The Ellul Forum: Issues #1-5; Reorganised by Category

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Articles

The Ethical Importance of Universal Salvation

by
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The purpose of the *Forum* is to provoke discussion, to further that goal, let me state the thesis of this position paper bluntly. In Dan Qendenin's book, *Theological Method in Jacques Ellul,* (University Press of America, 1987), he offers as one of his most devastating critiques of Ellul the following: "The most glaring inconsistency in Ellul's theological dialectic is bis nearly unqualified affirmation of die universal salvation of all peoples beyond history." (Clendenin, 135) According to Clendenin this dissolves the dialectical tension that Ellul otherwise maintains throughout his theology, the tension between *No* and Yes, between the Judgment and Promise of God. Moreover he argues that by insisting on universal salvation Ellul in fact commits the sin of collectivization (treating humanity as a mass) which he otherwise condemns in his dialectical critique of the technological society. My thesis is quite simple - Dan Clendenin is wrong. (1) Ellul's affirmation of universal salvation has not broken the consistency of his Biblical and Barthian dialectic nor has it succumbed to collectivization. On the contrary (2) the notion of universal salvation is a necessary pre-condition for the ethic of freedom Ellul develops precisely to protest the collectivization of human behavior in a technological society Finally (3) Clendenin's failure to understand this linkage between ethical freedom and universal salvation is complemented by his failure to understand the relationship of both to *power.* This leads to another questionable criticism central to his final critique of Ellul, namely that Ellul allows no positive place for the use of power within a Christian ethic.

(1) First, let's be clear, Ellul is not professing some general philosophical dialectic. He explicitly states that he is affirming the Biblical dialectic of judgment and promise. This biblical dialectic is eschatological. That is, the Biblical literature itself, whether the prophets of the Old Testament or the Gospels of the New Testament, limits this dialectic to history. Clendenin wants Ellul to be "consistent" and carry this dialectic "beyond history." But that is precisely what would be inconsistent. Clendenin suggests that one strategy that Ellul could take in response to his criticism would be to "be explicit about what he implicitly affirms, that his concept of dialectic is limited to history, and that there is no reason for this dialectic to continue after this life. I have found only one place where he hints at such *(The Humiliation of the Word,* 269)."

Clendenin acts as if this were a matter for speculation on which he is inviting Ellul to take a stand and is puzzled that he cannot find explicit references by Ellul to the issue. I submit that this is not hard to understand. Since Ellul explicitly subscribes to the Biblical dialectic which is limited to history I doubt that he ever thought that the matter needed further comment. Ellul remains consistently faithful to the Biblical dialectic.

(2) Second, Ellul's insistence on universal salvation (a) is not an instance of the collectivization which he otherwise criticizes in a technological society but rather (b) is a precondition for an ethicof freedom which is able to combat such collectivization.

Let me address point (2a) first. For Ellul collectivization is a sin which has to do with the limits of human consciousness. Human beings, he argues, (in *False Presence of the Kingdom* for instance) are not capable of loving the whole human race. Individuals can only love individuals, the neighbor who crosses one's path and is in need. Mass media seduce us into trying to love everyone. The media evoke compassion in us for those in distress half way around the world who we can only know abstractly and collectively. In the process we become diverted from caring for the neighbor we can personally know and help. Intent on changing the world, we become swept up in mass movements and bureaucratic structures which rob us of our individuality while at the same time we end up neglecting our neighbor. Such collectivization is a function of our being limited finite beings. As such we can neither know nor relate to all individuals personally and individually. Universal salvation on the other hand has nothing to do with this human limitation. Universal salvation is about God's capacity, not our human capacity. Unlike ourselves, God's knowing and caring are not limited. Only God could conceivably know, love and save the whole human race and do so without collectivization. Only God could love the whole human race by loving each individual as an individual. Therefore Clendenin is quite wrong to say that universal salvation is inconsistent with Ellul's dialectical critique of collectivization.

Now let me turn to point (2b). In fact, the case is quite the contrary of the one Clendenin suggests. Universal salvation actually plays a central role in making possible Ellul's ethic of freedom and its protest against collectivization by undermining the theological rational which has historically promoted Christianity as a collectivizing religion, one which produces an ethic of conformity to the world. Th make my case I wish to appeal to arguments advanced not by Ellul himself, although I believe they are presupposed in his work, but by two of his theological contemporaries, John Howard Yoder and Juan Luis Segundo. These are an unlikely pair of names to link together. Yoder champions the Anabaptist tradition while Segundo is an advocate of liberation theology. But on one issue both agree, namely that as soon as Christianity came to view its message as something everyone must accept in order to be saved, Christianity began to be "watered down" and abandoned its "ethic of discipleship" for a Constantinian ethic of "Christian civilization." [see chapter 8 in Segundo's *The Liberation of Theology,* (Orbis Books, 1976) and chapter 7 in Yoder's *The Priestly* Kingdom, (University of Notre Dame Press, 1984)].

Both argue that the sociological pressure of preaching a Christianity for everyone leads to the compromising of the Gospel ethicand ends up legitimating a "Christian civilization" whose final outcome is the Inquisition. Both argue that the core of this betrayal of the Gospel lies in assuming everyone has to be Christian in order to be saved. At this point Segundo makes the same move that Ellul does. That is, he appeals to Barth's teaching on universal salvation. Only in this way, he argues, can the drive toward collectivization be broken in Christianity and its function as a minority Teaven" within society be recovered. Yoder is more suggestive and less explicit bu t he too insists that we have to get rid of the notion that everyone needs to be Christian, and implies that the separateness of Christians has as its goal the "whole world's salvation" (12). Both of these theologian's share Ellul's conviction that Christians are and should be a minority in the world and that the desire to be otherwise leads to the "betrayal of Christianity". All three are intent upon recovering an important element of prophetic faith, namely, the insistence that *election* isa call to *vocation* (i.e., being a light to the nations) and not to a status of special privilege. To put it in New Testament terms, conversion as a response to the call or election to faith is not a privileged guarantee of salvation but rather a call to be a leaven for the transformation of the world into a new creation. When Jesus tells his disciples that they are to be the "salt of the earth" the metaphor is quite deliberate. Who in his right mind would sit down to a meal of salt On the other hand a little salt brings out the true flavor, the best flavor of any plate of food.

Those who admire Ellul's prophetic ethical critique of our technological civilization but who would choose to deny his position on universal salvation need to ask themselves whether these two can really be separated. As Yoder and Segundo argue, the weight of Christian history suggests otherwise. For Ellul faith is a call to vocation. It is what some are called to do for God's world in history. Salvation on the other hand is what God has done for the whole human race in Christ The good news of the latter frees Christians to assume the task of the former. Ruth is not a work that earns one a ticket to "heaven". But faith does make a difference, precisely where it should - in history as the freedom to struggle against the demonic forces of necessity, of collectivization and dehumanization. Rith inserts the freedom of God into history to the benefit of the rest of the world.

Clendenin's presuppositions become clear when he accuses Ellul of making everyone into a Christian as a consequence of universal salvation (at the very least he seems to think Ellul must believe them to be "hidden Christians"). Clendenin cannot imagine that anyone can be saved unless he or she is a Christian. This never occurs to Ellul. In Clendenin's interview Ellul explicitly denies this interpretation. Ellul is not playing games with Clendenin. It is simply that he can conceive of non-Christians being saved. For Ellul "being saved" and "being Christian" are overlapping categories, for Clendenin they are one and the same category.

(3)Let me tum to my final point, Clendenin's critique of Ellul's treatment of "power." That he should criticize Ellul for holding a view of universal salvation and also for not

advocating a "positive" use of power is rather telling. At least from the point of view of John Howard Yoder's theology. For Yoder thinks that it is significant that as soon as Christianity decided everybody had to be Christian it gave up the way of non-violence for the way of power and coercion. Where Christians of the first centuries refused to serve in the military, Constantinian Christians made serving the state into a Christian duty. Where Christian's of the first centuries practiced the Judaic ethic of welcoming the stranger, Constantinian Christianity made being a stranger, one of another faith, illegal. By force of law, and arms if necessary, being a citizen required being a Christian. Yoder and Ellul understand that if you give power an inch it will take a mile - it will take over the whole world. To give power an inch is to compromise the Gospel as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount.

It is interesting that Segundo recognizes this but argues that not even Jesus could live in the world without compromising this message and so suggests that the Gospel must be compromised and the use of force must be baptized by the Gospel. Ellul does not make that mistake. He too recognizes that no one can live in the world without the use of power but he refuses to baptize it. Power may be necessary but necessity belongs to the realm of sin. To use the Gospel to condone power is to do the devils work. Even the power of a benevolent state rests on power as coercion which will never be used only for just purposes. For Ellul, Christians can hold positions of power but they must never succumb to the illusion that their use of power is blessed by the Gospel - rather they must learn to live with the dialectical tension and paradox of being both saints and sinners at the same time. Clendenin's critique of Ellul on power is wide of the mark. For Ellul power is used positively when the Christian, like the yachtsman, welcomes the conflicting forces of power or necessity that impinge upon him or her and uses them against each other even as the yachtsman tacks against the wind. The only thing to be feared is the calm, for then he or she can do nothing. For Ellul, there is no freedom without power and necessity but as soon as we bless necessity we tum it into a demonic fatality and the positive becomes negative.

The question of the use of power is the most troubling question that Christian ethidsts face. I continue to wrestle with this issue myself. There is room for positions on the "positive use of power" in the ethical dialogue and I hope we will hear more from Dan Clendenin on this matter. But such positions need to take seriously the challenge of Ellul and Yoder (and we could add Stanley Hauerwas to this camp) who insist that Christians have got to stop thinking of themselves as having to "be in charge." The motivation to baptize power does not come from within the Gospel but from the outside, namely, from desire of Christians to run the world. This desire is closely tied to the presupposition that the whole world ought to be Christian, indeed must be Christian, in order to be saved. That is a dangerous pattern of reasoning and motivation and one which Ellul undercuts, severing the traditional link of Constantinian Christianity (Catholic and Protestant) between election and salvation. Since all are saved through Christ's death and resurrection that task is already accomplished. What remains unfinished is the struggle with the demonic dehumanization and collectivization which

occurs in history. It is to that struggle that the elect are called. Ellul's insistence on universal salvation serves to rechannel the energy of Christians in the direction which is most needed in our time, the ethical direction. Rr from capitulating to collectivization in any way, it is rather a most potent force against it.

Clendenin has two other aspects to his argument with Ellul that I have not focused on. One is the charge that universal salvation violates human freedom. But universal salvation does not violate free will. It is not about human freedom at all but about divine freedom. It insists that no matter what humans may do God remains free to accept them in his reconciling love - that his love, like the rain, falls on the just and the unjust alike. Rather than reject those who reject him, he chooses to take the consequences of that rejection upon himself in an act of suffering reconciliation. As Paul puts it, prior to any act of repentance, "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us... when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him by the death of his Son...".(Romans 5:8&10)

Clendenin puts his objection another way by arguing that the problem with Ellul's position is that human "actions no longer have ultimate soteriological value." He is quite right and that is as it should be. The act that has "ultimate soteriological value" is the sacrifice of Christ, an act of grace. On this too Ellul is surely right Human acts are restricted to the plane of penultimate value, the plane of history where they can make a difference.

Finally Clendenin argues that universal salvation cannot be scrip-turally maintained. In this position paper I have not tried to show that universal salvation is true or consistent with scripture. I have simply tried to argue that to remove it from Ellul's position effectively undermines the potency of the prophetic ethic he is so much admired for. In fact, however, I am largely persuaded by Ellul's arguments in this area as well.

Clendenin seems to imply that the Biblical dialectic of "judgment and promise" should finally result in a division of the world into the *saved* and the *damned.* Such a conclusion however assimilates the "Good News" to the historical and dialectical categories of the *sacred* and *profane.* It is the power of the demonic (the *diabolos* or divider) over that dialectic which creates dualistic division, strife and chaos. But Ellul correctly perceives that that dialectical dualism is relativized by the Biblical (eschatological/apocalyptic) dialectic between the Sacred and the Holy, in which the Holy unites what the sacred once divided. Hence the love of God transcends the categories of the sacred and profane (the saved and the damned) and falls upon the *just* and the *unjust* alike.

Clendenin also accuses Ellul of a "selective reading of the Biblical texts" but this surely begs the question, since the opposing view selectively reads the Biblical text as well, ignoring precisely those elements Ellul would emphasize. But more to the point every theological position selectively reads the text. After all, (as Krister Stendahl and others have shown) "Justification by faith" is not the dominant theme in Paul's thought and yet Luther made it the criterion by which all other scriptural statements were to be judged and forged it into the pillar of Protestant faith. Until I read Ellul's brilliant

exegesis of the Book of Revelation I remained skeptical that universal salvation could be scripturally maintained. I came away with my mind decisively changed. It seems to me that Ellul does with the Book of Revelation what Luther did with "justification by faith." Clendenin may disagree with Ellul's reading of the Biblical texts but I doubt that he can show that his own alternative reading is any less selective. In the end I am inclined to accept the Pauline advice to Timothy, "We have put our trust in the living God and he is the Saviour of the whole human race but particularly of all believers.This is what you are to enforce in your teaching." (1 Timothy 4:10)

A Visit with Jacques Ellul

Pessac, France, June 27,1987
by Marva Dawn

Jacques Ellul and his wife are very gracious people! They welcomed me kindly and even served raspberries from their garden. Through the excellent translating of Philip Adams, we held a far-ranging conversation for almost two hours. Prof. Ellul asked questions about my work, too - especially about some articles on teaching ethics to children. This stands out in my memory because Ellul serves as an excellent model of a profound scholar who is also able to relate well to other people. Concerning the common split in theologians between the head and the heart he said, "it is contrary to the Gospel."

We talked about many practical issues that day - the situation in South Africa, the ecology movement, U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, caring for the poor and the handicapped, euthanasia. As would be expected, Ellul stressed the importance of avoiding propaganda and political games, of thinking about each problem as a whole (thinking globally), and of seeing what we can modify practically in our own communities. He urged the U.S. to fight communism with economic justice rather than armies and to help the poor not only materially but also with fellowship, spiritual security and support in their anguish.

Regarding his efforts to reform the Church, Ellul criticized a "whole generation of liberal pastors" who "don't believe in anything so they have nothing to say." He said that most of the renewal in France is taking place beside the churches (except for the charismatics), rather than in them. Now he belongs to a small transdenomination-al group trying to listen to laypeople, but this "scares the authorities." Ellul feels his most important insight for the Church has been his emphasis on hope. Secondly, against the particular French problem of 200,000 people (including many intellectuals) becoming Muslim, he stresses, "our God is a Tfinity." This led to a discussion of universalism; had

I already read Dan Clendenin's book (see review) I could have been more able to press him further about the inconsistencies of his views.

The other major doctrinal topic was his concept of "the powers," the subject of my dissertation. When I questioned certain inconsistencies in his writings, he stressed that the powers must be understood dialectically - that they can't be personalized, and yet that there is a Power beyond what can be explained, that every human rupture is a *diabolos,* the Separator.

Most helpful for me were Ellul's comments about practical issues in writing and teaching, such as creating the necessary balance of preparing for one's Bible studies while yet dealing with all the people who want to speak with us when we are leading retreats. He stressed the importance of the Holy Spirit in helping us to find the time to do both. When I thanked him for taking the time to talk with me in spite of all he has to do, he answered, "I'm almost done with what I want to write." Even as *The Presence of the Kingdom* was the introduction to his corpus, his recently complete commentary on Ecclesiastes is its conclusion. He said that he continues to write, but without a tight program. His *Ethics of Holiness* is written, but he doubts whether it will ever be published because it is too long - which led to a discussion of presenting our work in publishable ways. He said that he had created his own market, but that it had taken a long time. When I responded that I'm too impatient, he replied, "you must always be impatient."

I wanted to know Ellul as a person, encountering typical obstacles in the struggle to live out his faith and ministry. He revealed himself as I expected - a wonderful model of a gracious man incarnating the Gospel in practical ways, a brilliant man choosing carefully the values of the kingdom of God.

Media Development Devotes Issue to Ellul

Media Development: Journal of the World Association for Christian Communication has just devoted most of its 2/1988 (vol XXXV) issue to *Perspectives on Jacques Ellul.* Many of you who are receiving this first issue *of Die Ellul Studies Bulletin* have also received a copy since I supplied Michael Haber, the editor, with a copy of our mailing list However a number of you who have been added to the list since then will not have received it. You may want towrite fora copy. The address is *Media Development,* 357 Kennington Lane, London SEII 5QY England (Tblephone 01-582 9139).

The collection of articles is impressive. The table of contents is listed below for your information.

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Forthcoming Ellul Publications

by Gary Lee, Editor, Eerdmans Publishing Co.

It is difficult to keep up with the work of a prolific author like Ellul - he seems towrite more quickly than most of us can read! This difficulty is compounded when the work has to be translated. But it is worth the effort (and the wait, for those who do not read French).

I will begin by just mentioning Eerdmans two most recent translations of Ellul titles: In 1985 we published *The Humiliation of the Word* (285 pages, $14.95), a translation by Joyce Hanks of *La Parole humili^e.* In 1986 we published *The Subversion of Christianity* (224 pages, $9.95), translated by Geoffrey Bromiley from *La Subversion du christianisme.*

In July of 1988 we will publish *Jesus and Marx: From Gospel to Ideology* (200 pages, $12.95), translated by Joyce Hanks from *L'ld^ologie mandste Chrttienne.* From both a biblical-theological and a socio-political perspective Ellul examines the attempts to relate Christianity to Marxism (e.g., liberation theology, Marxist Christianity). He describes the challenges that Marxist Christianity presents to traditional Christianity (the former practices some goals that the latter talks about but too often fails to do), and he discusses the roots and development of Marxist Christianity. He then reviews in detail some key Marxist-Christian books, exposing the weaknesses of so-called Marxist Christianity (which is neither Marxist nor Christian!). He argues that the biblical perspective takes exception to all political power; hence he concludes that Christian anarchism is the realistic revolutionary option. The preface by Joyce Hanks provides an excellent introduction to the book, for she shows how it relates to his previous work.

Early in 1989 we will publish Geoffrey Bromiley's translation of *Ce que je crois* (the French edition, published in 1987, is 290 pages; the English edition will probably be less than 200 pages), tentatively titled *What I Believe.* In this book Ellul outlines his beliefs about life, the world, history, and Christianity. In the first part of the book he discusses,

among other things, the meaningfulness of life, the dialectic, evil, and love. In the second part he surveys history from Paleolithic times to the present. In the third part he discusses his religious beliefs, including his views on providence, universalism, and recapitulation. The book is thus a convenient summary of Ellul's beliefs and will serve as an excellent introduction to his thought, for he states succinctly and provocatively his views on many crucial topics.

Later in 1989 we will publish Joyce Hanks' translation of *La raison d'etre: Meditation sur I'Ecclesiaste* (French edition, 1987, 318 pages) (English title uncertain). Here Ellul offers another of his stimulating biblical studies, on a book that has been central to his thinking for fifty years. He begins by discussing his approach to Ecclesiastes and his general view of the book. He then takes up various themes of Ecclesiastes (power, money, work, the good). Next he discusses the role of wisdom in Ec-clesiates and its relation to philosophy. Finally, he examines the references to God in Ecclesiastes, especially in chapter 12. Throughout, Ellul interacts with biblical-theological scholarship, though this is not a verse-by-verse commentary but more a thematic meditation.

We are considering the translation of *Un chrdtien pour Israel',* I have written to Ellul requesting a slight update, and he has agreed to write a postscript concerning the recent turmoil in Israel. In this book Ellul gives a biblical-theological analysis of Israel, then a historical, sociopolitical analysis, in which he examines the propaganda about Israel and considers the complexities of this difficult situation.

I have also just received from the French publisher *Hachette* a copy of *Le bluff technologique,* Ellul's latest book, so that we can consider it for translation. This, his third volume on technique *(The Technological Society* and *The Technological System* being the first two), builds on the previous ones and is similarly massive (489 pages in the French edition). Though we are primarily a religious publisher and this, like the other volumes, is a sociological rather than a theological study, we are pursuing the translation rights.

In addition, we are considering a proposal by Marva Dawn for a translation of six key early articles by Ellul, which, along with Marva's comments, would serve as an introduction to Ellul's thought.

Several years ago Ellul told me that he had written a manuscript on *Technique et Theologie,* but that he could not find a French publisher for it, since he already had so many books in the works. I urged him to send it to me, even though it was handwritten, but he declined. I have asked him again, also for any other material he has, in whatever form. In his recent letter he stated that he has written both this work and bis *Ethique de la Saintete* (which is 1000 pages) but that both need to be updated and revised. In addition, he is currently working on or has plans for three other books, including one on the suffering of Christ, which we will surely pursue.

But Ellul's writing career may be nearing its end. Who will pick up his mantle? Who will cany on in the tradition of Kierkegaard, Barth, Ellul, Stringfellow, etc.? Who will be our next prophet to provoke us to think deeply about our faith and our life?

Addendum

by Dan Clendenin

(Editors Note: Some time ago I asked Dan Clendenin to give me an update on Ellul's publication plans based on his interview with Ellul last April. Then just before press time I got in touch with Gary Lee to update me on what Eerdmans was planning to publish. Since there was a good deal of duplication between these reports and Gary's was more recent, I am appending here, only those comments from Dan which add something to Gary's report.)

Technology and Theology is done but needs to be "greatly revised and rewritten." When I asked Ellul just how close he was to final completion he remarked, "Right now I don't have any desire to write... I'm not writing anymore right now. Maybe later, but not now. Above all, I feel free."

...As for *The Ethics of Love* and the second half of his prolegomena to ethics, he said he has notes, but they need to be written... Finally, I asked him about his two-volume autobiography which is already written. Would it be published? "No, I gave it to my wife. She will do what she wishes with it. If she wants to publish it, she will, if not, she will keep it."

As for other items (not based on my interview). Publisher Donald Simpson of Helmers and Howard (PO Box 7407, Colorado Spring, CO 80933) has been corresponding with Ellul and by now should have finalized a contract to bring back into print *Presence of the Kingdom...* Also a secondary work on Ellul by David Lovekin is due out soon, published by Lehigh University Press.

Jesus and Marx: From Gospel to Ideology: A Critique

by Michael Bauman

(Michael Bauman is Director of Christian Studies and Associate Professor of Theology of Culture at Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, MI.)

The following was submitted as a book review of *Jesus and Marx: From the Gospel to Ideology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), pp. xvi + 187. However, I thought it provocative enough to merit featuring as the *Forum* statement for this issue. Readers are invited to respond for the next issue. *The Editor.*

The first task of an academic author is to understand his subject. The second is to make himself understood. Though it may be offensive to say so in a forum like this, I do not believe that in *Jesus and Marx* Jacques Ellul has succeeded well on either count. Because it often takes longer to correct an error than to make it, and because this book contains a surprisingly large number of errors of fact and errors of interpretation, I must content myself, within the small scope afforded a book review, to mention but a few of the most flagrant or most easily noted shortcomings.

First, I deny that Christians ought to feel any pangs of guilt "because of what the searching gaze of socialism revealed about them, their church, or even Christianity itself (p.5). Socialism, for one thing, says nothing about anything. Only socialists do. What they say, I am convinced, is philosophically sloppy and historically incorrect The guilt revealed by "socialism" should be guilt felt by socialists. I can not countenance Ellul's irresponsible assertions that Marxist criticisms are "obviously based on justice" or that "in every respect our society is unjust for both individuals and groups" (p. 6, emphasis added). Nor will I countenance Ellul's unproven (and unprovable) assumption that justice means equality. One must not say, with Ellul and the Communists that our "unjust society results from twenty centuries of Christianity" or that "neither churches nor Christians are doing anything to improve the situation (p.6). All I will admit is that books and ideas like Ellul's will not work and that his last statement is a refutation of his own book, written as it is by a Christian and clearly intended as an aid.

What is one to make of the scandalous assertion that "no matter what kind of poverty the poor suffer, the Communists are on their side, and the Communists alone are with them" (p. 6)? I can only say "God help those with whom the Communists stand." Obvious examples like Mother Teresa aside, one need only look at the years since WWII to see that Communism is the major perpetrator of poverty and not its solution. The Japanese, for instance, were on the losing side of the war effort and suffered nuclear destruction twice. They occupy a land not great in size or in natural resources. Nevertheless, their economy and their standard of living far outstrip that of the Soviet Union, which was on the winning side of the war, which was given all of Eastern Europe as a gift, and which has more people , more land and more natural resources than Japan. A similar comparison could be made between North and South Korea, East and West German, and mainland China and Hong Kong. Capitalism, not socialism, has unlocked the secrets of wealth and sustained growth. Capitalism, not socialism, has been the better friend of the poor. Socialists, not capitalists, ought to feel the pangs of guilt revealed by Socialism. Poverty circles around socialist ideas and socialist ideologues wherever they come to power. Shocking as it is to some, by the 1980's the average Black's per capita annual income under apartheid in South Africa was higher than that of the average white under Communism in the Soviet Union. In short, while capitalism and the Church are not perfect, neither are they what Ellul describes. Nor is Socialism.

Despite Ellul's groundless claim that communist tactics are consistent with communist goals, it is obvious that communists preach liberation and practice enslavement. As long as the same band of happy thugs continues to occupy the Kremlin and to sustain the Gulag, we must not say, as Ellul does that "they accomplish what Christianity preaches but fails to practice" (p. 6). Such ideas are scandalous and reprehensible. Have we forgotten Solzhenitsytn so soon?

That is why Ellul must not say, as he does say with regard to Fernando Belo's communism, that he respects the choice of others to be Communists and does not question it (p. 86). Nor should one say, with Ellul, that Belo's leftist revolutionism is a

"perfectly respectable" choice. It is not But, Ellul's muddled sense of Christianity and of Communism permits him to make these and other such abhorrent assertions, such as that Belo's view of the "radical opposition between God and Money, God and the State" and "God and Caesar" are not only true, but "truly evangelical" (p. 89). In other words, because of his partial acceptance of Communist claims, one can tax Ellul with the same charge with which he taxes Belo: he "appears not to suspect [that] Marx's thought is a whole - a precise, integrated unit, based on a thorough method. Once one has adopted it, one cannot mix it with other methods and concepts." (p. 94).

Second, Ellul's understanding of history is less than reliable. For example, he tells us that "often an ideology springs up to parry an ideology-free practice" and that "capitalism is a practice with no explicitly formulated ideology; socialist ideology arises to oppose it. Afterward, capitalism will produce a 'defense'" (p. 1). Not only is it a highly debatable(if not downright mistaken) notion that there is any such thing as an "ideology-free practice" or that capitalism, when it emerged, was one, it is patently false to claim that its ideology developed in response to Socialism. Karl Marx and *Das Kapital,* after all, come after Adam Smith and *The Wealth of Nations,* not before.

Such errors seem to arise from Ellul's peculiar view of ideology, a view wherein he tries to separate the inseparable. Contrary to Ellul, one cannot readily distinguish theology from ideology because the former category is a subset of the latter. To distinguish theology from ideology is no 'more useful than to distinguish Irishmen from humanity. One might well distinguish good theology from bad ideology, or good theology from bad, but one need not do what Ellul tries to do. His attempt is based upon a definition of "ideology" so fully idiosyncratic that if one looked only at his definition, one could not guess the word it was intended to define. Flying in the face of every dictionary known to me in any language, Ellul defines ideology as" the popularized sentimental degeneration of a political doctrine or worldview; it involves a mixture of passions and rather incoherent intellectual elements, always related to present realities: (p.l). A large number of Ellul's conclusions are based upon this monstrous and unjustifiable definition. When the foundation is tilted, how can the superstructure stand straight?

Forum, M. Bauman continued.

Ellul argues that while Christianity is not an ideology, it can degenerate into one as when, for example, it becomes "a means for distinguishing those who are right from those who are wrong [the saved and the damned" (p.2)]. But, Christianity did not become a means for making such determinations; that is something it was from the very beginning. Ellul, one begins to think, does not understand the nature of the very religion he is attempting to promote and to protect. "Christianity," he says," is the destruction of all religions" and of airbeliefs" (p.2). Because Christianity is, on any common sense view, undeniably a religion and entails beliefs, one cannot but wonder after reading such statements (1) if Christianity is not an enemy to itself, or (2) if Ellul uses language with grotesque imprecision and license. For many, the second option recommends itself most convincingly. So also does the conclusion that imprecise language is inescapably tied to muddled thinking.

This book's muddle is extensive. Ellul's skewed vision of history and of economic principles and reality are sometimes shocking, as when he tells us that Caesar is the creator of money (p. 168). For over 200 years, since Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, economists have known that money *antedates* government and that it arises from human action, not human design. Government recognizes the medium of human exchange and adapts itself to it. Government does not create money. But such ideas are (so far as this book is concerned) unknown to Ellul He nowhere shows a knowledge or understanding of classical or of Austrian economics. If his index is to be trusted, Hayek, Von Mises, Schumpeter, Ricardo, Hume, Smith, Say, Bastiate, Gilder and Sowell form no part of Ellul's knowledge of economics. I dare say that without knowing them, one could not understand Marx Perhaps that is why Ellul believes that Marx was "admirably well acquainted" with the problems of his day, that Marx's misdirected and ineffective theories can be labeled "solutions," and that his anti-theism was not an essential part of his ideology (pp. 4,153).

And what is one to make of the grossly exaggerated assertions that "both the Old and New Testaments take exception to all political power" and that "the state's prosperity always implies the death of innocents" (pp. 171,172, emphases added)?

In short, I believe Ellul misunderstands history, economics, Communism and even Christianity itself. In this book, Ellul does not adjudicate the Christian tradition, Christian wisdom, or Christian revelation in a capable or well-informed way.

Be Reconciled

by Jacques Ellul
Translated by Joyce Hanks

God's reconciliation with humanity is secured through Jesus Christ. But this should lead to reconciliation on our part with God, and to reconciliation among us. In what follows, I would like to suggest just an outline of the second point It seems to me to entail two aspects: religious and theological quarrels and divisions, on the one hand, and position-taking in the World, on the other.

As I have thought about it over the last several years, the tragedy of the separation of our various Churches springs from the fact that the reasons for their separation no longer matter very much. Two hundred or a thousand years ago, these reasons often justified separation. In the case of the theological battle over *filioque,* for instance, do theologians and clergy today really attach great importance to this formulation of the faith?

Or consider certain facets of that great schism, the Reformation: transubstantiation, for instance. A French Catholic theologian said to me a few months ago that "no one" on the Catholic side believes any more that the wine is materially transformed into blood, and the bread into flesh (I think he meant theologians, since the situation certainly

differs among simple believers!). He said "we believe in Jesus' real presence (but in the sense of his words: 'I am in your midst'). The bread and wine are Symbols of that presence." This inevitably reminded me of Calvin's phrase: "we believe in Jesus' real (meaning 'true'!) presence in the Lord's Supper, but not in his material presence. The dispute sprang from a certain philosophy of substances, no longer accepted in our day. On the contrary, we can come together rather easily on the basis of an existentialist philosophy.

The huge debate concerning salvation by faith or by works was similar. The terrible thing in this case was that both sides agreed salvation came by grace, in any case. But one group believed a person's initial act was believing in that grace, whereas the other group believed one first put grace into practice through works. Astonishingly, advocates of salvation by faith accomplished the most works in the nineteenth century (works of the Church and of charity). To think the Church was tom asunder, and thousands of Christians died, killing each other, because of such terrible misunderstandings (to which we could of course add others, such as the Virgin and the Saints).

At times breaches have occurred quite differently: a small group of Christians would realize the official Church was forgetting an important aspect of Revelation. For example, it is quite true that in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Protestantism, the Holy Spirit and eschatology were neglected. So these groups of Christians would decide to try to "return the Holy Spirit to his proper place," or "rediscover the importance of eschatology in theology and the spiritual life of the Christian." Their error consisted of making this truth the only important truth: a truth that constituted, by itself, a subject *Stands aut cadentis Ecclesiae.* They considered everything else secondary.

The official Churches committed a much more serious error: they failed to recognize what was right in such movements. Since the groups comprised only a minority, they were obliged to separate from the Church, becoming the Pentecostal Movement, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, etc. The "much more serious" error involved failing to apply a rule I find extraordinary: *Major aut Saniorpars.* It existed in the Church from the tenth to the thirteenth century, only to disappear in the fourteenth. When a decision was to be made in a Church Council, for example, a vote took place, but the majority was not always right! The ideal was to arrive at unanimity. Failing that, the group had to consider whether the minority represented a *saniorpars:* a wiser point of view. This process provoked delays, but resulted in a more just solution. People doubted that truth could be decided by a majority of votes! In reality, the Church should have examined whether these minorities were calling it back to essential truths. Instead, after their exclusion, such groups hardened their position, and ended up in the absurdities and extremism we know so well.

But can all this still be valid today? The Presbyterian Church, for example (the Calvinist church, or the Reformed Church of France), has now recognized again the importance of eschatology and the centrality of the Holy Spirit. Each time someone proposes a reconciliation of these churches, however, or wants to examine what divides us, stern refusals follow. Whose? The authorities'-all of them. What I have to say

will meet with very poor acceptance, but the thing separating Churches is no longer theological, religious, or doctrinal questions. It is institutions, organizations, and authorities. The heads of these Churches do not want to lose their power. They see no way to unite their separate and different institutions. People prefer having the body of Christ tom to pieces rather than challenging our authorities, powers, and institutions.[1] Considering that the Churches yield to such feeble motivations, it is not surprising they lose their influence in this world!

The second aspect of reconciliation among us involves taking political positions, often within a single Church.[2] After 1940 we rediscovered in Protestantism (at least in France) that the Church could not isolate itself from problems in society. For instance, we found ourselves confronted with communism in 1944. What attitude should we adopt? Many French pastors and theologians who had been completely indifferent, before the war, suddenly found themselves with communist friends in the Resistance. As a result of such friendships, they assented to communist doctrine. Moreover, this process highlights an important characteristic of French Protestantism: relationships based on friendship or charity often lead our Protestant intellectuals to join an organization, in order to show they sympathize with the doctrine or philosophy of people to whom they want to be closely related. We find this again in the case of Islam.

Naturally, the "great" French theologians of that era (such as Pierre Maury, Marc Boegner, and Jean Bose) did not allow themselves to be influenced at all by this trend, but a great number followed the (moderate) example of Karl Barth, who said, rather simplistically: "Since the Soviet Union saved us from Hitlerism, we must reconsider our negative attitude." Thus Barth drew close to communism (he was, of course, ignorant of both Marxist doctrine and the reality of the Soviet regime).[3]

Beginning at that point, we have a split in the Reformed Church of France. On the one hand we find those who considered the only calling to be evangelism: making the Gospel known and enabling people to share in salvation in Jesus Christ. On the other, those who considered a Christian could now witness to his faith only through political action, which ought to establish a just society. In such a society, the poor would be given first place. This faction denied the Gospel could be received without social

[1] At this point 1 return to the theme of a series of articles 1 wrote in 1952: "On the Cultural and Social Factors Influencing Church Division," *Ecumenical Review,* vol. 4 (April 1952), pp. 269-275, reprinted as "The Cultural and Social Factors Influencing Church Division," in C. H. Dodd, G. R. Cragg, and Jacques Ellul, *Social and Cultural Factors in Church Divisions* (New York: World Council of Churches, 1952), pp. 19-25.

[2] The point I take up here particularly concerns French Protestantism, but I am convinced a similar problem exists in many countries. Furthermore, in this article 1 especially attack Christians who have taken a Leftist position. I have made (and could make here) the same criticism of Christians of the "Right." See my *False Presence of the .Kingdom,* tr. C. Edward Hopkin (New York: Seabury, 1972) and *Jesus and Marx: From Gospel to Ideology* tr. Joyce Main Hanks (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988).

[3] Barth had been heavily influenced by his friend Fritz Lieb, who wrote a book in 1945 in which he "proved" that the Soviet Union had completely changed, that it had become completely free, and that there was no oppression there!

action, resulting in "the good news announced to the poor." The poor with no money, the proletariat, and only they were worthy of bearing the good news. Remarkably, this group managed to prevail, through utterly insidious means. Today, we can no longer deciare that we want to make the Gospel known by means of the Word.

Next we saw political positions taken at the time of the war in Algeria. The same intellectuals and theologians who had sided with the poor now acted on behalf of the Algerian Freedom Fighters, against France. The motive was the same: since the Arabs were poor and oppressed, one had to be on their side, against the rich French oppressors. This tendency continued as the group sided with the Palestinians (because they were the Poor, whereas the Israelis represented the United States, and thus the rich!). The trend continues today with respect to the immigrant workers (all Arabs), and the Palestinians. This Christian political movement has, of course, adopted Liberation Theology. But, more than that, it quickly subscribed to Marxist thought, and now favors Islam, emphasizing the "monotheism" of the two religions!

Of course, this trend that dominates the Protestant intelligentsia judges very harshly the Christians who confine themselves to the Gospel. These are considered reactionary, and unfaithful to God's will, since they do not put themselves on the side of the Poor. The adopting of political positions has gone beyond earlier theological differences.

My greatest reproach of all these Christians who adopt a political stance is essentially that they are ignorant. That is what grieves me most: between 1940 and 1956, they knew nothing about Marxism. They did not try to find out what was really happening in the Soviet Union. I maintain that when a Christian takes a political stance he should reflect on everything: the means used and the future risks, as well as the doctrine that inspires the movement If you are for the Palestinians, you must study the PLO's charter and evaluate the Israelis' chances for survival if the Palestinians should win. If you favor Islam, you must begin by studying the Koran thoroughly.

I believe that these Christians are acting in good faith, and that they are sensitive to poverty, but they are utterly lacking in perception, dear thinking, and competence. An honest Christian with these deficiencies says nothing. Above all, he does not take himself (like those I am attacking here!) for the equivalent of the Old Testament prophets! The prophets not only listened faithfully to the Word of God, but also were well acquainted with political conditions in their time!

The experience of the last forty years should have given our false prophets a warning about their errors. But, since they take themselves for prophets, they see none of the damage done by the regimes they have supported. They continue to drag well-meaning Christians into other errors, and widen the splits they have produced in the Reformed Church of France!

Christian Anarchy

by Vernard Eller
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Recently, while I was teaching a graduate seminar on the subject, a student came up with the terminology that enables me to express the gist of Christian Anarchy in fairly short order. She made a distinction between God's "Plan A" and God's "Plan B." Crucial, then, to any understanding of Christian Anarchy is, first, the seeing of the distinction and then the maintaining of it through every step of ethical reflection.

The ... point is made with ... relevancy in the story of Israel's demand for a monarchal government (1 Samuel 8ft)... The overarching question is: "Are the governing authorities... *of God?"* The answer which, from the biblical standpoint, simply will not do - this is the answer we most often get: namely, "The good moral regimes which we find attractive are *of God* but bad, immoral regimes are *of the devil.*

Rather, to our question, the first and decisive answer must be: "Well, the evidence is clear that none of them is recognized, or plays any part, in God's "Plan A." When Israel chose to go for a human ruler, God made it clear that this was nothing other than a rejection of his "Plan A" and indeed of his very self. His "Plan A" prescribes that he retain all (all) the reins of human government (and, indeed, cosmic government) in his own hands - that he perform the necessary governing of creation on his own, with surrogate orderers being entirely superfluous. "Plan A" intends that the government of all things rest with the one true and competent governor. That God be everything to everyone, as 1 Cor. 15:28 so aptly puts it.

Thus, rightly, the last thing any human government can claim for itself is that it is *of God"* ~ when, obviously, what it actually represents is the rejection of God. This is an absolute judgment that recognizes absolutely no distinction between one claimant and another - whether it be good, bad, or indifferent No, to the extent it claims the authority to govern, to that extent it represents a rejection of God's own governance and a defiance of bis "Plan A" (which does not call for any power-sharing on his part).

It is... only under "Plan B" that governing authorities come into the picture as being willed *of God.* In effect, God says that, if we have rejected bis perfect governing authority of "Plan A," it is downright essential that we have governing authorities of some sort. We will just plain have to make do and put up with the imperfect and sinful authorities of human devising. However, no one ought to think that these belong to God's "Plan A"; they are only tbe poor, poor substitute demanded by "Plan B."

Accordingly, in our biblical account, God helps Israel choose Saul as the most promising "Plan B" king for them... Yet, under "Plan B," while trying to use human governing authorities for as much good as he can get out of them, God also is the one who takes the initiative in unseating Saul and trying David in his place. The entire history of Israel's monarchy is that of governing authorities who aren't good for much but who, I guess, do fulfill God's Plan-B intention of keeping things from going completely to smash.

Now Christians, along with their ethics, are going to have the most ethically difficult time imaginable - living, as they do, suspended between "Plan A" and "Plan B." For themselves... Christians are totally committed to "Plan A." They try to make God so completely Lord of their lives that, for them, no other lords or authorities even exit. It takes all of their time to praise, love, and obey their Jesus. And when human-sinful governing authorities try to intrude themselves into the Christian's value-structure, they can be seen and treated as nothing other than competitors with and thus enemies of God.

Yet Christian ethics can't be left at this single focus on "Plan A." God himself demands that we go dialectical by reminding us that he, also, is the author of "Plan B"; it too is part of his will for humanity. It is true that those governing authorities are enemies of God; yet, just as truly, they represent the government God's wayward children simply must have if they are to survive long enough for him to get them back into salvation. These do, in a strange sense, represent the government of God.

So, if Christians love this wayward world as God loves it, they will have to be willing to involve themselves even in the makeshift ungodlinesses of "Plan B."

In Christ, Christians have been given the freedom to participate helpfully in "Plan B." However, we have blown that opportunity completely when we join "Plan B," treat the governing authorities as though they were now agents of God's saving work, play it as though "Plan A" has been superseded by "Plan B."

What we call "Christian Anarchy," then, is simply this very tricky business of retaining our Plan-A opinion of the governing authorities as rebellious enemies of God - retaining this opinion (as God himself does) even while using these same authorities (as God himself does) for the Plan-B survival of the race.

After Auschwitz and Hiroshima: Judaism and Christianity in a Technological Civilization

by Darrell J. Fasching

Judaism, Christianity and technological civilization - what possible link ties these three together, other than sheer contemporaneity? The answer, at least my answer, begins by tracing the path to Auschwitz and beyond.

From Anti-Judaism to Anti-Semitism and Auschwitz

That the Holocaust or Shoah (i.e., time of desolation) could occur in our "modem" world is a judgment on ail the institutions and resources of Western civilization, but it is an especially devastating judgment on the one ethical community, above all, which should have come to the defense of the Jews, namely, the Christian church. The cause of that failure has deep roots in Christian history and theology.

In the year 380 C.E., under Theodosius, the first Christian emperor of the Roman empire (Constantine was not baptized until his death bed), Christianity was declared the only legal religion of the empire. From this time forward no aliens or strangers were allowed within Christendom. Human dignity was granted to those who were die *same* and denied to those who were *different. At* this time all pagan traditions were suppressed and forbidden and Judaism came under severe legal restrictions. Within that same decade an ominous event occurred which was to set the pattern for the next two millennia of Jewish-Christian relations. In 388 C.E. the Bishop of Callinicum in Mesopotamia led a mob in the burning of a Jewish synagogue. Theodosius, in an attempt to administer justice, ordered the bishop to rebuild the synagogue. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, the great church father and teacher of Augustine, forbid Theodosius to enforce his decree and withheld the sacraments until he acquiesced to his demands. This event set the pattern for the treatment of Jews in Western civilization from the 4th century onward. The state became an instrument of the Church for the suppression of Judaism in particular and "heretics" in general. Behind this event already lay *more* than three hundred years of theological anti-Judaism in the writings of the church fathers, in which the Jews were accused of "killing Jesus," the Messiah and Son of God, and thus committing a "crime" against the human race. For this "crime," it was said, they were condemned by God to wander the earth, homeless, until the end of time as a "negative witness" to the truth of Christianity.

It is hardly coincidental that as these teachings took hold, the legal status of Judaism crumbled and the vulnerability of Jews to prejudice and violence increased. Synagogue burnings, Jewish children forcibly taken away from their parents and baptized, expulsions of Jews from country after country, and especially from the time of the Crusades, repeated mob violence or *pogroms* with extensive loss of life. When Hitler told two German bishops that he was only finishingwhat the church had started, he knew whereof he spoke. No wonder Hitler could say in *Mein Kampf,* "I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord."

Historically, Christians have engaged in a process of spiritual genocide. We have said to the Jew: "You have no right to exist as God's chosen because God has rejected you and chosen us instead. We are the true Israel." The step from such spiritual genocide to physical genocide - from "you have no right to exist as Jews" to "you have no right to exist" - is a step prepared by Christian religious anti-Judaism and carried out under Nazi "secular" anti-Semitism. Both the sacred and the secular in Western civilization, both Christendom and the Enlightenment, prepared the path to Auschwitz. As long as being a Jew was perceived by the Gentile as a religious claim, the "final solution" to the "Jewish problem" (i.e., the simple fact of their existence) could officially be envisioned as conversion, although the popular response was all too often pogrom and expulsion. But once the secularization process unleashed by the Enlightenment redefined being a Jew in terms of race, conversion was no longer a possible solution. Religious anti-Judaism became secular anti-Semitism. Now "the final solution" to the presence of an

alien and undesired race came to mean genocide: a solution the Nazis attempted to enact.

Two Models of Faith and Ethics

Different models of faith have different moral consequences. That is the hypothesis I wish to explore in the aftermath of the Shoah. How is it possible that, in spite of more than 2000 years of oppression and persecution, Jews remained faithful to their tradition? And why is it that Christians, who in the beginning were also persecuted, became a persecuting religion and abandoned the central Gospel injunction of loving one's neighbor, even one's enemy, as oneself? Starkly put, I think the answer is to be found in a fundamentally different understanding of faith and ethics in each tradition. Judaism is grounded in an understanding of faith as a dialectic of *trust and questioning,* even to the point of calling God into question, whereas in Christianity the element of *questioning* was largely lost and the dialectic of faith collapsed into an ethic of trust as total and *unquestioning obedience.*

Both traditions allow that trust and obedience play a central role in the life of faith and both appeal to Abraham as a model of this trusting faith. But in Judaism Abraham is remembered not only as the one who exemplifies the obedience of the Akeda (the binding of Isaac to be sacrificed, Genesis 22) but also as the one who, in the argument over Sodom and Gommorah, questions and challenges God, asking: "Shall not the judge of all, himself, be just?" (18:25)." For Biblical, Thlmudic and Hasidic Judaism, faith is wrestling with God - an ongoing dialogue and debate with God which serves as a training ground for moral autonomy, rooted in a strong sense of human dignity as a reflection of being created in the image of a God who is without image. The reduction of faith, in the Christian case, to unquestioning trust and obedience, by contrast, has taught quite another moral lesson: namely, the subjugation of moral autonomy to finite moral authorities, religious and/or secular-political, who pretend to speak for (or as) God, even when the obedience demanded runs counter to the Gospel message of love of neighbor and one's enemy. The result has been the persistent and repeated tendency of Christians, Protestant and Catholic alike, to accommodate their faith and moral vision to dehumanizing ideologies of the *status quo,* and so become a *negative witness* to the very transcendence they proclaim.

There is in Judaism an understanding of *covenant* as a personal and communal relationship which is essentially a two way street. It is a dialogue between God and his people grounded in a set of mutual expectations. The formula "I will be your God and you will be my people" is understood as a moral contract of love and commitment obligating both parties. Jews are obligated to live by the commandments but God also has obligations: to be with his people, to guide them and protect them. Although the term *chutzpa* has rather lighthearted connotations in American Jewish culture, the Israeli scholar, Mordechai Rotenberg, argues that it has a weightier meaning in the Talmudic tradition and is the most appropriate term for this contractual relationship

"according to which God as a dynamic 'personality* allows man to influence him—[Indeed, *chutzpa* is] a symbol for man's capacity to affect God and change his decrees and consequently man's future by his actions and justified complaints (Rotenberg,14)."

If the faith of Jews was a faith grounded in answers, the Holocaust or Shoah (i.e., the time of desolation) might well have meant the end of Judaism. But the faith of Jews, it seems, is not grounded in answers to metaphysical questions but in a personal covenant relationship of *chutzpa-* of ongoing dialogue and debate which is a continuous *wrestling with God.* More than any other factor, it seems to me, it is this which is providing the foundation for post-Shoah Jewish theology. Let me briefly suggest evidence for this from three leading Jewish authors who are struggling to find a path for Jews after Auschwitz: Emil lackenheim, Elie Wiesel and Irving Greenberg.

Emil Fackenbeim has raised the fundamental question: Where was God at Auschwitz? Like virtually all other Jewish authors on this subject, he rejects the pious traditions of the past which accounted for misfortune by suggesting that it is punishment for sins, for the Jews who died in the death camps were overwhelmingly Jews from the most pious and observant communities in Europe. God cannot be let off that easily. But then where was God? And how can one continue to be Jewish in the face of God's seeming abandonment of his people in the death camps? In response to these questions, Fackenheim says:

There is a kind of faith which will accept all things and renounce every protest. There is also a kind of protest which has despaired of faith. In Judaism there has always been protest which stays within the sphere of faith. Abraham remonstrates with God. So do Jeremiah and Job. So does, in modem times, the Hasidic Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdiczev. He once interrupted the sacred Yom Kippur service in order to protest that, whereas kings of flesh and blood protected their peoples, Israel was unprotected by her King in heaven. Yet having made his protest he recited the Kaddish, which begins with these words: "Extolled and hallowed be the name of God throughout the world..-" Can Jewish protest today remain within the sphere of faith (Hackenheim, 76)?

Elie Wiesel, a most eloquent survivor of Auschwitz, knows the meaning of this conflict More than any other author, Wiesel deserves to be seen as the bearer of the tradition of *chutzpa* in our post-Shoah world. Wiesel tells us: "I remember my Master... telling me, 'Only the Jew knows that he may oppose God as long as he does so in defense of His creation." Th be a Jew "means to serve God by espousing man's cause, to plead for man while recognizing his need of God." Or again, "Judaism teaches man to overcome despair. What is Jewish history if not an endless quarrel with God? (Wiesel, 6)." Standing like Job in the dialectical and dialogical tradition of *chutzpa,* Wiesel chooses to put God on trial and call him to account This is a persistent theme throughout his writings culminating in his play, *The Trial of God.* The play, ostensibly about an incident in the 17th century, is actually based on an experience he had in the death camps, where he witnessed three rabbis who "decided one winter evening to indict God for allowing his children to be massacred." And when the trial was over

and God was found guilty, the rabbis realized it was time for prayers and so they bowed their heads to pray (Brown, 154). The dialectical and dialogical faith of trust and *chutzpa* is not the Active invention of post-Shoah theologians. It is a lived faith, a tradition of faith reaffirmed in the very bowels of the death camps.

Irving Greenberg, our third theologian, explores the ethical as well as theological implications of this tradition. Greenberg takes issue with Richard Rubenstein's belief that God died at Auschwitz. He quotes Rubenstein's declaration that "Jewish history has written the final chapter in the terrible story of the God of History... the world will forever remain a place of pain... and ultimate defeat (Greenberg, 26)." Greenberg's response to this is direct: "After the Shoah, there should be no final solutions, not even theological ones (13)." What Greenberg finds unsatisfactory in Rubenstein's response to Shoah is his "definitiveness." Rubenstein has broken with the paradoxical dialectic of Jewish existence - the dialectic of trust and *chutzpa.* Rubenstein has abandoned the Thlmudic-Hasidic path of *questioning* and settled for a definitive answer. He does not wrestle with the unnamed God of Jacob. For Greenberg it is not belief in God which has to be abandoned but rather unquestioning trust and obedience. The ethical implication of the Holocaust is that one should be skeptical of all movements, religious or secular, whether of the left or the right. "Nothing dare evoke our absolute, unquestioning loyalty not even our God, for this leads to possibilities of SS loyalties (38)."

After Auschwitz, Greenberg argues, authentic faith defies the traditional categories of sacred and secular. It is action not words which tells us who has experienced the reality of God. Thus Greenberg argues that during the 1967 war against Israel, it was Sartre who spoke out against a potential genocide and Pope Paul VI who was silent Thus we must say that it is Sartre, not the Pope, who has shown himself to be a man of faith, one who has experienced the reality of God and God's image in every human being. Or again, he argues that in Israel today, it is the secular Israelis who represent authentic faith and not the Orthodox Jews. For it is the secular Israelis who insist on the admission of all Jews to Israel and not orthodox Jews, who even after the Shoah, would turn their backs on some Jews who do not meet their "religious" standards. Here the final paradox of the tradition of *chutzpa* reveals itself. The tradition that calls God into question is the tradition that calls human beings into question as well - in the name of the image of God in all creatures. It is the paradox of appealing to God against God on behalf of God's creation.

The Sacred, the Secular and the Demonic: Genocide as Deicide

What went wrong with Christianity during the Shoah? Why did the majority of Christians, and especially clergy, either actively or passively support Hitler and his "final solution to the Jewish problem"? Indeed, not even the famous Barmen declaration of the Confessing Church raised the issue of the treatment of the Jews. The leading

figure in its formulation, Karl Barth, later wrote: "I have long felt guilty that I did not make this problem central... There is no excuse that I did not fight properly for this cause...(Lit-teil, 46)."

"The most ironic statistic of the Third Reich... was that more Catholic priests and Protestant ministers died in the German army than were put into concentration camps: from an actuarial point of view it was safer to oppose Hitler than to support him (Allen, 122)." The greatest shame of the Church was "the tendency for all church-going Catholics and Protestants to be more anti-Semitic than were those who no longer attended services regularly (Gordon, 260)."

What went wrong? Undoubtedly a full answer to that question would be very complex, but I would suggest that a fundamental flaw in the dominant model of faith and ethics found within Christianity plays an essential role. It might be thought that the Church failed because it substituted the State for Christ as her Lord. But it is more complicated than that. Virtually from its beginning, Christian faith came to be defined as requiring (in varying degrees) obedience to the state as an aspect of obedience to Christ Therein, I believe, lies the heart of the problem.

Now feitii as a fierce and unquestioning loyalty to the will of God revealed in Christ could be an ethically powerful force for good in the world, were the "will of God" understood solely in terms of "love of neighbor," and even "one's enemies, as oneself. " But when the message of the Gospel is taken to include the theme of supersession, the myth that gentile Christians replace Jews as God's chosen, and vrfien it is thought to include the requirement of obedience to the state, the implications become ominous.

The key scripture which seems to have promoted this ethic of obedience occurs in Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 13: "Let everyone obey the authorities that are over him, for there is no authority except from God..." It is this statement that Luther appeals to in formulating his extreme position in urging the German princes to suppress the peasant revolts of his time. Only God can establish rulers and only God can remove rulers. It is not permissible for human beings to revolt, even against a vicious and unjust ruler. It is this pattern of faith as unquestioning obedience which prepared Christians for obedience even to Hitler.

Throughout history Jews refused to assimilate and be conformed to the world around them. The refusal of the Jew to assimilate led pagan and Christian alike to a violent rage against the Jew, because the "otherness" of the Jew was a witness to that which transcends all religions and cultures, remaining Wholly Other. God cannot be made the exclusive possession of any culture or religion - not even in the name of Christ. The existence of the Jew has reminded others that God's ways are not the same as their ways. In the world of the Shoah, the existence of the Jew was a burdening reminder of "faithfulness" which the-Christian conscience, of those who preached the value of "not being conformed to the world" while practicing conformity to the world of Nazi values, was only too happy to have out of sight and out of mind.

In the Nazi period this rage against the Jewish witness to transcendence escalated to a point of no return. The religious rage masked itself in the myth of race which

made assimilation as a "final solution" an impossible option. Hence the Nazis turned to genocide. But make no mistake about it, the rage against the Jew (whether pagan, Christian or Nazi) is a scarcely disguised rage against the transcendence of God, the God who cannot be used to legitimate pagan, Christian or Nazi hegemony, the God who cannot be owned or used for political and ideological purposes, the God who is the limit of all conformity to this world. The attempted genocide of the Jews is a thinly disguised attempt at the deidde of God, in which the perpetrators have all too typically projected their own motives onto the victims as a justification for their own genocidal actions.

Ellul's Contribution to Post-Shoah Christian Ethics

Jacques Ellul's theology speaks with unusual relevance to our situation after Auschwitz. Ellul's theology stands in sharp contrast to traditional Christian theology with its myth of supersession and ethic of obedience - a theology which shaped the path leading to Auschwitz. Rather than seeing the church as replacing the synagogue, he sees both as standing in a dialectical relation of mutually enabling witness through which they share the vocation to be communities of freedom in a world of determinisms. Ellul is often accused of focusing on the individual to the exclusion of the church. But in a rare discussion of ecciesiology in *Hope in Tune of Abandonment* he holds up the synagogue as the model of apocalyptic hope and urges the church to take the synagogue as the model for a diaspora presence, a "hidden presence" (the incognito), in a technological civilization. "Israel," he says, "is a people centered entirely on hope, living by that alone... As the one hoping people of the world, it is Israel which provides us with the model for this age... an example of the incognito. In this age of abandonment... I think that Christians should take that as a model (Ellul, 290-291)." Indeed, "if history is looked at closely and without the usual Christian prejudice, it turns out to have been forged at least as much by the Jewish incognito as by Christian activism...(Ellul, 297)." "There is only one political endeavor on which world history now depends; that is the union of the Church and Israel... These two communities _. must join forces so that, in effect, this Word of God might finally be written ... in counterpoint to the technological history of these times...(Ellul, 305)." Ellul is speaking, he says, not of an institutional merger but of a conversion of the Church to hope so as to support Israel "in its long march through the same night and toward the same kingdom (Ellul, 304)."

And in *Prayer and Modem Man,* written about the same time, Ellul furthers spells out the meaning of Jewish hope as a model for Christians. In an age of God's silence and abandonment, he argues, apocalyptic hope gives one the audacity (i.e., *chutzpa)* to assault God, and wrestle with him. Prayer is just this combat with God "which is a demand that God not keep silence..., a striving with God, of whom one makes demands, whom one importunes, whom one attacks constantly, whose silence and absence one would penetrate at all costs. It is a combat to oblige God to respond, to reveal himself

anew (156)." Such prayer is a "commitment on behalf of man" which "is decisively bound to the commitment with God (164)." Such prayer is "the ultimate act of hope" from which "all further radicalism, of behavior, of style of life and of action" comes (167,176).

Ellul's importance for post-Shoah Christian theology is linked to the feet that he is one of those rare Christian theologians who has allowed the Jewish experience of faith to speak to him and teach him. Ellul's theology echoes the wisdom of Judaism summarized so eloquently by Elie Wiesel: "Only the Jew knows that he may oppose God as long as he does so in defense of His creation." to be a Jew "means to serve God by espousing man's cause, to plead for man while recognizing his need of God (Wiesel, 6)."

Ellul's God is not a "Christian" God but the God of Israel, which is to say, the God of the whole human race. His God is the anarchist God of which Irving Greenberg speaks as the God who invites the contestation of all authority, sacred and secular, including his own, in defense of his creation. The difference between God (The Holy) and the idol (whether sacred or secular), is that idols will tolerate no dissent. There is a link between Ellul's ethic of audacity (apocalyptic hope) and anarchism, and his universal compassion manifest in his belief in universal salvation. His God is the God of the whole human race, of all those who are different and not just of those who are the same, the God who reveals his transcendence through the *otherness* of the stranger and the alien.

From Auschwitz to Hiroshima: The Demonic Autonomy of Technique

The path to Auschwitz and its consequences represent a severe challenge to the religious traditions of the West. To Christians, because of the complicity of Christianity in that anti-Judaic path renders its theological and ethical categories morally suspect, to Jews, because their victim status presses faith in the God of history and faith in human beings to the breaking point. But the path to Auschwitz, and from Auschwitz to Hiroshima, represents a challenge, equally severe, to the scientific and technical secular culture of the Enlightenment. We do not seem to have fared any better under a secular ethic than we did under a religious one. Indeed we have fared worse; genocide it seems is a unique product of the modern "secular" world and its "technically competent barbarians." As Franklin Littell has put it:

The same kind of "educated" technicians built Auschwitz and the antipersonnel weapons used in Vietnam... The technically competent barbarian is available to the highest bidder, be he communist or fascist or feudal despot or republican. The common mistake is to suppose this is solely a result of his avarice or unbridled ambition; it is aided and abetted by a system of education that has trained him to think in ways that eliminate questions of ultimate responsibility. Having eliminated God as an hypothesis,

he exercises godlike powers with pride rather than with fear and trembling. Unaware of himself as a person, finite and imperfect, he becomes, year by year, less a mechanic and more a machine - a machine which is still able to perform some complex services that are yet beyond the capacity of even the most advanced computers... The world of *techne* largely ignores the past in its devotion to present tasks... And the problems themselves are defined by an intellectual discourse that rules out the mysterious and transcendent... The definitions often lack aesthetic and spiritual quality and... the solutions are often morally outrageous - all of this was programmed in from the start... as a child of the Enlightenment (Littell, 13-15).

Auschwitz is the symbol of a demonic period in modem Western civilization in which the religious, political and technological developments converged to create a society whose primary purpose was the most efficient organization of an entire society for the purpose of exterminating all persons who were regarded as aliens and strangers to that society - especially the Jews.

Although they stand side by side as apocalyptic events unique to the modem period, Auschwitz and Hiroshima cannot be equated as historical events. Hiroshima parallels Auschwitz only in its consequences, not in its human intentionality Auschwitz expresses the linkage of the technological mythos to the intentionally demonic ethnocentric tribalism of the Nazis. Hiroshima represents the halting of a similar linkage of technology and demonic tribalism among the Japanese by a country, the United States, which for all its weaknesses was built on a tradition of welcoming all the tribes of the earth. Hiroshima stands as a warning, reminding us that if the Nazis or Japanese had had the bomb, demonic tribalism and genocide would have won the day and that victory would have meant the total destruction of the earth and all its tribes.

There is more to the link between Auschwitz and Hiroshima than sheer contemporaneity. This has become dear to me as I have studied the Post-Holocaust Jewish theologians. Again and again, in the same breath with ”Auschwitz” the name ”Hiroshima” keeps coming up. The link between Auschwitz and Hiroshima turns out to be an inner link demanded by the analysis of those who were, directly or indirectly, the victims of the Shoah. It is as if those who know something of the ”desolation” of Auschwitz recognize that in some sense they have a kinship with those who know the ”desolation” of Hiroshima. But also, more than once I have encountered an awareness of a logical as well as psychological link between the two - a link identified as the progressive unfolding of a technological civilization which no longer holds anything sacred, not even human life - nothing that is except the technical imperative: If it can be done it must be done. The death camps were technically feasible and they came to pass. The atom bomb was technically feasible and it came to pass. A final, total apocalyptic nuclear annihilation of the earth is technically feasible...

By comparison with the bomb, technical power at Auschwitz was still relatively inefficient and limited in scope and so capable of being demonically directed at targeted populations, such as Jews and Gypsies. But with the coming of the bomb, technical power burst the bounds of all limitations and has become completely autonomous,

it has outstripped human intentionality. If there is a next time after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it will not matter who the good guys and who the bad guys are. The threat of apocalypse which erupted at Auschwitz is no longer limited to the West Hiroshima symbolizes the globalization of the demonic.

The movement from Auschwitz to Hiroshima is psychological, logical and finally mythological. For Auschwitz and Hiroshima have assumed the mythological status of sacred events which orient human consciousness. They have become trans-historical and trans-cultural events which are shaping a public consciousness of our common humanity. The horrifying irony of this is that they are not manifestations of the divine but of the demonic and the common awareness they are creating is one structured by dread.

On July 16th 1945 at 5:30 a.m. the first atomic bomb exploded at a New Mexican desert site named Trinity. It lit up the sky "infinitely brighter than the sun" and one reporter thought of the Biblical phrase -"Let there be light." It was a "religious" response to the awesomeness of a new kind of power. But this experience of the "sacred" was no life giving experience. It was J. Robert Oppenheimer, the scientist who orchestrated the "Manhattan Project," who captured its meaning most accurately. He remembered the line from the Bhqgavad Gita, spoken by Krishna/Vishnu: "Now I Am Become Death, the Destroyer of Worlds." The technological utopianism of the secular city, aptly symbolized by "The Manhattan Project" revealed itself at Trinity to be headed toward an apocafyp-tic and suicidal destiny. The sacred power of the technological reality was unleashed in a "cloud of smoke and a pillar of fire" and the division of history into a new *before and after,* which began at Auschwitz, found its completion in the movement from Trinity to Hiroshima. On August 6th 1945 at 8:16 a.m., the bomb exploded over Hiroshima and the *millennium of utopia,* the millennium which gave rise to science, technology and the "myth of progress," came to a premature apocalyptic end.

It is as if in a moment of inverse enlightenment or revelation, the religious symbols of East and West clashed and exploded within the psyche of J. Robert Oppenheimer and he grasped the demonic inversion of the sacred. The symbolism of the Buddha's Enlightenment, the Biblical Exodus and the Resurrection have undergone a demonic inversion. "Trinity" no longer names the God of life but the place where planetary death was bom. Now when a commanding voice is heard from a burning fire it speaks not the language of being -1 Am Who Am - but the language of not-being -1 Am Become Death. Likewise, when the hibakusha (literally "explosion affected person") or survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki speak of themselves as *mugamuchu,* meaning "without self, without center," they speak not of the humanizing experience of liberation *(no-self)* which comes with Buddhist enlightenment but the experience of total "desolation" which comes with total immersion in the kingdom of death of which the survivors of Auschwitz, during the Shoah (i.e., time of desolation), were the first to speak.

The task of theology in our time, as Arthur Cohen suggested in his book *The Tremendum,* is to excavate the abyss of the demonic and build a bridge of transcendence

over it. That bridge, I am convinced, must be built on an ethic of audacity on behalf of the alien and the stranger. We need a common ethic to unite us as a global human community, one which can carry us beyond our common dread. Perhaps excavating the abyss will motivate us to build a bridge, one built by *passing* over-the abyss and into other religions and cultures in order to *come back* with new insight into ourselves and bur own culture.

Beyond Auschwitz and Hiroshima: Welcoming the Stranger

In such a context the dialogue between Christians and Jews in response to Auschwitz leads to the inclusion of Buddhists, as inevitably as Auschwitz leads to Hiroshima. For Buddhism is not only native to Hiroshima but also the other great tradition bound by an ethic of welcoming the stranger - i.e. the "outcaste." I am convinced that the movement from Auschwitz to Hiroshima provides a prophetic warning of what the future holds if we fail to create a cross-cultural public order which can find unity-in-diversity. The apocalyptic threat of our time is that we shall be swallowed up in the abyss of the demonic. Our utopian hope lies in *passing over* and *coming back*—in creating that new world where strangers are welcome and where bonds of cross-cultural understanding could alter our relation to the technical order and at the same time make total destruction of "the other" unthinkable. I believe such a world is possible, based on a new social ethic which can be structured cooperatively by Jews, Christians, Buddhists and other ("secular") a-theists - one which can have a transformative impact on the rest of the world.

After Auschwitz and Hiroshima, I am convinced, we need a new style of theology and ethics. We need a "decentered" or "alienated theology." Alienated theology, is theology done "as if one were a stranger to one's own tradition. It is my conviction that alienated theology is the appropriate mode for theology in an emerging world civilization - a civilization tottering in the balance between apocalypse and utopia. There are two ways to enter world history, according to the contemporary author, John Dunne, - you can be dragged in by way of world war or you can walk in by way of mutual understanding. By the first path global civilization emerges as a totalitarian project of dominance which risks a total atomic apocalypse. By the second path we prevent the first, creating global civilization through an expansion of our understanding of what it means to be human which occurs, as Dunne suggests, when we*pass over* to another's religion and culture and *come back* with new insight into our own (Dunne, ix-xiii).

Gandhi is an example - passing over to the *Sermon on the Mount* and coming back to the Hindu *Gita* to gain new insight into it as a scripture of non-violence. Gandhi never considered becoming a Christian but his Hinduism was radically altered by bis encounter with Christianity. One could say the same (inverting the directions) for Martin Luther King Jr., who was deeply influenced by Gandhi's understanding of non-violent resistance in the *Gita.* When we pass over (whether through travel, friendship or disciplined imagination) we become "strangers in a strange land" as well

as strangers to ourselves - seeing ourselves through the eyes of another. Assuming the perspective of a stranger is an occasion for insight and the sharing of insight. Such cross-cultural interactions build bridges of understanding and action between persons and cultures which make cooperation possible and conquest unnecessary. "Passing over" short circuits apocalyptic confrontation and inaugurates utopian new beginnings - new beginnings for the "post-modern" world of the coming 3rd millennium. Gandhi and King are symbols of a possible style for a post-modern alienated theology.

To be an *alien is* to be a stranger. To be *alienated* is to be a stranger to oneself. We live in a world of ideological conflict in which far too many individuals (whether theists or a-theists) practice a "centered theology" in which they are too sure who they are and what they must do. Such a world has far too many answers and not nearly enough questions and self-questioning. A world divided by its answers is headed for an inevitable apocalyptic destiny. But when we are willing to become strangers to ourselves (or when we unwillingly become so), new possibilities open up where before everything was closed and hopeless. My own conviction is that the *kairos* of our time is one which calls forth the badly neglected ethic of "welcoming the stranger" which underlies the biblical tradition and analogously "welcoming the outcaste" which underlies the Buddhist tradition. It is this care for the stranger and the outcaste which provides the critical norm or test of authentic transcendence as self-transcendence.

Centered theologies, whether sacred or secular, theist or a-theist, are ethnocentric theologies which can only tolerate the alien or *other,* if at all, as a potential candidate for conversion to *sameness.* Centered theologies are exercises in narcissism which inevitably lead down apocalyptic paths like those that led to Auschwitz and Hiroshima. Why? Because such theologies, whether civil or religious, sacred or secular, cannot permit there to be *others* in the world whose way of being might, by sheer contrast, cause self-doubt and self-questioning.

Alienated theology, however, understands doubt and selfquestioning as the essence of transcendence and therefore understands that only a faith which requires one to welcome the alien or stranger is truly a utopian faith open to transcendence. According to the Genesis story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1 -9), human beings sought to grasp transcendence through the ideology of a single language and a common technological project - building a tower to heaven. But God upset their efforts by confusing their tongues, so that they could not understand each other. They became strangers to one another and so could not complete their task. The popular interpretation of this story is that the confusion of tongues was a curse and a punishment for the human sin of pride. But I am convinced that is a serious misunderstanding of its meaning. I would suggest, rather, that human beings misunderstood where transcendence lay and God simply redirected them to the true experience of transcendence which can only occur when there are strangers to be welcomed into our lives.

To put it in terms closest to home for myself, as a Christian who seeks to comes to grips with Auschwitz in the light the history of Christian anti-Judaism, I cannot be a Christian except as I am prepared to welcome Jews into my life, understanding that

the very attempt to convert them would be to destroy the authenticity of my own faith by robbing me of the chance to welcome the stranger (the one who is different from me and a permanent witness to the Wholly Other in my life) who is given to me as an invitation to transcendence. For the literal meaning of "transcendence" is "to go beyond" - to go beyond my ego-centered, ethno-centered, religio-centered world to embrace that utopian world glimpsed at Pentecost, where each spoke in his or her own language and yet each is understood by all (Acts *2:*1-13). The tragedy of human existence revealed by Auschwitz and Hiroshima, is that we continue to misread our situation. Given the opportunity for transcendence, the opportunity to be carried beyond ourselves into a new global human community, we continue to insist on a "technological solution," a MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction) solution which at best leads to a global stalemate between cultures and at worst to an attempt at global conquest. In either case we place ourselves under the dark and threatening cloud of an atomic apocalypse which such a path must inevitably bring.

To speak personally as one living in an *age of alienation,* I used to think that the experience of alienation was a problem in need of resolution. I have come to see it rather as a promising opportunity, for when we have become strangers to ourselves we experience a new vulnerability and a new openness to the other - other persons, other ideas, other cultures and ways of life. To the degree that the secularization which accompanies technological civilization alienates us from our "sacred" traditions, it presents us with utopian possibilities. It also presents us with apocalyptic dangers. The greatest danger created by alienation seems to be that we shall get lost in a sea of relativism, of assuming one way is as good as another. That is just as destructive as those centered theologies which assume there is only one way. It is my conviction, however, that there is a path in between these extremes of reiativism and absolutism and that is the way of *passing over and coming back.* This path reveals that some ways are better than others. Those ways are marked by an openness to doubt and self-questioning and a genuine compassion for *the other* which leads to an ethic of audacity *(chutzpa)* on behalf of the alien and the stranger. These are authentic signs of encounter with the Holy.

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On Christians, Jews, and the Law

By Katharine Temple

This article has been extracted from a longer essay written for the feast of Epiphany in the January-February 1988 issue of *The Catholic Worker.*

More and more, I am distressed to encounter Christian teachers who, wittingly or unwittingly, seek to distance us from Judaism. For example I read articles in journals meant for people attracted to "peace and justice" concerns, claiming that Jesus did away with Mosaic Law in favor of something superior, namely, love; that He founded a new religion on a moral rather than an institutional basis; that, in cleansing the Temple, He wanted to abolish completely the purity laws; that He rescued us from patriarchal (and other) oppression in Jewish law; or that civil disobedience is rooted in Jesus' contempt for the same divine revelation, the Law of Moses. Apart from conjuring up the long, dark shadows of Christian anti-Semitism, this quick dismissal of the Law acts to deny the truth of Christianity as being grafted on to the rich root of the olive tree of Israel (Romans 11). As a people so grafted, Hebrew Scriptures are truly for Christians a thoroughgoing revelation *of* grace. (Saying so is not new, for the Church has always promulgated this as doctrine, although not always with clarity and conviction.) And at the heart of the Hebrew Bible - for Moses and all the other prophets and sages, and for the whole Jewish tradition, including Jesus of Nazareth - lies the Law.

Part of the difficulty, leaving aside anti-Semitism, seems to lie in the very word "law" as the translation for the Hebrew word *Torah.* For Christians, "law" brings with it images of dry legalism, devoid of mercy and compassion or freedom. In the matter of Biblical Law, however, these are misguided prejudices. Jews know the Torah given to Moses at Sinai to be God's gift to draw the people's lives into the fullness of His. Pinchas Lapide, an orthodox Jewish theologian who devotes much time to teaching Christians about the Bible, has written: "For Jews, the Torah is a gift of grace which flows from the love of God. Accordingly, to believe or not to believe is the free choice

of every individual. Certainly faithfulness to the Torah rests solely and completely on *emunah* - absolute, unquestioning trust in God which summons us to work as coworkers with God in the task of improving the world" (from *Paul, Rabbi and Apostle).* A single citation may well not convince Christians who are used to thinking of the Law as harsh and picayune and not needed for us. Nevertheless, the more one learns about Torah (or *halacha,* the way to walk, another Hebrew word for the Law) from those who embrace it, the less desire there is to scorn it.

Christian scholars could gain so much from the whole history of Jewish learning about Torah, but unfortunately, in many circles, its importance continues to be diminished. We are taught to read the Exodus story without following it through to Sinai, or to revere the prophets without heeding their call to return to the Law, or to study the New Testament in isolation from the Old "testament. It is little wonder that we find it hard to associate Jesus with His People, either historically or theologically.

When we do come to the New "testament, many people suggest that Jesus kept the Law when convenient, but broke it to "do his own thing" whenever it did not suit His higher purposes. I remember a paper given at a Jewish-Christian colloquium, discussing examples of the times Jesus supposedly broke the Law, and why. The intriguing part, for me, came when those examples were challenged - by the Jewish participants - not because of differences between Judaism and Christianity, but because of the lack of comprehension shown about the content of the Law. They claimed that none of the episodes under scrutiny undermined a view of Jesus as an observant Jew. Why should Christians find this conclusion surprising or unsettling? After all, St. Luke tells us that as a young man Jesus sat listening to the teachers and asking them questions, and amazed everyone with His understanding and answers (2:46-47). That is, He knew and lived by "Ibrah. From his detailed studies, Clemens Thoma, a noted Christian scholar, concludes: "Jesus, the so-called sovereign transgressor of the Law, does not exist!... He certainly did not practice a narrow-minded interpretation of it, but He also opposed all excesses. He wanted the Law to be understood in its most profound meaning and in its original context" (from/f *Christian Theology of Judaism).* Or, if we prefer to speak of the Christ of faith, why would the Word of God at Creation and at Sinai break His own commandments?

St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, is the one who tells us how we are to be joined with the root of Israel, and yet he is notoriously perplexing ... and has been presented as the great rejecter of the Law. In fact, many Christians, who otherwise have little use for him, rejoice in the thought that St. Paul announced the abolition of the Law. How could it be, though , that this Pharisee and student of the famous Gamaliel slighted the Law the way we do? Do we know what Jewish sources understood about the Messianic Times and what would happen to Mosaic Law then? Or how he read his Hebrew Bible and the rabbinic commentators? Once more, Pinchas Lapide can help shed some light.

"When Paul says that neither Jew nor Gentile can achieve salvation by fulfilling the commandments or performing the deeds of Torah, he is kicking doors that are already open to all Biblically knowledgeable Jews. It was self-evident to all masters of

the Thl-mud [the authoritative Jewish interpretation] that salvation or participation in the coming world, as it is called in Hebrew, could be attained only through God's gracious love."

"If, in addition, we note that this same Paul includes *nomothesia,* 'the giving of the Law,' among the gracious gifts of God that belong to Israel even after Easter, that the word telos can mean 'goal.' 'conclusion,' 'completion,' 'fulfillment,' or even the 'final part' of a thing, not just 'end'; that the apostle twice indicates that Jesus lived in accordance with the Law throughout his earthly life (Rom. 15:8 and Gal. 4:4); that Paul prescribes a new *halacha* for his young congregations, containing dozens of statutes, regulations, prohibitions and requirements, some of which seem to be even stricter than the unascetic ordinances of orthodox rabbis - then it is no longer passible to continue talking about the so-called Pauline termination of the Law or its validity."

If such a reading of St Paul is possible for a Jew who has every reason to suspect the Church, and for whom Christianity is a heresy unnecessary for the vitality of Judaism, can we not explore with him the possibilities for ending the ignorance and distrust that keeps us from our roots?

As may be gathered from these quotes from Pinchas Lapide and Clemens Thoma, there exist good historical studies to help us begin again and which can serve to counter our stereotypes. As they also show us, however, the question of our roots, our source in the Bible, our salvation coming from the Jews, is not merely an historical study. Beyond looking to the past, we also must recognize why certain books have been preserved as Scripture to reveal to us now the living Word of God.

All these questions arise when we read passages about Jesus and the Pharisees. First of all, it is impossible for us to understand these texts without knowing something about the historical group of people known as "the Pharisees." One of the best essays is "The Pharisees" by Leo Baeck (the chief rabbi in Germany during World ^hr II). According to him, they were the reformers, the "progressives" who brought the Law to the people, who made possible their survival after the destruction of the 'femple, and who founded Judaism as it is practiced today. From this perspective, many historians think the rabbi Jesus was Himself a Pharisee and the confrontations were inter-Pharisee debates. This portrayal is a far cry from the "Pharisaical" self-righteous hypocrite that has been handed down to us. The Jewish tradition of the Pharisees seems quite unknown to the many preachers who erroneously contrast "their" religion of hang-ups, petty parochialism, bigotry and legalism, with "ours" of trust, universalism, love and authentic faith. Unbiased historical studies can help influence the way we reckon with what Jesus was saying.

It would still be too easy, though, to keep the Pharisees as historical figures, unrelated to us, to make the Pharisees into our scapegoat, just as we have treated the whole Jewish people who have followed in the Pharisees' footsteps. This is not to dull the fact that these are judgment passages, but to suggest that revelation, unlike history, is spoken to us and not about other people in faraway places. In other words, "the hard sayings of Jesus" fall on us. The verses themselves ask for this kind of reading

for most of the Pharisee conversations begin with "You." Our tendency to shift away from ourselves to "them" is realty the attempt to reject Jesus as our Lord by removing ourselves from His presence, and putting the blame elsewhere...

The Utopian Theology of Gabriel Vahanian

Gabriel Vahanian's "Utopian Connection"
Speaking of God, the Human and Technology
by Darrell J. Fasching

All too typically contemporary theological reflection on technology seems awkward and inept, as if we are stumbling around looking for a handle on this phenomenon - which, of course, is precisely our situation. For the most part, theology is treated as one world of discourse and technology another. In Gabriel Albanian's view, a theology which does not speak the discourse of its culture cannot speak to that culture. As a theological ethicist or theologian of culture he understands his task to be that of appropriating and transforming the linguistic universe of our technical civilization. The power of his work lies in his ability to locate the linguistic connection between the biblical tradition and our technological civilization.

"No epithet better qualifies this post-Christian age," Vahanian argued in his 1961 book, *The Death of God,* "than, 'technological'" (N.Y.: Braziller, 1961, 176-177). Long before *Time* magazine turned "the Death of God" into a media event, Albanian bad used that phrase to suggest that technological civilization was radically altering the experiential-linguistic texture of human existence, creating a "post-Christian civilization" typified by "a cultural incapacity for God." In a technological age the Medieval language of "supematuralism" no longer speaks the reality of God. The problem, he argued, is not so much secularization as it is a religiosity disengaged from the world. Christian faith has been reduced to a religiosity living in a separate world, focused on changing worlds rather than changing the world. That technological world which Albanian first analyzed almost three decades ago was (and still is) a world desperately in need of "the spirit of utopian and radical Christian adventurousness,... a radical rupture with the past and a bold new beginning (1961,188)."

That is not a bad description of the theological enterprise which Albanian has been engaged in since then - "a radical rupture with the past and a bold new beginning." A world which has no other language of faith than that of another world (in this case the language of Medieval supematuralism) is a world which has no capacity to speak of the living God and so ends up endlessly *Waiting for Godot.* A world which has no contemporaneous language to speak of God has no God to speak of. For the living God is not only the God of creation, the God who *speaks us,* but equally the God of incarnation, the God whom *we speak (Dieu anonyme,* Paris: Descite de Brouwer, 1989). If the God of creation is not first of all the God of incarnation, if the word does not

become flesh through the linguistic structures and sensibilities of our contemporary existence, then "God is dead."

The "Death of God" as a cultural event suggested that with ' the emergence of a technological civilization human existence bad undergone a fundamental mutation. The sacred bad migrated, as Albanian put it in *God and Utopia* (N.Y.: Seabury, 1977), from nature to technology. The theological task is to be as faithful to the linguisticality of our world as the Medievals were to theirs. Understanding themselves to part of the sacred order of nature, transcendence was expressed .in terms of the supernatural. Today we understand ourselves in terms of technology and transcendence will have to be expressed in terms of its utopianism. We no longer think of ourselves as living within a fixed order of nature and subject to an unchangeable human nature. We now seek not only to remake our world but also our selves. "Existentialism," Vahanian argued already in *The Death of God,* "is related to Christianity in the same way as technology is. Neither is thinkable without the Christian culture which originated them (1961,211)." The technological self is no robot, says Albanian, but the self which makes itself *(God and Utopia,* 1977, 136). And this same existential self-understanding pervades our managerial attitude toward our social structures. A technological civilization has an inherent utopian propensity, an inherent openness to transformation which can only be explained by understanding it as a child of biblical eschatology.

If ours is a Post-Christian age it is so because unlike the Middle Ages which were still shaped by pre-Christian Classical world views, the technological structures of our world are a direct product of Ute impact of biblical faith upon Western culture. The irony is that, because of this, the Gospel is more directly attuned to a technological civilization than it ever was to the Medieval mythological and metaphysical world view of "Christendom" - so much so that to speak of God in terms of "nature" and "super-nature" in our world seems foreign and unintelligible.

Every myth of ages past, Albanian argues, was a "technique of the human" which, while promoting human identity as "human nature," ended up settling humans, not in nature but in culture (1977, 86). Culture is the uniquely human realm, the artificial realm or "second nature" we create through our capacity for speech. As such, culture is inherently technological. Entranced by myth, we once thought of ourselves as part of the order of nature. But when technological consciousness demythologized these myths we became aware that we dwell not in nature but in language - the realm of culture. We have come to realize that our understandings of nature are themselves cultural products. To be a linguistic creature rather than a creature of "nature" is to be an eschatological-utopian creature. For language provides no permanent place to dwell but rather demands that we become what we are not. Both personal identity and the structure of society is rendered radically open. Modem technological civilization is uniquely and selfconsciously a child of the word.

For Albanian, "God," our "humanness" and "technology" are related, not extrinsically but intrinsically. They converge in our utopian capacity for culture, that is, our capacity for speech. Theology in a technological civilization cannot be "natural theology" but

only a "theology of culture" - a theology of the word. Natural law and natural theology were always an ill-fitting graft onto a biblical faith which insisted that we are created in the image of a God without image, a God Wholly Other than nature and known only through speech. Human identity, understood "in the image" of such a God, revealed not some ill fated human nature doomed to death but a utopian destiny of new creation. If there is a lesson to be learned from the eschatological utopianism of biblical faith, it is that *a rose by any other name* is not really a rose. The difference between "nature" and "creation," or "history" and "incarnation," is the difference between fate and utopian destiny - between being trapped in "this body of death" or being "alive in Christ." Everything depends on the word - the Christie event where tbe otherness of God and our humanity converge as utopian event of the human. For it is "neither God nor man but Christ who is the measure of all things" (1989,61). This convergence can only occur in the body, (physical and social/ecclesial) wbere the word is made flesh through the techniques of the human. Wherever the word is so embodied, the world is transformed to disclose the pleromatic fullness of its utopian destiny as tbe reign of God draws near and all things are made new.

Christ, says Vahanian is not "some leftover Jesus" to be retrieved from the past and faith is no nostalgia for Jesus but rather "hope in Christ" (1977, 73 -75). Faith has to do with the coming of the human and Jesus confirms that there is no way to God except through the humanity of every person who comes to us as a stranger, as "God anonymous" (1989,174-177), even as the church has less to do with tbe creation of some exclusionary community than with "communion" with the stranger through whom God's otherness invites us to share in the pleromatic fullness of a new creation. "I have no other God," says S^hanian, "than the God of others" (1989,96).

God, says Vahanian, is not "tbe condition of (i.e., does not explain) our humanity any more than our humanity is "the condition of" technology. On the contrary, our humanity "is the condition of God." Apart from tbe human there is no God to speak of and apart from technology there is no human to speak of. Apart from technology, the human as utopianism of the body cannot come into being. We are not first human and then express our humanity through technology any more than we are first human and then express our humanity through speech. On tbe contrary, "In the beginning was the Word." First we are given the gift of speech and through speech the possibility of our humanity is given to us (1989,143). As the embodiment of our capacity for speech technology makes it possible for us to become what we are not The human is not a fact to be accounted for but a possibility ever and again to be realized (i.e., "made flesh"). As children of the word created in the image of the God without image *we are not what we are and are what we are not* (1977,137).

The utopian connection, then, between God, our humanity and technology is the word, our capacity for speech. But we must not think that Wianian is collapsing the divine into the human and its technological realization. Nor should one think that he is proposing tbe collapse of tbe kingdom of God into Utopia. On the contrary, he insists: "Utopia is not the kingdom. Utopia is to the kingdom as nature is to creation, or as

history is to redemption, or simply as the flesh is to the spirit. If there is a relationship between them it is one of radical otherness" (1977,137). It is the task of the chu rch, as an *other world* within (not "another" world beyond) this world, to bring about a cultural revolution through a prior eccles-sial revolution.

Without the reign of God embodied in the social structures of our technological civilization, its utopianism will give way to the technical imperative (i.e., "if it's possible it's necessary" or "what can be done must be done") as our fate, putting an end to the utopianism of the human. Apart from the reign of God, the possible becomes reduced to the actual even as creation is reduce to nature and eschatology to history. The reign of God makes the impossible possible. "Created in the image of God, [tbe hu]man begins where all techniques of the human leave off, wbere they can only go "too far,"... where for want of the kingdom utopia ends" (1977, 141). Only a church which has re-formed itself as utopian embodiment of the word for a technological civilization, embracing "the words and concepts proper to *homo tech-nicus"(1989,167),* can serve as tbe leaven of a cultural revolution which would enable the world to realize its utopian possibilities - making all things new and all things possible.

Theology of Culture: Tillich's Quest for a New Religious Paradigm

by Gabriel Vahanian
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for Jean-Pierre Richter

Whatever reasons are adduced by Paul Tillich when he claims that, under the circumstances of today's human cultural predicament, traditional theological ethics should give way to a theology of culture, one thing clearly stands out: the task at hand can be neither defined nor discharged properly unless it rests, firmly, on a religious analysis of culture. Immediately, however, another thing makes itself felt and grows and looms even larger than the former it refers to what I shall call Tillich's quest for a new religious paradigm.

In *Theology of Culture* Tillich writes that if "religion is being ultimately concerned about that which is and should be our ultimate concern, [then] faith is the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, and God is the name for the content of this concern."[4] But no sooner has he made this statement than he draws our attention to the fact that with it he points to "an existential, not a theoretical, understanding of religion."[5] But is that all there is to it? Nor would the question arise if, in the same paragraph, he did not invite it by admitting that "such a conception of religion

[4] *Theology of Culture,* Oxford University Press, New York 1959, p. 40.
[5] *Ibid.*

has little in common with the description of religion as the belief in the existence of a highest being called God. and the theoretical and practical consequences of such a belief."[6] Having thus raised at least a question about the assumption that religion must be intrinsically tied up with a substantialist ontology, he ads, similarly, that another and for us equally significant consequence of "the existential conception of religion is the disappearance of the gap between the sacred and secular realm."[7] And yet, just as he retracts himself with respect to God as Being-itself, so also he will not really go so far as to drive a wedge between religion and the sacred much less discard that other, equally rampant, assumption according to which religion must intrinsically be tied up with the sacred.

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Casual as they may be, these statements bring nonetheless into focus what, to my mind, is really at stake in Tillich's shift from theological ethics to theology of culture.

To begin with, take the last words of the last quotation. Considering that normally what goes together with the sacred is the profane while religious is what goes together with secular, one is bound to wonder whether the disappearance of the gap is, for Tillich, the result of a process of desacralization or the result of a process of secularization. For reasons that will become clear as we go on, Tillich does not mean the former. But he really does not mean the latter either, since secularization - of which he is critical, anyway - at worst would amount to a displacement of the sacred, not its loss. And if so, there could be no disappearance of any kind of gap, either. Or else, it must result from a process of desacralization - a process which, precisely, consists, not in obliterating religion, but in providing it with another ground than the sacred. Indeed, unless the gap to which Tillich consistently refers has disappeared, what would be the point of shifting from theological ethics to theology of culture? Given the ambiguities of Tillich's thought or his *existential* ambivalence about the secular (or, for that matter, the sacred), the shift, once it is property analyzed, should bring into evidence another yet equally exciting aspect of his thought, with consequences affecting not only ethics and society but also the language of faith and theology properly speaking. Meanwhile, the real nature of the shift and its shortcomings in Tillich's own handling of it are brought to light by raising a simple question. It can be phrased as follows: Obviously honing in on or beckoned by a new religious paradigm, what is it that prevents Tillich from ultimately giving up ontotheology, and the idea of God as Being-itself, for the sake of a theology rooted in the Word - instead of merely using words? That is, to a theology attuned to the verbal condition of the human. What is it that keeps his thought firmly oriented to the sacred instead of prodding it into a theology of utopia?

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[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid, p. 41.*

To be sure, what Tillich was concerned with, on his own admission, was a *religious* analysis of culture. But, given the previous remarks, it could well be that this first step was also the wrong one. Considering the vast upheavals generated by the successive scientific and technological revolution and their urgent implications for human self-understanding; considering in other (or, should I say, in his own) words, the cultural shaking of our religious foundations, should he not have instead been concerned with a cultural analysis of religion? Indeed, if language is "the basic cultural creation" and, Tillich goes on, of moreover, "every religious act, not only in organized religion, but also in the most intimate movement of the soul [i.e., not only in theoretical but also in existential religion] is culturally formed," in these times of spiritual crisis and shifting religious styles - driving, for example, Protestants and Catholics into having nowadays more in common than they do with their respective sixteenth century ancestors - would a cultural analysis of religion not have provided him with a better and more pertinent theological stance? Much as Tillich protests against ascribing religion to a "special realm" alongside a secular one, does he not himself consolidate such a cleavage even when he defines religion as "the substance of culture" and culture as "the form of religion"?[8] Inevitably, a definition of this type is bound to foster one kind of dualism or another, if it does not simply perpetuate a rather traditional, dichotomous understanding of reality.

Tillich's protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, this impression is not quite alleviated by statements to the effect that "the religious and the secular are not separated realms:" they are "within each other."[9] Such statements, however, are immediately counterbalanced if not neutralized by the rather telling admission that "this is not the way things actually are."[10] Actually, each realm tries or tends to dominate the other, even as, Tillich claims, on another, existential level, each of us drifts into estrangement or is responsive to both acceptance by God and self-acceptance.

Am I then still suggesting that for all practical purposes Tillich's understanding of the relation between religion and culture is grounded in the sacred? I am, in spite of the fact that he defines the sacred as a passion for the secular. Am I equally suggesting that his understanding of the religious phenomenon and of Christianity in particular is one that is not so much grounded in "salvation" as one that reduces the Christian faith to a religion of salvation? I am once again, and again in spite of the fact that even for Tillich "salvation," "saving," and "savior" are words that need to "be saved themselves."[11] They are words whose efficacy has consistently lost to the "saving power of the technical control of nature," while at the same time the cure of souls is itself being practiced with a far "greater consciousness of the real meaning of grace" by depth psychology.

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[8] *Ibid, p. 42.*
[9] *Ibid, p. 41.*
[10] *Ibid*
[11] "Salvation," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* LVII(1963) 1, p. 4 & 7.

In a word, Tillich's reluctance to get rid of *being* in talking about God is in turn explained by his reluctance to get rid of the sacred. Interestingly, this twofold reluctance is accompanied by an even more significant acknowledgement, namely: both religion and culture are funded by language. True enough, what Tillich means by language is nothing more than a symbolic order and its tradition. And, although as an order this order is less and less conspicuous today for its adhering to the so-called vertical dimension rather than to the horizontal one, still it is thoroughly tangled with the sacred of which it remains captive instead of being pegged on utopia. Mistaking optimistic progressivism for "hope against hope," the utopian hope of which at times American civilization was only able to reflect distorted image, Tillich points out that religion "had nearly forgottet^the religious reservation, the vertical line, and had dedicated its-fagee to the religious obligation, the horizontal line alone. It had consecrated progressivistic utopianism instead of judging and transcending it."[12] What he does not realize, however, is that religiotrVas been undergoing a basic shift: in fact, if not yet theoretically it is no longer tied up with the sacred. And Tillich has no conception of such a radical mutation of the religious experience. Inadvertently or not, he then writes: "The original terminology of scriptures and of the liturgies of the Ancient Church cannot be replaced. Mankind has archetypal words."[13]

As is well known, Paul Tillich was by and large rather critical of utopia. He sees it as the ultimate sanction of secularism if not its final degeneration. No wonder he did not approve of Gogarten's overall vision *afjS£kularisiening.* Yet he should not be rebuked for that. And he wS®d not be altogether wrong if his own alternate concept of apologetics had been free of all suspicion. Indeed, utopia and the sacred do not quite mix. As Gilles Lapouge puts it, utopia is not pr^Stibus to the sacred.[14]

And no Ibtfger can the question be eluded, either. Something prevents Tillich from identifying the religious dimension with the spirit of utopia. Why? In spite of the entire thrust of his thought, what is it that, for example, drives him to contend that "no church is possible without a sacramental representation of the Sacred"?[15] Or does Tillich manage to overlook the fact that this kind of claim is scarcely possible without the prior confusion of the sacred and the holy, of sacralization and hallowing? Surely, there must be another explanation.

At this point, it seems obvious to me that Tillich was groping for a new religious paradigm. The general trend of his thought is studied with irrefragable indications of such a quest. To wit, the incessant struggle against secularism as well as clericalism or ecclesiasticism he wages in the name of that most apt and most beautiful of all, the Protestant Principle – of which, apparently, even his own definition of religion and culture, if not his theology of culture, is to be deemed but a distorting echo. Quite correct when, by ecclesiasticism, he means otherworldliness, something seems

[12] *The Protestant Era,* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1948, p. 190.
[13] *Auf der Grenze* Evangelisches Verlagswerk, Stuttgart 1962, p. 47.
[14] Gilles Lapouge, *Utopie et civilisations,* Flammarion, Paris 1978.
[15] *Auf der Grenze,* p. 52.

to go wrong when, by secularism, he means not only socialism but also the latter's utopianism or, more precisely, its immanentist utopianism. Not to mention the fact that it remains to be seen whether, of necessity, utopianism must be immanentist,

Tillich, easily presuming that secularization must lead to secularism and construing the secular in antinomy with the sacred, opts for and finds refuge in the bosom of the sacred even while claiming to be concerned with the unconditioned, the ultimate, albeit forgotten, the religious dimension.

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Still, it is no wonder that in spite of it all he has, in "Critique and Justification of Utopia," written pages hardly surpassable on the subject. From the start, he states, that "utopia is truth," and asking "Why is it truth?" answers: "because it expresses man's essence, the inner aim of his existence." "Utopia," Tillich insists, "shows what man is essentially and what he should have as telos of his existence.[16] Accordingly, Tillich points out," a socially defined utopia loses its truth if it does not at the same time fulfill the person, just as the individually defined utopia loses its truth if it does not at the same time bring fulfillment to society."[17]

However, the significant thing lies elsewhere. It lies in the fact that this truth of utopia seems itself inevitably bound to be checkmated by no less a utopian untruth: "Utopian is a judgment of the extreme sinfulness of the present or of a social group or people or religion and an attempt to lead out of this situation, but it does not say how this is possible if there is radical estrangement."[18]

We need not be surprised at Tillich's negative assessment of utopia being as strong as his positive assessment. He uses the same stratagem with respect to the church or religion in general, or with respect to culture. He remains consistent with the sacral presuppositions of his theological stance, globally considered, if not outright with the Protestant principle. Of the problem thus raised by utopia he sees no resolution except in terms of the *idea of the two orders,*[19] of the vertical and the horizontal or, do I dare add, of the sacred and the profane. Clearly, for Tillich onfy the Lutheran idea of the two orders - which I prefer to see as somewhat alien to my own unabashedly Calvinistic understanding of the Protestant principle - can prevent utopia from "freezing" into some *final solution* (with all this phrase connotes to our post-Auschwitz ears). Tillich does not, I am afraid, seem to allow for the possibility much less for the fact that utopia, if it aims at anything, aims precisely at no final solution of any kind. For him, what would and does ultimately confer finality, even "utopian finality to any place or time in history," is and has always been the sacred. No sooner has he acknowledged the spirit of utopia than he rejects its relevance unless it can be retrieved in the name of the

[16] Frank E. Manuel ed., *Utopias and Utopian Thought,* Beacon Press, Boston 1967, p. 296.
[17] *Ibid,* p. 297
[18] *Ibid,* p. 300.
[19] *Ibid,* p. 308.

sacred. Unexamined or inadvertent, such a position is all the more unexpected since Tillich himself concludes his own essay with these words which he himself underlined: "It is the spirit of utopia that conquers utopia." And who else but Tillich could say anything like that?

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If the religious task consists in changing the world rather than changing worlds, is there any conquest or, for that matter, any quest that is not fundamentally utopian? Only in this manner can the religious dimension be spared from becoming one dimension among others. Only in this manner can it perform as the leaven does in the dough, changing it into bread. By contrast with the sacred, the spirit of utopia implies in no way that the real world is somehow a place off limits; it is what is at stake in and through cultural revolutions that exhibit a religious vision and religious revolutions that likewise exhibit a cultural relevance. True enough, in Tillich's time, the need for either kind of revolution had, at bottom, been ideologically oriented, exclusive of any other consideration. Progressivistic or apocalyptic, demonic or catastrophic, it did nevertheless reflect something - though not always the best — of the deeper revolution that had been and still is affecting us all both religiously and culturally, the technological revolution.

Of this technological revolution, surely, Paul Tillich grasps the hitherto unexpected, unfathomed meaning. The desert can be "tamed" into a garden, and the wilderness, both inward, psychological, and outward, physical, can be turned into paradise. Which, of course, does not mean that the converse cannot equally happen, and technology unleash demonic forces yet unsuspected by our natural, all too natural, inclination to evil. Not that this would mean the ultimate surrender of nature to technology and its alleged inherent madness, its congenital incapacity for coherence. It could, on the contrary, mean the surrender of technology to nature, albeit through human nature.

To conceive of technology as the ultimate negation of nature amounts to overlooking its real meaning, to begin with, technology has made us more conscious of nature than we have ever been so far. Technology is the spirit of nature conquering nature. And to it, an its implications, Tillich is, no doubt, most sensitive.

So sensitive, indeed, that he feels the need for a new religious paradigm - a utopian paradigm of religion in lieu of the sacral paradigm bequeathed by the Western tradition. A tradition, however, of whose language, precisely, Tillich does not simultaneously feel the need to be freed. And it is this language which holds Tillich's thought firmly grounded in the sacral discourse of on-totheology and withholds it from the spirit of utopia. But it is a language that defeats itself: pervading everything from birth to death, geared to life after death, it shies away from life in spite of death, the life over which death itself can win no victory - no final victory.

Not without some irony, Paul Tillich's ashes were scattered in the sky over and above the memorial garden designed in his honor at New Harmony, a town founded

by Robert Owen and his utopian community, a landmark in the conquest of utopia by the spirit of utopia.

Notes on the Catholic Church and Technology

by Sergio Silva G., ss.cc.

Sergio Silva is a priest of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart and Professor of Theology as the Catholic University of Chile. Recently he spent a week in residence as a visiting scholar at the Science, Technology, Society Program of Pennsylvania State University. In the future he will be collaborating with Carl Mitcham and Jim Grote in the development of more bibliographic documentation concerning theological reflection on technology, especially in Latin America.

These notes are based on my book (written with the collaboration of Pedro Boccardo) *La idea de la ticnica modema en el Magisterio de la Iglesia, desde Pio XII hasta Juan Pablo II* (1985) *(The Idea of Modem Technology in the Magisterium of the Church from Pius XII to John Paul II* [1985]), published in *Anales de la Facultad de Teologla* 38, 1987, Cuademo 2, Santiago de Chile, Pontificia Universidad Catdlica de Chile, 1989,166 pages. — S.S.

What contemporary Popes and the Second Vatican Council have said about technology reflects the thinking of the Church. Not that in the Catholic Church and in her theology there are no differences of opinion, but on this subject Popes and Council do not go beyond the Church.

To write the book I read and analyzed all that the Popes and the Council have said on technology. It should be immediately noted that Popes and Council seldom reflect explicitly about technology; their statements are usually indirect, apropos other subjects, and in most cases are not in the Encyclicals (letters in which the Pope engages his teaching authority at the utmost, without being infallible), but in occasional speeches to various groups, especially at the Wednesday open audiences. I have collected all such statements (or so I hope) and have tried to organize them systematically.

I have found 409 relevant documents. From Pius XII (1939-1958), 98; from John XXIII (1958-1963), 28; from the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), 8; from Paul VI, 98; and from John Paul II (1978 till 1985), 177.

I.

My main conclusion is that the Popes and the Second Vatican Council have (with some subtle but significant shifts between them) fundamentally the same attitude toward modern technology, an attitude that can be summarized as follows:

1. The documents stress the importance of modern technology as one factor that contributes to the shaping of modem society and its culture.

2. When they come to evaluate modem technology, their statements are of the form "Yes, but." Yes: they affirm technology in itself, that is, they believe that the human ability to know and to dominate nature has been created by God, so that in this abstract and general sense, technology is God's gift. But: this means that contemporary technology is not always and equally acceptable.

Repeatedly, papal documents refer, on three levels, to the ambiguity of modem technology. First, the forces controlled by technology can be used for good or bad, to support life or to sow death. There is, therefore, fundamentally an ambiguity of humanity, wounded by sin.

Second, modern technology' involves a serious threat to the human spirit. This threat is twofold. On the one hand, there is the issue of method: the method of modern science is legitimate when it is a question of knowing the natural world, but it becomes illegitimate when applied - as the only valid method - to human beings and their works. On the other hand, the problem is cultural: contemporary Western culture is more and more a scientific-technological culture; that is, the ultimate values are the objectivity of modern science and the efficiency of modem technology. But these values tend to destroy the humanness of humanity.

Last, but not least, the indefinitely growing power that modern technology puts in the hands of this wounded humankind – its limitlessness – gives to the problem of ambiguity a new dimension and makes it qualitatively different. On the one hand, to say it simply, ambiguity is of a different order when it is concerned with the ability to kill a few people or to destroy all life on our planet. On the other hand (and this is more decisive), there is the difficulty of controlling and dominating this technical development and all its effects in the life of society and of individuals.

The papal documents stress four areas in which this difficulty of controlling technology is most obvious: environmental pollution, the destruction of cultures among underdeveloped peoples, damage to the inner life (self-consciousness, awareness, contemplative life), and the triumph of the scientific-technical positivist ideology.

II.

After this brief summary, it is helpful to ask: What is specifically theological in these statements about technology? What do they contribute (if anything) to a philosophy of technology? There are at least two specifically theological points in the documents analyzed.

1. The first is that technology is God's gift to humankind. This point can be regarded as a purely formal one, only necessary in the ecclesiastical language game. But it is accompanied by a more global affirmation that the earth (the object of technological manipulation and transformation) belongs to God, and that he has given it in stewardship to human beings.

These statements can make a twofold contribution to the philosophy of technology. On the one hand, a radical denial of technology is excluded, because as an ability

of human nature it is God's gift. Yet, on the other hand, every concrete historical technology, including our modem scientifically based technology, must be criticized because it is not obvious that it respects the earth as the creation of God.

2. The second theological affirmation is that the problems with technology are rooted in ambiguities that derive ultimately from sin. Given that sin can be defeated only by Christ, and that his victory shall encompass the whole world only at his second coming, technology, in the light of Christian faith, will always remain, now and in every imaginable historical future, ambiguous.

From here we can conclude that Christians must undertake the effort and the struggle to transform modem technology, so as to deliver it of its bad aspects, because Christians must struggle against sin in all its forms. This must not be done with a utopian attitude, however, as if a perfect technology were possible. A moderate attitude is the only one that can help us to improve modem technology.

III.

One can, however, go beyond the teaching explicitly contained in the papal documents. If the Popes and the Council were to view technology as a reified anthropology, as made in the image of humanity that prevails in modem culture, then it could be argued that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of Christian faith, as the criterion of humanness, provides a standard for criticizing technology. If technology is to reify a "good" anthropology, it must be pursued in the light of the human personality of Jesus, of his kind of relations with nature and with human beings.

Finally, there are implications of the fundamental option for the poor made by the Catholic Church in Latin America, since the Conventions of Bishops in Medellin, Colombia (1968), and Puebla de los Angeles, Mexico (1979). This option is not made by the Church autonomously. It is the option of the God of Jesus himself, who is revealed in the Scriptures (and in the lives of his saints throughout the ages) as be who loves with special care and tenderness those of his creatures who have their lives unjustly threatened. This is what happens today with the poor in the Third and Fourth Worlds, and with nature. The teaching of the Church is therefore that technology ought to be used not to promote but to protect against such unjust threats.

Article Responses

The Importance of Eschatology for Ellul's Ethics and Soteriology: A Response to Darrell Fasching

By Ken Morris

Dan Clendenin has strongly criticized Jacques Ellul for his affirmation of universal salvation. Darrell Fasching's position paper on "The Ethical Importance of Universal Salvation" took Dan Clendenin to task over his failure to recognize universal salvation as an integral part of Ellul's ethic of freedom, yet it must be pointed out that Ellul himself has said that one need not accept bis universalism along with the main body of bis approach to ethics.[1] Even though Fasching has made a helpful critique of Clendenin's analysis, he has failed to uncover the root of both Ellul's optimistic soteriology and his ethics. In order to understand, and indeed, not be distracted by Ellul's affirmation of universal salvation, we must grasp the centrality of Biblical eschatology to Ellul's thought We must understand what Ellul means by "the presence of the Kingdom," an apt title for his seminal work.

Fasching sees universal salvation as "a necessary precondition for the ethic of freedom Ellul develops precisely to protest the collectivization of human behavior in a technology society." He uses the theologies of John Howard Yoder and Juan Luis Segundo to argue that universalism, by undermining the theological rationale and ethical motivation which have historically promoted Christianity as a collectivizing religion, serves to free up the church from its worries about converting the world and "rechannel(s) the energy of Christians in the direction which is most needed in our time, the ethical direction." Fasching draws on the assertion shared by Yoder and Segundo that the Gospel was betrayed when the church came to view its message as something everyone had to accept in order to be saved. The immediate result of this assumption was that the boundaries of salvation got drawn (and redrawn) in such a way that the greatest possible number of people could be included. Christianity abandoned its "ethic of discipleship" for an ethic of "Christian civilization." This shift failed to preserve the central biblical perspective of election as a call to vocation, and, instead promoted election as a special privilege. But the greatest significance of this move was that the emphasis in theology was shifted off of discipleship and onto salvation. Central to this

[1] David W.Gill, cd., unpublished interview with Ellul, Bordeaux, France (July 1982).

shift was the definition of the boundaries of salvation *according to,* and *for the sake of,* human understanding.

While it is true that the contemporary church, especially the conservative wing, has a preoccupation with personal, future salvation, and while it is also true that an affirmation of universal salvation effectively undermines this emphasis on soteriology, it does not necessarily follow that Ellul's universalism and his ethics of freedom are inseparable. Both Ellul's ethics of freedom and his soteriology are rooted in his eschatology. One must understand this if one is not to be distracted by his universalism.

Ellul claims that Romans 8, which he feels is a fundamentally universaiistic proclamation, has indirectly inspired all the research and writing he has done over the last fifty years.[2] A specific reading of Romans 8 was the final stage in what Ellul elusively refers to as "a very brutal and very sudden conversion to faith in Jesus Christ."[3] He identifies three essential and interdependent themes in Romans 8: the salvation of the world, the suffering of the present time, and freedom. These three themes became the basis of all of his life's study and proclamation.

According to Ellul's exegesis of Romans 8, every individual is in solidarity with the whole of creation: "The creation's suffering, (Paul) tells us, arises out of human sin - out of my sin." Therefore, if one person can be saved out of their sin, then the whole creation is concerned. "I can't be liberated or emancipated by myself... All creation - humans, animals, things - all are promised salvation, reconciliation, new birth, new creation."

The second theme in Romans 8 is the suffering of the present time. These sufferings are the inevitable subjection to "the law of sin and death" (8:2) which Ellul understands as bondage, obligation, fatality and biological, cultural, social, economic and political conditioning. The work of God in Jesus Christ ruptures these inescapable necessities by introducing hope. Hope, central to Ellul's theology, is defined as the immediate expression of the eschatological and freedom is the ethical expression of hope.[4]

Freedom from necessity and fate is only possible in "the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ." Not only have we all been set free, all creation will be set free. There is a Now of that liberation as well as a Not Yet. Salvation is "a liberation that puts me on the path of freedom." In Ellul's personal discipleship under Christ both Christian hope, which is expressed in his ethics of freedom, and universal salvation are rooted in the Eschaton. "I go through all the miseries of the world carried by this hope, writes Ellul, "because I know that both those who know of it and those who don't are walking together to meet their Lord and Savior."[5]

Given the historically soteriologicai focus of Christian theology, it is understandable that Fasching would argue for a direct connection between Ellul's theology and ethics.

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[2] Ellul, "How I Discovered Hope," *The Other Side* (March 1980), p. 31.

[3] Ellul, *Perspectives on Our Age* (New York: Seabury, 1971), p. 14. [4] Ellul, *Hope in Time of Abandonment (New York: Seabury,* 1971), p. 239.

[4] Ibid., p. 31.

[5] Gill, Unpublished interview with Ellul (July 1982)

Both Clendenin and Fasching grasp the significance of Ellul's eschatological approach to theology and ethics, the same eschatological approach which gave rise to his universalism, but neither has stepped back far enough from the context of their thinking to recognize the effect that this traditional preoccupation with soteriology has had on their own theologies. For that matter, neither has ElluL

Clendenin betrays his preoccupation with soterioiogy by choosing this area to mount "one of his most devastating critiques of ElluL" Fasching is correct in questioning the consistency of Clendenin's stance that adopts the ethics of freedom that are generated by Ellul's eschatology yet rejects the soteriology that issues from the same. Even so, Fasching falls short of ridding himself of a soteriologicai tendency by affirming, after ElluL that in the apocalyptic/eschatological resolution of the historical dialectic between sacred and profane *all* persons are saved. The emphasis is still on salvation, in Fasching's case it is simply all inclusive.

One of Clendenin's critiques of Ellul's universalism is that it fails to extend his dialectic beyond history. Fasching is correct in his assertion that this criticism is groundless since Ellul clearly maintains that the Biblical dialectic is eschatological and thus limited to history. But regardless of whether or not this tension, which centers on the soteriological question, is resolved at the Eschaton, an affirmation of universal salvation in the midst of history allows the dialectical tension to collapse. On the whole, however, Ellul grapples with this soteriological tension in a consistent manner, and even when he allows it to collapse at the times he affirms universal salvation he reveals that he is not entirely comfortable in so doing, adding," I often teach in sermons and public Bible studies, but I never teach universalism. I do believe it, I attest to what I believe, I witness to it, but I don't teach it."[6] To affirm universalism as true, yet to refuse to teach it, is more than simply a reluctance to be identified as a universalist. This hints at the dialectical tension of a soterioiogy rooted in eschatology. Geoffrey Bromiley picks up on this soteriological tension when he observes that Ellul's position strives to avoid "either an automatic salvation on the one side or a salvation dependent on giving oneself in faith to Christ on the other."[7] A main theme in *The Meaning of the City* is that God's characteristic love takes into account human free will, all human intentions, even if they are, in fact, revolts against God, and transforms them as material for the New Creation. Ellul recognizes that what he is contending is prone to misuse. The temptation inherent in this theological position of eschatological appropriation of everything and everyone is to give ourselves over to our selfish desires while counting on God's pardon. But he argues that any such misuse is based on the rupture between reality and truth initiated with the Fall. Ellul draws his analysis from the Biblical revelation and therefore he claims it is fundamentally an appeal to those who have already madea decision of faith: "Either we believe that the Bible expresses

[6] Jacques Ellul: Interpretive Essays, eds. Christians and Van Hook (Urbana: Univ, of Illinois Press, 1981), p. 40

[7] Ellul, The Meaning of the City, p. 179.

the revelation of God centered in Jesus Christ... or else we do not believe it. We must not confuse the two positions: asserting that since God pardons in the end we have nothing to worry about and thus can obey our every whim is taking the attitude of one who does not believe in revelation."[8]

The person who claims to both universal salvation and moral license is one who does not understand that truth does not equal reality under the Fall. He thinks he can assert the truth that all will be adopted by God in his love while at the same time be rejecting the Lordship of Christ. It does not occur to him that he is attempting to restrict this word of revelation to pure objectivity. He is separating the word of universal salvation from its necessary context of obedient discipleship and, in so doing, uses it to oppose that discipleship. He wants to separate his life for what he thinks is an objective truth, but the biblical revelation is that "all human speech is intrinsically connected to a person —. (when) someone has tried to separate it from the person who speaks it, it has lost is relationship with truth and has become a lie."[9] Only for the person who lives in the eschatological kingdom, that is, under Christ's Lordship, can this revelation be a reality. Only at the Es-chaton are reality and truth reunited.[10] Thus, the present possibility of a situation arises in which two people can assert the truth of universal eschatological salvation but only the one who is in the eschatological kingdom, as demonstrated by his or her submission to the ethics of that kingdom, is speaking of reality in truth. For the other, salvation is not a reality.

In effect, what Ellul accomplishes with his eschatological dialectic is to remove the possibility of answering the soteriological question once and for all: yet he does just that. Ellul has stated that, "the soteriological dimension is diminished with respect to the dimension of the kingdom."[11] With the advent of the Kingdom (though hidden and not yet fulfilled) in the coming of Jesus, the soteriological dimension is completely removed. Therefore, in affirming universal salvation Ellul is taking an unjustifiable liberty with the eschatological dialectic, a liberty that causes more trouble and confusion than it is worth. Especially since the soteriological tension is, in and of itself, sufficient to move our theological focus off of salvation and back onto discipleship and the kingdom of God. Ellul's perspective on salvation and his ethics of freedom share a common root in his eschatology, but they are only indirectly connected.

Vemard Eller (University of La Verne) is a scholar familiar with Ellul who has effectively grasped the importance of retaining a soteriological tension. Eller wants to walk a narrow path in his soterioiogy, one that most contemporary theologians, with their central focus on salvation, would find difficult to accept. On the one hand, he feels that it is wrong to assert that there will inevitably be some people who will not

[8] Ellul, The Humiliation of the Word (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 33.

[9] Ibid.,p. 237-269.

[10] Ellul, In Season, Out of Season (Harper & Row, 1982), p. 76.

[11] As quoted in Gregor G. BoUch, Karl Barth and Evangelicalism (Downers Grove: IVP, 1980), p. 75.

be saved. On the other hand, contra Ellul, he believes that it is just as wrong to assert that all human beings will ultimately be saved.

Since one cannot be sure of either particularism or universalism, the most one can propose is a "universalistic possibility." This effectively moves our focus off of salvation and onto the ethic of discipleship grounded in our response to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Ellers universalistic possibility (see his *Revelation: The Most Revealing Book of the Bible}* is a third soteriological position, and one which moves beyond the particularism/universalism impasse by preserving the tension of the eschatological dialectic. It only becomes an option, however, after we have been able to identify our misleading emphasis on personal, future salvation as unbiblical and heeded Ellul's call for "re-escbatologization" of Christian theology.

Presently we find ourselves trapped in a circle of incriminations. Contemporary scholars and theologians who begin to rediscover the eschatological root of biblical discipleship and begin to tentatively work out their understanding of the soterioiogical tension, usually, by attempting to balance particularism with a broader sense of God's graceful action, are invariably branded with the scarlet "U" of universalism. A good example is Ellul's predecessor, Karl Barth. In an "evangelical" response to Barth's theology entitled *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth* (1956), G.C. Berkouwer identified the key element of Barth's theology as the tension between universal election and human decision. Instead of seeing this as a dialectic, however Berkouwer pointed to it as a crossroads and wondered which way Barth would turn: "Probably no one will wish to venture a prophecy as to the direction in which Barth will further develop his thought It is possible, however, to state in a nutshell his central thesis. This is that the triumph of election means, centrally and determinatively, the *a priori* divine decision of the election of ail in the election of Christ."[12]

Barth responded to Berkower by attempting to move the emphasis away from the question of salvation and toward a freedom and pursuit of a knowledge of Christ: Tm a bit startled at the title, *The Triumph... Of* course I used the word and still do. But it makes the whole thing seem so finished, which it isn't for me. *The Freedom...* would have been better. And then instead of— *Grace* I would have preferred *...Jesus Christ.'^*

AU this is particularly significant for the contemporary church as it grapples with the issues of evangelism and social action. As long as our focus remains on personal, future salvation, we can never be entirety comfortable with a renewed emphasis on an ethic of discipleship. But if soterioiogy can be grasped in terms of a tension rooted in Biblical eschatology, then we can move beyond the either/or approach (either particularism or universalism) in which the majority of contemporary, orthodox, Christian theology has sunk its roots.

[12] Ibid., p. 76.

A Second Forum Response to Fasching

In response Darrell Fasching's article on "The Ethical Importance of Universal Salvation" in the premier issue of *The Ellul Studies Bulletin:* It seems to me that throughout his critique of Clendenin's objections to Ellul's notion of universal salvation Fasching confuses two very important and necessarily distinct issues. Underlying all three points of Fasching's argument is a confusion of evangelistic coercion/Constantinian power and the particularity of the gospel.

John Yoder is right to criticize the Constantinian coercion that demanded conversion (a better choice than losing one's life!) and thereby watered down the ethics of Christian discipleship. But that coercion is not identical to the belief that salvation was made possible for the human race particularly through the gift of Jesus Christ, in whom all human beings are invited to have faith.

Rather than the notion of universal salvation, the idea that Jesus alone is "the way, the truth, and the life" is the necessary pre-condition for an ethic of freedom. Without him a person struggles under the un-freedom of trying to mate ones own way, of following all the right steps to find the truth, and of expending great effort to create and justify one's life.

The gift of salvation in Christ is offered freely. God does not coerce us to accept it Moreover, God's grace sets us free re respond to that salvation with lives that carry on what Fasching calls "the struggle with the demonic dehumanization and collectivization which occurs in history." Consequently, the Christian ought not to use power to coerce others into accepting the good news of God's gift in Jesus. Fasching rightly criticizes Constantinian link with power, but throws the bay out with the bath water when he also rejects the uniqueness of Christ's victory over the powers.

Ellul, Yoder and Hauerwas all are right to condemn the unbiblical notions that Christians are in charge, but this ought not to be confused with the idea the Christians have a great gift to offer the rest of the world - the grace of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Fasching falsely links" the desire to run the world" with the belief that Christ alone is the means to salvation. Unfortunately, throughout history, since Constantine, Christians have used power instead of appeal in their evangelism, but that was not the case in the early church. All its members were both pacifists and also advocates of Peter's confession that "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among [humankind] by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Fasching's Reply

I very much appreciate the thoughtful responses to my essay by Ken Morris and Marva Dawn. I must say that in many ways I find Ken Morris' essay persuasive. I agree with him that it would be desirable (given the typical narcissistic emphasis

on personal future salvation) to remove the issue of "salvation" from the theological vocabulary altogether, replacing it with a focus on eschatology. I find it distracting, and almost embarrassing, to have to spend so much time discussing it when our focus is on the response of theology to a technological civilization. And yet, just because there is such a prevalent misuse of this theme which does distract from the ethical-eschatological dimension, such a discussion is unavoidable. Given this past history I wonder if it is really possible to attempt to sidestep the issue as Mr. Morris seeks to do. I am afraid that Vemard Eller's position, at least as interpreted by Mr. Morris, may not really undercut the motivation to turn the whole world into a collectivist Christian civilization. Agnosticism about salvation, Max Weber argued, actually led Calvinists to be more compulsive in spreading Protestant Christian civilization. If it is true of Ellul's position, as Mr Morris says, that "an affirmation of universal salvation effectively undermines this emphasis on soteriology" it may be (given our past history) the only way to undercut a collectivist ethic and recover an ethic of discipleship. I recognize that Mr. Morris is right to warn that affirming universal salvation in the midst of history may collapse the dialectical tension necessary for an ethic of discipleship. Paul faced the same problem in preaching that in Christ all things a permitted. Some took this as an invitation to license. That is why it is probably good that the scriptures are ambiguous on this matter. No one can reasonably claim certain knowledge on this issue and take things for granted. It is better to have some doubts even as we live by hope.

I am less persuaded by Marva Dawn's position. I do not see how the statement - "the gift of salvation in Christ is offered freely. God does not coerce us to accept it" - can be true if the consequence of refusal is hell and damnation. It is only offered freely if one accepts Ellul's premises concerning universal salvation. Dawn opposes "universal salvation" to the notion that "Jesus alone is the way" but for Ellul this is a false opposition since he affirms both. Dawn concludes her argument with Acts 4:12 (i.e., there is salvation in no other name), apparently to oppose it to my conclusion with 1 Timothy 4:10 (i.e., God is savior of the whole human race, especially all believers). It is interesting, however, that on her premises one is forced to choose between these two scriptures but on Ellul's premises one can consistently affirm the truth of both.

A Reponse to Michael Bauman's Review of *Jesus and Marx*

by Jacques Eilul

Translated by Michel Machado

My work has been so often criticized without being understood that I believed nothing could shock me. However, I must confess that Mr. Bauman's article [Issue #2, Nov. 88] first provoked irritation, then stupefaction, and finally I thought it to be a

joke! Indeed, I found it (and I use Mr. Bauman's terms), "monstruous", "grotesque." I never read such accumulated stupidity and lack of comprehension. It is evident that Mr. Bauman knows nothing of my work. He does not know that I was for forty years professor of history of institutions and economics and that I am aware of the works of Hayek, Schumpeter and others. Mr. Bauman knows nothing of Marx's theory and of the prominent Marxist theoreticians. Setting aside his ignorance, I am equally disturbed that an obtuse theology professor can so violently judge a book that he has clearly misunterstood and I doubt even seriously, read.

Mr. Bauman's atrocious misconceptions include the following:

1. He accused me of saying that Christians ought to have a feeling of culpability because of what socialism revealed. But, I never said that! I said, in fact, "Many have had a bad consience"... I report a fact, nowhere have I said that Christians must have a bad conscience.

2. I never wrote that justice was equality. I have often written to the contrary. Mr. Bauman should begin to apply to himself the rule that he set in the first line of the article - "The first task of an academic author is to understand his subject."

3. He accuses me of saying that Communists are on the side of the poor. Here again, he missed it. I don't justify the Communists, I do not say that they help the poor. I say that wherever the poor revolt, Communists are there. If Mr. Bauman had known the Leninist *prods,* if he had read Lenin's work, he would have known that that is their tactic. Clearly, I do not entertain the simplistic idea that Communists help the poor; they use them in order to come to power. Only for appearance and public opinion sake do Communists care for the poor.

4. His inability to understand is further revealed when he believes that I could have said that our unjust society is the result of twenty centuries of Christianity. I wrote clearly that this is the accusation hurled at Christianity by Communists and that if many ceased to be Christians it is because this argument was accepted.

5. Concerning my statement that the Communist tactics exactly correspond to Communism's objective, Mr. Bauman, again understood nothing since he doesn't know the clever tactics and grand strategy of Lenin. In a stupid fashion, he transforms it: "the Communist discourse is contrary to what Communists practice." But discourse is not the same thing as tactics!

6. Mr. Bauman attacks me because I said that Belo's choice is respectable. For myself, *a priori,* I respect the choices of all, but I didn't say that I accepted them. *If Mr.* Bauman knew something about the matter, he would have known that I wrote one of my books in order to prove that Belo's position is wrong, not in conformity to the Gospel. Moreover Belo clearly is ignorant of Marxist doctrine.

7. Mr. Bauman makes numerous misinterpretations like this one: He attacks me violently because I wrote that "Caesar is the creator of money". From his learned ignorance, he said that money existed before the State (I wrote twenty pages on the origins of money in my six volumes! *History of the Institutions).* But I never wrote what Mr. Bauman thinks to have read! I wrote that Caesar makes [i.e. coins] money *(fait les prices de monnaie).* Mr. Bauman ignores the difference between create [i.e., originate) and make [Le., coin]. Besides, very early, as soon as metal ingots were used as money they were indeed marked and usually it was the political power who did it.

8. I could go on enumerating the stupidities and confusions of this article, but I will insist only upon two very important questions. First, it is "evident" for Mr. Bauman that Christianity is a religion. I was thinking that since Kierkegaard and Karl Barth, the distinction and even the opposition between religion (which is a fabrication of man in order to satisfy his religious need) and the Revelation of the God of Abraham and Jesus (which doesn't not correspond to the religious desire of man), was clear and well accepted (at least by 90% of European theologians). Evidently, our theology professor knows nothing of Kierkegaard or Barth! From a sociological standpoint, he assimilates Revelation to religion!

   My second point concerns my definition of ideology. The "excellent" Mr. Bauman finds it scandalous and unjustifiable. This entails three remarks. First, he seems to ignore that there exist at least fifty definitions of the ideology. Every author has is own and the one of Adorno is not Belo's or Aron's, or Lukak's, etc.. I proposed a definition after having said that there were many others. My definition corresponds to the one accepted by most French political scholars. I counsel Mr. Bauman to read, for example, the different articles of the *Encyclopaedia Universalis* concerning ideologies, where he will learn that the matter is not so simplistic as he thinks. What is apparent from his article is his inability to distinguish among Theory, Doctrine and Ideology! For example, he argues that I am mistaken in saying that often an ideology arose to defend a previous *praxis* devoid of ideology. (He doesn't know, for instance, that Capitalism was constituted since the XVI century, without the help of any ideology). I am supposed to be mistaken in saying that the liberal ideology appeared to defend Capitalism against the Socialist ideology. What an error he is uttering! Of course, Smith's *The Wealth of the Nations* was published long before Marx's *Das Kapita* - Bauman's response is absurd because, here, we speak about doctrine. Liberal doctrine appeared before Socialist theory. Socialist ideology, however, appeared since 1815 in order to attack Capitalist structure. This was before any Liberal ideology existed.

9. He accused me of not having cited, in this debate Hayek, Schumpeter, Herme, Say, Bastiat, etc... But I don't understand why I should mention these in a

debate about Marxism and Christianity in which they are not relevant. I have not quoted the prominent Marxist classics, either. I wanted to focus on current debate and I quoted only current authors, (with the exception of Proudhon and Bakunin).

10. Finally I maintain:

    a) that although it raised the level of life of populations and produced much more from an economic standpoint, liberal capitalism created a much poorer proletariat than before;

    b) that our affluent nations create an increasing poverty in the third world;

    c) that nineteenth century Christianity played the role of an ideology of justification for the wrongs of Capitalism;

    d) But that Marxism will not resolve any of these problems and that Christians must not ally themselves with the Communists.

This was evident in my book. In short, Mr. Bauman understood nothing I had to say. I pity his theology students if he misunderstands the Biblical text in the same fashion. His misunderstanding reflects a theology of the last century, the preconceived ideas of the Constan-tinian heresy, and a desiccated social conservatism.

Vernard Eller's Response to Katharine Temple

Iwas not particularly disconcerted by Katharine Temple's disappointment over my book - especially since Ellul himself and many other top reviewers have given it much more favorable notice. However, Temple's review may provide me opportunity to clarify some matters.

I propose that temple has misread the significance of the fact that Ellul's book bears the name Ellul, while mine bears the name Eller. The similarity of name is not meant to suggest a similar qualify of mind and work. Quite the contrary, my name is different from his to keep it clear that my work represents an order of intellect and scholarship entirely other than his.

I never ever, for one moment, have seen myself as an intellectual peer, colleague, or competitor with Jacques ElluL I don't even see myself as an Ellul scholar, someone equipped to meet him on his own level in the way of analysis, critique, and the citing of other authorities pro and con. No, my way is simply to read Ellul's books (usually only once), let whatever ideas adhere adhere, and then also let them resurface and be put to use as they will. I have not researched and claim no "command" of his literature that enables me to cite chapter and verse on one point or another. I have no technical expertise in any of Ellul's fields — have made no effort to keep up with, let alone make scholarly contributions to, Ellulian studies at large.

My one advantage, a gift most precious to me, is perhaps that, from the word Go (which was apparently Ellul's Christian Century article of June 1968) I have heard Ellul speaking on the same wavelength to which I was already attuned by virtue of my biblical commitment and "sect-type" church background. So, whenever I have difficulty understanding Ellul's "words," I simply read his mind - and usually come off understanding him better than his scholarly proficients do. I am of the firm conviction that Ellul's "simple faith" is much more of the essence than is his "scholarly expertise." And I intend to stay plugged into Ellul on the end at which I started and where I have found so much satisfaction for more than twentyyears now.

I really believe that the burden of "temple's complaint against me is that I wrote my type of book (biblical theology for the lay reader) rather than hers (technical stratospherics for the academician). Mine nowhere purports to be that of an Ellul scholar addressing other Ellul scholars like herself. No, the greatest satisfaction I feel about my book is that it introduces the thought of such thinkers as Ellul, Barth, Bonhoeffer, the Blumhardts, Kierkegaard (plus Hengle, Bomkamm, Kee, and others) to a lay audience that would never consider itself competent to tackle such scholars through their own scholarly writings. If I have a contribution to make to the cause of Jacques Ellul, it will not be through the medium of technical papers; it will be in opening his thought to Christian laypeople, those in best position for profiting from it [As a convenience, I shall hereafter identify the above named thinkers as "my people."]

What I most wish "temple (and other reviewers like her) would have been willing to recognize is that basically my book, from start to finish, is biblical exposition. I don't think there is a spot in the book where the reader can be more than a few pages away from biblical exposition. The essential use to which I put each and every one of "my people" is as biblical exegetes, nothing more - not ethical theorists, not political scientists, not speculative theologians, none of that Most pointedly put, the thesis of my book is that the concept of Christian Anarchy can be derived (and must be derived) solely from the biblical faith. And this has the effect of making it accessible to any Bible-believing Christian, quite apart from intellectual attainment or technical expertise.

Consequently, the history and analysis of anarchical theory (which "temple demands of me) is quite beside the point. The survey of current ethical theory (implied in the demand to include Yoder and Hauerwas) would actually confuse and lose me my audience. The suggestion that I must show myself a scholarly expert in these professional fields before being allowed to speak about Christian Anarchy - strikes me as the worst sort of intellectual elitism.

Consequently, too, a study of the "Christianity," of Christendom - which is far from the same thing as biblical Christianity [see Ellul's *The Subversion of Christianity]* - that "Christianity" is quite beside the point and would, again, completely sidetrack my book.

It was this finding of Christian Anarchy in practice all over the place that I understand "temple to have been after by faulting me for not naming William Stringfellow

(Episcopalian) or Dorothy Day (Roman Catholic) among the blessed - and for dismissing "whole traditions" out of hand. In the first place, I never did set out to list "the blessed"; I set out to find noted Christian thinkers who have left us major deposits of authoritative biblical exposition that point toward a concept of Christian Anarchy. I respect all four of temple's people (Stringfellow, Day, Yoder and Hauerwas) and know a couple of them personally. I doubt that there is one of them who would agree that their work in biblical theology puts them in the league of Ellul, Bonhoeffer, Barth, and Kierkegaard. And as to dismissing whole traditions, why does temple pick on me for that one? Ellul (let along Barth and Kierkegaard) has done that much more thoroughly than I ever could.

There is much more to which I perhaps ought to give answer; but I will be content to address the one charge of my making tax resisters my main target - while she knows a number of tax resisters who are truly nice people.

Again, that is completely beside the point. Temple refuses to recognize that every single time I talk about tax resistance I am doing biblical exegesis (either doing an exegesis of my own or sharing one from the expert exegetes of "my people"). And the reason the tax question comes up time and again is because (as best I can discover) the tax passages are the sole representation of the New testament speaking specifically to the basic issues of revolutionary protest and civil disobedience.

Yet I never express anything less than good opinions of the moral character of tax resisters I have known. My one charge is that the biblical counsel is against their position rather than supportive of it If I am wrong, my error could be rebutted without any anger or ill will form either side. All that is wanted or needed is a reputable biblical exposition that supports tax resistance. Yet the fact is that I have caught plenty of flak like temple's - while, no more than she does, has anyone else shown a willingness to dispute the matter biblically.

As I say, I can take temple's review without too much consternation, knowing that Jacques Ellul, some Ellul scholars, and other expert reviewers read mine as a book quite different from the one she apparently read. I do think it important for readers of *Ellul Studies* to know that temple's is very for from being the unanimous opinion of my book.

Michael Bauman's Response to Jacques Ellul

Regarding Professor Ellul's objections to my review (My numbers correspond to his.):

1. Ellul is wrong. I did not accuse him of saying that Christians ought to feel guilty abut what Marxist critics allege concerning Christianity or Christians. As a politically conservative, free-market Christian, I denied that we Christians ought to feel Socialist-in-spired guilt because the Socialist criticisms directed at us are radically flawed. I said

so as a preface both to my complaints about what Ellul does say and to some of the criticism Socialists have made with which he agrees.

2. While rehearsing the Communist critique, of Christian practice, Ellul occasionally (and, I think, rightly) registers his dissent, as, for example, he does when he notes the manipulative way Communists side with the poor. He does not do so, however, when addressing the issue of justice. The communist critique writes Ellul, "was obviously based on justice. In every respect our society is unjust for both individuals and groups. It produces inequality on all levels: inequality of opportunity, income, power, culture" (p. 6). Quite clearly, these words indicate that inequality is an injustice and (conversely) that justice entails equality, things Ellul says he never wrote.

3. I did not "accuse" Ellul of saying that Communists are on the side of the poor I quoted him. Further, contrary to Ellul's assertion that he does not say that Communists help the poor, he himself writes that "they accomplish what Christianity preaches but fails to practice" (emphasis added, p. 6).

4. Ellul objects that the accusation that our "unjust society is the result of twenty centuries of Christianity" is one concerning which he "wrote clearly that this is the accusation hurled at Christianity by Communists and that if many ceased to be Christians it is because this argument was accepted." He most certainly did not In the passage in question (pp. 5-6), Ellul is speaking about why many have become Marxist Christians. He nowhere mentions either the possibility or the actuality of their ceasing to be Christians, for this reason or for any other. (Nor does he pause here to distance himself from this Marxist challenge.)

5. Despite Ellul's opposite assertion, I am well aware of "the clever tactics and grand strategy of Lenin." Unlike Ellul, however, I do not believe that Lenin's means are compatible with Lenin's goals or could ever lead to them. I hold the same view of ail Communist regimes. Five-year plans, Gulags, iron curtains, military expansionism, cultural revolutions, perestroika, glasnost, and state-sponsored terrorism cannot and will not yield a worker's paradise, a proletariat without chains, or a world without the state. I contended and do contend, that a radical incompatibility exists between Communist ends and means. Barbarism will not yield humanitarian or therapeutic results.

Further, contrary to Ellul, discourse and its uses most certainly are a part of Communist tactics. That is Lenin.

6. Not all, perhaps not even most, of the choices humans make are respectable or are worthy of a Christian's respect Some choices are ignorant and inadequately informed; some are counter productive; some are wicked. Despite his intention, Belo's choice to be a Communist is all these things. I do not respect it anymore than I respect someones choice to be a slave trader which I consider to be very much the same thing. I challenge such choices and I excoriate them. Contrary to Ellul, while I respect and value choosing, I do not value all human choices, especially this one. I cannot side with someone who writes that Belo's choice to be a Communist "clearly merits our respect," that it is "a political choice," one "which we do not question!" (p. 86).

7. If the distinction between ”make” and ”create” is so fundamental to Ellul’s view of the nature and origin of money (a distinction that in economics I contend is truly insignificant), and if I am mistaken to use the word ”create” concerning Caesar’s role in this activity, then perhaps Ellul should enlighten his translator to that fact, for Ellul’s text does say - despite his insistence that he ”never wrote what Mr. Bauman thinks to have read!” - that” Jesus means that Caesar, as creator of this money, is its master” (emphasis his, p. 167).

8. You may still number me among those who consider Christianity a religion and who deny that ”biblical revelation necessarily entails iconoclasm, that is, the destruction of all religions [and] beliefs” (emphasis added, p. 2). From my position on this issue, however, one should not deduce, as does Ellul, that I ”know nothing of Kierkegaard or Barth”! One could more accurately deduce that I reject them and that I have reasons for doing so.

In addition, I contend that not all the working definitions that scholars advance (much less all definitions) are acceptable. Some, for example, are unjustifiable question-begging and need to be discarded. Some debates are won (and lost) by definition. As a trained literary critic, one who opposes the unnecessary proliferation of definitions and the degeneration of language that results, I did, and do, reject Ellul’s idiosyncratic use of the term ”ideology.” to do so is not, as Ellul charges, ”simplistic.”

As a trained historian, I equally as firmly reject his reconstruction of the rise or capitalism and its subsequent development, beseigement, and defense. Some of my reasons for doing so are outlined in EA. Hayek’s *Capitalism and the Historians* (1954).

9. By mentioning the economists I did, I was intentionally endorsing their relevance to what Ellul calls ”the current debate” between Marxism and Christianity, especially Gilder, Smith, and BastiaL That Smith and Bastiat are not our contemporaries is quite insignificant Current debates can often be resolved (or at least set in their proper light) by invoking the wisdom of the past Insight was not bom with our generation. I only regret now that I did not mention Whittaker Chambers in this context, a man who is not an economist, but whose views are wonderfully pertinent

10. a: That liberal capitalism did not further impoverish the poor, I refer you to such books as Michael Novak’s *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (1982), pp. 16-22.

b: That the wealthy do not prosper at the expense of the poor, I refer you to such books as George Gilder’s *Wealth and Poverty* (1981) and his *The Spirit of Enterprise* (1984), especially the former. Both books also demonstrate that Christian values are capitalist values.

c: Nineteenth-century Christianity was not a monolithic entity about which we can make generalizations like Ellul’s, which alleges that it served merely to justify the failures of capitalist societies and systems. The evangelical united front in America, for example, served to ameliorate - not defend - such shortcomings.

d: We agree!

Finally, Ellul need not worry about my students or my biblical exegesis. The failings of his own anarchist reading of Scripture, however, I will expose elsewhere. I shall do

the same regarding what I consider his unjustifiably incomplete break from Marxist taxonomy and methodology, and from the ideology that necessarily attaches to them.

Book Extracts

The Paradox of Anarchism and Christianity

by Jacques Ellul

We express our thanks to Gary Lee and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. for permission to reprint a brief selection from Jacques Elluls, Jesus *and Maix,* (Eerdmans, 1988), The following are excerpts from the concluding chapter.

Perhaps it seems odd to attempt a reconciliation of anarchism and Christianity, since the idea that they are utterly irreconcilable enemies is so well established. Doesn't anarchism repeatedly cry "no God and no Master"? .„ Looking at the question from the opposite angle, we see that Christianity clearly not only respects authority, but presupposes that authorities exist Everyone believes Christianity to be a doctrine of order... From both sides, then, the reconciliation of anarchism and Christianity seems excluded... Without a doubt the official Church, transformed into a power, taught the opposite of biblical teaching... Essentially... both the Old and New Testaments take exception to all political power. No power can claim to be legitimate in itself. Political power and organization are necessities in society but only necessities. They attempt repeatedly to take God's place, since magistrates and kings invariably consider themselves the incarnation of authority. We must continually challenge, deny and object to this power. It becomes acceptable only when it remains on a humble level, when it is weak, serves the good _. and genuinely transforms itself into a servant...

Usually, however, this principle is stated the other way: the state is legitimate except when it becomes tyrannical, unjust, violent, etc. In reality, since the state is illegitimate, it should be destroyed, except when it acts as servant of all..., effectively protecting the good...

The only Christian political position consistent with revelation is the negation of power: the radical, total refusal of its existence, a fundamental questioning of it, no matter what form it may take. I repeat this statement not so Christians will turn toward some sort of spiritualism, political ignorance, or apolitical position - certainly not! On the contrary, as Christians we must participate in the political world and the world of action, but in order to deny them, to oppose them by our conscious, well-founded refusal Only this refusal can challenge and occasionally impede the unlimited growth of power. Thus Christians can take their place only beside anarchists; they can never join the Marxists, for whom the state is unacceptable only to the extent that it is bourgeois.

Do Christians contribute anything specific or special to anarchism? ... Anarchists live in an illusion, believing that it is possible actually to abolish power and all its sources... Today we can no longer believe in one of the absolute tenets of anarchist faith: the inevitability of progress... We must not become discouraged, then, if our anarchist declaration fails to lead to an anarchist society... [However] when we shake the edifice, we produce a crack, a gap in the structure, in which a human being can briefly find his freedom, which is always threatened... I can hear the disillusioned anarchist: "Is that all we are doing?" Yes: *all* that; through our refusal, we keep the trap from closing all the way, for today. We can still breathe out in the open. The Christian must enable the anarchist to make the transition from a contemptuous "Is that all?" to an "All that," filled with hope...

I believe this two-edge Christian contribution of realism and hope to be essential for anarchism. Anarchism's need for Christianity shows the possibility of a practical harmony, which could accompany the dear agreement of the two on the theoretical level This possibility contrasts with the fundamental contradiction of Christianity and Marxism, and the extraordinary uselessness of cooperation between them. I must clarify, however, that in this essay I am not trying to find a new concor-dism. I do not mean to imply that anarchist thought expresses the Christian political orientation, nor that Christians should adopt an anarchist orientation. In other words, we must not fall into the same error with anarchism that has been made with respeqt to Marxism!

I have tried to show, contrary to what is usually believed, (1) that no radical contradiction exists between anarchism and the concrete consequences of Christian faith in the sociopolitical area, whereas there is a contradiction between Marxism and the implications of the faith; (2) that anarchism does not imply as Marxism does, the elimination of Christian specificity; (3) finally, that within the context of modem society and our concrete historical situation, the determining and decisive problem is that of the universal power of the state™. Communism has shown itself incapable of responding to this challenge. On the contrary, each time it comes to power, it merely reinforces the state. Refusing a synthesis of Christianity and Marxism does not amount to "preaching submission"... On the contrary it means entering a *different* revolutionary way, another way of questioning that is infinitely more radical and profound.

Thesis Extracts

Law and Ethics in Ellul's Theology

[Abstract of *Introduction to Jacques Ellul's Judicial Ethics,* Master's Thesis, Faculty of Protestant Theology University of Strasbourg]

By Sylvain Dujancourt

Translated by Charles L. Creegan

Jacques Ellul's judicial thought is an aspect of his work which has received little attention. And yet it is perfectly characteristic of Ellul's sociological and theological procedures. In this area as in others, Ellul initiates a dialectic of constant cross-questioning involving study of the problem in its social, political, and cultural aspects, and investigation of what the Bible says-or does not say-about the subject. For Ellul, law is a human phenomenon which is only fully significant in light of Biblical revelation.

A: to affirm that law is a human phenomenon is an implicit response to two questions: What is law? What is its origin?

1) In defining law, Ellul begins by rejecting the traditional alternative between idealist and positivist conceptions-which he accuses in the first case of an abstract vision of the nature of law and humanity, and in the second case of reducing law to a mere rule. Law is "a concrete system destined to be applied." Ellul next distinguishes law from several notions for which it is sometimes or often mistaken: morality, history, the State, custom, laws, language, and science. These distinctions allow Ellul to uncover five characteristics of law. Law is universal, a rule of social life indispensable to the functioning of all civilization. Law is an artificial creation of humanity, helping to ensure control of time, space, and human relations. Law is normative, both in that it expresses a desire to modify the total social fact and in that it is a set of procedures facilitating the realization of the values embodied in law. Law depends on applicability, it is made to be applied. Finally, Ellul claims that law has an aim, justice, which is also its critical benchmark.

Ellul the historian sets out a three-stage typology of the evolution of law. In religious law, law and religion are confused. In secular law there is an equilibrium between the basis, popular conscience, and the form, judicial technique. This is the moment of legal evolution which Ellul prefers. The last stage is that of the technologizing of law, in which judicial technique dominates. Here law is transformed into an organization at the service of the State. The law of our societies is in a crisis due at once to its

nationalization, its proliferation, its incoherence, and its devaluation. It has also mutated: technique has transformed law into a mechanism for social control. A teleology of order has substituted itself for one of justice. In counterpoint, Ellul imagines an ideal law which would encompass three qualities: a close mesh with social reality, a subordinated judicial technique, and a capacity for evolution. This conception comes nearest to the second stage of the evolution of law.

2) Having thus analyzed law, Ellul tries to answer the question of its origin-that is, of its creation and foundation. For Ellul, the creation of law is the fruit of a combination of human effort and social facts. Law is firstly a spontaneous and collective work of humans for the organization of social life. Law is created by decisions made in light of certain values. Without accepting the Marxist analysis of law, Ellul allows that social, economic and political givens play an important role in the creation of law. Ellul considers events to be a particularly important source of transformations of law. The satisfaction of three criteria allows us to affirm that a rule has become one of law: the existence of common and accepted values; regularized procedures; and sanctions. Ellul raises judicial and theological objections to natural-law doctrines which purport to explain the foundation of law. "Natural law" is a human invention, founded on a variable idea of nature; it is a negation of the eschatology of the Kingdom and allows humans to escape radical revelation.

B: Continuing his research, Ellul relates his analysis of law as a human phenomenon to the Bible, and shows that revelation adds to the value and significance of law. He examines the place of law in the project of salvation as it is revealed to us by God, and proceeds to extract a Christian judicial ethics. Ellul's theological analysis of law rests on two choices, theology of grace and Chris-tocentrism, which underline his solidarity with S. Kierkegaard, K. Barth and J. Bose.

1) In revelation, law is an element of the dialectic between truth and reality. In the Old Testament, Ellul distinguishes between the Torah, expression of Divine grace, and Hebraic legislation. Hebrew law is in many ways similar to those of other oriental civilizations of the same era. Ellul notes that, as an instrument of God, it is nevertheless unique. In the New Tostament, law takes on an essentially ethical dimension; it is an instrument directed to reducing conflicts and allowing the weak to compensate for their weakness.

In the Bible, there are three characteristic manifestations of law: institutions, such as marriage, State, or property, which are created by God with a soteriological dimension; human rights, those given by God in the interest of covenant, of which the first is to be able to speak to God in the name of Jesus Christ; justice, which is an act of God, judgement, and grace. The notion of justice establishes a link between law and revelation. This link allows Ellul to affirm that the foundation of law is in God. This is not a theocratic conception of law. Instead it signifies that law finds its true value in God, and that in Jesus Christ it gains its full significance. Law is a part of the lordship of Jesus Christ over the world, between the covenant and the parousia. It is also placed

in the eschatological perspective of the final Kingdom, although it cannot contribute anything at all to its coming.

2) On the basis of this judicial and theological analysis, Ellul constructs a Christian judicial ethics, that is to say, a coherence between being and doing relative to law and faith. The ethics proposed by Ellul is founded on the notion of judgement, first of all with respect to existing law, and secondly with respect to the working out of law. On the one hand, the Christian is invited to take notice of the worth of law before God, while at the same time measuring the exact social value of law. Further, the law of love does not allow the Christian to ignore the law in force; it must come into play with respect to the existing law. The Church must also take care that the law of society does not hinder the free speaking of the Word of God, salvation of humankind.

On the other hand, as to the working out of law, the Christian must work for the re-establishment of order, that is, to recall the existence of a transcendent dimension of law. The point of reference is the Christological order. The Christian must constantly reorient law, and stress the creative sense and the social function of law. Ellul invites the Church to exercise its role of mediation and conciliation so that all social groups may rally around certain values, and accept the authority of a law which would bring them into being. Ellul also rejects all notions of a Christian law since he opposes the idea of obliging non-Christians to believe in a faith and values which they do not share.

Book Reviews

Theological Method in Jacques Ellul

by Daniel B. Clendenin (Lan-hanm, MD: University Press of America, 1987). pp. xvii + 145

Reviewed by Marva Dawn, Vancouver, Washington

(Marva is a Ph.D candidate in Christian Ethics at the University of Notre Dame and a founder of *Christians Equipped for Ministry* in Vancouver.)

Dan Clendenin's well-researched and balanced study develops the thesis that "Ellul's theological method revolves around one key theme or kernel idea, the dialectical interplay between freedom and necessity,.. a gold thread ... which serves as a sort of hermeneutical key to his thinking" (xi). This revised doctoral dissertation contributes immensely to the possibility that more scholars and lay readers can properly understand Jacques Ellul and let his thinking stimulate, rather than alienate, their own. Since most of us reading this publication believe that Ellul's prophetic voice needs to be heard in our world, we can all be grateful that Dan Clendenin has provided such a useful tool for listening to him appropriately.

Clendenin's own method is illustrated best by three concentric circles, the largest of which describes four methodological interpretations of Ellul: as theological positivist, existentialist, prophet, and dialectician. His second chapter analyzes the more narrow circle of Ellul's dialectical method, which "operates as a description of reality [the phenomenological], an epistemological orientation to understand this reality, and as a Biblical-theological framework by which to read the Bible and craft a peculiarly Christian style of life [existential]" (xvi). Then, chapters three and four explicate Ellul's central dialectic between freedom and necessity, the innermost circle and the "controlling idea in all of Ellul's work" (59).

The final chapter analyzes four weaknesses and three strengths of Ellul's method. Clendenin's "internal" criticisms are the best part of the book, for he aptly demonstrates that Ellul's works contain definite non-dialectical tendencies which are inconsistent with his avowed method (129). First of all, Ellul's unclear or caustic use of language often invites antagonism rather than dialogue. Secondly, his theme that freedom is not just a virtue of the Christian life, but rather its *sine qua non,* is undeniably reductionistic. Ellul is right to emphasize this aspect because of the social circumstances of contemporary Christianity, but his overstatement denies the dialectical interplay of other factors in discipleship. Most helpful of Clendenin's critiques is his analysis of

the inconsistency of Ellul's universalism in its selective reading of Biblical texts, its negation of human free will, and its negation of the individual (pp 135-141).

I disagree, however, with Qendenin's third alleged weakness in Ellul's; method - viz., his conception of "power as the enemy of God." Utilizing die Biblical notion of *exousiai,* Ellul has maintained a dialectical tension in his understanding of power, though his latest work, *The Subversion of Christianity,* contradicts some of his earlier statements about the nature of "the Powers." Furthermore, Clendenin himself must be criticized for his own overstatement that "Ellul never comes close to incorporating the use of power into his dialectic" [134, emphasis mine), and he himself is inconsistent when he asks Ellul to give "clear guidelines" for "nonpower use," since a few pages later he cites as a first strength in Ellul's method his deliberate refusal to provide solutions in order to obligate readers to think beyond him (133 and 142). His claim that Ellul "gives us no help here with his rather unrealistic picture" (133) overlooks the prophetic nature of Ellul's language, designed to raise awareness of the subtlety of the demonic aspects of power.

Clendenin also cites as strengths that Ellul effectively combines theology from above (revelation) and below (practical concern for the world) and that his theology truly offers hope and freedom to the person on the street. That, of course, is a main reason why all of us care so much about his work.

Freeom and Universal Salvation: Ellul and Origen

In some ways no two theologians in the history of Christianity could be farther apart than Jacques Ellul and Origen, the Neo-Platonic theologian from the 3rd century. If one were to classify them using H. Richard Niebuhr's five types of Christ and culture relationships, Origen would probably fall under the *Christ of Culture* type and Ellul would stand probably be found somewhere between *Christ Against Culture* and *Christ and Culture in Paradox.* In many ways Tfertul-lian rather than Origen would seem to be the theologian who might have the most in common with Ellul. And yet on two themes very much at the heart of Ellul's thought, *freedom* and *universal salvation,* it is in fact Origen who is his kindred spirit. Although its hard to believe, Origen is even more radical on these two themes. On universal salvation it seems that he held that all creatures would eventually be saved, even the devil, and on freedom he thought that because God gave us the capacity to be free, even after universal salvation is achieved, the fall could happen again, should some creature choose to rebel against God. Ellul would not go quite that far on either count but he certainly goes further than most theologians in the Christian tradition have. In the *Forum* column for this issue a case is made for the ethical importance of universal salvation. But to refresh our minds on Ellul's stand the following excerpt from Dan Clendenin's recent interview with Ellul is quoted from *Media Development* (2/1988, p. 29).

Interview

Clendenin: You have been a strong advocate of universal salvation, which you seem to support by at least five ideas: distinction between judgment-condemnation; between salvationfreedom; priority and triumph of God's love (Jonah's hard lesson); your robust/high Christology; scriptural references to perdition - 'God's pedagogy* - only of heuristic value.

Ellul: Exactly. This is a part of Karl Barth. Barth liked very much to make a joke. One day he explained the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian in this way: everyone has received a sealed letter from God, but a Christian is the one who has opened it and read it. That's the way it is in reality. Every person is loved by God, but Christians are the only ones who know it

Clendenin: And experience the joy, hope and freedom.

Ellul: Yes, and that changes completely one's perspective on mission. Because toward pagan people, for example, we do not say to them, 'Be converted or, you will be damned', but rather, 'I'm telling you that you are loved by God.'

Clendenin: That was Jonah's hard lesson, that God loved even the Ninevites! No one is excluded.

Ellul: Yes.

Clendenin: You said with Karl Barth that a person must be crazy to teach universalism, but impious not to believe it.

Ellul: Yes, I like very much this phrase of Barth's. For me, obviously, there are biblical texts which seem to go against the idea of universalism, but I really don't understand them very well. That's why I say very often that for me universal salvation is in the realm of faith, but I cannot present it as a dogma.

Clendenin: Would it be fair to call your belief in universal salvation a pious hope but not an absolute conviction?

Ellul: No, it's an absolute conviction.

Clendenin: Universal salvation sounds very un-Kierkegaardian!

Ellul: Yes, this is exactly the place where I part company from Kierkegaard.

Clendenin: But what about his question: does this do away with Christianity by making everyone a Christian?

Ellul: No, it does not make everyone Christian.

Clendenin: They are not hidden Christians?

Ellul: No, that's right, to teach people that they are loved by God is to start them on the path of being converted to Jesus Christ. But it's not at all what Kierkegaard justly criticized as a 'Christian' society.

Clendenin: Yes, this latter theme you pick up in *The Subversion of Christianity.* What about divine coercion in universal salvation, especially given your very strong emphasis on the absolute importance of human decisions/choices.

Ellul: This is really a story of love between God and man. I don't believe that the human being is completely independent before God.

Clendenin: And here we've begun to ask the metaphysical question which we can never answer.

Ellul: When the Word of God addresses a person it liberates him or her, but this free person has heard a word from God. Often I ask my students and the people to whom I'm preaching, 'Do you understand that what you're hearing right now is a word from God?' Thus there is human responsibility, and one can never say that God does not speak. Yes, He does speak now.

The Growth of Minds and Cultures

by Willem Vanderburg, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

Reviewed by Katharine Temple

[The following review is excerpted from the winter issue of Cross *Currents* 1985-1986. We are grateful to Katharine Temple and to Cross *Currents* for permission to reprint. - *The Editor*]

A cursory glance at the table of contents might leave the impression that here we have one more introductory textbook in sociology or anthropology. But this would be a mistake. Early on (p.9), Vanderburg tells us this is the first volume in a projected trilogy -*Technique and Culture,* a title which sharpens the focus. I have to admit it is daunting to pick up a 300-plus page book, only to find out there are two more yet to come. Since, however the task is enormous, I also have to conclude that the effort is worth it. In this case, it is important to pay closer attention than usual to the Preface and Introduction, which serve to clarify the end-point.

I have the profound sense that our present concepts allow us to see the mystery of human life only through a dark glass... But the very process of asking new questions and not absolutizing reality as we know it is vital not only to keep scientific debates in their proper context, but also to guarantee a genuine intellectual life for us and the generations to come— If these reflections can contribute to giving new energy to a dialogue within the multi-versity and among intellectuals around science, technology and technique and their influence on human life, my audacity in attempting a synthesis on such a vast scope will have been worthwhile (pp. 302-303).

At no point is Vanderburg preaching to the converted. He is speaking to people who have to be lured into the discussion in the first place - natural scientists and engineers who, by and large, consider the social sciences beneath them, and those in other disciplines who are thoroughly intimidated by "the hard sciences." As he has to start from square one on both fronts, it is a difficult mix, especially when he wants to promote dialogue, and critical dialogue at that. Then, even apart from his pedagogical pursuits, his own research breaks out of the accepted positivist molds. His conceptual framework is grounded in the dialectical thought of Jacques Ellul (who has written an incisive foreword that puts the methodology into perspective). Vanderburg has commented elsewhere about the influence.

In rethinking Marx... Ellul centered on technique, a much broader phenomenon than technology in the engineering sense. Indeed without recognition of this, much of what Ellul says may appear to be overstatement or exaggeration. It was this which struck me most when I first encountered it in *The Technological Society,* and called forth in me a desire to work through this concept from an engineer's point of view *(Cross Currents,* Spring 1985).

Ellul is indeed one of the most brilliant interpreters of our century, but he is an inspiration others have found difficult to swallow, and so he is out of favor in the official groves of academe. Vanderburg has undertaken to introduce a recalcitrant crowd with uneven sophistication to controversial arguments based on highly sophisticated concepts. Perhaps this is as good a definition of formal teaching as any.

Having said that, let me also stress that *The Growth of Minds and Cultures* is not a re-hash of Ellul's insights brought into the classroom. Both are sociologists who view the world very much alike and the Ellul imprint is clear. Nevertheless, they are sociologists who work differently. Just as Ellul is an analyst (in the etymological sense "to loosen," "to unpack," "to dissect") starting from the whole, so Vanderburg remains an engineer, examining the parts to see what makes the system tick and then working toward putting those parts together into a synthesis. One example. This book starts with the irreducible social unit, the individual, and follows how he or she is "enfolded" into the pre-existent web of culture. Ellul, by contrast, tends to start with a definition of *technique* itself. The two approaches are complementary, not interchangeable. The very lack of acceptance Ellul's work has encountered may indicate that the more nuts-and-bolts description is very much in order.

Every once in a while, it also occurred to me that there is not a single topic in the book that won't be old hat to someone and long since rejected by someone else. I cannot say, however, that I wasn't warned.

I have assumed that most of my readers, like myself, will have an expertise in some areas covered in these essays and not in others... In all of this, I am keenly aware of the fact that both the frontier-type of highly specialized knowledge and the intellectual-reflective kind of knowledge have their own lacunae (p. xxv).

The whole point of a synthesis is not to come up with brand-new separate parts; it is to look at what we think is obvious with new lenses, to show new configurations and relationships. Of course, there is sometimes bound to be a *deja-vue* quality, as well as disagreement, partly because of the range of separate parts and partly because Vanderburg presents his case without being easily side-tracked. We are sadly unused to this way of thinking. The question is whether this sociological synthesis promotes clarity. I would say that it does. With both scientific coolness and passion, he succeeds in a synthesis that lays the foundation for his next work on technique.

Because he has made such a considerable sociological contribution, I feel churlish in asking questions perhaps better put to the discipline itself. My hesitations come at both ends of its spectrum. First, I think certain biological inquiries deserve greater weight; in particular, genetics and the implications of maleness and femaleness. Second, at

the other end stands philosophy. Although the book is deliberately non-philosophical, many of the key concepts carry over from that tradition: mind, will, being, freedom, even culture itself. Such reservations probably would not come to mind if it were not for the overwhelming denial of biology and philosophy in technical civilization at large. Such may be the nature of the beast; nevertheless, from a book that carefully delineates terms, one is tempted to ask for more.

What heartens me the most about this book is the way it re-asserts common sense as a criterion, even as the discarded disciplines once did. Now, "common sense" is an elusive term both philosophically and in common parlance. The only consensus about it is that common sense is never very common. Yet, it is the best expression I know to describe the strength of Vanderburg's argument. By it, I mean a practical wisdom and judgment that rely on perceptions and experience as the touchstones to shake us out of our tendencies to fantasize, objectify, trivialize and distort. People do not initially perceive themselves either genetically or statistically or philosophically and, strange or shaky as it may sound as a theoretical principle, Vanderburg is actually on solid ground when he builds on common perceptions. There will still be disagreements, but the stage is set for discourse based on actual experience, even on the widest conceptual plane.

Vanderburg has concerned himself with technological advances and what they might mean for our life. *The Growth of Minds and Cultures* leads us to see how hard it is to dissociate ourselves form a "star wars" mentality, in which our culture is deeply and almost inextricably embedded. Nevertheless, Vanderburg shows that we can think about this civilization in other than logistical terms or science fiction.

Eller's Crowning Achievement

by Hu Elz

Within the past year or so... the Federation of French Anarchists commissioned Ellul to write for them a book, *Anarchie et Chris-tianisme* .„ The book was purposed particularly for partisans of political anarchy, who would not have much knowledge as to how Christianity relates - although it could be just as useful for Christians who have almost no knowledge as to how anarchy might relate to their faith. Ellul is probably the only person ever, who has been equipped to do as full justice to one side of the equation as the other. He is a top authority either way.

In the book Ellul opens by recounting his personal history regarding the two traditions. His faith as a Christian believer has always been his primal commitment; yet, in his political interests, anarchy has long had a fascination for him... The difficulty is that he has never found a way of getting the two together - natural enemies as the two seem to be.

Traditionally, Christianity and anarchism have shown deep animosity toward each other, with what surely is good reason. Anarchy starts from the premise that all of society's effort to structure itself and regiment the citizenry to an established order - all this works to the detriment rather than the enhancement of true humanity. The anarchical goal, then, is to break up these "orders," that, in the ensuing "disorder," individuals might find the freedom to live as truly human humans.

In response, Christianity has not been particularly keen on the idea, seeing anarchy's "disorder" as nothing but a threat to "the ordering of God" and "the godly ordering of the world" to which it is committed. The antagonism has been as much as absolute. Most anarchists have been atheists. After all, the idea ofa 'Lord* (The Great Orderer in the Sky) is quite antithetical to what they have in mind. Further, they have seen (correctly enough) that the institutional church has always been on the side of tighter and tighter ordering rather than looser and looser. Ellul set himself some problem in trying to make those two speak with a common voice.

Ellul's book testifies as to how long he has been worrying the matter. As the years went by, he found more and more evidence of an anarchical strain within Scripture, but he still didn't see how this could contribute to getting the two traditions together. The breakthrough came then, he says [p. 7], in reading Vemard Eller's book, *Christian Anarchy* (Eerdmans, 1987).

Vemard, of course, is happy to have been of help - though the situation is very much a weird one. The truth is that anything and everything Vemard may know of Christian Anarchy he learned in the first place from none other than Jacques Ellul. The first chapter of Vemard's book (in which he defines the concept and establishes its categories) is based directly upon the thought of Ellul - and particularly upon one of his earlier essays regarding Christianity and anarchism. All Vemard was doing was quoting Ellul back to himself.

Actually, this is a phenomenon that probably happens time and again. When I hear my own thoughts read back to me by another person (in this situation in which I am *hearing* rather *thanspeaking,')* I can often hear things I was not fully aware of having spoken. But if Ver-nard never did anything except echo Ellul's crucial words back to himself, that is more than enough to constitute a crowning achievement.

Probably there was a bit more involved. Vemard came at the problem from a new angle. Rather than trying simply to combine apparent incompatibles, he came up with a new category - a third category that combined at least something of the earlier two and yet was not identical with anything of either of them. In the new two-word term "Christian Anarchy" neither of the words means quite what it meant when standing alone. Each word modifies the other in the process of being paired.

"Anarchy"... assumed that, once set free, people would freely discover for themselves the minimal, instinctive ordering that would truly serve their humanity. But... "Human regimentation" never manages to limit itself - always gets out of hand and goes demonic.

So "Christian Anarchy"... [uses] that disorder's freeing us to give ourselves wholly over to the Ordering of God... This new regime would not be heavy-handedly imposi-

tionai (as all human regimes have to be). God's regime of love and light, is one that never uses force but uses patience and mercy in winning people into that one Order that is right for them.

So Christians need have no fear of anarchy - if it's Christian Anarchy. And anarchists need have no fear of Christianity - if it's Anarchical Christianity. Ellul can combine his two interests - if it is done by going to a new, third category rather than by trying to meld two old incompatibles.

Vemard's crowning achievement proceeds from that point. Ellul, in his book (pp. 12-13), confesses that, in tracing the strain of Christian Anarchy through church history, he had thought simply of renegade individuals such as Tertullian, Francis of Assisi, and a few others. But here again, Vemard's book taught him something he undoubtedly knew for himself - if he had been thinking.

It's hard to say how accurate an understanding of the 16th century Anabaptists... Ellul has had up to this point; these people still do not get a very good press on the Continent But Ellul is explicit in saying that Vemard is right, that the Anabpatists were not *a-political Christian secessionists"... they were true Christian anarchists.

It's hard to know, too, how much Ellul has heard of the Blum-hardts, the 19th-century German fatber-and-son pastoral team that was so influential with the young Karl Barth. But here again Ellul is explicit in seconding Vemard's motion that the Blumhardts "formulated a strictly anarchistic Christianity."

There is no difficulty at all in determining that Ellul has been up on Kierkegaard since goodness knows when... But apparently Ellul bad never thought of SK in connection with anarchy. However, a nudge from Vemard's book was enough to get Kierkegaard in.

Finally, it is no secret that Ellul, for a long time, has been strongly influenced by the work of Karl Barth. However, there were aspects of Barth's thought that had Ellul convinced that Barth could not be a Christian Anarchist. Yet, regarding Vemard's long chapter on Barth, Ellul now testifies that that demonstration has convinced him: Barth will be of that number when the anarchistic saints come marching in.

Jacques Ellul, Anarchic et Christianisme

Atelier de Creation Libertaire, Lyon, France, 1988,123 pp. Vernard Eller, Christian Anarchy, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mi. USA, 1987, 267 pp.

Reviewed by Katharine Temple

Anarchism, that underrated and submerged critique of modem society, has been a longstanding, if not always overt theme in the writings of Jacques Ellul. It goes back at least as far as his time with Emmanuel Mounier and *Esprit* in the 1930s, and his most explicit formulation came in *Autopsy of Revolution,* a classic of anarchist thought Put succinctly, that school (which is a critique of both Capitalism and Marxism from

within Socialism) points to the increasing power of the state as the focal point for social analysis.

Theologically, M. Ellul's anarchism points to the same power of the state as a false god or a locus for the incarnation of the principalities and powers - a motif in *Apocalypse.* How he brings together his two types of writing has long been a question, and he has always insisted that they stand in a dialectical rather than a systematic relationship. On the subject of anarchism, he has shown what he means, biographically, in *In Season, Out of Season* and, analytically, in the last chapter of *Jesus and Mane* and now *inAnarchie et Christianisme.*

Although nothing substantially new appears in this slim volume (apart from reflections on 1 Peter), various strands from previous works are pulled together and that alone makes it worthwhile. Here and there some irritants surface, such as some comments about liberation theology or Islam without the more complete arguments he has given elsewhere, or certain statements about the prevalence of socialism that is not self-evident in English-speaking countries. These, however, are relatively few and far between (albeit on-going) points. Overall, it is a treat to encounter his grasp of the anarchist tradition, his fluency with the Bible and Church history, and his emphasis on Christian realism.

InAnarchie et Christianisme, M. Ellul commends Vemard Eller's book, and also I had read some articles on his own [Eller's] and M. Ellul's theological roots, which are as little known and as much shunted aside as anarchism is in social thought. As a result, I was looking forward to *Christian Anarchy,* especially as Mr. Eller writes from this country where, to put it mildly, anarchism has never really "taken." In any case, maybe I looked forward too much and expected too much.

Let me say, first of all, that I was not disappointed in the story of his theological sources - -the radical Reformation, Kierkegaard, the Blumhardts, Karl Barth, Jacques Ellul - -although his explanations seem marred by the tone that hints broadly that really nobody else has had such thoughts as his. How could he not mention William Stringfellow whodid so much to make Karl Barth and Jacques Ellul known here, or Dorothy Day who introduced anarchism through the pages of *The Catholic Worker!* Nor do I disagree about the need for hard questions to be put to the Christian left or peace movements, although, again, other voices have also spoken. Why, for instance, no account of Stanley Hauerwas or John Howard Yoder? And, finally, the matter of whether he is a-political or not (a charge he seems to relish) seems, by and large, beside the point

My disappointments lie elsewhere. Unfortunately, throughout the book, Mr. Eller falls into generalizations and simplifications that start to sound like a parody of some of the complaints made about M. Ellul.

This imprecision is most marked in the title theme of anarchism, which does have a coherent meaning, content and history, no matter how unsystematic these may be. Mr. Eller makes a point of saying (p. 4) that he knows nothing about anarchist writers, nor does he know much about Marxist analysis apart from impressions (p. 60) either.

And so the stage isset to waver between "re-inventing the wheel" or a Humpty-Dumpty sense that "a word means exactly what I say it does, neither more nor less." In either mode, the result is not conducive to realism about what is going on, to which we are called to respond. Furthermore, his historical references are, at best, uneven.* The history of biblical exegesis and theological understanding is long and complex; it does no service to dismiss whole traditions, century after century, with a patronizing wave of the band. Indeed, we need iconoclasts to expose errors and shibboleths, but such a vocation requires more, not less insight and detailed knowledge than has prevailed.

Beyond these points, my major disappointment lies in his picture of responses being made by Christians today. My criticism may sound harsh, particularly as "the movement" can often drive me to distraction almost as much as it seems to annoy Mr. Eller. Still, I think we must avoid the temptation to judge anything anybody is doing with broad, unnuanced strokes and at its worst The critique is necessary, but how is it to be made? We must remember that caricature is not constructive, fraternal criticism, while sarcasm means "a tearing away at the flesh." In the interests of clarity and charity, we are not allowed to indulge in such approaches.

Take but one example, tax resistance is one of his main targets. In these sections, I found myself wondering "Whom is he talking about?" There are not all that many tax resisters around, but some do exist and they have seriousness and an awareness about the bonds among taxes, war and materialism — a recognition and thoughtfulness that come close to M. Ellul's discussion but that could not be guessed at from Mr. Eller. He does not bother to address the diverse philosophical biases and approaches among those who do so choose. Some are anarchist, most are not; some are believers, many are not; almost all focus on war taxes. None of these distinctions enters the book, and he completely ignores the form of tax resistance most consistent with anarchism, voluntary poverty (in keeping with Peter Maurin's - the co-founder of The Catholic Worker - dictum: "The less you have of Caesar's, the less you have to tender unto him"). Such failures from an author who wishes to shed light on the topic only further the division and shallowness, only give scandal rather than edify.

In the end, it comes down to the requirement of realism. The lacks in social analysis and dialectics (the very thinking that lies at the heart of M. Ellul's account of anarchism) combine to undo the contributions Vemard Eller could have made in *Christian Anarchy.*

☒*Examples of this unevenness come in his search for Biblical interpretations. On the one hand, his discussion of Philemon, for example, is enlightening, while his treatment of the Temple and synagogue in Jewish tradition, as another example, should have been edited out as an affront*

Jesus and Marx: From Gospel to Ideology, by Jacques Ellul

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, 187 pp., 12.95.

by Daniel B. Clendenin

William Tyndale College, Farmington Hills, Ml

At age eighteen Ellul borrowed a copy of Marx's *Das Kapital* from the library and, upon reading it, experienced a conversion to a global interpretation of the world. About the same time he also underwent what he describes as a "brutal conversion" to Jesus Christ Unable to eliminate either totalitarian truth, and unable to merge them into a synthesis, for the past sixty years Ellul has sought to hold them in "radical contradiction" (p. 63), by which he means a critical and mutual dialectical tension such as characterizes all of his thought In *Jesus and Marx* he offers a withering critique of the fashionable tendency which merges the two and declares that the only authentic Christian *praxis* is that which commits itself to Marxism. Understanding Ellul, though, demands an effort to enter into his dialectical mode of thinking which holds the two in critical tension. Readers must beware of making two errors.

First, despite this scathing critique, Ellul does not throw out the baby with the bath water. Marxist thought has challenged Christianity in a number of positive ways (pp.5-10). It focuses attention on the need for social justice (which is not to say it brings justice!). It recognizes the role of the poor in the historical process and enters their world (even if not for good). Marxists attain a "coherence between thought and action, theory and *praxis,"* which shames the church's disparity between word and deed. By focusing on the material factors of history, Marxists challenge the evangelical tendency toward a disembodied spiritualization of Christianity which is little more than a privatized experience. Finally, the zeal and militant spirit of Marxists challenge the church to become what we should be. Indeed, they take seriously the last of Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach',* the goal is not to interpret the world but to change it.

But readers must avoid the opposite mistake of reading Ellul as soft on Marxist Christians. His critique is at two levels. First, there is Marx himself. Marx could never answer existential questions of life, love and death; his view of people as merely economic beings *(homo economicus)* is reductionistic; and his belief in the inevitable progress of history is naive. Thus, Marx is not scientific but passionate (and that is why Ellul likes him). Most of *Jesus and Marx,* though, occurs at a second level and is directed to those Christians who claim to follow Marx. According to Ellul, their words and deeds show they are neither Marxist nor Christian. In chapters 2-6 Ellul levels an excoriating attack on such people, with special attention paid to Fernando Belo's *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark* (Orbis, 1981) and G. Casalis's *Correct Ideas Don't Fall from the Skies: Elements for an Inductive Theology* (Orbis, 1984). We can summarize five salient points made by Ellul.

First, Marxist Christians display an alarming degree of conformity to sociological trends. Thinking to be "progressive" in their positions, they are really just the opposite: eager-beaver Johnny-come-latelies who "conform culturally and intellectually to the rest of society" (p. 21). This guts Christianity of all content. Thus we witness an incredible sociological phenomenon: Christians who have every reason to oppose Communists and almost no reason to join them continue, like moths to a flame, to find it an irresistible attraction (p. 34).

Second, liberation theologians must ask the question: liberation for whose benefit? The so-called wars of liberation from capitalism and imperialism have resulted in worse dictators, more outrageous oppression and shameless brutality, more prisons, greater economic disparity, than any ever perpetuated by the West (p. 58). Given the fact that Communism "has never incarnated itself in anything but dictatorships," a Christian "would have to be crazy" to join them (p. 137). Third, where is the *praxis* of most of these theologians? Except for a small minority, most of these liberationists are bourgeois professors whose only *praxis* "consists of giving lectures, writing articles, traveling to congresses or colloquia, attending demonstrations, signing petitions and manifestos, and organizing seminars" (p. 128).

Fourth, when Marxist Christians accuse others of a blind reading of the Biblical text and claim to offer the first truly objective and "scientific" exegesis, they reveal their own pre-understandings. They fail to apply the myth of hermeneutical objectivity to themselves. In fact, this theology which claims to be inductive and based on the priority *of praxis* is in reality just another deductive theology with its own uncritically accepted assumptions. Finally, Ellul takes to task "service theology" which contends that meeting human need alone on the horizontal level is all that counts. Considering Matthew 9:2-13 as a case study, he shows how just the opposite is true: the vertical relationship of confession and worship must come first

Jesus and Marx is ultimately rooted in a broader Ellul theme: that the Gospel revelation is fundamentally iconoclastic and inimicable to all power, and especially political power (which is the worst kind). Thus, the book ends with a chapter on anarchy, "the only acceptable stance in the modem world" (p. 156n). By anarchy Ellul does not mean social chaos. "All my position means is that the present center of conflict is the state, so that we must adopt a radical position with respect to this unfeeling monster" (ibid.).

Un Chretien pour Israel, by Jacques Ellul

Monaco: Editions du Rocher, 1986,243 pp.

Reviewed by Darrell J. Fasching

This book reveals a side of Jacques Ellul that may come as a surprise to some. Most of us are familiar with Ellul the sociologist of technical civilization, Ellul the exegete of scripture, Ellul the theologian and ethicist of freedom. But in *Un Chretien pour Israel*

we now discover Ellul the champion of Judaism and defender of the state of Israel against all anti-Judaism, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

Although Ellul typically argues that only Christians can introduce freedom into a technical civilization, he clearly makes one exception to this rule. The one other community of hope and freedom is Judaism. Thus one might have guessed that Judaism has a special place in his theological thinking. For those who have read his earlier books *Hope in Time of Abandonment* and *Prayer and Modem Man* this will not come as a complete surprise (see the forum essay for this month). And careful attention to his Biblical commentary, *Apocalypse: The Book, of Revelation* might also have prepared one for this book. But even so I was still quite surprised and most delighted with the depth of his commitment.

The book begins with a personal preface and then proceeds to a discussion of the place of the Jewish people in Christian faith, scriptures, and theology - dealing forthrightly with the history of Christian anti-Judaism. This prepares the way for addressing anti-Jewish trends in our time and the link between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. An analysis of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist propaganda in contemporary news media coverage follows. The book then concludes with a historical and political analysis of the Middle East situation with special attention to the PLO - Israeli conflict, the emergence of an anti-Semitic bias in UN declarations, and finally a vigorous defense of Israeli political policies in relation to the Palestinians.

In the Preface, Ellul reveals some of the biographical details of how he has come to the position he holds in this book. He goes to lengths to show that his position is based not in any personal factors, such as personal friendships or family influences. Rather, his commitment to Judaism grows out his scriptural and theological understanding that being a Christian requires a relation to the Jewish people. Thus we find that he was largely indifferent toward Israel until 1948 when he read an essay by M. Visscher exegeting chapters 9-11 of Paul's letter to the Romans. "In my own spiritual life," he says "chapters 8 and 12 had played an important role, but I had never seen the importance of the teachings of Paul on the Jewish people (13)." This essay was decisive in his development of a commitment to the Jewish people. Thus he insists that he does not defend Israel out of a bad conscience for Christian persecutions of Jews, nor because of the Holocaust (even though he insists Christians must, of course, come to grips with these) nor out of any admiration for Israel's prowess in rebuilding the land of Israel. His defense of Israel comes rather as "a direct expression of the faith which I have in Jesus Christ and as a result of a series of political reflections (16)."

Ellul acknowledges that the New Testament has been the cause of anti-Judaism in Christian history, especially in placing blame for the death of Jesus on the Jews and for promoting a teaching of supersession - that gentile Christians replace the Jews as God's chosen people. But he argues that such a use of the New Testament scriptures is contrary to the theological meaning of the Gospel, which insists that the cause of Christ's death was "our sins." Moreover the negative teachings of contempt in Christianity are based on pulling passages out of context and applying them to

the whole of Judaism, and as a result creating a false theology of the rejection of the Jews. But there is only one place in the whole of the New Tostament in which the relationship of Jews to Christians is explicitly addressed as a theological issue, and that is in Paul's letter to the Romans. Everything else in the New Testament thus must be brought into reconciliation with it. Paul provides the norm and standard of theological truth in this area. And Paul's teaching is emphatic: the Jews are not rejected by God. Christians do not replace the Jews as God's elect, but rather are a wild olive branch grafted on to the holy root of Israel. In Ellul's view, Jews and Christians are the two covenant peoples who stand in a dialectical historical relationship to each other as God's faithful witnesses in history. The "Mystery" revealed in Paul is that "through Israel the election and salvation of the whole of humanity will finally be attained" (29) and thus "Israel must always be at the center of Christian theology"(33). Israel testifies to the faithfulness of God and the Church to the universality of the love of God. The problem, as Ellul sees it, was that this theology of Paul's was buried under a tradition of anti-Judaism in the Church fathers, beginning with Origen, so that Paul was selectively read and re-interpreted to conform to the myth of supersession.

As Ellul moves on to the contemporary implications of anti-Judaism, he develops the theme that contemporary anti-Zionism is fundamentally disguised anti-Judaism. Nor does he accept the specious argument that the Arabs can't be anti-Semitic since they are themselves Semites, arguing that Hitler's anti-Semitism (a racial prejudice) was in reality only disguised anti-Judaism (a religious prejudice), noting that Hitler had cordial relations with Palestinian Arabs, which seemed to cause him no problems at all.

One of Ellul's most provocative arguments is that the Palestinian people, as a political and "ethnic" reality, is the creation of propaganda. They had no special "Palestinian" ethnic identity prior to the formation of the state of Israel (157). They were simply Arabs living in the territory. "The Palestinians have never constituted a nation nor an organized people. They have never been a state" (108). It is only in the last twenty years that "the Palestinian people" have been created through political conflict and propaganda.

In the contemporary situation the media tend to portray the Palestinians as a persecuted minority who have a right to use violence while Israel is portrayed as the oppressive majority whose every act which uses force is condemned, ignoring the fact that the Palestinians are part of an Arab majority which both surrounds Israel from without and threatens her from within at the same time. Israel is accused of exploiting the bad conscience of the West, but nothing is said about the pro-Palestinian exploitation of the bad conscience of the West for its "colonialist crimes."

The most vicious propaganda tactic is to tum the Holocaust back upon the Jews by accusing them being the new Nazis and the Palestinians the new "Jews" or "persecuted people." The analogy is so inexact as to be blasphemous. There are no smoke stacks in Israel, there is no mass genocide. The identity cards and internment camps are no more than many other nations enact to protect their own security. The treatment

of Palestinians is no different than the treatment Jews are accorded in many other countries (e.g., USSR, Kuwait, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt,etc.) and yet the media find only the Palestinian situation an outrage. Moreover, few countries are as vulnerable to sudden attack as Israel and fewer still could be annihilated by such an attack.(Ellul calculates that the countiy could be divided by a decisive military attack in less than half an hour.) If other nations lose a war they have the luxury of regrouping their resources and going on. If Israel succumbs to attack there will be no second chance.

The outcome of this propaganda and the political situation it creates, Ellul argues, is to create a new pre-pogrom climate which will be used to "justify" a new attempt at a "final solution."

Ellul goes on to discuss the Palestinian charter, which like Hitler's Afein Khmgf promises the annihilation of the Jewish people and of the growing influence of anti Judaism in UN declarations and policy. On the Palestinian charter, he observes that it has never been revoked. He totally distrusts contemporary Palestinian claims to have revoked this commitment to the destruction of Israel, noting that until they change the charter by the same formal process in which it was first created such claims are nothing but lies and propaganda.

Ellul finally concludes the book with a discussion of Israel as a nation which is not "an exemplary" State, acknowledging that real abuses of power occur. But he nevertheless insists that Israel is a "unique state" showing greater conscience, morality and respect for its promises than have the nations which stand as its accusers. Ellul finishes on a discouraging note, saying that he can see no solution to the situation in the Middle East even as he warns that world peace for the future hangs in the balance there. Yet what is impossible for human beings may yet be possible for God. The task of Christians is to hope and pray and act as Christians "for Israel."

This book is rich in detail far beyond anything I can communicate in this review. Theologically I can find no fault with it at all. Historically, I do not have sufficient command of the depth and breadth of the facts of 20th century Middle Eastern history and politics so as to be able to disagree with it. At the very least it ought to be on the mandatory reading list of every Christian as a healthy antidote to the anti-Judaic and anti-Zionist propaganda we are deluged with and taken in by, all too often. (For this reason, I was very disappointed to learn that *Eerdmans* has decided not to publish an English translation. However, they have passed it on to *Helmers and Howard,* where Donald Simpson confirms that they are considering it for publication, so there is still hope.) Theologically, Ellul is surely right to insist that it is the special responsibility of Christians to be making the case "for Israel."

Daniel J. Lewis's Review of *'What I Believe'*

'What I Believe' by Jacques Ellul

Translated by G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989; London: Marshal Morgan and Scott, 1989), 223 pp., $19.95, cloth.

Reviewed by Daniel J. Lewis, *William Tyndale College*

Most books with the title "What I Believe" might be discounted out of hand. In this case, however, the fact that the book was written by Jacques Ellul makes the title intriguing rather than banal. The highest interest, of course, will be those who have already been exposed to Ellul's writings.

There is a careful distinction which the reader must observe between faith and belief, a distinction which Ellul makes in the "introduction" and which must not be passed over. Belief, at least in the way Ellul uses it, is the affirmation of what he thinks about things, not so much on a doctrinal level but in terms of a world view. The book is not creedal, and it is not a theology, though as is usual in Ellul's works, theology influences his treatment of the subject matter. Neither is it a philosophical prolegomena, though despite Ellul's aversion to it, philosophy also impinges on the subject matter. Rather, the work is more on the order of an assessment and a conclusion about the way in which human life and society exists, how people make decisions, how the human race explores its potential - and most important - what are the far reaching implications of all this.

Ellul addresses his world view in three major sections. The first is a collage of various beliefs about reality, including the meaning of life, the relationship between chance, necessity, and accident, the nature of communicable truth, the importance of dialectic, the human desire for harmony as a lost ideal in need of restoration, the problem of evil, and the human need for life-long love which arises out of freedom. As is characteristic of his other works, there is a strong ethical bent throughout He himself says, "I have devoted my whole life to making people more aware, more free, more capable of judging themselves, of getting out of the crowd, of choosing, and at the same time of avoiding wickedness and imbecility. My books have never had any other goal" (p. 64).

Special comment is in order with regard to his discussion of the dialectical method. In fact, for anyone not familiar with Ellul's works (and possibly even for those who are), it would be appropriate to read the chapter on dialectic immediately following the introduction. Ellul frequently resorts to explaining his beliefs by the negation of what he does not believe. His method is not unlike that of the sage in the Upanishads who, when pressed for a definition of God, says, "neti, neti," i.e., "not this, not that."

The second major section explores a philosophy of history. Since Ellul's speciality is sociology and history, this portion is particularly insightful. Ellul explains human history under the rubric of three stages or environments, the environment of nature, which be calls the original or prehistoric environment, the environment of the social group, labeled the historical period, and the environment of technology, the post-historic era into which human society is now plunging. Each new environment appears, not by

eliminating the previous one, but by superimposition, thus modifying and reducing it to a substratum.

The final major section addresses theism and what Ellul perceives to be metaphysical reality. While it is not so easy to pigeonhole Ellul into a definite theological category, it can at least be said that he certainly is neither a deist, gnostic, process theologian, apologist, nor fatalist. He is more similar, at least in dialectical method, to Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and the Niebuhr brothers. In this final section, he addresses the spiritual potential inherent in a freedom of history, and he does so through the theological lens of God's rest on the seventh day. This rest, which has already been inaugurated, still awaits its consummation in which all the tensions of history and human life will be resolved by a foil reconciliation with God. Reconciliation with God is unilateral, and the divine rest, which will be consummated in a total way at the conclusion of history, becomes the foundation of Ellul's universalism. In his closing comments, he suggests that human freedom to cooperate with God will result in the divine recognition and acceptance of human work, and as he says in his closing line,"... to the utmost of my power it has been the meaning and motivation of all that I do."

It is difficult to be critical of a world view, except to express agreement or disagreement. A world view is not some matter of fact or research, but a perspective and a value judgment on life and reality. At the same time, it may be said from the viewpoint of this reviewer that the most stimulating and perceptive area of the book is Ellul's forcefol and convincing analysis of the technological environment, not as an entity to which a minor adjustment can be made, but as a total framework which assimilates all else in human society.

Jacques Ellul, *Le bluff technologique [The Technological Bluff].*

Paris: Hachette, 1988

Reviewed by Gabriel Vahanian, Universtiy of Strasbourg

Translated by Charles L. Creegan

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Nothing irritates Jacques Ellul so much as being taken for someone "opposed" to technique, by detractors and admirers alike. He repeatedly shows that one cannot be opposed to technique any more than to avalanches, but nobody — or almost nobody - pays any attention. Though many arguments could be given in his defense, I will mention two, which are the most important for an understanding of this last work and the numerous other writings he has given over to this subject.

The first argument begins from the simple fact that Ellul, who certainly does not esteem technique too highly, is careful not to underestimate it. On the contrary, I would

say that he overestimates it and moreover that he is well aware of this. Clearly he sees in technique a sort of bogey man, though he is wont to complain that it only succeeds as a scarecrow. But we are rather more fallen than the birds, particularly as we play sorcerer's apprentice. In our hands technique inevitably slips its chains˜or is it that we simply conspire to charge our own slips to its account? And when we foot a bill far too large for our human purses, we are not only the victims of an enormous bluff, but worse, its willing victims. Of course, we cover ourselves by a technicality: we abdicate. It is this abdication which Ellul exposes in *Le bluff technologique,* a volume which will no doubt be seen to form a trilogy with *The Technological Society (La technique,* 1954) and *The Technological System (Le systeme technicien,* 1975). These titles illustrate a semantic glissade, which did not happen by chance. We are bluffed, not by technique, but by the system which we erect upon it-using technique to enthrall ourselves rather than to help us toward self-evaluation. But Ellul tells us that all technical progress has its cost, and furthermore that technique does not bluff. So it is we who must bear this cost, at the price of being-along with technique?–the objects of one of the most enormous bluffs, the technological bluff: "that is, the gigantic bluff of a discourse on techniques [my emphasis-G. V.] in which we are caught up, which continually causes us to take hawks for handsaws and, what is worse, to modify our stance toward our own techniques." For after all what is a man, if not that by which we escape from technique? Even a technological society has in it a bit of social vision which escapes the embrace of its techniques-unless it is taken in, and resigns itself, under the fallacious pretext that because one is not opposed to technique, one must believe the slogan "it can do anything," and thus one must blindly let it do whatever it can.

We again owe thanks to Jacques Ellul for crossing the "t's" and dotting the" i's." It is not against technique that we must work, but against the discourse into which we force it beyond measure and beyond reason. Ellul takes up this task with a will. One after another, he masterfully dismantles all those technological challenges with which we have been ceaselessly plied and with which we are still being tempted, though in fact even the technological fairy has lost her way-if she is not making us lose our heads! He addresses four issues, which all participate in the growing uncertainty about the effects of an invasive, unassimilated technique: the ambivalence of technical progress; the unpredictable nature of development; the vicious circle constituted by technique and its insidious influence on politics and science or the economy; and finally the contradictions inherent in the system itself. The upshot, aside from spiritual impoverishment, is a marginalization approaching abrogation of culture. Without flinching, Ellul writes: "a technological culture is impossible." He believes that "culture is necessarily humanistic or it does not exist," and deciares categorically that "no bridge between the two is possible."

Then are we irremediably condemned-irrecoverable? One would never guess Ellul's reply. It is a firm no! He is categorical, though his hope rests only on the fact that in the last analysis, "the gigantic bluff is self-contradictory" and "has nothing to do with the fact that technique yields very satisfying and useful fruits, as I have never denied."

And I call attention to the fact that the emphasis is Ellul's: he brings me to the second of the reasons which I invoked above against those who unfairly accuse him of being opposed to technique. He will pardon me for expressing it in the well-known formula:

A man more Utopian than Ellul has never been born!*

* The last line is an idiomatic translation. A literal translation of the French would read: *"More Utopian than Ellul, you die."*

** *The Technological Bluff* is scheduled to be published in English by Eerdmans s before the end of 1990.

The Struggle for America 's *Soul: Evangelicals, Liberals, and Secularism.* By Robert Wuthnow.

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989,189pp., $16.95 paper.

by David L. Russell

William Tyndale College, Farmington Hills, MI.

The ever growing interest in American Evangelicalism has resulted in a smorgasbord of thought-provoking publications. While many new historiographies continue to be published on evangelicalism and fundamentalism, an impressive number of works are now being produced from within sociological circles. In a review article in the *Evangelical Studies Bulletin* (Fall 1989) historian Mark Noll quips, "It is becoming increasingly difficult for historians of religion to maintain their prejudices against sociologists." The gist if this statement has to do with the positive impression sociologists of religion have been making, not only upon the field of religious history, but upon the varied fields of theology as well. - –

At the top of the list of impressive publications from a sociological perspective is this most recent work by Robert Wuthnow, professor of sociology at Princeton University. Interestingly, this book follows one year behind his preceding publication, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith since World War II.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), considered to be the most concise history of American religion since World War IL

Wuthnow's analysis is centered around the dynamics of two competing groups in American society, conservative evangelicals and religious liberals, both of which are influenced by a seemingly progressive secularism, to begin with, the author identifies three main sectors at work in American society: 1) The public sector, 2) The private sector, and 3) The voluntary sector. While many social theorists identify only two sectors, public and private, it is Wuthnow who opts, for the voluntary sector. It is his contention that the voluntary sector possesses aspects of both the public and the private sectors. The Church functions in the voluntary sector, however, the changing dynamics in society are changing the role and relationship of such voluntary organizations to society overall. In light of the relationship of the Church as a voluntary

organism in American society there are added dynamics at work within the Church which increasingly make ambiguous and complicate that relationship. Wuthnow identifies it in the historic break between religious conservatives and religious liberals as far back as the years immediately following the Civil War, but perhaps as far back as the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. The contested terrain (chapter 3) of conservatives and liberals has continually drawn them "...into the public sphere in recent years" (p.41) yet with little progress in terms of arriving at a common ground.

Ongoing debates continue over the abortion issue, prayer in the public schools, gay and lesbian rights, and the nuclear arms race to mention just a few. Instead of arriving at constructive conclusions conservatives and liberals resort to a tit for tat game of "Argumentum Ad Hominem." What, then, is the end result ? According to Wuthnow, it "...has been a travesty of the profession of love, forgiveness, and mutual forbearance" (p.64). Wuthnow uses the Presbyterian Church as an institutional model for the past and present struggles between conservatives and liberals not for the reason that there have been no struggles in any of the other denominations, but mainly because of the magnitude of the struggle for Presbyterians. Division has haunted the Presbyterian Church from the days of the "New Light" versus the "Old Light" controversy during the First Great Awakening to the present day divisions between Presbyterian conservatives and Presbyterian liberals. The possibility of reconciliation, while hoped for by some, is in Wuthnow's opinion, slim to none. He in fact argues that the cleavage between these two warring parties is unfortunate for the reason that the conflict is skewing efforts to reconcile and more clearly see the biblical mandates for love and understanding.

In part II Wuthnow turns his attention to the "Dynamics of the Secular." The focus of this section deals with the ways in which the state, the media, and education all effect the function and role of religion in American society. In particular is the concern for the tendency of the state to drive individuals into various forms of civil privatism.

Conversely, there has been a privatization of America's faith attributable to many factors, including the increasingly pluralistic nature of American religion, and the greater identification of personal faith with the private sector. Interestingly enough Wuthnow accuses the widening appeal of the religious mass media of contributing to the privatization of faith. The televised religious format becomes a surrogate for the real thing. In other words, who needs the First Baptist Church down the road when you can tune into the "Glass Cathedral" on the tube ? In this sense the religious couch-potato can receive dynamic Bible teaching and words of encouragement while maintaining a detached commitment obliging themselves only to mailing in an occasional check.

The battle between "Science and the Sacred" (chapter 7) has also been a contributing factor in the divisions between conservatives and liberals. For this study, the presumption that science is a contributing factor in the advancement of secularism seems to be refuted by the evidence that Wuthnow presents. The available evidence appears to indicate that there is a greater likelihood of secularization within the disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities.

In summary, Wuthnow poses a challenge to the evangelical academic community to continue working at developing credible scholarship and the utilization of the resources at their disposal. According to Wuthnow, "the intellectual community and the public at large have a tremendous interest in knowing more about evangelical Christianity" (p.175). So what seems to be the problem in achieving greater goals in the evangelical community ? Wuthnow seems to indicate that more reconciliation needs to take place between evangelical Christians and liberal Christians.

Overall, I found this work well reasoned and adequate in its analysis of evangelicals and liberals. However, at times I got the sense that Wuthnow failed to clearly discriminate between fundamentalists and evangelicals and as a result he seemed to define conservative evangelicals as fundamentalists. I do believe that Wuihnow made periodic attempts to distinguish between the two (e.g., pp. 43 and 171). It should also be understood that the terms evangelical and fundamentalist are ambiguous and not so easily defined. It will be interesting to see what Wuthnow may produce in the future, but this work is bound to be one of his best.

Essay Reviews

God and Utopia: The Church in a Technological Civilization

by Gabriel Vahanian (N.Y.: Seabury, 1982)
An Essay Review by Lonnie D. Kliever
Southern Methodist University

This essay first appeared in the summer issue of *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses, 11/3 (1982), pp.321-324, and is reprinted here* with the permission of the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion. (Note: In transcribing this paper bold face emphasis has been added to certain passages.)

Perhaps no contemporary theologian is more frequently misunderstood than Gabriel Vahanian. Often wrongly associated with other movements (Left-wing Barthianism, Death-of-God theology), he has gone his own way in fashioning a theological vision at once distinctively biblical and uncompromisingly modern. The constructive lineaments of that theology have been partially obscured by the iconoclastic tone and message of Vahanian's writings in the 1960s - *The Death of God* (New York: Braziller, 1961), *Wait Without Idols* (New York: Braziller, 1964), and *No Other God* (New York: Braziller, 1966). With the publication of *God and Utopia: The Church in a Technological Civilization* (New York: Seajgjury Press, 1977), the full shape and significance of Vahaniaf^ljfheology has emerged. In this genuinely original and radical statement, he establishes the essential identity between a 'utopiari i^manism' and an 'eschatological faith' and sketches out the linguae and ecclesiological form that faith must take in the 'technolSgRal civilization' that is dawning in our time.

Vahanian sees all human existence as essentially utopian. This 'utopianism of the human reality' functions both as a limit and as a horizon. As horizon, "the human" confronts human beings as a dare without prototype. As limit, "the human" contests every expression of life as less than a final achievement. Both dimensions of the utopian are caught etymologically in the Greek word for utopia -*ouk topos.* Human life happens where strictly speaking "it has no place." This utopian "otherness" or "beyondness" is, of course, what religions speak of symbolically as "God." As we shall see, there^jje very different ways of conceiving the relation, between "GSo* and humans. But whatever the conceptuality, God is God and ffimans are human only so long as they remain other to one another?

There can be no doubt that for Vahanian biblical fait]) is paradigmatic for this joining of the utopian and of the religious. Indeed, the utopian character of authentic humanism and the "eschatic" nature of biblical faith are structurally identical. But this formal identity must not be misunderstood. Vahanian does not generalize utopian humanism and eschatic faith to some universal experience enjoyed equally by all. Both the human and the divine come to appearance only in language and that language is always culturally and religiously particular. The utopian reality of the human and of God is always expressed in a culture's own religiosity and every religiosity is articulated in a specific cultural framework. This means that a given religious and cultural symbol system may either express or repress true humanity and true divinity. Any given symbol system can spell death or life to humans and to God!

Vahanian calls each such symbol system a "technique of the human," and notes that each technique is borne by a distinctive "vector of culture." The heart of this theological program centres in sorting out the ways these techniques differ and why their vectors change with the passage of time. He begins by marking a crucial distinction between "soteriological" and "eschatological" techniques of the human. Soteriological techniques (religions of salvation) envision God as the condition of the human. In soteric religiosity, God's transcendence is *exterior* to humans and the world. Human existence is defined by "scarcity" and "heteronomy" and the utopian destiny of the human is projected into *another world* which can only be anticipated through "spiritual" evasion of this world. By contrast, eschatological techniques (religions of the reign of God) see humans as the condition of God. Eschatic religiosity sees God's transcendence as *anterior* to human beings and the world. Human existence is marked by "abundance" and "autonomy" and the utopian destiny of the human is realized in this world becoming *other* through "bodily" engagement with it.

Vahanian further divides soteriological techniques according to whether humanization is seen as a liberation from nature or from history. A soteric religiosity vectored on *nature* centres in a "supernatural" conception of transcendence. Only a return to a supernatural world above can make up for the mysteries and miseries of life in the natural world. By contrast, asoteric religiosity vectored on *history* turns on an "apocalyptic" conception of transcendence. Only the arrival of the apocalyptic world ahead can resolve the vicissitudes and injustices of historical existence. In other words, these soteriological techniques of the human rest on "mythic" conceptions of transcendence. They distinguish humans and God, world and kingdom, by *separating* them spatially and temporally. Consequently, these mythic carriers are never adequate for expressing true humanism or biblical faith. Soteriological religiosity always consigns the utopian reality of humans and God to some paradisal past or apocalyptic future. Their utopianism has consisted largely "in changing worlds rather than in changing the world."

Given these distinctions, Vahanian argues that Christianity has been a "salvation religion" throughout most of its history. To be sure, there was no way historically that Christianity could have avoided taking the cultural form of a soteric faith because the only cultural vectors available in the Greco-Roman world were mythic. Moreover, these

supernatural and historical theisms at least mediated the utopian reality of God and humans in aaambiguous way. Belief in another-world above of ahead at least stood guard iconoclastically against all temptations to deify nature or society. The existence of the church at least prevented total disengagement from every concern for the world. But even these "misshapen utopianisms" have lost their power to bring the human and God to appearance in the modern world. An axial shift in modern sensibilities has "dishabilitated" the entire Christian tradition by undermining its mythic framework. The God of salvation religion who fulfills life from above nature or beyond history is no more! All mythic "cultural vehicles" of transcendence have been dissolved by the triumph of technological civilization. Modem technology has delivered humans from the mythic world of scarcity and heteronomy into the technological world of abundance and autonomy. Modern technology has made humans *producers* of nature and history rather then their *products.*

Seen in this light, technology is not the threat to humanism and faith so widely feared today. Technology liberates humans from an impersonal nature and history and empowers them to humanize both. What then is technology if not the the continuation of utopian humanism and eschatological faith? If the proper place of the human is neither "residue of nature" nor "afterglow of history," then technology furthers the realization of "the coming of [the hu]man" by extricating humans from nature's necessities and history's terrors. In other words, technology both negates and fulfills the Christian tradition. In negating Christianity's mythological conception of religion (whether in its supernatural or apocalyptic version), technology at last offers a cultural vector that can embody a genuinely eschatological faith.

Vahanian is under no illusions that technology's promise will be realized automatically. Technology will foster the utopianism proper to the human only if it gets "the religion it deserves." That new religiosity requires a new language and a new ecclesiology. Here Vahanian is still feeling his way and his thought at this point reaches an unparalleled density and difficulty. But the essential shape of this requisite linguistic and ecclesial revolution is clear enough to be grasped.

Linguistically, an eschatological faith can speak of God and the kingdom of God only by speaking of humans and their world. The human is the "event of God," though God is the ever-present other by which humans become what they are not. The world is the "event of God's kingdom," though the kingdom is the never-present *eschaton* that calls forth the world as *novum.* But language about humans and the world in a technological civilization must be *bodily* and *fictile.* The shift from mythology to technology is a shift from a "civilization of the soul" to a "civilization of the body." Technological civilization gives humans an earthly dimension heretofore neglected in favor of the soul and its heavenly aspirations. Body language brings the utopian reality of the human and God into the realizable present and thereby makes the human body and the social structure the instrument of the kingdom and the incarnation of God! But body language that does not sink into factualism or soar into fantasy must be fictile –it must shape the present by joining the real and the imaginary. Indeed, every

human body and social structure is a "bridge" between the imaginary and the real precisely because language is the "artificer" of the human. "Language nudges the body into the word as well as anchoring the word in the body, even as the imaginary is anchored in the real. Indeed there is no utopia except in terms of the realizable, and the imaginary is nothing other than a utopianism of the real. Eschatological artifice does not overwhelm the imaginary with the real, nor does it sublimate the real in the imaginary. It emancipates humans from both, "thereby bringing hope within reach."

Ecclesiologically, an eschatological faith is neither identical with nor separate from the customs and structures of society. The church is rather "the eschatological principle of political and social organization of the human order." The utopian church in a technological civilization must meet the challenge of the "technocratic" systematization and privatization of life. The often-voiced fear that technology inevitably brings dehumanization and faithlessness grows out of technology's breakup of traditional customs, roles, and communities. Bureaucratic rationalization and multinational corporations are making traditional geographic and sociological boundaries obsolescent. Seen in its best light, this technological leveling could signal the latter-day beginnings of a "city of earth" where there is neither East nor West, black nor white, male nor female. But what of the individual who seems lost in this "gigantism" and "interchangeability"? Will the individual and the interpersonal simply disappear in the extraordinary *artificiality* of the technological environment and persona? While admitting the dangers of such a loss, Vahanian contends that artificiality need not oppose the human. After all, linguistic artifice creates the utopian "nowhere" where human life happens. "Far from being a robot, artificial man is the man who makes himself." "Artificial man" can be authentic if he or she makes himself or herself in the image of an imageless God."

The church cannot contribute to this artistic process of humanization by establishing havens of seclusion or ghettos of particularity. The church must go beyond all confessional or geographical boundaries. Neither liturgy nor polity should separate the church from the human community. Yet the church will lose its iconoclastic function and its eschatological anchorage if it is nothing but that community. The utopian church is an *other* world in the present world precisely because it is "pleromatic" - bringing all things everywhere into fullness by naming the One God who is everywhere because nowhere, and who is for every one because for no one. The utopian church is anywhere and everywhere anyone makes a new world.

Here then in bold strokes is the sum of two thousand years of Christian thought and life. Vfebanian presents a remarkable sketch of humans and their world in transition from a mythic to a technological civilization. That unanswered questions and critical problems abound in a work this encompassing and radical goes without saying. More traditional thinkers will ask: Is the reality of God so language-dependent? Does an eschatological faith offer real consolations? Is the utopian church anything more than an ideal construct? More radical thinkers will ask: Why does biblical faith deserve normative status? Does utopian humanism require symbols of radical transcendence? Does technological rationality allow anything other than private religiosity? But ques-

tions such as these do not blunt the sharpness of Albanian's challenge to both sides of the contemporary debate over human nature and destiny - to a reductionistic atheism that simply re-assigns the attributes of God to humans or to a repristinated theism that simply remodels human dependence on God. Neither atheism nor theism meets the challenge of making and keeping human life human in a technological civilization.

Dieu anonyme, ou la peur des mots [God Anonymous, or Fear of Words]

by Gabriel Vahanian (Paris, Descl€e de Brouwer, 1989)
An Essay Review by Philippe Aubert Pastor, Reformed Church of Alsace
Translated by Charles L. Creegan

God Speaks Our Language

Many theologies have endless prolegomena. One may enquire into the relation between faith and reason, between ontology and theology; lay the foundations of an existentialist, materialist or other reading of the Biblical tradition; reflect on the being of God and the being of humans. It is very true that all God-talk is grist for the Biblical mill. God may be defined as Alpha and Omega, the all-powerful, the judge or the gracious one. These conceptions of God are all present in the Biblical tradition, but the originality of the Biblical message over against other religions is not to be found in any of them.[1]

God is a God who speaks, the inverse of silent idols: "And like all speech, which binds even while liberating, God, bound to humanity, is only so bound by the word."

Even before Gabriel Albanian, Christianity has certainty not lacked theologians who have placed this Biblical affirmation at the center of their theological thought fhr rarer are those who have accepted all the consequences. Barth himself fell by the wayside — a victim, like many others, of a hermeneutics of history. Tt> say that God is speech, that God is connected to humanity only by language and not by virtue of an analogy of being, or some sort of historical conscience, is to radicalize to the point at which God escapes from the idol which we make as soon as we assign to God a name, a place, a history, be it ever so holy.

Here we can see a filiation with the thought of Bultmann, who, in his enterprise of demythologizing, had no other intention than to bring God back to the zero point, a point of no return at which onty the new and the impossible are possible. That is what the Bible does when it forges the idea of redemption over against that of history, of creation over against that of nature.

[1] Gabriel Vahanian, *DieuAnonyme ou la pew des mots* (Paris, Desclde de Brouwer, 1989), p. 17.

Radicalized, God is no more tied to nature than to history. Holding to a hermeneutics of speech from Genesis to Revelation, from creation td resurrection, Albanian elaborates in his book a veritable Systematic Theology. Diving back into the sources of Biblical tradition, his thought does not switch Gods at the whim of the diversity of Biblical texts, of our existential angst, or of passing trends.

Offered as prolegomena are the central affirmations of the BiUe: God is speech, and its fulfillment: the Word made flesh. In this verbal condition, God and humanity are linked by language. If the break with ontotheology is not surprising, the anthropology found in Albanian's thought is worthy of greater attention. In a world where often God has resolved the human question, but also-inevitabty-humans have resolved the Divine question, Albanian reminds us that far from exposing of confusing these questions, the Bible radicalizes them to the point of defining them in terms of alterity: an alterity which onty language can establish.

> Speech does not separate. It does not separate what God has joined together. It does not separate what is one-as a hand is one with another in dapping, or I with thou, God with humanity in metaphor. It is not metaphor which is a manner of speaking *a* language. It is language which is a metaphor. It is the power of metaphor which bodies out the space of a speech as it makes of speech God's space: a space where humanity is the condition of God, where the reality of God is given with the reality of the world, but nevertheless without their becoming confused.[2]

Humans are grounded in God; like Adam, called Son of God, they have no other antecedents than speech. Thus they could not be defined as changelings of nature or as beings gifted with a historical conscience. Without precedents, each one is altogether as hu man as anyone, in the formula which Albanian borrows from Jean-Paul Sartre. "Where even God is no more than a word. A word thanks to which humanity is no longer grounded and never will be solely grounded in nature-though we must first be human, and, like Adam, hitman first rather than the first human."[3]

Now it is dear that language cannot be reduced to a simple code of signs and symbols.

We are far from the conception of Paul Tillich, for whom religious language can onty be symbolic: "[The symbol opens] up levels of reality which otherwise are hidden and cannot be grasped in any other way."[4] Tillich translates, he does not radicalize, so that for him the word "God" cannot be replaced since it partidpates in the Holy which it expresses. Translation onty displaces or circumvents the Holy, it makes language an instrument or even a mask. For Albanian, in speaking, God unmasks, un-names,

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[2] Ibid., p. 18.

[3] Ibid., p. 63.

[4] Paul Tillich, *Theology of Cultwe,* ed. Robert C. Kimball (New York, Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 56 [cited in French translation–Tr.] .

de-sacralizes, putting himself [berselfpn question thanks to language which by nature is iconoclastic and utopian.

God can onty be spoken!

Speech and Utopia: God

Refusing to enclose God in a name, the Bible also constrains itself from enclosing God in a place: Biblical iconoclasm moves from the anonymity to the utopianism of God. For the myth of the Eternal Return or of the Earth-mother is substituted the hope in the Promised Land; to natural order which engenders an ethic of necessity is now propounded the Law, gracious order for which the onty possible ethic is that of the impossible.

Master of the Universe, God creates. Thus is wiped out any idea of a generative Nature which takes care only of those it favors.

So in the Old Testament, the appeal to nature as a norm and criterion of life yields to the Law. The Earth-mother yields to the Promised Land. And the Eternal Return yields to the Sabbath, while humans, whatever they may be in the natural order; are all equidistant from God.

Albanian restores this utopianism, which succumbs to a sacral conception of God and of the world, by a formula which acts as leitmotif from beginning to end of the book: "ftith consists not in changing worlds, but in changing the world."[5]

Salvation and Utopia: The Christ

Whether in a sacral or utopian conception of the world, every religion must address the question of salvation. For from Israel to the Church, salvation is the central problem of the Bible.

The answer to this question must lie in the Christie conception of God, but also-as Albanian is at pains to show-in the Christie conception of humans. Classical Christology generally develops in three parts. First is an ontological reflection on the person of Christ, which most often aims to emphasize the ontological specificity of Christ as against humans, or again to deny any differences; in this second case, the difference between Christ and us would come out existentially. The second part attempts to discover the historical foundations of the life of Jesus, while the third is given over to the soteriology which follows from the confession of Jesus Christ as savior.

For Vahanian, Jesus is no more the answer to the God question than He is to the human question. He absorbs neither, but rather sets them face to face in their alterity and their communion, thus becoming the covenant between God and humanity. The measure of God and of the person who is the Christ does not begin with the birth of Jesus, but with the faith of the believer. That is to say, faith guarantees its own

[5] Vahanian, p. 79.

foundation and the result of historical studies is of minor importance. Does not St. Paul himself settle the question by reminding us that we only know the Christ of the writings?* The life of Christ begins with faith and the sense of God shown when, in Christ, God is not stuck in divinity nor the human in humanity, but God is of one body with humans, and in Christ 'humanity is the condition of God."

> Son of God, Christ does not represent the quintessence of God, but God's providence, in other words God's currency. Son of Man and thus native of the human, he does not symbolize the culmination of nature through the human phenomenon which would also be its conscience, but the novelty of humanity.[6]

More than ever it is a question of salvation. The word is made flesh to be embodied, to become Church as body of Christ-but on condition of becoming a social body in all of its dimensions, ethical, political, economic and cultural. Far from any mysticism, the thought of Vahanian ever returns to ethics: an ethics which permits us to change the world, as opposed to a mysticism which only changes worlds.

Utopianism of the Body and Social Order The Spirit

Far from setting in opposition heaven and earth, God and humanity, or the flesh and the spirit, the Bible invites us to engage nature and its determinism, history and its absolutisms, and the social order.

The pneumatology of Vahanian does not rest on a subtle analysis of the different names which refer to the Spirit. The best way of understanding the third person of the Trinity is still the amazing story of Pentecost.

While Western theology has, for a variety of reasons, dangerously reduced the place of the Spirit, our author gives it a new spin which is not unsurprising. Rather than any mystical manifestation like glossolalia, the outpouring of the Spirit is nothing other than a new social order, an ecclesial vision of the world.

> And how is this order to be recognized? From the fact that it falls into place once our behavior-on the social as well as the religious, cultural and ethical levels-demonstrate the conviction that is ours when our living is living the Christ.[7]

To live the Christ and not simply in Christ. The nuance in the Pauline expression must not be pushed too far; Vahanian wishes to insist on the fact that the Spirit does not interiorize the Christ, but exteriorizes him, communicates him in every person's

[6] Ibid., p. 117.
[7] Ibid., p. 136.

language. Every person, be they Parthian, Elamite, Mesopotamian, Jew or Greek, male or female, rich or poor.

Not satisfied to revise the social order which classifies people according to their merits, or privileges of land or blood, the Spirit moves between the individual and the communal - [shaping] a community in which communion must not eclipse communication. St.Paul was already worried at the attitude of those Christians for whom the edification of the neighbor was secondary to the mystical communion of speaking in tongues. It falls to Vahanian to take up the cause and to take on the interpretation of the famous passages which Paul devotes to this problem in the first letter to the Corinthians.

> And would not God then be reduced to a mere effect of language-—like that other Divine abyss, Being, or what fills it, the Holy? Speech postulates language. But when through misdirection it is called to postulate both more and less than language, it leaves the sphere of language. Then it serves to strengthen a vision of the world more mystical than ethical: dualistic, and providing a springboard for the initiates, the candidates for otherness. But if God is a God who speaks to us, God is willingly placed in question, less through nature and its catastrophism or history and its tragedy, than through language. It is in language that one recognizes the traces of God, as those of the wind in the grass, breath in the word, and the Spirit in the newness of the world and of life.[8]

In this book, Gabriel X&hanian shows that it is possible to escape the eternal problem of theism and atheism by returning to the roots of Biblical tradition.

Taking up the theses already expressed in *God and Utopia,* the author proceeds to a true theological reconstruction which, far from refuting tradition, restores it by reorienting it in a direction it should never have left. A theology in gear with modernity which returns to the Christian an awareness of faith, a capacity to grasp the reality of the world, not fleeing it, but rather changing it. On one condition: that the Church must show its mettle, it must not be afraid of words; for more than our past or our future it is speech which remains a challenge to humans and a hope of humanity.

☒ Editor's note: Mr. Aubert makes a puzzling allusion here. I suspect he means to say, as Vahanian does say, that Paul reminds us that even if we once knew Christ in the flesh that is not how we now know him, for we now' know him only in the Spirit. (2 Cor. 5:16).

[8] Ibid., p. 139.

Misc.

Debut Issue Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *The Ellul Studies Bulletin.* Thanks to the organizational work of Dan Clendenin, Ellul scholars from around the country (and even beyond its borders) met for the first time at the American Academy of Religion convention in Boston last December. At that meeting I indicated that I would be willing to edit a newsletter which could serve as a communications link among us. This letter fulfills that commitment.

Jacques Ellul's "contribution to contemporary theology is monumental... a comprehensive *tour de force."* This conclusion from my book, *The Thought of Jacques Ellul* (Mellen Press, 1981), has been criticized as perhaps too strong a claim. However I remain unrepentant As *the Epilogue* (177ff) in which this statement appeared made clear, his work is monumental not because he is right in every respect but because of its unique focus and comprehensiveness. The depth and breadth of his work "culminates in a thorough sociological analysis of the technological society and its religiosity in such a way as to directly lay bare the ethical and theological issues surrounding human freedom and the future in our technological civilization."

Ellul has helped theologians to see that technology is not just one more thing to think about but rather has replaced "nature" as the new all-encompassing context in which theology is done. "Perhaps the most important contribution of Jacques Ellul to the future agenda of theology is not the *answers* he offers to the questions he raises (although his *answers* are not insignificant, he would not think of them assoZuftons) but the questions themselves." Through his sociological analysis of the sacralization of technology placed in dialectical confrontation with the Biblical witness to the Holy, Ellul has taught us how to raise the question of technology in such a way as to be appropriated for theological reflection and ethical consideration." He has taught us how to think critically, creatively and constructively about technology in a way no one else has managed to do. Barth may be his equal, indeed his mentor, in theology. Lewis Mumford may approach his status as a sociological and historical critic of technology, but no one has brought these two disciplines (theology and sociology) together in such a way as to define the theological and ethical agenda as Ellul has. "Thus even where Ellul may be thought in error by some, I believe he will be seen as having advanced our understanding of the issues, for his bold formulations provoke further investigation, further dialogue, further insight. He is a man who has done his homework

to our benefit." One may not agree with Ellul but there is no way to responsibly do theology in our technological civilization without taking his work into account. There is no way around him, only through him. That is what makes his work monumental.

It is appropriate therefore that this publication bear Ellul's name. It is my hope that *The Ellul Studies Bulletin* will live up to Ellul's dialectical and dialogical standards. Nothing would be more embarrassing and disappointing to Ellul than to have this *Bulletin* be the vehicle for *true disciples, Ellul groupies,* or a *cult of Jacques Ellul.* The whole thrust of Ellul's theological ethics has been to force Christians to think for themselves and *invent* their own responses. Although the *Bulletin* will review and discuss Ellul's work, it should not be our purpose to turn Ellul's scholarship into a body of *sacred* literature to be endlessly dissected. The appropriate tribute of the *Bulletin* to Ellul's work will be to carry forward its spirit, its agenda for the critical analysis of our technological civilization. Ellul invites us to think new thoughts and enact new deeds. The *Bulletin* should be a vehicle for carrying out that challenge, hence the tag line of the *Bulletin, "A Forum for Scholarship on Theology and Technology"*

I debated about what to call this publication. At first I thought perhaps *The Ellul Studies Newsletter.* But I wanted it to be something more than a newsletter and yet something less than a journal. I hope the *Bulletin* will create such a niche for itself. It should be a vehicle for the exchange of information on conferences, publications, etc. But I also hope that it will be a forum for the exchange of ideas. I would like to invite you to submit short position papers (up to ten double spaced pages) for open discussion. Responses would be invited and printed in the next issue. Sometimes when weare working on ideas but are not quite ready to put them in final form it would be helpfill to be able to send up a *trial balloon* and see how it flies. *The Forum,* I hope, will serve that purpose.

The Ellul Studies Bulletin will be published twice a year in late Spring and again in late Ball (about a month before the AAR meeting). This first issue is free and I encourage you to duplicate it and send it to interested friends or send me their addresses and I will put them on the mailing list. If you decide you wish to receive the *Bulletin* you will need to fill out the subscription form on the last page of this issue and mail it in with your check. Within the United States subscriptions are $4.00 per year. Outside the U.S. subscriptions are $6.00. These rates will have to be reviewed after our first year of operation but I want to keep the cost as low as possible.

Finally, this is an experimental publication. If it is to work everyone who subscribes needs to participate by sending position papers for the *Forum,* annotated bibliographic information on books or articles you have published, reviews of relevant books you have read, announcements of conferences and calls for papers on relevant topics, etc. *The Bulletin* should function as a communications network. If you don't send me submissions it is an indication that there is no need for the network. So let the experiment begin.

Darrell J. Fasching, Editor
Nota Bene

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is October 15, 1988. See instructions on the last inside page for details.

The Ellul Forum: Issues #1-5; Reorganised by Category

<ellulforum.weebly.com/back-issues.html>

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