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THE BIRTH OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

GARY DORRIEN

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LETTERS

Resisting Catholic fascism, witnessing healings

MORE AT STAKE THAN WORDS

I appreciate Julia G. Young's critique of the term "authentic Catholic" as a way to attract new students to the Catholic University of America ("Narrowing the Universal Church," February 22). Since she uses the example of the Unión Nacional Sinarquista that appeared in Mexico in the late 1930s to oppose the policies of the Mexican Revolution, I would like to offer one correction and a comment.

Etymologically, the word *sinarquismo* derives from the Greek prefix *syn*, which means "with"; the second part of the word comes from *arkhein*, meaning "to rule." *Sinarquía* means, therefore, with rule or order, and *sinarquismo* is the doctrine that supports such a social arrangement.

Sinarquismo in Mexico in 1937 was not simply a rejection of the secularization of life, brought about by the reform laws of the nineteenth century and the Mexican Revolution to a country where three centuries of Spanish colonial rule had given the church exorbitant power. It was rather the ultra-right expression of Catholicism ideologically allied with the Falange in Spain and sympathetic to world fascism. Its principles were openly anti-Semitic, anti-masonic and anti-communist. Its utopian impulse, rather than the creation of a perfect place, was a return to an imagined past of pure Hispanic catholicity.

This historical context seems pertinent because Catholicism has been put in the service of right-wing ideologies in other times and other places. There can be much more at stake than the divergent ways in which we construe what it means to be Catholic.

AURORA CAMACHO DE SCHMIDT
Professor Emerita of Spanish and Latin American Studies
Swarthmore College
Philadelphia, Penn.

STILL BELIEVING

I have twice read Dr. Johnson's article ("Can We Still Believe in Miracles?" February 22) and very much appreciate his extensive development of a trans-Enlightenment epistemology. It is a recognition of the riches of human experience beyond empirical positivism.

I have been teaching Christology at Spring Hill (Jesuit) College in Mobile, Alabama since 1974, and I have had regular occasion to deal with unexplainable physical healings. My observation is that if these healings occur in the modern world, they should be recognized as capable of occurrence in the time of Jesus. They do not prove that Jesus was divine or that there is a God, but they are an interesting piece of the New Testament puzzle that is the foundation of Christology.

I suggest to my classes that there may indeed be more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy, and futuristic telepathy and telekinesis may indeed discover that presently unknown strengths of exceptionally focused human psychic energy may eventually provide explanations. But we should remain open to the fact that Jesus did indeed heal with a power unexplainable by the people of his time and the secular science of our own. The Catholic insight is that grace builds on nature, and who knows the limits of human nature?

Meanwhile, what would David Hume think of quantum physics, curved space, string theory, and Schrodinger's cat? It's a bit unfortunate that "miracle" gets defined as violating the laws of nature, when we haven't a clue as to what all the laws of nature are.

GEORGE GILMORE
Spring Hill College
Mobile, Ala.

After Mueller

The investigation by Special Prosecutor Robert Mueller into possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia during the 2016 election has felt part and parcel of the two-year Trump era itself. Since the firing of FBI Director James Comey in May 2017, it has been "Mueller time" about as long as it has been MAGA time, a parallel dimension in which Trump's opponents could nurture their hopes that a legal deus ex machina would restore the natural order of things. This seemed all but inevitable, given the meticulousness of the probe and the rectitude of its leader, a man who would also "roll up," in the style of Mafia prosecutions, underlings willing to rat on their don. The indictments started coming, followed by the plea bargains and criminal convictions of multiple Trump associates. And with all that other suspicious activity still to look into, surely much more would emerge, and then the president himself would be forced to go.

This was never the way to view the special prosecutor's job. No one should have expected Mueller's investigation to magically undo the results of the 2016 election. From all indications, he conducted a thorough, fair investigation that hewed to the terms of his mandate: to uncover whatever evidence there might be that Americans had conspired with a foreign power to sway the outcome of an election. He did not find it. The "witch hunt," it turns out, has probably been helpful to the president, even though he continues to grouse about the probe's legitimacy. Perversely, Mueller's main finding seemed to come as a disappointment to the president's most vocal opponents, especially among some quarters of the media—almost as if proof that Trump and his people worked actively with a foreign power to steal the election would have been *good* news. What still seems possible is that, ahead of an election that almost everyone, including Trump, expected him to lose, members of his campaign were laying the groundwork to cash in after his defeat. Unseemly, yes, maybe even obscene, but not a conspiracy. It is worth noting that Mueller and his team were able to complete their work without interference from the administration, despite the president's periodic threats to shut the investigation down. Also worth noting is that the probe exposed the true extent to which Russia interfered in the 2016 election in hopes of getting Trump elected, issuing dozens of indictments against the individuals and entities involved. It is just over a year until the next election, and the success of the Russian effort to meddle in the last one has yet to be sufficiently reckoned with.

The Mueller investigation did not conclusively settle the question of whether Trump obstructed justice. In his four-page summary of the findings issued on March 24, Attorney General William Barr noted that Mueller's report neither accuses nor exonerates Trump of obstruction. Congressional Democrats are demanding to see the full report so that they can look into the issue more deeply. Barr himself, however, has argued that there can be no obstruction when there is no proof of an underlying crime. This is sure to make for a political and legal battle lasting through the 2020 election, but Democrats should press their demand, just as they should pursue the various other lines of investigation they have already begun—from possible violations of the Constitution's emoluments clause to campaign-finance violations, fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion. And lest Trump, his family, and his associates think they are out of the woods, it's worth noting that Mueller spun off a number of investigations to the Southern District Court of New York, while New York State's attorney general is launching her own inquiry into possible corruption.

Yet by now Trump's venality is largely taken for granted as just another one of his personal shortcomings; everyone seems to have gotten used to it. There are limits to what can be gained simply by harping on how bad a guy he is. Getting him out of office in 2020 means highlighting how his policies hurt many of the people who voted for him. These include a tax bill designed to benefit corporations and the wealthy, and tariffs that have further undermined sectors the working class once depended on for jobs. Farmers in the Midwest, already struggling, are increasingly concerned about climate change, more so following extreme weather events and catastrophic flooding in March. There has been no action on the plague of opioid addiction, and the administration continues its spiteful attack on the Affordable Care Act. Democrats took the 2018 midterms by smartly emphasizing the so-called kitchen-table issues; many of the 2020 presidential hopefuls are doing the same. The hysteria surrounding the Mueller investigation consumed time and energy that could otherwise have been spent pressing this case. Getting rid of Trump is imperative. But the repudiation will be far more resounding if achieved at the ballot box. ■

Charles R. Morris

Time for a Wealth Tax

SENATOR WARREN'S OTHER GOOD IDEA

The two charts here capture the sad and bedraggled state of our union. Since 1980 or so, we have endured a kind of *Downton Abbey* in reverse. Rather than empowering the middle classes, the top 2 percent of earners are sucking the vitality out of the country. Within just the past few weeks, we have discovered yet another symptom of this: the school-admissions scandal—millions of dollars paid to assure that a favorite child will be guaranteed a spot at a top university—just as the sons of the upper classes were assured of a place in the Etons and Harrows of Edwardian England.

As the charts make clear, the bosses are in charge of the economy. They're breaking unions and skimping on overtime. They've been making boffo profits but they're distributing them to their stockholders and executives. They may be hiring again, but the workers' paychecks are still pretty thin.

Enter Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren, backed by a crack team of economists, with a fresh look at the problem and a bold proposal: a wealth tax. Wealth taxes have a bad reputation. They are hard to administer and manpower-intensive. But Warren's proposal is intriguing. She proposes a wealth tax of 2 percent that kicks in when a fortune passes $50 million, with a step-up to 3 percent on wealth over $1 billion.

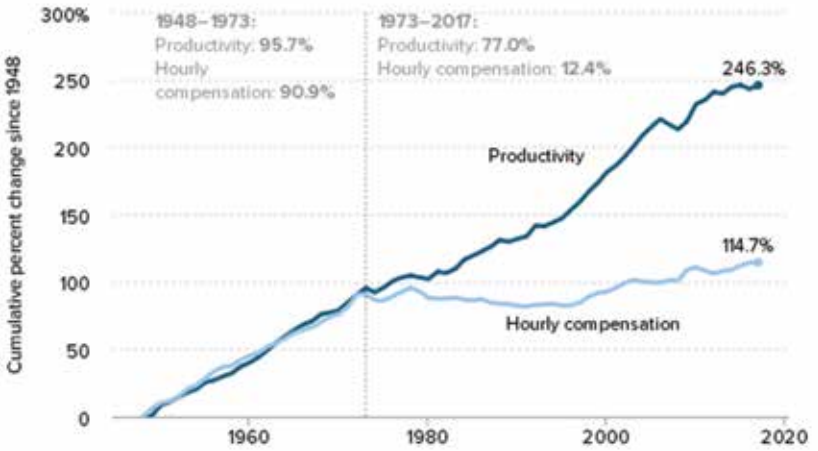
That is a very narrow target—only about 75,000 to 80,000 households, ensuring that only the truly wealthy will be affected. That should simplify administration, although the wealth-tax examiners will have to be drawn from an elite corps. Experience in other countries also suggests that there should be no exempted assets, for it would be too easy for a smart lawyer to ring-fence whole classes of assets from the clutches of the taxman.

Cheating would be rife—it's the plague of wealth taxes—but focusing on only the richest households would help a lot, and over time, the agents and the family accountants would get accustomed to each other and their portfolios. The IRS also has a strong set of tools for dealing with recalcitrant taxpayers. The 2010 Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) requires foreign financial institutions to report all overseas financial accounts to the IRS. Of course, a die-hard taxpayer could renounce his citizenship, and legally take his money overseas. Current U.S. law would subject him to a penalty of up to $2 million. Warren suggests that be raised to 40 percent of the proven wealth holdings.

This is quite possibly just a blue-sky fantasy. But it is true that the United States allows its citizens to get away with one of the lowest all-tax burdens in the developed world. (You can look it up.) And the very rich pay possibly the least in the developed world. Just ask Warren Buffett, who says he usually pays at a lower tax rate than his secretary does.

The gap between productivity and a typical worker's compensation has increased dramatically since 1973

Productivity growth and hourly compensation growth, 1948–2017



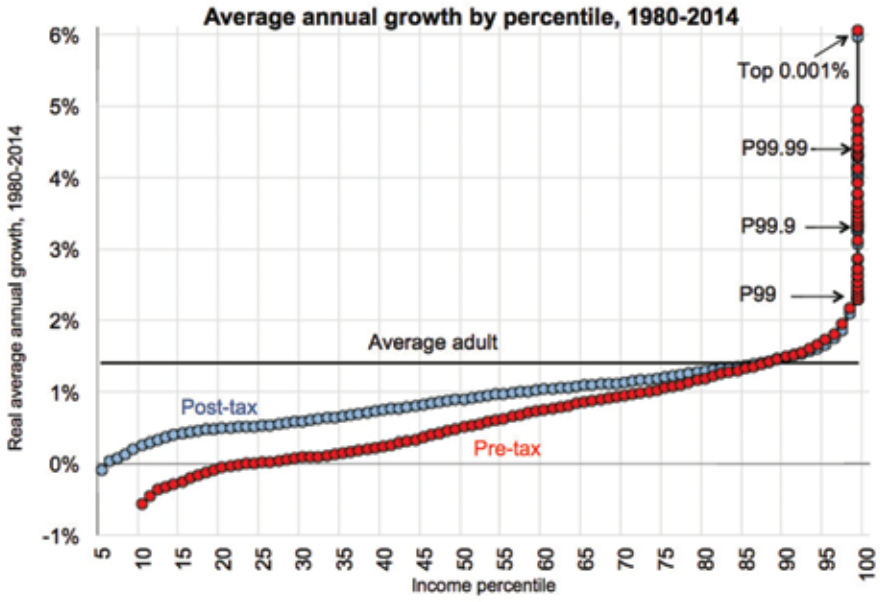
Notes: Data are for compensation (wages and benefits) of production/nonsupervisory workers in the private sector and net productivity of the total economy. "Net productivity" is the growth of output of goods and services less depreciation per hour worked.

Source: EPI analysis of unpublished Total Economy Productivity data from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Labor Productivity and Costs program, wage data from the BLS Current Employment Statistics, BLS Employment Cost Trends, BLS Consumer Price Index, and Bureau of Economic Analysis National Income and Product Accounts

Updated from Figure A in *Raising America's Pay: Why It's Our Central Economic Policy Challenge* (Bivens et al. 2014)

Economic Policy Institute

Figure 2: The distribution of economic growth in the United States



Warren's plan is well thought-out, would possibly produce truckloads of revenue, and might start to rectify the glaring privilege unveiled by the college-admissions scandal. And nothing like that will happen without a thorough kick-in-the-butt for the current administration.

Finally, there is what Alfred Hitchcock called a "McGuffin"—a random event or condition that drastically changes the scenario. In this case, it is that a wealth tax may be unconstitutional. The question turns on two provisions. The first, in the original document, requires a census to impose a new federal tax. The second is the Sixteenth Amendment, which permits an income tax but not a wealth tax. What would the courts say? We may get a chance to find out. ■

Piotr H. Kosicki

So Long, Solidarity

POLAND'S RIGHT-WING GOVERNMENT RUINS A CENTENNIAL

Ask any Pole about the Round Table and what you'll hear, instead of the story of King Arthur, is one about the dozens of intellectuals and politicians—some Communist, some not—who met in Warsaw over the course of two months in 1989. Gathered around a massive (and memorably photographed) oak table, dissidents from the legendary Solidarity movement and their former jailers, the leadership of Poland's communist party, hashed out a series of deals that sent Central and Eastern Europe down the path of the peaceful revolution that delivered the region from Communism.

Yet today, Poles are split over the legacy of the Round Table. Invoking it may elicit whispers of respect for the founding fathers of Poland's Third Republic, or generate expletive-filled tirades about the "traitors" responsible for the "fifth partition of Poland." (The first three came in the late 1700s at the hands of Austria, Prussia, and Russia; the fourth refers to the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement of 1939 between the Soviet Union and the Third Reich.)

When Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Round Table negotiator and later prime minister who shepherded Poland from communism to liberal democracy, died in the fall of 2013, right-wing extremists wasted little time in reminding Poles of his reputed "Jewish" roots. As it happened, Mazowiecki was a Roman Catholic scion of the Polish gentry—not simply Catholic, but in fact one of the leading intellectuals of twentieth-century Polish Catholicism: friend to Pope John Paul II and longtime editor of one of the few religiously inspired journals (a monthly named *Więź*, or *Bond*) that flourished behind the Iron Curtain.

Whether or not Mazowiecki had a Jewish background is entirely beside the point. The impulse to impute Jewish heritage as a way of tarnishing a public figure's image—resurrected from the 1930s, before the ovens of Auschwitz burned in Nazi-occupied Poland—has, since 1989, often targeted twentieth-century Poland's counterparts to James Madison and Alexander Hamilton. Many of the founding fathers of the Third Republic (dated from December 1989, when the country dropped the abused Communist term "people's" from its name) had also been cofounders of Solidarity. In the 1980s, the movement had evolved from Communist Europe's only independent labor union into a ready-made political opposition; along the way, its leadership endured jail and internment during a period of martial law from 1981 to 1983.

By 1989, having brought Poland to the brink of economic collapse, Communist leaders were looking for someone to share the blame for whatever might go wrong next. The choices were obvious: Mazowiecki, Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa, and others who had been willing to negotiate with the Communist regime in 1980 in order to create the independent trade union in the first place. Instead of finding themselves elevated to a hallowed pantheon, like the American federalists or the French *lumières*, these pioneering dissidents suffered a last revenge of the Communist system. In the historical memory of post-Communist Poland, they have come to be seen as traitors or, at best, as men who merely followed the unromantic path of compromise in the interest of the public good. "Compromise" can seem like a dirty word from a twenty-first-century Polish vantage point. But as early as the 1960s, Mazowiecki, one of Poland's leading Catholic social thinkers, would put it differently: "No living social phe-

Jarosław Kaczyński

KRYSTIAN MAJ / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

nomenon, no meaningful intellectual current, can persist in isolation." His watchword already then was "dialogue." In the 1980s, given the opportunity to remake the Polish social order in that spirit, he could not refuse.

Still, from today's perspective, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Mazowiecki—certainly with respect to his own legacy—made the wrong choice. Poland now finds itself celebrating the centennial of its statehood: reborn in 1918 and 1919 out of the catastrophe of the First World War, glued back together from three eighteenth-century partitions. Yet who spearheads these celebrations, and who actually participates in them? The ruling Law and Justice Party (PiS) controls both Poland's presidency and its parliament. But instead of pursuing a bold agenda of its own, it uses a blueprint imported from abroad. Following the lead of Hungary's Viktor Orbán and Russia's Vladimir Putin, PiS has dismantled the independent judiciary, assaulted freedom of the press, and replaced trained professionals throughout the apparatus of the Polish state with lackeys entirely unsuited to the task.

Even more troubling, the celebration of the centennial is open only to some Poles, while others—"Poles of the worst sort," in the immortal phrase of PiS leader Jarosław Kaczyński—are deemed ineligible to share in it. This exclusionary paradigm has also proved convenient for explaining away the various blemishes of contemporary Polish history, from autocracy to ethnic cleansing and pogroms. The wartime killing of Polish Jews by their Catholic neighbors, exposed by Princeton historian Jan T. Gross in his groundbreaking 2001 study *Neighbors*, is by now well known. The pogroms continued even after the Holocaust itself was over. Hundreds of Holocaust survivors returned to Poland after World War II only to be murdered there.

Two decades later, in 1968, Polish Jews once again found themselves targeted by purges and persecution, launched this time by Communists. And yet, on the fiftieth anniversary of these events, one Polish historian (currently a PiS senator) blamed "foreign" elements for the purges of '68. It would hardly be a stretch to conclude that he was blaming the Jews themselves (via Moscow), in the spirit of the "Judeo-Bolshevik myth" Paul Hanebrink writes about in his new book, *A Specter Haunting Europe* (see James J. Sheehan's review, "From Trotsky to Soros," March 8).

The same Polish historian also played a prominent role in a campaign launched in 2015 by the newly elected PiS government against the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk. The museum took a decade to come to fruition, benefiting from the efforts of a cross-section of Poland's greatest humanistic and curatorial talent, led by eminent historian Paweł Machcewicz. Among its goals were not only to document Poland's decisive place in global affairs, but—above all—to spotlight how dramatically civilian suffering eclipsed military heroism in a global conflagration marked by mass violence and genocide on an unprecedented scale. The museum would also bestow recognition on its host city. Of shared German-Polish heritage before World War II, Gdańsk is where war broke out on September 1, 1939. Four decades later, the same city played host to the birth of Solidarity. Yet a now-infamous critique prepared in 2016 for the PiS-controlled Ministry of Culture derided the museum's founding curators for seeking to impart lessons that transcend the Polish experience: "The collective focus is the evil of war and its consequences. This lesson, due to the trains of thought that it sublimates, proves to be so general as to be infantile."

For a city synonymous with Solidarity, such a critique is anything but neutral. When PiS tried to remove the leadership of the museum after taking over the reins of national government, Mayor Paweł Adamowicz threatened legal action. Gdańsk had provided the land for the museum, and so the city was able to hold the Ministry of Culture at bay long enough for the museum to open in its originally intended form. But then, in January of this year, Adamowicz was assassinated—stabbed onstage at a charity event by an ex-con who declared that he was killing the mayor in order to avenge injustices experienced at the hands of PiS's political opponent, the Civic Platform.

There's also the ongoing controversy over the European Solidarity Center, also in Gdańsk, and also long championed by Adamowicz. In the months since his assassination, it has found itself in the Culture Ministry's crosshairs, its state support at risk unless the advisory board surrenders control over a decisive portion of executive appointments (a solution since rejected by both the Center and the city of Gdańsk). The worry here extends beyond the politicization of an apolitical institution. Rather, the ministry's terms represent an attempt to co-opt a national institution intended to unite Poles in shared remembrance of their past and, instead, to pit them against one another. The PiS government has taken advantage of Adamowicz's death to press attacks on the institutions he once protected, calling into question what remains of the "solidarity" of the 1980s.

The word "solidarity" is no mere slogan here. Just as Mazowiecki has been slandered in death for cofounding the union and then creating a government on its behalf in 1989, so has the effort to recognize Gdańsk as an important European crossroads been demonized. Political scientist David Ost has written movingly of the "defeat of Solidarity" in post-Communist Poland, yet what we see in 2019 takes us beyond the story of post-Communist countries' neglect of their industrial and agricultural laborers. As the largest nation of post-Communist Europe celebrates the centenary of the restoration of its national sovereignty, Poland is failing to rise to the challenge of preserving the values forged in its struggles against the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. ■

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Gabriel Said Reynolds

After Abu Dhabi

POPE FRANCIS & THE 'DOCUMENT ON HUMAN FRATERNITY'

On February 5 Pope Francis celebrated Mass in front of 130,000 people in an open-air sports stadium in the small emirate of Abu Dhabi. The scene was rich with symbolism. Catholics in Abu Dhabi (and throughout the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Arabia, which includes the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Yemen) are mostly guest workers from all over the world and thus represent the beautiful diversity of the church. Catholic believers from more than a hundred countries, along with Muslims and others, were in attendance at the Mass, which was likely the first public celebration of Christian liturgy in the Arabian peninsula since late antiquity.

Francis's public Mass was also an opportunity to highlight the gradual but real advances in religious freedom in the United Arab Emirates, where a Christian population of over a million believers worships in forty churches. In some ways, Christianity is thriving in the UAE, especially when compared with the tragic decline of Christianity in nearby countries with historic Christian populations such as Iraq and Syria. The demonstration of religious freedom in the UAE (albeit a limited freedom—there is still no right to evangelize publicly or to baptize Muslims there) also sent a message to neighboring Saudi Arabia, where any non-Islamic religious gathering is theoretically forbidden and no churches are to be found. For all these reasons, the press coverage of the pope's visit to the UAE was decidedly positive. Controversy, however, would follow.

The day before the Mass, Pope Francis met with a delegation of Muslim leaders led by the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, Ahmed el-Tayeb, who had traveled from Cairo to meet with him (the UAE has already commemorated this meeting with a stamp featuring the two religious leaders). Together with el-Tayeb, who is eager to advance the reputation of al-Azhar as an institution that speaks for the Sunni Islamic world, Pope Francis signed "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together." That very day the pope tweeted: "The Document on Human Fraternity, which I signed today in Abu Dhabi with my brother the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, invites all persons who have faith in God and faith in human fraternity to unite and work together."

Almost immediately Catholic observers noticed the following line in the document: "The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings." This statement was evidently meant to advance an argument

CNS PHOTO / PAUL HARING

Pope Francis and Sheik Ahmad el-Tayeb leave an interreligious meeting at the Founder's Memorial in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Feb. 4, 2019.

about religious freedom, as the next line reads: "This divine wisdom is the source from which the right to freedom of belief and the freedom to be different derives." This element of the document serves as a response to the growing Salafi movement within Sunni Islam, which generally opposes religious freedom, insisting that Muslims and non-Muslims alike can and should be compelled or pressured in different ways—to follow Islam "properly" in the case of Muslims, or to convert to Islam in the case of non-Muslims. And yet this statement was largely ignored by Muslim observers (which may say something about the actual influence of Ahmed el-Tayeb). It was Catholics who responded.

On February 8, Bishop Athanasius Schneider of Astana, Kazakhstan (a majority-Muslim country), released a document titled "The Gift of Filial Adoption, the Christian Faith: the only valid and the only God-willed religion," the subtitle clearly alluding to the assertion in the Document on Human Fraternity that the diversity of religions is "willed by God." Toward the end of "The Gift of Filial Adoption," Bishop Schneider argues that the apostles and other martyrs would have spared themselves their terrible deaths if they had believed that "the pagan religion and its worship is a way, which as well corresponds to the will of God."

On the same day, Cardinal Gerhard Müller, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith between 2012 and 2017, released a document called a "Manifesto of Faith," which, as he explains in the opening lines, was intended as a response to "growing confusion" about the faith. Müller does not explicitly address the Document on Human Fraternity signed by Francis and el-Tayeb, but his "manifesto" does appear to respond to it indirectly. Unlike Schneider, Müller bases his argument on Christ's establishment of the church for the purpose of the salvation of souls (a theme of the magisterial document *Dominus Iesus*): "Today, many Christians are no longer even aware of the basic teachings of the Faith, so there is a growing danger of missing the path to eternal life." While Müller does not refer to Islam explicitly, he does write that "We are to resist the relapse into ancient heresies with clear resolve, which saw in Jesus Christ only a good person, brother and friend, *prophet* and moralist" [italics mine]. At the heart of Islamic teaching on Christ is the rejection of his divinity and the affirmation of his prophethood. Müller insists that proper faith, the faith that saves, involves the confession that Christ is "first and foremost the Word that was with God, and is God, the Son of the Father." Müller, who later refers to the "dreadful possibility" of eternal condemnation, insists that one must not "keep silent" about the truths of the faith by which humans are saved.

Other Catholic observers have looked for more sympathetic ways to understand the Document on Human Fraternity. The popular Catholic blogger Fr. John Zuhlsdorf writes, "We must seek a way to understand this without it sounding like heresy," and goes on to note that God has both an "active" will and a "permissive" will (for example,

ESSENTIAL FEAST

Fish-fry every Friday night
during Lent at Saint John's
Saint Mary's Saint Michael's
and many, many more

—no meat for the faithful—

The hot oil must be sacred
chrism to cook that cod,
perch, or flounder to blessed
crispy crust while saving

the moist purity of its
innocent white flanks
the parishioner must partake

—not quite the Body of Christ—

but a cut above the accompanying
cole slaw, fries, and Sunday
to Thursday fare

(excluding the Host at morning Mass)

leading the communicant to digestion
transcending the purely material

nourishing the hungry soul
long practiced in abstinence,
disciplined in this season
of forsaking the flesh.

—John Zedolik

John Zedolik has had poems published in the Alembic, Ascent Aspirations, *the* Bangalore Review, Common Ground Review, *the* Journal, Pulsar Poetry Webzine, Third Wednesday, Transom, *and the* Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. *His full-length collection will be published in July 2019.*

he permitted Adam and Eve to sin although he foresaw that sin). Perhaps the plurality of religions is something that falls under the latter category. Chad C. Pecknold of the Catholic University of America presents another possibility in an interview with the Catholic News Agency—namely, that the diversity of religions is "evidence of our natural desire to know God" and might, for this reason and to this extent, be willed by God. The Second Vatican Council's declaration *Nostra aetate* speaks of a "perception" of a hidden power common to humanity and adds that "the Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy" in other religions.

One thing is missing from this discussion. In our efforts to understand the Human Fraternity document, and the turn of phrase regarding religious pluralism in particular, it is essential to keep in mind that, unlike *Nostra aetate* (or *Dominus Iesus*, or any other magisterial document), it was *jointly* written with non-Christians. Indeed it is critical to recognize that this phrase reflects two passages of the Qur'an.

The first is Sura 5, verse 48, where the Qur'an declares, "And if God had so *willed*, He could surely have made you all one single community: but [He willed it otherwise] in order to test you by means of what He has vouchsafed unto you. Vie, then, with one another in doing good works!" (trans. Asad) The Arabic word for "willed" is *sha'* (the same word found in the expression *inshallah*: "if God wills"). It is the nominal form (*mashi'a*) of the verb for God's "will" that appears in the Arabic version of the Human Fraternity document. The Arabic word for "community" in the Qur'anic verse above is *umma*, precisely the Arabic word that Muslims use for the international Islamic community (roughly parallel to "church," but *only* roughly). For Muslims open to pluralism this verse accordingly implies that God wills more than one religious community.

Sura 5:48 continues with this declaration: "Unto God you all must return; and then He will make you truly understand all that on which you were wont to differ." This concluding statement is generally thought to mean that God will sort out true believers from false ones on the Day of Judgment. So the verse does not necessarily imply that all religions are true—only that it is God's role, not ours, to judge them (a bit like St. Paul's warning: "'Vengeance is mine,' says the Lord," or like the gospel parable of the wheat and tares).

The second key verse in the Qur'an is Sura 49, verse 13: "O men! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him." This verse suggests to Muslim pluralists that God values diversity. At a conference on international peace organized by al-Azhar during Pope Francis's visit to Egypt in April 2017, Ahmed el-Tayeb quoted this verse and commented, "I think that the road now is paved so that religions would undertake their role in highlighting the value of peace and the value of justice and equality along with respect of man whatever their religion, color, race, or language." Precisely the themes el-Tayeb was highlighting in 2017 found their way into the Document on Human Fraternity two years later.

These themes were already prominent during a meeting at al-Azhar in which I participated two months earlier (in February 2017) as part of a delegation from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. The spokespeople for al-Azhar made frequent references to ideas that would find their way into the Document on Human Fraternity, including the brotherhood of humanity and the importance of citizenship, with the rights and responsibilities it entails.

While Catholic observers have focused on how the Document on Human Fraternity relates to the church's theology of religions, there has been less attention to the message the document sends to the Islamic world. Al-Azhar's insistence that religious pluralism is willed by God serves as a direct, and indeed provocative, response to conservative strands in Sunni Islam (such as Salafism) that are interested only in the triumph of Islam over other religions. Motivated by other verses of the Qur'an (such as 3:19, "The true religion with God is Islam" [trans. Arberry]), many Salafi Muslims are concerned not with dialogue but with proselytism (known in Islamic parlance as *da`wa*) or, in the case of Salafi jihadis such as ISIS or Boko Haram, in holy war against the infidels.

It is especially notable that the Document on Human Fraternity embraces freedom of "belief, thought, expression, and action." While the text nowhere mentions the freedom to *change* religions, and thus does not explicitly support the right of Muslims to convert to another religion (the traditional penalty for apostasy in Islamic legal thought is death), it certainly can be read to support such a right. From this perspective, the world should recognize the initiative of Ahmed el-Tayeb in signing a document that sounds more like *Dignitatis humanae* than traditional Islamic jurisprudence. The world should also admire the way in which Pope Francis has patiently walked a path of dialogue with el-Tayeb through meetings in Rome, Cairo, and now Abu Dhabi.

We should not be surprised that the Document on Human Fraternity departs from earlier expressions of magisterial thought on the religions, notably *Dominus Iesus* (which declares clearly, "God has willed that the Church founded by him be the instrument for the salvation of all humanity"). Unlike *Dominus Iesus* the Document on Human Fraternity was written by Christians and Muslims together, and thus includes elements from both the Bible and the Qur'an. The document reflects the way in which the pope has reached out in friendship to Ahmed el-Tayeb and, together with him, offered a vision of friendship for Muslims and Christians everywhere. ■

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C. Colt Anderson and Christopher M. Bellitto

Scarlet Fever

TO COMBAT CLERICALISM, REFORM SEMINARIES

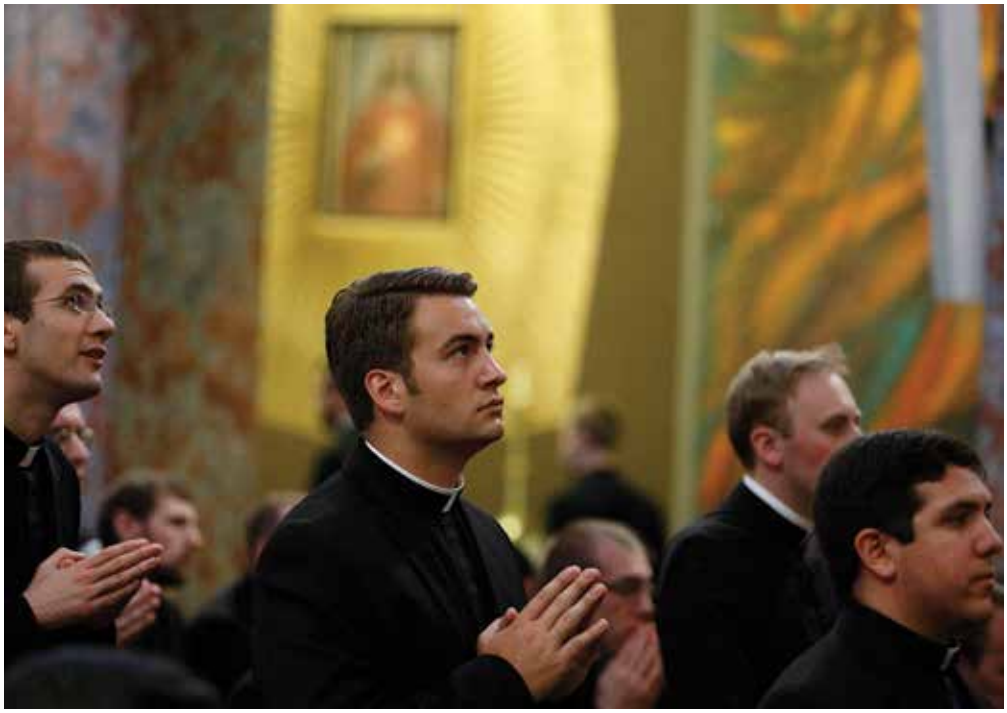
As former seminary professors, we have looked upon the last several months of revelations about clergy sex abuse, cover-ups, and institutional infighting with the same disgust and sadness as our sisters and brothers—but we are not surprised. Though we honor and support the many good people who work and study in seminaries, we know that seminaries have played a significant role in the church's current crisis. It is essential to understand how priests and thus, ultimately, bishops are formed, especially the way they are enculturated into clericalism from their first days in seminary. It is the air they breathe there.

Clericalism in seminary formation is explicitly singled out as a problem in the Synod on Youth's final document, approved in late October 2018, and it affects everyone in the church—it is a systemic and widespread problem. While not new in church history, of course, it is a particularly pressing concern during this time of scandal. Pope Francis has repeatedly targeted clericalism as the great enemy of ordained ministry today. You can easily see the career-climbers he warns about in seminaries. If you want to learn how to work your way into the clerical caste, watch these men. They are learning Italian, wearing cufflinks and cassocks, and don't at all mind being called "Father," even though they are still in studies. Along with our colleagues in other formation programs, we have easily singled out seminarians with scarlet fever: while there may be few vocations to the priesthood, there are plenty of ambitious young men aiming for a bishop's miter.

Clericalism can be thought of as a type of exceptionalism. Seminarians soon learn that the rules and standards, such as mastery of course material, do not really apply to them. As lay faculty members we have both been told, "You don't vote on our advancement or ordination," which falls just short of saying "so you don't matter." We have had discussions with seminarians who struggle with drinking or drugs and sexual activity that they commit or observe around them. Some are sexually harassed in the seminary, a problem that the case of ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick has brought to much needed attention. There are few consequences for any of this.

Seminarians know that, given the shortage of priests in the United States, it won't be long after they're ordained that they'll be pastors with a parish of their own. We often heard conversations in the lunchroom that indicated as much: "When I'm pastor, I'm going to put my place on the map." We heard very little talk of service or shared leadership, collegial relations with parish councils, or facilitating the talents of parishioners. The parish, it was clear, belonged to the pastor and not the people. Once, Cardinal Francis George explained to a group of seminarians in Chicago that Pope Benedict XVI stressed that the role of the priest and bishop was governance, not leadership. This was not unusual. Seminarians are fed a consistent message: their role is to rule over the laity and the religious as a result of their ontological change at ordination, not as a result of their virtue, knowledge, or model behavior. They are being trained to be autocratic bosses, not servant leaders.

One suggested reform, then, is to make an explicit effort to keep seminarians as the lay people they are. The goal of a seminarian's path is ordination, but until ordination to the diaconate, that seminarian is a lay man. Why are they



CNS PHOTO / PAUL HARING

Seminarians attend Pope Francis's celebration of Mass at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, May 2, 2015.

AMONG THE ERRANCIES

Continue by just trying to be one man,
not multiplicities like the cloud cover.

Mimic the sun. It's one no matter how
gulfstream weather darkens, thickens,

dispensing promises of rain with gray.
Every day a constant, shifting paradise!

Paradise! What else to name today,
walls around the garden my breath I've blown

to circumscribe this little space that's mine?
Eve and the serpent are intertwined

with their temptation and the storied fruit
I won't be eating this time, occupied

with naming animals I've never seen.
Every day they have to be made up:

that beast with four heads, this bird with scores of wings.
I'll call those just yesterday's menagerie.

Something is coming toward me as I sing.
What new fish, fowl or animal

will I make of this monster, naming him?

—Peter Cooley

Peter Cooley's tenth book of poetry, World Without Finishing, *was published last year by Carnegie Mellon University Press.*

wearing cassocks and a Roman collar before then? When we asked that question of seminarians and priests on faculty, we were repeatedly told, "So they will get used to it." Nonsense. This practice amounts to training in clerical condescension and strutting more often than not. It reinforces the hierarchy of vocations that still plagues the church—indicated by the way we say that a former priest is "reduced" to the lay state.

But an even more important reform in seminary education and, in turn, parish life, would be to mix men and women in classes. If that sounds radical, it is precisely what the Synod on Youth's final document proposes: the joint formation of laity, consecrated religious, and priests.

Separating men and women can lead to hypermasculinity and a focus on the "otherness" of priests. This was especially fostered during John Paul II's papacy, with its near-cult of the priesthood. It also contributes to a related problem nearly as long-standing as the structured church itself: institutional misogyny. We have witnessed seminarians going on and on about how they must keep custody of their eyes so as not to be tempted by women seeking to steal their celibacy. It is the modern version of the ancient Madonna-whore complex. It only takes a few minutes of observing these men in social situations to realize many have no idea how to interact professionally with women.

Mixing men and women, especially in classes, is good ecclesiology and good economics. Many seminaries have already realized that the law of supply and demand dictates that more attention needs to be paid to ministry programs for lay people. Professors cost money, so why not have one course section with one teacher teaching a mixed group of men and women? Given the number of adults who pursue advanced degrees and certificates, it makes no sense to reserve classes just for those who might end up ordained priests. A New Testament class is a New Testament class.

Having women and men sit side by side in formation programs also offers significant intellectual and spiritual benefits. Surely a woman's voice in a classroom discussion of Scripture will expose a seminarian to ideas and perspectives not his own. And won't that woman be interpreting, explaining, and applying Scripture in RCIA and other formation programs in her parish? Even in more specialized situations—say, a practicum in preaching and penance—wouldn't it be helpful for seminarians to hear the perspectives of women as they consider what makes for an enriching homily, or as they prepare to encounter parishioners in the confessional and in sacramental preparation, especially for marriage?

A closed caste teaching a closed caste does nothing but further divide the church. Good priestly formation means men must learn to interact with lay men and women in healthy, professional, and respectful ways. This formation can start in classroom learning as fellow students. Seminary training should also deliberately include supervised apostolic experiences under a lay person's authority. There must also be sisters along with married and single people teaching their specialties (and paid a living wage with medical benefits so that they can support a family).

This leads to another suggested reform: the professional opinions of religious sisters and lay professors, professionals, and supervisors must be taken into real account when voting on whether a seminarian will proceed in formation and eventually to ordination. Their input must be deliberative and not merely consultative—that is, it must really count. Moreover, a seminary's board of trustees must have lay members who, again, have deliberative and not simply consultative votes that the bishop is free to ignore. It must be clear to the bishop that even if canon law says he can do what he wants, that may be a bad idea if all or most of the board and formation team vote against a candidate. The

Synod on Youth's final document recommends that women be on seminary formation teams. It does not specify whether or not they should be voting members, though the synod called for greater decision-making authority for women at all levels of the church.

We believe a further step should be taken as well: seminaries should not be strictly and exclusively under the control of the bishop. There needs to be a deliberative board consisting of members of the laity and religious that can regularly and independently audit the seminaries to ensure compliance with standards. Audits, assessments, and accreditations must be reported in a public forum so that people know whether the bishop or seminary is doing intellectual, spiritual, pastoral, and human formation properly. If the bishop fails to do as he should, his right to govern the seminaries needs to be taken away from him and given to a prudent person. If this sounds extreme, it is a paraphrase of canon 30 of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215):

> It is very serious and absurd that prelates [bishops] of churches, when they can promote suitable men to ecclesiastical benefices, are not afraid to choose unworthy men who lack both learning and honesty of behavior and who follow the urgings of the flesh rather than the judgment of reason. Nobody of sound mind is ignorant of how much damage to churches arises from this…. Therefore he who has been found guilty after a first and second correction is to be suspended from conferring ecclesiastical benefices by the provincial council, and a prudent and honest person is to be appointed at the same council to make up for the suspended person's failure.

The laity in every diocese should have a formal role in ending the practice of moving unfit men from seminary to seminary until they find one that will testify they are worthy of ordination. The synod's final document warns specifically against wandering seminarians (*seminaristi vaganti*). There is a policy requiring a two-year period after a seminarian is formally dismissed before he can enter another program, but because seminaries rarely *formally* dismiss men, technically the rule is rarely violated. The failure to formally dismiss students allows bishops to move them immediately to other seminaries. In the eleventh century, St. Peter Damian declared that no priest is better than a bad priest, but today just the opposite sentiment seems to hold sway.

A final suggestion involves John Paul II's 1992 apostolic exhortation on seminary formation, *Pastores dabo vobis*, which presents high standards in terms of admissions, behavior, and academics. Consider, however, that the current edition of the American bishops' *Program for Priestly Formation* still states only that the admissions process "ought" to give sufficient attention to the emotional health of the applicants, that candidates "should" give evidence of having interiorized their seminary formation as evidenced by their ability to work with women and men, that seminarians "should not" be excused from pursuing accredited degrees, and that seminarians "should not" be advanced if they lack positive qualities for formation. Since bishops can and do offer dispensations from anything that is not mandatory, we maintain that those "oughts" and "shoulds" need to be turned to "musts"—and then firmly patrolled.

Make no mistake: seminaries made sense when they were created at the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, but they are less than a quarter as old as the church itself. Their programs must not be set in stone, as unyielding as the fortresses where they are currently housed. Seminaries still have a role to play; they should not be abolished. But they should no longer be factories for clericalism, elitism, and misogyny, as they too often still are. It is long past time for fundamental reform. ■

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UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

The birds are doing their homework, singing trees
into a vision I have never claimed
until this instant. My homework? To raise wings,

claiming the music of my dead sparrow
I am chosen to resurrect and resurrect,
the unheard music of the wind, mid-summering.

And the homework of the stars just coming out?
Still cloud-shifting, it constitutes a page
in the eternities, always underfoot

while we are here. Stars have so many decades
of our lives to answer, so many unread tomes,
papers to write, oral reports to draft—

Small wonder constellations refuse even a nod
to any questions: Is this Death? Life?
Am I reborn or waiting for my birth?

The stars are always behind, terrified
they won't have yesterday's homework done
by breakfast. They will be up beyond first light—

—Peter Cooley

Flavor of the Gospel

The Abuse Crisis as Prophecy & Pascha

Rita Ferrone

When Pope Francis wrote to the American bishops concerning the abuse crisis, he observed that "many actions can be helpful, good and necessary, and may even seem correct, but not all of them have the 'flavor' of the Gospel."

By recommending a return to the Gospel as an essential reference point, Francis is on to something. The horror of the abuse cases, the sheer numbers of victims, the longevity of the crisis, its scope, and the fact that it has proved so hard to change the institutional patterns and habits that abet it—all this has been, for many of the faithful, a profoundly shocking and disorienting experience. It has eroded the trust we used to give to our church leaders and structures. It has shamed us in the eyes of the world. We do not taste the Gospel here. Yet we long for it, even when that longing goes unnamed.

Metaphors of taste and smell have a long history in Christian discourse. The psalmist enjoins the faithful to "taste and see the goodness of the Lord." The gift of God's law is perfect and refreshing, "sweeter than syrup, or honey from the comb." Evil, in contrast, is something that sets one's teeth on edge. Sour and bitter fruit come forth from wickedness.

In the New Testament, followers of Jesus are urged to be "salt for the earth" and not to lose their savor. Because the sense of taste is allied with smell, we also find olfactory images in the Scripture. Paul refers to Christians as those who bear "the aroma of Christ." In the ancient church, catechumens were given salt on the tongue as part of their admission to the catechumenate. Ritual expresses in the body what is believed in faith: Christian life is not bland or flavorless. It tastes like something.

What does the Gospel taste like? Francis doesn't say. Perhaps this is because he thinks the bishops already know. Maybe, as in an old television commercial for a certain pasta sauce ("Now, *that's* Italian!"), the assumption is that anybody who has tasted the Gospel will be able to recognize it when they encounter it again.

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Yet I wonder. For all the emphasis that has been placed on Scripture in the postconciliar church, for all the readings we have access to in our lectionaries, for all the renewal in biblical studies that has taken place in the church during our lifetime, it nevertheless seems that the categories our church leaders are most sensitive to are legal and doctrinal, rather than scriptural.

The Second Vatican Council wanted the sacred page to be the very soul of theology, yet there is still a certain suspicion that if we rely too much on Scripture we'll neglect the precise formulations of doctrine, and forget the accumulated tradition of church teaching. If Francis had recommended "the taste of the catechism" our bishops would be right there. The "taste of the Gospel" is more elusive.

Yet this Gospel flavor is actually quite a powerful thing. The Scriptures may not always be as precise as one might like (there are multiple sources, they don't always agree, and so on), but no one can deny that they are packed with flavor. The narratives and imagery they contain, as well as their poetry and wisdom, have sustained the life of the church through hardship, trial, and crises throughout the centuries. Their flavor can remind us of who we are, and help the church emerge from the present crisis both more deeply chastened and stronger.

The chastening is an important feature. Consider a New Testament example. Anyone in our society can say that the sexual abuse of minors is a crime. It is. But how much time have we spent reflecting on Jesus' words in Luke 17:1–2:

> Occasions of stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone by whom they come! It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble.

This saying appears in all three synoptic gospels. Matthew and Mark don't say just a millstone, but "a great millstone." It's astonishing that so many of our shepherds (those who treated accusations of child abuse lightly) seem to have failed to take this word in. How can anyone who enabled abusers not tremble when they read this? If we take this seriously, the prospect of laicization or tangles with law enforcement seem mild penalties compared with the future that awaits

Marten de Vos, The Last Supper

those who destroyed someone's childhood and shattered her faith.

Frankly, it's a terrifying saying. Does the Gospel taste bitter, therefore? For malefactors, perhaps it does. Yet these words also testify to God's eternal justice and to his partiality to the poor and the vulnerable: the "little ones." These are words that bear listening to. "We know that, given the seriousness of the situation, no response or approach seems adequate," Francis wrote. "Nonetheless, we as pastors must have the ability, and above all the wisdom, to speak a word born of heartfelt, prayerful and collective listening to the Word of God and to the pain of our people." Amen to that.

What sort of actions might the bishops take that would convey the flavor of the Gospel? Surely there must be actions of justice and compassion, and actions that breathe the humility of Christ. Yet above all there must be actions that kindle hope for the future to which the Holy Spirit is leading the church through this crisis.

The Abuse Crisis as Prophecy

Jesus stands squarely in the tradition of the prophets of Israel; the people to whom he came received him as a prophet. He was not a member of the priestly class. Jesus himself is the Word of God, but, lest we forget, he also *spoke* the Word of God—both in its comforting and liberating assurances to the poor and the simple and in its roaring condemnations of "blind guides" and those who prey upon the weak.

Perhaps we have forgotten this today, as so many of the implicit messages we receive about the church's ministry suggest that the voice of prophecy has been fully absorbed into our institutionalized charisms and offices. But the prophetic edge of the Gospel remains a cutting edge—as any serious student of the New Testament can tell you. A "flavor" too irenic to admit to the sharp sword of the Gospel does not capture its character.

When we call something a crisis, we mean it causes a division in time. A crisis moment in interpersonal relationships occurs when a conflict no longer simmers in the background but has come to a head. In an illness, a crisis is a moment of intensity after which the patient will either recover or go into decline. A political crisis occurs when a former way of governing does not work anymore and everyone knows that something new must take its place. A social crisis arises when customary ways of being together in society are challenged by events or by changing conceptions of social roles and relationships. In a crisis, there is always a "before" and an "after."

We say that we are going through "the abuse crisis." But the interesting thing is that the *crisis*—the thing that causes the disjuncture between past and future—isn't the abuse. It's the *revelation* of the abuse (and the revelation of the unjust and inadequate responses to such abuse by church authorities). The abuse itself was going on for decades, probably generations, yet was never called out for what it was. It's the *revelation* of this heinous, global, hidden cancer that makes this a crisis, because it demands a response; it signals a moment of change.

A prophet is someone who speaks on behalf of God, and frequently in the Scriptures a prophetic oracle begins: "Thus says the Lord." Who is saying "Thus says the Lord" in the

church today? If we look at the witness of abuse survivors, we discover that in many instances they seek not only to come to terms with their wounds and painful history, nor simply to seek their own compensation. They are working for justice to overcome corruption and they are longing for the return of hope for others who are hurting. Theirs is, at least implicitly, a prophetic mission.

The prophetic word condemns corruption and calls out sin, demanding change. Isn't this what is being asked of the church today?

When we are at our lowest ebb, the prophetic word also comes to offer comfort and consolation, as it did to Israel during the exile. The prophetic word is heard not only in denunciations, but also in the promise of a return to the homeland that God alone can provide. We taste the Gospel in both the refusal to accept the situation as it is, and in demonstrations of genuine compassion and hope.

The Abuse Crisis as Pascha

There is a fond imagining among some church people that once we "get past" the abuse crisis, things will go back to the way they were. The clerical system won't change. The role of church authorities won't change. Our hearts won't change, either. Like an accident on the highway, the wreckage of the clergy sex-abuse crisis will someday be cleared away, the insurance companies will settle the debts, and we'll go on our way the same as before, as if nothing had ever happened. Yes, there may be new guidelines to assure that such "accidents" don't happen with the frequency they once did: like putting up signs to better mark a dangerous section of road, or implementing seatbelt laws, we'll put safe environment regulations in place. But roles and relationships within the church will not change, because what happened is seen as, essentially, an accident rather than the expression of a sickness in the body itself.

There is another way to look at this crisis, however, and some wise observers—Pope Francis among them—have realized that a deeper reckoning is required. As Francis said to the bishops of Chile, "It would be irresponsible on our part not to delve into a search for the roots and structures that allowed these concrete events to happen and to continue." By this he does not mean a search for scapegoats. Such an approach, which he calls "the Jonah syndrome," seeks to blame the storm on one or another person and throw them out of the boat. This is a false solution and one that he condemns.

Instead, Francis's diagnosis cuts straight to the essential issue of whether the clergy are "with," or removed from, their people. "Messianism, elites, [and] clericalisms, are all synonymous with perversion in the ecclesial being," he says. He describes the resulting malaise as "the loss of a healthy consciousness [formed by] knowing we belong to the holy faithful people of God who precedes us and who—thanks be to God—will succeed us." He concludes this line of thought with a powerful statement: "Do not let us ever lose the awareness of that exalted gift that is our baptism."

A solid grasp of the dignity of the baptized is, in fact, essential to reform. It grounds both laity and clergy. But getting to the point where this is truly grasped involves more than a cosmetic change. It actually entails dying to one vision of church and rising to another.

We have heard many times in the press that Francis denounces clericalism. Fair enough. Yet this assertion is strangely incomplete without noting the corresponding and reciprocal attention he gives to the dignity of the baptized, their holiness and mission. It is the sacred reality of the people of God that illuminates the real calling of pastors to adopt a model of humility and service so that the church as a whole may thrive. The goal of meaningful reform is not merely to take the clergy down a peg. It's a call for a different model, leading to a new and more fruitful relationship.

The Pascha, or Passover, described in Exodus, is the passage of God's people from slavery to freedom. The Pascha in the New Testament is the passing over of Jesus from this life to the Father. The paschal mystery for the church—death to sin and resurrection to new life in Christ—is the central mystery the liturgy celebrates. It is the preeminent taste of the Gospel.

What does this have to do with the abuse crisis? I would go so far as to say that the only adequate response to the clergy sex-abuse crisis is a paschal response: death to one way of being and resurrection to a truly new way of life. The abuse crisis requires the death of an old model of insularity and arrogance in clerical culture. It declares as a failure the model of accountability that defers only to one's hierarchical superiors while disregarding those below. It proposes instead an organic, sacramental relationship of sharing in the one mission of the church—for which we all must hold one another accountable. You don't get to a state in the church where no one is exploited without a robust respect for the dignity of all. It takes a paschal journey to bring us to the new life and freedom the Gospel promises.

The good news is this: if the dignity of all the baptized is genuinely and deeply respected, this rules out every one of the predatory behaviors we have seen in the abuse crisis. It calls forth transparency and accountability as the natural state of affairs in the church rather than as some holy grail that remains always just out of reach. And, finally, true respect for baptism requires structures that support the mutual trust and respectful collaboration that ought always to exist between pastors and their people.

The Pascha has many flavors in the Scriptures. It includes the unleavened bread of the journey, the bitter herbs of slavery, and the lamb—still eaten at the Passover Seder. Yet the taste of the Pascha is also found in the milk and honey of the Promised Land. And in the Christian liturgy, the taste of the Pascha is ever present in the bread and wine of Eucharist. ■

The Birth of Social Democracy

From Karl Marx to Eduard Bernstein

Gary Dorrien

Democratic socialism is an ascending idea in the United States, despite its marginal American history and also because of it. In Europe, democratic socialism has a rich and complex record of achievements and failures through continental social-democratic parties and the British Labour Party. In the United States, only a modicum of social-democratic decency has ever been achieved and now even those modest gains are threatened, yielding a surge of interest in democratic socialism.

Negatively, the latter development reflects a widespread recognition that neoliberal capitalism works only for a minority and is ecologically harmful. Often it registers the bitter verdict that liberals do not fight for social justice. "Democratic socialism" summarizes what is lacking. Positively, the current flow of young people into democratic socialism reflects a growing recognition that economic justice is fundamental to all struggles for justice and liberation, and that there is no common ground for progressive movements without it.

European social democracy has helped create societies in which health care and the rights of self-determination are universal for all citizens, elections and higher education are publicly financed, and grotesque levels of inequality are not tolerated. In the United States, health care depends on what you can afford, millions have no health coverage at all, voter suppression campaigns are routine, electoral politics is dominated by the donor class, students are buried in debt, and until recently, huge disparities in income and wealth were not even a subject of political debate. Democratic socialism is a demand for economic democracy, extending the principles and values of democracy into the economic realm. In the United States it is also a protest against the claim that caring about economic inequality is un-American.

But no movement for democratic socialism can afford to ignore the ambiguous history of the struggle for it. The very name, "democratic socialism," is a self-conscious marker that many kinds of socialism were and are democratic only in a tortured sense of the term, or in no sense at all. François-Marie-Charles Fourier, in France, and Robert Owen, in England, propounded the original idea of socialism in the early 1820s. It was to achieve the unrealized demands of the French Revolution, which never reached the working class. Instead of pitting workers against each other, a cooperative mode of production and exchange would allow them to work for each other. Socialism was about organizing society as a cooperative community.

When Owen started writing about communal socialism, he had not read his paternalistic French forerunners—François-Noël Babeuf and Henri de Saint-Simon—but he shared their belief that a good society doesn't allow anyone to live off the labor of others. Owen's early work influenced Fourier. Soon there were many kinds of socialism, conceived by a stunning array of thinkers: Louis Blanc, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lassalle, Georgi Plekhanov, William Morris, Karl Kautsky, Sidney Webb, Eduard Bernstein, Rosa Luxemburg, V. I. Lenin, and G.D.H. Cole, and Christian socialists Philippe Buchez, John Ludlow, Frederick Denison Maurice, R. H. Tawney, Stewart Headlam, Charles Marson, Henry Scott Holland, Conrad Noel, Hermann Kutter, and Leonhard Ragaz. Buchez and Lassalle made pioneering arguments for state-supported producer cooperatives, which Blanc and Marx took the lead in rejecting. The founders of socialism who were not religious blamed capitalism for *all* of society's ills, but religious socialists did not, tracing the source of human woe back further still; that difference meant that there were specifically religious versions of nearly every kind of socialism.

All variations of socialism retain the original idea of organizing society as a cooperative community, yet there is

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no core that unites what cooperative communalists, Marxists, Fabians, anarcho-syndicalists, Communists, and Social Democrats—to name only six broad categories—believe about the state, socialization, trade unionism, and democracy. Even those belonging to the democratic-socialist tradition aren't always in agreement about these matters. I believe that the best candidate for an essential "something" in democratic socialism is the ethical passion for social justice and radical democratic community. This ethical impulse retains the original socialist idea in multiple forms, inspiring struggles for freedom, equality, recognition, and a democratic commonwealth.

Democratic socialists, past and present, insist that liberal rights and democracy are essential to socialism as ends *and* means. Historically this meant that democratic socialists in continental Europe, though not in England, had to fight for their right to the socialist name. (For a long time, Marxism held a marginal role in British socialism, and what passed for orthodoxy in the British Labour Party was instead a pastiche of Christian socialism, ethical socialism, union reformism, and Fabian ideology.) They had to fend off the persistent left-wing socialist claim that "democratic socialism" is a mere euphemism for "opportunism" and "revisionism," epithets that were powerful in continental contexts where Marxism was especially influential.

Every socialist tradition had debates over what counted as opportunism. Running candidates for office? Making immediate demands of any kind? Casting a vote on national budgets? Forming electoral coalitions with bourgeois parties? Democratic socialists were usually ready to do all these things, and thus were constantly accused of being opportunists. "Revisionism," on the other hand, is something quite distinct and not a substitute term for democratic socialism. "Revisionism" names the periodic necessity of adjusting the socialist idea to real-world circumstances.

Contrary to countless claims by both detractors and disciples of Eduard Bernstein, he was not the founder of democratic socialism. British socialism in the nineteenth century was mostly democratic, and both of Germany's Social Democratic parties of the 1860s and early 1870s were predominantly radical-democratic, not Marxist. But Bernstein *was* the first great socialist revisionist; his historic significance owes much to the fact that he was a Marxian social-democratic hero before he turned against orthodox Marxism. Bernstein rocked the German Social Democratic Party in 1898–99 by contending that Marx and Engels got many things wrong, and that the party's Marxist ideology was less credible and democratic than the party's reformist practices. In Sweden a similar watershed occurred in 1928 under Per Albin Hansson, who committed the Social Democratic Party to the Bernstein approach and built a political powerhouse. All Continental social-democratic parties eventually took the path of Bernstein and Hansson. In Britain the parallel benchmark came in 1955, when Hugh Gaitskell's revisionist faction won control of the Labour Party, seeking to replace Fabian Collectivism with pluralistic economic democracy.

Democratic socialists rejected the subordination of democracy and liberal rights to a catastrophe vision of revolutionary deliverance. Socialists had to be democratic and liberal on their way to achieving socialism.

Each of these revisionist episodes was a creative response to a stagnant orthodoxy *and* a blow to the conviction that "socialism" names something definite and credible. Most nineteenth-century continental socialists believed that capitalism is antagonistic toward democracy and socialism is intrinsically democratic. The latter belief, however, was construed in profoundly contrasting ways. Anarchists and Marxists contended that political democracy is a bourgeois fraud, and that real democracy emerges only from a proletarian revolution. The state must be smashed as the enemy of freedom (anarchism), or it will wither away after the revolution for lack of anything to do (Marxism). The bitter debate between anarchists and Marxists destroyed the First International in the 1870s, but both camps said it was ridiculous for a socialist to lionize democracy as a socialist value or the best road to socialism. Democracy would only come as a gift of the proletarian revolution. This contention compelled democratic socialists to name themselves self-consciously, rejecting the subordination of democracy and liberal rights to a catastrophe vision of revolutionary deliverance. Socialists had to be democratic and liberal on their way to achieving socialism.

Democratic socialism and social democracy would become significantly different things after democratic socialists insisted that democracy is both the means and end of socialism. When democratic socialists founded the Second International in 1889, they believed that socialist revolutions were inevitable. But they were wrong about socialist revolutions

occurring in all industrialized societies, or *any* at all. So they competed for votes in capitalist societies, which set off debates over how the democratic-socialist ideal should relate to questions of getting and using power—and, ultimately, the divergence between unreconstructed democratic socialists and revisionist social democrats.

THE PRINT COLLECTOR / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Bernstein's life and work are essential for understanding such debates. He was born in 1850 to a Berlin family boasting many rabbis, physicians, mathematicians, and other high achievers. His father was a locomotive driver who attended a Reform temple that conducted services on Sundays. Bernstein took a job as a bank clerk after his gymnasium schooling, and renounced Judaism on the day after his mother died. In 1871 Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel, the founders of Germany's second Social Democratic party, bravely blasted the Franco-Prussian War that yielded the German Empire. They were convicted of treason and Bernstein joined their party out of hero worship, knowing hardly anything about Marxism.

He learned his socialist theory in the movement. Germany's two Social Democratic parties bitterly fought each other, splitting the socialist vote, which compelled a merger in 1875. Bernstein played a unifying role at the merger conference at Gotha, while German chancellor Otto von Bismarck campaigned to outlaw socialism. In 1878 social-democratic publisher Karl Höchberg asked Bernstein to be his secretary on his foreign travels. Bernstein accepted, clueless that crossing into Switzerland would exile him from Germany for twenty-three years. In Switzerland he befriended budding Marxist theorist Karl Kautsky and won over Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on a trip to London, proving his Marxist acumen. Bernstein took over the Swiss version of *Der Sozialdemokrat* and flooded Germany with 12,000 weekly copies of the smuggled paper. He ran the paper through its glory run, 1881–1891, when the Social Democrats surged in Germany. They made spectacular gains in the face of government suppression, winning 312,000 Reichstag votes in 1881, 550,000 in 1884, 763,000 in 1887, and 1,427,000 in 1890. By 1890 the renamed Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) held 20 percent of the national assembly, making it the largest single party in Germany.

Bernstein wrote winsomely astute articles that brought thousands of readers into the party. He explicated Marxian orthodoxy impeccably, as expounded by Engels and Kautsky after Marx died in 1883: parliamentary politics would never create a socialist society, and German Socialists needed to prepare for the inevitable revolution that delivered Germany from capitalism. But first they had to survive Bismarck by being vigilant, intransigent, unified, and careful, breaking no laws. If the party stayed defiant but legal in the Reichstag, the downtrodden masses would flock to social democracy. Policy vigilance was crucial. Engels, Bebel, Liebknecht, and Kautsky described Bismarck's welfare programs as a form of blackmail that kept the monarchy and propertied classes in charge. Bernstein won the favor of SPD bigwigs by editorializing that welfare disastrously strengthened the government against the people, as did Bismarck's subventions for the steamship industry that enabled imperial expansion. It didn't matter that working people liked health insurance and subventions financed dockyard jobs. Bernstein stuck to a hard line, fended off protests from unions, and contributed mightily to the SPD's glory period.

In 1888 he lost his refuge in Switzerland, when Bismarck

persuaded Swiss authorities to shut down *Der Sozialdemokrat*. Bernstein moved the paper to London, where his comradely relationship with Engels grew into a close friendship. Bernstein surprised himself by reaching beyond Engels's group. He greatly admired William Morris, a literary star and ethical socialist who approached socialism through his artistic imagination, very unlike Engels. He befriended Fabian leaders George Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, and Beatrice Webb, surprised to find they were serious socialists. He also befriended Anglican clerics Stewart Headlam, "Brother Bob" Morris, Percy Dearmer, and especially Thomas Hancock, astonished that they were no less socialist than his German comrades.

Later, all of this would be cited against Bernstein, after he stunned the SPD and Socialist International with his heresy. British progressives had seduced him! Always he denied it, contending that his mind was changed by factual evidence, not personalities. A key episode in this change of mind occurred on January 29, 1897, when Bernstein gave a lecture to the Fabian Society on "What Marx Really Thought." Halfway through the lecture, he realized he wasn't persuading himself; he was making Marx sound like Bernstein. He vowed that he needed to clarify, to himself and others, what Marx got right and wrong.

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Bernstein said too many Marxists were like medieval scholastics, wielding a doctrine about a necessary perfect ideal. Meanwhile democracy was advancing throughout Europe, and a fully realized democracy was not hard to imagine. Democracy changed the equation because it compelled states to meet the needs of common people, no longer serving merely a class interest. Huge industrial firms were growing in size and number, and advanced economies needed the rule of law and considerable planning, with or without capitalism. To take Marx literally about the stateless socialist end was incredible. Rightly understood, social democracy is not a fantasy about "society" somehow transforming the transport system into something requiring no governmental administration.

Bernstein began there, rather gently. Then he went on to say that Marx got many things very wrong, notably that capitalism was destroying itself. To Bernstein, what mattered was the movement for liberation, not any particular doctrine about where socialism was going. Marxism is true as a reflection of the struggle for liberation, and debatable concerning everything else.

This position evoked a barrage of rage and accusation, wounding Bernstein. He countered that Marxian dogmatism did not exempt Marxists from the problems of idealism and fallible knowledge. After all, materialism itself is an idea; all knowledge of physical reality is hypothetical and thus ideal; and science is open-ended and revisionist, rooting out errors. Socialists must be open to correcting their errors. At the SPD Congress of 1898, Bebel declared that a fighting party must have a final goal; otherwise it will not fight or be socialist. Young Rosa Luxemburg weighed in, agreeing with Bebel. What made Socialists different from progressives was their commitment to the conquest of political power that produces a communist society. Lacking that, she said, there is no reason to be a social democrat. Kautsky explained that his old friend had lost touch with the German struggle, having enjoyed himself too much in England.

Bernstein even claimed that capitalism was advancing. If this were true, Kautsky said, it would mean that socialists had no hope of reaching their goal! That had to be wrong. Kautsky judged that Bernstein had become an ethical socialist, believing that achieving democracy comes first, whereas true socialists believe the reverse—that the victory of the proletariat is the precondition of achieving democracy.

The final end was crucial because it was the only thing that fused the rhetoric of the SPD to its political practices. As long as the party had a constant final goal—the conquest of power yielding a classless society—it could rationalize all manner of electoral and parliamentary maneuvers. Running for office was revolutionary if it was only a tactic, an expedient implying no commitment to parliamentary democracy. No tactic was right or wrong in itself. The right means helped to achieve the given end. Kautsky said repeatedly that what made *anything* revolutionary was its end, never its means. As long as the party had a defining final goal, everything else in its program and campaigning made sense. Or so many of the party's leaders believed. Bernstein threatened the party's ability to make sense to itself. This was more important than anything else in the Bernstein controversy.

Bebel and Luxemburg wanted to expel Bernstein, but Austrian Social Democratic leader Victor Adler persuaded Bebel to back down, contending that being wrong should not

disqualify Bernstein from party membership. Revolutionary Marxism versus non-revolutionary socialism was a legitimate debate *within* social democracy, and Bernstein was an able champion of the wrong view. If the party expelled Bernstein, it would have to expel many others. On that basis Bernstein kept his place in the party, championed its agrarian-union-reformist-democratic wing, and appropriated the parts of Marxism that seemed right to him.

He took for granted that historical materialism is the foundation of Marxian theory. All events are necessary in the sense that matter moves of necessity in accordance with certain laws. There is no cause without its necessary effect and no event without a material cause. The movement of matter determines the formation of ideas and the directions of human will, so everything falling under these categories is also necessitated, like all other human events.

If all events are necessary, how should the factors of force be understood as relating to each other? How should nature, the economy, legal institutions, and Marx's own ideas be understood? Marx's theory of the material forces and relations of production was his answer: productive forces and relations are the determining factors. The bourgeois mode of production was the last antagonistic form of the social process of production, and the forces developing within it created the material conditions needed to end the antagonism. Human society would end its prehistorical phase when the contradictions of capitalism yielded a communist society. Bernstein passed over the part about communism, since it was hypothetical, belonging to the future. He disliked Marx's reductionism about human ideas and will, contending that Marx should have left more room for human agency.

On Bernstein's telling, Marx's problematic determinism reflected the fact that he took too much from Hegel and too little from Kant. He agreed with neo-Kantian F. A. Lange that Hegel's idea of development through antagonisms, though brilliantly illuminating, was also over-determining for Marx. For example, the Communist Manifesto declared that the bourgeois revolution was the prelude to an immediately succeeding proletarian revolution. Bernstein doubted that Marx would have been so self-deceived had he not over-believed in contradiction dialectics. As it was, Marx never quite got rid of it.

Similarly, the Marxist tradition never quite threw off Blanquism—the belief in massive revolutionary explosions from below. On several occasions Marx and Engels extolled Blanquist terrorism as a near-miraculous force that propels revolution. This defect preceded Marxism and ran through the entire Socialist movement, putting two streams of thought into constant tension. One was constructive in variously utopian, sectarian, or peacefully evolutionary forms. The other was destructive in variously conspiratorial, demagogic, or terroristic forms. Constructive currents conceived emancipation as occurring primarily through economic organization. Destructive currents conceived emancipation as occurring primarily through political conquest and expropriation. Bernstein argued that Marx combined the essential elements of both streams, synthesizing the constructive investigation of the economic and social preconditions for liberation with the revolutionary conception of liberation as a political class struggle, and that Marxism still featured this twofold character.

Marx and Engels assumed that proletarian revolution followed the pattern of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century revolutions. A progressive bourgeois party would take power, aided by revolutionary workers as a propelling force. It would rule for a while, run its course, and give way to a radical bourgeois party, which would soon be overthrown by the revolutionary party of the proletariat. But that was not what happened in France in 1848 and 1871, when revolutions immediately thrust forward the most radical party. Bernstein said there was no reason to believe that socialists and revolutionaries would take a back seat to bourgeois radicals or liberals. It was far more likely that bourgeois types would withdraw, leaving political responsibility to the proletarians. Bernstein doubted that a radical bourgeois government would last a single day in Germany. Thus, Socialists had to be ready to govern Germany, something he shuddered to imagine. SPD leaders routinely reduced Blanquism to a stereotype about a handful of vanguard conspirators waging terrorism, which had nothing to do with them. Bernstein said this was convenient for them, but wrong. Blanquism is the theory that the overthrowing power of revolutionary force is immeasurably creative and indispensable. This cult of force, a legacy of the French Revolution and contradiction dialectics, is toxic and hard to uproot; social democracy should not merely wave away such an idea, but actively purge it from its ranks.

Other Marxian concepts had similar problems. Bernstein cautioned socialists against assuming that Marx's theories of value and surplus value were the last word on these subjects, because Marx's measure of commodity value involved too many abstractions and reductions to be intelligible. Marx treated the rise of the joint-stock company only as an example of the concentration and centralization of capital, failing to recognize that joint-stock companies create a counterweight to the centralization of wealth by centralizing business enterprises. Joint-stock companies permit concentrated capital to be extensively divided, making it unnecessary for capitalist titans to appropriate capital to concentrate their enterprises. Bernstein said socialists were slow to grasp what made corporate capitalism different because Marxian theory steered them away from doing so. Plus, Marx claimed that the concentration of industrial entrepreneurs runs parallel with the concentration of wealth, which is not true. Bernstein dramatized the ongoing capitalist boom in Germany, England, Holland, and France with a slew of graphs. He insisted that socialism had a viable future because social wealth was increasing, not decreasing. The movement had

to give up its dire dogma that its future depended on an imminent catastrophe—a diminishing capitalist class that sucked up all surplus value. Modern production greatly increased the productivity of labor, which greatly increased the mass production of goods for use, generating enormous new wealth.

Socialists had to stop pining for a capital crisis that wiped out the growing middle classes of the world. Bernstein wanted Continental social democracy to be more compelling and up-to-date than the dire apocalyptic face it presented to the world. Marxism rested everything on a theory about the structural contradictions of capitalist production and an argument about the exercise of political power by a class party of workers, described in the transition period as a dictatorship of the proletariat. All three parts of this platform were problematic, and the third part was repellant. Social democracy needed to acknowledge that wage earners were not the homogeneous mass devoid of property that the Manifesto depicted. Moreover, the most advanced industries produced highly differentiated labor hierarchies in which feelings of solidarity were tenuous at best. Bernstein grieved that his opponents condemned him with barricade rhetoric. Perhaps it was exciting to proclaim, but it repelled toolmakers who made decent wages and farmers who wanted to own their land.

Bernstein grieved that his opponents condemned him with barricade rhetoric. Perhaps it was exciting to proclaim, but it repelled toolmakers who made decent wages and farmers who wanted to own their land.

Marxian theory came from an era in which democracy was merely a form of government, and thus not the point for a Marxist. Bernstein said democracy morphed into something else in the late nineteenth century. Socialists, radical democrats, and progressive liberals brought out the negative meaning of democracy as the absence of class government. No class should have a political privilege against the community as a whole. Progressives got clear about this in fighting against the anti-democratic privilege of the monopolistic corporation. Moreover, Bernstein argued, this negative definition brought out the idea that a majority's oppression of individuals and minority communities is repellant.

For similar reasons, social democrats had to stop bashing liberalism indiscriminately. Bernstein said this was another hangover from decades past. Before liberalism bonded with democracy, liberals were pro-capitalist enemies, and old-fashioned liberals still were. It mattered greatly that most liberals now supported democracy. Moreover, Bernstein claimed, social democrats prized civil liberties above everything else. Liberals did not own this issue.

Bernstein's admiration of England was excessive, extending to British imperialism, which he insisted was more good than bad because it exported democratic civilization. He could be florid on this theme, lamenting that Germany's imperialism was closer to the brutal and tyrannizing side of the imperial continuum than to England's. Anglican socialists Headlam, Hancock, Marson, Holland, and Charles Gore railed against British imperialism, but they were moralists at heart. Bernstein identified with Sidney Webb and other Fabian leaders who did not moralize about colonialism or their socialist political ends. Morality had a role to play, but not the leading role. Orthodox Marxists took unwarranted pride in spurning morality, yet they clutched proletarian internationalism as a moral dogma. Bernstein pitched his case to the quiet majority of social democrats he thought were out there. If he got to return to imperial Germany, he would not stand in the way of its interests, and saying so might help him return. More important, German socialists had to prove they would defend the German nation.

Bernstein shot to the top of the quiet party majority he believed was there. Chancellor Bernhard von Bülow, figuring that Bernstein's return might split the SPD, allowed him to come home in 1901. Bernstein defended his position at the Lübeck Congress, condemnations were proposed and defeated, Bebel took it hard, Bebel's milder resolution of rebuke passed, and Bernstein celebrated his vindication. The reformist side of the party had never had a theorist, much less a star with a storied history in the SPD. Everywhere he spoke, Bernstein drew huge crowds of supporters. They launched a journal, *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, proving that democratic socialism was a real position with a large following, not a just a grab bag of compromises.

Bernstein identified the aspects of Marxism that were problematic for democratic socialism. He established that socialists could draw deeply from Marx's economic analysis without accepting Marx's apocalyptic vision of deliverance, showing that democratic socialism had a real basis in socialist and even Marxist theory. Socialists needed to grasp that capitalist economies were more complex than Marx said.

Control of the economy was not inevitably destined by the process of industrial concentration to fall into the hands of a few monopolistic firms.

Until war and imperialism became the dividing issues in the SPD, Bernstein championed the reformist wing of the party. Desperate to prevent war, he railed against the fearmongering toward France and Britain that paved the way to World War I. Like all SPD officials, he wanted to believe that socialism was the antidote to capitalist wars. The war came and Bernstein briefly accepted it, voting with the party majority on August 3, 1914, that committed the SPD as a block to support Germany. He shared the customary German dread of Russia and the SPD's fear of being trampled by pro-war patriots.

But shortly afterward, Bernstein judged that Germany was chiefly responsible for causing the war. He allied with Kautsky and other SPD centrists, who tried to stop the conflict without opposing Germany's war aims or government. This was impossible in every way. Bernstein's antiwar faction was expelled from the Reichstag and regrouped as a new party, the Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD), which opposed the pro-war SPD and Germany's imperialist war aims. During the German Revolution of November and December 1918, Bernstein tried to unite the SPD and USPD—another hopeless effort and equally fateful. The USPD conceived the worker and military councils of the November Revolution as foundations of a new society, advocating pure council-Marxism instead of parliamentary democracy. It prohibited dual memberships with the SPD, and in 1920 its majority joined the Communist International, shattering Bernstein's dream of what should have been.

Subsequently, he played a mostly commendable role in trying to create a decent republic. Bernstein saw the demon coming in his beloved nation before it fell for hyper-nationalism and stab-in-the-back mythology. He inveighed against Germany's refusal to accept responsibility for the war, enraging the SPD; he became a pariah in it, albeit with a seat in the Reichstag. When Bernstein died in 1932 nobody in Germany treated him as an esteemed founder of social democracy. His death passed without notice. Capitalism had not evolved into socialism, he flunked the nationalistic test that the party struggled to pass, and the chasm between his ethical idealism and the prevailing reality made him obsolete. His brand of socialism seemed completely irrelevant and discredited. After World War II, Social Democrats outside West Germany remembered him with mild respect, but the SPD still claimed to be a Marxist party. The SPD lost two successive elections to the Conservative Party before it conceded that Bernstein had been right.

Party leaders Carlo Schmid, Herbert Wehner, and Fritz Erler said it was ridiculous to keep saying that middle-class people should vote for the Marxist party. The SPD had to stop claiming that a centrally planned economy would be better, which defied the common sense of West Germans about why they were better off than East Germans. At its Bad Godesberg conference in 1959, the SPD disavowed its goal of creating a classless society, declaring that it sought to insinuate socialist values into a capitalist society. It also explicitly disavowed anti-clericalism and the refusal to support West German defense policy, two hangovers from a century long past. The party's central objective, it said, was to democratize economic power, not to overthrow private ownership. Public ownership is one form of public control among others, and nationalization is one way to curb economic domination—specifically, the last way.

At one stroke the party halted its electoral decline, making itself welcome to the middle-class progressives it had long wanted. Bernstein was belatedly remembered as the icon of democratic socialism. Today he symbolizes the pathos of social democracy, for the gap between the democratic socialist idea and the present social-democratic reality is vast and expanding. Every social-democratic and workers' party is struggling to rethink its mission in the face of economic globalization and reactionary movements based on racism and xenophobia. In Germany the SPD has capitulated to neoliberal capitalism and has become habituated to its junior-partner alliance with the Conservative Party, albeit with codetermined enterprises. In Sweden the Social Democratic Party has disavowed its historic attempt to democratize major enterprises, the Meidner Plan for Economic Democracy, which folded in 1992 after a ten-year run. In Britain the Labour Party has slightly revived by turning against its entire past generation of accommodation. Nearly all social-democratic and workers' parties in Europe are now consumed by the battle to save the welfare states they created.

No social-democratic party has taken even a pass at democratizing major enterprises on a national scale since Sweden abandoned the Meidner Plan. Today the struggle for economic democracy has been left to stubborn types in the back rows of traditional parties and to a new generation of activists determined to build new organizations. I am against giving up on national-scale strategies, but also against identifying economic democracy solely with them. Democratic socialism expands the cooperative, public bank, and social-market sectors; mixes worker and community ownership; dismantles white privilege, male privilege, and heterosexual privilege; repudiates Eurocentric presumptions; and upholds ethical commitments to freedom, equality, community, and ecological flourishing. It is far more complex and unwieldy than the supposedly inevitable outcomes that Marxists and Fabians predicted. Many young people today want to belong to something that encompasses all their social-justice commitments, not just one or two. Thus we are witnessing a resurgence of interest in an old idea: democratic socialism. ■

Mollie Wilson O'Reilly

Getting the Call

Carlos's phone rang early on a Sunday. "Hello?"

"Hi, Carlos? This is Msgr. Farrell calling from the bishop's office with some exciting news. His excellency has decided to elevate you to the clerical state."

"I'm sorry?"

You're being elevated. It's like a promotion. A reward for good behavior." There was a pause. Carlos heard Msgr. Farrell sigh. "Frankly, the church is in a bit of a fix. You've probably heard about it—"

"Sure, I—"

"Officially, the media is against us and no one really cares about the truth, and what about Hollywood, if we're casting stones? But *entre nous*, the truth…isn't great. Since that report came out about the diocese, we've had to reduce more priests to the lay state than we have new ones coming in. So we're looking for alternate solutions."

"I see. But why are you calling me?"

"We've looked into your background, Carlos, and you seem like the kind of guy we need. Your HR department says you're a good public speaker and a real team player. You raised a lot of money for that cancer-related charity. And you have a knack for breaking bad news gently. Also, you're fluent in Spanish, is that right?"

"Uh, I'm a bit rusty," Carlos said.

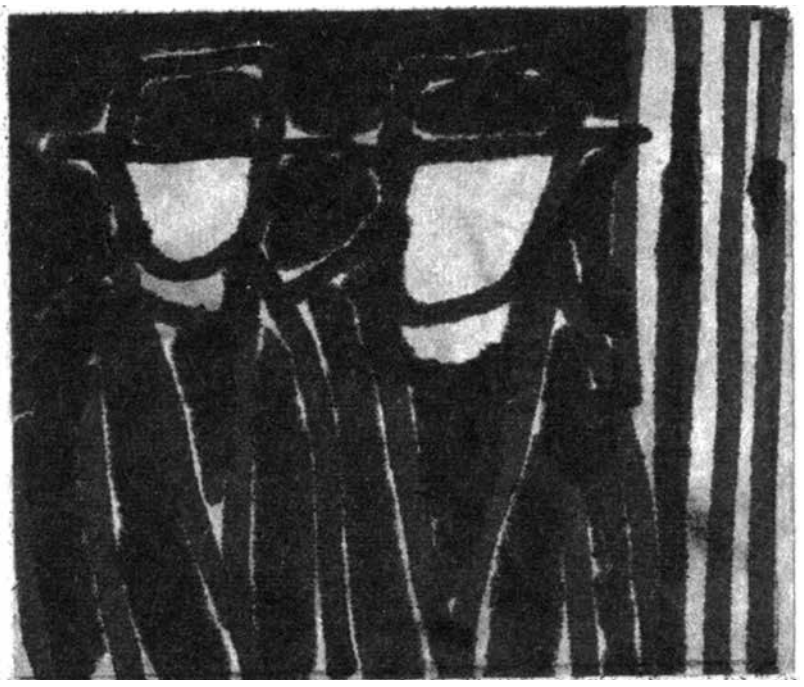
"Fine, perfect. Do you have a wife or girlfriend?"

"Well, no, actually, I—"

"Hey, enough, stop! Yes-or-no question. No details. And…religion, let's see, your pastor says you attend Mass regularly, but—and these are his words—you 'aren't weird about it.'"

"Well, thanks, I guess. And no criminal record, right! Ha ha."

"Oh, great, great; we didn't think to check on that." Carlos could hear Msgr. Farrell rustling papers. "I'll just make a note: 'No…crimes.'"



Carlos was still feeling baffled. "You know I'm not ordained, right?"

"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it," Msgr. Farrell said. "The next step is for you to come in to the chancery for a cassock fitting and some basic training. You know where the chancery is?"

"Sure, right downtown next to—"

"Perfect." Carlos heard the papers rustle again. "'Has…heard…of…chancery.' You are really nailing this, Carlos. I can't wait to get you in front of the bishop."

"Well, I do have some ideas about how he—um, His Excellency—could be addressing this whole crisis thing, if—"

"Ah, yes, I'm sure you do." Msgr. Farrell cleared his throat. "Check your email—we're sending you a copy of our latest manual for clergy. It's the attachment called *'And They Said Nothing to Anyone': Servant Leadership in the Twenty-First Century*. Look that over and then come on in—how's tomorrow at 11?"

Carlos glanced at his calendar. "I guess I could take an early lunch, if…"

"Oh, don't worry about your job. Those are for lay people! We can send a note on the bishop's stationery to let them know you've moved on."

Elevated to the clerical state! Carlos had to admit he liked the sound of it. "OK, I'll be there at 11. But hey—if you're looking for Catholics with leadership potential and solid character and no criminal record and all that stuff, you should talk to my boss."

"Great, what's his name?"

"It's a woman. She's—"

The line went dead. Carlos stood for a moment staring at his phone. "Wow," he thought to himself. "That really *was* the bishop's office!" ■

Mollie Wilson O'Reilly *is an editor at large and columnist at* Commonweal.

ANTONUCCI

Robert Rubsam

Outside the Frame

'ART OF NATIVE AMERICA' & 'ARTISTIC ENCOUNTERS WITH INDIGENOUS AMERICA' AT THE MET

American Indians have always served a largely symbolic purpose for most Americans. They have represented savagery, or primitive innocence, or the potential of the American frontier. But always they have represented something other than themselves. Except as the rest of us see ourselves reflected in them, they are mostly invisible to us.

Many Europeans got their first glimpse of an American Indian when he or she was in captivity, like the Munsee-Delaware man called Jacques who in 1644 was exhibited in Amsterdam as a curiosity. In allegorical representations of the Americas, European artists often presented a Hellenized figure with bow and arrows, naked or in plumed headdress and skirt. Early popular illustrations of American Indians were full of exaggerations and outright fabrications. When the Russian diplomat Pavel Petrovich Svin'in published his 1815 *A Picturesque Voyage in North America*, he updated existing watercolors of an Osage delegation to include facial tattoos, nose rings, and garish body paint. Evidently he felt the real Indians were not quite Indian enough for his readers.

Artists of the first American century combined these two symbolic traditions in their depictions of the Noble Savage. The Indians depicted by landscape painters like Thomas Cole are little more than foils for the legend of American progress, their teepees and primitive superstitions no match for those visible markers of imperial capitalism: the railroad, the telegraph, and the stagecoach. We see the Indians as if they had been overrun by history itself—their defeat honorable, even noble, but always inevitable.

Those who visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art's American wing for *Artistic Encounters with Indigenous America* (on view till May 13) will find themselves swept along by this narrative as it makes camp at the base of Albert Bierstadt's mammoth *Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak* and slumps, broken, in bronzes by James Earle Fraser or Frederic Remington. Working as the Plains Wars drew to an end, these artists depict Indians in attitudes of pastoral splendor or futile defiance. The reality of Native American life in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth—reservations, residential schools, programs of cultural and religious "improvement"—are literally outside the frame.

The Met, along with other major institutions like the Smithsonian, has recently tried to expand our picture of American Indian life by coupling the work of artists like Fraser and Reming-

Pavel Petrovich Svinin, An Osage Warrior, *1811–ca. 1813*

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, ROGERS FUND, 1942

Louisa Keyser, basket bowl, 1907

ton with that of native artists. The Met's curators have juxtaposed items from their permanent collection with major turn-of-the-century Indian works, like the stunning black-on-black ceramics of Maria and Julian Martinez. The curators have also erected a number of "Native Perspectives" placards in which native artists explain their often complex relationships with iconic and canonical works.

Overlapping with *Artistic Encounters with Indigenous America* is the Met's *Art of Native America* (on view till October 6), the largest-ever show of its kind to be held at the museum. Drawing from the extensive collection of Valerie and Charles Diker, *Art of Native America* provides a millennia-spanning survey of Native American art, but its primary focus is the century-and-a-half period of major conquest. At the start of that period, Indians occupied almost the whole continent; by its end, most of them lived on one of a few hundred reservations. The 116 works on display in the exhibition represent fifty different cultures and most major indigenous art forms—everything from a basket woven in the 1930s by the Pima artist Lucy Makil to an ivory toggle from the Bering Strait region, whose surface was finely incised with a wolf's face around the second century AD.

If that sounds like a lot, it is. But it allows for some exciting comparisons. Visitors can see how ideas and traditions changed as they passed along trade networks. Decorative combs from the Eastern Woodlands are just a few steps away from combs from the Pacific Northwest. The sheer variety of forms and approaches shows that Native art is about much more than the repetition of a few archetypal patterns. It helps that many of the objects on display are masterpieces, from the James Bay Cree woman's hood, adorned with intricate floral beadwork, to the rigidly expressive ritual mask of the Tlingit artist Taaw'yaat.

Many of the images on view are abstractions of natural forms. An Acomita water jar, for instance, is painted with what look like the deconstructed and idealized elements of a bird. Particularly among the Alaska Native pieces on display, an encounter with the divine is often represented by means of reduced and streamlined forms. But right next to such reductions one finds other images of striking complexity, many of which compress incredible amounts of narrative information onto a single, wearable plane. There is a Yup'ik ritual mask whose bentwood hoop represents the whole of the universe: the souls of all animals, past, present, and future, meet within its bounds, and are led by a spirit's fingers to members of the tribe. This mask would have been worn as part of an annual ceremony honoring the animals that had fed the community and inviting them to return the following year.

If you end up feeling lost as you wander through the rooms of these two exhibitions, you won't be alone. By attempting to serve as both an overview of Native artistic traditions and a period-specific demonstration of how these traditions responded to several centuries of colonization, the Met exhibitions end up offering a curiously lopsided history of Native America. Most of the plaques describe only the use or design of an item on display, while the historical commentary from Native artists and scholars homes in on colonization. The actual extent of influence and exchange, as well as the impacts of forced religious and cultural assimilation in the Spanish colonies and American territories, is never entirely clear. Yup'ik masks celebrating survival take on a different meaning when one learns they were created in the immediate aftermath of the Great Sickness of 1900, in which many Alaska Native communities lost as much as 50 percent of their population. But you will have to learn that on your own; the exhibition doesn't mention it.

There is an obvious solution here: a better-explained and most importantly *permanent* display of the muse-

Yup'ik artist, dance mask, ca. 1900

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, THE CHARLES AND VALERIE DIKER COLLECTION OF NATIVE AMERICAN ART, PROMISED GIFT OF CHARLES AND VALERIE DIKER

um's Amerindian art would allow it to mount themed exhibitions that better explore, among other things, the ways in which colonial and Christian iconography made its way into traditional forms of carving and weaving. A significant number of the pieces on display were created for sale, a fact reflected in choices the artist made. Consider the Apache woman who wove her basket with representations of people and deer to make it more attractive for tourists. Two kachina dolls, representing Zuni katsina deities, are a commercial twist on a traditional ritual object. This difference of function shows.

The point isn't that these figures represent cultural decline or sacrilege. The point is that they are just one example of the many accommodations Native Americans were forced to make in circumstances they didn't choose. The choice to make marketable kachina dolls for tourists was in this way like the choice to send one's children to distant residential schools or to accept individual farming plots on diminished tribal lands. As the historian Stuart Banner has argued, American Indians have always made hard choices about every aspect of their interactions with colonists, but their options grew increasingly limited over time. The objects in the Met's Amerindian collection could help explain the complicated and often tragic processes of accommodation and adaptation, but only if properly presented.

Almost every item in *Art of Native America* was made to be used for one purpose or another, whether to cradle a child or retrieve a soul. Cree women wore those elaborate beaded hoods to church; He Nupa Wanica painted his shield with a thunderbird because he believed it would protect his comrades in battle.

Many of the objects on display here reflect a worldview in which even the most banal aspects of daily life are threaded with religious meaning. There is little if any division between the sacred and the profane, the religious and the secular, the symbolic and the real. When a Yup'ik dancer puts on a whistling spirit mask, he is not just acting as the spirit: he *becomes* the spirit. There is an impressive Okvik carving of what looks like a woman turning into a seal. Then again, it is entirely possible that this figure with a woman's face and a seal's body is not between states but is *simultaneously* woman and seal—an example of what the historian Calvin Luther Martin calls as the multivalent quality of many American Indian religions.

Almost nothing in this exhibition was created for aesthetic admiration alone. Whether it's the way a Diné blanket's lines break into daring geometric forms when placed across a person's shoulders, or the transformation that a mask undergoes during a ritual, the full beauty of these objects has to be activated by the people who use them. One wishes those people were present. The more time one spends looking at the works on display at the Met, the more one suspects that they could only ever be seen as they are meant to be seen when used as they were meant to be used. Placed behind glass under the banner of "art," they look abandoned.

Perhaps this is unavoidable. But surely it is not too much to ask that such objects always be presented with an account of the stories and activities that gave them their original meaning. Early in the exhibition one comes across a true masterpiece, a dagger whose handle is adorned with a shaman's owl-eyed face, his trance state beaten onto the thin metal. According to Tlingit oral history, one day the metalsmith Saayina.aat came across a meteorite, and forged her blade from this "iron that fell from the sky." Knowing that story makes all the difference to the viewer; it turns the object into something more than just a bit of exquisite craftsmanship. Only when all these stories are included—when the *why* and *who* matters as much as *when* and *how*—can these works be expected to change our understanding of the cultures to which they belonged. ■

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J. Matthew Ashley

Upon These Books

The Mind of Pope Francis

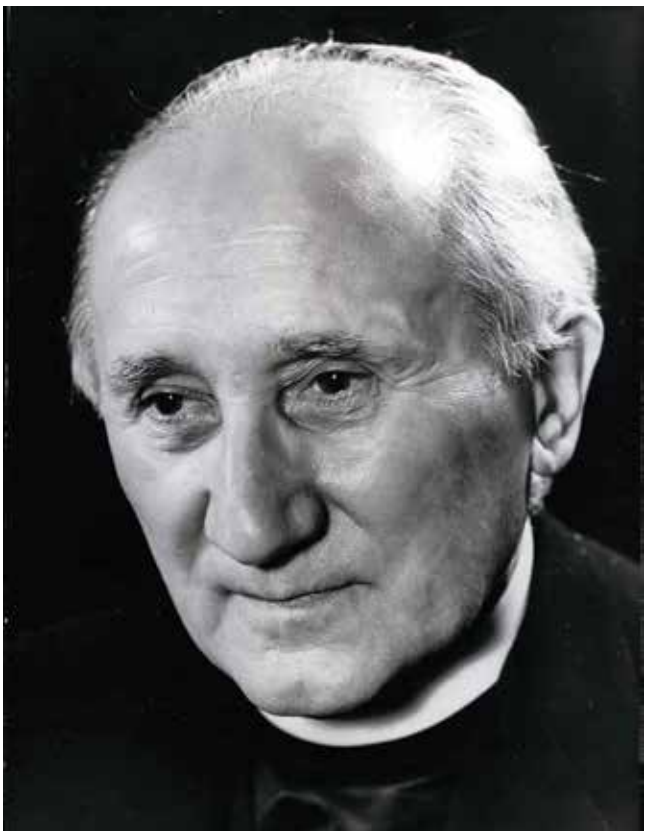
Jorge Mario Bergoglio's Intellectual Journey

Massimo Borghesi

Liturgical Press, $29.95, 344 pp.

It isn't easy to write an intellectual biography of a man who frequently asserts that "realities are more important than ideas." There is no doubt that Pope Francis is a highly intelligent and supple thinker, but unlike his two immediate predecessors, he did not earn a doctorate in either theology or philosophy. As anyone who has read his encyclicals and apostolic exhortations will know, this pope prefers rhetoric, the art of persuasion, to dialectic, the science of conclusive proof. That said, it would be a mistake to draw the contrast too strongly. As Massimo Borghesi shows in his comprehensive survey of the sources that have shaped the pope's thinking, Francis has read broadly over the course of five decades. This reading informs the way he looks at the world and how he exercises the Petrine Office.

Borghesi's account is richly documented and quotes generously from Pope Francis's own words, including four audio recordings that the pope provided specifically for this project. The original Italian edition of the book is subtitled "an intellectual biography," and *The Mind of Pope Francis* does indeed follow a generally chronological sequence. In doing this, it relies heavily on Austen Ivereigh's biography *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope*.



Romano Guardini

Like Ivereigh, Borghesi understands the pope's life and work to be an ever-shifting negotiation of various polarities found in both church and society, polarities that have been locked in struggle throughout his adult life. For example, in the Argentina of the 1970s, Borghesi identifies a polarity between a "revolutionary messianism" (which for him includes liberation theology) and "the anticommunist crusade of men in uniform" (the military dictatorship of Argentina's Dirty War). Among the Jesuits during the same period there was another polarity between the traditional values of religious life as they had been lived in Argentina, and the new vision of Jesuit life proposed at the Order's thirty-second General Congregation, one focused on the defense of the poor and the promotion of justice. In a trenchant analysis of *Amoris laetitia*, Borghesi frames the debate over that apostolic exhortation in terms of yet another polarity: mercy and truth. And related to this is the polarity between the doctrinal element of the church's teachings and the pastoral element.

Bergoglio's response to these polarities and others has been to recognize the value in each pole while recognizing the dangers in absolutizing one over the other. He does not, according to Borghesi, propose a "synthesis" that reconciles the two. For one thing, that sounds too much like Hegel (or Marx, for that matter), and Borghesi has an almost obsessive preoccupation with separating the pope's thought from that particular German tradition (though not from the German Romanticism derived from Hegel's competitor, Friedrich Schelling). Any synthesis one might arrive at, through dialogue and discernment, is provisional, always subject to renegotiation as the situation changes. This is what it means for reality to be greater than ideas. One reason this pope welcomes dissent and debate is his understanding of the need to respect and preserve an open-ended negotiation of the different values at stake in these polarities. It is always necessary for those representing different sides to

keep talking to and with one another, as long as they realize that their unity is always greater than whatever may divide them at the moment.

This general framework for understanding how Francis has approached the conflicts he has had to address as pope is very fruitful, although it carries with it the risk of oversimplifying the different sides of various conflicts in order to emphasize their opposition to one another. This is a temptation to which Borghesi succumbs at times, for instance in his portrayal of the liberation theology of the 1970s and '80s.

Borghesi has various names for the basic style of thinking Pope Francis has developed for dealing with conflict, often calling it an "antinomian dialectic." By using the term "antinomian" Borghesi does not mean to suggest that Francis's approach is opposed to the moral law, but rather that it recognizes the irreducible—and potentially creative—presence of different sorts of antinomies in human life. For decades, Francis has been attracted to thinkers who recognize this "antinomian dialectic." Some of them have developed systems of thought—in philosophy, theology, political theory, or history—that work out its details. Others have reexamined the history of the church or of Christian theology from the vantage point it provides.

The story begins in the 1960s during the future pope's training as a Jesuit. His studies were dominated by a calcified Neo-Scholasticism that was only slowly giving way to the new theologies emerging in the 1950s and '60s. Under the influence of Miguel Ángel Fiorito, however, the young Bergoglio developed a lifelong interest in the study of Ignatian spirituality. A book by the French Jesuit Gaston Fessard, *La Dialectique des 'Exercices Spirituels' de Saint Ignace de Loyola*, became "a major force in Bergoglio's intellectual formation," Borghesi writes. Fessard presents the *Spiritual Exercises* as a method for discerning a path forward in the presence of a God who is found in the smallest details of life, but who also exceeds even the most expansive horizon for the future that we can imagine. Francis says he was also influenced by Michel de Certeau, another French Jesuit. De Certeau's biography of the early Jesuit Pierre Favre deeply impressed the young Bergoglio because it emphasized the *mystical* character of the Ignatian charism, rather than portraying Jesuit spirituality as a rule-bound training regimen for soldiers of Christ. These and similar works laid the spiritual groundwork in which Bergoglio found corresponding intellectual tools in later decades.

During the period when he was a leader of Argentina's Jesuits, Bergoglio was drawn to a number of Latin American thinkers who provided some of these tools. From the philosopher Amelia Podetti, Bergoglio first learned to think in terms of going to "the peripheries." He was also drawn to her reading of Augustine's *City of God*, which still influ-

ences how he thinks about church and state, faith and politics. Meanwhile, he was becoming involved in the so-called "theology of the people" represented by figures such as Lucio Gera, Rafael Tello, and Juan Carlos Scannone.

But Borghesi believes it was the Uruguayan philosopher and social critic Alberto Methol Ferré who had the greatest influence on Bergoglio. And so an entire chapter of *The Mind of Pope Francis* is devoted to presenting Methol Ferré's thought, with barely a reference to Bergoglio himself. According to Borghesi, Bergoglio took from Methol Ferré a particular critique of the liberal, technocratic-hedonistic model for society that has dominated our globalized world. Bergoglio also adopted Methol Ferré's ideal of the Latin American church as a "source church" rather than just a reflection of the church in Europe.

Next, Borghesi turns to the influence of Romano Guardini, whose work Bergoglio was sent to study in Germany in 1986. Although the four maxims the pope often repeats (time is greater than space; unity prevails over conflict; realities are more important than ideas; the whole is greater than the sum of the parts) can be traced back to a nineteenth-century Argentinian politician, Juan Manuel de Rosas, their conceptual underpinnings are largely borrowed from Guardini. Borghesi lays these underpinnings out in helpful detail, and also examines Guardini's influence on the pope's diagnosis of modern society in *Laudato si'*.

Finally, Borghesi explores the influence on Francis of the founder of Communion and Liberation, Luigi Giussani, whose book *L'attrattiva Gesù* ("The attractiveness of Jesus") helped shape the pope's views on the centrality of encounter with Christ, the priority of the pastoral, and the preeminence of mercy.

Along the way, Borghesi presents many other figures—too many to cover here—including Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, and Hans Urs von Balthasar. Reading this book, one is left with a deep sense of Pope Francis's intellectual curiosity and aptitude, as well as his originality. In searching for Francis's intellectual roots, Borghesi has set himself a difficult task: it is really only with Guardini that clear and direct lines of influence become apparent. For other figures, we have the pope's testimony that he read and learned from their work as a whole, but few direct statements on which particular elements of their thought impressed him. And it is here that one difficulty with this book emerges. Borghesi likes to offer sweeping overviews of a whole system of thought (Methol Ferré's, for example), but that means the reader is sometimes left to wonder exactly which parts of the system in question actually influenced Francis, and how the ideas of one thinker connect to those of another in the pope's thought.

Still, Borghesi does succeed in providing a compelling survey of the pope's various intellectual sources, and in suggesting how they contributed to his fundamental understanding of the world and the church. The church for Francis is itself a rich symphony of differences and polarities, a reality that is always greater than any set of ideas. In highlighting this, Borghesi helps us grasp the intellectual roots of Pope Francis's belief that differences and disagreements within the church must often be allowed to run their course—because no one, not even the pope, is in a position to say in advance what they may teach us. No doctrinal or theological vision, no matter how conceptually sophisticated, is equipped to resolve all the disagreements preemptively. Finally, Borghesi helps us see that Pope Francis's originality comes not only from the depth of his intellectual formation, but also from his practice of looking for the resolution of conflicts not only through careful listening and thoughtful reflection, but also through prayerful discernment. It is exactly the kind of originality one might expect from the first Jesuit pope. ■

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Peter Quinn

The Wild East

Devil's Mile

The Rich, Gritty History of the Bowery

Alice Sparberg Alexiou

St. Martin's Press, $27.99, 304 pp.

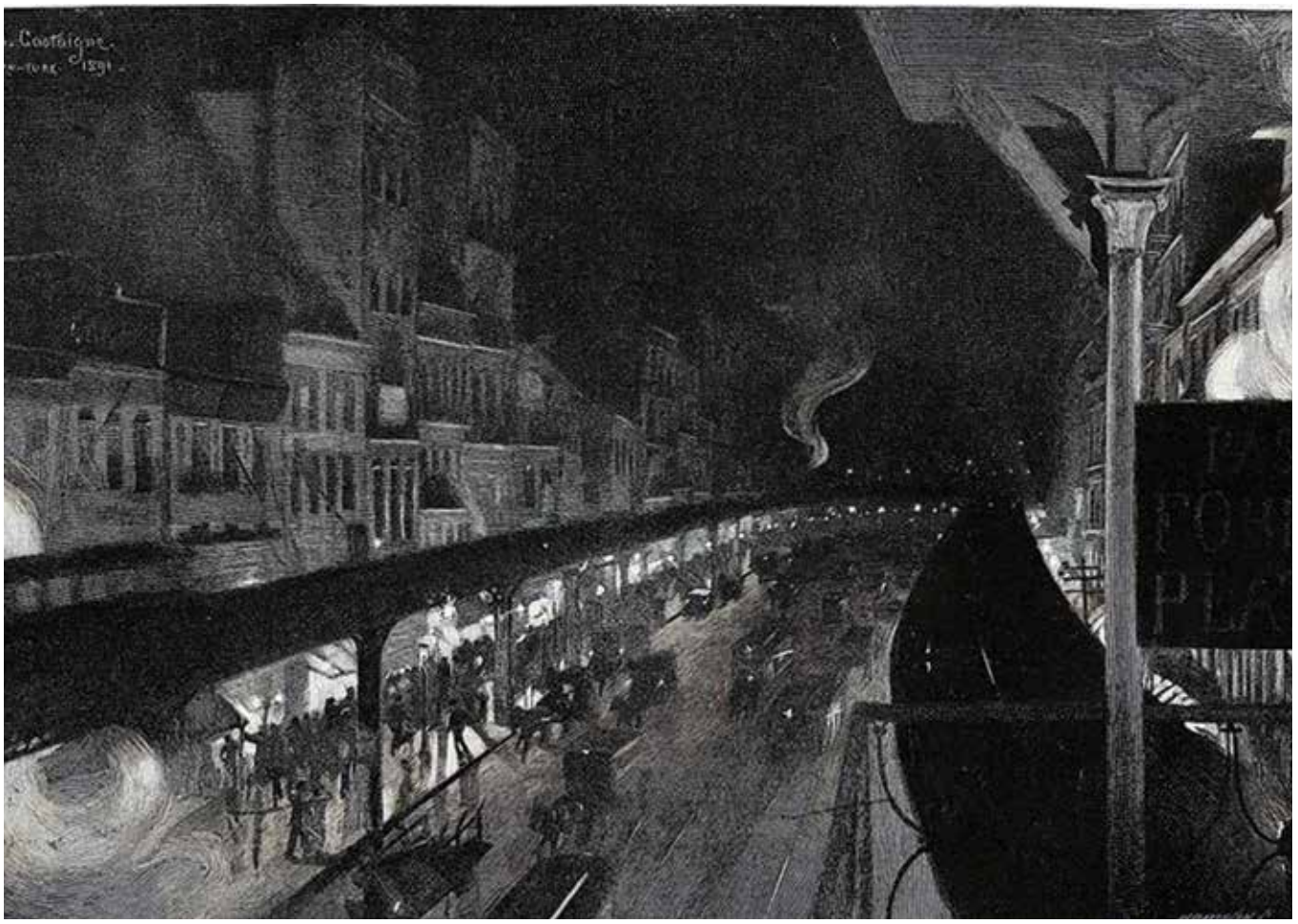
My first visit to New York City's Bowery was as a child. My Aunt Gertie took me to a Catholic mission around the corner. It was Christmastime and Gertie was delivering clothing collected from fellow telephone operators for, as she informed me, "the bums." My memory is of a wintry Walpurgisnacht. Tattered men huddled around barrels of burning scrap wood, or lay in doorways, or staggered out of brightly lit, evil-smelling bars. I was distressed by the destitution, but Gertie, who grew up not far away, seemed unbothered. She brought along a purse full of dimes that she handed to any who asked.

The few times I returned as an adult were on forays to inexpensive lighting stores tucked among missions, gin mills, and flophouses. Yet I detected a faded dignity behind the Bowery's begrimed façades, not unlike that behind the ruined faces of its inhabitants. As Alice Sparberg Alexiou puts it in *Devil's Mile: The Rich, Gritty History of the Bowery*, "Almost every building and lot has a good story in its history." No matter the ups and downs, the soulful history of the place "is always present and somebody will always find it."

Walt Whitman sang of the Bowery as "racy of the East River," its denizens embodying "a picturesque freedom of looks and manners, with a rude good nature and restless movement." A century later, his spiritual descendant Allen Ginsberg celebrated those "who ate the lamb stew of the imagination and digested the crab at the muddy bottom of the rivers of Bowery."

Charles Hurstwood, ill-fated lover of Theodore Dreiser's Caroline Meeber (*Sister Carrie*), ended as a flophouse suicide, his last words a cri de coeur shared by generations of the down-and-out: "What's the use?" Real-life Stephen Foster, the progenitor of American popular music, dubbed by Alexiou "the poignant bard of the Bowery," died cold and alone in the attic of a hotel, his throat slit either by accident or design.

Minstrelsy, "with its edgy and shame-



The Bowery from the Grand Street Station of the elevated railway. Drawn by A. Castaigne, engraved by H. Davidson.

inducing racial content," grew to a national rage after the Virginia Minstrels' 1843 debut at the Bowery Theater. Israel Beline (a.k.a. Irving Berlin) remembered his turn-of-the-century "musical education on the Bowery" among "real tough people." At century's end, CBGB's, a cave-like bar on the ground floor of a flophouse, hosted punk pioneers like the Ramones and Patti Smith, and became the hothouse for the re-blossoming of rock 'n' roll's rebellious soul.

America began as much on the Bowery as at Jamestown and Plymouth Rock. Immigrants of all shades and persuasions began here. Industrious Dutch, conquering English, enslaved Africans, famished Irish, fleeing Chinese, penniless Italians, persecuted Jews. The history that Alexiou relates in her enlightening, engrossing book is overwhelming in its richness. She writes without exaggeration that "the Bowery was more than a street. It was, is, a place that transcends time."

The Bowery was the seed and stem from which the Big Apple grew. In the beginning were the Dutch who founded New Amsterdam in 1625. Governor Peter Stuyvesant established his *bouwerij* (farm) beside a Native American footpath that soon became a bustling lane. Freed slaves settled in nearby swampland, which came to be called "Negros Land." Native Americans were swept away by smallpox and military force. As property values rose, the ex-slaves were displaced.

The Dutch lost control of the colony to the British. They renamed it in honor of the Duke of York, who became James II and shortly after was kicked off the throne. Before the British were tossed out by their colonial subjects, they turned Bowery Lane into "the southernmost leg of a comprehensive postal highway to link New York and Boston." Loyalist families like the Delanceys fled and left behind nothing but a street name.

The great scheme of New York real estate, which would one day propel an odious huckster to the presidency, was hatched here. Fittingly enough, the art of the deal originated in butchery and skinning. Heinrich Ashdore came to New York from Walldorf, Germany, with Hessian mercenaries employed by George III. After his boss was booted, Ashdore reinvented himself as Henry Astor, set up shop on the Bowery, and grew wealthy as a purveyor of fresh meat. His brother Johann Jakob (John Jacob) followed him to New York and made a fortune in the fur trade.

Henry and John had a fraternal relationship of the Cain-and-Abel kind. They invested heavily in real estate, competing with one another as they bought and divided Bowery lots, and squeezed larger and larger profits from tradesmen and small-business owners. When John opened a downtown theater, Henry bested him with the capacious Bowery Theater, which boasted a capacity of three thousand seats. Alexiou identifies the Bowery as "the very place where American popular culture was starting to emerge."

The street itself was a theater. Young, American-born, working-class males made it their headquarters. The Bowery b'hoys, as they came to be called, featured their own haircut and outfit, as well as a trademark slang and strut. Nativist embodiments of the rude, boisterous, assertive (to some, threatening) spirit of Jacksonian democracy, they brought to life the edgy urban cool adapted by street dudes from Damon Runyon's guys and dolls to today's hip-hop artists.

The Bowery was a great American frontier, the Wild East as opposed to the Wild West. The unwashed and unfettered roamed here, those who reveled in the American Dream and those defeated by it. Here, the rules and proprieties of sober, God-fearing society ended and the country of anything goes began. Its combination of danger and diversion was an irresistible draw that, for some, didn't always end well. Cautioned one music hall ditty: "They say such things and do strange things / On the Bowery! The Bowery! / I'll never go there anymore."

The Bowery's raison d'être went beyond "the pursuit of happiness" to an open-ended hunt for fun. Before Las Vegas, gambling dens were rampant. Yiddish theater prospered. Dime museums appealed to fans of the outré and offbeat. It was where gay men from across the social spectrum found a haven, and where Gotham's 1 percent went slumming among the no percent. "Sex on the Bowery," Alexiou allows, "went at bargain rates."

Reformers loathed the Bowery not only for its promiscuity but for its politics, especially the Irish variety perfected by Tammany Hall. Reverend Charles Parkhurst made an anonymous tour of the dives and brothels of the area, demanding at each stop to be shown something worse, until he emerged to lead a citywide crusade against lust, drink, and Tammany. He was convinced that if the country rid itself "of rum and the Irish, it could close three-quarters of its poorhouses and tear down half its prisons."

Presiding over Bowery politics was its undisputed king, Big Tim Sullivan. King though he was, he treated voters as equals, not subjects. Long after the Irish had ceased to be a numerical majority, Sullivan earned the loyalty of Jews and Italians. In the days before a social safety net, he provided everything from jobs and meals to children's shoes. If he profited handsomely from politics, which he most certainly did, Alexiou credits that "he gave back more than he took by looking out for his constituents."

After Sullivan came the deluge. World War I deposited growing numbers of unemployed veterans, many physically or mentally scarred, who filled up the missions and cheap rooms. Prohibition closed the saloons, which along with alcohol offered companionship and basic amenities. "Without the saloons," Alexiou laments, "the bums were lost." Rot-gut whiskey and chemical wines pushed by illegal dives left some blind or dead. New York's most historic, vibrant, freewheeling street descended into a byway of the broken and abandoned.

The Bowery bum, a synonym for a hopeless, panhandling, transient alcoholic, found a sympathetic chronicler in filmmaker Lionel Rogosin. *On the*

Bowery featured two genuine Bowery denizens, Gorman Hendricks and Ray Sayler. It was shot in 1956 for $60,000 and used a skeletally scripted plot that followed their three-day interactions. An early example of cinéma vérité, it captured the pathos of men whose days revolved around finding the next drink and a place to sleep. Sayler's good looks and natural style earned him a shot at an acting career, but he chose to return to points unknown.

Eventually the El that had long shackled the Bowery sky came down, but daylight only added to the desolation. It was tagged for "urban renewal" (i.e., demolition) by power broker Robert Moses, who swept aside acres of the city to erect highways and high-rises. Moses's reign ended before he got to bulldoze the Bowery, but crime and drugs and the city's economic decline left it a bleak and dangerous place.

Alexiou has it exactly right when she concludes that in New York "every story begins or ends, with real estate." The next chapter in the saga of the Bowery pits the dogged resistance of preservationists and a dwindling number of longtime residents against the mounting advance of speculators, developers, and the new urban gentry. Once more the future of "New York's quirky and fabled street" is in play.

Alexiou's gem of a historical Baedeker is not just for everyone who cares about the Bowery but also for anyone interested in the play of change and continuity—of memory and history—that gives a city its soul. Hers is a tribute, not a lament. She records the Bowery's multiple manifestations as cultural playground, moral underground, and urban wasteland. She gives us what was and is. She never loses hope. "*The Bowery! The Bowery! / They say such things and they do strange things / On the Bowery! The Bowery*!" ■

Peter Quinn, *a frequent contributor, is the author of the novels* Banished Children of Eve, Hour of the Cat, Dry Bones, *and* The Man Who Never Returned. *His essay collection is* Looking for Jimmy.

Nicole-Ann Lobo

'Places Remember'

Bangkok Wakes to Rain

Pitchaya Sudbanthad

Riverhead Books, $27, 368 pp.

A feeling of saudade permeates the pages of *Bangkok Wakes to Rain*, Pitchaya Sudbanthad's debut novel. Though that Portuguese word can be defined as "a longing for the past," it's often used to convey something more elusive: a melancholic yearning for certain moments in life, but also happiness that they occurred in the first place—its closest English equivalent might be "nostalgia." All of Sudbanthad's many characters experience saudade at some point in this tale of interwoven lives, which spans a century in the ever-changing city of the title.

Sudbanthad builds the novel on an innovative premise: that a single house can hold a wildly vast array of stories, containing within it the secrets of countless lives. Those secrets compound in time, as the original dwelling, a single-family estate, gives way to a high-rise condominium over the course of the novel. At first, the tale seems disjointed; each vignette is different from the next; the characters' interrelations appear virtually incidental. But their connections become evident as they mature into fully formed people, broken but resilient. For each of them, Bangkok (often referred to by its old Thai name Krungthep) and, to a varying extent, this particular dwelling, play important roles.

Our vantage point shifts between and among these many characters: a languishing missionary begs to be transferred in the midst of a cholera outbreak in the Old City; an aging rockstar is melancholic with longing for his old romantic partner; a wallflower desires to be seen amid her beautiful, more affluent friends. Sudbanthad painstakingly articulates poignant moments in each life—how they permeate the consciousness, how they perpetuate a sense of loss, how they linger long after they've passed. This approach helps him build captivating accounts of his characters' mundane existences, especially that of Nee, who evolves from a young woman witnessing the death of her boyfriend in a government attack on university protesters, to a quiet worker who falls in love with an impetuous photographer, to an old lady discerning, after a life stacked with abandonment, where her sense of home lies.

Sudbanthad's early description of that attack on college students and its devastating aftermath sets a poignant tone for the novel. It strongly resembles the 1976 Thammasat University massacre, in which Thai state forces and far-right paramilitaries attacked university students who had been peacefully protesting the regime for weeks. The massacre is remembered for its shocking brutality: entrances to the university were blocked and students were shot even as they called for a ceasefire and surrendered. It's estimated that well over a hundred people died, with many more wounded and arrested.

Sudbanthad himself grew up in Thailand, Saudi Arabia, and the American South. Now based in New York and Bangkok, he is the recipient of several fellowships in fiction writing, and serves as a contributing writer at the *Morning News*. Perhaps this range of experiences helps explain the easy familiarity he seems to have with his characters, many of whom are described in terms normally reserved for old friends. One of the most endearing is Mai, whom we first encounter as a young girl dutifully loyal to her schoolmates; later, we see her as a successful career-woman no less dedicated to old ties (she gives shelter to one of those friends, now struggling). Yet even with this seemingly happy development, it's impossible not to remain haunted by Sudbanthad's account of

Bangkok

her adolescence. Those old friends also encouraged her, to her parents' consternation, to get cosmetic surgery. We see through the eyes of the hesitant surgeon, a father himself, as he begins to reshape this young girl's face with "the same force he'd use to cut into a fruit."

For each of Sudbanthad's characters, no decision is ever quite as straightforward as it seems. Phinneas, a missionary doctor, is forced to choose between bringing a dying man back to the mission hospital or allowing an angry group of Thai locals to take him to a ceremonial house at a witch doctor's request, while the man's frightened son looks on. "Will you see that I acted within the bounds of good reason?" Phinneas implores his brother in a later letter, himself unsure whether he made the right choice.

The past continually imposes on the present, if not explicitly through memory, then unexpectedly via the evocative capacity of the senses. In one of the novel's storylines, for instance, a murderous Thai colonel is returned to his childhood by the distinct aromas of a woman's cooking. That woman is Nok, who is the sister of Nee, the survivor of the university massacre. Nok is unaware that the fragile old man was in fact responsible for the death of Nee's beloved that day. But when Nok eventually learns of the man's identity and role in the attack, she faces both rage and guilt—can Nee ever forgive her? And later she too, like other characters, faces a choice: whether to cook for the colonel as he lies on his deathbed, his final wish to smell the scent of her sour curry and chicken-fat rice.

If Sudbanthad is concerned with how our decisions haunt us, he is also concerned with how they haunt the places we leave behind. Later in his life, Pig, an old friend of Mai's, discerns a sporadically appearing shadow that takes the shape of a recumbent child. The shadow and its placement might recall a young worker who fell through bamboo scaffolding during the rapid construction of the high-rise that replaced the old estate house. "Who's doing the remembering?" Pig asks Mai, who has brought her to the spot. "Here. This building, this ground." "They can do that?" Pig asks. Mai responds, "I wish I had a better explanation, but I think that maybe yes, they do, even when we don't. Places remember us."

This anticipates the dystopian turn the novel ultimately takes. New technologies and a changing climate begin to make themselves felt, even as many of the characters express nostalgia for small details of the old Krungthep, communal and bustling, where street stalls sold fragrant noodles and oliang, Thai iced coffee. By the closing pages, people have a taste for futuristic "coffee vaporized in a soundfield," which is said to enhance its notes and quicken its effects, even as they are trying to survive in a Bangkok nearly submerged by catastrophic rainfall and rising sea levels. In fact, such a future may not be so far off. Today overdevelopment is causing Bangkok to sink, while the seas inexorably encroach: some experts estimate the city will be underwater within twelve years. The beloved building through which Sudbanthad filters the lives of his many characters is itself understood to be in jeopardy—and with it the sacred land it has stood on.

Whether or not it survives, the memory of it will somehow persist. Near the novel's end, as Nee looks back on her decisions, she must accept that the past still manifests itself in unforeseen ways. "Truth lingers," she thinks, "unseen like phantoms but there to rattle and scream wherever people try hardest to forget. ■

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NINARA FROM HELSINKI, FINLAND

B. D. McClay

Innocents (Almost) Abroad

The Children's Crusade

Marcel Schwob
Wakefield Press, $11.95, 56 pp.

In 1198, Innocent III opened Rome's first foundling home, the Hospital of the Holy Spirit. Inside the hospital, frescoes tell the story: women in Rome were murdering their children and throwing their bodies into the Tiber; fishermen, distressed at the number of dead infants they were catching in their nets, presented their remains to Innocent III. An angel comes to the horrified pope in a dream, telling him to build a hospital, which he does.

One can believe this story or not—in a paper on the frescoes, Diana Bullen Presciutti points out that the "earliest surviving account of this foundation legend" comes "almost 200 years after the events of the legend were purported to have taken place," and the Hospital of the Holy Spirit was not exclusively dedicated to foundlings. But if it is true, or even half true, there is perhaps a special poignancy to Innocent III's role as the pope who also witnessed the Children's Crusade of 1212, in which children ran away from their parents to an almost-certain disaster. As one of eight tellers of tales in Marcel Schwob's 1896 novella *The Children's Crusade*, recently republished by Wakefield Press, Innocent III pleads with God: "Let there be no new massacre of the Innocents under Innocent…. Long years have taught me that this herd of children *cannot* succeed. And yet, Lord, is it a miracle?"

To its contemporaries, the Children's Crusade was bizarre; "a futile expedition," in the words of one chronicler. To us, it is hardly less so. It comprised two movements of children in 1212, one in Germany, the other in France. (There's some debate about whether or not the "children" are properly considered such at all). Convinced that they were called to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, off they went, asserting the very seas would part if no one gave them passage. Their ultimate fate is uncertain. Later chroniclers believed some of the children, having made it to Marseilles, were tricked into boarding ships "heading for Jerusalem" that actually took them away to be sold into slavery. (This is the story Schwob follows.)

Perhaps because it is such a strange story—one that feels like a myth—the Children's Crusade automatically presents itself as a lens through which to understand other awful moments involving children: sexual abuse, shootings in schools, children at the border. A myth can be a clarifying simplification, and children, symbolically, are simple; so children setting out, already doomed, in the service of an ambiguous cause, betrayed and manipulated by the adults around them, can easily stand in for other suffering children, revealing something about their circumstances and lending them historical weight. Schwob's book even makes a cameo in Valeria Luiselli's new novel *Lost Children Archive*, a book about the deportation of migrant children.

And yet after reading *The Children's Crusade,* reading more about the events in question, and then returning to it, I find that something about the book and its story resist being used in this fashion. The history makes what really happened to the children harder to know, and instead of deepening my understanding of the present, using the Children's Crusade simultaneously distances me from what's happening while obscuring the sadness of what happened to these long-dead children. What remains, instead, is Schwob's bleak meditation on innocence, one in which the children are innocent to the point of seeming almost inhuman. Their innocence also provokes something suspicious in the adults around them.

"There are cruel men who gouge the eyes of children…to put them on display and evoke pity," the first teller of the novella's tales, a goliard (or wandering cleric) warns us. "And this is why I was afraid when I saw all those children." That Schwob himself will proceed to do this to these children deepens the warning, rather than undermining it. When adults encounter children, the book suggests, one urge they experience is to maim them; it is this desire to harm that underlies an adult obsession with children's purity.

The eight tales that make up *The Children's Crusade* read like testimony: one even begins, with some urgency, "If you want to understand what I am about to tell you..." But if they are testimony, even only rhetorically, it is unclear to whom the testimony is directed. What has happened with these children requires some sort of explanation, but who is in a position to do it, and who is owed such an explanation in the first place—the children to the adults, the adults to each other—remains ambiguous.

None of these tales depict the dramatic moments one might expect: no setting-out, no declaration that the sea will part, no moment of realized betrayal. Instead, some of the tales are from people who encounter the children on the road; two are from the point of view of the children themselves; and two, finally, are from Popes Innocent III and one of his successors, Gregory IX. Attitudes toward the children vary. The goliard and a leper, who meet them during their travels, are moved. Pope Innocent III wonders if the children represent a test that he's failed; Gregory IX mourns them. A qalandar (a kind of Muslim holy man) who happens upon them after they've been sold into slavery rejoices in the opportunity they present for conversion.

For François Longuejoue, a cleric in Marseilles, however, these "throngs of children" are a problem. (Amusingly, Longuejoue's testimony is presented as written testimony, as if turning up to speak on the subject was a waste of his time.) To him, the children "know not

Monogrammist LIW, Children's Crusade, *1490–1550*

what they do," but this makes them dangerous; they are a "foreign turbulence," a "northern horde," and their "madness of a children's army" is not condoned by the church, thus liberating the town of Marseilles from any obligation to them. It has been a rough winter, after all; they cannot support these hungry masses. So off the children go in the boats that are supposed to take them to Jerusalem; as the reader is painfully aware, nothing of the sort will happen.

With the exception of Longuejoue, the adults are moved and troubled by the children's purity and make note of it. To these adults, the children are "white" as Christ is "white": without stain. They are pious, unafraid of other people. The children are so unmarked as individuals to the adult observers that the goliard tells us he considered them "nameless."

Part of the historical argument that the "children" were not children at all, but rather adults, has to do with a dispute over the term used to designate the children in contemporaneous accounts: *puer.* That term, it is argued, does not connote a child so much as a person who is not fully considered an adult—an unmarried and unmarriageable laborer, for instance, or a shepherd. In his book *The Children's Crusade: Medieval History, Modern Mythistory*, Gary Dickson disputes this understanding, pointing out that *puer* refers reliably to youthful people in other contexts.

Yet also interesting, if we step back from the technical argument for a moment, is the assertion that a person can be *not* a child—which is to say, not toddling, diapered and rosy-cheeked, but rather off to the sea—yet also *not* an adult.

Would it matter if the "children" of this Children's Crusade weren't children? For the book, it matters in a particular sense: imagining a group of adults traipsing through Europe does not provoke the same sense of tragedy, or of innocence's power and powerlessness, both its moving and inert qualities. They could not have sustained this book. Yet a group of adults that had, similarly, been betrayed and sold into slavery would be, in the way that mattered, no less innocent.

When Pope Francis speaks of the victims of abuse, he sometimes calls them "little ones." "We showed no care for the little ones," he said in August of last year. At the recent summit on child abuse, he prayed that those gathered "listen to the cry of the little ones who ask for justice."

This language has real emotional weight. But it also flattens children—a category that here also includes teenagers, not precisely "little"—into an abstraction, eliding not only the abuse of adults but even the way abuse looks when it involves actual children. Real children are many things; they have an insistent bodily presence and need; they can be loving, cruel, courageous, deceitful. They get tired and angry. One of the ugly aspects of predation is that it looks at a child with its own inner life and chooses to regard it instead as a blank mass on which a stronger will can be imposed.

Part of what makes the Children's Crusade such a compelling story is that it is *not* a story of children being sent out to die by adults, or being manipulated by adults, but rather an assertion against various authorities—parental, ecclesiastical—that there was something important happening that these adults did not have the right to control. If it is a story about innocence and power, it is not a story in which innocence is conflated with powerlessness. That the children lose does not make them passive; that they are not passive does not mean they are not innocent. Part of the struggle is over what their attempt to go to Jerusalem means: if it is insanity, or disobedience, or something else.

One interesting decision Schwob makes in *The Children's Crusade* is to have the children say, within their own tales, that they are guided by voices that all of them seem to be able to hear, even after they are deceived in Marseilles. Though the children seem nameless to the adults around them, in their own stories, they have names, relationships, and faith. They are still abstractions—*The Children's Crusade* is that sort of a book. But the choice to side, in some sense, with the children, to grant validity to their doomed quest, lends this strange and sad novella a hopeful quality. Whatever happened to these children, what it all meant, ultimately belongs not to the surrounding adults, but to them. ■

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The Thresher

Ben Bishop

The first thing Charlotte ever said to me was, "Everyone I know and love is dead." I knew it was true, I just didn't know how to respond. For a moment I sat with the phone to my ear, the silence building. When I showed up at her apartment a little later, she regarded me with a faint smile. She was ninety-four years old, her clothing stained and torn. I was a mental-health worker with the county, there to do a cognitive evaluation. I had barely settled into my chair when she took me completely off guard.

"Let's pray," Charlotte said.

I hesitated, vague misgivings spreading their wings inside my chest. Then I shrugged. "Okay."

Charlotte stared at me for a long beat, her rheumy eyes holding a spark. At last she spoke. "*I'm* not going to pray. *You* pray for *me*." So I started, but didn't get thirty seconds into my prayer before she burst out—"I'm ready for the rapture, Jesus! O God, I want to go to heaven!"

Charlotte was descending into dementia. She was convinced someone had a key to her apartment and was letting himself in at night. As I was leaving, I stood at her front door, trying to explain how she could lock it from the inside after I left. I assured her she was completely safe, but every time I tried to go she started crying.

Soon I will be dead. I'm not sure when—I'm relatively young and in good health—but even at thirty-five years old I can already sense time accelerating. The transience of human existence is one of our race's most cherished truths, yet for many years the admonition to remember how little time I had failed to move me. It takes more than a proverb to stir up intimations of our own mortality. My awakening came in the form of a strange job.

Not long after finishing graduate school, I took the position that led me to Charlotte. My responsibilities included visiting elderly clients, most of them impoverished. Sitting in shabby tenements, I listened to stories of long-dead siblings and faded dreams. A few years into the job I met John, a homeless man who had suffered a traumatic brain injury after a brutal beating in a city park. John's capacity for short-term memory was almost entirely gone. We had the same conversation over and over again. Every week he described to me, as if for the first time, his plan to move to another state and open a bakery. It was a dream I knew he would never realize. John had just enough awareness of his own impairment to be excruciatingly frustrated by the circular nature of our talks. One morning, instead of returning to his entrepreneurial aspirations, our discussion turned to his drinking. I will never forget how he described his habit.

"I've got a little spot down by the Willamette where the cops can't see me. Nobody can. It's just me and the ducks. I take a six-pack down there and sit and drink my beers and the moon rises over the water and all my problems just melt away like candle wax. I'm going to keep doing that."

PXHERE

In my childhood I was taught that Jesus suffered and died so that I could go to heaven. As I grew older, I came to understand the Gospel to include the hope that those who put their faith in Christ may be renewed now, in this life. But it's a hard hope to sustain in the face of all the loneliness and fear I encounter on the job. What does Christ's promise of renewal mean for someone dying alone in poverty? Confronted by my clients' suffering, the hope of eternal life—a time or place beyond death in which God will wipe away all our tears—has given me strength to face the thresher of this world with my eyes wide open.

Another day, another visit. As I sit in a dim apartment on a winter afternoon, something dark pulls at me. My client is silent, staring at a shadow creeping down the wall. His fingernails are yellow, his hair like dirty snow. I think of Elijah and his valley of clattering bones. This man has just told me about his children, whom he hasn't seen in years. He cannot quite remember where they live. He is tired and old, wrung out by his work as a foreman on a road-building crew. My colleagues tell me the woman currently staying with him is almost certainly stealing his Social Security checks. The hallway outside his apartment is lined with huge roach traps.

When I reach the sidewalk I am lightheaded from the building's stench. I shake my head, trying to clear it. Across the street the black mouth of a parking garage gapes like a tomb. I see Lazarus stumbling out, into the warmth of day and the scent of lilies. ■

Ben Bishop'*s writing has appeared in* Willamette Week, *the* Stranger, *and the* Other Journal. *He lives with his family in Portland, Oregon.*

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