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The opiate of the people?

Marxism and Religion

- Debate - Marxism and Religion -

Publication date: Wednesday 1 June 2005

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Is religion still, as Marx and Engels saw it in the nineteenth century, a bulwark of reaction, obscurantism and conservatism? To a large extent, the answer is yes. Their view still applies to many Catholic institutions (Opus Dei is only the most obvious example), to the fundamentalist currents of the main confessions (Christian, Jewish or Muslim), to most evangelical groups (and their expression in the so-called “Electronic Church”), and to the majority of the new religious sects - some of which, as the notorious Moon Church, are nothing but a skilful combination of financial manipulations, obscurantist brain-washing and fanatical anti-communism.

The well-known phrase “religion is the opiate of the people” is considered as the quintessence of the Marxist conception of the religious phenomenon by most of its supporters and its opponents. How far is this an accurate viewpoint? First of all, one should emphasize that this statement is **not at all specifically Marxist**. The same phrase can be found, in various contexts, in the writings of Kant, Herder, Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer, Moses Hess and Heinrich Heine... For instance, in his essay on Ludwig Börne (1840), Heine already uses it - in a rather positive (although ironical) way: *“Welcome be a religion that pours into the bitter chalice of the suffering human species some sweet, soporific drops of spiritual opium, some drops of love, hope and faith”*. Moses Hess, in his essays published in Switzerland in 1843, takes a more critical (but still ambiguous) stand: *“Religion can make bearable... the unhappy consciousness of serfdom... in the same way as opium is of good help in painful diseases”*. (1)

The expression appeared shortly afterwards in Marx's article on Hegel's philosophy of Right (1844). An attentive reading of the Marxian paragraph where this phrase appears, reveals that it is more qualified and less one-sided than usually believed. Although obviously critical of religion, Marx takes into account the **dual character** of the phenomenon:

“Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of an unspiritual situation. It is the opiate of the people.” (2)

If one reads the whole essay, it appears clearly that Marx's viewpoint owes more to left neo-Hegelianism, which saw religion as the alienation of the human essence, than to Enlightenment philosophy, which simply denounced it as a clerical conspiracy. In fact when Marx wrote the above passage he was still a disciple of Feuerbach, and a neo-Hegelian. His analysis of religion was therefore “pre-Marxist”, without any class reference, and rather a-historical. But it had a **dialectical quality**, grasping the contradictory character of the religious “distress”: both a legitimization of existing conditions and a protest against it.

It was only later, particularly in *The German Ideology* (1846), that the proper Marxist study of religion as a **social and historical reality** began. The key element of this new method for the analysis of religion is to approach it as one of the many forms of **ideology** - i.e. of the **spiritual production** of a people, of the production of ideas, representations and consciousness, necessarily conditioned by material production and the corresponding social relations.

After writing, with Engels, *The German Ideology*, Marx paid very little attention to religion as such, i.e. as a specific cultural/ideological universe of meaning. One can find, however, in the first volume of *Capital*, some interesting methodological remarks; for instance, the well known footnote where he answers to the argument according to which the importance of politics in the Ancient times, and of religion in the Middle-Age reveal the inadequacy of the materialist interpretation of history: *“Neither could the Middle-Age live from Catholicism, nor Antiquity from politics.*

The respective economic conditions explain, in fact, why Catholicism there and politics here played the dominant rôle (Hauptrolle) “. (3) Marx will never bother to provide the economic reasons for the importance of medieval religion, but this passage is quite important, because it acknowledges that, under certain historical circumstances, religion can indeed play a **decisive role in the life of a society**.

In spite of his general lack of interest for religion, Marx paid attention to the relationship between protestantism and capitalism. Several passages in *Capital* make reference to the contribution of protestantism to the primitive accumulation of capital - for instance by stimulating the expropriation of Church property and communal pastures. In the *Grundrisse* he makes - half a century before Max Weber's famous essay ! - the following illuminating comment on the intimate association between protestantism and capitalism : *“The cult of money has its asceticism, its self-denial, its self-sacrifice - economy and frugality, contempt for mundane, temporal and fleeting pleasures; the chase after the eternal treasure.* Hence the connection (Zusammenhang) between English Puritanism or Dutch Protestantism and money-making (Geldmachen) “. (4) The parallel (but not identity !) with Weber's thesis is astonishing - the more so since the author of *The protestant ethic* could not have read this passage (the *Grundrisse* where published for the first time in 1940).

On the other hand, Marx often referred to capitalism as a *“religion of daily life “* based on the fetishism of commodity. He described capital as *“a Moloch that requires the whole world as a due sacrifice “*, and capitalist progress as a *“monstrous pagan god, that only wanted to drink nectar in the skulls of the dead “*. His critique of political economy is peppered with frequent references to idolatry : Baal, Moloch, Mammon, the Golden Calf, and, of course, the concept of “fetish” itself. But this language has rather a metaphoric than a substantial (in terms of sociology of religion) meaning. (5)

Friedrich Engels displayed (probably because of his pietist upbringing) a much greater interest than Marx for religious phenomena and their historic role. Engels's main contribution to the Marxist study of religions is his analysis of the relationship of religious representations to **class struggle**. Over and beyond the philosophical polemic of “materialism against idealism “, he was interested in understanding and explaining concrete social and historical forms of religion. Christianity no longer appeared (like in Feuerbach) as a timeless “essence “, but as a cultural system undergoing transformations in different historical periods: first as a religion of the slaves, later as the state ideology of the Roman Empire, then tailored to feudal hierarchy and finally adapted to bourgeois society. It thus appears as a symbolic space fought over by antagonistic social forces - for instance, in the XVIth century, feudal theology, bourgeois Protestantism and plebeian heresies.

Occasionally his analysis slips towards a narrowly utilitarian, instrumental interpretation of religious movements:

“... each of the different classes uses its own appropriate religion... and it makes little difference whether these gentlemen believe in their respective religions or not. “ (6)

Engels seems to find nothing but the “religious disguise” of class interests in the different forms of belief. However, thanks to his class struggle method, he realized - unlike the Enlightenment philosophers - that the clergy was not a socially homogeneous body : in certain historical conjunctures, it divided itself according to its class composition. Thus during the Reformation, we have on the one side the high clergy, the feudal summit of the hierarchy, and on the other, the lower clergy, which supplied the ideologues of the Reformation and of the revolutionary peasant movement. (7)

While being a materialist, an atheist and an irreconcilable enemy of religion, Engels nevertheless grasped, like the young Marx, the dual character of the phenomenon: its role in legitimating established order, but also, according to social circumstances, its critical, protesting and even revolutionary role. Furthermore, most of the concrete studies he wrote concerned the **rebellious** forms of religion.

First of all, he was interested in **primitive Christianity**, which he defined as the religion of the poor, the banished, the damned, the persecuted and oppressed. The first Christians came from the lowest levels of society: slaves, free men who had been deprived of their rights and small peasants who were crippled by debts. (8) He even went so far as to draw an astonishing parallel between this primitive Christianity and modern socialism:

a) the two great movements are not the creation of leaders and prophets - although prophets are never in short supply in either of them - but are mass movements; b) both are movements of the oppressed, suffering persecution, their members are proscribed and hunted down by the ruling authorities; c) both preach an imminent liberation from slavery and misery. To embellish his comparison Engels, somewhat provocatively, quoted a saying of the French historian Renan:

“If you want to get an idea of what the first Christian communities were like, take a look at a local branch of the International Workingmen's Association. “

According to Engels, the parallel between socialism and early christianity is present in all movements that dream, throughout the centuries, to restore the primitive Christian religion - from the Taborites of John Zizka (“of glorious memory “) and the anabaptists of Thomas Münzer until (after 1830) the French revolutionary communists and the partisans of the German utopian communist Wilhelm Weitling.

There remains however, in the eyes of Engels, an essential difference between the two movements : the primitive Christians transposed deliverance to the hereafter whereas socialism places it in this world. (9)

But is this difference as clear-cut as it appears at first sight? In his study of the great peasant wars in Germany it seems to become blurred : Thomas Münzer, the theologian and leader of the revolutionary peasants and heretic (anabaptist) plebeians of the sixteenth century, wanted the immediate establishment on **earth** of the Kingdom of God, the millenarian Kingdom of the prophets. According to Engels, the Kingdom of God for Münzer was a society without class differences, private property and state authority independent of, or foreign to, the members of that society. However, Engels was still tempted to reduce religion to a stratagem: he spoke of Münzer's Christian “*phraseology* “ and his biblical “*cloak*. (10) The specifically religious dimension of Münzerian millenarianism, its spiritual and moral force, its authentically experienced mystical depth, seem to have eluded him.

Engels does not hide his admiration for the German Chiliastic prophet, whose ideas he describes as “quasi-communist” and “religious revolutionary : they were less a synthesis of the plebeian demands from those times as “a brilliant anticipation” of future proletarian emancipatory aims. This **anticipatory and utopian** dimension of religion - not to be explained in terms of the “reflection theory” - is not further explored by Engels but is intensely and richly worked out (as we shall see later) by Ernst Bloch.

The last revolutionary movement that was waged under the banner of religion was, according to Engels, the English puritan movement from the XVIIth century. If religion, and not materialism, furnished the ideology of this revolution, it is because of the politically reactionary nature of this philosophy in England, represented by Hobbes and other partisans of royal absolutism. In contrast to this conservative materialism and deism, the protestant sects gave to the war against the Stuarts its religious banner and its fighters. (11)

This analysis is quite interesting : breaking with the linear vision of history inherited from Enlightenment, Engels acknowledges that the struggle between materialism and religion does not necessarily correspond to the war between revolution and counter-revolution, progress and regression, liberty and despotism, oppressed and ruling classes. In this precise case, the relation is exactly the opposite one : revolutionary religion against absolutist materialism...

Engels was convinced that since the French revolution, religion could no more function as a revolutionary ideology,

and he was surprised when French and German communists - such as Cabot or Weitling - would claim that "Christianity is Communism". This disagreement on religion was one of the main reasons for the non-participation of French communists in the *French-German Yearbooks* (1844) and for the split with Weitling in 1846.

Engels could not predict liberation theology, but, thanks to his analysis of the religious phenomena from the viewpoint of class struggle, he brought out the protest potential of religion and opened the way for a new approach - distinct both from Enlightenment philosophy (religion as a clerical conspiracy) and from German neo-Hegelianism (religion as alienated human essence) - to the relationship between religion and society.

Most twentieth century Marxist studies on religion limit themselves to comment or develop the ideas sketched out by Marx and Engels, or to apply them to a particular reality.

Many Marxists in the European labour movement were radically hostile to religion but believed that the atheistic battle against religious ideology must be subordinated to the concrete necessities of the class struggle, which demands unity between workers who believe in God and those who do not. Lenin himself who very often denounced religion as a "mystical fog" insisted in his article "Socialism and Religion" (1905) that atheism should not be part of the Party's programme because "*unity in the really revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for creation of a paradise on earth is more important to us than unity of proletarian opinion on paradise in heaven*". (12)

Rosa Luxemburg shared this strategy, but she developed a different and original approach. Although a staunch atheist herself, she attacked in her writings less religion as such than the reactionary policy of the Church in the name of its own tradition. In an essay written in 1905 (*Church and Socialism*) she claimed that modern socialists are more faithful to the original principles of Christianity than the conservative clergy of today. Since the socialists struggle for a social order of equality, freedom and fraternity, the priests, if they honestly wanted to implement in the life of humanity the Christian principle "love thy neighbour like thyself", should welcome the socialist movement. When the clergy support the rich, and those who exploit and oppress the poor, they are in explicit contradiction with Christian teachings: they do not serve Christ but the Golden Calf. The first apostles of Christianity were passionate communists and the Fathers of the Church (like Basil the Great and John Chrysostom) denounced social injustice. Today this cause is taken up by the socialist movement which brings to the poor the Gospel of fraternity and equality, and calls on the people to establish on earth the Kingdom of freedom and neighbour-love. (13) Instead of waging a philosophical battle in the name of materialism, Rosa Luxemburg tried to rescue the social dimension of the Christian tradition for the labour movement.

Austro-Marxists, like Otto Bauer and Max Adler, were much less hostile to religion than their German or Russian comrades. They seemed to consider Marxism as compatible with some form of religion, but this referred mainly to religion as a "philosophical belief" (of neo-Kantian inspiration) rather than to concrete historical religious traditions. (14)

In the Communist International little attention was paid to religion, although significant number of Christians joined the movement, and a former Swiss Protestant pastor, Jules Humbert-Droz, became during the 1920s one of the leading figures of the Comintern. The dominant idea among Marxists at that time was that a Christian who became a socialist or communist necessarily abandoned his former "anti-scientific" and "idealist" religious beliefs. Bertold Brecht's beautiful theatrical play *Saint Jean of the Slaughterhouses* (1932) is a good example of this kind of approach towards the conversion of Christians to the struggle for proletarian emancipation. Brecht describes very perceptively the process by which Jean, a leader of the Salvation Army, discovers the truth about exploitation and social injustice and dies denouncing her former views. But for him there must be an absolute and total break between her old Christian faith and her new credo of revolutionary struggle. Just before dying, Jean says to the people:

"If ever someone comes to tell you

*that there exists a God, invisible however,
from whom you can expect help,
hit him hard in the head with a stone
until he dies. "*

Rosa Luxemburg's insight, that one could fight for socialism in the name of the true values of original Christianity, was lost in this kind of crude and somewhat intolerant "materialist" perspective. As a matter of fact, a few years after Brecht wrote this piece, there appeared in France (1936-1938) a movement of revolutionary Christians, numbering several thousand followers which actively supported the labour movement, in particular its more radical tendencies (the left wing of the Socialist Party). Their main slogan was: "We are socialists because we are Christians." (15)

Among the leaders and thinkers of the Communist movement, Gramsci is probably the one who showed the greatest attention to religious issues. Unlike Engels or Kautsky he was not interested in primitive christianity or the communist heresies of the Middle-Ages, but rather in the functioning of the **Catholic Church** : he is one of the first Marxists who tried to understand the contemporary role of the Church and the weight of religious culture among the popular masses.

His most substantial writings on religion are to be found in the *Prison Notebooks* : in spite of their fragmentary, unsystematic and allusive nature, they contain most insightful remarks . His sharp and ironic criticism of the conservative forms of religion - particularly the Jesuitic brand of Catholicism, which he heartily disliked - did not prevent him from perceiving also the utopian dimension of religious ideas: *"religion is the most gigantic utopia, that is the most gigantic 'metaphysics,' that history has ever known, since it is the most grandiose attempt to reconcile, in mythological form, the real contradictions of historical life. It affirms, in fact, that mankind has the same 'nature', that man... in so far as created by God, son of God, is therefore brother of other men, equal to other men, and free amongst and as other men... ; but it also affirms that all this is not of this world, but of another (the utopia). Thus do ideas of equality, fraternity and liberty ferment among men... Thus it has come about that in every radical stirring of the multitude, in one way or another, with particular forms and particular ideologies, these demands have always been raised "*. He also insisted on the internal differentiations of the Church according to ideological orientations - liberal, modernist, Jesuitic and fundamentalist currents within Catholic culture - and according to the different social classes: *"Every religion... is really a multiplicity of different and often contradictory religions: there is a Catholicism for the peasants, a Catholicism for the petty bourgeoisie and urban workers, a Catholicism for women, and a Catholicism for intellectuals ... "*. Moreover, he believes that Christianity is, under certain historical conditions, *"a necessary form of the will of the popular masses, a specific form of rationality in the world and of life "*; but this applies only to the innocent religion of the people, not to the "Jesuitical Christianity" (*cristianesimo gesuitizzato*), which is *"pure narcotics for the popular masses "*. (16)

Most of his notes relate to the history and present role of the Catholic Church in Italy: its social and political expression through the Catholic Action and the People's Party, its relation to the State and to the subordinate classes, etc. While focusing on the class divisions inside the Church, Gramsci is also aware of the relative autonomy of the institution, as a body composed of "traditional intellectuals" (the clergy and the lay Catholic intellectuals) - i.e. intellectuals linked to a feudal past and not "organically" connected to any modern social class. This is why the main motive for the political action of the Church, and for its conflictive relation with the Italian bourgeoisie, is the defense of its corporative interests, its power and its privileges.

Gramsci is very much interested by the Protestant Reformation, but unlike Engels, and Kautsky he does not focus on Thomas Münzer and the anabaptists, but rather on Luther and Calvin. As an attentive reader of Max Weber's essay, he believes that the transformation of the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination into "one of the major impulses for practical initiative which took place in the world history ", is a classical example of the passage from a world-view into a practical norm of behaviour. To some extent , one can consider that Gramsci uses Weber in order to supersede the economic approach of vulgar Marxism, by focusing on the historically productive rôle of ideas and representations.

(17)

But his relation to Protestantism is much broader than this methodological issue : for him the Protestant Reform, as a truly national/popular movement, able to mobilise the masses, is a sort of paradigm for the great “moral and intellectual reform” that Marxism wants to accomplish : the philosophy of praxis “corresponds to the connexion Protestant Reform + French Revolution : it is a philosophy that is also politics and politics that is also a philosophy “. While Kautsky, living in Protestant Germany, idealised the Italian Renaissance, and despised the Reform as “barbarian “, Gramsci, the Italian Marxist praised Luther and Calvin and denounced Renaissance as an aristocratic and reactionary movement... (18)

Gramsci's remarks are rich and stimulating, but in last analysis they follow the classical Marxist pattern of analyzing religion. Ernst Bloch is the first Marxist author who radically changed the theoretical framework - without abandoning the Marxist and revolutionary perspective. In a similar way to Engels, he distinguished two socially opposed currents: on one side the theocratic religion of the official churches, opium of the people, a mystifying apparatus at the service of the powerful; on the other the underground, subversive religion of the poor and the heretical rebels . However, unlike Engels, Bloch refused to see religion uniquely as a “cloak” of class interests : he explicitly criticized this conception, while attributing it to Kautsky only... In its protest and rebellious forms religion is one of the most significant forms of utopian consciousness, one of the richest expressions of the **Principle Hope**. Through its capacity of creative anticipation, Judeo-Christian eschatology - Bloch's favorite religious universe -contributes to shaping the imaginary space of the **not-yet-being**. (19)

Basing himself on these philosophical presuppositions, Bloch develops a heterodox and iconoclastic interpretation of the Bible - both the Old and the New Testaments - drawing out the *Biblia pauperum*, which denounces the Pharaohs and calls on each and everyone to choose *aut Caesar aut Christus* (either Caesar or Christ).

A religious atheist - according to him only an atheist can be a good Christian and vice-versa - and a theologian of the revolution, Bloch not only produced a Marxist reading of millenarianism (following Engels) but also - and this was new - a **millenarian interpretation of Marxism**, through which the socialist struggle for the Kingdom of Freedom is perceived as the direct heir of the eschatological and collectivist heresies of the past.

Of course Bloch, like the young Marx of the famous 1844 quotation, recognized the dual character of the religious phenomenon, its oppressive aspect as well as its potential for revolt. The first requires the use of what he calls “*the cold stream of Marxism* “: the relentless materialist analysis of ideologies, idols and idolatries. The second one however requires “*the warm stream of Marxism* “; seeking to rescue religion's **utopian cultural surplus**, its critical and anticipatory force. Beyond any “dialogue,” Bloch dreamt of an authentic union between Christianity and revolution, like the one which came into being during the Peasant Wars of the sixteenth century.

Bloch's views were, to a certain extent, shared by some of the members of the Frankfurt School. Max Horkheimer considered that “*religion is the record of the wishes, nostalgias (Sehnsüchte)* and indictments of countless generations. “ (20) Erich Fromm, in his book *The Dogma of Christ* (1930), used Marxism and Psychoanalysis to illuminate the Messianic, plebeian, egalitarian and anti-authoritarian essence of primitive Christianity. And Walter Benjamin tried to combine, in a unique and original synthesis, theology and Marxism, Jewish Messianism and historical materialism, class struggle and redemption. (21)

The idea that there exists a common ground between the revolutionary and the religious mind had already been suggested , in a less systematic way, by the most original and creative Latin American Marxist, the peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui. In an essay from 1925, “Man and the Myth “, he proposed a rather heterodox view of revolutionary values : “The bourgeois intellectuals busy themselves with a rationalist critique of the revolutionary's method, theory and technique. What a misunderstanding ! The force of the revolutionaries does not lie in their science; it lies in their

faith, their passion, their will. It's a religious, mystical, spiritual force. It is the force of Myth...The revolutionary emotion...is a religious emotion. The religious motivations have moved from heaven to earth. Their are no more divine, but human and social ". Celebrating Georges Sorel as the first Marxist thinker that understood the "religious, mystical, metaphysical character of socialism ", he writes a few years later, in his last book, *Defense of Marxism* (1930) : "*Thanks to Sorel, Marxism was able to assimilate the substantial elements and acquisitions of the philosophical currents that came after Marx . Superseding the rationalist and positivist bases of the socialism at his time, Sorel found in Bergson and the pragmatists ideas that strenghtened socialist thought, restoring it to its revolutionary mission... The theory of revolutionary myths, applying to the socialist movement the experience of the religious movements, established the bases for a philosophy of revolution...* ". (22)

This formulations - expression of a Romantic/Marxist rebellion against the dominant (semi-positivist) interpretation of historical materialism - may seem too radical. In any case, it should be clear that Mariategui did not want to make of socialism a Church or a religious sect, but intended to bring out the **spiritual and ethical** dimension of the revolutionary struggle : the faith ("mystical "), the solidarity, the moral indignation, the total commitment at the risk of one's own life (what he called the "heroic "). Socialism for Mariategui was inseparable from an attempt to **re-enchant** the world through revolutionary action. Little wonder that he became one of the most important Marxist references for the founder of Liberation Theology, the peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez.

What is sorely lacking in these " classical " Marxist discussions on religion is a discussion on the implications of religious doctrines and practices for **women**. Patriarcalism, unequal treatment of women and denial of reproductive rights prevail among the main religious denominations - particulary Judaism, Christianity and Islam - and take extremely oppressive forms among fundamentalist currents. In fact, one of the key criteria for judging the progressive or regressive character of religious movements is their attitude towards women, and particularly on their right to dispose of their own body : divorce, contraception, abortion. A renewal of Marxist reflection on religion in the XXlth century requires to put the issue of women rights at the center of the argument.

Notes

(1) Quoted in Helmut Gollwitzer, "Marxistische Religionskritik und christlicher Glaube ", *Marxismusstudien*, Vierte Folge, J.C.B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1962, pp.15-16. Other references to this expression can be found in this article.

(2) Karl Marx, "Towards the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right ", 1844, in Louis S.Feuer (ed.), *Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, London, Fontana, 1969, p. 304.

(3) K.Marx, *Das Kapital*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1968, I, p. 96.

(4) Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, pp. 749-750 ; *Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, Midesex, Penguin Books, 1973, p. 232 and *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, p. 143.

(5) K.Marx, *Werke*, Berlin, Dietz VErlag, 1960, vol. 9, p. 226, and vol. 26, p. 488. Some liberation theologians (Enrique Dussel, Hugo Assmann) will make extensive use of this references in their definition of capitalism as idolatry.

(6) F.Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of Classical German Philosophy ", in Feuer (ed.), *Op.cit.* p. 281.

(7) F.Engels, " The Peasant War in Germany ", *Op.cit.* pp. 422-475.

- (8) F.Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1969, pp. 121-122, 407.
- (9) F. Engels, "Contribution to a History of Primitive Christianity ", in Marx and Engels, *On Religion*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1960, ch. 25.
- (10) F.Engels, "The Peasant War in Germany ", 1850, in *Op.cit.* p. 464.
- (11) F. Engels, "On Materialism ", *Op.cit.* p. 99.
- (12) V.I.Lenin, "Socialism and Religion ", (1905), *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1972, vol. 10, p. 86.
- (13) R.Luxemburg, "Kirche und Sozialismus" (1905), in *Internationalismus und Klassenkampf*, Neuwied, Luchterhand, 1971, pp. 45-47, 67-75.
- (14) On this see David McClellan's interesting and useful book, *Marxism and Religion*, New York, Harper and Row, ch. 3.
- (15) See Agnès Rochefort-Turquin's excellent research *Socialistes parce que Chrétiens*, Paris, Cerf, 1986.
- (16) Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited by Quintin Hoare and G.Nowell Smith, London, New Left Books, 1971, pp. 328, 397, 405 and *Il Materialismo Storico* , Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1979, p. 17.
- (17) A.Gramsci, *Il Materialismo Storico*, pp. 17-18 (direct reference to Weber), 50, 110. Cf. M. Montanari, "Razionalità e tragicità del moderno in Gramsci ", *Critica Marxista*, 2-3, 1987, p. 58.
- (18) A.Gramsci, *Il Materialismo Storico*, p. 105. Cf. Kautsky, *Thomas More und seine Utopie* p. 76.
- (19) E.Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Frankfurt/Main, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1959 (three volumes) and *Atheismus im Christentum. Zur Religion des Exodus und des Reichs*, Frankfurt/Main, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1968.
- (20) Max Horkheimer, "Gedanke zur Religion ", (1935), in *Kritische Theorie*, Frankfurt/Main, S.Fischer Verlag, 1972, Band I, p. 374.
- (21) See our articles "Revolution against Progress : Walter Benjamin's Romantic Anarchism ", *New Left Review*, n° 152, November-December 1985 and "Religion, Utopia and Countermodernity : The Allegory of the Angel of History in Walter Benjamin ", in M.Löwy, *On Changing the World*, Atlantic Highlands, Humanities Press, 1993.
- (22) José Carlos Mariategui, "El Hombre y el Mito ", *El Alma Matinal*, Lima, Editorial Amauta, 1971, pp. 18-22 and *Defensa del Marxismo*, Lima, Amauta, 1971, p.21.