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Evil Passions – The Right of the Self

On Anti-Christianity

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(“*the only Christian there ever was*”¹⁰) and the apostle Paul of Tarsus “the priest” wanted to be the undisputed truth:

“*The desire for God is written in the heart of Man, because Man was created by God and for God*”¹¹

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¹⁰ F. Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*

¹¹ Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church; first chapter Man’s Capacity for God – The Desire for God.

*the Sisters of Mother Teresa who reach out to the orphans, the sick, the poor and suffering, without asking questions about themselves, and so they become inwardly rich and free. This is the proper Christian attitude. The meeting with young disabled people in the foundation of San Jose in Madrid is still memorable for me, where I met again the same generosity of making oneself available for others – a generosity of giving oneself, that is definitely born from the encounter with Christ who gave himself for us.”*⁸

How many plumped words, how much this egoist draws water to his mill! Sacrifice! Dare the leap! Here is the good news transformed into what it is! Withdrawing from the I, rejecting the “*search of our own I.*” But which sacrifice, and for whom? Who should I serve? What could be more severe than the prayer of the Saint Francis? Should I kneel to another egoist?

*“God and mankind have concerned themselves for nothing, for nothing but themselves. Let me then likewise concern myself for myself, who am equally with God the nothing of all others, who am my all, who am the only one.”*⁹

Stirner’s words are so full that the dominators are afraid of the anti-relativists, of the absolutists. The Bishop of Rome wants with all of himself to demolish the gates of the Ego, he wants a slice of our life, he hopes to gorge for breakfast, lunch and dinner, goosing his belly with our existences, and in whose name? Of his God and of the *enjoyment of himself*. Not by chance does the Catechism of the Catholic Church irrefutably clarify what lies behind the “altruistic” message and the “humanity,” what for two thousand years Christ

⁸ Benedetto XVI, Hearing in the Roman Curia at the presentation of Christmas greetings, 22 December 2011.

⁹ Max Stirner, *The Unique and His Property*; Adelphi.

[Alternate translation from the Italian: “God and Humanity have set their cause on nothing, on nothing other than their being. Likewise I set my cause on myself, on I who, like God, am the nothing of others, am my own all, I who am the unique one. [*Einzige*].”]

Note from *Edizioni Cerbero*

The contribution in this fragment of a longer text which will be published later will cover a vast critical terrain of close examination on the discussion opened (or at least made public) by my egoist comrade and affine Federico Buono on the anti-juridical issues and on the ethics or non-ethics with regard to living illegally here and now.

This temporary text is intended to be, starting from anti-Christianity, a cue to accommodate written intervention of egoist comrades who will feel the need and if they will want to participate to nourish this nihilist project. The texts will complement a pamphlet that we will edit as *Edizioni Cerbero*.

This text retains the words of the comrade Gabriel Pombo Da Silva and redeploys in these Christmas days, his solidarity greeting to the prisoners of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire and FAI – Indonesian section.

“For a black and nihilist Christmas that sows terror.”

* * *

Evil Passions – The Right of the Self: On Anti-Christianity¹

“That’s enough! Whoever talks this way is an enemy of the people!”

A MAN (from the crowd)

from *An Enemy of the People* by H. Ibsen

Premise

It would be appropriate to make a detailed analysis of the anti-juridical thought in Stirner’s work *The Unique and His Property*², which is rich in content on the issue, I would dare say foundational

¹ [Translation notes to ponder: I translate *l’Io*, literally ‘the I’ as ‘the Self.’ I variously translate *l’unico*, which in Italian grasps pretty well Stirner’s *Einzig*, as ‘the unique’ or ‘the unique one.’ I translate *egoista* as ‘egoist.’ Where ‘myself,’ ‘oneself’ (etc) appear in the text it should be noted that these are translations from the Italian *me stesso* (etc), which means the same as the English, however the word *stesso* itself means ‘same’ and nothing more (whereas the English ‘the self’ refers to the essence of a being). I translate *essere* as ‘being.’]

² Cf. Max Stirner, *The Unique and His Property*; Adelphi.

[Translator: The common but misleading English title of *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* is *The Ego and His Own*; I use instead a more literal translation. The quotations in the main body of this text and in footnote 3 are from Steven T. Byington’s translation of the book. But because that translation is controversial, considered outright awful by some, and quite different from the text Maurizio would be reading, my own translations from the Italian are offered in some cases.]

cus that does not reenter into the sphere of our individual force nor something beyond our will, so one must address oneself rather than gods or idols.

“From this comes a new way to live the human existence, the Christian existence. One of the most important experiences of those days for me was the meeting with the volunteers of the World Youth Day: they were approximately 20,000 young men who, without exception, devoted weeks or months of their life to collaborate in the technical, organizational and contentual preparation of the World Youth Day, and thus had made possible the orderly development of all this. With his own time man gives always a part of his life. At the end, these young men were visibly and “in a tangible way” full of a great feeling of happiness: their donated time made sense; precisely in donating their time and their labor force they found time, life. So for me, a fundamental thing became clear: these young people offered in faith a piece of life, not because this was ordered and not because with this one might earn heaven; nor because one might escape the danger of hell. They didn’t do it because they wanted to be perfect. They didn’t look back, to themselves. I remembered the image of Lot’s wife who, looking back, became a pillar of salt. How many times Christians’ life is characterized by the fact that they look primarily to themselves, they do good, as it were, for themselves! And how great is the temptation of every man to be worried first of all for themselves, to look back to themselves, becoming so inwardly empty, “pillars of salt”! Here instead was not a case of perfecting themselves or wanting their own life for themselves. These young people have done good – even if that was hard, even if it required sacrifices – simply because to do good is beautiful, to be there for others is beautiful. One must only dare the leap. All this proceeds from the encounter with Jesus Christ, an encounter that ignites within us the love for God and for others and liberates us from the search of our own “I.” A prayer attributed to St. Francis Xavier says: I do good not because in return I’ll enter into heaven nor because otherwise You could send me to hell. I do it, because You are You, my King and my Lord. I encountered this same attitude in Africa as well, for example in

what follows, *we will usurp the right* to decide what is *good* and what is *bad*, forcefully tearing out the thorns of renunciation without giving in to the sense of guilt instilled by Christianity. We'll never offer our wrists deliberately to the grand inquisitors, but rather we will throw ourselves into the abyss of the unconscious in order to regain the Self, plummeting again into the void and in darkness we will be able to look in the face of the material reality and we will not hang ourselves like Smerdijakov if it is not of our own will, nor will we fall into the cerebral fever, a cold fever of madness and guilt, the same fever of the philosophical genius of "everything is permitted" immortalized in Ivan Karamazov. No, the Bishop of Rome's metaphysics and his entire theology is moved to annihilate the unique one, the nothing, the creator, the Self.

Every past thing
it is written that it will vanish

Every present thing
annihilates
the advance of the unique

Every future thing
arid and uncultivated ground

Stirner in the second part of his main work gets to the heart of the ethical question, touching on the struggle between egoist individuals. In *the own individuality*, he announces the true egoist nature of the Christian God:

"How one acts only from himself, and asks after nothing further, the Christians have realized in the notion 'God.' He acts 'as it pleases him.' And foolish man, who could do just so, is to act as it 'pleases God' instead.—If it is said that even God proceeds according to eternal laws, that too fits me, since I too cannot get out of my skin, but have my law in my own whole nature, in myself."

My own law, my own nothing. The center, the foundation of existence must be *ourselves*, not some phantasmal external right a fo-

for an individualist theory-study and practice in the arena of the *Right*.

Stirner immediately faces the problem of the *Right* in the first introductory pages highlighting what the *Self* (and notice not *Man*), reduced to simple subject-citizen, is called to not do: "be *egoist*". "Only *my* cause is never to be my concern. 'Shame on the egoist who thinks only of himself!'"³ The author of *The Unique and His Property* demolishes this supposed truth which is nothing but a lie perpetuated and consolidated even now because of a pervasive Christianity.⁴

Everything that is born
it is written that it will rot

Everything perishes
in the fate of your
immature breath

Everything touched
suffers a pain, decays

³ *Ibid.*

[Translator: 'Cause' and 'concern' are both *sache* in the original German.]

⁴ Just to give an example:

"Because Christianity, incapable of letting the individual count as an ego [Einzig], thought of him only as a dependent, and was properly nothing but a *social theory*—a doctrine of living together, and that of man with God as well as of man with man—therefore in it everything "own" [Eigene] must fall into most woeful disrepute: selfishness, self-will, ownness, self-love, and the like [Eigennutz, Egensinn, Eigenwille, Eigenheit, Eigenliebe]. The Christian way of looking at things has on all side gradually re-stamped honorable words into dishonorable; why should they not be brought into honor again? So *Schimpf* (contumely) is in its old sense equivalent to jest, but for Christian seriousness pastime became a dishonor, for that seriousness cannot take a joke; *frech* (impudent) formerly meant only bold, brave; *Frevel* (wanton outrage) was only daring. It is well known how askance the word "reason" was looked at for a long time. Our language has settled itself pretty well to the Christian standpoint, and the general consciousness is still too Christian not to shrink in terror from everything un-Christian as from

the ego falls in the void
swallowed by the farce of the times⁵

The cause of God and of Man are not *my* thing, *these are not my cause*. There is no cause, whether Humanity, truth, morality, ethics, etc., I do not kneel before superior causes, instead I make myself my own cause and my end, and become and am myself *egoistic*. Here one can perceive from the grotto where was laired my egoism, the Cerberus [*the watchdog at the gates of Hades*] of voracious passions, “the others’ nothing,” which you wanted to sacrifice for some evening with your luxurious lady, I who do not placate my rage and the insatiable urge of enjoying myself and who dismisses – this is very important – the concepts and principles of the Right that is outside of my being.

To the less attentive it could appear that I am forgetting the main theme of this text, but it is not so. The foundation as I outlined before for a radical unyieldingness to law and likewise to any organ that promotes it and emanates it, whether a theater that is ethically accepted by the mass or the expression of a restricted minority, must withstand absolutely, departing from such considerations on the individual.

The Right is the enemy to tear apart in order to reveal the great moral deception that resides in all comfort within the lie and illusion of precisely such a right, one that is right [*fitting*] for all. The phantasms that the Self has to deal with are many and, in the struggle one faces in the anti-juridical critique, are even too many. The many and various preacher-thieves of the Self flock to ensure that the *horror mortis* is amplified in the ritual of submission to these indefatigable slavers.

“Every saint, but in particular martyrs, are witnesses of God, who is Love: Deus caritas est. The Nazi concentration camp, like every ex-

something incomplete or evil. Therefore “selfishness” is in a bad way too.”

Max Stirner; *ibid.* Part Second of *The Unique and His Property*.

⁵ “In difesa dell’Io” (“In Defense of the Self,” ndt); Cerbero.

termination camp, could be considered extreme symbols of evil, of the hell that gapes on earth when Man forgets God and act in His stead, usurping his right to decide what is good and what it bad, to give life and death. Regrettably, this sad phenomenon isn’t limited to the concentration camp. They are rather the culmination of an extensive and widespread reality, often of shifting boundaries. The saints, who I briefly mentioned, make us reflect on the deep differences that exist between atheist humanism and Christian humanism; an antithesis that runs through the whole story, but which at the end of the second millennium, with the nihilism of the present, has reached a crucial point, as great writers and thinkers perceived, and as events amply demonstrated. On the one hand, there are philosophies and ideologies, but increasingly also ways of thinking and acting, that exalt freedom as the only principle of man, as an alternative to God, and thus transform man into a god, but it’s an erred god, who arbitrarily makes his own behavioral system. On the other hand, we have precisely the saints, who, practicing the Gospel through charity, make reason of their hope; they show the true face of God, who is Love, and, at the same time, the true face of man, created in the divine image and likeness.”⁶

The ravings of a delirious old man in the grip of lust for power.

“In fact, the Greek religion, the pagan cults and myths, were not able to shed light on the mystery of death, so that an ancient inscription said: ‘In nihil ab nihilo quam cito recidimus’, which means: ‘In the nothing, from the nothing, how soon we fall back.’ If we remove God, if we remove Christ, the world falls back into the void and into darkness. And this is also reflected in the expressions of contemporary nihilism, an often unconscious nihilism that unfortunately plagues many youth...”⁷

We won’t be the *prodigal son* submitted solely to youthful transgression, nor will we be dirt-cheap Raskolnikov, we will kill the *old usurer* and his sister with everything in our power and we will face

⁶ Benedetto XVI, Angelus, Castelgandolfo, Sunday 9 August 2009.

⁷ Benedetto XVI, Angelus, San Pietro square, Sunday 6 November 2011.