

revelation. The truth, however inadequately expressed here, is that the Trinity *is* present in and to every aspect and object of the scientist's study. And I am convinced that until those scientists who know this are working consciously in the full light of that knowledge, so that, without any straining or artificial introduction, it invades and informs the scientific mentality of our day, there will be a great wall between those who are trying to teach the faith and the minds of our contemporaries.



THE BLACK AND THE RED

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MR BLANSHARD has been at it again. This time he appears in the arena astride not one adversary but two: the twin steeds of the Vatican and the Kremlin, the Black International and the Red. His thesis is that there is a triangular war going on, between Communism and Democracy and Catholic power (he implies some distinction between Catholic power, which is his chosen concern, and Catholicism, which quite evidently is not)—a struggle in which each of the three is fighting the other two simultaneously, and in which there is room for only one ultimate victor.

But though in this book¹ there are two horses in the ring, where in *Freedom and Catholic Power* there was one, it is really the same turn all over again. The net result is but a deeper denigration of the Catholic Church, by (this time) comparing it for three hundred pages with a Marxist institution whose blackness none of his readers except Communists will any longer doubt. The parallel is of course fascinating (there is never a dull moment): *provided* you are content for it to have extent without depth—for he never addresses himself to the problem of *why*, fundamentally, the Church execrates Atheistic Communism, nor *vice versa*. To him they are both primarily power machines, and anti-majority-rule. It is as easy as that. And parlous plausible.

1. *Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power*. By Paul Blanshard. (Cape; 18s.)

In one respect there is more restraint than last time. There is none of the bombast about nobody being able to refute a single fact or quotation. On the contrary, his preface saddles responsibility for any mistakes upon himself rather than upon his consultants: though he is freer with the names of the ex-Marxists among these than of the ex-Catholics: 'Unfortunately it would not be wise to mention all of my friends in Italy who have helped . . . to show me the seamier side of Vatican policy'.

But in another respect he is so far ceasing to measure his words as to make his next book something worth waiting for. On the Presidential candidature of Governor Al Smith in 1928 he says that 'the significant feature of the campaign was the patent dishonesty of the Catholic hierarchy', in remaining silent on how far Al Smith's profession of political faith 'did not accurately reflect the Vatican's true position'. On the device of 'exploiting the ignorant', he gets as far as the word *fraud*. 'In almost every respect the devices of deception used by Catholicism are less extreme and crude than those of Communism. The one exception is in the field of religious-commercial fraud. . . . Technically the Vatican repudiates such trickery, but priests are permitted and at times encouraged to play upon the lowest superstitions of their people by similar techniques. . . . The priest, as nature's magician, uses his power to "protect" his people. His techniques are less fraudulent than they were a hundred years ago, but the difference is only a matter of degree.'

Between those poles, of grave historiography and declamatory exposure, we have all the familiar landmarks and *motifs*. There is the having of it both ways, as when at one and the same time he castigates the Vatican's iron control of all expression of opinion but can quote from Michael de la Bedoyère's outspoken *Christian Crisis*; or when, having perpetuated the standard version of the *Index*, he can nevertheless relish the fact that 'the Italian people, in spite of their alleged ninety-nine per cent Catholicism, would never think of permitting the Vatican to interfere with their desire to read Zola'.

There is the imputing of motives. It is quaint to think of Pius XII (of all people) as a careerist. But so apparently he was. 'He went directly from the closed Catholic educational system into the office of the Vatican's Secretariat of State, and worked his way up as a political negotiator, Nuncio, Secretary of State, and finally

Pope.' As to dogma, 'in actual practice, change is permitted in the Catholic system of thought by calling it something else. A new doctrine is called a "reinterpretation".' As to the contemplative Orders, 'ostensibly they scorn the world as sinful. However, they manage to circularise hundreds of thousands of people in the United States—people who live in the sinful world—with gaudy appeals for worldly money.'

Sometimes this sort of write-up goes so far as (in Newman's famous phrase) to poison the wells. 'No true Catholic can agree with the doctrine of church-state separation in its American constitutional form and remain loyal to Vatican policy, because the two are absolutely incompatible.' Cardinal Spellman's correspondence with Mrs Roosevelt was one by which 'not many persons were deceived. Cardinal Spellman had no authority to alter the world policy of the Vatican which demands public money for Catholic educational enterprises. He could waive this demand as a temporary stratagem, but only the voice of the Pope could renounce the policy.' Or again, 'the Pope, as the primate of Italy, is personally responsible for the survivals of magic and sorcery in that country'. Or again, 'one fundamental stratagem is always apparent in the Vatican's support of a Catholic party. The support must never be official. . . . "The Church stands above all political parties." That is the doctrine for public consumption.'

There are, too, the neat partial truths. The American people 'decided that they should have a school system which represented all the people, which was paid for by all the people, and which was open to the children of all the people without discrimination'. 'In general, the maintenance of a controlled private-school system under Vatican auspices has been an enormously successful device for penetration of non-Catholic countries.'

Interspersed with these things, there are at times some shrewd body-blows. The Church is a man's Church, and it took the Communist threat during the Italian elections of 1948 (by causing nuns to be paraded at the polls) to secure for Catholic women 'a new standing as citizens . . . which they had never possessed under male domination in their own religious commonwealth'. Again, 'the policy of exclusion makes of the Catholic population a biological bloc in each nation . . . even more clearly separated from the rest of the community than the Communist bloc, because Communists—in countries outside of the Soviet Union

—are not expressly forbidden to intermarry with other groups'. Above all, when he enters the citadel of the Catholic defence of the Catholic school, he impugns the basic argument. 'This is the argument that the Church stands for the control of education by *parents*, and against the control of education by godless politicians. Actually . . . Catholic parents as against their priests have no rights over the education of their children.'

There are, throughout, sustained parallels between the penetration techniques of the two great power-machines: chapters on the Devices of Deification (of Stalin and of the Pope), the engines of Thought-Control, the exploiting of discipline and devotion, the manipulation of truth, and the Trojan Horse technique of infiltrating so effectively as to govern without a majority. From time to time, when he comes to concrete examples of what he is urging as the difference between Democracy and its twin enemies, the examples take on the character of an obsession. They always include the phenomena he labels 'social hygiene'; and they always view the Church's position, whatever the matter under discussion, as first and foremost a political, power-seeking position: even in such things as the Encyclicals on Christian Marriage and Christian Education. Those basic obsessions emerge finally in the three crisp requests which an American Ambassador to the Vatican (should Washington, against Mr Blanshard's advice, send one) might address to the Pope. These three points are:

'That the Vatican cancel for the United States its rule against Catholic attendance at public schools; that the Vatican grant to all Catholic Americans the moral right to study both sides of every social question, including material critical of Catholic policy; and that the Vatican recognise American marriage and divorce as valid.'

Those words form the climax to his chapter on 'The American Answer'. It is that, pathetically enough, that the entire book leads up to.

There is a remorseless consistency about it all. He has an invincibly dogmatic view of what he supposes the Church to be standing for and to teach. Adopt his view, and all the rest follows. Where individual Catholics, however exalted, say anything that cannot be squared with the ultramontane, obscurantist power-psychosis of the Blanshard gloss, search their words for double meanings (as for example Cardinal Spellman on the First Amend-

ment and the separation of Church and State): especially if they use words like *accept*, *freedom*, *democracy*. If there are no double meanings after all, then they are bad Catholics. 'The hierarchy has evolved the theory that the Constitution does not really mean what the Supreme Court says it means. This stratagem at least postpones the unhappy day when the Catholics of the United States must make a moral choice between two sovereignties.'

All this is as sound as it is ingenious, moreover: *unless* Mr Blanshard's view of what the Church is, fundamentally, is wrong. But if it is wrong, then his gaskins, like Falstaff's, fall about his knees. So jauntily certain is he that there is a melancholy but real relish for the Catholic reader (who *knows* how rum the whole thesis is) in watching them fall as he reads on.

The book is a prize demonstration of what Maritain meant by the distinction between knowledge-about and knowledge-into. Mr Paul Blanshard has done a vast amount of research; he is portentously well-informed and documented. But it is all how and no why; a study in insulated efficient causes, with nothing of the formal (except by reader's inference), and of the final cause nothing whatever. So consistent is he in declining to be drawn into any discussion of Catholicism or Marxism as a religion, that there emerges from his pages no difference between them more profound than such a thing as the Kremlin's possession of armaments. The 'dedicated person' (his own phrase) can be equally the nun in the leper-colony or the Soviet Commissar.

But most truly revealing of all, in this psychologically fascinating book, the Democracy that is the free world's champion against both the Kremlin and the Vatican forms of Totalitarianism never appears at all. The references to Democracy itself, in his own index, are but three: pages 2, 3, 5. None of these is the crucial one, for that appears on page 4, and is as follows:

'... good democrats, so long as they accept the fundamental thesis upon which our whole way of life is based—namely that the majority of the people have the right to determine our future by free choice based on free discussion, with certain inalienable rights guaranteed to minorities. Such freedom of choice based on free discussion is the only sacred thing in the unique mixture of nobility and egotism which we call Americanism, and it is the only thing which we have a right to use as a yardstick in measuring the Vatican and the Kremlin.'

There, assuredly, is a thesis, rooted in the Natural Law, which Catholics must be only too delighted to join with Mr Blanshard in upholding (if only he would allow us to suggest that we know the implications of our Faith better than he does). But how little he himself really understands this thesis—and here we come to the crux of his shallowness of thought—is revealed when he translates the thesis into action. This he does twice: as follows:

‘It is true that the public-school system has many defects. . . . But this is a failing common to democratic institutions. . . . The very fact that our schools are controlled by a majority of the people tends to make the loyalties and prejudices of the dominant majority the norm of education. And who has a better right to determine the norm of education than the majority?’

‘Even if our forefathers *had* all favoured government financial support for churches—as some of them did—there would be a strong moral case against it today in a nation nearly half of whose people do not belong to any church.’

Comment on the crudity of that, as political thinking based on the Four Freedoms, would be superfluous.

One would have thought that, after two thousand years, we had already a sufficient documentation on the seamy side of the Catholic Church. One would have thought that, since 1917, experience had by now convinced all but the most besotted minds that there is no future for freedom under Marxism. If Mr Blanshard is at all typical of American thinking on Democracy, what the Western world needs is rather more attention to Democracy itself, and *why* it is a great heritage, and (as Western Catholics *know* it is) worth defending to the last gasp. But he understands it, and us, so little, that he would rather defend it against Marxism without us (page 297) than with us.