

Paraphrasing Clausewitz: Peace is a mere continuation of war by other means About “Barbarism” and the “Apocalypse of the Prodigal Sons”

Albert Camus, in his book *The Rebel*, describes about socialism as a degenerate version of Christianity. Both, socialism and Christianity, sustain the finality of history. While in Christianity the fulfilment of history is the Kingdom of God, in socialism we find two options: Either history is fulfilled through the revolution leading to a new world order where real humanity and real culture are accessible, or the victory of capitalism leads to the fall of the world into disorder. But things have changed. Socialism no longer is an option. As Otto Bauer just says, mankind has chosen Barbarism. But is this really the last word?

This seminar paper is based on the late works of Otto Bauer (1897-1986), co-founder and chairman of the “Movement of Religious Socialists” in Austria. After the annexation of Austria into the Third Reich in 1938, Otto Bauer fled with his family from Vienna to Zurich and finally in 1940 to the USA. His late works are characterized by a critique of society, politics, religions and culture from an apocalyptic point of view. For Otto Bauer the dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945 and the subsequent end of World War II marked the beginning of a new world order, where “peace is a mere continuation of war by other means” (Bauer, *Das Wiener Gespräch II*). From his point of view, the peace after World War II is illusionary because it is founded on a violent act. For Bauer, the atomic bomb symbolizes the fall of western civilization back to barbarism and the rise of the “apocalypse of prodigal sons” (Bauer, *Gedanken und Überlegungen zu Nietzsche*). This paper aims two things: (1) To find, on the basis of mimetic theory, criteria for what is called “apocalyptic thinking” and (2) the application of this criteria on the aspects of “Barbarism” and the so called “Apocalypse of Prodigal Sons” in the works of Otto Bauer.

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