

CHRONOLOGY OF THE END TIMES



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BOOKS



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Chronology
of
Recent Times

(according to traditional doctrine
of Cosmic Cycles)

INTRODUCTION

The Doomsday Clock

"Chronology of the End Times": this is a title that would have greatly amused scholars sixty years ago, those who, at the beginning of this century, i.e. during the "Belle Epoque", firmly believed that their sacrosanct "Science" would bring happiness to humanity. No one is laughing today, and for good reason; on this subject, it suffices to let today's scholars speak for themselves.

First, here is the opinion of an American specialist in biological warfare, Dr Gustave Davis: "Apparently, we are building up ever-increasing stocks of these uncertain weapons of mass destruction, and now we have enough to kill the entire human race."

Among these weapons of mass destruction, we must obviously include high-powered nuclear bombs (H-bombs), which the two superpowers (the US and the USSR) are widely known to possess, prompting an American to write in 1965: "More than 120 million Americans would perish if this country were to suffer a Soviet attack by means of rockets."

Time, 19-1-65). Since then, Soviet nuclear power has only grown.

That's not all: the unrest that broke out in many places in 1968 revealed the existence of a quasi-explosive situation,

which can be explained by the profound upheavals that have shaken the world since 1914:

"All over the world, people are caught up in a whirlwind of convulsive change... Problems that once took a century or more to mature are constantly arising. Our universe is shrinking: time is running out, space is diminishing, populations are exploding and problems are multiplying. And everything is tied to a smoking fuse." (*New York Times*, 10 June 1968).

Or again: "Our civilisation is like a car travelling faster and faster on an unknown road after nightfall." (Gaston Berger)

One last quote to sum it all up: "A Doomsday Clock appears on the cover of the University of Chicago's Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. In October 1949, when the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb, its hands were set at three minutes to midnight. They struck two minutes to midnight when the United States detonated its first H-bomb in 1953. They were subsequently moved back to seven minutes to midnight. Following the ratification of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty by the US Senate, they have just been moved back three minutes. The Doomsday Clock is now ten minutes away from triggering the Apocalypse. (*Spectacle du Monde*, May 1969, p. 48).

What, then, is this Clock of the Last Judgement, if not the dial on which the Chronology of the Last Days will be inscribed? So, the problem is set out: first, how to establish, scientifically, this Chronology of the End Times, and second, what approximate date can be set for the onset of the Apocalypse? To answer this, I need only recall the essential data of the traditional doctrine of cosmic cycles, which I have already set out in my previous works under the direction of

René Guénon. In short, this work will be presented as an application to the period known as the "End Times" of my previous studies devoted to the cyclical laws of History and the Movement of History.

Finally, a last word to reassure readers who may be alarmed by the title of this work: the "Great Event" towards which humanity is rapidly rushing — which, incidentally, is not yet imminent — will not be the true "End of the World", but only one of the great cyclical periods in its long history.

THE LAST DAYS

(Definitions)

*Definition of the Last Days
according to the traditional doctrine of cosmic cycles*

First and foremost, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by the term "the Last Days" and thus situate these "Last Days" within the providential unfolding of world history.

In fact, the current "End Times" must bring to a close the great cosmic cycle of 64,800 years that Hindus call Manvantara, or the era of Manu; more precisely, Manvantara represents the cycle of humanity over which Manu reigns. Furthermore, it is said that our Manvantara is not the first, but the seventh of the Kalpa, or cycle of a World, and it is added that it will be followed by seven future Manvantaras. It follows that the next "End of Time" corresponds exactly to the temporal centre of the entire Kalpa since it is located, on the one hand, at: $7 \times 64,800$ years 453,600 years from its origin and, on the other hand, at: $7 \times 64,800$ years 453,600 years from its end. Hence the first conclusion that the true "End of the World" is not coming tomorrow! And the second will be that the expression "Last Days" means: the last days of the Manvantara, it being understood that the duration of these "Last Days" varies according to different traditions, as we shall see shortly; but first, we must respond to the inevitable objection that arises here, namely that modern scholars attribute to our world a fabulous age, which can be calculated in billions.

years, instead of the 453,600 years proposed by the doctrine of cycles. This striking discrepancy can, however, be easily explained if, as I have shown elsewhere, we take into account the fact that, for the Ancients, time was cyclical (or circular), whereas, for modern scholars, time is linear. From this point, we can establish a mathematical relationship that allows us to move from the traditional cyclical chronology to the modern linear chronology, and vice versa: thus, the previous objection is removed. However, in this same area, namely the duration of the world, we encounter other opinions that we must point out. For example, some exegetes offer us a literal interpretation of the Bible, which leads them to write the following, which can only make us smile: "According to biblical chronology, which is trustworthy, Adam and Eve were created in the year 4026 BCE. *Wake up*, 8-4-1969). Others, on the other hand, take the fantastic figures of Hindu tradition very seriously, but René Gutnon has shown that the countless zeros found therein probably had no other purpose than to mislead the curious. On the other hand, in our world of time and space, there is no cycle greater than the Kalpa, whose total duration (including the seven future Manvantaras) would be: $2 \times 453,600,907,200$ years. The other larger periods envisaged in Hindu tradition must be understood in a purely symbolic sense, not literally.

Having made these remarks, we must return to the question of the duration of the "End Times" in different traditions. According to Hindu tradition, the Manvantara, or cycle of Humanity, is divided either into five Great Years of 12,960 years each (or 13,000 years in round numbers), or into four Ages of decreasing duration (proportional to the numbers 4, 3, 2, and 1, whose total is 10) and which correspond to the four traditional Ages of the Latin tradition:

Traditional Studies, nos. 419-420 (1970), pp. 160-177.

Golden Age, Silver Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. In a sense, it is this last Age of current Humanity, the Iron Age of Ovid and Virgil, that Hindus call the Kali-Yuga (or Dark Age), which represents the entirety of the "End Times", (in the Bible, it is the episode of the Confusion of Tongues that marks its beginning, while the Flood corresponds to the cataclysmic transition between the 4th and the 5th and current Great Year).

This, then, is the longest period that can be envisaged for the "Last Days", namely that of the Dark Age, which lasts 6,480 years. But Greek tradition, as recounted by Hesiod in *Works and Days*, subdivides this last Age into two "Races": first the "Race of Heroes" (which perished beneath the walls of Troy), then the "Race of Iron", which would therefore have begun around 1100 BCE.

Is this a Jewish tradition? If so, we should consult the prophet Daniel: he gave us a good description of the statue with feet of clay seen in King Nebuchadnezzar's dream , which is obviously symbolic.

of the "Last Days". This text describes the succession of the four Ages of the Ancients, and I have shown (*The Future Era and the Movement of History*) that the proportions of the durations were the same, but in reverse order, as those of the four parts of the statue. As for the overall duration of this Jewish period of the "Last Days" (which Daniel does not give), it is theoretically 2,592 years (or 26 centuries in round numbers). This, of course, refers to the entire period until "the end of days", and not just the duration of the four "Kingdoms": Chaldean (1 century), Persian (2 centuries), Greek (3 centuries) and Roman (4 centuries), which together represent the "pagan millennium", to be succeeded, with an "overlap" of about a century, by the Christian millennium of the Apocalypse.

The beginning of the Cycle of Daniel (or period of the Last Days in Jewish tradition) dates back to the early sixth century BC, coinciding with the beginning of the His-

and we can see that its beginning is more recent than that of Hesiod's "Iron Age".

Finally, we must discuss Christian tradition: here, there is no difficulty since, according to the Gospel, the "End Times" began at the Ascension, when Christ ascended to Heaven, and will last until his Return, at the "End of Time". The early Christians believed for quite some time that this glorious Return of Christ was imminent. In contrast, some scholars, and even theologians, have relegated this ultimate event in the life of the Church to a distant, if not indefinable, future. The truth, which can be deduced from the scriptural texts, and in particular from the Gospel prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, as well as from the Apocalypse of St John, is simple: the theoretical duration of the "End Times" would be, for Christians, 2,000 years (i.e. from 30 to approximately 2030). These 2,000 years therefore represent the end of the Hindu Dark Age (or Iron Age of the Latins), and consequently of the entire Manvantara.

In summary, the coming "End of Time" will bring to a close (around the year 2030 AD) not only the 2,000-year history of the Church, but also the five centuries of the Iron Age and, at the same time, the five millennia (rounded number) of present-day humanity; but it will not be the "End of the World"! Furthermore, it should be noted that these increasingly shorter periods representing the "End Times" can in turn be subdivided into secondary phases, so that, little by little, the final duration of what can still be called the "End Times" shrinks to a few decades.

The "End of Time" would thus occur, as I have just said, around the year 2030 of our era, and therefore in the relatively near future: there will undoubtedly be objections to this, either that this date is purely imaginary, or, on the contrary, that it is a "secret" that should not have been revealed.

My response to this is that this date is no longer se-

Crete for a long time. Without going back to the Fathers of the Church, who already attributed 2,000 years of life to the Church, I would point out that the "End of Time" was announced very clearly and explicitly in the "Prophecy of the King of the World" published by the Russian writer F. Ossendowski in his book *Beasts, Men and Gods* (ed. Pion, Paris 1923), which has been published in several languages. This prophecy, of Mongolian origin, said in effect:

"In the fiftieth year (after 1891), only three great kingdoms will appear, which will live happily for 71 years. Then there will be 18 years of war and destruction. Then the peoples of Agartha will come out of their underground caves and appear on the surface of the earth."

The final phase, designated as the "End of Time", would appear to be:

1891 -I- 50 + 71 -I- 18 2030.

Furthermore, the Prophecy of the Popes, known as "Saint Malachy's Prophecy," whose numerical key (based on the number 111) was discovered by Mr. Raoul Auclair, would give: 1143-1-8 times

111 2031.

We can conclude that this is indeed the approximate date of the "End of Time", and we can agree that it is prodigiously optimistic and that its disclosure cannot disturb anyone, quite the contrary!

The Dark Age

The Dark Age, or Iron Age, represented, for the Ancients, the entirety of the Last Days. To understand its meaning, it is necessary to summarise here, in a few words, the traditional doctrine of the Ages of Humanity.

The first thing to remember is that, within the limits of the Manvantara, evolution would be, so to speak, "regressive"; which Dupuis, in *The Origin of All Cults*, expresses as follows:

"(...) the Hierophants of the East kept repeating that the world was deteriorating both physically and morally and that eventually everything would be destroyed in order to be regenerated when the wickedness of men had reached its peak; and it was believed that the present age was the guilty age and the last, as well as the most unfortunate..."

It is from them (the poets of the East) that Plato borrows his idea of the world, which, once it has left the hands of its creator, initially enjoys the advantages of a new work, whose movement and mechanisms have not yet been disturbed, but which, with time, deteriorates and wears out and would be destroyed forever if the great Demiurge, sensitive to its misfortunes, did not take care to repair it and restore it to its original perfection...!

This same idea of the physical and moral degradation of the earthly world is also found in Genesis, in pro-

Pos de la Chute: Yahweh God said to the woman: "I will multiply your sufferings, especially those of your pregnancy; you will give birth in pain..." He said to the man: "...the ground is cursed because of you. It is through hard labour that you will earn your food, all the days of your life; it will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Genesis II, 17, 20).

This progressive deterioration of the world throughout the Manvantara is reflected, in the temporal realm, by the shortening of the duration of the successive Ages of Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron. This shortening is clearly specified in Hindu tradition by various texts, of which the following is a particularly explicit example (according to Dupuis, *Origine des Culées*):

"Abbé Mignot reports, based on the Ezour-Vedam, an Indian tradition that gives a different duration to each of the ages. The first lasts 4,000 years, the second 3,000, the third 2,000, and the last only 1,000 years..."

In summary, the successive durations of the four traditional Ages into which the total cycle of our Humanity is divided (i.e. 64,800 years) will be proportional to the four numbers 4, 3, 2 and 1, whose total is 10, giving:

Chronological table of the four Ages of Humanity

Golden Age	64,800 x 4	= 25,920 years;
	10	
Silver Age	64,800 x 3	= 19,440 years;
	10	

from 62,770 BC to 56,850 BC

i.e. from 36,850 BC to 17,410 BC

Age of Bronze	64,800 x 2	= 12,960 years;
	10	
		from 17,410 BC to 4,450 BC
Iron Age	64,800 x 1	= 6,480 years;
	10	
		4,400 BC to 2,030 AD

After these brief explanations, which situate our current Iron Age ending in the course of the Manvantara, here is how the Ancients described, in the Vedas, the character and mentality of men during each of the four successive Ages. The following comparison shows what the consequences of cyclical degradation, or, in Christian terms, the Fall, have been over time:

“... When intelligence and the senses participate mainly in Goodness (Sattva, the luminous, ascending tendency), then we recognise the Krita Age (Age of Truth or Golden Age), during which we delight in science and austerity.

When beings devote themselves to duty, interest, and pleasure, then it is the Trēta Age (Silver Age), where Passion (expansive tendency: Rajas) dominates.

When greed, insatiability, pride, imposture, and envy reign amid self-interested works, then it is the Dvapara Age (Age of Bronze), where Passion and Darkness (Tamas: the dark, descending tendency) dominate.

When deception, falsehood, inertia, slumber, malice, consternation, grief, turmoil, fear and sadness reign, it is called the Kali Yuga (Dark Age or Age of Per), which is exclusively dark (exclusive downward Tamas tendency).

We can see from these last lines that Hindu tradition paints a very dark picture of the current Iron Age, but the Latins were no less severe, judging by the poet Ovid:

"At this moment, all crimes are coming to light in this century of baser metal; modesty, truth and good faith are fleeing; in their place reign cunning, artifice, treachery, violence and a guilty thirst for possession... We are no longer content to ask the fertile earth for the necessary crops and food; we descend into its bowels, and the riches it held hidden there, close to the darkness of the Styx, brought to light, awaken all evils: soon appear the harmful iron, the even more harmful gold, and war, which takes both as instruments and whose hand, reddened with blood, shakes the noisy weapons. People live by plunder... and the Virgin Astrea finally abandons the earth, drenched in bloodshed, when all the gods have already left it.

In fact, the history of the Dark Age is not uniformly gloomy, because here too we see the same law of progressive deterioration (through four increasingly shorter and darker secondary phases) that governs the entire Manvantara. The fourth and final of these secondary phases of the Dark Age would therefore last:

6,480 years: 10 648 years,

and its extreme dates will thus be: 1382-2030 (AD). In France, this "dark age of the Dark Age" began with the unfortunate reign of Charles VI, the Mad; which speaks for itself! When it began, this period could also have been considered as the "End Times". But there are others. The Dark Age can also be divided into three "Cosmic Years" of 2160 years each, which is the duration of the vernal point's passage through a sign of the Zodiac. It follows that the first of these three "cosmic years" corresponds to the sign of Taurus, the second to the sign of Aries, and the third and last to the sign of Pisces (coincidentally, the symbol of the early Christian Church). That's not all. It is easy to see that all three of these great periods of 2160

years can be correlated with the three functions of the cosmic principle known as the King of the World, namely the prophetic function, the priestly function and the royal (or imperial) function. and it so happens that the third and last of these cosmic years, that of Pisces (130 BC to 2030 AD), began in the West with the reign of Caesar, whose memory and prestige would last as long as the cycle itself: not so long ago, in fact, Germany and Russia were ruled, one by a Kaiser, the other by a Tsar, that is to say, by Caesars! In short, this third and final Cosmic Year of the Dark Age can be called: the Cycle of Caesar (or of temporal power). But here again, we can apply the ternary division of the total cycle to the secondary cycle, which gives us the following three subdivisions:

From approximately 130 BC to 590 AD: Prophetic cycle from c. 590 CE

to 1310 CE: Priestly cycle and from c. 1310 CE to 2030 CE: Royal cycle.

We can see that Christ and his apostles appeared during the Prophetic Cycle, while the height of the Papacy under Gregory VII occurred around the middle of the Priestly Cycle. As for the Royal Cycle, it coincides with the Modern Cycle (1310-2030), characterised by the preponderance of temporal power with the ultimate goal of the Reign of Quantity. René Guénon masterfully studied in his book of the same name the successive stages of this intellectual and spiritual degeneration, which must first lead to the reign of the masses and then to the Great Parody of "Spirituality in Reverse". It follows from this that the Modern Cycle (1310-2030), which we will return to later when studying the Christic Cycle, effectively represents one of the most important meanings of the term: "The Last Days".

The true "Cyclical Movement of History"

The traditional doctrine concerning the succession of the four Ages—Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron—throughout the cycle of present humanity has never been taken seriously by modern scholars, who have regarded it as nothing more than literary fiction. This is for several reasons, the first of which is that the two terms are incompatible: anyone with a modern mind cannot help but reject, *a priori*, any teaching of traditional origin. But there is also another, more valid reason: the texts relating to the ancient ages, and more particularly to the Golden Age, are virtually impossible to verify in concrete terms. It is a proven fact that the people of the Golden Age left no material trace of their passage on earth: so what can we say about their behaviour, their way of life, their degree of spirituality? The same is not true of the relatively short periods that are entirely covered by classical history (beginning in the sixth century BC) and which are well known to us: it would therefore be possible, *in principle*, to study them in the light of traditional teachings, even if this means using different terminology in order to be better understood. However, it so happens that the doctrine of the Four Ages was taken up at the beginning of the century by authors who were primarily concerned with social issues; this

It was they who named the succession of the four traditional castes—clergy, nobility, bourgeoisie, and proletariat—the "Movement of History," bringing them to the forefront of history. It is easy to see that this succession corresponds to that of the four traditional ages, and this is not due to chance, but rather results from the true nature of things. In fact, according to an ancient Arab tradition reported by René Guénon: "In the most ancient times, men were distinguished from one another only by knowledge; then birth and kinship were taken into consideration; later still, wealth came to be regarded as a mark of superiority; finally, in recent times, men are no longer judged by... than by outward appearances alone".

As these are the respective viewpoints of the different castes, we can conclude that the priestly caste of clerics (those who know) predominated during the Golden Age, followed by the nobility during the Silver Age, then the caste of merchants and bankers during the Bronze Age, and finally the people during the last Age, or Iron Age. Thus, viewed in a traditional, descending or regressive sense, we find the very process of the "Movement of History", which we see as identifying, at least within the limits of classical history, with the traditional doctrine relating to the succession of the four Ages of Humanity.

Given the law of analogy between cycles, already stated above in relation to the Dark Age, it follows that the respective durations of the four phases of the Movement of History will be proportional to the numbers 4, 3, 2 and 1, whose total is 10. Furthermore, each Age or phase can in turn be subdivided into four analogous "sub-Ages" whose proportions between durations are the same as above; hence the following definitions of the four successive stages of the Movement of History:

1^o" Phase of Movement 4/10 of of History (theoretical duration — the total cycle).

This should be seen as a reflection, in the overall period under consideration, of the primordial Golden Age. It is therefore the primitive phase of the cycle during which spiritual concerns come to the fore (relatively speaking, of course), with a certain superiority of the priesthood, sometimes simply moral, while temporal power almost always remains in the hands of the other castes, particularly the nobility. Holiness and knowledge of divine matters are held in high esteem; this is the era of Sages, Saints and Doctors. Life is generally simple, sometimes crude; the lower castes, often with little differentiation between them, do not yet think to take offence at their modest condition. Literature consists mainly (and sometimes exclusively) of spiritual works. The arts are devoted to the glory of God, as can be seen at the beginning of the Millennium.

Phase II of the Movement of History (duration = 3/10 of the total cycle).

This phase in turn reflects the second age, or Silver Age, of ancient authors. From the outset, we can see the disappearance of the relatively primitive mentality of the first phase. The spiritual aspirations of ancient times are increasingly replaced by purely temporal concerns. The feudal caste, which owns the land, predominates and imposes its chivalrous ideal of loyalty, nobility and honour on society.

Epic poems appear, singing the praises of valiant knights and extolling the beauty of their noble ladies, for this era is no longer one of Knowledge, but of Love. Similarly, architecture becomes royal or military in nature, celebrating the magnificence of the prince or protecting the city from its enemies.

The priesthood is still present, but its role shifts to

In the background, heterodox tendencies inspired by the rationalist mentality of the noble caste are already beginning to appear. Moreover, life is becoming easier, luxury and comfort are increasingly sought after, trade is growing in importance, and the merchant caste is becoming wealthier and thus acquiring greater influence. However, the supreme resource was not yet money, but the sword; land remained the basis of wealth, and this land was passed down from father to son, along with noble titles. In short, this was a time when birth and kinship were taken into consideration, in other words, when it was important above all else to be "well-born".

nie Phase of the Movement of History (duration = 2/10 of the total cycle).

This is the image of the Bronze Age of Hesiod and Virgil. The consequences of the "Fall" are already being felt: people's mentality is becoming increasingly self-interested, with a tendency towards materialism. The ideal of honour and loyalty of the previous age gives way to the pursuit of profit; money becomes all-powerful and men distinguish themselves from one another according to their degree of wealth. The morality of self-interest replaces that of salvation and duty, and serves as the basis for new political ideologies.

The bourgeoisie, i.e. the caste of merchants and bankers who held movable wealth, became predominant, but they were much more interested in business than in politics, which they controlled through their "Cavalry of Saint George". The upper castes therefore generally remained in their positions, but in the background, and in fact we can see that the nobility tended to become bourgeois, while, on the other hand, the bourgeoisie soon penetrated to the highest levels of the religious hierarchy.

This third age saw industry take off, while and trade reached its peak; the arts and letters benefited from general enrichment; the bourgeoisie took

luxury and pleasure, but all this material progress is paid for by a corresponding spiritual regression. Heresies multiply, atheism begins to spread, metaphysics is abandoned in favour of purely utilitarian philosophies; in short, agnosticism is advancing rapidly.

But the darkest aspect of this Bronze Age phase stems from its warlike nature: "Man, more ferocious, is quicker to take up arms, which sow terror; yet he refrains from crime." In fact, the "wars of hell" of modern times, these bloody and excessive struggles, are, at least in their origin, bourgeois enterprises. But, alas, these wars will become even bloodier with the approach of the fourth and final phase of the cycle.

IV. Phase of the Movement of History (duration = 1/10 of the total cycle).

It was the grim Iron Age that ancient poets cursed thus: "Now all crimes come to light in this century of the basest metal." In fact, during the previous age, that of the bourgeoisie, money had ended up corrupting men, while the growing spread of atheistic materialism had broken down the last moral barriers. From then on, in such a society where spiritual values fall by the wayside (they never disappear completely, otherwise society would immediately collapse), or even the morality of self-interest so dear to the bourgeoisie is described, only the morality of success, based on cunning and force, can survive. On the other hand, with the advent of the working class, castes eventually merge, any normal hierarchy based on the true nature of beings tends to disappear, and the government of men, able to rely only on violence and terror, ends up in tyranny or "totalitarian" dictatorship.

Furthermore, with the proliferation of social organisations aimed at

Born into the working class, the state becomes increasingly intrusive, much to the detriment of individual freedoms, which are gradually being eroded. Trade falls into servitude and sometimes even takes a back seat, but industry experiences tremendous growth in terms of quantity, mass production and scale. On the other hand, with the ever-accelerating pace of history, people caught up in the whirlwind of an increasingly hectic life no longer concern themselves with the substance of things, but only with their outward appearance. It is a time when clothes make the man, when the end justifies the means.

or success excuses everything.

However, despite all these flaws, this Age is not entirely dark, but also presents glimmers of dawn. For it is the era blessed by the hymns of the Vedas, the suras of the Koran and the parables of the Gospel: the time of the Eleventh Hour, that is to say, the twilight heralding the coming dawn, the dark Advent in which the joy of Christmas is already bursting forth, the darkness of Good Friday from which the joy of Easter morning will spring forth.

These are the four Ages into which certain cyclical periods of human history can be divided, and it so happens that each of them goes through four analogous phases of decreasing duration. Thus, when the Silver Age, for example, reaches nine-tenths of its course, that is, when it enters its fourth and final phase, the process of cyclical decline suddenly accelerates and becomes chaotic, the populace runs wild, and events come to a head. It is no longer a riot, but a revolution, which first overthrows the old regime and sometimes even destroys the old ruling class. Then the excesses of anarchy provoke an immense desire for authority, a dictator emerges who restores order to the chaos, clears away the ruins and, on this clean slate, rebuilds a new city based

on the predominance of another caste, in this case the bourgeoisie. Then comes the moment when the dictator, lost or burned out by the excesses of his genius, disappears from the stage of history. Then, in a renewed world, but at a lower spiritual and social level, the first phase of the next age begins again.

Now, from this brief overview, and in particular from the theory of revolutions, which shows that each one comes in its own time and at its own hour, can we conclude that the question of the cyclical movement of history is in fact very simple? Not at all, for several reasons. Firstly, as we shall see elsewhere, the overall movement that seems to govern the destiny of Christendom is overlaid by numerous secondary movements relating to certain peoples, kingdoms or empires. In particular, we can see that there is an English cycle that is quite distinct from the Portuguese or Prussian cycles, just as the pace of evolution of the young American Republic of the USA must differ greatly from that of old Russia. On the other hand, it should also be added that each event in history can also be considered as the result of a multitude of periodicities such as the ten-year solar period, the 33-year social generation, the century, Virgil's "great year" (520 years), the cosmic year of 2160 years and its divisions, etc.

Under these circumstances, a comprehensive study of the cyclical movement of history appears virtually impossible because it is too complex; I will therefore content myself, in the chapters that follow, with applying this doctrine to the major periods of the Christic Cycle, or the Last Days.

THE CHRISTIC CYCLE
(30 - 2030)

While the Cycle of Daniel (lasting approximately 2,600 years), which practically coincides with the entirety of classical history, represents for Jews the overall period of the "End Times" until the "end of days", the same is not true for Christians, who, since St. Paul, consider the Ascension as the starting point of this long wait, which must end with the glorious Return of Christ at the Last Judgement.

The early Christians hoped that the wait for the Parousia would be short, but Saint John, in the Apocalypse, soon proved them wrong. His announcement of a Millennium of light framed by two periods of darkness was in fact in line with a respectable tradition, reported by certain Church Fathers (St. Justin, St. Irenaeus, St. Anastasius, St. Hilary, St. Jerome and St. Augustine), which assigned a duration of 2,000 years to it. The same number can also be found by a very simple calculation based on the Gospel prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of time, these two events appearing to be closely linked, as if the first were a prefiguration of the second. However, between the crucifixion of Jesus and the subsequent punishment of the Jewish people during the destruction of Jerusalem, approximately forty years passed, and we can conclude that

that between Christ's death and the Last Judgement, the interval will be: 50 times 40 years, or 2000 years.

Why 50? Well, because 50 represents the perfection of reward (realised through the Parousia), just as 40 represented the perfection of penance (realised in 70 through the destruction of Jerusalem). We can cite, on the one hand, the 40 years of wandering of the Jews in the desert, and on the other hand, the 40 days of fasting of Jesus at the beginning of his public life. As for the number 50, suffice it to say that it defines the jubilee cycle at the end of which all things are restored to their original state. In other words, 50 is par excellence the number of the Great Return: the return of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and of the glorious Christ at the Parousia.

The history of the Church will therefore comprise a total of 50 secondary periods of 40 years each, which can be grouped as follows, taking into account the teachings of the Apocalypse:

I• phase: Persecutions - duration 7×40 years	,280 years	II• phase: The Millennium	- duration: 25×40 years = 1,000 years
Phase III: The Modern Cycle		- duration: 18×40 years = 720 years	
Total 50×40 years = 2000 years			

Hence the following chronology:

Phase I: Era of Persecution: from 30 to 310 AD	Phase II: The Millennium	Phase III: The Modern Cycle
	: from 310 to 1310 AD	: from 1310 to 2030 AD

In this interpretation of the Apocalypse, consistent with that given by Cardinal Billot in "La Parousie", the Millennium, from 310 to 1310, effectively corresponds to the most brilliant and fruitful period in the history of the Church, its phase

diurnal, in a manner of speaking, a luminous phase, which emerges from the morning twilight of the early Church (the Church of the catacombs), only to gradually sink, after the sinister reign of Philip the Fair, into the spiritual darkness of the modern world.

It was Philip the Fair, in fact, who definitively ruined the traditional organisation of Christendom through his triple revolt: against the Papacy (the attack on Boniface VIII in Anagni in 1303), the Empire (which would become secularised), and the Order of the Temple (which was dissolved after an unjust trial in which the Templars were horribly tortured). After Philip the Fair, temporal power, now freed from the previous suzerainty of spiritual authority, would reign supreme: in this sense, this third phase of the life of the Church, in which Satan "must be loosed for a little while", is purely and simply identified with the third and final phase of the Cycle of Caesar (1310-2030), which we mentioned earlier, and we see once again that the Modern Cycle practically coincides with the period of the "End Times"—at least in the Apocalypse of St. John.

This interpretation, however, is not accepted by everyone: there are people, in fact, who are still waiting for the Millennium, but this is a theological error. When Saint John announced that Satan would be chained for a thousand years, he did not mean that perfection would reign on earth—in reality, perfection exists only in God and only in Him—but more simply that, during this period of a thousand years, the Millennium, the Church would be able to watch over the salvation of souls without too much difficulty. And this was indeed the case for many centuries, especially when Western Christianity was covered with "a white mantle of churches". What essentially characterised the Millennium was that "achieving salvation" was the main goal in everyone's life, so that holiness was then held in very high esteem — this is certainly no longer the case today, where "celebrities" are objects of idolatry for the masses!

In addition to the previous division of the Christian bi-millennium into 50 penitential phases of 40 years each, two other ways of dividing the Christic Cycle can be considered: the first would consist, like the biblical cycle of seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine, of a double septenary, each comprising seven secondary periods of one hundred and forty-three years; the second, found in the famous Prophecy of the Popes, results from a subdivision of the Millennium into nine periods of one hundred and eleven years, according to the following pattern:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} 9 \times 111 = & 999 \text{ years} \\ -1- 1 \text{ jubilee year} & & 1 \text{ year} \\ \hline \text{Total:} & 1,000 \text{ years.} \end{array}$$

This is analogous to, for example, the Jewish jubilee cycle of 50, which was calculated as follows:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} 7 \text{ sabbaths of sabbaths of years} = 7 \times 7 = 49 \text{ years} \\ -1- 1 \text{ jubilee year} & & 1 \text{ year} \\ \hline \text{Total} & & = 0 \text{ years.} \end{array}$$

That said, we will examine each of these two modes of division of the Christic Cycle separately.

*Symmetrical Dirifioa of the Christic Cycle (or
Chrelian bimillennium)*

The Christic Cycle can therefore be divided into a double septenary, analogous to that of the seven fat cows and the seven lean cows. The latter, which symbolised the succession of seven years of abundance and seven years of famine, is eminently symmetrical: each of the seven fat cows corresponds to a lean cow that will devour it; similarly, each year of abundance corresponds to a 'complementary' year of famine. Metaphysically, one might say that this is a global process of manifestation; for example, the total unfolding of the Kalpa or Cycle of a World through the succession of its 14 Manvantaras. Such a process therefore involves, first of all, a "departure from the Principle" throughout the first septenary series, and then a "return to the Principle" during the following septenary. Thus, during the seven years of abundance, wheat continues to accumulate in the Pharaoh's granaries, so that at the end of the seventh year, at the height of the cycle, the granaries are overflowing: Egypt has reached the peak of its wealth and prosperity. Then came the years of famine, during which the granaries gradually emptied, so that at the end of the seven years of famine all provisions were exhausted: once again the country was poor and destitute — but the Pharaoh was now very rich — and this "wealth" of the sovereign

At the end of the entire cycle, this wealth must be understood here in a symbolic or, if you will, evangelical sense: the Pharaoh is the Lord, or rather the Principle into which everything is absorbed at the end of a cycle.

All this applies perfectly to the two millennia of the Church's life, since each of them can be subdivided into seven secondary phases of 143 years each. The whole thus constitutes a symmetrical cycle comprising, first, a period of ascension, or development, lasting approximately 1,000 years, then a phase of apogee, which took place in the 11th century.

cle, and even, more precisely, during the first half of the 2nd century; and finally a period of decline, or regression, lasting about a thousand years, symmetrical to the first in the sense that, for example, persecutions had the opposite effect: the expansion of Christianity despite persecutions during the early centuries, and, conversely, the massive de-Christianisation of large populations in the contemporary era. We could take this study further by comparing the corresponding symmetrical phases, which we will do shortly, after verifying whether the so-called "apogee" phase deserves its name.

The year 1030 represents roughly the middle of the 2000-year Christian cycle (since: $30 - 1000 = 1030$, and $1050 - 1000 = 2030$), so it is worth examining the situation of the Church at that time. On this subject, one fact immediately strikes us: in the aftermath of the year 1000, Western Christianity was "covered with a white mantle of churches" – something we would never see today! And here is another fact that has not been repeated either: from 1014 to 1024, a couple of saints, Saint Henry II and Saint Cunegonde, his wife, reigned over the Holy Roman Empire. However, in the second half of the 11th century, two events heralded, if not the decline of the Church, then at least the beginning of that decline. These were, first, the Greek schism of Michael Cerularius in 1054, then the humiliation of Emperor Henry IV at Canossa in 1077. Indeed, the schism...

Greek influence weakened the Church by dividing it, and the consequence would be that Islam could ultimately invade and conquer the entire Byzantine Empire. Then, Canossa would inaugurate the long and disastrous series of struggles between the Priesthood and the Empire; struggles that were disastrous because: "Every house divided against itself shall perish."

The first half of the 11th century therefore represents the apogee of the Christian bimillennium; it should be seen as a period of spiritual fulfilment: the zenith, so to speak, of Christianity — this by analogy with the cycle of seven years of plenty and seven years of famine, where the seventh year of plenty effectively corresponds to a period of fulfilment, since all the granaries are overflowing with wheat. If we transpose this into the history of the Church, then the grains of wheat symbolise souls converted to the Christian faith and, in this sense, the first half of the 11th century appears to us as the period of Christian fulfilment. In fact, from the eighth century to the third quarter of the eleventh century, Christianity was on the rise. After completing its conquest of the last remaining pagan enclaves in the West, it then spread throughout Eastern and Northern Europe, to the Saxons, Avars, Hungarians, Moravians, Swedes, Poles and Russians: "Prince Boris of Bulgaria converted in 864, the Duke of Bohemia at the end of the 9th century, Duke Rollo of Normandy at the beginning of the 10th century, Princess Olga of Russia in 954 and Duke Mieszko of Poland in 966." On the other hand, faith at that time was not only ardent and profound—we see the King of France Robert II the Pious (996-1031) composing hymns and Latin sequences—but also, if we dare say so, "universal", since everyone throughout Christian Europe professed the same Catholic faith and recognised the Pope of Rome as their spiritual leader. To this we might add that the Church had its own sacred language, Latin, which had long been established throughout Western Christendom.

The wealth of the Church at that time was not only spiritual, but also material. This would later become

one of the main causes of the subsequent decline of Catholicism, for "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven".

Another observation: the heyday of the Church in the West coincided with the heyday of feudalism. This is by no means a coincidence; in fact, when feudalism weakened and declined, it was not to the benefit of the priesthood, but to that of the monarchy, which soon rose up against the papacy (the attack on Boniface VIII in Anagni in 1303).

At its height, chivalry had a very lofty ideal high ideal, which has been preserved and, in a way, codified in the Romances of the Round Table, particularly the *Romance of the Grail* (by Gauthier Map). The Quest for the Holy Grail was the sublime goal set for every new knight. Four hundred years later, in 1429, this ideal of medieval chivalry was honoured one last time by Joan of Arc; but because the country was already in the throes of spiritual decline, Joan, whose holiness was anachronistic, was soon betrayed, sold, condemned and burned (1431).

The height of Christianity, spiritual fulfilment: all this means that around the year 1000, the "City of God" dreamed of by Saint Augustine was finally realised, to the extent that this is possible in this world. What essentially characterises the City of God is that it offers people the maximum facilities and opportunities to achieve salvation and attain holiness.

To achieve salvation is to return to the primordial state of humanity, symbolically represented by the earthly paradise. Dante teaches us in *De Nonarchia* that it is the Emperor who must lead the people to the Earthly Paradise, which presupposes that he knows the way: this was precisely the case for Saint Henry II, who reigned over the Holy Roman Empire.

worst Germanic Roman from 1014 to 1024. It is therefore the Emperor (or King) who has the duty to lead the people to the Earthly Paradise, but it is the Pope who, from there, lead them to Heaven, which obviously presupposes that the Papacy, or more generally the Priesthood, has full spiritual authority

The heyday of Christianity during the 11th century is described as a time of intense and profound faith, but also universal, so that there was little room for atheism at the time, and it follows that there was little merit in being a believer. The Church was well aware of this, which is why, in return, it was very demanding of sinners and did not hesitate to impose extremely severe penances on them, the likes of which we cannot imagine today. In this sense, our contemporaries are therefore privileged compared to the people of the year 1000; and that is not all, for we also enjoy the great **privilege of being** separated from the Parousia by only a few decades. On the other hand,

For the faithful who lived at the height of Christianity, in the first half of the 11th century, Christ was far away (temporally): a thousand years had already passed since the Ascension, and a thousand years still remained until the Second Coming. In other words, never was the Church so far removed from the Lord as during the era of its omnipotence, under the reign of King Robert the Pious!

As we have just seen, the first half of the second century, that is, the middle of the Christic cycle, represents the peak phase in the two-thousand-year history of Christianity; we can now compare the corresponding symmetrical phases of the Christian double septenary (two sets of seven phases of 143 years each). To do this, we must first establish the approximate chronology of these fourteen successive phases,

each lasting approximately 143 years. This chronology will be approximate because, in fact, we have:

$$7 \times 143 \quad 1000 -I- 1$$

So here we have one year "too many"; but that is what a one-year interval that allows transition from one cyclical system to another. In this case, the 143-year period can be subdivided into 13 ten-year periods, since:

$$13 \times 11 = 143,$$

this is analogous to the 365-day year, which can be divided into thirteen lunar months of 28 days (or 4 weeks) each:

$$13 \times (4 \times 7) -\{ 1 \quad 365.$$

In the above case of the Christian bi-millennium, it will therefore be necessary to provide for a "correction" of one year for each septenary, (which) allows the establishment of the following chronological table of Fourteen phases of 143 years into which the entire in the history of the Church.

Table of the 14 symmetrical phases of the 2000-year Christic Cycle (30 to 2030) Peak Period: 11th

century			
1030	Reign of Robert the Pious (1051). Reign of St. Henry II (1024-1024). Conversion of Poland (966). Conversion of Russia (954). Otto I (916-937) founded the Holy Roman Empire. Conversion of the Normans (910).	VII	Apogee of Feudalism. East-West Schism (1054). Struggles between the priesthood and the empire - Canossa (1077). The Crusades - Capture of Jerusalem in 1099.
888	Charlemagne founded the Western Empire in Rome in 800. Charlemagne's campaigns in Spain in Sexe and in Iteie. Pepin founded the Papal States (754).	VI	Death of Frederick II, last of the great emperors of the Holy Roman Empire (1250). Great Interregnum. Last Crusade: Tunis (1270). Assassination of Anagni (1303).
74CE	Poitiers (732): Charles Martel drives the Arabs back to Spain. In Piaule: Century d'Or for Monasteries (7th century). The expansion of Islam in the East.	V	Transfer of the Papacy to Avignon. Great Western Schism, secularisation of the Holy Roman Empire. Execution of Joan of Arc (1431). 1453: The Turks at Constantinople.
602	Atropé of the Theocratic Empire d'Urbis with Justinian (527-565). Pin of Arianism in Gaul (507). the conversion of Clovis (498).	IV	Renaissance and Reformation. 1458 The Reformation spreads to England, Germany and Scandinavia. Wars of Religion in France. Conversion of Henry IV (1598).
459	You mow down invasions (404-40d). The failure of Julian the Apostate (363). The decline of paganism (398). The establishment of the Episcopate. Councils: Nicaea (325); Milan	III	XII
316	Pré des Martixs (304-311). of the Church under Alexander Severus (222-233). The RR of curcins under Marcus Aurelius (177). The persecutions (311). Expansion	II	Thirty Years' War and decline of Catholic powers. Failure to convert China. 1601 Emergence of heresies: Jansenism, Quietism. Classical period.
1744			Beginning of the Persecutions: Jesuits (1760). The Reign of Terror (1793-1798). VII Concordat (1801): <u>bishops appointed and paid by the state</u> . Spread of liberalism and end of the Papal States (1870).
1887	The spread of Christianity: in the 1st century, in Asia Minor, Rome, Gaul and Spain. The execution of Domitian (81-96). The destruction of Jerusalem (70).	XIV	Secularisation of the state and spread of atheistic materialism (20th century). "Religio depopulata". The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Renaissance of Israel (1948) End of the Christic Cycle: around 2010.
50	The birth of the Church (Pentecost).	I	

A quick glance at this table reveals the symmetry of events between corresponding phases. Let us cite a few examples. In 70 AD, Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jewish people scattered throughout the diaspora; conversely, since 1948, we have witnessed the rebirth of Israel. On the other hand, during the first two phases (from 30 to 316), Christianity expanded in the major cities of the Roman Empire, despite very violent persecutions (under Nero, Marcus Aurelius and especially Diocletian), but Christianity eventually triumphed with Constantine (Edict of Milan in 313). Conversely, during the last two phases (i.e. after 1744), religion continued to lose ground and successive persecutions greatly weakened it: significantly, Pope Benedict XV, who reigned in 1917 (at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917), had as his motto — how justified, alas! "Religio depopulata". Continuing our investigations, we arrive at a momentous event: the abolition of paganism in the Roman world by Theodosius the Great in 394; Christianity thus became the only recognised religion of the Empire. Symmetrically — but in the opposite direction — in the 17th century we encounter an event of the same magnitude: the Celestial Empire's offer to open its doors to Catholic missionaries, which virtually implied China's conversion to Christianity. This project failed due to Rome's authoritarianism and, consequently, the Church's rigidity at that time. It should be noted that, at the same time, Louis XIV (who was then regarded in Europe as a Great Monarch, like Theodosius the Great) imitated his distant Roman predecessor by revoking the Edict of Nantes (1685). Let us now move on to the fourth phase: here, from the outset, is the conversion of Clovis (498), which corresponds symmetrically to the conversion of Henry IV (1598): in both cases, this conversion allowed the sovereign to enter Paris! This fourth phase then saw the Byzantine Empire reach its peak under Justinian, which corresponds symmetrically to

during the Western Renaissance, when Western humanists and scholars used and absorbed, in a manner of speaking, the science and spirituality of Justinian's century.

During the fifth phase, the "Golden Age" of the seventh century, Saint Odile was to shine forth; France then became "the eldest daughter of the Church and the soldier of God". Unfortunately, this was not to be the case

the same, alas, during the ^{tenth} phase (symmetrical to the fifth), when will see the Great Western Schism — caused by the transfer of the Papacy to Avignon — threaten the unity of Western Christianity

In 754, at the beginning of the ^{phas} phase, Pepin the Short, whom the e,

had just crowned king of France, founded the Papal States after liberating Rome from the Lombard threat: "this was a turning point in the history of the Church". Symmetrically, we find another turning point — but in the opposite direction — at the end of the

The sixth phase began in 1303 with the attack on Pope

Boniface VIII, followed by the transfer of the papacy to Avignon, definitively ruined the power of the popes and thus the authority of the Church.

Pippin the Short, the first Carolingian king, was succeeded by Charlemagne, founder of the Holy Roman Empire (in 800), who would become the greatest emperor of the West. His counterpart was Frederick II Hohenstaufen, the last of the great sovereigns of the Holy Roman Empire, whose death in 1250 was followed by the Great Interregnum.

Finally, with the seventh and final phase of its first millennium (888-1030), the Church reached its zenith with the conversion of the Normans, Russians and Poles, and the reign of a holy Emperor: Henry II. However, from the beginning of the eighth phase (the first of the second millennium), the decline of the Church began with the Greek Schism of Michael Cerularius (1054).

This was followed shortly afterwards by the beginning of the long struggles between the priesthood and the Empire, struggles that would ultimately prove fatal to the "City of God" of the year 1000.

These are the initial observations that can be made when comparing the corresponding phases of the two thousand years of Christianity, but that is not all. A quick glance at the table above reveals the three major periods that St John distinguished in the life of the Church: first, the underground Church of the catacombs (from Pentecost to the end of the Age of Martyrs); then the Millennium, which will see the triumph of the City of God; and finally the Modern Cycle, during which " Satan will be loosed for a time".

The first period (that of persecution) represents, give or take a few years, the first two phases of 143 years (from 30 to 316); the second period (the Millennium) corresponds to the following seven phases (from 316 to 1315); as for the third and final period, known as the modern period, it covers the last five phases of the cycle (1315 to 2030). We are thus brought back, by an unexpected detour, to these three great periods of the Christic Cycle announced in the Apocalypse, which we will therefore need to examine more closely.

THE MILLENNIUM
(310-1310)

of the Millennium (theoretical dates: 310-1310)

As for the situation of the Millennium in the course of history, I have stuck, as we have seen previously, to the highly authoritative interpretation of Cardinal Billotte, for whom the Apocalypse of St John announced the three great eras of the Christic cycle. In fact, in the year 96, when St John was writing, the persecutions had begun.

"Christians tempted to lose heart need to hear an authoritative word. So the last of the Apostles, the exile of PatlTOS, himself pursued by the hatred of the Caesars, sends them his message to assure them that, despite appearances, victory is certain. Christ, who was crucified during his lifetime, must also be persecuted in his disciples; but his enemies will be defeated. It is he, in the end, who will triumph."

And indeed, beneath strange figures, the seer describes the terrible persecutions that Christ will have to endure in his Church, especially during the first centuries... Thus, the Apocalypse is a song of hope that announces to the early Christians the victory of Christianity over paganism. To realise this, one need only look at its content and, at the same time, at the history of the Church.

We will see that this history, written in advance, is divided into three parts: the era of persecution, the reign of Jesus Christ, and the end times.

¹ M *Parousia*, by Cardinal Billotte (passage quoted by Elie Daniel in *Could this really be the end of time?*).

This perfectly logical interpretation of the Apocalypse allows us to establish the chronology of the Millennium. From this perspective, the famous expression, "Satan will be bound for a thousand years" (p. 20, 1-3) effectively refers to the end of persecution in 313, when the Edict of Milan was promulgated.

Consequently, a thousand years later, we must encounter an event that is harmful to Christianity. Indeed: "Saint Vincent Ferrier, prophet of the Last Days, was soon to confirm that this marked the end of a historic *Millennium*, the reign of Christianity begun in 313 by the Edict of Constantine" (Louis Lallement: fr *Vocation de l'Occident*). It suffices, moreover, to examine

the historical facts at the beginning of the 14th century to see
tater — at least in France — Satan was calling the shots: In 1303, the

Anagni assassination attempt perpetrated by the lawyer Nogaret, the "damned soul of Philip the Fair", against Pope Boniface VIII, VIII, who died shortly afterwards.

In 1304, Saint Benedict XI, who had excommunicated Nogaret, died.

In 1305, Clement V, elected thanks to the intrigues of the King of France, settled in Avignon, where Nogaret held him at his mercy. In 1307, the main dignitaries of the Order of the Temple were arrested by surprise , and the Trial of the Templars began. Subjected to severe torture, they initially confessed to all kinds of turpitude.

kinds of turpitude.

March 108: The Faculty of Theology of Paris approved the measures taken by the king against the Templars.

September 1309: Opening of an investigation against Boniface VI II.

7 April 1310: Nine imprisoned Knights Templar submit a protest against the trial.

1 May 1310: 54 Knights Templar are burned alive at the Porte Saint-Antoine after asserting their innocence.

April 1312: Clement V dissolves the Order of the Temple.

February 1314: Grand Master Jacques Molay and Charnay are burned in turn.

In 1308: Emperor Henry of Luxembourg dies, possibly poisoned.

In 1338: The Empire becomes secularised in response to France's control over the Papacy.

It follows *from* all this that the crucial date, when events took an irreversible turn, was 13 May 1310. After the torture of the 54 Templars, the Pope, faced with a fait accompli *and*, moreover, a prisoner of Philip the Fair, was finally forced to pronounce the dissolution of the Order of the Temple. The drama of 13 May 1310 is said to be at the origin of the characteristic deviation of the Modern Cycle, but why? The answer is that these monk-soldiers had as their main function that of "guardians of the Holy Land", in other words, of Tradition.

Thus, at the beginning of the 14th century, the millennium was coming to an end. Nium, Satan, unleashed, had first attacked the head of Christianity: the Papacy, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Order of the Temple. To complete his victory, the Evil One then turned his attention to the royal family, which he managed to discredit and then disintegrate in just a few years, thanks to the diabolical intrigues of the Tour de Nesle. We know that Philip the Fair had four children: a daughter, Isabelle (who would marry King Edward II of England) and three sons: Louis, Philip and Charles. The dynastic succession therefore seemed assured, until, during a party, Isabelle accused her three sisters-in-law of misconduct. As a result, two young lords of the court were burned alive (after being tortured during interrogation), and the three young women were thrown into prison. One of them, Marguerite, wife of Louis, was strangled in 1315 on the orders of her husband, another was forced to divorce and enter a convent; only Philippe's wife was rehabilitated, but Philippe V the Long was accused of usurping the throne that normally belonged to Jean 1, Posthume, who had to be

René Guénon, *A Penis on Christian Esotericism*, Chapter III: "The Guardians of the Holy Land".

to hide him from his uncle's wrath. Finally, in 1328, the direct Capetian dynasty died out with the youngest son of Philip the Fair, Charles IV the Fair. As for Isabella, she would later commit so many cruelties that the English would call her "the She-Wolf" (she had her husband, King Edward II, impaled with a red-hot iron after having the king's favourite flayed alive, strip by strip). In truth, Philip the Fair seems to have been cursed in his descendants!

The initial cause of the conflict between the Pope and the King of France was financial; it must be said that Philip the Fair's abuse of currency alteration (he had a great need for money) had led to quarrels with certain religious orders. Furthermore, the King had taken Italian bankers as his financial advisers, and these were inevitably rivals of their competitors, the Knights Templar, who continued to observe the traditional rules regarding money that the Church had imposed until then. In other words, Mammon could only enter the scene on the ruins of the Temple! It was therefore on 13 May 1310, the date of the drama that marked the end of the Order of the Temple, that the "Reign of Mammon" began, or, if you prefer, the Modern Cycle.

The Modern Cycle can therefore be defined, in a certain sense, as the Reign of Mammon, as opposed to the Millennium or "Reign of God", during which the Western world was called Christendom. Christianity, that is to say, the medieval society in which Christianity was the social, political and spiritual bond, and which would disappear on the day that bond was broken, had come into being (it existed before, but in the shadows) about a thousand years earlier, with the Edict of Milan in 313. It then gradually organised and strengthened itself with the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Milan (355), before triumphing definitively and ruling the former Roman Empire when Theodosius the Great abolished the old Roman religion in 394. Of course, Christianity existed

even before Constantine, but at that time it was only a secretive sect and did not have the soul of a great empire; Similarly, the Church continued to exist after Philip the Fair, but temporal power ceased to obey it and, increasingly, it appeared as a foreign body in a secular society subject to the legalism of lawyers and driven solely by the appetites of its temporal leaders. It follows that the Christian Millennium (310-1310) constitutes, in the history of the West, a defined and limited cyclical period, corresponding to the total cycle of evolution of a society essentially based on Christianity. In such cases, the overall cycle of social evolution must pass through four successive phases, of progressively decreasing duration, analogous to the four traditional Ages of Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron described by ancient authors; this means that the Millennium must also obey the law of the Movement of History, as we shall now see.

The Movement of History during the Christian Millennium

Being subject to the law of the Movement of History, the Millennium has therefore gone through four successive phases or "Ages": Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron, whose decreasing durations are respectively proportional to the four numbers: 4, 3, 2 and 1, whose total is 10. The durations of these four "Ages" will thus be:

400 years for the Golden Age of the Millennium

(i.e. 310 to 710 approximately)

300 years for the Silver Age of the Millennium

(i.e. from 710 to approximately 1010)

200 years for the Bronze Age of the Millennium (i.e. from approximately 1010 to 1210)

100 years for the Iron Age of the Millennium

(from approximately 1210 to 1310)

Note: The above chronology is based on the date of 13 May 1310, chosen as the beginning of the Modern Cycle. We also adopt the dates of 313 (Edict of Milan) for the beginning of the Millennium, and 1314 for the end. These differences correspond to the "margins" normally observed in the study of historical cycles, which allow us to move from one cyclical system to another.

The Golden Age of the Millennium

According to the above, the Golden Age of the Christian Millennium extends from 313 to 714 (the theoretical dates here would be: 310 to 710), which can be divided exactly into two two-century phases, from 313 to 913 and from 513 to 714, or from Constantine to the end of Clovis' reign (313-511), and from Clovis to Charles Martel (511 to 714). Here we find two classic chapters in the history of the Church, which shows that this first Age of the Millennium is not a conventional division, but that it fits perfectly with historical reality.

These two phases, spanning two centuries, are quite different. The first (from 313 to 1111) marked the transition in the West from the ancient world to the Christian Middle Ages, while the second (from 1111 to 714) constituted, in a sense, the primordial era of medieval Christianity.

In fact, the Edict of Milan in 313 marked "the beginning, within the Empire, of openly Christian legislation, going hand in hand with the official fight against paganism, which persisted mainly in rural areas". On the other hand, the continual penetration of the Empire by barbarians had led to the gradual dissolution of ancient society, which was essentially based on the expansion of the Roman city, the gigantic Urbs, which had eventually absorbed all the ancient Mediterranean cities. This observation is crucial because the excessive development of city civilisation is one of the most characteristic features of recent ages, whereas, on the contrary, primordial times always correspond to a patriarchal and rural civilisation; better still, the dwelling place of the primordial Adam is described in the Bible as a park or garden planted with trees (Paradisus); and the heavenly Jerusalem, which in the Apocalypse descends to earth at the End of Time, is represented as a city.

See *History of the Church* by Paul Lesourd.

During the final years of the Roman Empire, the dissolution of ancient society took place on both moral and material levels. Morally, as the sacred fires of the prytaneums died out and pagan temples collapsed; materially, when barbarian invasions transformed the opulent Gallo-Roman cities into deserts. Rome itself was not spared, and St. Jerome, after the sack of the city by the Goths in 410, delivered this funeral oration: "The light of the universe is extinguished, the head of the Roman Empire severed, or to speak more accurately, the entire universe overturned in a single city."

In reality, Saint Jerome was exaggerating somewhat: it was not the universe that had been overturned, but only the ancient world; on the other hand, Christianity, then in full swing, found in the fall of paganism and the disappearance of the imperial administration a surge of vigour and influence. In fact, "amidst the ruins of the Empire, the bishops remained the sole leaders of the cities".

The bishops were therefore, as historian Paul Lesourd reminds us, the sole leaders of the cities. Now, "leader" is synonymous with "head", and this brings to mind Daniel's symbolic statue, in which the golden head represented the first Age, or Golden Age, during which "men were distinguished from one another only by (divine) Knowledge". And indeed, divine knowledge, or, if you prefer, holiness, flourished in this primordial era of the Christian millennium, so that the faithful, unable to converse with God as Adam did in the Garden of Eden, at least had the joy of being able to approach and hear one or another of the great saints of those privileged times: Saint Ambrose in Milan and Saint Augustine in Carthage, Saint Jerome in the East and Saint John Chrysostom in Byzantium, Saint Leo in Rome and Saint Martin in Tours, Saint Germain in Auxerre and Saint Patrick in Ireland. This is why the fifth century was one of the most important periods in the life of the Church: "Never, at any other time, did it appear so clearly great, strong and powerful". In short, this

What is then constituted is, according to the powerful words of Saint Augustine, "The City of God".
, "The City of God".

This initial phase (313-511), which was sometimes confusing and tumultuous, was followed by a calmer period during which Western society reorganised itself on relatively stable foundations. While in the 5th century bishops remained the sole leaders of cities, even directing the general politics of their time, as did Saint Germain and Saint Rémy in Gaul, from Clovis onwards temporal power was re-established. The priestly and royal functions, sometimes confused during the previous theocratic phase, became distinct from one another, and the "primordial" state of Christianity in the 5th century, this state of relative indistinctness, gave way to a first differentiation: alongside the bishops, who held spiritual authority, kings, dukes and counts appeared, exercising strictly temporal functions, without any change to the general form of society, which remained rustic and peasant-based. The barbarian conquerors had settled in the countryside: "Under the domination of the invaders, who remained at the tribal stage, the tribal system was completely absorbed into the feudal and rural environment of the warrior clans. Later, the Merovingian princes abandoned the cities and continued to live in the midst of the vast rural estates that constituted their entire wealth. This was the case in the time of Saint Radegund, Queen of the Franks, and the custom still existed during the reign of Charlemagne."

This "barbaric" or rather "primitive" era was characterised by , despite the harsh customs of the Merovingian era, such tranquillity that, during the eighteen years of Queen Nanthilde's regency, widow of Dagobert, chroniclers report nothing: happy peoples have no history! But it is essentially in the spiritual realm that this period stands out brilliantly from those that followed:

"The 7th century, in which Saint Odile was to shine, was rightly called by Mabillon: 'Aureum vera saeculum', for it saw a large number of considerable foundations, monasteries

monasteries, saints, and learned and zealous bishops; the Franks helped their pontiffs and priests in this work of regeneration and salvation. France then became 'The eldest daughter of the Church and the soldier of God...'

... Everything was grand in this Golden Age: the examples and the enthusiastic imitators. Such as Saint Columbanus. Ascetic vocations, which for some time had been tending to settle in cities, close to protective police forces and nourishing alms, relearned, at the school of this saint, how to flee the world. Caves and cells sometimes kept a wide opening to the world, but the future belonged to the cenobites. These saints set out as conquerors through the unexplored solitudes of the forests. A brand new fragrance, a fragrance of Christian georgics, permeated the rule known as Tournant: Let the ploughman sing Alleluia as he drives his plough, let the sweaty bell ringer be stimulated by the singing of psalms; let the vine-grower, as he prunes his tender shoots, sing some song of David, let this be the shepherd's sifiet and the instrument that accompanies the farmer...

.. But it was society as a whole that, at that time, relied on the prayers of monks and invoked them: privileges for monks, generosity towards monks, because, according to an old saying, it was desired that they should be able to pray more fully for the situation of the Church and the salvation of the king and the country.

It should be added that this refers to Western Europe.

Western Europe, whose spiritual centre was then Ireland, the Island of Saints, from which science and holiness spread throughout Gaul and Germania. Irish eremitism, because it was at the height of monastic life and corresponded to a Golden Age atmosphere, was not destined to last beyond this period: in the following ages, it was the Benedictine monasteries that played the leading roles.

Eastern Christianity, on the other hand, not having suffered as much

hbé Joseph Walter, *Sainte Odile d'Alsace*.

While the West suffered barbarian devastation, the East retained its urban civilisation under the aegis of Byzantium, which, until Pepin the Short, fulfilled the role of imperial metropolis, even vis-à-vis the Frankish kingdom. It was during this period, under the reign of Justinian, that the Byzantine Empire reached its zenith, having been transformed into a theocratic state by almost total Christianisation. One might therefore be tempted, given the urban character of this civilisation, and even its splendour, to dispute its "primitive" nature, which characterises everything associated with the Golden Age; however, it should be remembered that the term "Golden Age" must be understood here in a relative sense. On the other hand, in the artistic field, and in relation to the Renaissance, Byzantine painters and their early Italian imitators have always been considered "primitive".

In any case, in the particular case of the Eastern Empire, the period from 313 to 714 truly deserved the title of the Golden Age, not only in the spiritual realm, with Saint John Chrysostom (the Golden Mouth), but perhaps even more so in the **arts**, with the construction of Hagia Sophia, that marvel of Byzantine Christian art.

The Silver Age

From the beginning of the second age, or Silver Age of the Christian millennium (714-1014), the Eastern Empire declined in favour of Islam, which had just established itself firmly in Asia Minor, Egypt, the Maghreb and as far as Spain, pushing back Byzantine civilisation everywhere.

In the West, however, Charles Martel's victory at Poitiers signalled the rapid rise of the Frankish kingdom, and in 800 Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the West in Rome. From then on, Western Christianity formed a new state, centred on the Frankish kingdom and completely independent of Byzantium. This break had the serious disadvantage

This led to the division of European Christianity in two, just at a time when the Muslim world was encroaching on Christian states on all sides. Once again, we can conclude that the transition from the Golden Age to the Silver Age corresponds to a "fall" that manifested itself primarily in the emergence of increasingly discordant dualisms. Here, dualism first appeared on the political level with the two empires of East and West: the Pope of Rome continued for a little over two centuries to maintain the unity of the Christian world, until the day when the Schism of the Orthodox Church definitively separated the Universal Church into two Christianities that were foreign to each other, if not sometimes hostile.

Leaving Byzantium to decline gradually under the blows of Islam, we will now focus our attention on the Roman Church, which from then on, and until the end of the Christian millennium, would play the leading role. Here, the figures who dominated this second age of the millennium were the first three Carolingians: Charles Martel, Pepin the Short, and Charlemagne. This fact clearly characterises the Silver Age, where "birth and kinship are taken into consideration". Charlemagne, in fact, descended from a family of bishops and saints, thus combining the prestige of his victories with that of his birth. On the other hand, this family of bishops and saints belonged to the priestly caste of the earlier Golden Age, and this "descent" from the priesthood to the royal caste remarkably illustrates the transition from the Golden Age to the Silver Age.

Another equally significant detail relates to the nickname of the victor over the Arabs at Poitiers, Charles "Martel". We know that, in Judeo-Christian esotericism, the second Age is represented by the chest and silver arms of the statue with feet of clay. Now, it is the arm that wields the battle axe or grasps the sword, thus symbolising the royal caste. The arrival on the scene of Charles Martel after his resounding victory at Poitiers therefore inaugurates not only the advent of the Carolingian dynasty, but also and above all the beginning of this Silver Age, which, moreover, will correspond roughly to the reign of the Ca-

Rolingians (here again, we see an application of the historical law whereby a change of era corresponds to a change of dynasty).

In Genesis, the "Fall" brings about the end of the paradisiacal period: in fact, these two events are inseparable. In the history of the Christian millennium, we find a reflection of this in the unrest that followed the creation of the Papal States by Pepin the Short: "No sooner had the Papacy added a kingdom with all that it entailed to its spiritual power than it became the object of countless covetous desires. Papal elections immediately became the cause of strife, discord and crime." At the end of the 9th century, popes lasting only a few months or even a few days succeeded one another. Factions, in which depraved women played a prominent role, fought over the papal seat. Alongside pontiffs of irreproachable morals, others were unworthy, and some popes were assassinated. In Gaul, the wealth of the Church at the advent of Charles Martel (714) also became the object of covetousness, and a veritable decline ensued, which Pepin the Short, with the help of St Boniface, was able to remedy for a time. But the decline resumed in the 10th century when bishops and abbots became official members of the feudal hierarchy; the resulting confusion between the spiritual and the temporal pushed spiritual concerns and the welfare of souls into the background: "Simony and depraved morals took hold in the Church and reigned there until the middle of the 11th century."

The emergence and hierarchical organisation of hereditary feudalism was, in fact, the most striking feature of the period, at least from Charlemagne onwards. As a result, the old rural society of Merovingian times, which was both flexible and crude, gradually changed; large estates were divided into fiefdoms, defended in these times of growing insecurity by wooden, then stone, keeps. Towns (or what remained of them) still played no other role than

Paul Lesourd, *op. cit.*

that of county or bishopric seats; the true centres of civilisation were elsewhere, in Benedictine monasteries, "true Augustinian model cities, which, under the aegis of religion, brought together within their walls culture and the arts, crafts and agriculture, trade and banking, lodging and hospitals, in short, all the elements of a cooperative Christian social order that was trying to emerge." The monasteries were at the origin of this intellectual renewal known as the "Carolingian Renaissance". This is perhaps the greatest honour to which Charlemagne can be credited, whose reign in a sense sums up this entire Silver Age, and even the entire Christian millennium. It was during this period that Alcuin replaced the ancient expression "imperium Romanorum" with the new formula "imperium christianum" in liturgical texts, because Charlemagne intended to found a Christian empire, not to resurrect the ancient Roman Empire.

The Bronze Age (1014–1214)

The Bronze Age began in 1014 with the highly symbolic gesture of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry II of Saxony, who handed over all the insignia of imperial power – the crown, sceptre, orb and mantle – to the abbot of Cluny. Western Christianity was then definitively organised according to the feudal system, with a clear differentiation between four distinct castes: clerics, nobles, bourgeois and serfs, originating from the ancient rural society of Merovingian times. This differentiation was now, and for more than seven centuries, a fait accompli. This also implies an event whose importance would be revealed in future ages: the urban renaissance and the emergence of the third caste, that of the bourgeoisie (or inhabitants of the towns), artisans, bankers and merchants.

¹ou is Lallemen t, *I.u Yoco/iria dz' ſj2r. 'r'id'aſ*

The advent of feudal society after the year 1000 can be viewed from two opposing, or if you will, complementary perspectives, like two sides of the same coin. The obverse is obviously the blossoming, the maturity of possibilities — not the highest but the most brilliant — or, if you will, the richest (in the material sense) — included in the cyclical unfolding of the Christian millennium. This is indeed the case, in a certain sense, if we consider the spiritual, moral and temporal "fruits" of an era that was particularly fruitful in three areas: the clergy (which could then boast of a Saint Bernard), chivalry (with the heroic and adventurous deeds of the Crusades), and guilds (which produced its finest masterpieces: the cathedrals).

But in another sense, we must not forget that if the Church is then rich and powerful, it thereby strays from the path of poverty and simplicity laid out by its Founder. Historians lament the disorder within the Church and the moral and spiritual decadence of part of the clergy, as well as the doctrinal heresies of the 10th and 11th centuries, which necessitated the reforms of Gregory VII for the secular clergy and of St Bernard for monastic life. It is precisely this aspect of decline or decadence in medieval Christianity during the Iron Age that will now be the focus of our attention. Here we encounter one of the most typical examples of what René Guénon called the "solidification" or "hardening" of society during the final phases of the cyclical descent. To understand this properly, it is best to compare the Merovingian Golden Age with the 11th and 12th centuries, which mark the height of feudalism.

During the Merovingian period, towns were miserable hamlets with narrow streets where hardly anyone lived except

¹ This heyday was well highlighted by Régine Pernoud in *Lumières du Moyen Age (Lights of the Middle Ages)* and Louis Lallement in *M Vocation de l'Occident (The Vocation of the West)*.

servants of the bishop and the workers who labour for the churches, towns played only a secondary role. Kings and leading Franks did not like to live there; they preferred to live in the countryside on their large estates or in villas. The master resided in the centre in a palace usually built of wood. Among the people, each Frankish family lived in a wooden house consisting of a single room. The weapons of the Frankish warriors included bows, spears, battle axes and daggers, with wooden shields for defence; only the wealthy wore armour and rode horses. Moreover, there were very few soldiers, and the bulk of the population consisted of peasants attached to the villas. The customs of the time were "barbaric" or, if you will, "primitive", and ignorance was widespread, but faith was strong. This was the era of queens: Saint Clotilde (a disciple of Saint Genevieve), Saint Radegonde and Saint Bathilde, and ministers Saint Eloi and Saint Léger. It was the time when the daughter of an Alsatian count, Saint Odile, founded the monastery of Hohenbourg. Previously, the hermit monks who were disciples of Saint Columbanus had already evangelised eastern Gaul, and we had seen, for example, the son of a noble family from Nevers, Déodat, found a monastery in the Vosges.

the hermitage of Val de Galilée (Saint-Dié).

Five hundred years later, in the 11th century, the towns are once again gaining importance; churches and cathedrals are being built, constructed from cut stone. Ramparts are springing up everywhere, as lords no longer live in wooden palaces but take shelter behind the thick walls of their fortified castles. Even the monks, who had long since abandoned the hermitic life of Saint Columbanus for the rule of Saint Benedict, built vast monasteries, some of which were veritable towns adorned with churches so rich that Saint Bernard had to preach a return to greater simplicity. War spread from castle to castle, and even the smallest estates were defended by heavily armed knights clad in iron.

Peasant life became increasingly precarious because every military campaign usually began with the plundering of livestock or the burning of crops and villages. This was indeed the Bronze Age, when men loved war so much that the Church had to channel this bellicose ardour by instigating the great military expeditions of the Crusades, and so much so that the most important religious orders of the time were military orders of monk-soldiers, the Knights Templar and the Teutonic Knights!

On the other hand, the third age, symbolised by the belly and thighs of bronze of the statue with feet of clay, this Bronze Age will also see wealth become a mark of superiority, from which we can conclude the growing importance of the bourgeoisie, that is to say, the urban caste of merchants and artisans. In fact, from the end of the 11th century onwards, the inhabitants of certain towns tried, through financial means or even by force, to free themselves from the yoke of the lords. The first revolts (in Cambrai in 1075 and Laon in 1106-112) were undoubtedly harshly suppressed (i.e. with the brutality characteristic of the Iron Age), but from the beginning of the 12th century, the Crusades, from which the feudal nobility emerged decimated and impoverished, benefited the bourgeoisie in two ways. Firstly, because the lords, in need of money, required the services of their serfs, and secondly, thanks to the vast commercial movement triggered by the expeditions to the East, which considerably enriched the urban merchant class.

The Iron Age

This renaissance of urban civilisation would gain even greater momentum during the subsequent Iron Age (1214-1314), which ended with the apotheosis of the reign of Saint Louis the Christian Millennium. The Iron Age: in a sense, therefore, a period of hardship or, if you will, of hardening, but also because the last age is identified with the

"Eleventh Hour", a period when scholars and saints will flourish
saints will flourish.

It is in this latter respect that history generally represents the 13th century, which was the century of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor of centuries to come, and Saint Louis, the model for princes and kings. However, if Louis IX's reputation for justice had such an impact on the people, it was undoubtedly because injustice, or rather the law of the strongest, was the general rule at the time. For the same reason, the Poverello's praise of poverty presupposes a time when material wealth threatened to stifle all spiritual life among the clergy. As for the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, in which we can admire the finest fruit of medieval universities at their peak, it must be considered, together with Dante's *Divine Comedy*, as the testament of the Middle Ages, and it is significant that the new theology, based on Aristotle's rational philosophy, came on the eve of the modern cycle to replace the old Augustinian doctrine, of Platonic origin, which had nourished the Christian millennium until its end.

This substitution of Aristotle's philosophy for Plato's metaphysics represents precisely one of the aspects, and indeed the most significant one, of the "solidification" of the world towards the end of its cyclical descent. Another example is provided by the writing, at that time, of the Book of Trades, which constituted the codification, and therefore the "fixation", of a social state that had until then been flexible and "fluid". But in this realm of the "solidification" of the world, it is military art and architecture that offer the most visible example, as they did during the previous Bronze Age, with the heavy armour of its knights, the thick walls of its fortresses, the ramparts of towns and fortified castles, and finally the construction of great cathedrals, those 'stone books' for the use of the people... and the clergy. This is perhaps the most significant example of the 'petrification' of a doctrine which, originally, did not trans-

stated that only through oral teaching or, if necessary, only, by the Epistles of Saint Paul.

As for the "hardening" of Christianity during this last Age, we must attribute to it this stain on the robe of the Church: the Inquisition (which dates precisely from this period) as well as this crime: the Albigensian Crusade. The role of the inquisitors is usually justified by the need to combat heresy, which means that "the charity of a certain number had grown cold" since violence now had to be used to combat error. Finally, from a social point of view, we know that the late Middle Ages marked, in one way or another, the advent of the popular caste. This came to pass in the 13th century with the arrival on the scene of the sedes, whom the kings freed in large numbers and who soon provoked riots, peasant revolts, and even the Pastouroux revolt, in which the people followed a Hungarian monk named Jacob, who claimed to be an envoy of the Blessed Virgin. This strange leader even entered Paris and preached at Saint-Eustache dressed as a bishop, but he had several priests and other clergymen killed. However, he was allowed to leave the capital unpunished with his bands, and they attacked towns and villages. In the end, Queen Blanche sent troops against these hordes of brigands, who were soon destroyed (1251). Order was completely restored with the return of the King in 1254, and the kingdom of France then enjoyed sixteen years of true Christian peace worthy of St. Augustine's City of God. But during this time, the holy King disciplined himself, fasted and did penance, so that this "Great Peace" in the midst of the turmoil of the medieval Iron Age (while Germany was suffering the anarchy of the Great Interregnum) this brief Golden Age was not a free gift from Heaven, and even less an anomaly in the unfolding of the Ages of the World, but the divine reward for a life of holiness.

The fact remains that this reign of justice and peace does not seem out of place in the midst of an "Iron Age", not

more than the gentleness of Saint Francis of Assisi, or the profound knowledge of Saint Albert the Great or Saint Thomas Aquinas. However, Hesiod's brief account resolves this apparent contradiction. In fact, in his myth of the races, the old Greek poet follows the third race, known as the Bronze Age, not immediately with the Iron Age, but first with a fourth race, "more just and braver, the divine race of heroes known as demigods...". The ancient heroes had perished, some beneath the walls of Thebes, others before Troy. "To others, finally, Zeus, son of Cronos and father of the gods, gave an existence and a dwelling far from men, establishing them at the ends of the earth. There they dwell, their hearts free from worry, on the Islands of the Blessed, on the edge of the deep whirlpools of the Ocean, fortunate heroes for whom the fertile soil yields three times a year a flourishing and sweet harvest."

This last sentence, reminiscent of certain descriptions of the Golden Age, allows us to consider the Age of Heroes as a reflection or summary of the previous Ages: the Golden Age (in relation to the blessed inhabitants of the Fortunate Islands, i.e. what remains of the Earthly Paradise), the Silver Age and the Bronze Age (for the heroes who fell in the War of Ttoie).

In the specific case of the Christian millennium, the Age of Heroes thus represents the reflection, or rather the recapitulation, of the Golden Ages of Saint Augustine, Saint Columbanus, and Saints Radegund and Odile; as well as the Silver Age with Oliver, Roland and Charlemagne, and the Bronze Age with Godfrey of Bouillon and Saint Bernard. Even from a classical historical perspective, this accurately defines the golden age of the

12th century when Francis of Assisi, Elizabeth of Hungary and Thomas Aquinas encapsulates all the holiness and learning of the Golden Age, while in Saint Louis, the valour and bravery of Charlemagne's knights are combined with the piety and deep faith of Saint Bernard.

Hesiod: *The Works and Days*, ed. Belles Lettres.

And only when this fourth race, the Heroes and Saints, has left this earth, will the fifth race appear, the race of Iron, which will bring the cycle to a close in treachery, vice and suffering: "No value will be attached to keeping one's word, to justice, to goodness; all respect will go to the perpetrator of crimes, to the man of excess; the only right will be force, and conscience will no longer exist. The coward will attack the brave with devious words, which he will back up with a false oath."

With regard to the Christian millennium that ended around 1314, the Iron Race seems to be identified with the reign of Philip the Fair, and the expression "architect of crimes" applies strictly to the sinister Nogaret, whom history blames for the attack on Boniface VIII at Anagni and the torture of the Knights Templar, not to mention the probable poisoning of Pope Benedict XI and Emperor Henry VII. The tortuous and cruel methods employed by the French king's minister, both to bring down the Papacy and to destroy the Temple, are particularly significant of an Iron Age. Until then, loyalty and righteousness had been the chivalrous ideal of feudal society. Thus, the Templar Rule stipulated that a Templar knight should never strike first, but only after being attacked three times, and likewise he should attack alone against all". This did not prevent Nogaret from attacking these heroes by surprise in the middle of the night, taking them captive before they could even defend themselves (1307); after which horrific torture forced the unfortunate men to confess to imaginary crimes. Then a mock trial allowed the King of France to rid himself of the Order of the Temple by fire and sword and to confiscate its property. In this whole sinister affair, violence had supplanted the law, and conscience had disappeared. Nogaret, Philip the Fair and other representatives of the cruel and deceitful iron race thus came, by burning alive the leaders of an Order that embodied the dual religious and chivalrous ideal of the Middle Ages, to "irrevocably ruin the essential framework of the

Holy Empire of Chivalry'. Michelet wrote that this was the most significant event of the Middle Ages.

This event, along with the attack on Anagni, had been prepared, since the reign of Saint Louis, by the revival of Roman law, which the lawyers, who had become the advisers of princes, used as inspiration to stand up to the Pope and thus make temporal power completely independent of spiritual authority. Such a deviation constituted nothing less than a renewal, on the human level, of Lucifer's revolt; and it is understandable that Saint John, speaking of this future event in the Apocalypse, announced that "Satan would then be loosed for a little while". In other words: the Christian Millennium was over, and the modern cycle was about to begin.

Conclusion

In summary, throughout the Christian cycle during which "Satan was to be bound for a thousand years" (from 313 to 1313-14), we saw Christianity emerge, grow, flourish and suddenly wither after the brief apotheosis of Saint Louis' reign (but the Tarpeian Rock is close to the Capitol!). In this sense, the evolution of Christianity appears to us as the development of a new, specifically Christian civilisation, from the ignorance of the so-called "barbarian" centuries to the flourishing of the 12th and 13th centuries. But if, from the point of view of civilisation, this development appears to be an ascent, on the other hand we have observed from a traditional, or more precisely spiritual, point of view that such an evolution actually follows the process of any cyclical descent: the succession of the four Ages, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron, which represent the successive stages of the transition from innocence or primitive simplicity to science (rational and

Lallement, *The Vocation of the West*.

dualistic) as well as the complexity of the End Times; or even the "subtlety" or "fluidity" of Eden compared to the rigidity of the Iron Age. Thus, the rustic hermitages of the Golden Age, where the disciples of Saint Columbanus lived in solitude, were later replaced by the rich and populous

Cluniac abbeys; Similarly, in the field of architecture, the old wooden villas scattered throughout the Merovingian countryside would "petrify" to become the powerful fortresses with thick walls of the reign of Philip Augustus, while increasingly numerous armies replaced the light wooden shields of the Frankish warriors with the heavy armour of the iron-clad knights. In the administrative sphere, this tendency towards "coagulation"

and "hardening" that characterises the end of a cycle would lead to the fossilised legalism that jurists exhumed from ancient Roman law (i.e. from a dead or fossilised civilisation); and we know that it was this legalism which, by increasingly stiffening relations between the Church and the State, caused the final break between the Papacy and the King of France at the beginning of the 14th century. Such is the picture presented to us by the Christian millennium, viewed from the traditional perspective of the four ages, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron — in which it is easy to recognise the four classic phases of the Movement of History. Thus, the first phase (identified with the Golden Age from 313 to 714) saw the priesthood play a leading role from Constantine to Charles Martel: sometimes, after the barbarian invasions, bishops even governed the city, waiting to influence or direct the course of politics of their time. Then, from the beginning of the Silver Age (714-1014), with the powerful figures of Charles Martel, Pepin the Short and, above all, Charlemagne, the noble caste entered the scene and organised itself to govern feudal society. Significantly, the Bishops and abbots of monasteries were themselves integrated into this hierarchy as feudal lords; in other words, the priesthood sometimes tended to merge with the nobility.

With the following Bronze Age (1014 to 1214), it was the third caste, that of merchants, which appeared timidly at first, then with increasing confidence as the bourgeoisie grew richer and the lords grew poorer. Finally, the fourth caste, that of the Serfs, began to make a name for itself during the last Age, or Iron Age (1214 to 1314), either by managing to free itself here and there, or by allowing itself to be led by a sinister adventurer into the bloody Revolt of the Shepherds.

It should also be added that the Movement of History not only led to the awakening of different castes and their respective and successive appearances on the stage of history; but that it also caused a gradual acceleration in the pace of social life since primitive times, when the Merovingian chariots of the so-called "Lazy Kings" travelled peacefully from villa to villa at the slow pace of their

to the turbulent 12th and 13th centuries. oxen, to the turbulent ^{12th} and
nturies, s o

bustling with activity in all areas: literature and science, crafts, architecture, great cavalry rides and brilliant tournaments, distant embassies, expeditions to the East, not to mention cathedrals that were demolished without hesitation forty years after their completion. The pace of life had accelerated so much since the uneventful years of Queen Nanthilde to the eventful reign of Saint Louis — or even more so since the contemplative life of the hermits of the Golden Age to the prodigious activity of the monk-builders of the 13th century.

However, whether it be the advent of lower castes or the acceleration of the pace of life, the action of the Movement of History will never exceed the limit beyond which evolution becomes subversion, and where the pace accelerates to the point of becoming diabolical. As a result, even during the last Millennium Age (1214 to 1314), the caste hierarchy was always respected. It could even be said that the secret of Louis IX's success lay in his respect for this hierarchy, both on his part and on the part of all his subjects. The holy King had such prestige that he would have

He could easily have freed himself from spiritual authority, but he had the wisdom not to do so. Forty years later, however, when Philip the Fair's revolt had definitively destroyed the prestige of the Papacy, ending the Millennium in a veritable atmosphere of subversion and thus heralding the advent of the Modern Cycle, this would no longer be the case.

THE MODERN CYCLE

OR

LAST DAYS

*The Modern Cycle, or the "End Times" (1310-2030)
and its "ternary" division*

As I said above, the Modern Cycle represents one of the most important meanings of the term: "End Times". Saint Vincent Ferrier (1300-1419) must have had an intuition or revelation about this, for he "preached on the Last Judgement with such eloquence that terrified souls immediately abandoned their sinful habits to devote themselves to the rigours of penance". It is true that at that time, when he preached thus on the Last Judgement, the "Iron Age" of the Iron Age had just begun: in France, with the unfortunate reign of the mad King Charles VI, and in Rome, under the pontificate of Urban VI (1378-1389), designated in the prophecy known as St. Malachy's Prophecy by the motto XLV: *De Inferno Praegnanti* (From Hell in Labour): "It was during his reign, in fact, three months after his election, that the Western Schism broke out. Hell seemed to be in labour."

But we must leave this Prophecy of the Popes, which we will return to later, and return to the Modern Cycle, which began ominously on 13 May 1310, amid the glow of the pyres erected at the Porte Saint-Antoine, and which is said to end in the apocalyptic conflagration of the Last Judgement.

According to René Guénon, the modern deviation finds its origin in the French king's revolt against spiritual authority.

In fact, events unfolded in two stages. First, the attack on Anagni (1303) definitively ruined the supremacy of the Papacy, thus bringing to a close the Christian millennium, whose unity, embodied spiritually by the Pope and temporally by the Emperor, resided essentially in the Christian faith. Then, the subsequent destruction of the Order of the Temple (1310-1312) brutally ushered in the modern era, during which the West, gradually followed by the rest of the world, would increasingly distance itself from its original tradition.

The above therefore allows us to define the modern cycle. (or the Last Days) as the third and final division of the Christic Cycle, which is to unfold from the end of the Christian Millennium until the "End of Time". But we can also define the Modern Cycle as the third and final phase of the current "Cosmic Year" of 2160 years, or Reign of Caesar (130 BC to 2030 AD), which we know is naturally divided into three successive periods of 720 years each, according to the table given above, which is worth repeating given its importance:

Ternary division of the 'Reign of Caesar' (130 BC to 2030 AD)
Phase I: 'Prophetic' (130 BC to 90 AD): Apostolic period.
Phase II: 'Priestly' (590 to 1310): Apogee of the Papacy.
Phase III: "Royal" or "Dictatorial" (1310 to 2030): The Reign of Quantity.

Finally, we can define the Modern Cycle (1310-2030) as the period of increasingly absolute predominance or hegemony of temporal power, regardless of the form in which power is exercised, whether monarchical, republican, fascist or dictatorial; whereas, on the contrary, the Christian Millennium (310-1310) was characterised by the predominance of spiritual authority. According to this perspective, the four Ages

Ternary division of the Modern Cycle

The Modern Cycle (or Last Times) therefore represents the third and final ternary division of the current Cosmic Year (2160 years), or Reign of Caesar, but this subdivision can be taken even further. In fact, given the law of analogy between the major cyclical periods and their secondary divisions, the Modern Cycle thus defined (1310-2030) can in turn be subdivided, first into three phases of equal duration, then into four Ages (or phases of the Movement of History) of decreasing duration, and even, correlative, into five secondary periods of 144 years each.

In this chapter, we will examine the case of the ternary division of the Modern Cycle. *A priori*, such a division seems consistent with historical data, since the exclusive predominance of temporal power was not established all at once and from the outset, but rather in successive stages. That said, it remains to be verified whether the chronology of the three "phases" into which the modern period is subdivided is consistent with the major turning points in history. Such a chronology will be easy to establish, since 720 is divisible by

in which the modern period is subdivided corresponds well with the major turning points in history. Such a chronology will be easy to establish, since 720 is divisible by 3:

720 — 3 240.

From this we can deduce the dates of the three "polar" phases of modern times:

From 1310 to 1550 – First phase: "Prophetic" or Primitive From 1550 to 1790 – Second phase: Priestly or Religious From 1790 to 2030 – Third phase: Royal or Temporal.

At first glance, this table already contains a striking date: 1790, that is, at the beginning of the French Revolution, a serious attempt to enslave the priesthood by temporal power, with the promulgation by the National Assembly of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in July 1790: The clergy had been deposed, partly so that it would be less powerful. There was reason to fear that it would become powerful again because it had been dispossessed... In order for the clergy to cease to be a political body, the Assembly wanted to place it under the control of civil power. To subordinate it to civil power, it laid its hands on the organisation of the Church.

Thus, by a new and truly extraordinary coincidence, it was precisely in 1790 that the National Assembly that emerged from the Revolution attacked the clergy with the aim of subjugating it to civil power. We know what followed: religious persecution, the Reign of Terror, the closure and desecration of churches, the cessation of worship, and even the seizure of the Pope, who was taken to France and died in Valence (1799). How can we fail to see in this last event a distant echo of Philip the Fair's revolt against Boniface VIII and his successors, just at the end of the period of papal hegemony?

Admittedly, Bonaparte put an end to the persecutions and restored order in France; however, the Concordat of 1801 transformed the

¹ Jacques Bninville, *History of France*.

The clergy became a body of civil servants paid by the state and required to swear an oath of allegiance to the government. The subjugation of the priesthood to civil power was now a fait accompli and definitively accepted. (The separation of church and state in 1903 did not improve the situation because it was accompanied by anti-clerical measures aimed at de-Christianising France, thereby weakening spiritual authority).

From all this, we can already conclude that the third, "polar" phase of the modern period began, at least in France, with an ultimately successful attempt to subjugate the clergy to the new government, so that here, the decline of the priesthood came in its own time, when the hour of its retirement had just struck on the clock of cosmic cycles (1790), thus inaugurating a new era that was to correspond in every respect to its definition as a cycle of Mahinga or the predominance of temporal power.

But was this also the case for the earlier "polar" phases? Let us first consider the first phase (1310-1550), governed — relatively speaking, of course, since these are minor cycles — by Brahâtmâ or the Prophet. We know that, compared to the phases that followed it, this one must appear as a primitive period of saints or initiates. As far as sainthood is concerned, there is some truth in this, for this era can still boast of very great saints, recognised as such during their lifetime, whereas in our time sainthood is generally honoured only at the tomb, after having been previously scorned and persecuted. Above all, it is in the middle of this "prophetic" or "inspired" cycle that divine intervention in the government of men will burst into the open during the mission of Joan of Arc. At that very moment, a very specific event took place that allows us to define the cycle 1310-1550 as that of the Bra-hâtma or, if you prefer, the "missionaries" of Heaven. This was the solemn handover by Charles VII of the kingdom of France to Joan of Arc and, through her, to the King of Heaven.

Heaven; after which Joan returned her kingdom to Charles, but as Lieutenant or Vassal of Christ... A significant ceremony if ever there was one, since it was an inspired woman, a woman on a mission, who thus legitimised the ruling dynasty, and not the priesthood.

Another observation about this period concerns its initiatory aspect. Indeed, the last authentic and well-known representatives of Christian esotericism all date from the 14th and 15th centuries. To name only the most illustrious and greatest among them: Dante Alighieri in Italy (member and perhaps leader of the Fede Santa), Meister Eckhart in Germany, then Ruysbtoeck the Admirable and Cardinal Nicolas de Cusa, and finally, during the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci and Rabelais.

While no significant events marked the transition from the first "polar" phase (1310-1550) to the second (1550-1790), the eclipse of esotericism will soon be a fait accompli, with the last known initiatory organisation, the Rosicrucians, believed to have disappeared for good following the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648. From the beginning of this period, dominated relatively by the priesthood, Catholic and Protestant theologians reigned supreme, and for a long time France and Europe were torn apart by quarrels.

Religious wars in France at the end of the 15th century
cle, Thirty Years' War in Germany (1618-1648) and War of the League of Augsburg after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685. However, after the death of the Sun King, the general mindset increasingly turned away from spiritual matters to focus on purely temporal, political, economic and social issues. By the end of Louis XV's reign, the decline of the priesthood had become apparent; philosophers were free to attack the Church, with no doctor standing up to refute their sophistry and no saint coming to lift the spirits of the downtrodden. The Ancien Régime was coming to an end, and a new era, focused primarily on the pursuit of material goods, would begin in 1790 with the spo-

the separation of the Church of France and its subjugation to the State. We have thus returned to this third and final "polar" phase (1790-2030), which began in 1790 with the auctioning off of the clergy's property and the subjugation of Catholic priests to the public authorities, and it is interesting to see whether we can still apply the previous ternary division to this last period of the modern cycle. *A priori*, this should be the case, not only by virtue of the law of analogy already invoked above, but also because the 240-year period can be naturally divided into three secondary phases of 80 years each. Under these conditions, the last "polar" period of 240 years (1790 to 2030) would be subdivided

in turn in three phases according to the following chronology:

from 1790 to 1870 - First phase, relatively "prophetic" from 1870 to 1950 - Second phase, relatively "sacerdotal" from 1950 to 2030 - Third phase, increasingly "dirigiste".

Does history confirm this theoretical chronology? In truth, we will only be able to answer this question fully in a few decades, when it will be possible to assess the actual direction of the third and final phase. In the meantime, we can already observe, on the one hand, the relative importance of esotericism during the first half of the 19th century, as well as the tendency of certain writers towards 'prophecy'. On the other hand, during the second phase, we see a repetition, in a new form, of previous religious struggles.

With regard to the influence of esotericism or initiation between 1790 and 1870, it suffices to mention the names of Joseph de Maistre and Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, Fabre d'Olivet and Novalis, to whom we might perhaps add Willermoz and the Duke of Brunswick. Above all, however, it should be remembered here that Romanticism derives at least in part from esotericism, which may explain the "prophetic" tendencies of Victor Hugo, as well as those of the many more or less inspired utopians of 1848.

In the second phase, and from the outset, esotericism faded into the background.

Western initiatory organisations abandoned metaphysical speculation in favour of political action. However, the Church still occupied centre stage. In Germany, for example, Bismarck, after declaring, "We will not go to Canossa," eventually gave in. In France, the state's incessant struggles against the Catholic Church lasted more than forty years and, at times, the presence of Protestants in the anti-clerical ranks proved that the Church was in the spotlight, at the forefront, otherwise no one would bother with it, either to secure its support (as did Franz Joseph, or later Salazar and Franco), or to fight and weaken it (as did the radical ministers in France and the National Socialist leaders in Germany). If a kind of appeasement has been emerging for about fifteen years, the causes may be found, on the one hand, in external events and, on the other, in popular indifference towards the Church, and not solely in a revival of religious faith.

For some time now, it has been the labour unions, supported by political parties, that have held the upper hand and sought to direct the life of the country; yet the goal of both is primarily economic and social, and therefore focused exclusively on temporal matters. If this orientation continues in the years to come, the third and final phase of the cycle (1950-2030) will deserve the epithet "totalitarian", in the sense that temporal power, increasingly powerful and invasive, will seek to govern all human activity, going so far as to claim to forbid the Spirit of "to blow where it wills".

Indeed, in the ternary division of a cycle, the third and final phase is governed by the Mahinga or Great King, who is said to be " , who directs the causes of future events". However, if we understand this traditional text in its most literal, material sense, then we arrive at the totalitarian diti-gism announced by James Burnham in his masterful study on the Revolution of the Managers.

*The Movement of History during the
Modern Cycle*

We have just seen how the 720-year Modern Cycle, inaugurated by the destruction of the Order of the Temple by Philip the Fair (1307-1314), obeyed, even in its secondary phases, the law of ternary division already pointed out by Father Victor Poucel in relation to the morphology of the human body. It is now necessary to examine whether the Movement of History also governs the evolution of modern society, which would imply a division into four Ages or phases of decreasing duration, like the numbers of the Pythagorean Tetrakys: 4, 3, 2 and 1, whose total is 10. At the same time, it would also be appropriate to study the quinary division into five ' ' or 'great years' of 144 years each, which goes hand in hand with the question of the 'Ages', as already noted above.

The chronology of the five "great years" of the 720-year Modern Cycle can easily be established as follows, starting from the theoretical date of 1310:

¹ R.P. Victor Poucel, *Plaidoyer pour le Cor pu.*

Tableau 1: les 3 'great years' of the Modern Cycle		
of 1310 à 1553	Première "grande year"	De 1310 à 1553
ne 1d.55 i 13gg	Second "grande ronde"	Information and Reform.
de 1598 à 1742	Troisième "grande ronde" : Empire russe	De 1598 à 1742
of 1742 à 1885	Or si réme 'grande year'	Period of hegemony
de 1886 à 2030	Cinquième "grande année": Période américaine et russe.	

Nous pouvons ensuite, à partir de la durée totale du Cycle Moderne, soit 720 ans, calculer la durée des quatre Ages ou phases du Mouvement de son Histoire. On obtient ainsi:

Durée de l'Age d'Or	$4 \times 72 = 288$ ans
Durée de l'Age d'Argent	$3 \times 72 = 216$ ans
Durée de l'Age d'Airain	$2 \times 72 = 144$ ans
Durée de l'Age de Fer	$1 \times 72 = 72$ ans
Durée totale du Cycle Moderne	$10 \times 72 = 720$ ans

D'où la chronologie suivante pour les quatre Ages du Cycle

Tableau 2: les 4 Ages du Cycle Moderne (1310-2030)	
de 1310 à 1598 - Age d'Or	- Bas Moyen Age et Renaissance.
de 1598 à 1814 - Age d'Argent	- Monarchie absolue et Révolutions.
de 1814 à 1958 - Age d'Airain	- Période capitaliste.
de 1958 à 2030 - Age de Fer	- Période populaire (?) ou technocratique.

A quick look at the tables above (Ages and Great Years) shows that the first two "great years" into which the Golden Age is divided correspond to two major divisions in classical history: 1) the Late Middle Ages and the Hundred Years' War (from Philip the Fair to the end of the Hundred Years' War and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1455); 2) the Renaissance and Reformation, until the promulgation of the Edict of Nantes, which restored peace in France and ushered in a new age.

Similarly, the end of the Silver Age coincided with the demise of the Ancien Régime and the establishment of a new order based on the power of money. From then on began the period of bourgeois dominance, a period which, in fact, is identified with the Bronze Age itself and will end at the same time as it. Finally, the coming Iron Age, which, according to the above chronology, is to begin around 1958, can undoubtedly be defined as a "popular" period or one of "working-class advancement". It follows from 13 that the above chronology of the Four Ages, i.e. the four phases of the Movement of History, corresponds well to the major divisions of History, which encourages us to continue our study further by examining each of the four successive Ages in detail.

Before that, a few words must be said about the "Great Years", or at least the last three, since the first two are part of the Golden Age and will therefore be studied together with it.

The third "Great Year", an anomaly, began with France's recovery after the Wars of Religion and ended with the decline of the French monarchy during the emergence of the Philosophers, corresponding in Europe to the period of French dominance. From the beginning of the fourth "Great Year", major events upset the European balance in favour of England (the first partition of Poland, the decline of Austria, and above all the Seven Years' War, from which the English colonial empire emerged considerably enlarged). Throughout

During the fourth "Great Year", Great Britain effectively led the way in the concert of nations, both in relation to Napoleon I, who would ultimately be defeated by Wellington at Waterloo, and Tsar Nicholas I, whose ambitions for Constantinople would be brought to an abrupt halt by the capture of Sevastopol.

As for the fifth and final "Great Year", it began with the emergence of Japan, Germany and the United States as major world powers, while Russia continued its advance, either directly in Manchuria or indirectly in the Balkans. The final result, after the fall of Japan and Germany in 1945, was the division of the world between the two great northern powers: the USA and the USSR.

That is about all that can be said about these last three periods of 144 years, whose boundaries are not marked by any clear break or truly significant event, so that one passes from one to the next through an imperceptible transition. In particular, we do not find here any reflection of the biblical "Flood", although the general corruption of the human race that preceded this cataclysm was repeated in the wave of materialism that swept across Europe at that time. We have to wait until the Great War of 1914-1918 to encounter this new destructive and purifying Flood.

That said, we will now undertake a study of the four phases of the Movement of History during the Modern Cycle, beginning with the Golden Age, but first it seems interesting to quote the following passage from Mr Jean Reyor, which seems to justify once again our definition of the Modern Cycle as the period during which "Satan is loosed for a little while", and which would begin under the pontificate of Clement V, the first Pope of Avignon:

... We know that Melancholia (by Dürer) features a star in its upper left corner that projects black rays; next to the star and within its rays is a sort of bald...

mouse whose body ends like that of a dragon or a snake, holds a banner bearing the inscription 'Me-lancolia'. This star is commonly referred to as the Black Sun of Melancholy..."

Now, if we refer to the prophecy "attributed to Joachim of Fiore and Bishop Anselm of Marsico..." and reproduced by Roger Duguet in *Autour de la Tiare*, we see the expression 'dark sun' (solem tenebrarum), specifically in the oracle attributed to Clement V: 'He will lose his brilliance under the dark sun'. It seems to us that this is more than a coincidence, and that the engraving by Dürer, friend and protégé of Maximilian I, who was called the 'White King', does indeed refer to Clement V. We might add that the 'dark sun' seems to have a close connection with the 'dark satellite' mentioned in Burgoyne's well-known astrological work, *The Light of Egypt*.

What does this mean, if not that the oracle attributed to Clement V, "He will lose his brilliance under the Dark Sun", can be linked to the prophecy in the Apocalypse: "And Satan will be loosed for a little while", since the "Dark Sun" is none other than a symbol of the Prince of this World?

The Golden Age of the Modern Key
(1310-1598)

The first age, or Golden Age of the Modern Cycle, is naturally subdivided, as already mentioned, into two "great years" of 144 years each, and it so happens that the transition from the first to the second "great year" coincides with one of the most important turning points in history, namely, in the East, the capture of Constantinople by the Turks and, in the West, the end of the Hundred Years' War, all in 1453, the classic date for the beginning of the Renaissance.

Under these conditions, the first "great year" from 1310 to 1453 would correspond, according to the usual classification, to the Late Middle Ages. However, it is easy to see that this period actually marks the transition between medieval Christianity and modern times, while the second "great year" (1453 to 1598) is purely and simply identified with the French Renaissance.

On the other hand, if we consider the course of the Modern Cycle, it quickly becomes apparent that, compared to the subsequent periods, the first age of the Modern Era truly deserves its title of Golden Age, not only because of the exceptional brilliance of intellectual, spiritual and secular thought, literature and the arts during the Italian Renaissance, but also because of...n <1' lit 9il|3rÜmtlit r€l.l il ivr <III Si'trdoc't, oñi |1hiilÔ(<lt' III i€liyidM; **voire même, dans une plus faible mesure d'ailleurs, de l'épo**

tJrlsmc. In other words, we can say that, compared to what happened later, the men of this relatively theocratic or priestly period still distinguished themselves from one another "by Knowledge".

The first "great year" of the modern Golden Age (1310-1453) is generally considered to belong to the Middle Ages, since, according to classical historians, the Middle Ages ended in 1453 with the Hundred Years' War. However, the same historians describe Philip the Fair as a "modern king", which is indeed very accurate. In fact, the revolt of this "modern king" against the papacy ruined the old sacred organisation of Christianity, and Europe was then set on an entirely new path, not by chance or accident, but because the mentality had profoundly changed in the sense of "a general conversion of attention from heaven to earth".

At the dawn of the 14th century, the Christian order, undermined in all its aspects by the resurgence of Roman legalism and the consequent advent of secularism, appeared "doomed to imminent ruin. The autonomy of politics with regard to theology had become an accepted principle, recognised even by the University of Paris... Under these conditions, medieval society could only survive, and its unstable organic balance was at the mercy of a crucial event that would cause its collapse: This event was the quarrel between Boniface VIII and Philip the Fair, which had been brewing for some time and erupted in the first year of the new century, in the aftermath of the great jubilee of 1300...".

It is therefore the entire period from 1300 to 1314 that constitutes the break, or rather the "twilight" transition between the ending Christian millennium and the future modern cycle. After 1314, Western society would still retain, for a time, its outward character of Christianity, but within this

¹ Louis Lallement, *Vocation of the West*.

society, the subordination of the clergy to civil power is already
a fait accompli; subsequently, and from age to age, the subversion
will gradually spread to all social classes.

In 1338, the constitution "Licet juris" regulated the devolution of the Empire among German princes, without legitimisation by the Pope; in other words, the imperial function became secularised and no longer fell under Rome's jurisdiction. Later, when Joan of Arc came to raise up a defeated France, it became clear during the trial in Rouen that the episcopate was now nothing more than a docile instrument in the hands of the great English leaders. No doubt we can deduce from this sad trial that religion still occupied a prominent place in society, without which this parody of ecclesiastical justice would have had no reason to exist; but on the other hand, Cauchon's servile eagerness towards the invader proves that the priesthood was now subject to temporal power. This new way of viewing relations between the Church and the State would also be reflected in France in the Pragmatic Sanction, or Concordat with the Gallican clergy, who were now under royal authority (except, of course, for matters concerning dogma itself). Finally, it was also during this same "great year" that the Great Western Schism temporarily divided Christendom into several opposing camps, thus preparing minds for the idea of a definitive schism.

But it is perhaps in the temporal realm that the character The transition period represented by this era is the most visible. At Crécy, Philip VI of Valois, at the head of his feudal army, fought once again like his ancestor Philip Augustus at Bouvines: as a result, the French knights, weighed down by their heavy armour, were massacred by English archers, and the massacre was repeated at Poitiers and Agincourt, to such an extent that feudalism was virtually wiped out. On the other hand, during the siege of Orléans, our first artillery captain, Joan of Arc, inaugurated the new tactics of modern warfare. Later still, Charles VII, by creating a permanent army equipped with an artillery corps, would bring the pre-

first blow to the old feudal organisation of Christendom. There is no doubt that, while Philip VI of Valois and John the Good can still be considered feudal overlords, Charles VII already rules as a modern head of state.

In a sense, the Hundred Years' War represents the struggle of English armies recruited from the people against the French knights, who would ultimately be massacred. but in another sense, which is complementary, it was, in the words of the King of France himself, the struggle of the French nobility against the English wool merchants, because the bourgeoisie in England already enjoyed a position equivalent, if not superior, to that of the old aristocracy. This explains "why the bitter struggle that, for a century, jeopardised the maintenance of the Most Christian King or the advent of the hegemony of the 'wool merchant', brought together under the respective banners of lilies and leopards constellations of alliances far more complex than national options. It was essentially a confused melee between the powers upholding the traditional order of the Middle Ages and the forces, already organised, seeking to promote a new era. It was a war that decimated the knights in their armour from the time of the Crusades, while the English deployed the first pieces of artillery.

"At that time, however, we were still closer to the reign of the sacred than that of gunpowder. The spiritual potential accumulated by France over nearly ten centuries... took shape, and it was the miracle of Joan of Arc that saved the crown of Clovis."

In truth, the Maid had not only saved the crown of France, but she had also accomplished another, even more important mission: the renewal of the ancient alliance of Reims between Christ and the King of France. Without this, the modern monarchy that would henceforth replace the ancient one...

Louis Lallement. *op. cit.*

The traditional monarchy of feudal origin would have been tempted to become completely autonomous, recognising "neither God nor master" above it. The Virgin of Lorraine, taking the lead, had taken care, while Charles was still only a Dauphin without a crown, to present him in a solemn investiture ceremony, officially recorded, as the "lieu tenant" of God, having received his kingdom "in commende" and not as personal property. This was a remarkable scene, one that we will see repeated in various forms at the beginning of the next two ages, because each new cycle, even if secondary, begins with a spiritual restoration, in a form adapted to the mentality of the time.

What we have just observed about the priesthood as temporal power, that is, the transitional nature of the period 1310-1453, can also be seen in the arts and letters, particularly in architecture. In other words, the traditional intellectuality of the Middle Ages gradually gave way to the modern mentality. Thus, the elite of the 14th century, Dante Alighieri, Meister Eckhart, and Ruysbroeck the Admirable, were still linked by their spirituality to the Christian millennium, while paving the way for modern literature, since both of these masters wrote in the vernacular: Dante in Italian, Meister Eckhart in German, and Ruysbroeck in Flemish. Dante's esotericism was then succeeded in Italy by the romantic literature of Petrarch and Boccaccio, followed by the political considerations of Machiavelli, which already heralded the purely modern era. In the artistic field, a similar evolution saw the "primitive", i.e. traditional, painting of Cimabue and Giotto gradually give way to the modern and sometimes sensual paintings of the Renaissance masters. in architecture, the Gothic style became increasingly flamboyant, before finally disappearing in favour of a new art form inspired by antiquity. It should be noted that this transition coincided precisely with the loss of the ancient rules of *bfi 1 ii*.

From the beginning of the Renaissance, churches ceased to be ritually oriented.

Such was the first half of the modern Golden Age, still illuminated by the "Lights of the Middle Ages": Dante's *Divine Comedy* or the *Sermons* of Meister Eckhart; still capable of rising to the call of a child sent from heaven, or obeying the wise counsel of Saint Catherine of Siena, but already so distracted by the pleasures of this world that, in the aftermath of the Coronation of Reims, Charles VII abandoned Joan of Arc to immerse himself in a whirlwind of parties and pleasures, thus foreshadowing what was to come at the beginning of the Renaissance.

The second "Great Year" of the Modern Cycle, because it spans from 1453 to approximately 1598, coincides in fact with the entire historical period known as the Renaissance, but in truth, we know that the Italian Renaissance began much earlier, in the mid-14th century, so that we could call the Italian Renaissance the first "great year" (1310-1453) and the French Renaissance the following one, that is to say, the second part of the modern Golden Age, which is therefore ultimately identified with the overall cycle of the Renaissance.

But what exactly is the Renaissance? Or rather, what was it that was reborn in the 14th century? Historians are unanimous in their answer: what reappeared were the letters, arts and sciences of classical antiquity, spanning from the age of Pericles to that of Augustus. Not, strictly speaking, Platonic metaphysics, which a thousand years earlier had already inspired St Augustine, nor Aristotle's philosophy, so intelligently assimilated by St Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica*, nor certainly the spirit of the ancient world; quite the contrary, since the intellectual movement triggered by the Renaissance was directed against medieval scholasticism derived from Plato and Aristotle. What was reborn from Antiquity was therefore only the "dead letter", that is to say, the external and purely

profane (rational, aesthetic or literary) sciences, literature and arts. Basically, at least as far as modern science is concerned, it is a question of picking up where Archimedes left off in Greek scientific thought, in order to move forward until research directed towards increasingly utilitarian and materialistic ends has been completely exhausted. In the arts (with Titian) and in literature (with Ronsard), the imitation of Antiquity led to sensualism and, without the presence of prestigious artists or writers of genius still partially inspired by medieval knowledge (such as Leonardo da Vinci and Rabelais), the Renaissance would have been nothing more than the beginning of a profound decline. To be convinced of this, one need only compare Guillaume de Lorris's Rose in *Le Roman de la Rose* with that of Ronsard's famous ode, "Mignonne allons voir si la rose..." For the Renaissance poet, the rose, once a symbol of divine love, is now nothing more than the sensual image of a human idyll.

This was not always the case, however, because the esoteric knowledge bequeathed by the Middle Ages did not disappear overnight. On the contrary, it seems that this knowledge continued for quite some time, until the beginning of the sixteenth century, to inspire many artists and scholars. We have already mentioned Leonardo da Vinci and Rabelais; we must also add Albert Dürer, author of the famous "Melancolia"; and the protector of this artist, the "White King" Maximilian; as well as certain scholars such as Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola (late 15th century). We should also note here the persistence of knightly initiation, as evidenced by the account of the Battle of Marignan (1515), where we see Francis I being knighted by Bayard, from which we can conclude, on the one hand, that Bayard was considered a high-ranking initiate and, all in all, the last representative of medieval chivalry, as well as the last hero of the Quest for the Grail, while on the other hand, Francis I appears to us not as a light-hearted and frivolous spirit, but rather as

the most recent of the initiated kings, worthy protector of a Leonardo Leonardo da Vinci and Rabelais.

It was also under Francis I that the schism of the Reformation began, and here it is important to note that the modern Golden Age was already well advanced and in decline. At the beginning of this age, in fact, the Church had already undergone a serious crisis with the Great Western Schism, but it had still been able to overcome the danger. However, the reform of the Church, which had been a pressing issue for several centuries, had once again been postponed, so that, with the help of humanism and the intellectual emancipation movement it had triggered, Luther's revolt suddenly took on an unpredictable scale. It remains to be seen whether it really contributed to "reforming" Western Christianity, which was certainly in great need of it. However, nothing is less certain since, to begin with, the new religion brought with it a whole series of troubles, revolts and civil wars, such that people came to regret the old days: "In the past, people rose up against prelates who were as greedy as they were rich, and canons who were as fat as they were simoniacial, but now they claim that it is a great blessing that God has deigned to have the Holy Word preached by scoundrels and impious men." No doubt the reformers had been carried far beyond their original intentions, but they had nevertheless hoped that their actions would bring great benefits. However, "they experienced bitter disappointments, which they admitted.

Things were indeed getting worse and worse. One of the reformers complained that there was no longer any faith or charity among the Evangelicals, adding that the Reformation was limited to baptising in German, eating rich food, allowing priests to marry and rejecting traditional customs. Another lamented that, given the state of the Evangelicals, it was no longer clear whether they were Christians, Mamluks or pagans. All this led, in France, to the Wars of Re-

Paul Vulliaud in *Cahiers d'Klermès*, no. 2.

• *Ibid.*

religion that shook and ruined our country towards the end of this latter period. It is precisely this last feature that constitutes, in a way, the hallmark of this modern Golden Age, during which religion still remains at the forefront of human concerns, to such an extent that the quarrels of theologians eventually degenerate into bloody civil wars.

After this examination of the two "great years" of equal duration, into which the first Age of the Modern Era is divided, it seems interesting to investigate whether, by virtue of the Movement of History, the whole of this Age (1310-1598) might in turn be divided into four phases of decreasing duration and therefore respectively equal to: $288/10 = 28.8$ years, or approximately 29 years for the fourth phase, then $28.8 \times 2 = 57.6$, or approximately 58 years for the third phase ; then $28.8 \times 3 = 86.4$, or approximately 86 years for the second phase; and finally: $28.8 \times 4 = 115.2$, or approximately 115 years for the first phase.

From approximately 1310 to 1425 - First phase - Primitive and feudal.

From approximately 1425 to 1511 - Second phase - The Renaissance.

From approximately 1511 to 1569 - Third phase - The Reformation.

From approximately 1569 to 1598 - Fourth phase - Wars of Religion.

We can thus deduce the above chronology for the four phases of the Movement of History during the Modern Golden Age: the first phase, relatively primitive " compared to what would happen later, ended with the "shameful Treaty of Troyes", and Eve's sin at the end of the first Age of humanity became that of Isabeau of Bavaria, who surrendered France to the King of England. This is how her contemporaries judged her when Joan of Arc appeared, the

The Virgin of Lorraine, who came to repair the damage caused by Queen Isabeau, just as the Virgin Mary had come to repair Eve's sin. This first phase could still be called "feudal". In fact, the last of the feudal battles, Agincourt (1415), took place at the end of this period, and this disaster, which led to the Treaty of Troyes, is generally considered to mark the end of medieval feudalism.

The second phase (1425 to 1511) began with the renovation of the small army of the future Charles VII by our first artillery captain, Joan of Arc. This renovated and modernised army defeated the English at Orléans and Patay, and we can already conclude that the era of feudal wars was over. Charles VII and then Louis XI continued the work of modernising the army (which was equipped with an artillery corps) and the state (with the very modern aim of administrative centralisation). As a result, the monarchy became predominant, which precisely characterises the second phase of the Movement of History, when the clergy itself came under royal authority (Pragmatic Sanction placing the Gallican clergy under the authority of the King). Also noteworthy at this time was the height of the Italian Renaissance and the beginning of the French Renaissance, i.e. a prodigious flourishing of literature and, above all, the arts.

The third phase (1511-1569), which reflects the Bronze Age of ancient authors, corresponds to the explosion of the Reformation and its spread throughout Europe, with all its accompanying turmoil and revolts. Moreover, this was the period when Protestant theologians lifted the ban on lending at interest: this event was, in a sense, the birth of modern capitalism, which came at the right time, since the third phase of the Movement of History implies a period in which money must play a predominant role. Finally, let us add one last curious remark: in Hindu tradition, the third Age is described as follows:

"During this Age, men of the (higher) castes love glory and magnificent customs; they delight in the study

of the Vedas (the Sacred Scriptures); they are opulent and joyful heads of families; the royal caste and the priesthood are always at their head...".

In truth, this seems to have been written especially for the reign of Francis I, the King of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, whose reign began in 1515, just at the beginning of the third phase of the modern Golden Age.

As for the fourth and final phase (1569–1598), it began in France with the St Bartholomew's Day massacre and thus encompasses the darkest period of the Wars of Religion, until peace was restored with the signing of the Edict of Nantes in 1598. It is truly remarkable to note here the extent to which the history of France accurately reflects the succession of Ages and secondary phases of the Modern Cycle, since the serious French crisis of the Wars of Religion coincides precisely with the end, i.e. the Iron Age, of the first Age of Modern Times, whereas in Germany, for example, the Thirty Years' War took place fifty years later. We must therefore conclude that, due to France's central position in Europe, the Modern Cycle can be defined as the French Cycle. The same observation also applies to the second Age, or modern Silver Age, which we will now examine. There is even more to it than that: it is easy to see that the first Age of Modern Times encompasses the entire reign of the Valois, to such an extent that it could be called the Age of the Valois. In the end, the dynasty was threatened by civil war, and its last representative, Henry III, was assassinated in 1689. The same fate awaited the next dynasty, the Bourbons, who reigned gloriously for nearly two centuries until the French Revolution (the last phase of the Silver Age), and whose last king from the direct line, Louis XVI, perished on the scaffold. Strange coincidences or the laws of history?

The Silver Age of Modern Times
(1198 to 1814)

Part One: From Henry IV to Louis XVI

What is striking in the overall panorama of this second age of the Modern Cycle is, first of all, the leading role that the monarchy, that is to say, the royal caste, played until the fall of Louis XVI in 1792... and even beyond. The second salient feature of this period, and perhaps the most remarkable, is the acceleration and power of the Movement of History throughout this Age. This irresistible movement would ultimately trigger the formidable revolutionary tidal wave of 1789 and sweep away the society of the Ancien Régime like straw.

During the earlier age, religion was still the main concern for most people; thus, in Germany, the communist revolution of the Anabaptists of Münster was religious rather than social in origin, and the same was true of the Wars of Religion in France at the end of the 16th century. This was not the case during the subsequent Silver Age, when political issues came to the fore, to such an extent that cardinals such as Richelieu and Mazarin did not hesitate, during the Thirty Years' War, to ally themselves with Protestant princes against the Catholic Empire. A

In truth, most German princes had not waited until then to subjugate religion to politics, hence the rapid success of the Protestant schism during the 16th century; but it was not until the 17th century that such a mentality could be considered characteristic of the era.

In this regard, the circumstances that led to the pacification of spirits in France are particularly significant: in effect, unable to find in religion the centre and bond of national life, this role was necessarily entrusted to the hereditary monarchy. In other words, from the Edict of Nantes (1598) onwards, i.e. from the beginning of the Silver Age, the French, now divided by religious differences, would be united only by their common obedience to the King, whose role would thus become predominant. The French monarchy, the supreme embodiment of the state, would soon reach its zenith with the particularly brilliant reign of Louis XIV, whose nickname "Sun King" designates him as the central figure of the modern Silver Age.

The same is true in neighbouring kingdoms with regard to the predominant role of the monarch, and as a brilliant court of ladies and lords gravitates around the prince, ultimately it is the entire court nobility that, in Western society, takes centre stage to play the leading roles. We are therefore in an era where men are distinguished from one another "by birth and kinship". This is indeed what we see in the literature of the century of Louis XIV, where there is hardly any mention of the lower classes (except for the roles of comic servants), while we discover a bourgeoisie that is very keen to imitate the nobility (e.g. *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*). Furthermore, and by a strange coincidence, the brilliant reign of Louis XIV remarkably illustrated, from its very beginning, the famous verses of Corneille:

* Skif en /ng1eterre.

I am young, it is true, but for noble souls, valour does not depend on the number of years.

Thus, at the age of twenty-two, the young Prince of Condé won one of the most brilliant victories in our national history at Rocroi (1645). Eighteen years later, the young King Louis XIV firmly took the reins of the state (1661), demonstrating from day one the authority and nobility of a "well-born soul".

The prestige of birth during the modern Silver Age also explains why high-ranking clergymen were almost always chosen from among the nobility. Very few commoners, such as Bossuet, rose to the rank of bishop: in 1789, out of 18 archbishops and 108 bishops, only a few names without a particle were recorded. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie sought ennoblement, which shows how highly hereditary nobility was held in esteem.

The clergy's dependence on the monarchy also explains the emergence of Gallicanism, which was particularly active under Louis XIV and lasted exactly as long as the Ancien Régime. The Gallican Church, in fact, as it depended on the King of France, was bound to disappear with him, and the new Church that emerged from the Concordat of 1802 would be entirely new in character.

The decline of the clergy and the predominance of the nobility, as well as the ruins caused by the Wars of Religion, had a serious consequence during the modern Silver Age: the emergence of atheism. At first, this was atheism in practice rather than doctrine, and it preceded the future nationalist and materialist philosophies by a long way. The first literary work of this kind was none other than Molière's famous *Tartuffe*. Under Louis XIV, it would have been quite dangerous to play the strong-minded intellectual;

These are (excluding Corsica) Mgr Diilàu, Archbishop of Arles; Mgr Ame-lot, Bishop of Vannes; Mgr Dagay, in Perpignan; Mgr Desportes, in Glandèves; and Mgr Desnos, in Verdun.

Even unbelievers did not hesitate to disguise themselves as devotees, but as soon as the great King breathed his last and the Regent took power, the masks came off and it became clear how numerous the libertines already were; the days when an entire people shared the same faith were over. Saint Vincent de Paul had already found the countryside dechristianised, and later, the Venerable Grignon de Montfort would usher in the era of the Missions in the West. Then came the Revolution, and soon, throughout France, churches were closed or desecrated, the clergy persecuted and massacred, and Christianity replaced for a time by the Cult of Reason.

Returning to the strictly political aspect of the modern Silver Age, we know that this period of history coincides almost entirely with the reign of the Bourbons, whose successive dates are as follows:

Henry IV	(1589-1610)
Louis XIII	- (1610-1643)
Louis XIV	(1643-1715)
Louis XV	- (1715-1774)
Louis XVI	- (1774-1792-93)
Louis XVII	- (1793-1795-1804) '

We can already see here that this dynasty reigned, in direct line, from 1598 to 1795 or 1804, depending on whether we stop at the official date of Louis XVII's death (in 1791) or count until Napoleon I's coronation by the Pope in 1804. in the first case, the reign lasted 206 years, and in the second case, 215 years, which is almost exactly the theoretical duration of the Silver Age (here, $5 \times 72 = 216$ years).

Curious observation: Louis XVI I (who did not reign) was succeeded by the two brothers of Louis XVI; in other words, the Bourbon dynasty ended **with the successive reigns of three brothers**. However, the same had **already been** true of the direct Capetians (with the three sons of Philip the Fair) and, later, of the Valois, whose last three representatives were three brothers.

That said, let us return to the chronological table above. At first glance, we can already see a certain symmetry, since the first three reigns correspond to an "ascent" that reached its peak under Louis XIV roughly halfway through the entire cycle, while the last three reigns correspond to a decline that ended in 1792 with the fall of the monarchy.

It is indisputable, in fact, that the power of the monarchy, which started from scratch at the accession of Henry IV, when the League occupied Paris, continued to grow during the first three reigns and until the end of the 17th century, only to decline under Louis XV and Louis XVI, until it vanished completely with the imprisonment of the Dauphin Louis XVII. But why this rise and why this decline? The obvious answer is that the qualities or faults of successive monarchs had something to do with it. Thus, the founder of the dynasty, who had to take over a kingdom in the midst of rebellion, pacify it, and then strengthen his power, by chance possessed all the qualities that make a great king, qualities that were only partially found in his successors and eventually disappeared completely in Louis XVI, who would undoubtedly have made an excellent locksmith but was no longer a true king. Henry IV, on the other hand, after establishing himself as a war leader (the first quality required of a king), proved to be an excellent administrator, capable of maintaining order and ensuring justice, while also guaranteeing general prosperity. His successor, Louis XIII, was also a war leader, albeit less brilliant, but he entrusted the administration of the kingdom to all-powerful ministers. Louis XIV, in turn, took over the administration, but left the command of the royal armies to his generals. Louis XV, on the other hand, was neither an administrator nor a warlord, and finally Louis XVI, through his indecision and weakness (and therefore his inability to reign), ultimately brought about the collapse of the monarchy. In short, it was as if the lifeblood

springtime that bubbled in the veins of Vert-Galant gradually calmed down, after producing the superb flowers and magnificent fruits of Louis XIV's reign, diminishing under Louis XV, the effeminate king, in the autumn of the monarchy, and finally drying up during its winter, with the heavy and slow Louis XVI and his brothers Louis XVIII and Charles X. Thus, with the succession of the four seasons of the Bourbon dynasty, we find a quaternary division analogous to that of the four seasons of the year, and this reminds us of another, which we will now turn to: that of the four progressively decreasing phases of the Movement of History.

Applied to the Silver Age, this division would result in the following four phases which, as we have seen previously, represent either the four stages of society's cyclical decline throughout the period under consideration or, correlative, the successive appearances of each of the four traditional castes. Taking into account the calculations already presented above, we can thus attribute to the fourth and final phase of the modern Silver Age:

$216/10 = 21.6$ years, or approximately 22 years (4th phase); then 21.6

$\times 2 = 43.2$, or approximately 43 years
(for the third phase);

$21.6 \times 3 = 64.8$, or approximately 65 years (for the
second phase);

and $21.6 \times 4 = 86.4$, or approximately 86 years (for
the first phase).

Total... 216 years for the Silver Age.

We can deduce the following chronology for the four successive phases of the Movement of History during the Silver Age:

From 1598	to 1683 - 8J	approxima - First phase tely
From 1683-85 to 1748 - 50	approximately	- Second phase
From 1748-50 to 1792 -	approxima -	Third phase tely
From 1792	to 1814 -	approxim - Fourth phase ately

(The last phase is further subdivided into two distinct periods: the First Republic from 1792 to 1804 and the First Empire from 1804 to 1814).

A first glance at this table shows that the dates listed mark the major turning points in history throughout the two centuries of the modern Silver Age.

Thus, the year 1685, with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (which dated from 1598, i.e. the beginning of the first phase), marked a new direction in French and European politics, as well as the advent of a new literary generation. Then 1748-50 corresponds, on the one hand, to the reversal of alliances and, on the other, to the arrival on the scene of the "Philosophers", notably Rousseau. Finally, 1792 saw the fall of the monarchy and the first attempt at republican government in France, while 1814 saw the fall of the Empire followed by the First Restoration.

As regards the first phase (1598-1685), there is no doubt that it encompasses the Golden Age of the Bourbons, with the glorious reigns of Henry IV and Louis XIII, as well as the most brilliant period of the Sun King's reign, whose decline began immediately after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. In the literary field in particular, if

The entire Silver Age (1398 to 1814) coincides exactly with the classical period, and it can be said that the first phase (1598 to 1681) represents the most brilliant period of classicism. First, let us mention Pascal, Descartes and Corneille, who simultaneously renewed religious thought and the form of tragedy, thus paving the way for the heyday of our literature with the emergence of the school of 1660 with Boileau, Jean Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, La Bruyère and Bossuet. As for the spirit that inspired this entire period, which has been defined as a temporary union of rationalism and religion, it was first expressed by Corneille in an art form characterised by willpower and heroism, typical of an eminently "noble" era. Then, with Boileau, we witnessed the triumph of moderation and reason, while in philosophy, theology and sacred eloquence, this Christian rationalism, successor to medieval scholasticism, was illustrated by Descartes and Bossuet.

We have already pointed out that the date 1685 missed an important turning point in political and literary history, and we might add religious history as well. We can also see that this date corresponds to the beginning of Louis XIV's period of decline. Once he presented himself as the champion of the Roman Catholic Church against Protestantism, the King of France was forced to remain on the defensive, just as, shortly afterwards, following the death of the Eagle of Meaux in 1704 and due to a lack of great doctors or writers capable of taking the offensive, the Church was forced to confine itself to a state of continual and humiliating passivity. Could it be that the growth, heyday and decline of empires, as well as the emergence of great men, and even more so the direction of their thoughts and actions, are governed by the cyclical law of the Movement of History?

This would in any case explain the decline and then the irremediable decadence of classical poetry, including tragedy, during the 18th century, because these literary genres, intended to express vast thoughts or noble sentiments, cannot, without falling into profound decline, lower themselves to the level

of a coldly utilitarian rationalism based on the morality of self-interest, which succeeded the religious rationalism of the previous century. However, while poetry declined, prose flourished, whether in the service of science, with Buffon, satire, with Voltaire and Montesquieu, or the novel, with Le Sage.

To conclude this brief study of the second phase of the modern Silver Age, we must now identify the "central" figure of this period (1685-1750), that is, the person who best embodies or represents it. The chronological midpoint of this period corresponds to around 1718, during the reign of the Regent Philippe d'Orléans, who in fact fits the above definition perfectly. The Regent was renowned for his bravery in war, his generosity, his courtesy, his keen intelligence and his eagerness for novelty. Unfortunately, "he had all the talents," said his mother, "except that of making good use of them." He was particularly criticised for his carelessness, laziness and debauchery. In fact, his government enabled the state to restore its catastrophic financial situation and France to recover from the exhausting wars at the end of Louis XIV's reign. Be that as it may, Philippe d'Orléans must be recognised as the most representative figure of an eminently aristocratic era (it was the time of the "War of Lace" and courtesy in battle), an era that some would later regret when the bourgeoisie supplanted the nobility.

Part Two: Decline of the Bouchons and the Revolution of 1789

The future advent of the bourgeoisie, which was to be the work of the Revolution, was prepared by the movement of minds,

and perhaps even more so by the enrichment of the bourgeoisie during the third phase of the modern Silver Age, from around 1750 to 1792, which would prelude the final fall of the Ancien Régime. At the beginning of this third phase, not only had Jean-Jacques Rousseau just published his first *Discourse*, Montesquieu had published *The Spirit of Laws*, and Diderot had published his *Letter on the Blind*, but, more seriously, according to the Marquis d'Argenson, "an extraordinary antipathy arose between the king and his people, especially the people of Paris". This sudden antipathy is generally attributed to the king's faults: excessive spending, favouritism, etc., but one does not need to have studied history for long to realise that virtuous kings are not necessarily more popular than others (e.g. Louis XVI). Would it not be much more accurate to say that the time had come when "greed, instability, pride, imposture, envy", i.e. the vices characteristic of the third Age or Age of Bronze, which were already reflected in the history of this third phase of the Bourbon reign. But as we are still in the Modern Silver Age, the vices specific to the following Bronze Age cannot yet be displayed in the open and their action will only be exercised in an internal, hidden and underhand manner. The *Encyclopédie*, published by Diderot from 1752 onwards, was intended to serve this purpose and did so effectively. We know that on the surface this publication presented itself as "a general overview of the efforts of the human mind in all genres and throughout the centuries", but in reality its true purpose was revolutionary; as soon as it appeared, the work was accused of teaching "rebellion against God and royal authority". However, in addition to philosophical articles, the *Encyclopaedia* also contained a wealth of technical information on the arts and sciences of the time.

See *Les Quatre Ages de l'Homme*, p. 10.

This last trait is characteristic of a utilitarian or "bourgeois" mentality and, consequently, of this third phase, whose most representative figure seems to be the bourgeois Voltaire. Voltaire considered himself a demolitionist, so that all the leaders of the intellectual movement of that period (1750-1792) can be compared to him, that is to say, those philosophers comfortably installed in a society that nourished and pampered them, to those Caribbean termites skilfully lodged in the framework of a house, methodically gnawing away at the inside of the wooden beams until the building that sheltered and fattened them collapsed completely.

Another particularly characteristic feature of this era (or "sub-age" of bronze) lies in the growing role that finance and financiers, i.e. "anonymous and vagabond" wealth, would henceforth play in the modern world. Already under Louis XIV, we had seen tax farmers amass large fortunes, but without being able to escape their mediocre social status. It was from the Regency onwards, and especially with the frenzied speculation caused by the Law system, that the situation changed, partly because a number of ruined grandes formed alliances with the nouveau riche, and partly because the latter, generally descended from the old bourgeoisie, knew how to put their wealth to good use by protecting writers and artists. At least, that is what was observed in this verse from a comedy performed in 1754:

*Full of pride and steeped in arrogance
J0dtS tin financier knew only how to count.
He counts no less today, husband, he thinks. He would not have
dared to show himself in the world;
Now, with Lvi, we have fun and form alliances.*

At the same time as their social status was thus rising,

¹Quoted by J.V. Roustant, *Les Philosophe's 'de la societe /raiitaiie au XVf JJ'*
century.

Financial figures saw their political influence grow rapidly in France, and they were entrusted with the management of finances on several occasions, before Necker rose to the key position of Prime Minister.

In other words, in the hierarchy of social classes, money was in the process of supplanting birth, giving rise to a new mentality that would translate into the philosophical realm in the form of political and social theories based on interest and, in the economic realm, in the form of the studies of the Physiocrats. This also explains the enthusiasm with which England was viewed at the time: it was, in effect, the only kingdom where the upper middle class, thanks to the parliamentary system that suited it so well, reigned supreme, and this was enough to inspire the dreams of Montesquieu and Voltaire.

In the religious sphere, the effects of an increasingly atheistic rationalism were being felt harshly. The Jesuit order was violently attacked and finally dissolved. Curiously, its grave mistake was to have allowed one of its members to mix finance and religion, leading to a bank failure of which the overly trusting Carotte was the unfortunate victim. The Church, deeply affected by this painful incident, defended itself rather poorly against the virulent attacks of its enemies, which explains—and paved the way for—the religious persecutions of the Revolution. In 1789, in effect, the brilliant minds formed by the Age of Enlightenment considered religion to be an outdated superstition whose imminent disappearance should be hastened.

Such was the picture of French society towards the end of the third phase of the Silver Age, an aristocratic society with magnificent habits of luxury and pleasure, where the normal caste hierarchy was still respected, but a decadent world that would suddenly collapse as soon as, under the pressure of the Movement of History, the very harsh Iron Age came onto the scene.

In 1759, the Ancien Régime collapsed and, for ten years, the populace believed itself to be the master of destiny.

national celebrations. From then on, the fourth and final phase of the modern Silver Age (the dissolution phase, mirroring the Iron Age) could begin. In fact, it began in 1792 with the overthrow of the monarchy, the declaration of war on Europe, and also, sadly, with the horrific massacres of September, which suddenly brought to light all the darkness of the last Age, as predicted by the poet Ovid: "Now all crimes come to light in this century of baser metal; modesty, truth, and good faith flee; in their place reign cunning, artifice, treachery, violence, and the guilty thirst for possession..."

The same grim description appears in Hindu tradition:

"During this period, men are greedy, disorderly, ruthless, gratuitously hostile, miserable, insatiable, the Shudras (serfs) and sinners occupy the foremost rank... When deception, lies, inertia, slumber, malice, consternation, grief, turmoil, fear and sadness reign, this is called the Dark Age, which is (exclusively) dark..."

exclusively) dark...

The countryside is ravaged by bandits, the Holy Scriptures corrupted by heretics, the people cheated by their leaders...

Trade will be in the hands of miserable merchants, professional liars...

In the Dark Age, wealth will advantageously replace nobility of birth, virtue and merit among men; law and order will be determined by force...

Only outward signs will distinguish between social classes and allow people to move from one to another; if one is poor, one's rights will be powerless; verbiage will take the place of knowledge..."

* *The Four Ages of Humanity*, ch. VI. These traditional teachings are summarised — and realised — in Fouquier-Tinville's response to a question posed by Saint-Just (during a meeting held at Robespierre's house at midnight on 21 September 1792 to discuss the fate of Louis XVI):

— Saint-Just: "Tell me, Fouquier, are we brigands?"

- Fouquier: Words have changed their meaning. '*gens*' is now synonymous with 'traitors', and '*canailles*' means 'virtuous citizens'. (*Les Apres-Dîners de Cambacérès*

That said, we will now see to what extent the history of the Revolution confirms this description of the darkest periods in history.

In any case, one initial observation is already clear: this grim picture is remarkably consistent with the one painted by the Marquis de Sade of the society of his time as he saw it. The Marquis de Sade, who is regarded as the true theorist of the Revolution and its most typical representative, played a decisive role from the very beginning of the revolutionary unrest.

It was he who, a few days before the storming of the Bastille, incited the mob by shouting for death through a special kind of bugle: ... the drainpipe of the latrines! Next, let us mention the strange panic known as the Great Fear, which swept like a hurricane through the French countryside in the day after the storming of the Bastille.

After that, we come to the Massacres of September 1792, when all the vices that had suddenly been unleashed were given free rein: "The number of victims of the days of September 1792 is estimated at 10,000. The murderers officially received a salary of 24 francs. This long and bloody massacre had turned these murderers into veritable wild beasts; it was no longer enough for them to kill; only satanic cruelty could satisfy them... At the Saint-Firmin seminary, priests were thrown alive from the windows onto a row of pikes and bayonets that awaited them as they fell. Women finished them off and dragged them into the gutters of the street...". Here is how the mass murderers, who were acting at the instigation of leading Jacobins such as Chasles and Marat, were described at the Convention: "War to the death on the tigers. These men were human only in appearance, and their hearts were made of iron. Speed up the return of order by judging the most guilty, the execrable murderers of 2 September, the scoundrels who led..."

According to Caron, *Les Confesseurs de la foi*. The perpetrators of the massacres were prosecuted from 1795 onwards, and some were sentenced to death.

A crowd of defendants from Orléans coldly returned to Versailles to drink their fill of blood until they were sated... (*Moniteur*, 16 Ventôse - 6 March 1795).

After the massacres, religious persecution continued for a long time and at times took on the appearance of a masquerade. In Lyon, for example, sans-culottes followed a donkey dressed as a bishop, singing revolutionary refrains. In churches that had not been razed to the ground, theatrical performances replaced Catholic ceremonies. Women, picked up in the streets, were placed on improvised altars where they represented Reason. To counter the moral dissolution of society, the Convention decided that divorce would take place by mutual consent of the spouses, with the result that in Paris the number of divorces soon rose to a third of the number of marriages contracted in the same period. Anarchy spread throughout the country, which was also falling under the control of speculators: "By 1794, the upper echelons of society had been taken over by the crudest upstarts, the nouveau riche, lucky adventurers, unscrupulous financiers and courtesans, who in Paris constituted the most adulterated 'society' imaginable... Among the thousands of young people — boys and girls — who had grown up during the turmoil, there was not only ignorance of the basic rules of grammar, but even greater ignorance of the rules of politeness and even honesty. The most shameful vices were on display, and the police constantly reported the debauchery that had spread from the "upper classes" to the common people.

Such was the situation when Bonaparte returned from Egypt, and we know how quickly the First Consul succeeded in raising France from its ruins, endowing it in record time with an entirely new and yet very well thought-out administration and legislation, since its broad outlines still remain in place today. However, France had given itself an extremely tyrannical ruler who, while he definitively restored

Louis Madelin, *Napoleon*.

Total peace could only return to eBet with the dawn of the next Age, since minor cycles obey the great cyclical law of the restoration of all things at the beginning of each new era in world history. However, the new era was not to begin until 1814-1815, with the Restoration and the subsequent return of peace to Europe.

In fact, the Napoleonic period appears more as a transition phase between the ending Silver Age and the future Bronze Age, whose dawn is already beginning to break. To use the terms of Hindu tradition, we could say that if the Revolution represents the final twilight of the Silver Age, the Empire in turn appears as the dawn heralding the imminent Iron Age. In this sense, the period 1800-1814 of the Consulate and the Empire can be viewed from two opposing perspectives: first, as the final phase of the Silver Age, what Hesiod called the "Iron Race" with all the sinister connotations that such symbolism can entail; secondly, as the era of the conception and establishment of the new regime that would govern the future Bronze Age, which would finally come into being after the fall of Napoleon.

The sinister aspect of this period was violently stigmatised by Chateaubriand in his pamphlet *De Bonaparte et les Bourbons*: "What do we owe to your reign*? Who murdered the Duke of Enghien, tortured Pichegru, banished Moreau, chained the Sovereign Pontiff, kidnapped the princes of Spain, and started an unholy war? It was you. Who lost our colonies, destroyed our trade, opened America to the English, corrupted our morals, took children from their fathers, devastated families, ravaged the world, burned more than a thousand leagues of country, and inspired horror of the French name throughout the world? It was you. Who exposed France to plague, invasion, dismemberment, conquest? It was you again."

A writer's diatribe, one might say. Perhaps. While Napoléon's genius is undeniable, his contempt for mankind and his boundless ambition are even less so, for it was he who said: "Men made for business and authority know nothing of people; they see only things, their weight and their consequences." And again: "Men are like numbers, they have value only by their position." These words are particularly significant because they define and characterise the mentality of the tyrants of the Dark Ages, whom we would today call totalitarian dictators. For Napoleon was the first and, moreover, the model for the "Duce" and the "Führer".

To conclude this brief study of the Napoleonic era, it remains to show how the institutions specific to the Iron Age appeared during this period — but this will be developed in the next chapter. For now, we will conclude *this* overview of the course of history during the modern Silver Age with the following quote from one of the men who best understood the unfolding events at the time, Talleyrand. It summarises in a few notes the entire process of the "cyclical decline" that enabled the bourgeoisie to finally supplant the aristocracy, or wealth to take precedence over birth and kinship.

"After Cardinal Richelieu's ministry and under Louis X IV, only one title of pre-eminence remained: birth.

But since nobility had long been granted through venal offices, even birth could be supplemented with money, which reduced it to the level of wealth. The nobles themselves further debased it by marrying the daughters of wealthy upstarts rather than poor girls of noble blood. Nobility could not fall.

¹ It must be acknowledged, however, that Chateaubriand was very harsh on Napoleon; Cambacerès painted a more humane portrait of the Emperor.

below the level of wealth without being debased by poverty; and among the noble families, the majority were either relatively or absolutely poor. Debased by poverty, they were further debased by wealth when they had been sacrificed to it through misalliances...

Equality had, so to speak, come to the fore among the plebeian class... Once equality between the two classes had been established by new customs and in public opinion, it was bound to prevail as soon as the opportunity arose...".

The Bronze Age of the Modern Cycle (1814-1958)
(or Bourgeois Age, or Capitalist Age)

I° - *Origin of the Age Cupit«list*

According to Talleyrand's earlier observation, we know that on the eve of the Revolution, equality between the aristocracy by birth and the wealthy bourgeoisie was already a fait accompli; therefore, all the anachronistic institutions of the Ancien Régime, based on the now obsolete prestige of hereditary nobility, were bound to collapse sooner or later — and this was the eminently destructive work of the Revolution (from 1789 to 1800). What remained then was to design and establish institutions based on the pre-eminence of wealth. This was the work, essentially constructive this time, of the Consulate; this historical period therefore truly constitutes the transition between the two successive ages, if not perhaps even the dawn of the current Age of Iron, which will be above all the era of the bourgeoisie and capitalism, just as the Age of Silver had been that of the nobility.

Since it was the Consulate that conceived and prepared the organisation of bourgeois society, it is necessary to go back first to the very origins of the Consulate, that is, to the clandestine preparation of the Brumaire coup d'état:

"Bonaparte had just won the victory at Aboukir (25

July 1799), when he received a visit from an emissary tasked to deliver a disturbing and secret message to the general.

This message, from a Greek named Bourbaki, informed Bonaparte that Parisian financiers, threatened by the Directory with a capital tax, had resolved to overthrow the government. But they needed the support of the military. They had thought of Bonaparte, who was recommended by Le Couteulx de Couteleu and Perrégaux, bankers with whom the general had become acquainted in Paris. Two million francs had been raised for this purpose.

Bonaparte hardly hesitated. On 22 August 1799 at nine o'clock in the evening, without even informing Kléber, Bonaparte abandoned Egypt.

As a result, "the coup d'état appeared in its immediate aftermath to be both Bonaparte's and the bankers'. Bonaparte conferred power upon himself. Perrégaux and Le Couteulx were appointed senators and founded a new bank with the support of the First Consul." Such was the origin of the Banque de France and, consequently, of the capitalist regime as it was to function in France for approximately 144 years (coincidentally, just the duration of the modern Bronze Age or bourgeois age), until the recent nationalisation of the Banque de France and the major credit institutions — a measure that obviously ushered in another regime.

Thus, at the origin of the bourgeois regime that would govern French society throughout the modern Iron Age, we find a military man and bankers, as was to be expected in an era of history dominated by a "warrior and ferocious race", knowing no other supremacy than that of wealth, and guided, consequently, above all, by the morality of self-interest.

The morality of self-interest would, in effect, be the law of the regime.

A. Rolling, *Le roman de la finance*, ch. IV: Banque de France et coups d'Etat. **It should be noted that Cambacérès's *Après Aîniers* give another version** – this time political – of the coup d'état. However, the two versions are complementary, as the politicians needed money to carry out their plan.

established by Bonaparte, just as the moral code of duty had inspired the two centuries of the Silver Age or the previous aristocratic era. Bonaparte himself, speaking of the nobility of the Ancien Régime, said: "Only these people know how to serve." This transition from the morality of duty to that of interest was stigmatised and noted by Chateaubriand in a passage that is worth quoting.

"The Ministry has invented a new morality, the morality of interests: that of duties is left to fools.

Now this morality of interests, which they want to make the basis of our government, has corrupted the people more in the space of three years than the entire Revolution did in a quarter of a century...

Bonaparte saw in the royalist the natural enemy of those democratic dogmas which, through a stupid misinterpretation, we favour today; for the royalist represents a force, a moral force, the irrefutable proof of the power of duty...

Duty, always the same, makes the governments it supports participate in the permanence of its principle: variable and diverse interests can only be the shifting foundation of a structure that lasts a few days.

Chateaubriand was greatly mistaken in predicting a return to the morality of duty. If the government of the Duke of Richelieu had emphasised the morality of interests, it was undoubtedly because it was impossible to do otherwise, given the state of society and the mentality that had prevailed since the Consulate: since wealth was now considered the criterion of pre-eminence, the acquisition of wealth had to take precedence over everything else, hence the emergence of the morality of interests. This was later confirmed cynically by Guizot when he uttered the famous words: "Enrich yourselves".

Under the influence of the Movement of History, the morality of

Speeches of 3 November 1818,

morals had gradually deteriorated during the 18th century, as Chateaubriand had to admit in these terms: "So the 18th century was a destructive century, for we were all seduced. We mocked religion, we distorted politics, we strayed into sinful novelties of speech..." Similarly, we will see the morality of interests gradually deteriorate during the capitalist era, so that it can still, like the previous aristocratic era, be subdivided into four phases or "sub-ages", respectively analogous to the four ages of the entire modern cycle. Under these conditions, and taking into account the cyclical law that governs the proportions of the different ages and still applies to the subdivisions of the minor cycles, we can calculate as follows, first the duration and then the chronology of the four successive phases of the Bronze Age or capitalist era:

The duration of the Bronze Age being a total of 144 years, we can deduce for the last phase:

144, 10, 14.4 years, or approximately 14 years.

Then $14.4 \times 2 = 28.8$ years, or approximately 29 years for the third phase.

Then $14.4 \times 3 = 43.2$ years, or approximately 43 years for the second phase.

and $14.4 \times 4 = 57.6$ years, or approximately 58 years for the first phase.

Hence the following chronology:

From 1814 to 1870-71 - First phase:
monarchical.

From 1870-71 to 1914 - Second phase:
Third Republic (heyday).

From 1914 to 1944 - Third phase:
Second Republic (end).

From 1944 to 1958 - Fourth phase: Fourth
Republic.

Here again, as with the chronology of previous ages, we can see how perfectly the dates proposed by the doctrine of the Movement of History coincide with the major turning points of contemporary history: 1814, 1870-71, 1914, 1944 and 1958. Is this mere coincidence? Certainly not, but rather a consequence of the cyclical laws that govern the Movement of History. Here is striking proof of this, which we discovered in the *Apprè-dîners de Carnabacérès*, and which provides concrete *justification* for the date of 1814 chosen for the beginning of the bourgeois age:

“... The Champ de Mai... opened in June (18 U); the ceremony took place at the Champ de Mars, and it was magnificent; even those who had previously mocked it were moved. The Emperor, still obsessed with the idea that he represented the people, spoke in these terms:

Gentlemen, the electors of the departmental and district colleges,

Gentlemen, deputies of the army and navy at the Champ de Mars,

Emperor, consul, soldier, I have always said: in prosperity, in adversity, on the battlefield, in council, on the throne, in exile, France has been the sole and constant object of my thoughts and actions.

Like that king of Athens, I sacrificed myself to die for my people...

The rest of the speech, which was not particularly noteworthy, focused on the reasons for the meeting and the efforts that would be required to defeat the enemies. No one listened to it; everyone was much more interested in seeing Lucien, who appeared dressed in white velvet embroidered with gold, like his brothers. Napoleon was

in purple velvet: these costumes, almost the only ones of their kind, contrasted with the modern style of the others and were laughed at; all in all, it was recognised that day that restoring the empire would be impossible; one year had been enough to set it back three centuries; even the emperor himself was struck by this truth.

From then on, he thought only of surrendering to the army... Finally, on 11 June, believing he had made all the necessary arrangements, he left Paris... On the 24th, he was back in Paris, having lost the Battle of Waterloo... Conducted like a deportee to the shores of the ocean, Napoleon did not attempt to flee; he preferred to surrender himself to the mercy of England, boarded the *Northumberland*, and his political role was over.

The following passage from this quotation is of particular interest to us: "There was great curiosity to see Lucian, who appeared dressed entirely in white velvet embroidered with gold, like his brothers; Napoleon was dressed in purple velvet: these costumes, almost the only ones of their kind, contrasted with the modern style of the others, and people laughed at them; all in all, it was recognised that day that *restarting the empire would be impossible; one year had been enough to set it back three centuries, and* the emperor himself was struck by this truth."

We have read correctly: *one year had supour reject it back three centuries*". This means that the year 1814 had caused such a change in people's minds that a year later the empire seemed, to contemporaries, to have been rejected back three centuries. From this we can conclude that the third age of modern times, the bourgeois or capitalist age, began in 1814 and not in 1789, as one might be tempted to believe. Moreover, if we look at the imperial period (1804-1814) with sufficient hindsight, what strikes us is that Napoleon wanted to revive the splendour of the monarchy for the benefit of the new dynasty he intended to found; in this sense, the First Empire

¹ Gomte de Lamothe-Langon, *Lrs A pros-Diners de Cambacîres*, ch. XX, Le Chaoip de Mai.

should be considered the last gasp of the Old Régime.

Another point concerns the disasters of 1814 to 1815, when France lost all the conquests of the Revolution and the Empire, ultimately ending up smaller than it had been in 1789: this was something that had already happened at the end of the Wars of Religion, when France was partially occupied by Spanish armies; and it would happen again during the transition from the bourgeois age to the democratic (or popular) age, when France lost almost all of the vast colonial empire of the Third Republic. The metaphysical reason for all this is that every change of state takes place in the night, or consists of a "death" followed by a "rebirth". In some cases, it is total nakedness that symbolises this transition (for example, Saint Francis of Assisi inaugurating his religious life by undressing completely in front of the bishop and all the people). Similarly, like a newborn child when it comes into the world, France had to "undress" each time, to pass through the "narrow gate" leading to each new age of its history almost naked.

2") - *First phase of capitalist Age (1814-1870)*

This first phase (1814-1870), which must be rejected as the original Golden Age, encompasses the Restoration (1830-1848) and the Second Empire (1852-1870), i.e., coincidentally, the monarchical period of the Bronze Age; with one exception: the Second Republic (1848-1852), which proves the rule since, barely born, the said republic committed suicide by entrusting power to Prince-President Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, who hastened, as was to be expected, to restore the monarchy for his own benefit. The hour of the Republic would later strike on the clock of history, at the beginning

of the second phase of the capitalist era; but we are not there yet.

That this period (1814-1870) may appear to be a relative golden age, at least in comparison with subsequent periods, should come as no surprise, because France enjoyed a fairly long period of peace at that time. Moreover, during the Second Empire, there was economic prosperity, which our grandparents remembered very vividly.

For them, the war of 1870 marked the end of a relatively happy era and the beginning of a harsh world where life became difficult.

What is particularly noteworthy is that the beginning of this first phase brought about, as befits the dawn of a new age in history, a genuine 'restoration' that was not only political (with the return of the monarchy), but also moral and religious, literary and scientific, artistic, industrial and commercial (this had already been the case at the beginning of the previous Silver Age, which began with the Edict of Nantes, the pacification of France and the subsequent recovery of the country; there too, the new Age began with a general "restoration").

The restoration of French society following the Revolution had struck Chateaubriand deeply, who, in December 1814, noted with joy:

"Why not say it frankly? 2 Certainly we lost a great deal in the Revolution, but did we gain nothing? Are twenty years of victories nothing? Are so many heroic deeds and acts of generous devotion nothing? There are still among us eyes that weep at the story of a noble deed, hearts that beat faster at the name of the fatherland.

If the masses have become corrupt, as always happens in civil strife, it is also true to say that in high society society, morals are purer, domestic virtues more common; the French character has gained in strength and gravity. It is certain that we are less frivolous, more

natural, simpler; that everyone is more themselves, less like their neighbours. Our young people, raised in camps or in solitude, have something masculine or original about them that they did not have before. Religion, for those who practise it, is no longer a matter of habit, but the result of strong conviction; morality, when it has survived in people's hearts, is no longer the fruit of domestic instruction, but the teaching of enlightened reason. Great interests have occupied people's minds; the whole world has passed before us. It is one thing to defend one's life, to see thrones fall and rise, or to have as one's only entertainment a court intrigue, a walk in the Bois de Boulogne, or a literary novel. We may not want to admit it, but deep down, do we not feel that the French are more human than they were thirty or forty years ago? In other respects, why hide the fact that the exact sciences, agriculture and manufacturing have made immense progress? Let us not ignore the changes that may be to our advantage; we have paid dearly for them.

The first of these welcome changes was the religious renaissance that followed the Concordat of 1802 and made it possible to halt in time the de-Christianisation process initiated by the Revolution. In the intellectual sphere,

Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme* contributed greatly to this spiritual renewal, which had seemed impossible twenty years earlier, when Dupuis was preparing his monumental anti-Christian work on the Origins of *All Cults*, and when, in the salons, the intellectual elite vied with each other in their scepticism and speculated on how many days Catholicism had left to live.

Alongside this religious revival, after 1814 there was a magnificent explosion of Romanticism, of which Chateaubriand was one of the main architects. Finally, we know that the great expansion of modern science and the dawn of large-scale industry date from this period, and we could

¹ *Political Reflections*, December 1814. •

add that the four phases of the Age of Bronze marked the four stages of technological development in an increasingly utilitarian and quantitative, even colossal, sense.

From a political point of view, the Restoration, with its parliamentary system so favourable to the bourgeoisie, brought peace and freedom that the French had not known since 1789. It should be noted here that the census system only allowed the wealthy to vote: it could not be more clearly recognised that men were now distinguished from one another only by their wealth.

However, this official pre-eminence of money shocked minds nourished by the egalitarian theories of the Revolution, so much so that little by little, the census was first lowered and finally abolished. In short, the movement of history, whose incessant action prevents any situation from stabilising, was already making itself felt during the Bronze Age. As a result, philosophical and political ideas gradually evolved, as can be seen by reading the successive works of Victor Hugo, who was initially an ardent defender of the throne and the altar until 1830, and then clearly oriented towards republican ideology, and increasingly haunted by the idea of "Progress". In the political sphere itself, this evolution, or rather this action of the Movement of History, resulted in the succession of three different forms of monarchy, each more modern than the last: first the legitimate monarchy of Louis XVIII and Charles X (1814-1830), who had played the traditional hereditary game of accession to the throne, then the bourgeois monarchy of the "usurper" Louis Philippe, acclaimed by the Assembly (1830-1848), and finally the plebiscitary regime of Napoleon III (1848-52 to 1870).

At the same time, we see the growth of Catholic liberalism of Lamennais, the socialism of Proudhon and the collectivism of Karl Marx. Thus, just as a century earlier we had seen a theorist such as Montesquieu

preparing the ground for the bourgeoisie to take centre stage, so too, from 1848 onwards, certain doctrinaires began working towards the future advent of the fourth caste, which would later be called the "proletariat".

In the philosophical and religious spheres, the "downward" movement of minds is perhaps even more visible, since authors of traditional inspiration such as Chateaubriand, Pabre d'Olivet and Joseph de Maistre (early 19th century) were succeeded in the middle of the century by the positivist Auguste Comte and, a little later, the sceptical Renan. The success of the highly agnostic "Vie de Jésus" (1863) speaks volumes about the decline of Catholicism at the end of this first phase of the bourgeois era.

Another characteristic feature of this period in history (1814-1870) was the heyday of the Com-pagnonnage, vividly described by Agricol Perdiguier and his friend George Sand. This working-class aristocracy (formerly affiliated with the military orders of the Middle Ages, whose motto was Duty) declined after 1870, giving way to labour unions, where class hatred replaced the sense of duty.

On another note, other notable achievements of this capitalist era include the digging of the Suez Canal and the construction of the French railway network, both under Napoleon III, at a time when department stores were springing up. All these developments were made possible by a highly prosperous bourgeoisie, thanks to flourishing trade and booming industry.

But this should not obscure the flip side of this heyday of the bourgeoisie: the harsh "iron law" whose main victims were the poor factory workers, this ferocious iron law that prompted Victor Hugo to cry out in indignation:

Where are all these children going, not one of whom is laughing?

ðº - Second phase of the Capitalist Era (1870-1914)

In the Bible, Adam's rebellion and "Fall" bring the first phase of our humanity to an end and herald the coming of the following ages. A priori, we must detect, in the course of a minor cycle such as the Age of the Bourgeoisie, the reflection of this "Fall". A fall that will be followed by a recovery, since every new cyclical period begins with regeneration and restoration. Then we will see the Movement of History at work again, in the sense of a shift to the left, or, relatively, a progressive corruption of society until the final catastrophe heralding a new phase of History. After that, it will remain to take stock of the second phase of the bourgeois era in order to determine what role the caste of merchants, bankers and industrialists actually played in it, and whether it ultimately emerged enlarged or exhausted.

As for the aspect of "decline", there is no doubt that it can be found in the crucial — and bloody — years of 1870-71, which marked the end of the first phase of the capitalist era. The Terrible Year, in fact, saw a series of serious events unfold in the space of a few months that would determine the fate of France and the West for a long time to come. The War of 1870-71, it can be said, launched Europe down the slippery slope of the arms race and wars of revenge, as well as religious and racial hatreds that ultimately led to the spiritual and material ruin of the old continent.

That said, let us now recall the sequence of events:

On 19 July 1870, the imperial government, falling into the trap of the false Ems dispatch, declared war on Prussia. This war was the work of Bismarck, and the German victory would be his triumph. The Iron Chancellor thus brought the first phase of the capitalist era to a close with iron and fire, and by a strange coincidence, the work of this great Prussian lord has been described as "Luciferian". "Luciferian" implies an idea of proud rebellion.

and a desire for power and domination, for the benefit of a nation ruled by its military caste, a nation for which war had been the "national industry" for over a century.

The war quickly turned into a disaster and, on 2 September 1870, Napoleon III surrendered at Sedan while Bazaine was trapped in Metz. On 4 September, in Paris, the crowd stormed the Legislative Assembly and proclaimed the Republic. This revolt by a minority without a mandate against the legitimate authority (the Empire had been approved by a large majority in a plebiscite a few months earlier, and six months later, despite their presence in power, the Republicans would only obtain 200 seats out of 300) was particularly serious in that it amounted to "changing pilots in the middle of a storm". The results were disastrous: disorganisation of the government, paralysis of the defence, capitulation of Metz, and the very harsh terms of the Treaty of Frankfurt. Then, in order to remain in power, the Republican minority began a party struggle, waiting for favourable circumstances to allow it to launch the formidable anti-clerical struggle that would divide France into two opposing camps, thus wasting national energy in a sterile and futile struggle. Finally, as one revolt leads to another, in 1871 the Paris Commune rebelled in turn against the provisional government.

In Italy, the fall of Napoleon III led to the withdrawal of the French garrison from Rome and, as a result, the capture of the capital of the Church by the King of Italy. Italian unity was achieved and... France would have one more enemy in Europe (as would become apparent later, in June 1940). Once the Eternal City was occupied and the King of Italy installed in the Quirinal Palace, Pius IX shut himself away in the Vatican, where he and his successors would consider themselves prisoners until the Lateran Treaty of 1929. A highly symbolic fact: in that "terrible" year of 1870, not only was France invaded and its legitimate government overthrown, but...

For many years, the Pope remained a prisoner in his city of Rome.

Nicinpiiy, a fni.s homeland this bloody crisis but 6rève, ïs F rsnqe• put To recover quickly and here again, as after 1 B1 4- 1.5 mu aii the day after the Ffif de Nantes in 1598, the new regime will begin with a true "Restoration" mmm and political, economic and social, at the same time as a new philosophical and literary orientation. This follows, in fact, the programme proposed by Thiers to the National Assembly in February 1871: "Pacify, reorganise, rejevg r le rrerl it , ra nimer le trav riil ", was quickly achieved, so quickly that Ilis Marek was alarmed. This was because we were at the dawn of a new phase in history, and we know that every phase begins with hard work and reorganisation. In the political arena, this would be Ann lème nt, after a brief period of restoration m,o-p_rchiste, the parliamentary republic of 1875, which suited the bourgeoisie, then all-powerful. But it was the political and economic situation that made it possible for a visible change to take place, and it was this that led France to recover more quickly than expected.

gueit'e e ipéle p>a i B'is, marc!,h and the norm of Ond re mio ral dioinné 9ti gore veteiemien i de l' ë!pynque , ne'm qu. im pif ig na11 u ne voiloonté bien affirmée de rénovation morale. La défaite avait en effet vivement secoué le sentiment national; et chacun reconnaissait la nécessité de rejeter le scepticisme brouillon des derniers jours de l'Empire pour revenir à une conception plus virile, plus sérieuse, de l'existence. Un monument nous est demeuré comme le témoin de ce nouvel élan de foi dans les destinées de la patrie, de ce renouveau spirituel aussi intense... qu'éphémère, le Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre, dont la construction fut décidée par une loi du 22 Juillet 1873.

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all the harm that certain partisan politicians caused him after the Dreyfus affair (1899), either by destroying our intelligence service or through criminal anti-militarist propaganda.

The moral revival after 1870 was soon distorted by political propaganda, so that the cyclical decline caused by the Movement of History once again swept the newly established Third Republic into its irresistible vortex. The result was a "shift to the left" which gradually spread from politics to all other areas. Thus, the Catholic and royalist "Republic of the Dukes" (1871 to 1879) was succeeded first by the centrist government (from 1879 to 1899) and finally, from 1899 to 1914, by the radical (and anticlerical) Republic. The religious consequences of this shift to the left were soon felt: while in 1873 the royalist Assembly voted to build the Sacré-Cœur in Montmartre, ten years later Jules Ferry secularised education with a clearly anti-religious aim; finally, twenty years later, and the anticlerical government of 1903 would openly attack

openly attack the Church: expulsion of teaching congregations inventories and spoliation of Church property; anti-clerical hatred was so intense that the public education system did not hesitate to distort the history books used by children in secular primary schools. Originally, this anti-clerical struggle had a political pretext: the republicans attacked the clergy because they were royalists. But after the Ralliement, the pretext was no longer valid: the struggle continued nonetheless because, in reality, the stakes were spiritual. The ruling bourgeoisie of the late 19th century believed in the goddess "Science" (just as the great "ancestors" of 1793 had believed in the goddess "Reason"), and Jules Ferry firmly hoped that one day science would eventually supplant Catholicism. No doubt Jules Ferry's pseudo-goddess ended up sinking into ridicule, like Robespierre's, but the work of de-Christianisation bore its bitter fruit and

France, the eldest daughter of the Church, has fallen to the rank of "Mission Country".

Mission Country".

Alongside the methodical and progressive de-Christianisation undertaken from Jules Ferry to Emile Combes, from 1873 onwards we saw the spread of neo-Malthusianism throughout the country, with the result that the French birth rate fell from one million in 1875 to six hundred thousand in 1936. We know the outcome. In 1914, believing France to be in decline, Wilhelm II invaded our country in the hope of subjugating it in a matter of months. Twenty-six years later, for the same reason, Hitler unleashed his armoured divisions on us, forcing us to surrender after a few weeks of fighting.

In the political and social sphere, the shift to the left had a very serious consequence: it diverted the very legitimate social demands of the working class from their true goal, using them instead to further the anti-Christian policies of the Voltairean bourgeoisie. The nascent Socialist Party set itself goals that were more political than social and took no account of industrial achievements as conclusive as those of Léon Harmel. As a result, the republican France of 1914 lagged far behind the imperial Germany of Wilhelm II in the social sphere. The socialist push was, moreover, rather slow: about twenty deputies in 1871 and just over a hundred in 1914. This means that, throughout this second phase of the modern Iron Age or capitalist era, the bourgeoisie kept a tight grip on the levers of power.

Economic developments were also very favourable to the capitalist bourgeoisie. From 1870 onwards, modern heavy industry grew rapidly, particularly metallurgy; in this sense, the Eiffel Tower can be considered the "wonder of the world" of this distinctly bourgeois period. It should be noted that the automotive and aeronautical industries date from this period, as do wireless telegraphy and telephony, and the radioactive products industry. The importance of large-scale metallurgical industry (what we call

(known as heavy industry) dates back to 1870, when Krupp steel cannons silenced our old bronze guns on the battlefields of Alsace and Lorraine. Industrial superiority had given Germany military superiority: the European states were soon to learn the necessary lesson, hence the start of the arms race... a race which, eighty years later, still shows no sign of ending. However, from 1870 to 1914, it did not yet have the crucial importance it would later acquire, so the state did not have to intervene to direct the great industrial expansion of this period. It was therefore the exclusive work of the Western capitalist bourgeoisie, which had found a unique opportunity to showcase its entrepreneurial and expansive qualities as well as its inventive spirit.

The growth of modern large-scale industry and the intense commercial activity of the period, combined with the increasingly rapid development of transport and the accelerated pace of traffic, led to an irreversible exodus from the countryside. As a result, the French population, which in 1871 was mainly rural (24 million rural dwellers compared to 13 million city dwellers), gradually became urban, slowly at first until the beginning of the 20th century, then at an increasingly rapid pace. However, the growth of large cities at the expense of the countryside is perhaps the most serious aspect of this process of "solidification" or, if you prefer, "sclerosis", which inevitably leads to the ruin of the greatest and most beautiful civilisations.

As it was during the second phase of the Bronze Age mo-
From 1870 to 1914, the evolution of French society was described by one historian as follows: "Society became largely bourgeois: the bourgeoisie absorbed the nobility and the lower classes by standardising lifestyles and attracting them through marriages with the sons of impoverished noble families or employees and workers. The only distinction

distinction became that of wealth, and this wealth passed from hand to hand."

On the eve of the Great War of 1914, the French bourgeoisie was at the height of its power, and despite its accumulated faults, it could be proud of its achievements. Having come to power in the aftermath of a disastrous war, it had managed to rebuild the country and enable it to develop and grow richer. It had rebuilt a powerful army and conquered a vast empire. Finally, it had forged the alliances that would enable it to defeat Germany in 1918. In a sense, this victory was her doing, and France's global prestige reflected well on her. However, the Great War had taken too heavy a toll. From 1918 onwards, the impoverished French bourgeoisie began its decline, which would also be that of France.

4^o - Third phase (1914-1944)

Germany's brutal declaration of war on France in August 1914, followed immediately by the invasion of Belgium and northern France, marked the bloody beginning of the third phase, or "iron age," of the bourgeois era (1914 to 1943-44), which, as we shall see, repeated the evolution of the two previous phases, namely vigorous recovery at the beginning, followed by distortion and decline until the debacle of 1940 and the occupation from 1940 to 1944.

The Bronze Age. Does this not explain the fundamentally warlike nature of the recent Thirty Years' War, which lasted almost exactly as long as this Bronze Age? Never before had the human race been so 'warlike and ferocious'.

The warlike nature of this third phase would have serious consequences for the bourgeoisie: the impoverishment of the majority, followed by industrial overproduction and global crisis, the rise of the socialists to power

and the decline of the bourgeois parties, and finally a prodigious acceleration in the pace of industrial progress, while at the same time the circulation of wealth, currency and goods was made increasingly difficult by statist legislation.

It was therefore the first shot of the Great War that heralded the beginning of a new phase in Western history in August 1914. However, as we have already said, every new phase begins with a general recovery, reflected in the acceptance of a purer and healthier morality and a more virile and simpler way of life. This certainly explains the unpleasant surprise of Wilhelm II, who, expecting easy victories from the outset of the "fresh and joyful war", reaped only the bitter defeat of the Marne in return. From the very first clash, the lies of anti-militarist propaganda were exposed for all to see, and the old spirit of French patriotism quickly regained the upper hand; the military virtues of the race reappeared and the petty and absurd quarrels of anti-clericalism were forgotten for a time. Four years later, on 11 November 1918, we saw what France could become when it finally decided to reject vain subjects of discord. The national unity that had won the victory of 1918 lasted until 1924. Then the shift to the left began again, with pauses in 1926 and 1934, and resurgences in 1932 and 1936. Finally, shift after shift, by 1939, the country had reached a state of decline similar to that of the Second Empire in 1870. This led to the "debacle" of June 1940, followed by four years of occupation. This decline, which had been felt since 1933, was reflected first in the compromises made by government officials (the Stavisky affair), then in the weakness or inability of our ministers in the face of the growing threat from Hitler, and finally in the social unrest that led to the occupation of factories in 1936. The attempt at recovery in 1934 had ultimately been short-lived, due to the decadent climate of the time. It was, moreover, the profound

The demoralisation of Europe during those troubled years can be attributed in particular to the emergence of a doctrine such as Hitler's racism, whose monstrous aim was to turn young people into "young beasts"; hence also the particularly ferocious and all too often odious nature of the recent conflict, hence the concentration camps. The profound decline in morale had been highlighted, with regard to the German army, by Rauschning, to whom we owe this damning definition

definition, taken from his masterful "Revolution of Nihilism": "In the past, the honour of the Prussian officer was to be correct, today the honour of the Nazi officer is to be cunning". Adopting cunning as a rule of conduct, no longer recognising any morality other than that of success, such was precisely the goal of this nihilism which overwhelmed the entire Western world from 1940 to 1944. These four years of occupation were also four years of destruction in all areas. Immense material destruction that everyone knows about because they suffered from it to a greater or lesser extent, and above all moral destruction, less visible perhaps, but how much more serious and irreparable? For material ruins can be quickly rebuilt, but moral ruins cannot: beautiful youth and young talents brutally cut short are lost forever, and worse still, fierce hatreds remain locked in people's hearts. will never be extinguished again.

Such were the last years of the third phase of the modern Iron Age, dark years during which a humiliated France was subjected, without being able to defend itself, to the "nihilistic" influence of various foreign radio stations which, while seeking to use us for their own benefit, had no other goal, in essence, to weaken us even further so that they could eliminate us once and for all from the concert of nations. **This** explains the disastrous failure of the attempt at moral recovery undertaken by Marshal Pétain and Charles Maurras, for this attempt came at the wrong time and was misguided. In politics, it is important to observe the times and moments; but in 1943, the time for renewal

had not yet come — quite the contrary — since we were on the eve of a new revolution that would sound the death knell for the bourgeoisie, just as the previous Revolution of 1789 had sounded the death knell for the aristocracy.

While the second phase of the modern Bronze Age had indeed seen an all-powerful bourgeoisie realise its most cherished desires for wealth and domination in the economic, political and even philosophical spheres, from the beginning of the third phase, i.e. from 1914 onwards, there was a widespread decline, if not sometimes even the brutal annihilation, of this once-prosperous bourgeois class. It began in August 1914 with a general mobilisation that, this time, did not exempt the rich. Then, to meet the enormous expenses of the war, the French state took a very serious measure that contained the seeds of the end of the bourgeoisie's reign: the forced circulation of banknotes and the withdrawal of gold coins from circulation. It was because it held movable wealth that the bourgeoisie had been able to dominate nineteenth-century society; but without gold, there was no longer any real, movable wealth; all that remained was paper whose purely fictitious value depended on a minister. Thus, one fine day, we ended up with a system in which all wealth belonged to the state and there was only one social class facing an omnipotent government.

Meanwhile, the ultimate result of this fiduciary system was that paper money gradually lost much of its value, so that the multitude of small holders of government funds or fixed-income bonds found themselves ruined. Other property owners were also impoverished by the rent moratorium, and here again, the measure had serious consequences, since the right to property, the foundation of bourgeois power, was called into question. Finally, a political event caused by the war, the collapse of Russian funds, aggravated the difficult situation of small rentiers, and this time the disaster came from a direct attack.

against the capitalist regime that had until then governed all countries subject to the white race. In this case, the Bolshevik government simply repudiated the debts incurred by the former Tsarist government. Finally, with the fairly strict and hitherto immutable rules of commercial and financial loyalty on which bourgeois society was based being repudiated, there was practically no other secure wealth left than that derived from labour or its equivalent, be it speculation or the black market.

In America, the war initially led to a boom in business and increased wealth at the expense of an impoverished Europe. It was the very excess of prosperity across the Atlantic that triggered the decline of the bourgeoisie. We know that American industry, already over-equipped, had suddenly stumbled upon a formidable commercial crisis caused by overproduction. The traditional methods used to combat unemployment proved ineffective, and President Roosevelt was forced to adopt certain dirigiste measures, which paved the way for a future consideration of a capitalist regime, which until then had been reputed intangible.

At the same time, totalitarian regimes developed a new monetary circulation system that effectively eliminated the freedom of international trade. The primary advantage of this was to curb speculation on foreign exchange (thereby maintaining domestic price stability), and the secondary advantage was to allow the state to control the flow of trade. In practice, it became apparent that the system was capable of functioning without catastrophe, with the result that the example eventually spread to the rest of Europe. However, here again, as a backlash, the stock market... The bourgeoisie was weakening accordingly.

But while the bourgeoisie was losing its power and prestige day by day, the proletariat, on the contrary, saw its influence grow steadily, both in the economic and political spheres. Politically, in fact, the world

workers enjoyed the support of socialist and communist MPs, who were becoming increasingly numerous in Parliament, with the result that the left-wing bourgeoisie (i.e. anti-clerical and Voltairean) could no longer govern without the support of the representatives of the proletariat. In 1936, the socialists were even strong enough to secure the presidency of the Council, and during the feverish days of the factory occupations, the working class believed that its time had come to finally take power. This illusion was quickly dispelled, but it was now clear that the political dominance of the bourgeois parties would not last much longer.

The proletariat, in fact, possessed an effective economic weapon, the trade union, which was all the stronger because it was supported by the political parties in power. Furthermore, the ever-increasing concentration of industry led to the working class becoming more and more important, something that could not have happened in the past when workers were isolated from one another. Finally, the threat of war looming in 1936 accelerated the pace of industrial production, giving workers a crucial role, since without them, rearmament would have been impossible. The proletariat firmly hoped that its turn would soon come to replace a bourgeoisie in full decline and which, seriously, was beginning to doubt itself.

Such was the situation in 1939 when the radical — and therefore bourgeois — government of President Daladier declared war on German National Socialism. The French army, that is to say, the army of a bourgeois society in full decline, where the spirit of enjoyment had replaced the spirit of sacrifice, was about to suffer the brutal shock of the National Socialist divisions, which, fighting to expand the living space of the German proletariat, and moreover well equipped and well commanded, were determined to conquer or die. In six weeks, the matter was settled: the former house painter Adolf Hitler had crushed the history professor (!) Edouard

Daladier, relayed by the capitalist politician whom his good friends called the "Mexico City bazaar dealer" (May-June 1940).

This new disaster at Sedan not only led to the invasion of France, but also to the sudden collapse of the Third Republic, which dated back to the first disaster at Sedan (1870).

In fact, in July 1940, the day after the armistice with Germany, the National Assembly handed over its powers to Marshal Pétain, who took the title of Head of the French State.

This was in fact a kind of counter-revolution, which was dubbed the "National Revolution" but ultimately failed because it was premature. The hour of definitive change for this regime would not come until 18 years later, with the death knell of the capitalist era itself (1958).

The fact remains that Marshal Pétain's government, which had initially been welcomed by the majority of French people, prepared the way for the advent of this new regime, with its monarchical appearance, which is so well suited to "people's democracies" because it perfectly characterises the fourth and final age of history, namely the Dark Age, known as the "people's age", where the "masses" reign supreme.

In any case, Pétain's government was to last only four years, until August 1944, when a provisional government was established in Paris under the presidency of General de Gaulle, who wasted no time in reviving the defunct parliamentary regime, this time under the grandiose name of the Fourth Republic. Republic. This was similar to what Napoleon had done in 1804 when he attempted to revive the defunct Ancien Régime in the imperial form borrowed from Charlemagne.

The Revolution of 1944

1944! It is here that we will once again observe the extraordinary precision, unthinkable because it is almost mathematical, of the cyclical movement of history.

A few figures will illustrate this point. First, let us recall that the third age of the modern cycle, the bourgeois or capitalist age, which began in 1814 with the Restoration, was supposed to last, theoretically, 144 years, i.e. until 1958 (since 1814 - 1 - 144 = 1958). Furthermore, we know that the last of the four secondary phases of a given cyclical period (in this case, the Bourgeois Age) must have a duration equal to one-tenth of that of the overall period, which gives us, for the fourth and final phase of the Bourgeois Age:

144: 10 = 14.4 years, rounded to 14 years, hence the theoretical dates of this last phase: 1944-1958, which coincide precisely with that of the Fourth Republic; we should say: mathematically!

It follows that the fourth and final phase of the bourgeois age should, according to our calculations, have begun in 1944; this leads us to repeat what we wrote on this subject at the beginning of this work: when a certain period (cyclical) ... reaches nine-tenths of its course, that is, when it is about to enter its fourth and final phase, then the

The cyclical decline process suddenly accelerates and spirals out of control, the populace rises up, events unfold rapidly. It is no longer a riot, but a Revolution which, first of all, overthrows the Old Regime and sometimes even destroys the old ruling class...".

This is precisely what happened in 1792, when the Age of Silver, or Aristocratic Age, entered its fourth and final phase, and it is what will happen again, in another form, during the Revolution of 1944, which thus appears to be a cyclical repetition (albeit on a smaller scale) of the Revolution of 1792. Thus, in August 1944, as in September 1792, we witnessed the collapse of a more or less monarchical regime, whether it was the fall of Louis XVI or the departure of Marshal Pétain. The latter, who had been taken away by the Germans at the time of their defeat, was imprisoned upon his return to France in 1945. Similarly, Louis XVI was imprisoned in the Temple immediately after the overthrow of the monarchy. Subsequently, Pétain's trial resembled so closely, in its atmosphere of partisan hatred, the trial of Louis XVI during the Reign of Terror that even the communists themselves pointed out the similarity. And they were not alone: Robert Brasillach, before being shot at dawn on 6 February 1945, had already evoked, in his *Poèmes de Fresnes*, the poet André Chénier, who was guillotined in 1794:

"O my brother with the unbuttoned collar!"

And we could add to the previous examples that of the two great scientists, Lavoisier and Georges Claude, the former a victim of the Reign of Terror in 1793, and the latter of the "Purge" of 1944-1945, both in the name of the famous principle: The Republic has no need of scholars", nor of poets, of course, but only of "executioners, lawbreakers*", to quote André Chénier.

The immediate result of these summary executions, with or without trials, was in both cases the dictatorship of the moment.

toughened by extremist parties (Jacobins in 1793 and progressives in 1944-45), which led to a series of revolutionary measures aimed at crushing the right-wing parties once and for all, with the difference that in 1792-1794 the change of regime was to benefit the bourgeoisie, while in 1944-45 it was the "pro-proletariat"

that was called upon to benefit, at least in appearance, from the social upheavals. The course of events seems to confirm this parallelism, since, from 1794 onwards, as in 1947, the extremists were ultimately eliminated by the moderates. Finally, one last analogy: the fall of the assignats during the

Revolution corresponds to the fall of the franc from 1944 to 1952. On the other hand, the Purge of 1944-45 was accompanied by an upheaval unprecedented in our national history, namely the total dispossession of the French press in the name of the great revolutionary principle of "Move over so I can take your place", to the benefit of the progressive parties that had just seized power. Such an event, the gravity of which cannot be measured, constituted in itself a veritable revolution, for it deprived all so-called "moderate" or right-wing journalists and writers of their means of expression, thus causing a catastrophic imbalance in the intellectual sphere by elevating the "fakers" to prominence.

J.P. Sartre
and Teilhard de

Chardin¹, to the detriment of traditionally inspired authors, among whom we can mention two early Gaullists: Father Victor Poucel (eclipsed by Teilhard de Chardin) and Simone Weill (supplanted, vis-à-vis the great public, by Simone de Beauvoir).

This total plundering of the French press in 1944, for which the main person responsible was Minister of State Francisque Gay, of the very Catholic Imprimerie Bloud et Gay, was obviously in line with the "direction of history" or rather the "Movement of History", since this "Movement" is an "chute"

It was Sartre himself who described himself as a "Truqueur" in *Les Mots*.

² Teilhard de Chardin had participated, in his time, in the Piltdown hoax.

which leads us straight to the reign — fortunately ephemeral — of the Prince of this World". It did so by "distorting" French thought for a long period, thus preventing the teachings of the Elite from reaching the general public.

The result was a veritable intellectual dictatorship by the so-called "progressive" parties, hence the sudden resurgence in 1945 of a hypothesis that in 1943 was rightly believed to be obsolete: evolutionism (all we know for certain today on this subject is that species are fixed). This also led, in 1963, to a pro-communist group issuing *a ukase* against the awarding of the Goncourt Prize to the Romanian-born writer Vintila Horia, sponsored by Daniel Rops.

The progressive takeover of the French press was, as we said, moving in the "downward" direction of history: the new masters were effectively proposing the advent of the "proletariat" as their goal, to the detriment of the old bourgeoisie that had ruled the country since 1792. But such a promotion, unthinkable only yesterday, still had to be justified. This would be the role of the renegades and defectors who, following in the footsteps of Sartre and Beauvoir, would spit on the social class to which they owed everything, especially their culture.

Other collectivist measures would follow in the same "direction of history": nationalisation of the coal mines, then gas and electricity, as well as certain banks and insurance companies, and even the Renault factories, but none of this would affect the realm of thought; What is more, one might even wonder what the "proletariat" actually gained from it. But we must remember that the expression "advent of the proletariat" is in no way synonymous with "happiness of the proletariat" and, in fact, the "Movement of History" does not lead peoples towards the happiness of peace, but, let us repeat once again, towards the future reign of the "Prince of this World".

This was ultimately the main role of the Revolution of 1944, namely to bring us a little closer to that future

by destroying the traditional ideas of honour, fidelity and loyalty that until then had still been effectively slowing down the cyclical descent of modern society towards its ultimate goal: the end of the modern world.

The Revolution of 1944 was bloody, much more so than the Terror of 1793, which claimed only a few thousand victims, compared to 105,000 executions during the Purge of 1944-45. In the Mediterranean region alone, an American observer estimated that 50,000 people were put to death in 1944-45. For the department of Dordogne, Mr Robert Aron gives the figure of 1,000 victims; and the same for Haute-Vienne! Almost all of these executions took place without trial and, in the words of Colonel Remy himself, were motivated solely by a spirit of base revenge, murder, theft, rape, pillage, or even the conquest of prefectures or town halls for the benefit of the party".

The maquisards, not content with torturing, raping and pillaging, even went so far as to massacre children: one case cited is that of an eighteen-month-old baby shot on the orders of a maquis leader; in another, a two-year-old child was killed in his mother's arms!

Here is an excerpt from the newspaper *Le Jouer Gue Républicain* of 4 January 1946, under the headline "Tragic events at Rodez prison", a sad example of indiscriminate massacre:

"On 3 January 1945, at 2 a.m., around fifty men armed with submachine guns and muskets attacked the house

The figure of 105,000 executions was given to Colonel Passy by former Home Secretary Adrien Texier, who based his estimate on reports from prefects (February 1943).

When historian Robert Aron sought to verify this figure, he was met with silence and even lies from the administration. For example, for the Bouches-du-Rhône department, the Home Office figure was 310, but Mr Aron found 800; in Haute-Vienne: official figure: 260, compared to 1,000 recorded by

Mr Aron!

^o According to *Le livre Noir de l'épuration* (The Black Book of Purge), p. 15.

shut down the town after cutting the telephone lines connecting the establishment to the post office and the police station.

They forced the chief guard to open the gates and hand over three prisoners to be shot in the prison's central courtyard.

Among them was the Catholic journalist Pierre Fau, 62, editor-in-chief of the *Catholic* newspaper *Uflio*. He was a devout Christian, a patriot, and a loyal and upright man. The dominant trait of his character was his fidelity to his principles.

But then why all these massacres? What explanation can be given for such an explosion of bloodthirsty madness? In fact, we can only see one: that as a result of the cyclical movement of history, in 1944 we entered that sinister period described as: "At this moment, all crimes are coming to light in this century of the basest metal". The lasting result was a profound change, or in other words, the Fall, which could be observed in the French mentality from the beginning of the Fourth Republic.

The dramatic account of the assassination of a Catholic journalist shows us, better than any long speech, that the Revolution of 1944 sought first and foremost to eliminate the best elements of the bourgeoisie, with the aim of establishing a communist-inspired, or at least progressive, regime in France. Although it did not achieve this, because the time was not yet ripe, this Revolution nevertheless brought about a profound change in the French mentality, which could be observed as early as the 1945 elections, i.e. at the beginning of the Fourth Republic.

The Fourth Republic (1944-1958) (4th phase of the bourgeois age)

As mentioned above, the fourth and final phase of the bourgeois age, whose dates, calculated according to the traditional doctrine of the Movement of History, are 1944-1958, coincides exactly with, and can therefore be identified with, the Fourth Republic, which lasted from 25 August 1944 to 1 June 1958.

In principle, this period was supposed to ensure the necessary transition between, on the one hand, the Revolution of 1944, whose role was to definitively destroy the bourgeois or capitalist regime, governed by the selfish morality of self-interest and based, in politics, on parliamentarianism, and, on the other hand, the future "New Era" which socialist leaders announced would be popular, and therefore governed (though they were careful not to shout this from the rooftops) by the inhuman morality of success.

In fact, this is exactly how things unfolded, since once the revolutionary turmoil of 1944-45 had passed, the extremist elements from the working class were removed from power and replaced by moderate bourgeois figures such as Dr Queille and the industrialist Antoine Pinay. Meanwhile, the parliamentary system, once so despised, regained some of its lustre, as it appeared to be the only obstacle to the return of personal power. However, governmental instability resumed with a vengeance and worsened

to the point of undermining the foundations of the Fourth Republic, which finally collapsed during the Algerian crisis of May 1958. The governments of this difficult period (1944-1958) were criticised for their inability to successfully resolve the problem of "decolonisation", but this overlooks the inevitable action of the Movement of History, which, during revolutionary periods, is usually accompanied by a reduction in national territory, or even foreign occupation. Why? Because all change of state takes place in the "night", "poverty" and "nakedness".

The outcome of these fourteen years will be no less negative in the intellectual sphere. Suffice it to quote Mr Jacques Fauvet: "A chapter on the specifically political ideas of the Fourth Republic would be quickly written. A blank page." would suffice if other forms of thought had not left a few lines, traced a few furrows". The field of literature and the arts will fare little better: "Literature, art and music are characterised more by the profusion than by the quality of the works".

In fact, the positive achievements of the Fourth Republic consist, on the one hand, of its socialist-inspired economic and social accomplishments and, on the other hand, of the major projects undertaken during this period to provide the country with the energy and industrial infrastructure it sorely lacked, leading Jacques Fauvet to say: "It is ultimately in the social, economic and technical spheres that the regime's record is least controversial... The reconstruction and modernisation of transport and basic industries, followed by the continuous development of production and, even more so, productivity, are to the regime's credit because, despite ministerial instability, there were men with vision and ambition in the governments, parties, administrations, research and study offices, and employers' organisations."

Jacques Fauvet, *La IV^e de publique*, pp. 249-253, ed. Club du Meilleur Book.
• *Ibid.*

Let us add that in doing so, these talented men — ministers, directors of major public services, industrialists and engineers, almost all trained in the school of the energetic and hard-working bourgeoisie of yesteryear — masterfully prepared and put in place the political, social, industrial and energy infrastructure of the Fifth Republic, or more precisely, the Fifth and energy infrastructure of the Republic, or more precisely of today's France, that of the Fourth and final Age of Modern Times.

The same was true during the last phase of the Aristocratic Age, from 1792 to 1814: "There can be no doubt about the revolutionary ideas of the Convention members and Bonaparte. However, insofar as they organised and created, they did so by taking up—in broad terms—the reforms begun by the ministers of Louis XV..."

But what is most striking is that when the Revolution resumed the royal work, when the Convention and Bonaparte developed what had been started under Louis XIV and especially under Louis XV with regard, for example, to tax equality, the strengthening of central administration, and the creation of major government departments, they did so with men from the old regime... who had been trained in the old school. Some would say at the grande école.

¹ *Les Ajprès-DioerT de Cambacérès*, pp. X and XI.

The age of *F'er in the modern cycle:*
fourth and final age of modern times (1958-2030)

1) *The "Popular" or "Technocratic" Era*

We have just seen that the Age of Aiiain of the Modern Cycle, that is to say, the bourgeois or capitalist era, came to an end in France with the collapse of the parliamentary regime following the uprising in Algiers on 13 May 1958. As we know, this uprising led to the return to power of General de Gaulle, who, once firmly established as head of state, proceeded to carry out a major overhaul of the Constitution, thus bringing the Fourth Republic (1944-1958) and establishing in its place the current Fifth Republic, whose advent coincided with the beginning of the fourth and final age of modern times, the Iron Age, or, from a social perspective, the "popular era" or "technocratic era" (theoretical duration: 72 years). It is a popular era because, according to the inevitable law of the Movement of History, it is the so-called popular class that must benefit from the decline of the bourgeoisie. On this subject, it is very interesting to reread the anticipated description of the current Popular Era we gave in our previous work: *The Future Era and the Movement of History*, written from 1953 to 1955 and published in May 1956 (by Éditions de la Colombe), it being understood that this "Future Era" was none other than the current Fourth and final Age of Time Mo-

which we announced would be coming soon. Better than a long speech, the following pages (written in 1953 and 1954) will show the reader not only the concrete technocratic aspect of an apparently popular era, but also the real value of the traditional doctrine of the cyclical movement of history. For it has now been proven that this doctrine makes it possible to predict both the logical succession of Ages or Eras and the true meaning of History.

2) Working-class advancement or managerial revolution

Now that we are approaching the new era, that is to say, the fourth and final age of modern times, it is worth attempting to speculate on its essential characteristics, at least in the social sphere.

We have no shortage of documents for such a study, since, apart from the doctrine of the Movement of History, which explains so well the succession of social classes, we also have, thanks to James Burnham, an American author trained in the most objective modern methods, a methodical description of the "managerial society" that is now taking shape in various countries around the world. Furthermore, in France, we have the benefit of numerous surveys on the current "working-class advancement", which show that many minds foresaw the advent of a new society, and therefore a new Age of History, as being very close.

At first glance, there seems to be a contradiction between the two previous ways of viewing society in the fourth and final Age of Modern Times, namely "managerial society" according to the American philosopher, or "worker promotion" according to the conjectures —, or desires — of socialists (Christian or

Pages 229 to 235 of *The Future Era and the Movement of History*.

no) of different European countries. The apparent opposition between the two theories lies in the following: on the one hand, under the "Workers' Promotion" theory, the proletariat gains more or less control over the management of factories or, more generally, over the means of production, while also participating in the distribution of company profits. On the other hand, the "managerial revolution" deprives the working masses of both individual freedom and the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour, thus leading to widespread servitude of a severity hitherto unknown. In short, while some, whether Roman Catholic social Christians or socialists loyal or not to Moscow, dream of a "bright future" for the working class, others envisage, not without trepidation, a very real and very sinister "descent into Hell". So where does the truth lie?

It seems clear here that the truth lies not, as one might think, in a "happy medium", i.e. in a more or less lame compromise between the two opposing theories, but rather in their totality, because "Workers' Promotion" and "Managerial Revolution" are in fact only two successive aspects or two complementary sides, the obverse and reverse, of one and the same reality... in the future. To understand this, we will examine each of the two theories separately.

The oldest is obviously the "promotion of the working class", in which Jaurès and his followers saw the future realisation of paradise on earth, thanks to the reign of true social justice based on the abundant circulation of wealth. For there is no question, in the socialist paradise, of returning to the evangelical simplicity of primordial times, but rather of creating an extremely powerful industry capable of satisfying all the desires for comfort, well-being and luxury of the working classes. Would this not be, in essence, a "reverse" interpretation, in the most base and material sense possible, of the biblical expression "Paradisus voluptatis"? 2 In any case, the theory of "Promotion ou-

Socialism does not seek to achieve social justice by abolishing an industry that was so harsh and inhumane, but by giving the working class the means of production, in the hope that the people will thus be able to enjoy the fruits of their labour. This obviously implies the elimination of the bourgeoisie as the ruling class, with the "levers of control" passing into the hands of socialist leaders or trade union leaders. In France, this dream seemed close to becoming a reality for the first time in 1936 with the "occupation of the factories", and then in a much more serious way in 1945 with the rise to power of communist ministers from the working class, while the reconstituted major trade union federations seemed destined to play a leading role in the economic life of the country. The timing also seemed very favourable due to nationalisations, which were rapidly bringing large private companies under state control. There is no doubt that such a measure seriously weakened the bourgeoisie, to the benefit — or so it was believed — of the working class. Furthermore, the establishment of works councils was intended to enable the proletariat to participate, to a certain extent, in the management of companies, side by side with representatives of the employers... or the state.

"Thus, in all areas, including religion, the "promotion of the working class" asserted itself, that is to say, the rise to power of the working class, or its coming to the fore in place of a ruined bourgeoisie forced to retreat into the shadows and silence. In parliament, for example, three major parties representing the majority of the electorate claimed to represent the 'people', who saw several of their 'sons' rise not only to government, but also to the leadership of the national electricity and gas trust (EDF). In addition, certain trade union activists called to the government had been placed at the head of the key ministries of Industrial Production and Labour: in an eminently symbolic move, a former "proletarian" commanded the world of employers and managers, that is to say, the upper bourgeoisie!

Finally, another fact that proves this spotlight on the working class is that it has never received as much praise as it does today: there is nothing but praise and adulation from all sides, as only the powerful of the day are accustomed to, to such an extent that &rnanos had to sharply criticise those who proposed replacing the old 'divine right' bourgeoisie with a 'divine right' proletariat. In truth, this is what defines the promotion of the working class: all eyes that were once directed towards the bourgeoisie (and previously the nobility) are now converging on this popular class, around which the new society will be organised.

But then, one might say, the old socialist prophets were right to announce this new era in which the people, having finally conquered power, would bring justice and happiness to the earth. Alas, this was only a beautiful dream, retorts the cold analyst of the "managerial revolution"; the harsh and grim reality is quite different.

In fact, in the USSR, "far from showing tendencies towards socialism, far from moving towards it, the Russian revolution clearly developed in the opposite direction". However, the capitalists had been eliminated from Russia and did not return; despite this, "a new economic stratification took place, resulting in classes that were as differentiated as, if not more so than, in capitalist nations. The result is that, in 1939, 11 to 12% of the Russian population received 50% of the national income, while in the United States 10% of the population received about 25% of the national income." On the other hand, with the so-called democratic institutions having disappeared, it can be said that at present "every vestige of freedom and democracy has been eradicated from Russian life. No opposition of any kind is tolerated; no institution or organisation has any independent rights, and the outward signs of class differences and despotism have reappeared.

The workers' riots in East Germany in mid-June 1953 provided bloody confirmation of J. Burnham's remark.

One after another. Everything proves that the tyranny of the Russian regime is one of the most draconian in human history, with no exception for Hitler's regime."

At the same time, the socialist internationalism of the early years gave way to an increasingly pronounced nationalism that eventually surpassed even that of the Tsarist regime. The pseudo-internationalism that still manifests itself occasionally, represented by the Communist International and its parties, is in reality nothing more than the extension of nationalism across the entire surface of the earth; it is internationalist only in the same sense that Hitler's fifth columns or the intelligence services of Great Britain or the United States are internationalist.

Are workers today at least the masters of the factories, since the capitalists have disappeared? Another illusion: "The abolition of property rights has not only failed to...

guaranteed the establishment of socialism, but it did not even leave power in the hands of the workers, who today have none. It was therefore not the workers who ultimately benefited from the Russian Revolution of 1917, but the new class of "managers", the leaders of big industry and commerce. In other words, the totalitarian façade of so-called "fascist" or "totalitarian" states is only the transitional form currently taken by the "managerial revolution". Later, we can expect to see the Directors "take the reins of power and govern — obviously for their own benefit — the future directorial society", which is undoubtedly the final and, it seems, inevitable outcome of the "Workers' Promotion".

In truth, history offers many other examples of tyranny or dictatorship, but modern totalitarianism is nevertheless an entirely new form, because leaders with virtually unlimited technical resources wield infinitely greater power than the tyrants of old, resulting in much greater subjugation.

J. Burnham: *The Managerial Revolution*.

closer to the masses. Basically, we can say that in the past, tyranny was only partial, whereas today it tends to be completely totalitarian. In fact, totalitarian dictators manage to control not only political parties, but also *the economy*, including agriculture (down to the smallest details), as well as public education, culture, health, leisure and even religion. The trial of Cardinal Mindszenty showed us how far the power of the modern state can go: dissolving a prominent individuality in order to mould it to the will of its executioners. We cannot even console ourselves with the thought that the human spirit will at least be able to escape totalitarian tyranny, since unscrupulous technicians are capable of 'converting' that spirit to their will!

Now that we have examined the two seemingly opposing aspects of the future proletarian society, it is easy to understand how they are, in reality, complementary, one inevitably leading to the other. In fact, all measures taken in favour of the masses, whether to alleviate certain difficulties arising from circumstances (e.g. in the area of housing) or to achieve greater social justice, ultimately lead to the creation of new administrations whose directors will ultimately be the real masters. Add to these the heads of nationalised factories and major public services such as railways, roads, gas and electricity, etc., and it becomes clear that the new ruling class in our country is more than half formed. No doubt this new privileged class will initially work for the greater good of society in general, and the working class in particular, but it is quite clear that in the long run the initial enthusiasm will wane, so that a day will come when the all-powerful 'directors' (for their power will only grow) will use and abuse their unlimited power, no longer to serve, but to serve themselves, to the detriment and great misfortune of a people of 'slaves'.

The future society of the fourth and final Age of Modern Times will see the inexorable morality of success supplant not only the ancient religious precepts of the Theocratic Age and the rules of honour imposed on the nobility during the subsequent Aristocratic Age, but even the morality of self-interest that inspired the bourgeoisie during This morality of success was already at the root of Nazism, as the German writer Rauschning has shown; for Hitler was, in this as in other areas, a sinister precursor. It is true that he was preceded by Lenin, since communist morality knows no other law than that of success. From Moscow, this new ethic spread rapidly throughout the world, replacing the old morality of self-interest, which had until then been the driving force of bourgeois society and which has been much maligned. For self-interest, when properly understood, requires a number of social virtues whose practice can only be beneficial, both morally and materially: for merchants, these virtues include honesty and loyalty in business, intelligent labour and prudent economy; for artisans, they include perfection in their work. The best proof that well-understood bourgeois morality can lead to virtue and prosperity is provided by the material, social and moral success of the Val des Bois factory, founded in the last century by Léon Harmel.

Bourgeois virtues were also susceptible to transposition into the spiritual realm, hence the medieval initiatory organisations intended for the bourgeoisie (Hermeticism and Freemasonry in particular), and hence, finally, a certain

* bourgeois" way of conceiving the morality of salvation, which is, in
, is simply a higher form of the morality of self-interest, because
* The Fathers say that fear of torment is the way of the slave, and desire for
reward is the way of the mercenary... In the social sphere, the desire for
reward once led to the pursuit of profit that characterises and defines
capitalist society. But we are now entering a new age.

where profit takes a back seat. This is how large nationalist companies such as the SNCF continue to operate despite a significant annual deficit, and we must conclude that the pursuit of profit is no longer sacrosanct, and that a company can operate on other bases. Obviously, an operating deficit such as that of the railways must ultimately be covered by someone. If, therefore, the system becomes widespread, and since no one will be willing to pay their neighbour's debts, or at least work without hope of profit, then coercion will have to be used to maintain social cohesion, from which it follows that the elimination of profit cannot succeed and does not in fact succeed, as experience has proven, except in totalitarian dictatorship or reign of terror and, consequently, in generalised serfdom (but skilfully camouflaged). And it is indeed appropriate to repeat once again the words of the *Russian Pilgrim*: "Fear of torment is the way of the slave."

Does this mean that the coming Age, which will be the last in our history, can only be depicted in very dark colours? Certainly not, since widespread serfdom is only the other side of the coin or, if you prefer, the dark end of the popular Age. It is highly probable, on the other hand, that the beginning of the future New Era will present itself (at least during its first phase) in the marvellous colours of a setting sun. For the time has come for the "Twilight of the Nations", and should this not first of all take on the golds and roses of a splendid "Twilight Glory"? Similarly, since the history of the Church repeats and develops the public life of Jesus, should it not also experience, before the tribulations of the Passion and the Last Days, the dazzling but ephemeral triumph of Palm Sunday? But above all, what has been said about the "Workers of the Eleventh Hour" will find its most ultimate and grandiose application here, not only because very little will be asked of men

See Raoul Auclair: *Le Crémuscuile des Nations*.

des Derniers Temps, but perhaps even more so because it will reveal the simultaneous unfolding of the lowest and most sublime possibilities of the human condition.

*The Movement of History during
the Last Age of Modern Times*

We now need to study the division of the last Age of Modern Times into four phases, according to the proportions set by the Movement of History, since the overall duration of the last age is 72 years, the chronology is as follows:

First phase: from 1958 to approximately 1987 - duration 29 years
Second phase: from 1987 to approximately 2009 - duration 22 years
Third phase: from 2009 to approximately 2023 - duration 14 years
Fourth phase: from 2023 to approximately 2030 - duration = 7 years.

According to this table, we can expect a fairly brilliant period during the first phase or "sub-age" of gold, lasting until around 1986-87 (i.e. during the lifetime of the current generation, which spans from around 1950 to 1983-85), followed by a period of decline until the beginning of the next century, and finally the "eighteen" years of war and destruction, i.e. the phase of dissolution that generally occurs at the end of each major cyclical period. It is therefore likely that the generation présente 1950-1983-85 assistera tout d'abord à la

* Pages 235 to 241 of *The Future Era*.

"Twilight Glory" of Modern Times, and even of the entire Christic cycle. Perhaps we will then experience the "fullest" and "richest" years in all of human history, similar to what the sixteen years of Saint Louis' reign were for the Christian Millennium.

Utopia, one might say. Indeed! At the dawn of the modern bourgeois era (after 1814), did Chateaubriand not already observe a genuine restoration in character and morals, as well as in religion, literature and the arts? Is this not also the case today? In particular, why deny the important Christian revival that can be seen throughout Western Europe, and from which we can hope for the most beautiful fruits? But it is mainly in the intellectual and scientific fields that this revival is perhaps most striking. Better still, it can be said that the new intellectual generation, at least in the West, currently enjoys a privileged position unprecedented in the history of the modern world and perhaps of humanity itself, for in recent years our libraries have been enriched with the best works ever published on the different traditions of East and West. To understand how fortunate today's youth are in this regard, one need only look back thirty-five years and consider what a mind drawn to the metaphysical realm could find at outside of works that were indigestible, incomprehensible, or even more or less obscure, in order to satisfy its thirst for knowledge. Today, on the contrary, the best texts, presented by the most competent and comprehensive commentators, cover all fields. For those who wish to draw freely from them, all the treasures, pearls and diamonds of Eastern wisdom, hitherto jealously guarded or difficult to access, are now widely available. In truth, were we not right to predict that we would undoubtedly experience the richest and most

René Guénon's masterful work is one of the best examples of this.

full of all human history? And indeed, it is not only in the realm of pure and transcendent knowledge that treasures are wide open, but also in the lower realm of modern applied sciences, where discoveries follow one another at an extremely rapid pace. Never, it seems, have humans had so much power at their disposal: never before have they made such a complete inventory of the planet's riches. Never before has it been possible, at least for the masses, to broaden their horizons to the ends of the universe, or even to contemplate scenes from the history of past centuries. In physics and chemistry, as in mechanics, discoveries and inventions have made it possible to realise the wildest dreams: in a short time, man can explore the depths of the seas, encircle the earth or launch himself to conquer the skies, that is to say, exhaust all the possibilities of the physical world in the three dimensions of height, width and depth. Even the most hidden secrets of the human soul, such as the wisest rules for acquiring and maintaining health, have been discovered, and the child's soul, hitherto so mysterious, has been revealed to us.

If we were to complain, it would be rather about possessing too much wealth and too much power! Therein lies the danger of our time, therein lies the seed of future corruption, just as we have been able to detect a formidable threat of ultimate enslavement in the social laws passed in favour of the working class.

Excessive wealth: this is evident in the intellectual realm, where pearls and diamonds, buried under a jumble of sterile debris or infamous sludge, are accessible only to a very small elite; the masses, guided by blind leaders, are ultimately offered only the first stones they come across, even if they are the coarsest, if not, alas, the most foul sludge!

Excesses of wealth, particularly in the medical field, where the remarkable discoveries of Dr. Paul Carton, submerged by an overabundance of medical literature, are known and

used only by a privileged few, with the general public having to content themselves with the brutal — and sometimes dangerous — methods of an increasingly materialistic and mechanical medicine.

Excessive wealth, *enān*, which, according to "the man in the street", even if he is "cultured", to a continual scattering of the self, to a dispersion of the mind torn in all directions by too many divergent activities, by too many images to be viewed with a distracted glance, by too many discordant words or sounds poured into every avenue by the radio or loudspeakers.

Excessive power, so blatant that humanity is literally terrified; and yet the general public, which knows only about the sinister Hiroshima bomb in *this* field, is far from suspecting all that is being plotted in the silence of laboratories. For the time seems very near when the "Prince of this World" will perform wonders capable of seducing even the elect, if that were possible!

This brings us to the second half of the New Age, when the "Iron Race" will reign. It is then, without a doubt, that the Hindu prophecy will also be fulfilled: "The castes are confused, the family no longer exists".

The caste system is disappearing. This is already well underway in many countries, even in India, due to the gradual spread of democratic institutions across the globe. While everyone seems to agree on this point, the same cannot be said for the imminent disappearance of the family. Are we not, in fact, saturated with family associations of all kinds, whose leaders are convinced that, thanks to them, the family is saved? Let us take a closer look. First of all, why these family lines? The answer is clear: if heads of families felt the need to stick together, it was undoubtedly because the very existence of the family was threatened, and the problem now is precisely how much longer this ancient institution can resist the forces of disintegration.

solutions provided by modern civilisation, as well as the incessant encroachments of the State. It is clear that these seeds of dissolution will become extremely virulent as soon as "the charity of the many grows cold" and moral corruption becomes widespread. Then the "totalitarian" state will replace, willingly or by force, the failing family or not, thanks to so-called "social" organisations which are already preparing to take children away from their legitimate parents. (In this regard, we would like to point out, according to the U.C.S.S. review, the decree published in the Official Gazette of 5 November 1945 which, among other provisions, transferred to the state the protection of all children receiving family allowances). As for where all this may lead, it suffices to recall certain past achievements of Hitler's Germany, as well as certain very recent events in so-called "popular" democracies. During the Nazi era, there was a men's labour camp and a women's camp neighbouring each other in a forest with... a maternity ward nearby. More recently, during the famous Prague trials, a woman and her child demanded the death of their father and husband! In China itself, where the religion of the family had been so powerful until then, "people no longer even react when they see children insulting and cursing their parents before they are shot in the back of the neck; what is more, the contagiousness of the example leads other young people to the same ferocity".

These are just a few of the indications that can be deduced from the application of the laws of historical movement to the coming new era; but that is not all, for we must also consider, at least briefly, the important question of social evolution. Undoubtedly, the future popular age will be entirely marked by the "promotion of the working class", which implies first of all a real change of regime

a transition from the old capitalist and bourgeois society to the future proletarian (or Directorial) society. But we may first ask ourselves what the actual process will be.

Dufay, *L'Etoile contre la Croix*.

of this social evolution, and then what will happen at the end of the last Age (i.e. after the year 2000), when the popular caste, worn out and corrupted by the exercise of power, will in turn have to leave the stage.

In France, the question of political change is already acute, and sooner or later, willingly or unwillingly, it will have to be resolved. How? We do not know, but it would be possible to see clearly in this area if partisan passions and foreign ideologies gave way to cold reason enlightened by the lessons of experience. What does this mean in practice for France today, if not to move from a bourgeois society, which was suited to a parliamentary system, to a future 'proletarian' society, which obviously requires a different form of government, as can be seen not only in the various people's democracies beyond the Iron Curtain, but also in Spain and Portugal. It suffices here to consider the cases of the USSR and Portugal, whose evolution we have already studied and which underwent simultaneous regime change between 1917 and 1928. The example of these two countries is particularly interesting because, some thirty years ago, they had to resolve the problems that we are facing today. The question remains as to which of these two peoples, whose evolution has been so different, can serve as a valid example for us. We must naturally take into account first of all the community or kinship of civilisation and then the manner, good or bad, in which the two peoples have been governed. As far as the kinship of civilisation is concerned, there can be no doubt: Portugal is very close to France, whereas Russia, on the contrary, has been very distant from it for a very long time.

The Portuguese share with us their ancient Latin civilisation and Roman Catholicism, and our thinking has always had a profound influence on their destiny. By

• This was written in 1954/55.

However, since the Mongol invasion of the 13th century, the Russians have always lived apart from us, not only in terms of religion but even more so in terms of their Slavic and Byzantine civilisation, with Mongol influences. The tsars borrowed only Europe's inventions and technology, while striving to prevent the penetration of Western ideas. The October Revolution of 1917 further widened the gap that Kerensky might have tried to bridge, so that the USSR is further removed from us than the imperial Russia of Nicholas II was. Under these circumstances, what can we take from Russia that is worthwhile? Marxist ideology? But it is of German origin and dates back to 1848, which is quite old; moreover, it has failed because Soviet Russia is not moving towards socialism, but towards a managerial society. The conclusion is therefore indisputable: if France wants to look elsewhere for a concrete example of regime change that is valid for itself, i.e. in a Catholic and Latin country, it should look to Portugal. There would be no shame in this, since that country drew inspiration for its recovery from very French ideas. Nor would there be any risk, because since around 1928, Portugal has perhaps been the best-governed country in the world: did President Salazar not succeed in restoring his country's finances and maintaining peace, both internally and externally, in an atmosphere of healthy freedom, without "purges" or concentration camps? The same certainly cannot be said of the USSR!

These are already the practical, concrete lessons that can be drawn from studying the Movement of History with regard to France's immediate future; but what will happen afterwards? If we reason by analogy with previous ages, and more particularly with the current bourgeois age, the last years of which we are now living through, we can assume that after an initial restoration in all areas, we will then see an increasingly rapid decline and corruption. This means that at first the upper castes, the priesthood and

The aristocracy, then the bourgeoisie, will continue to exert their beneficial influence (and it would not be difficult to give recent examples of this), then this influence will gradually fade away and the proletariat will undoubtedly succeed in governing alone; this will be the era of the integral directorial society, or if you prefer, of "technocracy", but a purely materialistic technocracy that will no longer be humanistic and tempered by Christian charity or by very human feelings of honour and loyalty.

From *the Advent of Pro/éminence to the Revolution of Nihilism*

The two previous chapters, devoted to the fourth and final Age of the Modern Cycle (1958-2030), were already included, as I said, in my book *The Future Era and the Movement of History*, written between 1953 and 1955 and published in 1956. Even a cursory comparison between what was predicted and what has come to pass today is highly significant.

Is this a political issue? If so, it is clear that the Fifth Republic corresponds more or less to the Salazar-style regime that I predicted fifteen years ago, since the presidential and plebiscitary system — i.e. the popular system established in 1958 by General de Gaulle — has become the norm and even seems to be accepted as such by the majority of the nation. It was even accepted immediately, which proves that it arrived at the right time and at the right moment; I mean: at the moment determined by the Movement of History. Previously, between 1940 and 1942, Marshal Pétain had already attempted to reform our political institutions, but it was far too early, as the cycle of bourgeois parliamentarianism had not yet come to an end; it had begun in 1814 and was to last 144 years, until 1958. This was indeed the case, and moreover, since that date, we have been well governed, as I had announced, by politicians from the bourgeoisie, and not by workers, because the renewal that we see at the beginning

A new cycle implies the predominance, at least in theory, of the upper castes.

In 1958, in fact, *it* was not the union leaders who took the power abandoned by a failing Parliament, but, behind the imposing and authoritarian personality of General de Gaulle, the "Directors" who took power, and it was one of them, Mr Georges Pompidou, former director of the Rothschild Bank, who succeeded the General as President of the Republic in 1969. Under these circumstances, the "Directorial Revolution" discussed in the preceding pages becomes possible, even probable, since there is already an organisation, the Jean Moulin Club, whose stated goal is a programme similar to the so-called "Directorial Revolution":

The Jean-Moulin club — which has some 500 members, most of whom are aged between 25 and 30, almost all of whom are graduates of the E.N.A. plus a small number of older members, some of whom are from the private sector — has set itself the task of devising a coherent and comprehensive reform of French society.

These ideas have been expressed in several books published by Seuil. They inspire both the new society announced by Mr Chaban-Delmas and that of Mr Servan-Schreiber. And for good reason: both are linked at the highest level to the Jean-Moulin Club; both have members of the club as their immediate advisers...

What is the common ground between Mr Chaban-Delmas and Mr Servan-Schreiber? It is the thinking of Mr Jean Monnet.

The Jean-Moulin club serves as a workshop for studying the various ways for applying this thinking.

The initial idea is that American-style capitalism is outdated, that it generates waste through competition, and that it should be replaced by rationalisation, coordination, in a word, a 'Plan'.

But the Jean-Moulin Club has asked the question (notably in one of its books, *Le sociulixme et l'Europe*): Is planning possible in a single country?

The answer is no. Hence this extension: planning must be extended to the whole of Europe, which implies the introduction of supranationality, i.e. the existence of an authority capable of imposing the plan on the various participating countries.

In this planned space, the mechanisms of the capitalist economy must be changed. This does not mean generalised nationalisation: it means giving power to a body of leaders specially trained for this purpose, freed from the constraints of
} ro}riété.

11 It is a question of transcending both capitalism and communism by rejecting the equation common to both, according to which: "Property is power" (since in the capitalist system property belongs to individuals, and in the communist regime communist system to the state, in both cases by virtue of the right property). (...) The Communist Party has already found the label *guette*: for it, it is state monopoly capitalism and it is the enemy...

The Ahumanité is therefore stepping up its analyses and warnings... and the Communist Party, to guard against surprise elections, is resuming its dialogue with the Socialist Party on the one hand... and with Michel Rocart's P.S.U. on the other.

The Communist Party is seeking a common programme which, on the domestic front, could lead to an irreversible 'Marxisation' of the economy. It would make its own policy thereafter.

We can see from this quotation, and particularly from the last few lines, that the alternative: Workers' Promotion or Managerial Revolution 7 is still relevant today, while we wait for the Refutation of Nihilism, which we will discuss shortly, to perhaps bring everyone to agreement. That said, let us return to my predictions.

I also predicted (around 1954), regarding the years that have passed since 1958: "Perhaps we will then experience the richest and fullest years in all of history."

Valeurs actuelles, 6 April 1970, pp. 10-12.

human". I did not realise how right I was, since, since Christmas 1968, interplanetary travel has moved from the realm of dreams to that of reality. To this we must add that the acceleration of technical progress has led to a considerable rise in the standard of living for all social classes, at least in countries that are not kept in a state of scarcity by bureaucratic socialism. But that is not all. Not only have the people of the 20th century seen their material wealth and power grow — one is tempted to say dangerously! — but also their possibilities for knowledge, since the scientific domain continues to expand. Even in a field as difficult to access as pure metaphysics, the key to all truly transcendent knowledge, it turns out that today, at least in the West, researchers have access to the best texts of Eastern wisdom, texts that were very difficult to obtain only fifty years ago. For the time has come when "knowledge will increase", as Scripture had foretold!

This is the positive, bright side of the beginning of the fourth quarter and the last Age of Modern Times, a beginning that can, to a certain extent, be compared to the Golden Age, or better still to the Renaissance. But all this will be short-lived, because the inevitable movement of history will eventually drag the masses down below the working class, when the latter, worn out and corrupted in turn by the exercise of power, will be eliminated by newcomers. This raises a serious question: what can be found below the fourth caste, currently reigning supreme, the "working class" or popular class*? What we will find, or rather what we do find, we now know, since the Chinese Cultural Revolution of 1967-68, or, which amounts to the same thing, since the student riots of May 1968 in Paris. The Chinese Red Guards had attacked not only what remained of the ancient Chinese tradition, but also the Soviet "revisionists", who propose to eliminate the working class. Chinese Red Guards attacked not only what remained of ancient Chinese tradition, but also the Soviet "revisionists", who proposed to adapt industrial society to the level of the fourth caste, that is to say

of the working class. In some countries, notably Germany, workers reacted strongly against revolutionary Trotskyist or Maoist students who attacked the instruments of production. We can conclude that the cultural revolution of the Red Guards in Beijing, like that of the German and French students, was directed against the fourth caste, which was accused of wanting to settle comfortably into the "consumer society". It must be said, although the students are completely unaware of this, that the working class lived for a long time, and until very recently, in great poverty and deprivation; and this explains the current appetite of the working class for the material goods of which it has been deprived for so long.

That said, we need to know what these protesting students want. In fact, apart from destroying the current society, which is nihilism, they do not know what they want; so it is not them we should be questioning, but their mentor, in this case the philosopher Marcuse, who expounded his theories in *One-Dimensional Man*.

According to Marx, the revolutionary army would be represented by the working class, which, exploited by the system without benefiting from it, could and should overthrow it when it was sufficiently weakened by its internal contradictions. But the capitalist system did not follow the Marxist model. On the contrary, it strengthened itself by integrating the working class through adjustments, concessions and higher living standards: "The working class has lost its revolutionary will in advanced industrial societies."

So Marcuse turned to those who constitute "the underclass of the conservative working classes", "the substratum of outcasts and outsiders, other races, other colours, the exploited and persecuted classes, the unemployed and those who cannot be employed"... They alone, because they are without hope, can oppose the current domination with "the Great Refusal".

See *Benfí?és*, Oct. 1968, p. 98.

In practice, these theories, which did not have much success among the "outcasts", found an unexpected audience among certain students, and this is how Rudi Dutschke in Germany and Cohn-Bendit in France managed to provoke the unrest we know so well, particularly that of May 1968 in Paris. Why? More precisely, why did the "leftists" rush into this "Revolution of Nihilism" in which the "pariahs" and "outcasts" were to be the actors? I would first like to point out that, in the fairly recent past, the term "Revolution of Nihilism" was applied to Nazism by the German writer Rauschning, which at the time (in 1939) might have seemed exaggerated. But events soon proved the author right, since when Hitler disappeared from the stage of history at the end of April 1945, he left nothing but ruins behind him.

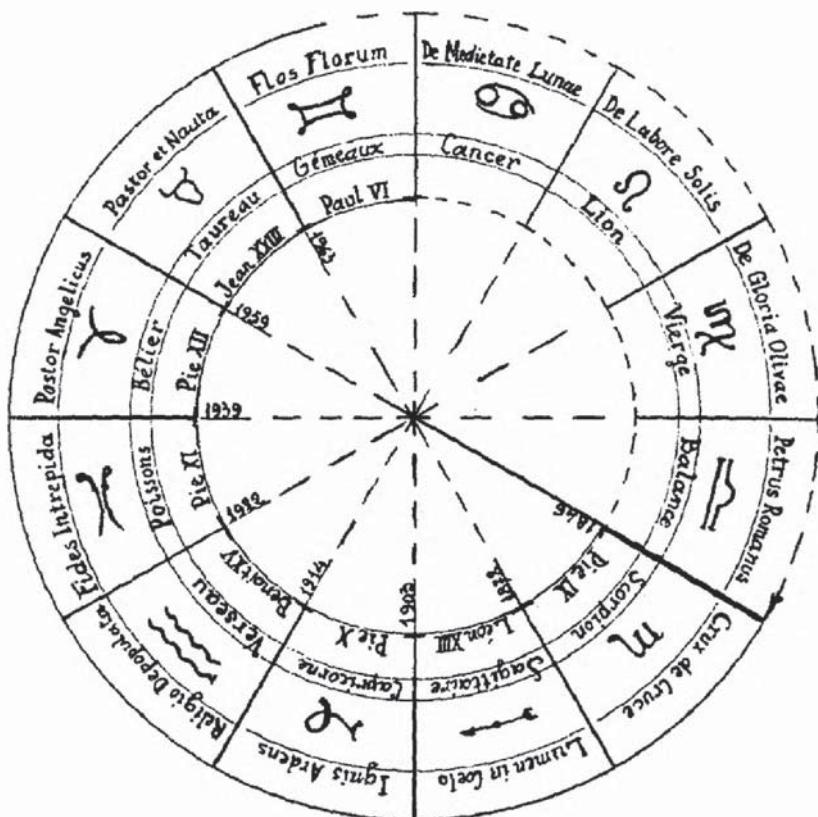
With a few exceptions, Nazi leaders were recruited, it has been said, from among the desperados of a society in distress; but who are the left-wing students of the West and the Chinese Red Guards? The answer to this important question is unequivocal: everywhere, in the Far East as in the West, including America, they are young people cut off from their original traditions, and therefore uprooted, who have risen up against established society. This is nothing new: around 1929, at the École Normale Supérieure, the small group that gravitated around J.P. Sartre was already espousing such nihilistic ideas, as Simone de Beauvoir reminded us in her memoirs. Then, in accordance with the law of social generations enunciated by Mentré, these ideas spread and led, in France, to the student riots of May 1968. Naturally, this revolutionary attempt was a fiasco (only the workers benefited, thanks to the Grenelle agreements), and it could not have been otherwise for such a premature attempt. But beware: here again, we must take into account the law of generations; this means that in 35 or 40 years' time, the young people who took part in the Cultural Revolution, both the Chinese Red Guards and the students

Parisians will occupy key positions in society, giving them frightening opportunities to realise their desire for general upheaval.

In short: if the perpetrators of the Cultural Revolution were recruited from among teenagers (in China) or students (in the West), it is because these young people, for one reason or another, had been cut off from all tradition; they are truly declassed, uprooted individuals who have rejected themselves, or have been rejected, below the level of the working class, that fourth caste which still has morals, traditions and common sense — precisely what these gregarious beings, these "outcasts" on whom the Antichrist will be able to found his empire when the time is ripe, lack.

THE PROPHECY
of
SAINT MALACHY

Liturgical cycle of the last 12 Popes



(Total duration: approximately 180 years)

Predictions and prophecies. The zodiacal cycle of the last twelve popes, according to Safrit Nlalachie

Since the First World War (1914-1918), works and collections of prophecies relating to the End Times have multiplied, accompanied by comments or interpretations that are sometimes highly dubious, to the extent that René Guénon referred to this phenomenon as "the deception of prophecies": "The word 'prophecies' can only properly be applied to announcements of future events contained in the sacred books of different traditions... In all other cases, its use is completely abusive, and the only word that is appropriate is 'predictions'. These predictions may, moreover, be of very diverse origin..." (*Le Règne de la Quantité*, ch. 37). To these remarks, we should add the wise counsel of Saint Paul: "Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. On the contrary, test everything and retain what is good..." René Guénon himself did not proceed otherwise, since he devoted an article to the "Prophecy" of the Popes, known as St. Malachy's, which we will discuss shortly. As for the Other predictions have come true with remarkable accuracy: for example, the prediction attributed to Saint Odile, which accurately described Hitler's rise to power. However, it was only after the event that this text could be understood. The same can be said, it seems, of the Prophecy of the King of the World that F. Ossendowski published in his book:

Beasts, Men and Gods, circa 1923. In France, no one had paid any attention to it, but in Germany the text had been taken seriously; too seriously, alas! Certainly, in 1945 the Prophecy had been fully realised, since the "Big Three" announced in Yalta and Potsdam had appeared, but Germany was not among them! Certain works published between the two wars also mentioned the coming of a "Great Pope" and a "Great Monarch". For the first of these two figures, the problem was solved by John XXIII, for whom all the pontiffs who had governed the Church since Pius IX were great popes. As for the "Great Monarch", we are still waiting for him, and we may wonder, along with René Guénon, whether he is not in fact Christ the King of the Second Coming; but let us wait a few more years before making a definitive judgement... That said, we must turn to the "Prophecy" of the Popes, which presents a very great challenge for our times.

interest.

The Prophecy of the Popes was first published in Venice in 1595 by a Benedictine monk, Arnold Wion, in a hagiographic collection of the Benedictine family, the *Sigouw Vitae*. The text of the prophecy appears there following the story of Saint Malachy, an Irish bishop and contemporary and friend of Saint Bernard, who died in 1148 in Clairvaux and who was also a Benedictine monk. Due to the late publication of this Prophecy, which appears to date from 1143 at the latest, there has been much speculation, rightly or wrongly, about its authenticity, which is quite unnecessary. In fact, it contains certain traditional elements that are found in the *Divine Comedy*, but which were to be completely lost by the end of the 16th century. It should be noted that Dante, the poet of the *Divine Comedy*, claimed Saint Bernard, his spiritual master, as his inspiration. Saint Bernard was also a friend of Saint Malachy.

That said, I would point out that St. Malachy's Prophecy is based on the number 111, which is the number of mottos, the first dating from 1143. We can see that the history of the Church can be divided into periods of 111 years as follows:

1° - From the year 55 (the "traditional" date of the beginning of the Church) to the first motto "Ex Castro Tibéris", the following time period elapsed: 1143 — 33, 1110 years = 10 X 111 years.

2° - From the first motto to the middle motto: "Axis in medietate signi", the following period elapsed: 1587 — 1143 444 years 4 x 111 years.

3° - From the middle motto to the end of the prophecy: same duration, i.e. 444 years: 4 x 111 years. This gives a total of: 18 x 111 years 1998 years; or, for the approximate date of the "End of Time":

33 -1- 1998 2.031

The concordance with the date of 2030 that we have obtained using other methods is remarkable, given the uncertainty that will remain until the end as to the precise moment of the Second Coming.

After these remarks devoted to the theoretical calculation of the duration of the Church, we will now consider certain singular aspects of St. Malachy's Prophecy, namely, first of all, the 45th motto, then the first hundred mottos as a whole, and finally the zodiacal cycle constituted by the last twelve mottos.

To understand the meaning of motto XLV: De Inferno praegnanti, which applies to Pope Urban VI (1378-

1589), we must remember that the fourth and final phase of the Age

Dark (duration: $\frac{6,480}{10} = 648$ years) was supposed to begin in

in 1382. That is precisely during the pontificate of Urban VI, whose motto "De Inferno praegnanti" means "From Hell in labour"! In France, this last phase, which could be called "the Dark Age of the Dark Age", began during the reign of Charles VI, whom history has called "the Mad".

We must now return to the Prophecy as a whole. It lists 111 mottos, to which must be added that of the

last pope: "Petrus Romanus", giving a total of 111.

-1- 1, 112 currencies. However, as Piobb, quoted by René Guénon, noted: "Of the 112 mottos, the first 100 are divided into 54 -1- 2 x 55, just like the cantos of Dante's Divine *Comedy*, while the last 12 form a separate series, corresponding to the zodiac." As for the 54th motto, "De fascis Aquitanicis", it refers to Clement V (130J-1314), whose reign marked an important turning point in history. On the one hand, the abandonment of Rome in favour of Avignon as the seat of the Papacy was to provoke the Great Western Schism later on, while, on the other hand, the dissolution under Clement V of the Order of the Temple founded by Saint Bernard brought the Christian Millennium (310-1310) to a close and ushered in the Modern Cycle. Furthermore, it so happens that the 34th canto of Dante's Divine *Comedy* is specifically devoted to the journey through the depths of Hell. Finally, one last remark: according to Jean Reyor, this same number 34 appears in Dürer's famous engraving, "Melancholia", in the form of a magic square associated with the "Black Sun of Melancholy", and indeed, in another prophecy (by Joachim of Fiore) quoted by Roger Duguet in *Autour de la tfare*, the oracle consecrated to Clement V says this: "He will lose his brilliance under the dark Sun."

We now turn to the extraordinary series of the last twelve mottos, which together symbolically correspond to the zodiac and, consequently, to a liturgical cycle. This seemingly strange correspondence between the twelve signs of the zodiac and the last twelve popes (which one might be tempted to compare to an apostolic college) can be explained by the fact that these twelve pontiffs are successive representatives of Christ, whose main symbol is the sun: "Sol Justitiae". According to this point of view,

Traditional Studies, ri' 247 p. 43.

² *Etudes irndi/ionnrfhei*, no. 267 p. 96: 'A curious example of zodiacal symbolism'.

The last twelve popes thus appear as twelve different images of a single spiritual sun, or as the twelve successive stations or zodiacal positions of that same sun, and it follows that the succession of these twelve reigns will also correspond to that of the seasons of the annual liturgical cycle, since the latter also follows the zodiacal rhythm of the seasons.

We said earlier that the series constituted by the last twelve popes was extraordinary; in this we are merely repeating the words of Cardinal Roncalli, who was to become Pope John XXIII:

"As for recent times, no self-respecting man or writer dares to dispute the absolute superiority — I do not say pontifical, but simply human — of the Popes who have honoured the Chair of Saint Peter for more than a century and who bear the venerated names of Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI and Pius XII."

To this already long list we must obviously add John XXIII himself, whose brief pontificate shook the world, and finally Paul VI, who has already proved himself to be the equal of the greatest. Should we conclude from all this that, since Pius IX, the history of the Church has changed direction? Certainly yes, since during the reign of this pontiff (1846-1878), the Papacy definitively lost the temporal states it had held since the Carolingians. This temporal loss was compensated for by an increasingly broad spiritual audience, so that the pontificate of Pius IX can be considered by Christians, first as the "end of a world", or rather of that form of the Church, specifically Roman, which dated back to the 8th century; and then as the beginning of a "new era", which could be called a "Great Year", lasting approximately 180 years, and which will be characterised by an increasingly assertive trend towards universality and ecumenism. This "Great Year" whose twelve "months" are represented by the twelve signs of the zodiac, symbolise

Quoted in the journal *Soleils*, Spring I, p. 3, La Colombe ed.

the twelve reigns announced by the twelve last mottos of St. Malachy's Prophecy, namely: Crux de Cruce, Lumen in Coelo, Ignis Ardens, Religio Depopulata, Fides Intrepida, Pastor Angelicus, Pastor et Nauta, Flos Florum, De Medietate Lunae, De Lahore Solis, de Gloria Olivae and Petrus Romanus. The term "Great Year" must obviously be understood here in the spiritual sense of a liturgical cycle whose "months" would be the different liturgical seasons, as we shall now see.

To begin with, we must first understand the true meaning or, if you prefer, the *raison d'être* of this pontifical "Great Year". We have already pointed out its ecumenical tendency, but this is only the consequence of a deeper, even essential cause, which Jean Reyor will reveal to us: "If the Prophecy of the Popes has an authentically traditional origin, it obviously has in view, not political and social contingencies, but events of a spiritual nature which, although they are in reality the most important of all, are not necessarily apparent, even though at the very end of the cycle they must nevertheless manifest themselves externally, we would readily say with increasing extensity."

What characterises the very *last* part of the cycle is not so much, in fact, the progressive decline that is the very expression of the cyclical law in general, but rather, at the same time as the apparent unfolding of this decline, the traditional process of recovery which, prepared invisibly at first, then visibly, must lead to the reign of the Paraclete, the advent of the glorious Christ, and the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem upon the earth. This process, like any cyclical development, can be traced on the zodiac.

That said, we will now move on to a brief study of the correspondences between the signs of the zodiac, the seasons

Jean Reyor: "A curious example of zodiacal symbolism" in: *Traditional Studies*, No. 267, pp. 102 and 103. All quotations following the above text are taken from this excellent study devoted to the Prophecy of the Popes.

Turkish and the last currencies of St. Malachy's Prophecy, starting with "Virus de Cruce," which Jean Reyor rightly places under the zodiac sign of Scorpio, whose main meaning is "mtirt" in all areas. In all areas, starting with nature, since it is the cold, grey season when the trees shed their leaves and the meadows lose their greenery, while the churches are draped in black for All Souls' Day. The motto "Crux de Cruce" also evokes the idea of death, since the Cross, for Christians, is a sign of suffering and death, but of a death followed by resurrection, which perfectly sums up the reign of Pius IX (1846-1878). This pontiff, in fact, saw the death of the temporal Roman Church, which was far too Roman and too temporal – even sensual during the Renaissance – and which would eventually become ossified. But the resurrection following this death would be the work of the next reign. Resurrection, return to the Light, such is the profound and more precisely spiritual meaning of the motto "Lumen in Cœlo" (Light in Heaven) of Pope Leo XIII (1878-1909), placed under the sign of Sagittarius, which governs the season of hope of Advent: "In medieval traditions, Sagittarius represents Enoch and Elijah, who did not pass through death. The sign is therefore the 'abode of immortality' and also the 'temple of the Holy Spirit'. Its hieroglyph is the arrow, a ray of heavenly light, whether that of Apollo or that which, in certain chivalric organisations of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, symbolised each of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. This new "descent of the Spirit" from the Pope "Lumen in Cœlo" (Light in the Sky) was described as follows in *La Mission de l'fnide* (pp. 119-121) by Saint Yves d'Alveydre: "... Since Irshou and since Çakya Mouni, for the high Agarthian initiates, the Ring of Cosmic Light... meant, by its closure upon itself, that divine Providence opposed the Anarchy of the General Government of the Earth with the Law of Mysteries, the defence against delivering outside the treasures of Science, which would only have lent Evil an incalculable force.

In

In 1877, a divinely memorable date in my life, Brahatma witnessed the following with his own eyes... The cosmic ring slowly moved apart... Successively, it split apart under the gaze of the High Priest and then his assessors. Suffice it to say that these splits stopped at the number 12...".

After consulting the Celestial Intelligences on the meaning to be given to these Signs, the Supreme College of Agartha, guided by its venerable leader, recognised *them* as a direct order from God announcing the gradual repeal of the Law of Mysteries. Let us add to this that the work cited above, *The Dark Satellite*, dates the gradual distancing and therefore the diminution of the evil influence of the "Dark Satellite" to the year 1881. Admittedly, in this 19th-century faith, where proud scientific rationalism already believed itself triumphant, this new infusion of the Spirit went almost completely unnoticed, but the main architects of today's intellectual and traditional revival had already come into the world, some, such as Victor Poucel and Maria Montessori, shortly after 1870, and the greatest of them all, René Guénon, in 1886 (like Marcel Jousse).

The traditional recovery began, timidly at first, under the pontificate of Saint Pius X (1903-1914), whose motto *Ignis Ardens* (the Burning Fire) corresponds to the sign of Capricorn, which in all traditions is *the gate of the gods* and *the gate of the great mysteries*, and therefore the gate through which the 'celestial fire' descends upon the earth. In the liturgical cycle, this is the season of Christmas and Epiphany, when the Church celebrates the coming and manifestation of Light in the world; this Light which, with Pius X, takes on the aspect of a " Burning Fire": "Ignis Ardens". On this subject, we must make a remark: we recalled earlier that René Guénon, who was for the Elite a "Light in the sky", was born (1885) during the reign of Leo XIII or "Lumen in Cœlo"; Similarly, Simone Weill, that great mystic burning with love, love of neighbour and love of God, was born in 1909, under Pius X: "Ignis Ardens" or "Burning Fire"!

Saint Pius X was succeeded under the winter sign of Aquarius, in the middle of winter (21 January - 21 February), by Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), whose motto "Religio depopulata" was only too well confirmed, first by the bloody massacres of the Great War (1914-1918) and then by the Bolshevik and anti-Christian Revolution of October 1917. This reign, so marked by mourning, corresponds to Aquarius, no doubt because of "the malevolent aspect of Saturn, which has its astrological domicile in Aquarius," but also because Aquarius governs, as we have said, the heart of winter, during the liturgical season of Septuagesima, when the priest wears purple vestments.

For the following reign, that of Pius XI (1922-1939), the correspondence between the motto "Fides Intrepida" (Fearless Faith) and the zodiac sign of Pisces seems obvious, since the fish is both the symbol of Christ and of Christians. The

connection between Faith and the Fish is clearly evident in a 3rd-century Christian epitaph: "Faith led me everywhere. Everywhere it served me a spring-fed fish, very

large, very pure, caught by a holy Virgin: she gave it to eating with friends. In the cycle of seasons, the sign of Pisces marks the end of winter, during Lent, which prepares us for the coming Easter. Next come the two "Shepherds": Pius XII (1939-1959), known as "Pastor Angelicus" (the Angelic Shepherd), and John XXIII or "Pastor et Nauta" (Shepherd and Pilot) (1959-1963), under the respective signs of Aries and Taurus. Now, "these two signs bear the names of two animals which, in symbolism, are considered par excellence as 'leaders of the flock', that is, as shepherds". To this interesting remark by Jean Reyor must be added the announcement of a "new springtime for the Church" by the late Pope Pius XII, whose **reign** is precisely placed under the sign of Aries (21 March - 21 April), which marks the beginning of spring. This springtime renewal of Pâques was continued during the subsequent reign of John XXIII by the new Pentecost that was the convening of the Second Vatican Council.

And so we **come** to the current pontificate of Paul VI, or

"Flos Florum" (the flower of flowers); this motto "is placed on the sign of Gemini (2 May - 21 June), which corresponds to the part of the year when flowering occurs." To this we must add: during this liturgical season of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, when the roses bloom. This must be understood from a spiritual point of view: the "new springtime of the Church" of the reign of Pastor Angelicus, followed by the "new Pentecost" of Pastor and Nauta, must be matched by the "spiritual flowering" of the current reign of Flos Florum.

For the next two mottos, "De Medietate Lunae" and "De Labore Solis", the zodiacal correspondences are obvious, since the first motto, "De Medietate Lunae", evokes the sign of Cancer, the astrological domicile of the Moon, and "De Labore Solis" evokes the sign of Leo, the domicile of the Sun. With these two signs, Cancer (21 June - 21 July) and Leo (21 July - 21 August), we are in the heart of summer, the season of fruit and harvests, but also of storms. The last of the 111 mottos, "De gloria Olivae" (Of the

Glory of the Olive Tree), naturally falls under the sign of Virgo: "In Christian tradition, the Virgin Mary, manifestation of the Heavenly Virgin, is frequently symbolised by the olive tree, the tree that produces the branch of peace, the fruit of gentleness and holiness." In the liturgical cycle, the sign of Virgo (21 August - 21 September) governs the end of summer, when we celebrate the Nativity of Mary (8 September). Finally, we must also remember here that at the origin of the Church, the Virgin precedes and announces Christ, whom she must bring into the world. This is still the case in the Prophecy, since the motto "De gloria Olivae", placed under the sign of the Virgin, is followed by these final lines which very explicitly announce Christ's Second Coming:

During the final persecution of the Holy Roman Church, Peter the Roman will sit and shepherd his sheep amid great tribulations, after which the City of Seven Hills will be destroyed and the terrible Judge will judge his people.

The end of this text, "the terrible Judge will judge his people," evokes...

that obviously the "Last Judgement"; however, in all traditions, the idea of "judgement" is attached to the sign of Libra, which thus corresponds to the last pope of the Prophecy, "Petrus Romanus". On the other hand, in the calendar, the sign of Libra corresponds to the first month of autumn, the month of the grape harvest, when the fruits of the earth are gathered, and this too is a symbol of the Last Judgement evoked by the liturgy in the feasts of Christ the King and All Saints.

In summary, the final "Great Year" in the history of the Church, during which the last twelve popes announced by the Prophecy of Saint Malachy are to succeed one another over a period of approximately 180 years, is unfolding according to the majestic order of a zodiacal and liturgical cycle that would begin on All Souls' Day with "Crux de Cruce" (Pius IX) and ending on the feasts of Christ the King and All Saints' Day, with Peter the Roman, the last of the popes, who will see the Glorious Christ return "with great power and majesty" to judge the living and the dead.

Note on the Prophecy of the Popes. - Here is the text provided by Wion in his *Lignes Vitae* (Part I, Book II, Chapter XL, p. 307).

Dunensis (episcopus). Sanctus Malachias Hibernus, mona-chus Bencorensis et archiepiscopus Ardinacensis, cum aliquot annis sedi illi praefuisse, humilitatis causa archiepiscopatu se abdicavit anno circiter Domini 1137, et Dunensis sede conten-tus, in ea ad finem usquae vitae permansit. He died in the year 1148, on the 2nd of November (Saint Bernard, Life of Saint Malachy).

There are three letters from Saint Bernard to him, namely 315, 316 and 317.

Scripsisse fertur et ipse nonnulla opuscula, de quibus nihil vidi praeter quamdam Prophetiam de Summis Pontificibus; quae, quia brevis est, et mon dum quod sciam excusa, et a mul-tis desiderata, hic a nobis apposta est.

(Translation of the last two paragraphs: There remain three letters from St Bernard addressed to him, 315, 516 and 517.

It is reported that he himself wrote a few short works, of which I have seen nothing except a certain prophecy about the Supreme Pontiffs; as it is short, has not yet been printed, as far as I know, and is desired by many, it has been included here by us):¹

Prophetia S. Malachie Episcopi de Summis Pontificibus

- 1 - Ex castro Tiberis: Celestine II (1143-1144)
- 2 - Enemy expelled: Lucius II (1144-1145)
- 3 - Ex magnitudine montis: Eugene III (1145-1153)
- 4 - Abbas Suburranus: Anastasius IV (1153-1154)
- 5 - De rure albo: Adrian IV (1154-1159)
- 6 - Ex tetro carcero: Victor IV (1159-1164) (Antipope Octavian)
- 7 - Via Transtiberina: Paschal II I (1164-1170) (Antipope)
- 8 - De Pannonia Tusciae: Callixtus III (1170-1177) (Antipope tipape)
- 9 - Ex ansere custode: Alexander II (1159-1181)
- 10 - Lux in ostio: Lucius III (1181-1185)
- 11 - Sus in cribo: Urban III (1185-1187)
- 12 - Ensis Laurentii: Gregory VIII (1187)
- 15 - De scola exiet: Clement III (1187-1191)
- 14 - De rure bovensis: Celestine II (1191-1198)
- 15 - Cornes signatus: Innocent III (1198-1216)

- 32 - Ex undarum benedictione: Boniface VIII (1294-1303)
- 33 - Goncionator Patarens: Saint Benedict XI (1303-1304)
- 34 - De fasciis Aquitanicis: Clement V (1305-1314)

- 45 - De inferno praegnanti: Urban VI (1378-1389)

The prophecy itself contains only the mottos. The names of the popes have been added to facilitate research.

73 Axis in medietate signi: Sixtus V (1585-1590)

74 - De rore Cœli: Urban VII (1590)

95 Ursus velox: Clement XIV (1769-1774)

96 - Peregrinus apostolicus: Pius VI (1775-1799)

97 - Aquila rapax: Pius VII (1800-1823)

101 Crux de Cruce: Pius IX (1846-1878)

102 Lumen in cœlo: Leo XIII (1878-1903)

103 - Ignis ardens: Saint Pius X (1903-1914)

104 - Religio depopulata: Benedict XV (1914-1922)

105 - Fides intrepida: Pius XI (1922-1939)

106 - Pastor Angelicus: Pius XII (1939-1958)

107 - Pastor et nauta: John XXIII (1958-1963)

108 - Flos florum: Paul VI (1963-1978)

109 De medietate lunae (1978)

110 De labore solis (1978-?)

111 De gloria olivae.

(112) In the final persecution of the Holy Roman Church, Peter the Roman will sit, who will feed the sheep through many tribulations; after which, the seven-hilled city will be destroyed, and the terrible Judge will judge the people.

Les Signes des Temps:

(it)ème as we have just seen, the reign of the last pope

Throughout history, Petrus Romanus, while not imminent, is only a few decades away from us, and it follows that certain precursory signs of the End Times must already be perceptible, among which we will first mention the acceleration and convergence of history, and then the current trend towards uniformity that is sweeping across the entire planet.

I ") The acceleration of history greatly intrigued our contemporaries, who could not see the cause. Yet this had long been explained by ancient authors in texts describing the succession of the Ages of Humanity, Ages whose progression is not uniform, but increasingly rapid. Here we find one of the fundamental laws of the Movement of History, the descending gradation of durations, symbolised in the Bible by the respective proportions of the Colossus with Feet of Clay. The same law is veiled under another symbol in North America and India: according to Sioux mythology, at the beginning of the cycle, a bison was placed in the West to hold back the waters that threaten the earth. Each year, this bison loses a hair, and in each of the four cyclical ages, it loses a foot. When all

its hair and four feet will be gone, the waters will flood the world again, and the cycle will have come to an end. The same myth is found, in a remarkably similar form, in Hindu tradition: each foot of the bull Dharma — the divine Law — represents an age (yuga) of the total cycle (maha-yuga), and in each age the bull withdraws one foot. During these four ages, spirituality gradually darkens until the cycle ends in a cataclysm; primordial spirituality is then restored, and a new cycle begins. The Native Americans, like the Hindus, believe that in our time the bison — or bull — is standing on its last foot, and is almost bald. Similar myths are found in other traditions.

This myth of the bison (or bull) that loses one of its legs at the end of each age symbolises not only the decreasing proportions: 4, 3, 2 and 1, of the durations of the four phases of a cycle, but also the progressive imbalance that takes hold of the world over the ages, an imbalance that obviously goes hand in hand with the acceleration of their history.

The acceleration of history is not only visible in the political and social spheres, but even more so in the scientific and technical fields. We generally speak of "scientific" or "technical" progress; it would be more accurate to use the term "change" here, which is much more appropriate, since perfection, in the technical field, is timeless and can be found in the Parthenon as well as in Roman roads, Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, and the modern aeroplane. "change", which is much more appropriate, because progress in the technical field is timeless and can be found in the Parthenon as well as in Roman roads, Hagia Sophia in Constantinople or Notre-Dame de Chartres. What we see, in reality, are changes in science and technology, and we know that since the Industrial Revolution of the 18th century, the pace of these changes has continued at an increasingly rapid rate. Perhaps the most spectacular example of this is transport. Under Napoleon I, in 1810, people still travelled as they did in Caesar's time, i.e. on foot and on horseback. By contrast, in 1860, under Napoleon II, people were already travelling by rail, and by the end of the 19th century they were travelling by aeroplane.

saw the appearance of the first motor cars, closely followed (around 1910) by propeller planes, then aerodynamic cars and jet planes in 1950, and finally interplanetary rockets in 1969. The pace of change here would be easy to follow: all we would need to do is plot the curve of the increase in the speed of transport from 1810 to 1970. Does the exponential slope that this curve is currently taking not mean that the moment is near when, as Oti , time will be transformed into space?

The same increasingly rapid pace can also be seen in what is known as "progress" in applied sciences; chemistry is the best-known example, due to the atomic bomb and also DDT, but it is not the only one. However, the very serious problem posed today by this frenzied acceleration of inventions and their increasingly dangerous applications is that of the sorcerer's apprentice: are humans still masters of the infernal powers they have unleashed? This is by no means certain, and scientists themselves are very concerned about this issue; some of them have made their concerns public.

I t is not only the relentless acceleration of technological progress that

is entirely and dangerously new, but also, complementarily, the current convergence of history. Until the Renaissance, the different continents of our planet each lived at their own pace, often unaware of each other. There was one civilisation, and therefore one European history, one Chinese history,

one Hindu history, one Japanese history, one American history and a multitude of local African and Oceanic histories. Then, after Christopher

Columbus' voyages, the Americas were conquered by Europe and integrated into its destiny; later came India, then Africa and Oceania.

China itself, although it remained independent, opened up to European ideas and inventions and thus participated in the evolution of the modern world. Modern Western civilisation thus expanded to the limits of the planet, and no people, no continent

has not escaped him. Even the recent nationalist uprisings in Africa and Asia are fomented by Westerners or inspired by Western ideas. The result is that old traditions are disappearing almost everywhere, whether in China, India, Africa or America.

Something similar happened in the ancient world at the time of the Roman conquest. The ancient local cults, once so powerful, degenerated into superstitions, and it was precisely this fact that greatly facilitated the expansion of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Similarly, the current obscuring of various exotic traditions under the pressure of modern materialism could ultimately prepare minds for the future triumph of the Universal Church that the ecumenical movement is preparing. This would explain the profound reason for the convergence of history, not only in terms of the various national cycles that seem to be coming to an end at the same time , when "the time of the nations will be fulfilled" — but also in terms of the general standardisation of life on the planet, as if all the inhabitants of the universe were preparing to merge into a single people.

2) From material uniformity to spiritual unity.

One of the most remarkable consequences of the "Convergence of History", and in any case the most visible and tangible, is reflected in the current trend among all peoples towards a certain uniformity, not only material, but also psychological, and therefore political and social.

This can be seen first and foremost in the field of clothing , since Western fashions have come to prevail on all continents. This question of clothing is of great importance from the point of view of popular mentality, since heads of state such as Peter the Great and Mustafa Kemal Pasha began the modernisation

of their respective countries by first forcing their subjects to dress in the European style.

After clothing, architecture is also becoming more uniform, at least in the new neighbourhoods being built near large factories and port facilities, because heavy and light industry from Western countries is establishing itself everywhere, in Africa as well as in South America, in China as well as in India, where Gandhi's prestige has been unable to prevent the gradual extinction of traditional trades, overwhelmed by the tide of mechanisation.

The global expansion of modern industry, along with that of trade, inevitably led to the parallel development of communication routes and means of transport, which also had to become standardised, sometimes very quickly: as a result, certain countries that were once inaccessible are now served by regular air routes.

This material standardisation is gradually leading to social standardisation: mechanisation and large-scale industry are effectively replacing the old rural crafts with the proletariat of the working-class towns, that is to say, with a new society of men without caste or tradition, with the significant name of "the masses".

To complete this general levelling, it was still necessary to at-dulling intelligence. Recent inventions have greatly facilitated this task: cinema, radio and television, by penetrating everywhere, have contributed powerfully to standardising the mentality of the masses, while, for their part, modern universities have played the same role for the educated classes, spreading Anglo-Saxon ideas of democracy and parliamentarianism, or socialist and Marxist ideologies of German origin, throughout all countries, leading to the gradual disappearance of the old traditional states, supplanted by parliamentary or "popular" democracies.

We can therefore envisage a fairly near future in which, at the lowest level, that of the masses, the

Quantity, the uniformity of the human race, which must certainly not be confused with its spiritual unity, for that would be, on the contrary, the Great Parody of this spiritual unity, or even Spirituality in Reverse. It is written, in fact, in the Gospel, concerning the Second Coming: "When He (Christ) returns, will He still find faith on earth?"

This future uniformity of the human race at the lowest level, that of the masses, of quantity, could therefore appear to be an extremely frightening possibility if it were without hope. But here all traditions teach us that this very uniformity will constitute the favourable condition for a new "Descent of the Spirit" that will bring about the regeneration of the whole of humanity, for it is then that there will be "one flock and one Shepherd". This, of course, refers to the Golden Age of the future Cycle, but an ecumenical "prefiguration" of this future spiritual unity of the human race must first be realised under the guidance of a Precursor.

seur: the Mahdi.

Another consequence of the trend towards uniformity that should be mentioned here is the current confusion between the sexes that can be observed in the West. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between boys and girls, since they dress and style their hair similarly, which led one journalist to write: "Are we not moving, through social desexualisation, towards a psychologically and physically asexual world? ". The answer to this question may be found in an apocryphal Gospel: "To Salome's question, 'When will the Kingdom of God come?', the Lord replied, 'When you destroy the garment of shame, and when two become one, and the masculine and the feminine are no longer as the masculine and the feminine.'

This, of course, will only be fully realised in the future Golden Age, which is certainly not far off, since some people, nudists for example, are already living there!

René Guénon, *The Legacy of France*, Ch. XXXIV.

Conclusion - towards the end of time

In 1970, we are only 60 years away from the End of Time. That is not very long, because the years pass by terribly quickly; but it is a lot when we consider the many spectacular events that will unfold between now and then, events that we can try to predict much more accurately now than we could sixteen years ago, when I wrote *L'ère*

The doctrine of social generations (by F. Mentré) allows us to logically predict what the next 30 or 40 years will be like. To do this, we need only discern the main trends that are already shaping the future of humanity.

There are currently four such trends, namely
namely:

- 1) A revolutionary trend in the style of "Front populaire", inspired by communism.
- 2) The great ecumenical movement that is leading the Churches towards unity.
- 3) A deep desire for peace among peoples.
- 4) A recent revolutionary trend known as "leftist", inspired by Maoism or anarchism.

As these different trends emerged at different times, they will consequently come to fruition at different times, which we can calculate approximately, assuming that it takes around 40 years for an idea to become a reality. As an example, we generally cite the case of the Revolution of 1789, which broke out 41 years after the publication of J.J. Rousseau's *Social Contract*; we can therefore expect the same to be true for the ideological or spiritual trends listed above. From this, we can already conclude that the "Popular Front" of May 1936 could well attempt to seize power during the current decade (1970-1980), which is more than ever the ultimate goal of the French Communist Party. Only God knows what will happen: only time will tell! But we are at the beginning of a new cycle, which implies spiritual renewal and not regression to the level of bureaucratic communist atheism.

While there may be uncertainty about the realisation, at least for a short time, of communist dreams (around 1976, or perhaps earlier), the same cannot be said for ecumenism, which emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War. Its realisation, which can be taken for certain – because it is announced by an evangelical prophecy – should occur, together with peace, around 1990. But who will be its architect? The "great monarch" of Western mystics, or the Mahdi, whom Muslims are still waiting for? On this subject, I would point out that the middle of a cycle often corresponds to the reign of a "great monarch"; examples: Charlemagne, during the Christian Millennium (310-1310), the exact middle of which, 810, falls at the end of the reign of the great emperor of the West; Saint Louis, in the middle and at the height of the fourth and last Age of the Millennium; and finally Louis XIV, for the entire Modern Cycle (whose chronological middle, 1310-360-1670, corresponds to the height of the reign of the Sun King). If this is still the case, the height of the future "great monarch" could be around the date: 1958-36 1994 (I would remind you that the du-

rēc qliibale tlū 4^{“““} ct last Age of the Modern Cycle is 72

aux, rl oI> a bim: 2 - 36 .

1 l'ai il i r }iotl, it will be remembered that the mottos of the two pro-i fouts }>u}irn s<int, from a}rés Saint Malachy: "De medietate lu-eur", rt "Itr l*ihorc solis*"; which the prediction known as "Saint t lilllr" clearly confirms. This "prophecy" which described •" , mourring the end of World War II until the invasion of Germany was finally over.

"The i>in len }icii} >1cs will recover what they had lost and i}i irli}tie t lii ise de Jiliis. The region of Lutetia will be saved, with its blessed mountains and devoted women, the i>itliitit t>iiis niitont believed in its demise. But the men au-i'oil v ii <fr trllen ib>ominations in this war that the génér-riii kinn n'rn will never want again. Woe, however, to those who do not believe in the Antichrist, for he will bring forth new Meilrl red. *Then the era of peace under the iron will have arrived, and we will see the two < <trac.r J< the moon reunite with the cross, for in those days*

*/t.i hi>mmes ejrayts will worship God in truth and the sun will shine
ū'u ri tclat iriacoutumé".*

The only thing that is clear from this text is that: 1) during the reign of the next pope (whose motto will be: "De medietate lunae") ecumenism will also extend to Islam (the two horns of the moon will meet at the cross); 2) during the following reign (motto: " De labore solis") humanity will enjoy great peace (symbolically: the sun will shine with unusual brightness). To this we can add that only the Mahdi awaited by Muslims will be able to unite the Cross and the Crescent.

The complete realisation of ecumenism was announced, I said, in the Gospel: "There are other sheep that are not of this fold, but they will hear my voice. Then he

This is what the American clairvoyant Jane Dixon seems to announce in her commentary on her vision of 5 February 1962 (according to R. Montgomery, *A Gift of Prophecy*).

there will be only one flock and one Shepherd." (Gospel of the Good Shepherd). Saint Paul also returns to this subject, specifying that it is only *when all nations have entered that Israel will be saved. Then the end will come.* This passage is clear: the global realisation of ecumenism (and therefore the triumph of the universal Church (under the pope "De labore solis") will precede the final conversion of Israel, which the Prophecy of Saint Malachy announces in the 111th and last verse: "Ee gloria olivae" (the glory of the olive tree), and we know that the olive tree is one of the symbols of Israel.

According to the above text from Saint Paul, the conversion of Israel precedes the End Times. Similarly, in Saint Malachy's prophecy, the motto "De gloria olivae" is immediately followed by the following very explicit lines: "During the final persecution of the Holy Roman Church, Peter the Roman will sit and lead the sheep amid many tribulations; when these are over, the city of seven hills will be destroyed, and the terrible Judge will judge the people."

These final tribulations of the Church will, moreover, be nothing more than the consequence and manifestation of this fourth trend of our time, which manifested itself first in China (from 1956 to 1967) through the Cultural Revolution of the Red Guards, then in the West, starting in 1968, where we saw the spread of a veritable epidemic of student revolts from Poland and West Germany to Mexico, passing through France. We have seen above what this Revolution of Nihilism suggests; we will retain this: iiiii ~~clà~~ tlc l'an 2000 (i.e. from 2000 to 2010), when the young Chinese radicals of 1966 (they were 15 years old at the time) took control of the levers of power in their immense country, they wanted to impose their Cultural Revolution on the world, starting with Europe, thus unwittingly paving the way for the final advent of the Antichrist — as St. Hildegard of Bingen had announced in her prophecy.i t's: "A pagan nation inhabiting in a region ~~l'biit iin~~ sera jealous of the happiness of Christians and will want to destroy it.

country and devastate everything, spreading misery and vice everywhere... The Roman Empire will collapse... The Roman Church will be torn apart by a terrible schism, so that everything will be ready for the coming of the Antichrist.

Enoch and Elijah will return to confound Satan's party and strengthen Christians in their faith. That is why Christians will go to martyrdom, which the Son of Perdition will have prepared for them, as if for a feast. The world will be purified by fire... After the Last Judgement, the terror of the elements will cease... then they will all shine forth, renewed, in the greatest beauty.

Note on Ecumenism

In 1986, the only lasting achievement of ecumenism concerned the rapprochement between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. On the other hand, the gap between Christianity and Islam has widened since the Iranian revolution. There is no hope either on the Hindu and Buddhist sides, so that it is probably only at the End of Time that Christ's prophecy will be fulfilled: "There will be one flock and one Shepherd". At the End of Time, or rather at the beginning of the future Golden Age?

*Summary: The Countdown to the Last Judgement, according to the
Signs of the Tewpr*

Preliminary explanations. First and foremost, I must reiterate this: While it is possible, as I have shown and demonstrated throughout this book, to establish a fairly precise chronology of the End Times, the exact date of the Great Event itself, in other words the Second Coming, remains unknown: "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (*Mark 13:32*). Here is why: the transition from one great cycle to another is a moment that is, in a sense, timeless, when the "cosmic wheel" stops turning, and where "Time is no more". But if Time is no more, how could this moment appear in any chronology? All we can say is that, under the reign of the last of the Petrus Romanus, the End will be near, and it will become imminent when Rome is destroyed. But as this last event will take place during the reign of the Antichrist, who will be "the most deluded of all beings", he and all those he has deceived with his prestige will firmly believe that they still have "a thousand years" ahead of them. As in the time of the Flood, only the Elite will know that the time is near for the renewal of all things. on a new earth and under new heavens."

For, and this is the second point to be made here, this

It is not towards the "End of the World" that people are rushing, but according to the words of Saint John the Evangelist, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (*Rev. 21:1*), towards a "new world" that will be better than ours. The downward process of the "Fall" only takes place within the cycle of a Humanity, but when such a cycle is completed, then, after the final regenerative cataclysm, the cycle of a new Humanity begins again, but at a higher level.

However, as I have already explained previously

— but one cannot overemphasise this point — the coming End of Time also represents, for the entire Kalpa or cycle of a world, the 'Middle' or 'Centre of Time', hence its particular importance, especially since it is then that the transition from the lower world of the Asuras (or demons) to that of the Devas (gods).

This explains what is known in Christian tradition as the "Last Judgement". When this occurs, the present Humanity will have realised all its possibilities, including the lowest ones, and completed the entire cycle of its destiny; it will therefore have to enter another cycle. This means that each of the beings who have belonged to the present Humanity will now have to leave it (since it will disappear forever) to pass on to another state of existence. But not all will be able to do so, and that is why it is written that some of them — the reprobates — will be thrown "into the lake of fire and brimstone".

The last point to be clarified regarding these preliminary explanations concerns the date chosen for the beginning of the chronology of the Last Days, namely the year 30 AD, which, according to Abbé Crampon, would be the year of the Ascension. In reality, this date is only probable, but not certain (just as we do not know the exact date of Jesus' birth). According to René Guénon, such obscurity is providential, since we do not know the precise date of the First Advent, it will be impossible to determine that of the Second, and we agree with him.

Painting of the Last Judgement by Compte à resoors

Dates	Designation of Events	Countdown
Around 30	Ascension of Our Lord and start of the countdown	
70	Destruction of Jerusalem.	2000 years
310/313	Constantine ushers in the Christian millennium. (Edict of Milan: 313).	
630	Muhammad returns victorious to Mecca.	1720 years
732	Charles Martel stops Islam at Poitiers, approximately.	1400 years
800	Charlemagne is crowned Emperor of the West.	1300 years
1030	The Church reaches its zenith.	1230 years
1143	Beginning of the Prophecy of the Popes: there remain to be killed to go.	1000
1310	End of the Christian millennium and beginning of the Cycle Modern.	888 years
1382	Under Charles VI: beginning of the 4th and final phase of the Dark Ages.	720 years
1430/31	Passion of Joan of Arc, reminiscent of that of	648 years
1490/92	Modern civilisation sets out to conquer the world.	600s
1531	Decline of the Church: beginning of the Protestant schism, approximately.	540 years
1587	Middle of the Prophecy of the Popes: it remains to approximately.	500 years
1598	Edict of Nantes and beginning of the Modern Age	444 years
1670	Heyday of the "Great Monarch", Louis XIV (and Apparitions of Laus).	452 years
1790	French Revolution and beginning of the third phase of the Modern Cycle.	360 years
1814	Beginning of the bourgeois age of the Modern Cycle.	240 years
1846/50	At La Sallette, Our Lady announces the Last Days.	216 years
1877	Time. In Rome, with Pius II, beginning of the zodiacal cycle of the zodiac cycle of the last 12 Popes, approximately.	180 years
1940	Adolf Hitler attempts to conquer the world.	153 years
1944/45	The dawn of the atomic age of rockets and nuclear bombs.	90 years
1958	Beginning of the 'popular' era, the last age of the modern era.	86 years
1970	The countdown is now complete.	72 years
2001	"The Iron Age has begun." 11 remains to be laugh about.	60 years
2030/31	Destruction of Rome and "End of Time".	30 years
	Second Coming of Christ and Last Judgement.'	0 years
		?

Let us ignore the previous remarks about the moment when 'Time will be no more'. That is why we will content ourselves here with approaching as closely as possible the End of Time, but no more. In other words, while I can say that the last Cycle will end in 2030, the date of the Second Coming itself remains a mystery. With these reservations in mind, here is how the countdown to the Last Judgement can be established:

Remarks. As can be easily seen, most of the durations in the previous countdown are derived, by a simple operation, from the fundamental cyclic number:

$$4320 = 2 \times 2160,$$

which is found, accompanied by several zeros, in the Hindu and Chaldean traditions.

Hindu and Chaldean traditions. We have, on the one hand:

$$4320 = 6 \times 720 = 8 \times 540 = 10 \times 432 = 12 \times 360 = 24 \times 180 = 48 \times 90;$$

and, on the other hand:

$$4320 = 18, \quad , \times 240 = 20 \times 216 = 60 \times 72 = 240 \times 18 = 50 \times 86.4$$

Furthermore, it turns out that:

$$648 = 3 \times 216; \text{ and } 2 \times 648 = 1296 \text{ (or approximately 1300).}$$

Furthermore, the numbers 2000, 1000 and 500 relate to the secular cycle, which itself derives from the Jewish 50-year jubilee cycle.)

In addition to the periods of 888 and 444 years, multiples of the number 111 on which the Prophecy of the Popes is based, we should also note this period of 153 years, during which "knowledge will increase". This number, which is the number of fish caught in the miraculous catch (*John*, XXI, 6, 22), has a meaning of "fullness". This means that at the end of these 153 years, "Knowledge" will be complete, because "everything will be revealed"; moreover, the *iiwptire den Plus* will be complete.

will be total, because "everything will be revealed"; moreover, the iiiiwptire den Plus will be complete.

(Jiiiiii an xodiacal cycle of the last 12 popes (duration: 180 ciii eivlron), we see that it began during the reign of Pius IX, when Notre Dame had just announced the coming of the Hu-iiiaultè in the last days: "This is the time of times, the liii tlei Flux" (La Sallette, 1846).

Finally, this period of 200 years separates the Passion of Christ from that of the "Two Witnesses" at the End of Time: 11 i'agl there is a traditional Chaldean cycle, the Saros, whose in-fiiiriire has already been noted several times in history.

f'om'lusion. The above considerations remind us that God created everything according to "number, weight and measure", including the unfolding of history until its ultimate completion: the "Last Judgement".

Complements:

- 1" Refutation of the millenarian error;
- 2) In tirand Monarque.

(The millenarian error, widespread today, consists in placing the Millennium announced by Saint John in *the Apocalypse*, which we have seen began during the reign of Constantine, at the beginning of the 4th century, and ended a thousand years later during the revolt of the French king Philip the Fair against the spiritual authority of his time.

The main cause of the millenarian error lies above all in a sometimes total ignorance of the traditional doctrine of cosmic cycles, which teaches that beyond the coming "End of Time" there must begin, not a simple Millennium, but in reality the Golden Age of the future Cycle; and the duration of this Golden Age will be approximately 26,000 years — and not

Not 1,000 years! It is true that these notions do not appear explicitly in the Bible, and it so happens that the millenarian error is mainly the fault of people who only want to know the Bible, which they interpret very poorly. Millenarianism, in effect, reduces the Glorious Christ of the Second Coming to the level of some ancient potentate, such as Nebuchadnezzar, who inaugurated the ancient millennium, or Constantine, whose Edict of Milan (313) marked the beginning of the Christian millennium. On the contrary, the doctrine of cosmic cycles shows us that the Second Coming corresponds to the precise, exact temporal centre of the global history of the world; and that's not all: the Christic cycle, because it can be divided into a double septenary, thus appears as a recapitulation, or a reflection, of the entire Kalpa or cycle of a world — an immense perspective in which the millenarian error seems ridiculous. Another important point: if the millenarian thesis were true, then it would be mentioned in ancient traditions, but this is not the case. In fact, apart from the Apocalypse, there is no trace of a thousand-year cycle. In particular, Du-puis does not mention it in his table of periods known to the ancients as Great Years, and René Guénon, in his seminal article, "Some Remarks on the Doctrine of Cosmic Cycles," does not mention the 1,000-year cycle. We must conclude that the Millennium is specific to Christianity; more precisely, it is the duration of one of the three phases into which the history of the Church is divided, according to the prophetic vision of Saint John, namely:

- 1) The early era of persecution and the catacombs (30-310);
- 2^o A phase of flourishing and apogee: the Millennium (J10-1310);
- 3) A phase of regression and decline: the modern cycle (1310-2030).

It is this third and final phase that must end, at the same time as the entire Manvantara (lasting 64,800 years), with the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem to earth. On this subject, here is what René Guénon wrote in *L'Esotérisme de Dame* (p. 91):

"At the beginning of time, that is, of the current cycle, Paradise was rendered inaccessible as a result of the fall of man; the New Jerusalem must 'descend from heaven to earth' at the end of this same cycle, to mark the restoration of all things to their original order, and it can be said that it will play the same role for the future cycle as the earthly Paradise did for this one. Indeed, the end of a cycle is analogous to its beginning, and coincides with the beginning of the next cycle; what was only virtual at the beginning of the cycle is effectively realised at its end, and then immediately generates the virtualities that will in turn develop during the future cycle."

This passage clearly means that the end of the current cycle, marked by the restoration of all things to their primordial order, coincides with the Golden Age of the future cycle, which will last 64,800 years, and its Golden Age will last 25,920 years. On the other hand, the same author had specified this in *The Crisis of the Modern World*:

"We are currently in the fourth age, the Mali-juge or 'dark age', and we have been there, it is said, for more than six thousand years..."

If we add that the total duration of the somisre age is 6,480 years, it follows that there can be no question, at present, of a seventh millennium prior to this End of Time, from which we are now separated by only a few decades. But there is **another** source of confusion regarding the

Millennium that we must now dispel: it concerns the "great monarch", whom we have already mentioned previously. The numerous predictions relating to the "great monarch" effectively announce that his mission will be to temporarily halt the modern world's current race towards the abyss, and

This is where some "millenarians" have gone astray. They confuse the Last Judgement with the possible "purifying chilliun" that must precede the coming of the "great iiiinrtjiiv", and they confuse the latter, whose reign is sem rclutvclieii t iiiirt, with the Great Monarch" of the Second Coming. This confusion leads to an excessive prolongation of the period of peace brought about by the so-called "great monarch" to make the dream Millennium come true. For it is a vain dream

rllet, in about forty years' time, the inevitable li*i* de siit*e*»ili*ii* of generations will bring to power the young gei» t*Jiil*, who, from 1966 to 1968, carried out the Cultural Revolution, rt nli*ti*, with them and behind them, the cyclical decline of humanity, temporarily neutralised around the "rincer 91), will take us at an accelerated speed to the inevitable catastrophe, when the history of present humanity will come to an end, after which the Golden Age of future humanity will begin "on a new earth and under new heavens".

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