

Correspondence.

The following third philosophical article was written by Brother Peter A. Droubay and translated by Brother Louis A. Bertrand.

A FEW WORDS ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM EXPOSED BY CH. FAUVET IN LA SOLIDARITE, JOURNAL OF PRINCIPLES. PARIS, 1896-1898.

It is rather difficult to express in a vulgar language the definition of God, as given by Mr. Fauvey. He repels altogether the Christian conception (see our previous article). A personal God is by no means admitted by him—if such a God was in existence, the French philosopher would instantly make Him answerable for the sufferings of His creatures. We shall try to give an account of this new conception of God.

Everything in existence has life in itself. Life pierces all things: animals, vegetables, the earth, the moon, the sun, the stars, in short, every part and particle composing the Universe have life in themselves. Therefore the Universe is constituted of and includes all existences. Now every being possesses its own individuality, but just as any part of the human body can not be affected without the whole body partaking of it, so the beings or members of the immense Universe, are all mutually accountable (solidaires). We assert the same thing, in saying that the earth is defiled by the sins of its inhabitants.

Hence it follows that every being is at the same time individual and universal. Besides every one of them possesses in itself the law or relation which unites its individuality to its universality. Now, if by the thought you concentrate every thing Universal which belongs to all beings in existence, you would have Mr. Fauvey's God—such a conception is, indeed, a rather easy task!

You can perceive, at first sight, that such a God is by no means a troublesome one; people may always be certain that he will never get angry, and that he will not expose himself to the same reproaches that have been lavished on the God of Christendom.

In order to be better understood, Mr. Fauvey describes the Universe by a circle—the beings, or individuals, remain in the circumference; their universality lies on the centre, the radii are the relations which unite the centre, the Universal God, to all individuals, who are so many parts of the circumference. There is a radiation from the centre to the circumference, and reciprocally. In the centre, that is to say in God, the points of the circumference, that is to say the beings or individuals, draw their motives, the elements of their destiny; every being assimilates to himself these elements with more or less power according to his strength and ability; he appropriates them to himself, he transforms them, he imparts to them his own qualities, and he sends them back to the Universal, a kind of reservoir where every special activity draws continually and carries back life.

It is something like what takes place in the human body, between the heart and other parts of the body, with this difference, that the blood, issuing from the heart, imparts strength and life to the utmost parts, and returns vitiated to the heart, while the elements which carry life to the various points of the circumference, return to the centre vivified and enriched with new acquisitions.

You will remark that all that happens is within the bounds of the circle, which represents typically, the whole being, and that nothing exists outwardly, because the Being includes every thing in existence. Hence it follows that the idea of the creation *ex nihilo* (from nothing) ought to be rejected, seeing that nothing can proceed from nothing, and that the Universal (God) which is only one of the aspects of the Being, can not exist without his other aspect, that is the individual, and also the relations which unite them all.

Hence it follows also that the creation is everlasting. "It is a work of development, of progress, of transformation and renewal. Working with God, all beings apply themselves to that labor, whether they know it or not. An indefinitely diversified production agrees with a universally infinite distribution, regulated by a double circulation which in radiating from the centre to the circumference and from the circumference to the centre, incessantly enriches the universal with everything which is produced by the particular; it places in the hands of every co-operator the common capital, and it multiplies the power of each by the sum total of all powers."

A magnificent theory, but rather abstract. In what Mr. Fauvey calls his God sometimes "the soul of the world," sometimes "the sum total of all things." Such a God is only a fantastical being, a mere abstraction. And indeed, how can I represent to myself a being who is impersonal, who is deprived of all kind of individuality, that is to say a being who does not exist? Whatever may be the name you give to this phantom of your fancy, it is absolutely nothing to me. *Cogito ergo sum*, said Descartes, and after him, all philosophers. Therefore, if the act of thinking is the condition of existence, your God does not exist; because, by your own definition, he can not think. The faculty of thinking belongs only to individuals, and your God constitutes the Universal.

And surely such a God is incapable of saving the world. Even though all mankind might accept this definition of Deity, the same amount of sins and crimes would still defile the earth. Indeed, no man is bold enough to pretend that more moral precepts can cure evil. Every thing has been said on morality—Chinese and French, Christian and heathen writers have striven from time immemorial to digest catechisms on morals; this question is now exhausted and the social evil is still progressing. Mr. Fauvey and other eminent publicists vainly labor hard to prove to us that Confucius was a more learned man than Moses, that Socrates, Plato and Aristotle have more skillfully discoursed than Jesus. These dissertations are, me thinks, perfectly useless, they can only contribute to hasten the social dissolution of Christendom. Such were the Greeks of the Low-Empire, who far from thinking to defend strenuously their capital, were engaged in discussing gravely certain points of doctrine when Mahomet II hoisted the Moslem's flag on the walls of Byzantium.

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