

I, Rich Perozich, am as guilty as the next person from time to time of reveries in ideology as defined by Fr. Schall. When I return to Jesus in prayer several times each day, I return to His revelation and the reality of God, and am once again freed from trying to create life apart from him according to my desires which may be innocent reveries or possibly devilish delights. Jesus is the revelation and the reality, not the ideologies of this priest, a pope, a bishop, a politician, an educator, a scientist, etc, all mere men subject to weakness which only can be redeemed by Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Revelation is the truth of what exists, given by our creating God for the edification of man and for man's participation in God's life.

Ideology is an expression of the ideas from the mind of man which are his alone without reference to the Creator. — Fr. Perozich

The Catholic Thing -

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On Ideology

James V. Schall, S.J.

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

The word “**ideology**” first appeared in French. In the 1790s, a gentleman with the wonderful name of Antoine Louis Claude Destutt, Comte de Tracy used it. Marx and Engels in 1846 wrote a manuscript called *The German Ideology* that never found a publisher till 1932 at the German- English Institute in Moscow.

Ideology disconnects us from reality and God's creation

The word itself circles around the issue of whether our minds have any contact with the world *that is*. Much is at stake here. If no connection exists between what is

out there and our minds, then all we know or can know is our own thoughts. And since our minds have no connection with things, we can formulate whatever world that we would like to have. Everybody lives in his own separate world. Our minds have no reality check.

Revelation is often said to be an “ideology”; that is, an arbitrary system of ideas that have no relation to reality.

Ideology and fantasy, however, are not necessarily the same things. Fairy tales and fantasy usually have some grounding in a reality that once was or is yet to be.

Ideology is rather a set of ideas imposed on or taken to be reality whereby what is seen and done takes place exclusively within the mind.

Revelation contains an account of actual events with their ultimate explanation rooted in an existing transcendent order. **Revelation** can be treated as a fantasy, as Tolkien did. But it cannot be considered an ideology. For those who insist that our minds have no relation to things, however, their only option, on hearing it, is to claim that revelation must be just fantasy or another ideology. Revelation does not profess to be skeptical about the existence of an ordered world.

Why bring up any reconsideration of **ideology**? *The world that most people now live in is an ideological world. It is a world whose limits and configuration are*

Ideology differs from fantasy

Schall defines ideology

Revelation is truth. Ideology is mere human desire often influenced by evil.

The current state of the person when Christ is not the center of all things

assembled from their desires of what they would like to be, not to what is.

Ideology allow us to disconnect from reality and propose our desires instead

A reason for this preference of **ideology** can be proposed. To be a consistent ideologue, we must first figure out a way to disconnect our minds from things. Much of modern thought from Descartes on has assisted us in this doubt that we can really know things *that are*. The trouble with existing things, including especially human things, is that, left to themselves, they are already definite kinds of things. They do not themselves configure what they are, but something did.

It is to this latter reality of *what things are* to which our minds are normally directed and which they know once they have encountered and identified them. Today those who hold **revelation** to be true are told that they **must** bring their “ideology” up-to-date. What is meant is that the revelation that is directed to things must be replaced by the ideology that sees no relation between things and mind.

The 21st tendency in the world and among many in the church

Politics legislates ideology to replace reality

The reason why ideology has come to be legislated into the political reality of most so-called modern democratic states is that this ideology does not conform to reality. What has been rejected is reality. What has taken its place is a construct of the mind. In former times, we spoke of people who rejected a proper way of **living** as “sinners.” Today, we insist that no sin exists

Reflected in the Synod in 2014

except the claim that “reality” contains an intelligible order that is given to us for our own good, an order that we can discover with our own minds.

The Bible, Catechism and Prayer will keep us grounded in revelation and reality, even when clergy become ideologues.

We are, as a consequence, forced to lie to ourselves about reality. We have to insist that abortion is not the killing of an actual human life even though every bit of evidence shows that it is. We have to insist that two members of the same sex can “marry,” which is the one thing they cannot possibly do. The list goes on. One denial of an order in things leads to another. We now find it necessary to prevent people from even talking about some radical error that we have made in our understanding of things.

Priests are silenced by bishops and their conferences because of speaking of the revelation and reality over the ideology of many clerics today

What some bishops now call Catholic is whatever utterance comes from them or the Holy Father, even in an airplane interview.

The logical consequence of replacing reality with ideology is that no one has grounds left to correct us in what we do or say. When we evaporate meaning from things, we are in effect insisting that things are not “created,” that they do not find their source in a Creator who is not part of this world, a Creator who, in creating the world, did so with the *Logos*, the Word, in mind,

It is from the fear of finding this “word” in things that forces modern men and women to fall back on themselves, to deny that anything but themselves exists. The ideological world does not conform to reality. It dare not. It must conform only to itself and strive with all its might to prevent anyone from even hinting that

Neither does Holy Church when she deviates into worldly matters and forgets the salvation of souls.

something objective is really out there, something we choose not to know in order that we can, without worry, do what we want.

*James V. Schall, S.J., who served as a professor at Georgetown University for thirty-five years, is one of the most prolific Catholic writers in America. Among his recent books are *The Mind That Is Catholic*, *The Modern Age*, *Political Philosophy and Revelation: A Catholic Reading*, *Reasonable Pleasures*, *Docilitas: On Teaching and Being Taught*, and *Catholicism and Intelligence*.*

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