

# **CHRISTIAN FAITH IN A POST-CHRISTIAN EUROPE: OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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In modern Europe a twofold challenge both of an intellectual and a socio-political kind stands against Christian faith. The first creates a false alternative between a “scientific” worldview and the Christian faith, while the second creates a false alternative between a “progressive” mindset opposed to a seemingly suppressive, fearful, and outdated Christianity. This view is often substantiated by historic or present misconduct of “the church” [1]. Even many Christians are emotionally and mentally immobilized by adopting such views while they try at the same time to argue for Christianity within the mental paths determined by these views. The challenge is therefore to understand and overcome misleading mindsets and misconceptions.

The first obstacle requires a close look at the relation between (natural) science, worldviews and Christian faith. There are unjustified atheistic, or more precisely termed naturalistic, claims about “science” to give an explanation of every aspect of the universe starting from its origin to the appearance of consciousness, culture and religion [2]. The problematic aspects of such claims have not only been pointed out by Christians [3, 4], but have also troubled secular philosophers [5].

The second obstacle is deeply rooted in the tradition of Marxism and uses the claims described above to justify a reshaping of society. If matter and natural laws are all there is, then man is just a graduate animal and a system of highly perfected economic production should produce a higher type of human beings [6]. As is well known, this approach not only produced economic disaster, but also about 100 Million people were killed by communist regimes during the last century [7]. Consequently, Neo-Marxism or Cultural Marxism changed its focus towards the culture of the societies it attempts to influence. Here, the Frankfurt School in Germany [8, 9] and the activities of its

protagonists in the US [6, 8] have profoundly influenced western societies. Although today's ideological scenery is far from homogeneous, its successors have deeply shaped modern western thinking. Due to the abuse and redefinition of terms such as e.g. scientific thinking, rationality, freedom, justice and equality, many Christians tend to be obliged to the corresponding agenda without realizing the underlying sources and goals [10].

As the concepts described above are deeply destructive, not only Christians are getting increasingly aware, that something is going wrong [11]. Therefore, there is increasing opportunity to demonstrate that the Christian faith not only gives a well-founded basis for reasoning but also is a valid foundation for individual freedom (not only for Christians) and the welfare of a society [12, 13].

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