

“Hail Mary?” Not Quite

Christians to the Lions!

anon.

1986

In March Jean-Luc Godard's film "Hail Mary" came to Detroit's Wayne State University, drawing sell-out audiences and violent demonstrations from christian-fascist groups. The film is a modern retelling of an already boring (and over-told) tale, the events leading up to the birth of Jesus (the little guy attached to crucifixes). In the film, Joseph is a taxi driver, the angel Gabriel is a foul-mouthed drifter, and Mary is a gas station attendant. Despite a few nude scenes of Mary, the film is rather tame, eliciting such reactions by people who saw it as "actually rather sensitive" and "a snore." True to form, the pope has condemned the film as sacrilegious.

During the week prior to the showing of the film by WSU's Cinema Guild, reactionary Catholic protesters picketed the university campus with signs like "Death to the Blasphemers" and "What Would Christ Say About This Film?" Those people we talked to who had had exchanges with this beady-eyed, slack-jawed, inbred crowd from Detroit's east side suburbs, had strange stories to tell—such as the campus worker who got into an argument with them, to hear such pearls as, "If you were in Russia the communists would string you up by your balls and torture you." When he replied, "I guess they'd do the same to you," the answer was, "Yeah, but I'd love it." After a while the christians got so upset they dismissed him as a "dirty christian-hating Jew," and the worker (an Italian-American) found he had to give them wide berth to avoid being harassed.

The evening of the showing, several hundred of god's elect showed up with banners emblazoned with blue crosses, a statue of the virgin surrounded by plastic flowers on a litter, a burly nun who gave every appearance of being a female impersonator, and U.S. flags and crosses. One woman harangued the filmgoers, "I wish they'd bring back the Inquisition, you'd all burn at the stake!" When some neighborhood-people showed up and unfurled a banner saying "U.S. Out of Central America," some christian thugs attacked the banner and a brawl ensued. One fascist and one of the antiwar activists were taken into custody by the cops while the crowd howled for "commie blood" (though it appeared that the christians shed more of theirs in the fight). "It was really weird," someone told us afterwards, "these kids were screaming 'Go back to Leningrad,' and I said, 'Whatever happened to Moscow?' but they didn't get it. They were in a frenzy."

The film which has caused all the furor (in New York some 5,000 demonstrators were said to protest it) has been labeled blasphemous by christian reactionaries, but it is not nearly blasphemous enough for our tastes. But even if it only indirectly insults the sensibilities of these good christian citizens, it deserves our gratitude. All state religions disgust us, but living in a "christian nation" makes us relish with special glee and scorn any attack on this Elmer Fudd-like christian god, his insufferable son and his ectoplasmic mascot the Holy Ghost. As one of our favorite rock and roll songs of all time goes (to the accompaniment of appropriate oo-wah-wahs and she-bop she-bops), "Jesus on the cross /The blood is dripping /Get another nail /His head is slipping." Frenzied christians can only bring one thing to mind: the arena. Bon appetit!

The following declaration and open letter to christian civilization was sent to us from a group calling itself the Mad Queen Society of Incendiaries.

“God is a pig.”

—Andre Breton

The film *Hail Mary* has been declared blasphemous by religious authoritarians. If anything, this film is not blasphemous enough. We spit on god—with Bakunin, we declare that “The idea of god implies the abdication of human reason and justice; it is the most decisive negation of human liberty.” What is beautiful, loving, and yes, even sacred in us can only be repulsed by state religions, in particular the judeo-christian-islamic complex which has unleashed all manner of atrocities on the world. Even if this slobbering and blood-soaked monster existed, it would be necessary to abolish him.

CHRISTIANS! Your god is the enemy of human freedom! Your religion is the sigh of the oppressed and is utilized everywhere to rationalize slavery and misery. The essence of your religion is the antithesis of human freedom: people on their knees, begging for mercy and trembling in fear of punishment. It follows that this god is the image of the patriarchal autocrat; his rule is tyrannical, hierarchic, bureaucratic. Under the dictatorship of this senile oppressor any personal or individual relationship with the cosmos and its beauty is impossible; it must be mediated by priests, a fossilized gospel, and routinized rituals. Any ambivalence is suppressed—one is either wholly the property of this astrological gangster, or damned. Because the religion itself reflects the structure of the state, it comes as no surprise that christian bureaucrats—ministers, popes, priests, and other such swine with only a minuscule number of exceptions—have historically been on hand to bless the ammunition when contending empires march off to war and conquest.

PEOPLE! The judeo-christian-islamic state religion is the enemy of nature. The judeo-christian fear of and hatred for the natural world is well-known to anyone who has read history. For the Old Testament Israelites, living in tents was a curse, and the wilderness, rather than being a lush garden or sacred space, was a horrible realm of the devil to be loathed, to be conquered and despoiled. Streams, woods and wild places are desacralized by the christian tradition. The older animist traditions, in which the entire world—stones, plants and animals—is alive, is replaced by an abstraction in the sky. Thus throughout christian history it has been not only permissible but necessary for the christians to conquer the world and remake it in their own repressive, distorted image. The murderous invasion of the Promised Land by the Israelites fleeing from slavery in Egypt becomes the model for all future christian conquests, particularly in America, where millions of native people were killed along with hundreds of millions of animals who did not fit into “God’s plan” for the “Elect.” The christian fears and dreads the wilderness, the land, the night, so he has tried to establish “dominion” over the world with a series of scorched-earth crusades. Pagans, “savages,” wolves, nature-worshippers, witches, nonconformists, alchemists, poets, seers, forests, all have come under attack, all have been put to the torch and the bulldozer. And in the act of violently repressing the wilderness, christians have correspondingly repressed all that is wild-and free in themselves. Christian civilization is profoundly denatured, robbed of animal truth, of genuine spiritual light. It has become so distorted that it can only respond to the other with enormous crimes—methodical and elaborately perfected technological forms of murder and plunder to repress its own inescapable dread. Christian civilization is doomed.

WOMAN! The judeo-christian-islamic god and religions are your enemies! During the time of the original community, before christian civilization and its plagues, our Mother was the Earth and our Father was the Sky, and the natural world, all the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, were our family. Wisdom resided in dreams and visions, and women were among the greatest visionaries and dreamers. Woman was a spiritual center, and birth and death were elements in an organic cycle. The land was female, and life was intimately associated with planting, gathering and animal migration cycles. The world had emerged from a goddesses’ womb, and the first man was her son, and later her consort. In the judeo-christian bible one can see the counter-revolution, the patriarchal-statist destruction of the original community with the subsequent subjugation of woman to male power. In the biblical falsification of the earlier myths, a new story is told of a male deity who first creates man, then woman from the womb of the man—an obvious reversal of the tradition of the goddess. It is not accidental that in all christian societies woman is the slave of man, his property, a breeding animal for the purpose of carrying on his inheritance; she never belongs to herself. She is either a virgin or a whore, depending on her status in or her response to male power. Women who respect themselves should have nothing but the most visceral aversion to this phallocratic religion and its slave-trading godhead.

LOVERS! The christian religion is the mortal enemy of the body! Because christians hate and fear the body, woman, the night, the other in themselves; because they have violently repressed every manifestation of physical love, of ecstasy; because their myth is based on the horrid concept of sin and guilt and the necessity of work; they are the enemies of the body and of pleasure, and hence the enemies of a whole and healthy life. Christians believe that work is the punishment for original sin, and that drudgery—rather than laziness, poetry, music, dreams—brings wisdom. They have suppressed millennia-old traditions of sacred dancing, which are universal among primitive and tribal societies. They believe the flesh best clothed in barbed wire and chains, rather than by the flesh of one's lover. Their denial of love has led to the murderous fantasies against women which are so prevalent in this society. They have taken up arms against sexual freedom; they have distorted love to such an extent that a violent and sinister libertinage has emerged as a pseudo-opposition to their repression. But true love beckons, and we must heed its call. Love demands that we taste of the forbidden fruit, that the flesh be true to itself, that flesh and spirit remain one and refuse the hideous separation imposed by religion.

THIS GOD IS THE ENEMY OF THE SPIRIT! Hatred for nature, freedom, love, and our animality can only lead to the most bleak and spirit-destroying neurosis. This neurotic life has been crystallized in modern civilization. The madness that technology and science have posed as a resolution of this plague, is in actuality the result of the christian desacralization of nature and its crusade against the wisdom of dream, its pogrom against shamans, witches, healers. The unambiguous and absolutist gospel has led to the disembodied, alienated scientific "fact," destroying the possibility of genuine human meaning in this meaningless world. The christians now fear that their authority is being eclipsed by scientific rationalism, a completely instrumentalist cynicism. But it is their own joyless masquerade which has brought it about.

"You say that you believe in the necessity of religion," wrote Nietzsche to the godly. "Be sincere! You believe in the necessity of the police." The christian god is a cop which must be overthrown before true salvation—the reconciliation of the body and spirit, woman and man, humanity and nature—can be achieved. Love, poetry and freedom cannot coexist either with the state or with any state religion. We must dare to eat the forbidden fruit of the Marvelous. To christian civilization, we say: you have been advised. We have every intention, along with millions who conspire with us, of transgressing your hideous law, of abolishing your state and religion, of breaking free of your entire mystico-technocratic anthill. We will be free, we will dance upon your bones, we will drink aphrodisiac elixirs from your chalices, our covens will bring the Goddess through your decaying temples as we prepare to replant our sacred groves. Your history is reaching its end and the coyotes and the ravens are returning. Your wooden crosses will soon begin to sprout leaves and their sculpted christs will become praying mantises. Your children are turning against you as the spirit of the land reclaims what is hers. Our love shall vanquish yours.

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