replying to the censor, von Schaper, Marx draws heavily on the Bible (MECW 1:282–85; MEW 40:394–97). In the midst of dealing with criticisms that the paper was "irreligious," Marx cites Luther:

> If Luther is not blamed for having attacked, in defiance of emperor and realm, the sole mode of existence of Christianity at that time, the Catholic Church, in a form that was even unbridled and exceeded all bounds, should it be forbidden in a Protestant state to advocate a view opposed to current dogma, not by isolated frivolous invectives, but by the consistent exposition of serious and primarily German science? (MECW 1:284; MEW 40:395)

If such criticism was good enough for Luther, Marx argued, it is certainly good enough for us! After all, as he writes elsewhere, "there is a press which he will hardly want to subject to censorship: we refer to the *holy press*, the *Bible*" (MECW 1:144; MEW 1:40).

Second, Marx's allusions are directed against the hypocrisies of the ruling class, such as Friedrich Wilhelm IV's efforts to enforce the Prussian "Christian state" or the ruling class's antics. For instance, Moses may have said. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" (Deut 25:4). But the pious lords of Germany say on the contrary: "Serfs should have a big wooden board fastened round their neck, so that they can't use their hands to put flour into their mouths" (MECW 33:400). Indeed, opponents within the communist movement were also not spared, especially if they drew on the long tradition of Christian communism. Wilhelm Weitling, the "father" of German communism (Weitling), attempted to prove that "Jesus Christ was the first communist and his successor none other than the well-known Wilhelm Weitling" (MECW 39:296; MEW 28:230).

Apart from anti-clerical comments – such as "compared with this Christian cruelty, how humane is the ordinary penal theory that just chops a man's head off when it wants to destroy him" (MECW 4:179; MEW 2:190) – a significant number of allusions are economic. Perhaps the best example concerns political economy, the "most moral" of all sciences, with the principal moral being self-renunciation:

> The less you eat, drink and buy books; the less you go to the theatre, the dance hall, the public house; the less you think, love, theorise, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you save – the greater becomes your treasure which neither moths nor rust will devour [den weder Motten noch Raub fressen] – your capital. (MECW 3:309; MEW 40:546)

Later, in *Capital*, Marx would use the Bible as a commodity for exchange as he develops his theory of C-M-C, or indeed biblical motifs in attempting to uncover the secret of the theory of value. Thus, the mediating function of value is comparable to the way the "sheep's nature of a Christian is shown in his resemblance to the Lamb of God" (MECW 35:62; MEW 23:66).

Finally, Marx often invoked the Bible when speaking of personal problems. It may be a rotten tooth, in which he follows "Christ's precept 'if thy tooth offend thee, pluck it out'" (Matt 5:29; MECW 40:122; MEW 29:125). Or, in reference to perpetual money problems, Marx pants "for money as doth the hart for cooling streams" (cf. Ps 42:1 = MT 42:2; MECW 38:179; MEW 27:129), or the family itself is often "by the rivers of Babylon" (Ps 137:1; MECW 38:273; MEW 27:543). In using the Bible so, Marx begins to touch on a political ambivalence, expressed best when he identifies with the first humans, if not the serpent, in Gen 2–3. While the Rhine Provincial Assembly sees itself on God's side in this story, warning against taking what is forbidden (freedom of the press, democracy, republicanism) Marx and those with him take the other side: "the devil *did not lie to us then*, for God himself says, 'Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil'" (Gen 3:22; MECW 1:168; MEW 1:65). Like the first humans, "*we* negotiate today as *then*" for the fruits of the tree of knowledge.

In response to claims that governments or kings rule by divine sanction, Marx retorts:

> *English history*, however, has sufficiently well demonstrated how the assertion of divine inspiration from above gives rise to the counter-assertion of divine inspiration from below; Charles I went to the scaffold as a result of divine inspiration from below. (MECW 1:156; MEW 1:51)

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Roland T. Boer

Marxism, The Bible and

1. Beginnings. Marxist biblical criticism begins with Friedrich Engels. After a youthful religious commitment, which included endless debates with his friends over biblical interpretation, Engels maintained a life-long interest in the Bible and the history of Christianity. His first major shift into this later phase is visible in his work on the Peasant revolution of 1525, with a focus on Thomas Münzer (1850). Engels acknowledges the Bible's importance, although he situates developments socio-economically and argues that Münzer's biblical language was a cloak – appropriate at the time – for political and economic concerns. Engels later made a more substantial argument that early Christianity was a revolutionary movement, although he earlier published some preliminary forays – drawing on the radical biblical critic, Bruno Bauer – focused on the Apocalypse (1882, 1883). The final result was "On the History of Early Christianity" (1894–95). In this work, Engels argued that a) early Christianity's followers were slaves, day laborers and the unem-

ployed urban poor; b) it had many similarities with modern socialist movements (schisms, false prophets, difficulties raising finance); c) it eventually took over the Roman Empire.

However, Engels's biblical analysis was somewhat thin. It fell to Karl Kautsky, a leader of second-generation Marxists, to engage extensively with biblical criticism and texts. After an initial assessment of early Christian communism (Engels 1895: 16–34), Kautsky published the lengthy *Foundations of Christianity* (1908). Kautsky drew heavily on the latest (German) biblical scholarship, leading him to be wary of written texts and to tread carefully in historical reconstruction. After detailing the difficulties in reconstructing a historical Jesus, Kautsky sought the economic and political background of both Greco-Roman society, with its slave economy and imperial state, and ancient Israel, defined by trade, the impoverishment of the peasantry, Babylonian exile (for religious beliefs and literature), and later movements like the Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots, and Essenes. Far from a reductionist analysis (Meeks: 3), Kautsky did not explain everything in terms of the economic base, but included economics, class, politics, culture, and ideas in a comprehensive Marxist analysis.

In his analysis of the Essenes, Kautsky approached his most significant but controversial topic: early Christian communism. If the zealots evinced the active, revolutionary side of religious communism, the Essenes developed a rural-communal alternative. Yet this was a communism of consumption rather than production, a hermeneutic principle Kautsky had already developed in his earlier *Forerunners*. Kautsky leveled the same critique against early Christianity, suggesting it did not change the socio-economic structures of the Greco-Roman world. Only a communism that alters production rather than consumption would have a lasting effect.

Where is the basis for this proposal? Kautsky engaged in extensive biblical interpretation. Acts 2:44–45 and 4:32–35, with its "all things in common," provided evidence for communal practices. Added to this was the "proletarian nature of the movement" (1 Cor 1:26–27), contempt for labor (Luke 12:22–31), destruction of traditional family structures (Mark 3:31–25; Luke 9:59–62; 14:26; 1 Cor 7), and class hatred against the rich (Luke 6:20–25; 16:19–31; 18:18–28; James). With this item, Kautsky moves to the radical dimension of early Christianity, which appears in statements of conflict and contradictory stories of disciples bearing swords (Matt 10:34; Luke 12:49–53; 22:38). Two questions arise from this reconstruction. First, how did the Christian movement survive and grow, since it was one movement among many? Kautsky's answer was the communistic organisation already in place around Jesus. A second question was how to account for the accommodation with the rich and powerful that appears in the NT. Kautsky's interpretation led him to two explanations for this process. On the one hand, Kautsky deployed a narrative of betrayal from an authentic core. The radical edge of Christianity was softened, slavery embraced, hierarchies and division of labor instituted, and the communist impulse weakened due to the inadequacies of a communism of consumption. On the other hand, Kautsky also notes the deep internal contradiction within Christianity, wherein contrasting historical conditions, teachings, and social organisation evince both the "organization of communism" and the "exploitation of all classes." Kautsky closes by arguing that the "communist impulse" could not be exorcised and continued to re-emerge in Christian history.

2. Bolshevik Hermeneutics. Lenin may have been fond of saying, "In certain respects, a revolution is a miracle" (Lenin 1921 [1965]: 153), but at least two biblical texts were crucial for Lenin and Stalin. The first is the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt 13:24–30), which Lenin deploys in the programmatic *What Is to Be Done?*.

> It is precisely our campaign of exposure that will help us separate the tares from the wheat. What the tares are, we have already indicated. By the wheat we mean attracting the attention of ever larger numbers … and freeing ourselves, the revolutionaries, from functions that are essentially legal … In a word, our task is to fight the tares. It is not our business to grow wheat in flower-pots. By pulling up the tares, we clear the soil for the wheat … we must prepare the reapers, not only to cut down the tares of today, but to reap the wheat of tomorrow (Lenin 1902: 455–56).

Lenin stays close to the biblical text, but his interest is homiletical: how to deal with the question of legal and illegal revolutionary action. While some argued for legal action alone, working within existing frameworks to achieve small gains, others wanted an illegal core that sought to overthrow these frameworks. Lenin argued for both legal and illegal action to spread the socialist message and enable revolution. The legal-illegal combination constitutes the wheat and the legal-alone position represents the tares, which could include legal trade unions focused on economic concerns or participation in parliaments. All were constrained by the flowerpot of legality. While some may be weeded out earlier, other tares could only be discerned by the reapers at harvest time (see further Boer 2013).

The second crucial biblical text is 2 Thess 3:10: "Anyone unwilling to work should not eat." Lenin first deployed the text to interpret Marx's brief comments concerning an initial and further stage of communism (Marx 1875: 87). Lenin's response introduced the influential distinction between socialism and communism, with the former becoming a very long "transition phase." In this situation, the socialist principle 'He who does not work must not

eat' is already realized (Lenin 1917: 472). By the following year, this text became a slogan during the grain shortage of 1918 and was plastered throughout the fledgling state. Lenin now states that it is the "prime, basic and root principle of socialism" (Lenin 1918: 391–92).

How did the Bolsheviks understand the text? Stalin, the former theological student (1895–99), followed Lenin and identified those who do not work as the old capitalist class, aristocracy, and those unwilling to support socialist construction. If they continue to do no work and rely on others they will not be able to eat. However, Stalin goes beyond Lenin and uses 2 Thess 3:10 to reinterpret the old communist slogan drawn from Acts 4: from each according to ability, to each according to *need*. In a series of texts in the 1930s, Stalin defines the prior era of socialism as "from each according to his ability, to each according to his *work*" (Stalin 1936: article 12). The long era of socialism would recompense in terms of labor, while under communism, still far in the future, the principle of need would apply. Thus, 2 Thess 3:10 in conjunction with a reinterpreted Acts 4 was used to redefine socialism and communism. It is not for nothing that these texts appear in the 1936 constitution of the USSR (Stalin 1936: article 12, see further Boer 2017).

Marxist biblical interpretation appeared elsewhere and later in the Soviet Union as research into ancient Southwest Asia. Here Igor Diakonoff (1915–1999) stands out, especially in terms of palatine estates and rural economies. This was both the enabling contradiction until the first millennium BCE and the reason for this economic system's demise, since the perpetual search for labor on estates depleted rural communities that in turn resisted such incursions (Diakonoff 1982; Diakonoff/Kohl 1991, see further Boer 2015).

3. European Criticism. In Western Europe, biblical critiques come from Marxist philosophers, classicists, philosophers, biblical scholars and biblical theologians. The most significant philosopher is Ernst Bloch (1995), whose utopian hermeneutics relies heavily on the Bible. Apart from finding an immense storehouse of utopian (socialist) imagery and myth in the Bible, Bloch's greatest contribution is to identify a profound ambivalence. Reaction and revolution appear side by side, requiring dialectical discernment to identify what is genuinely utopian.

More influential for biblical critics is Ste. Croix's Marxist analysis of class in the Greco-Roman world (1981, see further Boer/Petterson 2017). He defines class as "the collective social expression of the fact of exploitation," where exploitation means appropriation of part of another person's labor product. One (small) class controls the means of production (land) and appropriates (directly or indirectly) surplus from those lacking such control, the classes of "unfree" labor: slaves, debt-bondage, indentured

laborers (serfs), peasants and later *coloni*. Yet Ste. Croix insists that the whole system was a slave economy, since it "is not so much *how the bulk of the labour of production is done, as how the dominant propertied classes*, controlling the conditions of production, *ensure the extraction of the surplus* which makes their own leisured existence possible" (Ste. Croix: 52). Therefore, other classes were also understood by the ruling class in terms of slavery.

Ste. Croix also distinguishes between *polis* and *chōra*. The initial Greek sense of *polis* and *chōra* designated the town's necessary reliance on its agricultural hinterland. However, in a colonial context the *polis* became an alien presence that embodies Hellenistic culture and extractive economics while the *chōra* became all colonised space that was compelled to supply the *polis* with labor, produce and resources. In NT terms, a question arises: while Paul, John (Myles) and Luke clearly evince *polis* perspectives, does Mark express a *chōra* perspective or see the *chōra* through the lens of the *polis*? While Belo's kaleidoscopic reading (1981) may be read as affirming the former, other European interpretations suggests the latter. For example, Moxnes (2003) deploys Marxist spatial analysis (Lefebvre) to argue that Jesus leaves his village community to establish a new collective space that can take place only in the *polis*, where early Christianity took root. Petterson is more explicit, arguing not only that the NT and Mark evince a strong *polis* perspective (Boer/Petterson 2017), but also that the Gospel of John does not present a body of Jesus that is subsequently spiritualised but rather a spirit that has to construct a body through the text (Petterson 2016). A comparable earlier argument concerning Acts points out that this text is inexplicably a product of the Roman Imperial order in terms of self, gender, *chōra*, language, and nature (Petterson 2012).

A different European angle is from the biblical theology of Ton Veerkamp and Dick Boer. With some variations, both argue for a radical message within the biblical core. The "great story" from creation through Exodus to "actually existing Israel" with its "Torah Republic" is a radical effort at a liberated community, albeit with many problems. For Veerkamp (2012), this entails a continuity of HB/OT and NT with an accounting of the latter's deviations, while for Boer (2015) the experience of ministering in East Germany leads him to focus on the post-revolutionary context when the problems of actually constructing socialism and/or a progressive religious society become apparent.

4. Africa and the Americas. African and South and North American Marxist criticism have drawn mutual inspiration from one another. For example, Mosala (1989) has studied the class and ideological layering of Micah and Luke, while West (1999; 2016) focuses on a hermeneutics of the poor common reader in Africa. Liberation theologians have

further drawn upon Marxist economic analysis in order to recover a radical biblical message in Exodus and Jesus of Nazareth (Miranda 1974; 1982; Croatto; Pixley). Yet, Marxist approaches were often seen as diagnostic, while the prognosis was biblical and theological.

In North America, Marxist criticism has flourished since Gottwald (1999; 1985), whose identification of Israel's revolutionary origins established a thorough methodology drawing on Durkheim, Weber and above all Marx. Gottwald (1992) has also traced a radical impulse through the HB/OT, NT and early Christian movement. Others have followed his analysis, seeking "mode of production" interpretations where one mode signals exploitation and the other a relatively better socio-economic life. In place of Gottwald's "tributarian" and "communitarian" modes, others have proposed a patron-client model for the former (Simkins 1999), and a domestic, familial, or household model for the latter (Meyers; Yee 2003; Jobling 1991, 1998). Boer (2015) has argued that "mode of production" terminology is misleading and that instead these distinct economic forms were the building blocks of a larger, tension-ridden system. Within this system, we find the more exploitative components of estates, tribute, and exchange in tension with the allocative components of subsistence survival and households.

In contrast to these socio-economic studies, others deploy literary analysis, influenced particularly by Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson. Sneed (2012) analyses the ideological workings of Qoheleth with a Marxist-Weberian framework. Jobling has instead deployed a mix of psychoanalytic, feminist and Marxist approaches, while Yee links race, gender, and colonialism. To be added in the future is an increasing interest in resistance literature, and the literary signals of macro and micro-resistance, in word, song, slow labor, small acts of sabotage, and removing labor (Yee 2007; Horsley; Horsley/Hanson 1985), if not more radical acts of anti-imperialism (Elliott 2008, see also 2012). Here we see Marxist assumptions filtering into other biblical approaches, including postcolonial and anti-imperial readings. The former is due to the deep influence of socialist forces in 20th century anti-colonial movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, while the latter focuses on socio-economic matters, seeking resistance to imperial domination.

5. Chinese Marxism. In China, notably Henan University, Liang Gong directs a government-funded project on Marxist biblical criticism. This includes graduate students working on international aspects (categories and critics) and the publication of the only biblical studies journal officially approved by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (*Biblical Literature Studies*). Apart from an interest in the intersections between Marxism and contemporary

literary theory (Gong), the project's major purpose is to make international currents known in China and develop a distinctly Chinese Marxist approach to the Bible.

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See also → Communism, The Bible and; → Lenin (Ul'ianov), Vladimir Il'ich; → Marx, Karl

Marxsen, Willi

Willi Marxsen (1919–1993) was a German NT scholar. Between 1945 and 1948, he studied Protestant theology at the University of Kiel, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the institution narratives in Mark ("Die Einsetzungsberichte zum Abendmahl," 1948). In 1954, he was given the *venia legendi* by the same faculty. His habilitation ("second book") dealt with the redaction of Mark (*Der Evangelist Markus: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums*). After the publication of his second book, he was often referred to as the creator of the term "redactional history" (*Redaktionsgeschichte*). From 1956 to 1961, Marxsen was professor for NT studies at the Kirchliche Hochschule Bethel; from 1961 until his retirement in 1984 he held a professorship at the University of Münster.

Marxsen's work focused on NT Christology. Regarding the interrelation of the historical Jesus and the post-Easter proclamation of Christ, Marxsen developed the term "kerygma" as defined by Bultmann and distinguished between a Christ-kerygma and a Jesus-kerygma. On the one hand, the personal Christ-kerygma may be perceived in the scriptures by Paul or John. The traditions adopted in the synoptic gospels, on the other hand, show signs of a functional Jesus-kerygma, according to which Jesus brings about the kingdom of God and, as a result, embodies the substance of the kerygma.

Continuity between ante- and post-Easter faith corresponds to the distinction within the kerygma. Death at the cross and resurrection are not understood as a sharp break. Rather, resurrection is seen as an *interpretamentum* that marks a new beginning after Jesus' death. Easter then means that – in spite of the "catastrophe" of Good Friday – the "matter Jesus" lives on. Thus, the term does not designate teaching material that can be detached from the person of Jesus. Rather, it refers to a new perspective of faith by way of Jesus. This perspective finds a new expression and it develops into a belief in the resurrected Christ.

The focus on faith is also reflected in Marxsen's distinction between "Christian" and Christian ethics. This distinction refers to faith as the foundation of ethical behavior, on the one hand, and the concrete formulation of ethical maxims in Christian tradition, on the other hand.

The diverse titles of his commentaries on 1/2 Thess mirror Marxsen's judgment on the issue of authenticity. While he considers 1 Thess to be an authentic Pauline epistle, he regards 2 Thess as a pseudonymous post-Pauline scripture. Marxsen was committed to a theologically rigorous exegetical analysis. His analyses sought to emphasize that NT language is highly allegorical and that it seeks to clearly formulate its belief.

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Paul-Gerhard Klumbies

See also → Redaction Criticism

Mary (Person)

1. Mother of Jesus

Mary is the mother of Jesus according to all four canonical gospels and Acts (see "Mary [Mother of Jesus]").