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First Book: The Person

We divide the study into two books. In this first book, we address what, for Arizmendiarieta, is the starting point and final basis of the new order: the person.

In effect, Arizmendiarieta did not start—historically or systematically—from the philosophical analysis of a theory of history or production; his primary source of inspiration, rather, is in a concrete philosophical conception of the person.

Therefore, we consider it timely and necessary to provide detailed information on the roots that were the basis and stimulus of all his reflection. It will be demonstrated that, starting from some personal convictions inherited from his seminary education, Arizmendiarieta, in uninterrupted critical redevelopment, sets up a framework of ideas that continuously defines and develops Personalist principles. What is surprising about him is both his ability to find a coherent synthesis of concepts from varied origins and the evolutionary fluidity of his thought.

In that context of synthesis and change, what emerges is more and more solid and rich: the theory of the person, the only basis from which his final (and Personalist) philosophy of work emanates, and to which it is directed.

Given our apparent temporal, social and ideological distance from Arizmendiarieta's first formulations, we have sought to provide some significant social data that can illuminate us about the setting in which Arizmendiarieta undertook his journey as leader and guide of workers, who, together with him, discovered in a new synthesis—while not radically original, it was extraordinarily invigorating—that should be understood as the

Personalist dignity of mankind in all its dimensions: transcendent and social, family and political, play and work.

The person is open, receptive, and self-generating reality. She is not a finished product of nature, nor a closed and concluded accomplishment of its social conditions, but an “intentional” project, which, through education, opens herself to the community in whose bosom her own action gives it new personal importance. Through her own context, the person is also a community.

This inner communal density of the person finds its most dynamic instrument of service, freedom, and solidarity in work. In work, possessed and lived in human solidarity, we can find, with the support of an emancipating education, the fulcrum with which to rescue the dignity of mankind. Behold, then, the trilogy that saves us: cooperative education, free solidarity, and self-realizing work.

In this search, Arizmendiarrieta feels stimulated—not discouraged—by the crisis in which his generation, particularly, was immersed, a generation of men who grew up in wartime and just after. The crisis would be an impetus which would leave an imprint on, and give operational strength to, his thought, in search of a “new order.”

Part One: The Starting Point

Why a “new” order? Under the general context of his Personalist ideology, there lies a concrete vision of the world in which Arizmendiarieta lived, a world that was dying before his eyes. Considering the eminently theoretical and dogmatic training he came out of, he showed an open sensitivity towards altering the focus of his entire reflection very soon. Early on, he began to perceive a sterile distance between the theories with which he’d been equipped and the social reality in place.

He had experienced the Spanish civil war up close; he was interested in getting to know the bloody realities of Europe from 1939 to 1945; he lived each day with the working population in the painful and needful postwar period. He believed that his philosophical-religious convictions were valid; but, at the same time, he understood that the long-suffering society he belonged to had the right to theoretical formulations more closely linked to their harsh reality, and more emancipatory in practice.

The general crisis he was living in would give Arizmendiarieta the hope of a new order. For that, he would observe, there would need to be a debate around the minimum basis for that project: his religious and sociological vision of the crisis would serve to discover, precisely, the weakness of the existing bases and the urgency of developing, theoretically and practically, a communal and cooperative reform project.



Christmas pageants, a form of cooperation.

With a highly astute intuition, but as yet without a system of thought that was transmissible to the people around him, Arizmendiarieta would walk the edge of the crisis, at times with disconcerting affirmations, but always with his gaze wholeheartedly illuminated by his will to make the world, one day, fairer and freer.

Chapter 1: A World in Crisis

This chapter attempts to offer an analysis of the social setting in which Arizmendiarrrieta started out on his search for a “new order.” *Social setting* here has a double meaning: it means, in the first place, the medium in which a person develops (family, town, social class, church, State), but it also means those fields or values Arizmendiarrrieta referred to preferentially in developing his concept of the cooperative man.

We present, therefore, the general premises from which Arizmendiarrrieta’s reflection started. As will be seen, in and of themselves, they offer no originality at all; in large measure, they are no more than the typical, topical views of a young priest in the 1940s, who had just left the Vitoria Seminary, imbued with Personalist doctrines, but above all with traditional Catholic theology. There is a point to highlight. In contrast to the triumphalist and triumphant Catholicism at that time in Franco’s Spain, Arizmendiarrrieta felt engulfed by the worst religious, social, and cultural crisis ever faced by not just Euskadi [*the Basque country*], but the world. It is a tragic awareness of the crisis, caused, according to those who were closest to him, by his experience in the war. It is this heightened sense of the crisis, the awareness of its breadth, that enables us to understand the path of his thought.

The nature of Arizmendiarrrieta’s writings that we have requires an important prior clarification. The topics set forth below were not dealt with in a unified way by Arizmendiarrrieta, but rather in a variety of times and contexts. So, for example, almost all the

materials about the Church and a large part of those about the family were found in sermon notes; they belong, in addition, to the early '40s, which is to say, the first years of his priestly activities. On the other hand, a good part of the material about the State supposes a vigorous cooperative movement: the medium into which he pours out his opinions is no longer the pulpit, but the social conference room.

As a result, the writing method followed in this chapter is formally systematic. In a way, it tries to be a rigorous “system of Arizmendiarieta’s thought,” which the very nature of the writings, as indicated above, does not allow to be satisfactorily reconstructed. The reader will easily see that it is simply impossible to try to align or structure a coherent and homogeneous model of opinions from such diverse times and contexts. No systematic analysis of the crisis exists in Arizmendiarieta’s writings. All that being said, we hope to be able to offer a clarifying panorama of the broader picture.

We divide this chapter into two parts (A and B). Arizmendiarieta always referred to the general crisis indirectly, that is, always framing the various topics he dealt with (family, State, labor movement, etc.) within it. However, in his writings, two very different ways of referring to it can be distinguished:

- A) In the first writings (sermons, conferences with parents, conferences with the youth of Catholic Action), the crisis is conceived of fundamentally as a crisis of faith, although faith is understood in a broad sense as a general system of Christian-humanist values.

- B) Over the years 1945 to 1950, Arizmendiarieta centers his attention on the so-called social question. The idea of a universal crisis (of authority, of faith, of reason itself) remains in place. But its core is no longer the problem of faith, but rather the question of property. As of this time, purely religious matters disappear almost entirely from Arizmendiarieta's writings. Quotes from traditional Christian authors, especially from Papal Encyclicals, decrease notably, even as there is an increase in quotes from personalities outside the Church, and above all, from laborist politicians, until he arrived at his own conception of cooperatives, in the '50s.

Part A: Religious view of the crisis

This is how Arizmendiarieta sees his surroundings: in a total crisis of ideas, of principles, of authority, of coexistence, with the Second World War being the most conspicuous expression of this crisis. In his first writings, Arizmendiarieta refers to this crisis on many occasions, always in the darkest tones, always emphasizing that its roots were of a moral nature (SS, I, 1, 3, 4, etc.).

1. Early historical notes

1. 1 From soldier to priest

There is a radical breakpoint between Arizmendiarieta the student or soldier and Arizmendiarieta the priest after the war.

Arizmendiarrrieta lived his early Biscay youth in pre-war nationalist euphoria, the Basque Renaissance—*Pizkundia*—actively participating in it in his own way, socially and linguistically/culturally. Politics does not appear to have ever interested him.

It is known that he participated in the Academia Kardaberaz, with professors Barandiarán and Lekuona,¹ where he was one of the most enthusiastic collaborators, eventually becoming the secretary of the Academy. Handwritten notes and notebooks preserved in the Arizmendiarrrieta Archive can give us an idea of his tireless activity and of the breadth of his literary interests: in those years, Arizmendiarrrieta applied his pen equally to theater, poetry, translation, scientific and philosophical study, literary criticism, a personal diary, short stories, and the collection of ethnographic materials in the region of Markina/Ondárroa (songs, sayings, stories). When the war broke out, the 21-year-old joined the Basque Army (Euzko Gudarostea), lending his services as a journalist in the war newspaper *Eguna*,² written entirely in

¹ Larrañaga, J.: *Don Jose María Arizmendi-Arrieta y la experiencia cooperativa de Mondragón*, Caja Laboral Popular, Mondragón, 1981, 26-27.

² According to a Certificate from the Department of War (Euzkadi Government), Unit Formation Section of the E.B.B., issued in Bilbao on 22 December, 1936, Arizmendiarrrieta was, at that time, inscribed “in the militias of this P.N.V. [*Basque Nationalist Party*] as a volunteer soldier with the number 10,486 as of the 22nd” (date of issue of the certificate). A new certificate, issued by the General Command General of the Militias of the P.N.V. the third of June, 1937, and which is also kept in the Arizmendiarrrieta Archive, finds him inscribed in the militias of the P.N.V. as a volunteer with the number 76,120, and embedded in the Sukarrieta Battalion in expectation of service. Finally, his Military Card, issued in Bilbao on

Euskara [Basque].

Numerous notes and newspaper clippings, which are still archived, bear witness to his interest in social topics. The topic of cooperation is already present among them, as is the idea of a third way between liberalism and collectivism, or the idea of a genuine Basque socialism. [Translator's note: "liberalism" in this book does not refer to progressivism, but classical liberalism, which is to say, rationalism and unfettered capitalism.] Cultural and social concerns harmonized perfectly, following Aitzol's line: we could speak of a nationalism of *risorgimento*, with strong social and cultural content, animated by an irresistible mystique. The war, which truncated the Basque Renaissance, was also a hard personal blow for Arizmendiarieta.

Following the defeat, prison, and acquittal in a summary trial, Arizmendiarieta was destined for the offices of the Burgos Artillery barracks. "Mobilized from 1936-1939, served in Bilbao and Burgos on both sides," he himself would write on his curriculum vitae.³

In Burgos, with the help of a Seminary professor, he studied theology on his own, was examined in Bergara, where the

15 June, 1937, has him embedded in the "Indus. Movili. Press Battalion," fixing his residency in the Abando Barracks. It bears a seal reading "*Eguna, egunoroko JEL-izparringija, Bilbao*" and one from the Department of Defense of the Euzkadi Government.

³ Curriculum vitae written 16 January, 1971, for the Press Office of the Presidency of the Government (Arizmendiarieta Archive).

Seminary of the Diocese of Vitoria was operating provisionally. “Returned to Seminary late 1939 and ordained priest December 1940, was sent to the Mondragon Parish in January 1941, where I remain,” he would write on the above-mentioned CV.

It is hardly necessary to stop and describe the post-war cultural climate. “The defeat of the republican government,” says J.C. Tabares in summary, “led to the flight of 90% of the Spanish ‘*intelligenza*.’ Two thousand [*primary-school*] teachers, 200 secondary-school teachers, and 118 university professors went into exile.”⁴ This cultural desertion was even harder on Euskadi, where the Basque language itself was banned, and those who had previously cultivated it were persecuted. It would be many years before Arizmendiarrrieta would again write anything in Euskara [*the Basque language*], even private notes.

Euskadi had been culturally and politically decapitated. More concretely, the Basque Church saw its Bishop, Mateo Múgica, exiled, and priests subjected to a blind persecution “in the course of which sixteen priests would be shot, more than two hundred jailed, and the rest, a total of eight hundred, were taken to concentration camps, deported, or escaped into exile.”⁵ Among the priests executed by Franco’s troops was Aitzol, the soul of the cultural Renaissance and of nationalist social propaganda. The Biscay poet Lauaxeta was also shot dead in Vitoria. The

⁴ (Team) Reseña, *La cultura española durante el franquismo*, Mensajero, Bilbao 1977, 146.

⁵ Pío Montoya, in: Ibarzabal, E., *50 años de nacionalismo Vasco 1928-1978*, Ed. Vas-cas, Bilbao, 1978, 47.

Arizmendiarrrieta Archive holds testimonies of the attraction this poet held for José María as a student.

1.2 The Apostolic administrator

José María Arizmendiarrrieta was ordained as a priest the twenty-first of December, 1940, by Francisco Javier Lauzurica y Torralba, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Vitoria since September of 1937. After the forced exile of Mons. Múgica, he would also be the one who prevented him from studying sociology in Belgium, sent him to Mondragon, and watched over his early activities. Even though literature on this prelate is relatively abundant, we ask the reader's leave to stop and spend a moment on him, to make Arizmendiarrrieta's early period of activities in Mondragon more understandable.

"The war," Manu E. Lipúzcoa tells us, "found Mons. Lauzurica among his people (in Durango) and, like the rest of the Church leaders, he had not suffered at all from the extremely violent situation imposed by the conflict. On several occasions, he demonstrated his satisfaction with the work of the authorities of the Euzkadi government, which was made up almost entirely of Catholics. This was what gave him a well-founded confidence that his wish to be transferred to France would be fulfilled. That did indeed happen, and the Basque government provided him with everything for his plan. But once he was on French soil, the first statement he made was in contradiction to his previous positions. Back in Spain, he began to show so much support for the cause of Franco's Spain, that, according to apostolic delegate Mons.

Antoniutti, he thought about preparing things so he could take the reins of the orphaned Diocese of Vitoria.”⁶

The Falange delegate in Guipuzcoa publicly affirmed (in honor of Mons. Lauzurica) that he had heard Franco give the following opinion: “I have a bishop for Vitoria. He is a man who will speak of God by speaking of Spain.”⁷ For his part, he [Lauzurica] seems to have been very clear on his apostolic mission in the Basque land: “I am one more general at the orders of the *Generalísimo* to crush nationalism.”⁸ [Translator’s note: in the Basque Country, both sides in the Spanish Civil War were called “nationalist,” in reference to different “nations”—Spain or the Basque Country.]

And, indeed, his theology corresponded with this mission: “When I say Spain, I say Church,” he affirmed in Bilbao. “To love Spain is to love the greatest, the most sublime. To scorn it is to scorn what is most sacred (...). Scholars, love Spain and you will love God, and Spain will give you happiness on Earth, and Our Lord will give you glory in the kingdom of heaven.”⁹

⁶ Lipuzcoa, M.E., *La Iglesia como problema en el País Vasco*, Ed. Vasca Ekin, Buenos Aires 1973, 48. To verify these and other data, cf. I. d’Errotalde. *Les preoccupations de Monseigneur Lauzurika*, *Euzko Deya* (Paris), Nr. 81, 7 nov. 1937, 2 (Ed. Vascas, San Sebastián 1979, vol. I, 344).

⁷ *Diario Vasco*, 20 September 1937: cfr. Onaindia, A. de, *Hombre de paz en la guerra*, Ed. Vasca Ekin, Buenos Aires 1973, 50-51.

⁸ Iturralde, J., *El catolicismo y la cruzada de Franco*, Egi-Indarra 1956, 155.

⁹ *Boletín Eclesiástico del Obispado de Vitoria*, 1938, pág. 454, cit. en: Iramuno, X. from, *El clero vasco*, Bayonne 1046, 27. Onaindia, A. de, op. cit., 52.

Mons. Lauzurica was convinced that without the military insurrection, “we were, by that date, on the eve of seeing all of Spain become a Russian canton under the tyrannical power of the Godless.” “Providence sent us a man who united military talent with a deeply Christian spirit, who was heroically patriotic and serenely righteous. [...] All men of good will should join him who have proper respect for religion, love for the homeland, and a concern for seeing the nation supported by a framework of justice that lifts citizens up.”¹⁰

Lauzurica, while demanding from his priests a “fervent cultivation of the Castilian language, which is, at the same time, required of us by our unbreakable love for Spain and our thankfulness to this wonderful language of the Spanish culture, through which our mystics and ascetics poured out their sublime concepts,” was inclined to allow preaching in Euskara “when the faithful, by an overwhelming majority, is unaccustomed to utilizing a language other than Basque.” An immediate intervention by the Minister of Public Order Martínez Anido nipped that in the bud. Euskara was expressly prohibited “in prayers and preaching, and in every kind of public act of any character or nature.”¹¹

¹⁰ Altabella Gracia, P., *El catolicismo de los nacionalistas vascos*, Ed. Nacional, 1939, 8-9, Prologue by His Excellency, Mr. A.A. of the Diocese of Vitoria. The same editor, around the same date, published in San Sebastian the celebrated work by Mons. Zacarías Vizcarra, *Vasconia españolísima*. Data to prove that *Vasconia es reliquia preciosa de lo más español de España*, 1939, with a prologue by M.I. Dr. J. Artero, Canon of Salamanca.

¹¹ Torrealdai, J.M., *Euskararen zapalkuntza (1936-1939)*, Jakin, Nr. 24, 1982, 37-40.

1.3 1940-1945: The restoration

All of Spain, especially Red Spain, had to be purified: the new governors devoted themselves diligently from the first moment to cleansing the country of “corrosive ideas” which, it was said, had been the cause of Spain’s ruin. It was necessary to restore Spanish imperial unity, based on spiritual and religious unity. For such purposes, the new State found its most powerful ally in the Church.¹²

Mons. Lauzurica, Apostolic Administrator for the three Basque provinces, knew just how to distinguish the white sheep from the black in his flock:

We want to make it known here, for the pride of Navarre and Alava, that these two sister provinces were able to maintain the heights of their glorious and irrefutable tradition: in contrast, a large part of the honorable citizens of Biscay and Guipuzcoa forced the ouster of several leaders who were unable to appreciate the fair value of the treasure of spirituality which was placed in their hands. Later, they attempted to justify their conduct by equating the crimes of Red Spain with the executions of national Spain. What an inexplicable aberration! In Red Spain, the priest was persecuted as a minister of God; in national Spain, he was always respected in his role of minister of the Catholic

¹² On this topic, which cannot be dealt with more fully here, see: Alvarez Bolado, A., *El experimento del nacional-catolicismo*, Ed. Cuadernos para el Diálogo, Madrid 1976. Chao Rego, J., *La Iglesia en el franquismo*, Ed. Felmar, Madrid 1976. Urbina, F., La ideología, del nacional-catolicismo, in: *Iglesia y Sociedad en España 1939-1975*, 85-120.

religion. In Red Spain, the temples of the Lord were destroyed, torn apart, or closed down, destined for profane, if not sacrilegious, uses; in national Spain, they continued to be used for worship, and as our weapons brought towns into the New Spain, the buildings regained their old designations, and, consecrated anew to the Lord, they were opened for worship. In Red Spain, hatred for religion was systematic; in national Spain, the Catholic faith was and is lived deeply, and outdoes itself showing love for God.¹³

It was very true that it outdid itself showing love for God, to the point where some analysts would see in it an essential characteristic of early Francoism. Solemn processions, pallia, Eucharistic Congresses, popular missions, consecrations to the Sacred Heart or the Virgin, restorations of brotherhoods, imagery and shrines, were the order of the day. The presence of “authorities and hierarchies” in religious acts seems to have been obligatory. As F. Urbina writes about that period, its fundamental character is “a search for the total restoration of traditional religious forms.”¹⁴ Obviously, it was a unitary political-religious project—a total order, which, as A.L. Orensanz observed, was about

¹³ Altabella Gracia. P., op. cit., 10-11. We would like to point out that we availed ourselves of this book before others, because it was found in Arizmendiarieta’s personal library (Arizmendiarieta Archive). Also, *Los imperativos de mi conciencia*, 1945, by Mons. Múgica, constitutes a replica of a this book, among others, cfr. Onaindia, A., *Ayer como hoy. Documentos del clero vasco*, Axular, St. Jean de Luz 1975, 92. Lauzurica and Múgica appear to be in direct confrontation.

¹⁴ Multiple Authors, *Iglesia y Sociedad en España 1939-1975*, Ed. Popular, Madrid 1977, 11.

opposing modernity, and which encompasses the entire social structure with a sacred significance.¹⁵

It does not fall to us to retell the history of that time. However, so that the current reader will be able to get an idea of the general climate in which Arizmendiarrieta began his pastoral activity, we will take the liberty of again providing some informative strokes of the pen that such acts merited at the time in the magazine *Ecclesia*,¹⁶ according to the above-mentioned study by F. Urbina.¹⁷

a) Large popular missions

- (March of 1941, Barcelona) “500 missionaries, for almost the whole month of March, have carried the truths of the faith into the very heart of the city... This was much needed by the lovely regional capital, Barcelona, so beset by corrosive doctrines.” [In the final act of this mission,] “the venerable Christ of Lepanto came out of the

¹⁵ Orensanz, A.L., *Religiosidad popular española (1940-1965)*, Ed. Nacional, Madrid 1974, 9-10. “We must re-Christianize,” General Franco himself declared to the Central Directorate of Spanish Catholic Action in April of 1940, “that part of the people that has been perverted, poisoned by doctrines of corruption.” cf. Garcia Villoslada R., *Historia de la Iglesia en España*, BAC, Madrid 1979, vol. IV, 668, *Ecclesia*, Nr. 1, 1 January 1941, 2.

¹⁶ As can be seen in his file of notes (Arizmendiarrieta Archive), this magazine was an important source of information and study for Arizmendiarrieta.

¹⁷ Urbina. F., “Formas de vida de la Iglesia en España,” in: *Iglesia y Sociedad en España 1939-1973*, Ed. Popular, Madrid 1977, 7-120.

Cathedral, accompanied by authorities and hierarchies of the Movement and an immense crowd.”¹⁸

- (March of 1941, Seville) “His Eminence gave final instructions to 200 missionaries and 500 laypeople of the four branches of C.A. charged with helping them... Attendance at the closing meeting was some 50,000 people. In adulterous relationships alone, more than 30,000 have been corrected, and there is not prisoner in jail with whom we have not communicated.”¹⁹

b) Spiritual Exercises

- (April 1941) “Throughout Spain, spiritual exercises dedicated to youth have been held. According to data, even rather incomplete, the number of participants in them was nearly 100,000.”²⁰
- (May 1941, First Congress of Spiritual Exercises, Barcelona). “In the presidency of the Congress was Cardinal Segura, the chief of the fourth military Region, general Orgaz, the bishops of Barcelona, Calahorra and Tortosa, the Civil Governor, Correa Veglison; the Minister of Justice, among others, closed the act...”²¹
- (Biscay, 1945). “2,000 Babcock Wilcox workers do spiritual exercises in the very naves of the factories.”²²

c) Traditional devotions

¹⁸ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 7, April 1941, 8-9.

¹⁹ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 7, April 1941, 8-9.

²⁰ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 8, 15 April, 1941.

²¹ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 10, 15 May, 1941, 34.

²² *Ecclesia*, Nr. 198, 12 April, 1945, 366

- “The brotherhood of laborers, over which the Marquis de Purchena presides, proposes to bring about its resurgence, with all its traditional attire.”²³
- “The First Congress of Brotherhoods is celebrated in Seville, in which 1,880 associations came together from the 4 provinces of eastern Andalusia, representing a total of 180,000 men and 250,000 women.”²⁴

d) Redress

- “In Madrid, the procession of the Patroness of City Hall is reestablished after 73 years.”²⁵
- “In Zaragoza, a relic of Saint José de Calasanz, which was providentially saved from destruction by the Marxists, was exposed to the veneration of the faithful.”²⁶
- “The Virgin of Macarena has returned to her home, which the Marxist hordes had once destroyed.”²⁷

e) Pilgrimages

- “6,000 pilgrims of the youth of Catholic Action in the consecration of the holy chamber of Oviedo, with the presence of Chief of State, Nuncio, Generals Aranda, Roca

²³ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 32, 21 February, 1942, 188.

²⁴ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 13, 1 July 1941, 23.

²⁵ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 4, 15 February 1941, 22.

²⁶ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 28, 24 January 1942, 93.

²⁷ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 36, 28 March, 1942, 307.

y Valdés, Cabanillas; Archbishop of Santiago, Bishops from Lugo, Mondoñedo and Coria.”²⁸

- June, 1945. Military pilgrimage to the Hill of the Angels with the participation of 50 generals and 1,500 leaders and officials; in attendance at the Mass were the Undersecretary of the Presidency, Carrero Blanco; the ministers of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; generals Orgaz, Muñoz Grandes, Moscardó y Kindelán, etc.²⁹

As Manu E. Lipúzcoa observed, this era was characterized by religious inflation, on the one hand, which attempted to absorb all of life, both public and private, and by the traditionalism of the triumphant faith, on the other, taken to the most absurd limits: it was the time of the rise of the prophecies of Mother Rafols and Father Hoyos, of “I will reign in Spain” inscribed on innumerable homes and enthroned in public places, of Santiago Matamoros [*Saint James the Moor-Killer*] and of the Virgen del Pilar Capitana. A preacher could effectively compete to show his Catholic and patriotic feelings, going so far as to print expressions such as: “The Virgin, had she not been Jewish, would have been Spanish.”³⁰

²⁸ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 61, 12 September, 1942, 869.

²⁹ *Ecclesia*, Nr. 203, 2 June 1945, 491.

³⁰ Gutierrez Lasanta, *La Virgen del Pilar patrona de la Hispanidad*, Zaragoza, 1945; cit. by Lipuzcoa, M.E., op. cit., 62. By Government decree of the 28 of April 1939, Our Lady of Covadonga was granted the highest military honors, cf. BOE, 29 April 1939. The detailed description of the placement of the sash of Captain General on the Virgin of Fuencisla, patron of Segovia, can be read in *Ecclesia*, 6 June 1942, 536.

1.5 The curate

This was, with the few local variants possible under a regime that tried hard to make everything uniform, the political-religious environment in which Arizmendiarieta's work began.

This Basque cleric was able, to a certain extent, to stay on the margins of this official ideological pressure, despite the efforts of his prelate. The prestigious Seminary of Vitoria played a decisive role in this.³¹ But that does not mean that on numerous occasions he did not have to bend.

Some covert forms of opposition seem surprising today: thus, according to S. Mitxelena, the years of organizing pilgrimages to Lourdes, instead of to Fátima or Zaragoza, as well as the consecrations to the Virgin of Aránzazu (Arizmendiarieta consecrated the Youth of Mondragon to her), rather than to the Sacred Heart, would have had a clear content of opposition and resistance which, if understood as such by the authorities, would have entailed ongoing risk.³² Certainly the absence, in this sense, of official "devotions" in Arizmendiarieta is symptomatic and more than noteworthy. But nor would it do to overestimate it. On the one hand, the integration of priests into the controlled ecclesiastical machinery seems to have been very tight in those years, so that can hardly imagine a priest, much less a young curate, acting on his own, outside official directives, which were

³¹ Urbina, F., op. cit., 31.

³² Mitxelena, S., Idazlan Guztiak, EFA, Oñati 1977, 207.

prepared to regulate everything, down to the last detail. And, on the other hand, the union of the Church and of the State had become—at the hierarchical level—so intimate that many of the religious activities were draped with an undisputed political nature, and there were even some priests who accepted local political positions by episcopal appointment.³³

Arizmendiarrrieta, from the beginning, seems to have had a relatively critical and distant stance, which cost him no end of run-ins, as we'll see later. But he never ceased striving to defend the Church in public. His attitude will change notably, starting in 1945, as he dedicates himself more fully to the social question. By way of illustration, we can deduce here his response, somewhere between skeptical and disillusioned, to the President of the Youth of Catholic Action, who requested his collaboration to organize a religious-patriotic pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

With great pleasure, and by immediate return mail, I shall answer your message, and I shall do so briefly.

I believe that the youth still have a long way to go before reaching those spiritual heights of understanding the ascetic or mystical meaning of the pilgrimage, and as long as they do not have a pilgrim's preparation, it would be simple tourism.

³³ This is how Arizmendiarrrieta, on the proposal of the Provincial Delegate of the Youth of Guipuzcoa, was named by his Bishop as Delegate (sic) of the Youth Front of Mondragon (Office of the Bishopric of Victoria, 8 July of 1944, Arizmendiarrrieta Archive). This appointment does not seem to have had any effect. Neither in his writings nor in the Archive have we been able to find, apart from the aforementioned appointment, any other data that make direct or indirect reference to any activity of Arizmendiarrrieta's as Delegate of the Youth Front.

Wanting a good representation from Guipuzcoa to go on this pilgrimage could mean awakening people's curiosity to see new lands, but not precisely to continue the spiritual growth they have embarked upon. The material that you send could be accepted and made use of, but I fear it would barely move people, many would be set back, and others would be prevented from approaching us. I believe that with the above, the object of your request is fulfilled, and in any case, I am always at your disposal.³⁴

But let us return to the period immediately after the war. Named curate of the Parish of St. John the Baptist of Mondragon, Arizmendiarieta arrives in this villa on February 5th, 1941. He is assigned to work with the male youth of Catholic Action, which had been recently founded. Through Catholic Action and, later, through teaching, he remains in close contact with the working world: unemployment, lack of housing, tuberculosis, and children in miserable conditions, which will constitute his great personal concerns from the beginning. However, his official apostolic obligations are imposed on him by the position of Chaplain of C.A., which will not be officially assigned to him until 1943.³⁵ By

³⁴ Letter from Arizmendiarieta to the President of la J.A.C., of 8 July 1947 (Arizmendiarieta Archive).

³⁵ The Association of Youth of Catholic Action was founded at Mondragon, on the initiative of *don* Roberto Aguirre, the 12th of May, 1940, and legally constituted as such June 10th of the same year. The 25th of February, 1941, *don* Roberto was replaced in the office of chaplain by Arizmendiarieta (PR, I, 126). However the official appointment of "Chaplain of the Parish Centers of Men and Male Youth of Catholic Action, for the triennium 1943-1946" dates from the first of January, 1943 (Office of the Diocesan Delegate of C.A., Bishopric of Victoria, Arizmendiarieta Archive).

then, Arizmendiarieta had already had his first brushes with Falangist representatives in Mondragon. But it should not be thought of as any kind of confrontational situation, in these years, between the ecclesiastical and civilian powers in Mondragon. As for Arizmendiarieta, all witnesses agree that he proceeded with greatest caution, trying to avoid conflicts by all means, especially those that could have any political nature.

His initial activity is focused, as has been said, on youth. He founds Youth Sports and the Professional School,³⁶ organizes raffles, cavalcades, Christmas campaigns, collections in favor of the poorest children, collections for needy families, etc. From very early on, he takes charge of the Parish Work of Spiritual Exercises³⁷; publishes a small magazine, *Alleluia* (later “*Equis*,” [X] and then “*Ecós*” [*Echoes*]), really more of a flier, which will also cost him some run-ins with censorship.³⁸

³⁶ Youth Sports of Mondragon is created and officially presented to the public the first of June of 1943 (PR, I, 127), and the Professional School is inaugurated October first of the same year in the old building of the Fundación Viteri, cf. Leibar, J., “José María Arizmendiarieta Madariaga. Notes for a Biography,” *TU*, Nr. 190, Nov.-Dec. 1976, 60.

³⁷ This work had also been founded in Mondragon by *don* Roberto Aguirre in November-December of 1939, in the Unión Cerrajera. In 1941, other companies of the villa were associated, and organized themselves, under Arizmendiarieta’s responsibility, into 26 batches of Exercises (for 305 male workers and 148 female workers). We have not been able to find data for the year 1942, when he seems to have had some difficulties. Then in 1943, only 12 batches are registered (PR, I, 50), which, in 1944, are back up to 27 (PR, I, 65).

³⁸ The decision to remove these “pages,” that is, “something effective for the youth of Catholic Action” was made, according to the minutes, in the session of

It can be said that by this time (1941-1945), Arizmendiarieta has developed the classical pastoral work of a young curate, carrying out the functions and tasks he is assigned, from preaching (118 sermons are preserved) and the confessional to the organization of spiritual exercises or of a Eucharistic Congress.³⁹ It is very true that the study circles that he has formed among the youth will soon bear fruit. But, for the moment, there is nothing that would make one think of the decisive social orientation that he will try to imprint upon the youth of Catholic Action in the late '40s. Later, he himself will describe this period as the time of sowing. But this sowing must have happened more by the spoken word than in writing. The notes that fill the files, the conferences, and the sermons, his concern for spiritual exercises and retreat days, for the honesty of the entertainment of youth,⁴⁰ etc. remind us that we are in the middle of the restoration period. The reader should keep this in mind through the sections that follow, in which we will try to collect Arizmendiarieta's thought in his early years, 1941-1945.

the Board of Directors on April 2, 1942 (PR, I, 43). The small magazine started with a circulation of 60 copies, reaching 160 two years later (PR, I, 54). The collections are preserved in the Arizmendiarieta Archive.

³⁹ As of January 25, 1946, Arizmendiarieta is named Delegate of the Archpriesthood of Mondragon for the preparation of the Provincial Eucharistic Congress of Guipuzcoa (Arizmendiarieta Archive).

⁴⁰ On the entertainment of youth, see CAS, 117-130 and PR, I, 87-90. The cinema was a major concern, which is why Arizmendiarieta developed an extensive film file, which, in 1944, already contained more than 5,000 cards. In the Arizmendiarieta Archive, there is a record of several protests of his for some movies having been censored, in his opinion undeservedly, by the diocesan commission.

Let us see, then, in this first section (A), how the young priest, 25 years old, faces reality with no more intellectual preparation than his philosophy studies in seminary and those of theology (on his own) in the barracks, plus an intensive course of Ethical-Social studies. The Civil War has ended. The prisons are still full of prisoners.⁴¹ Europe burns in the Second World War.

2. The crisis of liberal reason

“Today humanity is going through a crisis which has had perhaps no equal in history” (SS, II, 158). And this political, social, and religious crisis corresponds to the crisis of reason, which has attempted constitute itself as the guide and organizer of human life. This crisis of reason has become, then, a crisis of authority, of coexistence, of ideas themselves (“what idea remains standing, what idea is respected, what idea is saved in this chaos of confusion, what idea is there of God, with whose light mankind can be oriented and channeled?”) (SS, II, 158). Rationalist

⁴¹ According to calculations made by Tamames, R., *La República. La era de Franco*, Alliance, Madrid, 1975, 355, in 1941, the number of political prisoners in the jails of the Franco’s State exceeded 170,000. Other researchers have given much higher statistics, cf. Fernandez Vargas, V., *La resistencia interior en la España de Franco*, Istmo, Madrid 1981, 61. In 1947, the Newsletter of the Basque Government still estimated the number of political prisoners at 102, 292. cf. Fernandez Vargas, V., op. cit., 63. “In synthesis,” writes Tamames, “adding in the politically exiled population, we reach the conclusion that between 1939 and 1950, in those 12 years, a total of 875,000 man-years was lost. Which—to give a graphic idea—is equivalent to 875,000 prisoners for a whole year (around 8% of the active population of that time) or 74,672 men in prison for 12 consecutive years.”

liberalism, by recognizing the right to citizenship of all ideas, has practically destroyed the idea itself, with objective value, plunging humanity “in this ocean of skepticism in whose sky there is no star that can orient man on his course” (SS, II, 159).

The crisis humanity is going through is, therefore, a crisis of faith and, simultaneously, a crisis of reason, which is proclaimed to be self-sufficient. “My intelligence in me,” says Arizmendiarieta, “just like my heart, is an interested party, and cannot extract itself from the interests that animate my body or my heart. It cannot be an impartial judge, but rather is always an interested party” (PR, I, 124). That is why reason alone is unable to define the goals of human life, just as it cannot find the righteous path.

In Arizmendiarieta’s opinion, to believe is the law of life: “To live, it is necessary to believe; to live as it corresponds to him, man has to believe” (PR, I, 125). This principle will remain constant in his thought until his last writings, even though later, he will prefer to express it as need for ideals, for utopias.

By its nature, the insufficiency of reason does not so much mean a deficiency, to Arizmendiarieta, as it does the possibility of unlimited development and a radical opening of human nature. Recalling Pascal, he tells us, “man cannot be defined as a rational animal, but as a rational and religious animal, which is called to the infinite” (SS, I, 139). Man cannot achieve the infinite by himself: he is a mysterious, inexplicable mix of grandeur and misery, of beast and angel. He must recognize his weakness. “The ultimate act of his reason is to know that it cannot know everything.” But, from the moment reason comes to recognize its

own limitation, unsuspected possibilities open up before it, and the path on which the truth is revealed to us opens up (SS, I,139).

The insufficiency of reason is not relative only to God; it is also relative to man himself, which is an aspect that deserves to be specially highlighted for the consequences it will have in Arizmendiarrieta's thinking. Man, by reason alone, is incapable, in Arizmendiarrieta's opinion, of discovering true human dignity. Man is, to man, an enigma, and "natural reason does not project radiant and immense enough light to be able to always dissipate those doubts and determine, by reason of the dignity and nobility recognized in him, an attitude of respect and consideration" (SS, I, 209). Arizmendiarrieta believes he can prove this assertion through an analysis of the various evaluations the most illustrious thinkers, especially the pre-Christians, have done throughout history.

The immediate consequence derived from this thesis is that a social order based on reason alone must remain well below what human dignity deserves. On the other hand, having tried to base them on reason alone is the cause, in Arizmendiarrieta's opinion, of the multitude of ideologies and social doctrines, not infrequently mutually opposed, and the subsequent disintegration of society. "The chaos and the confusion of ideas, of duties and rights, will not disappear until we look at things in the light of faith, which is the only way we are capable of discovering ourselves in our neighbor, beyond the appearances of poor or rich, friend or enemy, compatriot or foreigner, as a brother of ours, bestowed by God with inalienable rights, and always worthy of our respect and consideration." (SS, I, 218)

The Modern Era, which started by proclaiming the sufficiency and primacy of reason, precisely with the intended purpose of exalting man with his deserved dignity, is over, in Arizmendiarieta's estimation, and he clearly proclaims the total failure of the attempt. In modern society, man is again considered as he was in ancient, pre-Christian societies: "Man, the supposed king of creation, is the most unfortunate being. Man disregards himself, does not know himself, does not know his dignity and is a toy, rather, is a wretch or any old thing that does not deserve or instill respect" (SS, I, 124-125). Arizmendiarieta ironically comments: "There you have him with his lantern, with his reason alone!" (Ib. 125). Old liberal reason, humiliated now, is shown powerless to do work of restoration. "Today," he says, "after so many transformations and developments, we have come to a halt at state of things in which no human solution can be discerned, because in the world as it stands, there remains no element or resource that can be used." (Ib. 155) There no longer remains any principle, or any moral authority, on which to remake humanity in war. Authority has ceased to exist, has lost credibility, from the moment that the exercise of rights was entrusted to strength. Principles have lost value, because, from the moment that the freedom of ideas was declared, they have torn each other apart, and today, it is impossible for men to agree on any point. This relativism with respect to principles and ideas, translated into the lack of respect for ideas and principles, has turned mankind, emptied of ideals, into an animal that follows its instincts, unchecked and unrestrained. "In the name of what, in the name of whom, will order be brought, or justice established, if justice for some is a thirst for revenge, and for others, the annihilation of one's neighbor...?" (Ib.).

Arizmendiarrrieta sees the world divided into democrats and totalitarians (collectivists), both being incapable, in his opinion, of finding a solution to the grave problem of class struggle. Democratic systems do not guarantee such a solution, because they rapidly degenerate into demagoguery. The totalitarian systems have been able to overcome class struggle, but not by giving a solution, but rather, on the basis of transforming it in struggle of collectivities (Ib.). Neither formula can be assured a true social peace. "There is no human remedy, there is no human power capable of creating a stable order of things, and it will all come down, as the steeple collapses when the walls fail, like the arch on which the support rests." (Ib.)

Peace and unity will only be possible when mankind finds a high ideal, a convergence point that shows itself to our wills. But this point itself must be outside the borders of this visible world, it cannot be man himself, because otherwise, man, carried away by selfishness, ultimately sets himself up as an end, trying to subjugate his peers. "In this world, which is decomposed, broken, in pieces; in this chaos, we can assert, on the one hand, that the unity that is needed, unity in which we must find peace and well-being, must not be brought about by reawakening in her the awareness of common blood and the pride of that blood, nor kindling the awareness of strength itself, which must degenerate necessarily into violence; that universal unity that is needed must not be made and accomplished around myths of homeland, empire, destiny, or blood, but rather, that unity must burst forth like pure spring water, must appear when our intelligence is informed by those dogmatic truths of supernatural brotherhood over and above natural diversity (...), intellectual illumination which must then be translated into the concordance of wills,

which must converge on that point of common aspiration.” (ib. 156-157)

The most prominent critical allusions always refer to National Socialism. But, as can be seen, allusions to Falangist ideology, to nationalism in general and, perhaps, to Basque nationalism are not lacking.

The principles around which efforts have been made to unite communities (homeland, destiny, empire, race, blood) have failed, because, behind them, “in reality, is hidden nothing but ambition, the desire for dominance, and despotism.” The crisis has become widespread: “today, there is no human resource in the world usable for social renewal, to unite wills and undertake the path of reconstruction.” (SS, II, 159)

There remains no other way than that of the return to social principles and Christian dogmas. “That crisis of ideas will find no solution except in humanity’s return to the principles of faith. Human reason, which is weak and sick, must find its cure in the return to religious dogma; it needs to believe, and when it does not believe in God, it believes in man, and it is seeing how it turns out to believe in man” (SS, II, 159-160).

Human reason, stripped of interests and selfishness, has no obstacles to humbly accepting the eternal truths; it is when interests intervene that it refuses to accept them, having to then resort to justifications of noble appearance (SS, I, 206), but that, in Arizmendiarieta’s opinion, have none of the impartiality and rationality they claim.

The triumph of selfishness, for its part, has a cause, which is the loss of faith, and the abandonment of God. Arizmendiarieta seems, then, to move in a circle, with the loss of faith and the explosion of selfishness being mutual causes.

Arizmendiarieta takes as his own Balmes' idea of historical periods of delirium, in one of which he believes he finds himself, even though he has not stopped to explain how such historical delusions arise. In these periods, fury blinds understanding and denatures hearts, and the most horrendous crimes are committed, always invoking august names ("man has such a strong and lively feeling of the excellence of virtue that even the greatest crimes try to disguise themselves with its cloak," in Arizmendiarieta's expression). Societies, then, are like a man in the throes of delirium, and the ideas, the nature, and the conduct of the delirious man would be poorly judged by what he says and does while in that lamentable state. History shows numerous examples of such episodes. "In our own days, we have been witnesses to this state of delirium, which society has passed through, in which we ourselves have been perhaps more than simple spectators" (SS, I, 143).

This explosion of selfishness and delirium was prepared by liberalism, by proclaiming freedom as a supreme value, unlimited and unconditioned, which is equivalent to the proclamation of man for himself, the truth and the law being subordinate to him. If man places himself above the truth and the law, social authority "has no more function or mission than those of a traffic cop" (SS, II, 146). Man will be able to think as he likes, and work as well, so that the employer will oppose laws and contracts that stipulate working conditions, and the worker will not commit himself to

anything. The result will be that “mankind lives for a few.” (SS, I, 147)

Arizmendiarieta does not lament “the disappearance of this kingdom, falsely called Christian, in which the combining of the truth with the lie is more hateful and repugnant than error, boldly professed and practiced.” (SS, I, 155)

The century of freedom has been succeeded by the century of strength, of violence, the twentieth century: strength and violence, which are translated into the predominant political systems, and into the methods that all sides employ. The Church, formerly mocked for teaching that freedom has to be exercised within legality, is now belittled for condemning the way of violence (Ib. 148). As in the last century, it came to be conventional wisdom that the exercise of full freedom would lead to well-being, to peace and universal prosperity; today, it has become conventional wisdom that there is no other way to establish justice than with the edge of the sword.

The new dawn of mankind that was expected has already led to tragedy twice. A radical return of principles is required, and a search for new foundations.

This crisis of ideas, it has already been said, will find no solution except in humanity’s return to the principles of faith. The crisis of unity can only be overcome by the Christian spirit of love and fraternity, based on the awareness of equality of souls and the destiny of all mankind. The crisis of authority, finally, can be overcome when its exercise does not amount to the imposition of personal ambitions, but rather service provided to people in the

name of God. Constituted States will not be able to save us from the present crisis, as they themselves were created on principles that are corrosive—principles that lead, over the long term, to decomposition, to despotism, to war, to injustice. All these myths, Arizmendiarieta repeats, of homeland, of race, empire, destiny, class, are corrosive (SS, I, 160): they will not be able to provide us with peace and well-being any more than an elm can give pears.

Only the Church, whose mission is to make a second golden age flourish on Earth, in which the difference of races and nations, classes and professions, no longer engenders haughtiness and disdain, envy and hatred, can provide the solution to this crisis and this delirium. Only the Church can be the basis of the new order, to which we are all called. (SS, I,161)

To explain the insufficiency of human reason, Arizmendiarieta uses *Alleluia*, the magazine directed to youth (PR, I, 123), to tell a great adventure of Baron Munchausen: One day, he fell down a deep well, and, because he did not know how to swim and was unable to grab onto anything, needed to find a way to escape. In this desperate situation, he had the happy idea of saving himself by grabbing ahold of his own ears with his hands and giving a strong upwards pull.

“This escape, so extravagant and so implausible (...), is an escape that men in other areas of life admit as an acceptable and natural thing. There are many, philosophers and wise people, who think and teach that man, ever afloat on a sea of doubts and worries, and agitated by all kinds of passions, can be self-sufficient and successful, led through life with steady steps by invoking his

reason and following the path that it shows him. Reason is his only guide, and the path laid out by it, his only path.” (Ib.)

What is striking about the case is that the children would not believe the story of the Baron fallen in the water and rescued in such an original way, but many sensible people believe, without difficulty, the philosophers “who tell them that man is self-sufficient, and there is more than enough reason for everything.” (Ib. 125)

3. The Church, sign of contradiction

Arizmendiarieta worked to defend the Church publicly, as well as he could, in the difficult postwar years. It is necessary to distinguish, however, the political level and the social. We will deal briefly with the political issue, leaving for another place the topic of the relationships of the two societies, the Church and the State (cf. 9, 1; 9, 2).

3.1 The Church of the conquerors

A very widespread accusation at that time was of having made common cause with the conquerors. In Arizmendiarieta’s writings, not a single allusion is found to the role played by the Church in the war. We only find observations like one that is repeated, that the religion is not responsible for what is done in its name. Instead, allusions are frequently made to the fact that the Church, in public life, appears united to political power, and,

as such, is the object of a great deal of criticism, which Arizmendiarrieta rejects.

“‘What is the Church doing,’ it is often asked, ‘consenting to sometimes place its canopies in the hands of its most unworthy children? What is the Church doing, allowing those who have not loved their neighbors to approach the altar? What is it doing, surrounded by so many Pharisees and hypocrites?’” (Ib. 137) Arizmendiarrieta, remembering the conduct of Jesus with the public sinner, responds by asking: “What is Christ doing surrounded by so many sinners, so many publicans? What is he doing? But is not [*the Church*] the mother who must seek the conversion of the sinner?” It is not easy to imagine that Arizmendiarrieta could sincerely have considered as equal the situations that are equated here.

In fact, Arizmendiarrieta does not insist that the Church, with its conduct at the side of the powerful—undisputed sinners, it would seem—is following the example of its founder, the friend of sinners and publicans. It should be seen more as an argumentation of the historical type, even though its validity continues to be rather doubtful from many points of view.

The Church, he says, is intransigent and intolerant with error, “because it knows that it alone possesses the truth, and it alone is the teacher of the truth. This intransigence, this doctrinal intolerance of the Church, which watches over its teachings and the purity of its doctrine with such scrupulousness, is a commendation in its favor, it is a test that reflects well on it.” (Ib. 139)

But also, God, who cannot bless evil, tolerates it; in the same way, the Church has always been tolerant with people, according to what he tells us (Ib. 141). Trying to relativize the same criticisms, he will add that, for a whole century, the nineteenth century (Arizmendiarieta considers it the century of rationalism and liberalism), the Church was accused of not being sufficiently tolerant. Its intransigence and firmness scandalized the peoples of that century. Freedom was proclaimed as the supreme value, that needed to be respected and held to by the Church as well. The century has changed, and the way men think has changed, too: the spirit of struggle and violence dominates; “even the truth itself must be imposed.” (Ib. 137-138; 147) Today, the Church is criticized for its tolerance, for its condescension with human weakness. It is required that it, too, act with a violent spirit, with that spirit of war and class struggle characteristic of our time, and which the Church has always detested. “Thus, the Church is always between two fires, as Christ was.” (Ib. 145)

In May of 1946, Arizmendiarieta tries to respond to the objections arising because of the Eucharistic Congress. First, to the objection that such celebrations are more political events than religious, he does not deny that political and religious intentions coincide, but considers this fortuitous; the Church, in spite of everything, cannot stop celebrating such festivals because of the fact that some want capitalize on them politically (SS, I, 212; cf. SS, II, 43): the Church has organized Eucharistic Congresses for many years, in times of prosperity and of crisis, in all countries and under all regimes (SS, I, 217).

To the objection to the costs that such Congresses incur, he responds that bullfights, movies, etc., cost no less, and that no

one protests them, adding: “Nor does anyone stop attending because this or that authority presides over them and honors them with their presence, or this or that flag is flown.” (Ib. 212)

The interest in these matters stems, above all, from the fact that they reflect very well the climate in which Arizmendiarrieta began his labor, as well as the mentality of the young priest who was confronted with hard reality with no more intellectual preparation than what he received in seminary. His thought in relation to faith and to the Church seems to be formed on the basis of St. Thomas, de Balmes, and authors like De Maistre, “the genius with the penetrating gaze” (SS, I, 153), etc., which are quoted in his first writings. His social thought, fundamentally inspired by the doctrine of the Church, seems, however, to run through fairly independent channels, with its own dynamic. Certainly these determine and enrich each other, but differences continue to be observed in his areas of interest. While in theological thought, Arizmendiarrieta shows himself to us as a repeater, and quite well-informed (his knowledge of Strauss, Harnack, Renan, and the Central European Protestant liberals is noteworthy), on the social question, his very personal sensitivity appears from the earliest days, showing him to be a thinker on his own path.

The criticisms of the Church for cooperating with authority, for maintaining cordial relationships with authority, come to nothing, he says: “Anyone searching for something to criticize should look for it where the Church distances itself from the people, not where it deals with authority.” (Ib. 215)

Arizmendiarrieta insists on this aspect: because the mission of

the Church is just that, because the Church lives in the people, because it is the people whom it needs at all times. The Church is divine, the treasure it keeps is divine, but all those who represent it are human, very human, and run the risk of allowing themselves to be seduced by the goods they own, and by the favor of those to whom they owe such goods. The Church, he will insist, should be poor, to be able to be free and impartial.

“Congratulations always to the Church that remains in contact with the people, just as a people that has the Church as its friend is fortunate, for that Church has magnificent means to protect their rights and safeguard their dignity. If it has the Church together with it, no one can ever tyrannize that people, whose consciousness of dignity remains alive, thanks to the doctrine of the Church, which ferments it” (Ib. 214).

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