The Know-About-It Trilogy

Elke Streit de Oliveira
What a Believer Is

Believer, for those who do not know it yet, is the guy who does not live without God. However, he keeps on living his life without noticing it until he faces a miracle, because he had testified it, or because he himself had requested it. The miracle can be sensitive to the eyes or to the ears. At sight he is a paralytic walking, a blind seeing, a husband coming back home, a child getting free from addiction, an unemployed back to the work market, cancer or AIDS that is not there anymore, the healing of emotions, the giant that falls by just one stone. To the ears is the name “Jesus Christ”. Because the guy who does not live without God, ignoring his own condition, when he hears about who Jesus Christ is this guy gets enchanted, falls in love and speaks from the bottom of his spirit “If there is a God, He must be Him!” and elects Him to be his God and the Lord of his life. But it does not mean, as people say, alienation. On the contrary: those who have Jesus in their heart face life as a challenge to beat the cosmos, let us say, Heideggerian (that is much likely the biblical cosmos) and, by their Lord’s example, become a servant of society, they are not limited by walls. And, as far as I know, his faith gets stronger in the opposite way of alienation: the greater his conscience of the world is, the more impossible the world seems to be and the greater his faith has to be. They are all dreamers, imperfects, forgiven. They think they have a mission to fulfill and act before life as disciples giving birth to disciples. Every time you see someone who fulfills this description, you find a believer. For your own sake, do not believe in caricatures and in idealizations. They are all far too ideological. And if someone claims himself to be a believer and carries the Bible, but does not fit the description I offer you, he is a pretender (and there are lots of pretenders around). Because this definition is a faithful extract of what is read in the believer’s manual. But if you are still in doubt, I recommend you reading it by yourself.

What Church is

Church, according to the common sense is the edification, the temple where people of the same faith meet. Church can also mean the institution, the dominant religion. Church in Brazil is the Catholic one. But church also has another meaning, the biblical one: church is the people who host the Spirit of God. In this sense, church is not fixed. She goes around, travels, goes to the movies, to the beach; she is not alienated as soon as she studies, she reads the paper, she talks to people, she watches TV, she debates and change opinions. Neither is she cold, she is around 36°C and lives on the rhythm of a heartbeat. Church is in jail, at the mall, at the party, in the funeral, at home, in the hospital. She dances, cries, sings, laughs. Church is broke, and she invests in the stock market. She takes a crowded train, she drives a 0 km car. She has only finished elementary school and maybe she has a computing course. She is a Ph.D. at University. She sweeps the streets, she works in a bank, she teaches, she fixes things, she runs companies, she produces arts, music, cinema, theater. She is democratic, she is conservative, she knows nothing about politics. She dwells in the slums, the suburbs, the condominium, the best part of town, the country, the wilderness. She is Latin, Nordic, Black, she has got those oriental eyes. She speaks all languages and dwells in all cultures. She is versatile, plural, cosmopolitan. She meets herself, she exchanges, she grows up. She shares her possession with herself, who is under privations. And she shares so much that she prospers and she shares with other ladies of her relationships. And church has many relationships. As I told you, she is a lady, a historical being who does not escape from the rules. And the rule is living. In order to live, everyone needs myths, symbols, allegories, because reality as it is, incomprehensible, impossible to be assimilated. We do not see face to face yet, only in fragments. So, church speaks about Good and Evil. Frankly, this is a too simplistic and childish way to face such a complex reality, but it seems to me that we have not reached a thought that overcomes infantilism; we are still trying. Someone tried so much that they got to the extreme of dissolving all concepts into pure power. Complicated way of thinking, but it is still a boy’s way of thinking. But things are like this, anyway. We keep on moving. That is: Good is God, Evil is Devil; Good is Christ, Evil is Antichrist. Church has her own dreams, her ideals. She is
an apparently paradoxical lady so that she confuses sociologists, anthropologists and social psychologists. She wants to see all things new on the basis of her ancient's model: the Primitive Church. The Primitive Church, founded personally by a carpenter, is everything I said about church. The other churches, though, those ones I do not know what to say.

What Antichrist Is
The antichrist is an interesting figure both literally and as an allegory. He is the enemy, that is, he is the friend of none, not even of those who walk with him and live for him. His essence is the absolute evil. Sorry for the word “absolute.” The absolute evil started with a thought: “I shall go up to heaven to be like God”. There are people who think it is gorgeous. There are people who also want to go up to heaven and be like God too. All right. I have nothing to do with it. That’s ok. But for the believer it’s the last straw. So, evil starts with ambition for power. In this sense, the antichrist can be anyone – he just has to want power. See it clearly: power for the sake of power. But the antichrist can also be easily recognized by his sassy characteristics: he does not love, he does not feel mercy, he does not care. He is never a servant; he uses everyone and everything. The antichrist destroys, kills, steals, splits and unites around a common enemy. He oppresses and justice and good sense testify against him. He is violent, sarcastic, mocking and he prospers with the violent, sarcastic and mocking reaction of those who are suffering in his hands. The antichrist is problematic, he has got deep psychological diseases; he is schizophrenic. He distorts good and evil. Is he a person? Can be, but not only one. He is, indeed, a spirit, a system. He is iniquity, the lie that lies to us about not being possible to escape from him. His religion is Determinism, his philosophy Fatalism. As a system he can also be called cosmos. For he would have been an invincible enemy if he had not already been beaten by Christ. Because Christ is the evidence that there is an alternative future, an alternative system. He who has got the faith will resist. Forgive me for that, but the enemy really exists, he is real, his deeds are everywhere. But may not be the one you have been thinking about.