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I-Thou Relation

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Italy

Parly's ideology was the domin-
any Catholics were convinced
oper social and political con-
lict Action and the Christian
1. the democratic system could
ristian state" that would con-
g management of power and
ould have the influence that
el. But the Holy See's excom-
unists and their support-
re opposite effect; it marginal-
The ferment of renewal was
sent, especially among the
ups embodied a spirit of free-
 spiritual commitment to a
 in society, and the quest for
faith. The majority lived an
id political life under the lead-
edda, the general president of
nd the Jesuit father Riccardo-
ter of the "Crusade for a Be-
government and magistrates,
ded the Lateran Pacts (Article
was often oppressive and dis-
regard to religious minorities
ists, Jews). Freedom of reli-
oned by Article 8 of the con-
flictive time.

 Vatican Council (1962-65)
ound interest in Italian pub-
events of the Council taking
ought Italian Catholicism out
dition. Even ordinary people
the great themes of Chris-
the last years of the pontifi-
-78), a spiritual flower-
est, especially with the birth
astic communities (Monte-
, characterized by an intense
that attracted the partic-
d range of Christians. Such
rated and enriched myriad

, after four and a half cen-
Italian popes (Karol Wojtila,
enger, 2005), the Catholicism
insula entered a new phase
 pope's diminished involve-
 was accompanied by deep-
 ranging from the
ising ecumenical and inter-
"Communion and Liberation"
habation in the mission of
sheres of life) and San-
ng solidarity with the poor.
find it difficult to maintain a

balanced relationship with ordinary believers. Their efforts to root Christian identity in cer-
tainties that are historical and temporal betray
kind of fundamentalist" tendency. The concil-
 impulse nevertheless triggered processes of
ovation: the spread of direct contact with the
ible, participation in the liturgy, and a slow
outing diffusion of historical and theolog-
al studies on Christianity in the university. All
ese are helping to overcome centuries of pas-
ity and marginalization of lay believers. In the
0s, while Catholic Action was losing vitality,
ther commitments developed. The volun-
t sector involves many Christians in services
on the "frontier," such as assistance and rehabi-
ation of drug addicts, assistance of the elderly,
和服务 in Two-thirds World countries.

Church and state relations in Italy have
extended to the Reformed churches, which
became beneficiaries of public funds; a similar
ament was made with the Jewish com-
nities. The rapid decomposition of the Chris-
Democratic Party after the fall of the Berlin
Wall necessitated a strenuous search for a new
made of presence in Italian society. The cli-
ate of greater freedom, resulting from Vati-
 I and the ecumenical initiatives of contact
and dialogue, has calmed the tensions between
Christian confessions, while the rapid evolution
toward a multireligious tradition has profoundly
changed the spiritual climate and the increas-
ingly secularized culture of Italy.

(M); Christians, 47 M, 82% (baptized Roman
Catholics, 55.6 M [10 M are "disaffiliated"] and
only 6% attend Mass regularly); Protestants,
0.4 M; marginal Christians, 0.4 M; inde-
dents, 0.4 M; Orthodox, 0.1 M; Muslims, 0.7
M, 1%; nonreligious, 9.3M, 17%. (Based on
World Christian Encyclopedia, 2001.)

GIUSEPPE ALBERIGO

I-Thou Relation, an intimate, loving union,
usually between persons, human or divine,
who view each other as free, self-directed indi-
viduals possessing intrinsic value and dignity.
(The English "thou" is a translation of the
familiar form of "you" in French [tu], Ger-
man [du], and other languages). It is con-
trasted with an I-him/her relation between
persons who view each other as separate things
or objects whose value lies in their particu-
lar features and functions. The loving bond
between I and thou enhances each party, for it
entails a sharing of lives and experiences while
respecting the mysterious uniqueness of each.
See also BUBER, MARTIN; MARCEL, GABRIEL;
LEVINAS, EMMANUEL; HETERONOMY; RELA-
TIONALITY.

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