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JAKOBUS MARTINUS
VORSTER

Analytical perspectives on religious fundamental- ism

Abstract:

The first decade of the twenty-first century will amongst other things be remembered for the renewed interest in religious fundamentalism. In the past fundamentalism was related to a certain strand in the Christian Protestant tradition in the USA, but nowadays the term is used for a resurging complex ideology world-wide. Religious fundamentalism, and even religions themselves, indeed became a focal point of attention. Furthermore, the question arises of how to deal with this phenomenon in a Liberal Democracy, especially in the execution of religious rights. This study investigates contemporary religious fundamentalism and endeavours to identify its features and the reasons for its growing power and destructive influence in a human rights environment.

1. Introduction

The concept of fundamentalism has been used since 1927 to describe a form of conservative Protestantism that was discernible in Christian circles in the US. Christians holding on to the fundamentals of the Christian faith in the wave of modernist changes used the term to classify themselves in a “liberal” society. Since the event of September 11, 2001 in New York the word ‘fundamentalism’ appeared anew and generated astonishing interest in contemporary political and human rights debates. It became a potent force in the restructuring of the post-Cold War world order (Huntington, 2002:98). Scholars started to speak about and debate the issue of Islamic fundamentalism as an attitude that developed in Muslim countries and that lies at the root of the modern hostilities towards the West. An intimate link exists between Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism (Milton-Edwards, 2005:92). However, research revealed that Islamic fundamentalism can be recognised alongside the manifestation of Hindu, Christian, and Jewish variations (Milton-Edwards 2005:3). Many religious and political conflicts in Europe can also be ascribed to this resurging religious fundamentalism. Berger (2002:297) is correct in his statement that the concept of fundamentalism is nowadays used to describe just about any militant religious movement with a claim for authority and certitude. Therefore, research is also under way on what researchers call the “psychology of fundamentalism” (Hood, Hill & Williamson, 2005:11).

**Prof.
Jakobus
Martinus
Vorster,
Ph.D.**

Rector of
Theological
Seminary of
the

Reformed
Churches in
South Africa, North-West University,
South Africa.

Author of the books:

Christian attitude in a Liberal
Democracy (2007), Ethical perspec-
tives on human rights (2004)

Email: Koos.Vorster@nwu.ac.za



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Westophobia

Bruce (2000:117) describes fundamentalism as: “a rational response of traditionally religious peoples to social, political and economic changes that downgrade and constrain the role of religion in the public world”. According to Antoun (2001:xii), fundamentalists can be identified by: “the search for purity in an impure world; ‘traditioning’ (making the ancient immediately relevant to the contemporary situation); totalism (taking religion out of the worship centre and into many domains; e.g. home, school, bank), activism (confronting establishments, political or religious, by sometimes violent protest); the struggle between good and evil; and the selective modernization and controlled acculturation”.

According to Marty & Appleby (1991:835) fundamentalism functions “as a tendency, a habit of mind, found within religious communities and paradigmatically embodied in certain representative individuals and movements, which manifest itself as a strategy, or set of strategies, by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinctive identity as a people or a group”.

Fundamentalism is described

- * as an aggressive response to change;
- * as the slavish adherence to the absoluteness of certain fundamentals;
- * as a religious orientation that views religion as relevant to all important domains of culture and society including politics, the family, the marketplace, education and law;
- * as a habit of mind found within religious communities and paradigmatically embodied in certain representative individuals and movements.

Fundamentalism can not be limited to the sphere of the religious. Some scholars draw attention to the viewpoint that fundamentalism should be seen as a sociological trend that appears under certain social conditions. The phenomenon pertains to much more in the fields of religion, politics and culture. One can rightly speak of a new contemporary form of fundamentalism. Furthermore, the question arises whether fundamentalism in Christianity nowadays has the same core characteristics as fundamentalism in Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, African traditional religions or politics. Should we speak of “fundamentalisms” according to the example of Marty & Appleby (1991:vii)? This article focuses on these questions in an effort to describe contemporary religious fundamentalism and to discover the rationale of its way of reasoning.

To answer these questions, and especially the question about the identity of contemporary religious fundamentalism, a thorough analysis of all the aspects of this phenomenon as mentioned in the quoted definitions, is necessary. To achieve this goal, this investigation approaches these questions by discussing the contemporary theological, psychological, political and sociological perspectives on this phenomenon.

2. Theological perspectives

Fundamentalism is not an unknown concept in Christianity. A certain trend of Christianity in the United States has been termed fundamentalist for many years, although Barr (1981:1) concedes in his well-known book on Christian fundamentalism that a clear and simple definition of the concept can not always be given. He uses the term fundamentalism for a “certain basic personal religious and existential attitude”. The term carries “the suggestion of narrowness, bigotry, obscurantism and sectarianism”. He maintains that fundamentalism was used for Christians who confess the inerrancy of the Bible and:

* with a basic hostility to modern theology and to the methods, results and implications of the modern critical study of the Bible;

* with an assurance that those who do not share their religious viewpoint are not really 'true Christians' at all (Barr, 1981: 10).

Furthermore, he contends that this movement could even be described as a theology-less movement in the sense that it is a "fossilized theology", a "fragmented theology" and an "inactive theology" (Barr, 1981:160). It seems that he regards a theology that departs from the presupposition of the unity of the Bible and the unfolding revelation-history as fundamentalist.

The logical consequence of Barr's view is that all forms of orthodox reformed theology and evangelical theology must be considered fundamentalist because they answer to most of the attributes Barr lays at the door of fundamentalism. It seems that Barr's description of fundamentalism is too simplistic. On the one hand the definition limits religious fundamentalism only to Christian fundamentalism and on the other hand it raises suspicion of certain strands of protestant theology which is not extremist or fanatical. Marsden (1991:1) rightly reminds us that a (Christian) fundamentalist is an evangelical who is angry about something. Evangelical beliefs include the Reformation doctrine of the authority of the Bible, the historical character of God's saving work recorded in Scripture, salvation to eternal life based on the redemptive work of Christ, the importance of evangelism and missions, and the importance of a spiritually transformed life (Marsden, 1991:5). Contrary to this outlook, he describes fundamentalists as a subtype of evangelicals and militancy crucial to their outlook (Marsden, 1991:1&104). He makes a valid point when he indicates that militancy (extremism, fanaticism and anger) is an integral component of fundamentalism.

Many Christians who view themselves as Reformed, Evangelical, Charismatic or conservative, and who confess the divine authority of Scripture, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and adhere to the bodily resurrection of Christ, the final consummation and the eternal life, amongst others, will not regard themselves as fundamentalist in the above mentioned exposition. Furthermore, fundamentalism is not only a theological position flowing from certain biblical presuppositions. Although it seems to be lenient towards conservatism, fundamentalism is also more than mere conservatism or orthodoxy. Modernists can also be fundamentalists when they use their "absolutes" in a fanatical way, are suspicious of other views and are guilty of stereotyping. This reality indicates how difficult it is to define fundamentalism even within Christianity itself.

The difference between evangelicalism and fundamentalism becomes clear when one considers Marsden's interesting account of the history of evangelicalism in the US. Evangelicalism ruled as a result of the second Great Awakening immediately after the civil war. There was a strong current of mission and an urge to transform the whole American society into a Christian nation on the basis of evangelical beliefs. Evangelicalism also aligned itself with internal politics and anti-black sentiments, and even contributed to the religious base of a militant racist movement such as the Ku Klux Klan (Marsden, 1991:100). In 1920 the Northern Baptist Convention instituted a "Fundamentals" conference to muster opposition to liberalism. Marsden (1991:57) says: "Soon the term caught on to describe all sorts of American Protestants who were willing to wage ecclesiastical and theological war against modernism in theology and the cultural changes that modernists celebrated".

The second phase in the history of evangelicalism started around 1930, and this period witnessed the growing division between the fundamentalists and the neo-funda-

mentalists (Marsden, 1991:74). The first movement aligned itself with political life in the US in an attempt to realise the old idea of a Protestant Christian America. The movement attempted to congregate Christian opposition to Roman Catholicism, Judaism and liberalism. The latter was an attempt to be engaged in Christian missions and to restore the classic evangelicalism of the Awakening without being engaged in political and anti-establishment actions. Fundamentalism was an upcoming religious fanaticism with visible strands of militancy and extremism, while neo-fundamentalism was a resurgence of true evangelicalism. Marsden (1991:74) makes it clear that fundamentalism and evangelicalism cannot be regarded as synonymous. Unlike evangelicalism, this fundamentalism adhered to a certain means of interpretation of Scripture, which can be termed biblicism. Biblicism uses the biblical texts to prove a view and to derive ethical principles from these texts without taking into account the revelation-historical relevance and cultural-historical background of Scripture for the understanding of biblical passages.

Since 1930 this Christian fundamentalism has been characterised by its growing global influence in countries with a strong Christian ethos, such as African and European countries. It became known because of its pro-nationalist and pro-capitalist positions in world politics in the wake of the Vietnam war and the growth of international communism. It also became notorious for its support for the formation and protection of the state of Israel because of the importance of Israel in the doctrine of dispensationalism, and secondly its presence in the world-wide development of the Charismatic Movement which penetrated many churches.

The definition of Barr has a second deficiency and that is that the term fundamentalism cannot be used for a phenomenon in Christianity only. Nowadays, scholars in religious studies use the term fundamentalism in a much broader sense. Fundamentalism became a description for any form of religion that contains militancy, extremism and fanaticism, and which is directed vehemently against an identified opponent. Because the phenomenon of militancy and religious fanaticism also appears in other religions, such as Islam and Judaism, scholars speak of Islamic fundamentalism and Jewish fundamentalism as well. Bruce (2000:94) is an exponent of this view and he maintains that fundamentalism is typical of many religious movements. In other words, fundamentalism can be regarded as a phenomenon, particularly on the terrain of the religious. However, Islam, Judaism and Protestant Christianity seem more prone to fundamentalism than other religions because they are "religions of the book". These three have religious text as their doctrinal and spiritual foundations.

The concept fundamentalism is thus also used to describe the extremism, radicalism and militancy in certain strands of current-day Islam. This topic has been thoroughly investigated by Milton-Edwards (2005:1). She provides an outline of the ancient history and developments of Islam, and describes the negative influences colonialism had on the countries with Muslim majorities after the decline of the Ottoman Empire and other Islamic strongholds. The Islam identity in the twentieth century became threatened from two sides. Firstly, attempts in Islam to modernise itself eroded its identity. Furthermore, the development of political nationalism in colonies such as Pakistan and Indonesia and the strife for political independence temporarily pushed Islamic ideals to the background and out of the leadership's concern. From outside came the advance of secularism and the cultural and political power of what she calls "westernism," and this worldwide phenomenon posed a threat to Islamic values.

The trend towards modernism in Islam itself, the growth of political nationalism and resistance against the colonial powers and the threat of westernism and secularism,

gave impetus to the idea that Islam needed to be remodelled if the decline of Islam civilisation was to be brought to a close. Milton-Edwards (2005:21) singles out several key figures in Islam thinking in the early twentieth century that nurtured this idea. Their influence spread geographically across Asia and the Middle East and endures to the present day through the movements and ideological inheritors of Islamic modernism. Eventually Islam became involved in politics since 1945 in a variety of ways. Some Islamic movements have been allowed to a modicum of political power at the popular level. Contrary to this positive development, other fundamentalist movements such as in Afghanistan, Iran, and Middle Eastern states have succeeded in controlling the state. As a result of the rise of fundamentalism, the experiments in secular nation-building in Muslim societies across the modern world began to fall apart (Milton-Edwards, 2005:49). Islam weaved itself back into the public domain and Islamic fundamentalism entrenched itself deeply in world politics and became a force to be reckoned with, both on the diplomatic and military levels.

The resurgence of extremism with its fanatical characteristics in Islam flows from a certain approach to the Qur'an. Various terms are in use to describe this approach such as Islamism, integrist, neo-normative Islam, Islamic revivalism and Islamic nativism (Voll, 1995:33). For the purpose of this study, the term "scripturalism" will be used to describe the hermeneutical approach to the Qur'an in Islamic extremism.

Scripturalism tends to apply the verses of the Qur'an in a normative way, irrespective of the spirit of the whole message of the Qur'an. God intervenes in the Qur'an, as in the Bible, in order to bring concrete responses to a historic situation out of absolute eternal principles. As is the case with Biblicism in Christianity, the unity and the cultural context of the religious text is disregarded in favour of the literal application of all norms in every situation. The Shari'a governs all human relationships through its principles for economics to politics and for the inner life to conjugal relations from the perspective of faith. The Shari'a then consists of living one's public life and private life in the sight of Allah (Geraudy, 1990:51). However, the extremist approach perverts this noble concept of the Shari'a to an idolatrous cult of tradition. In Kuwait, some Sunnis follow the Saudi Arabian (Najd) clergy and their beliefs that emphasise keeping women apart from the larger society and maintaining a patriarchal social structure. The veiling of women is in essence also one of the results of Scripturalism. Kiddie (1988:76) points out that the practice of veiling goes back to the pre-Islamic Near East civilisation. The practice existed in pre-Islamic Persia and also in the Byzantine Empire and was taken over by Islam.

Judaism also has its fundamentalist segments. According to Antoun (2001:19) Jewish fundamentalism is the religious reaction to anti-Semitism and its twentieth-century culmination in the Nazi Holocaust. Since World War II fundamentalism was fed by the struggle in the Middle East and the subsequent wars between the Israelis and the Arab states. The most important segments with fundamentalist characteristics became known as the Haredim (Heilman & Friedman, 1991:198) and the more radical Gush Emunim (Aran, 1991:265).

The Haredim are ultra-Orthodox Jews. The term haredim is used because these people visibly distinguish themselves not only from non-Jews, but also from most of their Jewish neighbours by way of their dress, attitudes, worldview and the character of their religious life. The historical line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the teachings of the prophets represents the unchangeable Jewish tradition. This tradition must be maintained in the modern world and therefore the life view of the Haredim refuses to endorse

or to legitimize contemporary Western culture.

The Haredim views the Jewish history as sacred. According to this belief Jewish life and tradition was an alternative superior to anything that non-Jewish contemporary culture could offer. Aran (1991:265), Antoun (2001:20) and Bruce (2000:4) refer to another group namely the Gush Emunim as an example of contemporary Jewish fundamentalism. This group saw the war as a fulfilment of Old Testament prophesies and they defended the occupied territory with militant force. Aran (1991:289) informs us that the Gush Emunim is an active core group of observant Jews, mainly yeshiva students, teachers and graduates – young people who number at most several thousand. This group retains many characteristics typical of schismatic and even deviant fringe groups.

Fundamentalism is, however, not limited to these three religions. In the run of their study of fundamentalisms of our day, Marty & Appleby (1991:531-813) published several articles on the rise of fundamentalism in other religions and cultures. Gold (1991:531) describes how this phenomenon can be discerned in organised Hinduism. According to him Hindu fundamentalist groups flourished since the eighties of the previous century. This Hindu fundamentalism appeals to what may be urban Hindus' lowest common religious denominator: a Hindu identity that must be protected against global influences.

In the same volume, Madan (1991:594) teaches us about the rise of fundamentalism in the Sikh religious tradition. He says that Sikh fundamentalism is a reactive phenomenon, a defence mechanism. This fundamentalism is marked not so much by deep theological concerns or intellectual vigour as by religious fervour and political passion. Here also fundamentals of faith become absolutes that are used to protect an identity. Remarkable is the fact that Sikh fundamentalism gained momentum when Hindu fundamentalism began to flourish.

Swearer (1991:628) provides valuable information about fundamentalist movements in Theravada Buddhism. He says that fundamentalisms in Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asia arose from the collapse and transformation of classical religious and cultural syntheses following on the colonial period and the introduction of Western values, technology, education, and economic and political systems. Theravada Buddhist fundamentalists created an innovative and popular synthesis of religion and culture designed to preserve Thai Buddhist identity against conventional Thai Buddhism and the morally compromised secular society. These movements are frequently led by strong, often military aggressive, charismatic leaders whose followers, whether at the centre or periphery of the cultural and socio-political mainstream, perceive themselves to be threatened as individuals, communally, or as a nation (Swearer, 1991:678).

Another theological argument used to ascertain whether a religion is fundamentalist is to establish whether such a religion claims to be totalist. A strong supporter of this idea is Antoun (2001:85). He employs the term totalism and with this term he describes the intention of some religions to extend their meaning beyond the spiritual to the areas of politics, economy, family-life and all other spheres of life. When a religion defines itself as totalist, such a religion must be regarded, according to his view, as fundamentalist. Milton-Edwards (2005:11) entertains the same idea, and therefore she describes Islam as essentially fundamentalist because Muslims view their religion as a universal religion in the sense that it dominates all dimensions of human existence. This argument can be questioned because all the major religions are by definition holistic. They profess a value system that should be realised by their adherents in all spheres of life. Religion is not only spiritual in nature, but attempts to concretise a certain value system in soci-

ety. To reduce religion to the sphere of the spiritual is to distort the very essence of religion. Christianity regards the concept of the kingdom of God as meaningful for the totality of the life of Christians. Islam proclaims the all encompassing character of the Shari'a and Judaism the rule of Jahweh over creation. These facts are the reason why Sutton & Vertgans (2005:9) use the term "praxisitioners" instead of fundamentalists when dealing with resurgent Islam. This major trend in these religions does not mean that they are fundamentalist per se. On the other hand, religions with a narrow spiritual content can also be fundamentalist because they can be, for example, schismatic, intolerant and judgemental and these features are typical of fundamentalism. Viewing totalism as a characteristic of religious fundamentalism will entail that all religions are intrinsically fundamentalist, and such a derivation is not true.

These theological perspectives reveal that scripturalism, the attempt to establish a rigid orthopraxis, the identification of a common enemy, anger, totalism, religious fanaticism and extremism are indicators of the emergence of fundamentalism in religious traditions.

3. Psychological perspectives

A thorough study on the "psychology" of religious fundamentalism was done by Hood, Hill & Williamson (2005:30). The contention of their research is that religious fundamentalism provides a unifying philosophy of life within which personal meaning and purpose are embedded. People become fundamentalists because religion as a "meaning system", strengthened by a sacred text, endows them with a sense of meaning and purpose in a situation of insecurity. Creating meaning in life may seem to be a positive contribution of religious fundamentalism. However, the effects of fundamentalism are usually negative (Hood, Hill & Williamson, 2005:211). Altemeyer (2002:18) deals with these effects in this research. He addresses the question: what is there in religiousness that might promote bigotry, because religious fundamentalism runs with prejudice? He finds the answer in the fact that fundamentalism is mostly embedded in "religious ethnocentrism". With this concept he describes the tendency in fundamentalism to make "us versus them" and "in-group versus out-group" judgements of others on the basis of religious identification or beliefs. His investigation revealed that religious fundamentalism correlates with prejudice against various racial-ethnic minorities among students and slightly more among the parents. Fundamentalism related yet higher than usual with hostility toward homosexuals and still higher with Religious Ethnocentrism. So as relatively prejudiced as religious fundamentalists tend to be toward racial and ethnic minorities, and toward homosexuals, they are even more likely, compared with others, to make ethnocentric judgements on religious grounds (Altemeyer, 2002:23). His study further reveals that the prejudice is the consequence of people's development of their sense of self-identity.

Another finding of his study is: "that religious fundamentalists tend to have a very small 'us' and quite a large 'them' when it comes to faith". This high level of religious ethnocentrism, learned early in life, can provide at least part of the reason why such people would incline toward "in-group", "out-group" distinctions later. The "in-group", "out-group" paradigm, which is apparent in fundamentalism, usually results in racism and xenophobia. With the "we feeling" and subsequent solidarity in the own group as measurement, a group (either ethnic racial or religious) can have the tendency to judge other

groups by the standards and values of their own. According to Marger (1994:15) this tendency produces a view of one's own group (the "in-group") as superior to others (the "out-group").

Therefore, fundamentalism often leads to social stratification and violations of human rights. Social stratification is a system of legitimate, structured social inequality in which groups receive disproportionate amounts of society's wealth, power and prestige and are socially ranked accordingly (Marger, 1994:70). Social stratification flows from the supposition that society consists of irreconcilable groups and the premise that a unitary government with general franchise cannot govern these groups.

The dialectical principle must lead to the "us-them" social attitude and structure. As has been proven historically, total division and conflict develops according to a particular pattern. In the "us-zone" the uniqueness of the own group is idolised. The emotional core of conflicts between groups can often be found in chosen traumas and chosen glories of opposing sides. Chosen traumas refer to the shared mental representations of humiliating events during which losses, which could not be mourned effectively, occurred. Chosen glories recount the shared mental representations of events of success or triumph. Both are often mythologized and passed from generation to generation, although historical grievances are stronger markers of a group's identity than the mental representations of past glories. Traumas experienced many centuries in the past are still active in the identities of same groups. It is as if time collapses and feelings about ancient events are condensed and intertwined with current events.

This is what happened in Apartheid South Africa with the glorification of "white" history over and above the neglect of "black" or "indigenous" history. This pattern of reasoning results in abuses of human rights. Marcuse's (1971) social analysis, which maintains that oppression breeds aggression and eventual revolution, assists man to understand that this pattern must result in inter-personal conflicts.

Fundamentalism is on the one hand fuelled by fear of others, and on the other hand fuels this fear. Riddell (2004:39) discusses a report of the Runnymede Trust in the UK which analysis Islamophobia (fear of Muslims) in that country. The report identified eight features of Islamophobia, which include amongst others:

Islam was seen as being inferior rather than different.

Racial discrimination against Muslims is defended rather than challenged.

Muslim criticism of the West is rejected and not considered.

In Islamic fundamentalist circles the fear can be termed as Christianophobia and Westophobia. These fears reflect the same features as Islamophobia. Besides the violation of human rights, these fears are also responsible for the dangerous though popular human custom to stereotype others. A stereotype is a "picture" in one's head that one does not acquire through personal experience, but that was drawn by traditions, group pressures, group isolation, racist propaganda, general perceptions and beliefs of other group members (Marger, 1994:74-75). Stereotyping is usually responsible for perceptions of other people according to generalised images. In the American society stereotyping can lead to the following negative descriptions of groups: if you are white you are rich, racist and oppressive, if you are black you are prone to drugs and criminality. In the United Kingdom whites have a colonial and imperial mentality and blacks are lazy and a burden to the state. This stereotyping often lends justification to dehumanising actions against people perceived as "others" (Vorster, 2004:198).

Stereotyping is typical of fundamentalism. In Western communities Muslims are nowadays seen as violent and dangerous and prone to terrorism and indiscriminate

killing of people. Little attention is given to the heterogeneous character of Islam (Sutton & Vertigans, 2005:9). In Islamic communities Christians are projected as sexually immoral, materialist, and hedonist as if Christianity and Western culture are synonymous. Although Hood, Hill and Williamson (2005:194) warn against stereotyping religious fundamentalists as “militant,” they acknowledge that fundamentalists can also become violent. Social prejudice, the “in-group” “out-group” paradigm, discrimination and social stratification, reconstruction of history, in-breeding, fear, the tendency to stereotype and the inclination to violence, are powerful ingredients of contemporary religious fundamentalism that become clear when examined from a psychological point of view. Other prominent features can be discerned when this phenomenon is viewed from a political angle of approach.

4. Political perspectives

An editorial in the journal *Studies in World Christianity* points out that: “fundamentalism seems now to be used more often as an ideological category than a theological term. This might lead us to suspect that fundamentalism describes a phenomenon which is not primarily religious, but rather a movement generated by social, cultural and political change” (Anon, 2002:1).

What is remarkable in this interesting statement are the words “ideology” and “political change”. It supposes that fundamentalism is more than just a hermeneutical methodology in the understanding of religious texts. All the publications referred to in this article dealing with the rise of the various kinds of religious fundamentalisms refer to the importance politics play in these developments. What Jansen (1997:1) says about Islamic fundamentalism is virtually true of all other religious fundamentalisms. He speaks of the “dual nature” of Islamic fundamentalism, which entails that this constituent of fundamentalism is both fully politics and fully religion. Most of the countries where religious fundamentalism occurs were at a certain stage colonies. Indigenous populations were confronted with the culture, systems, language and religion of the colonial power. Own indigenous cultural traditions, religions, languages and systems were either oppressed or ignored. Colonialism gave rise to the fear of losing identity. This fear and the longing for identity was the breeding ground for the rise of religious fundamentalism which produced certain ideologies and religious sectarian groups.

Most Muslim communities suffered the negative consequences of colonialism. They lost their political and ethnic independence and their political systems were replaced by Western structures. In Eastern Europe the Muslim communities were oppressed by the dictatorial systems instituted by Communism. The liberation struggles that ensued in these countries became a potent breeding-ground for religious fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalism provided the ideological framework for national liberation.

Antoun (2001:3) indicates that fundamentalist movements are defined, ideologically, by their opposition to and reaction against the ideology that suits the permissive secular society, the ideology of modernism. They opt for theocracies instead of the modern secular nation-state. This option has severe political consequences, because to fulfil this ideal they have to develop a political ideology.

These ideologies became politically active and created religio-political movements and groups because that was the only way to rid themselves of colonialism. Some reli-

religious institutions turned into political tools. In Christianity in the colonised world political theologies emerged (Fierro, 1977:309; Gutierrez, 1974:101). In many cases the political theology became a moral justification of a struggle for political liberation. Davis (1998:43) describes how this method was applied also in Islam. He refers to Afghanistan and indicates how religio-politics turned the Taliban into a military force. The same evidence is given by Voll (1991:354) regarding Islamic fundamentalism, by Gold (1991:533) regarding Hindu fundamentalism, by Madan (1991:609) regarding Sikh fundamentalism and by Davis (1991:782) regarding political fundamentalism in Japan. Religious fundamentalism as a political pattern developed thus where indigenous peoples felt that their identities were threatened by colonialism, and they turned radical and sometimes used violent means in order to protect their identities.

The same kind of religio-political fundamentalism can emerge when minorities in a heterogeneous society feel threatened. I experienced this kind of fundamentalism first hand during the times of Apartheid in South Africa and dealt with it more comprehensively in other publications (see Vorster, 2000:35 and Vorster, 2004:139). Whites in South Africa were not oppressed by British colonialism since 1948. However, they made out the Black majority as a threat to their own identity. This fear was fuelled by the many failures of post-colonial African states to produce healthy non-discriminatory societies. To protect themselves they held on to political power and attempted to force a segregated society by way of active social stratification. N. Vorster provides a lengthy survey of the process of stratification in South Africa in his well-documented dissertation (Vorster, N. 2003:9).

The White population in South Africa developed a political theology weaved around certain so-called fundamentals of Biblical faith using a fundamentalist pattern of reasoning. These fundamentals were elevated by many prominent theologians to absolutes, and formed the pillars of the Apartheid theology. God called nations (in the sense of cultural units) into being and expect from them to maintain their God-given identities. The Afrikaner nation in South Africa identified itself as a Christian nation on the model of Israel in the Old Testament. They had a covenant with God. They had moved into the interior of the country in an "exodus" to occupy it and they believe that they were not allowed to mix with the indigenous people of the country. Racial integration was regarded as a sin. They gave recognition to national racially separated churches which can co-exist but should not unite. Ethnic separateness and isolation were regarded as important Christian virtues and they attempted to protect their own Christian identity by way of the political model of Apartheid. South Africa is a classic example on how the fear of minorities can lead to a fundamentalist pattern of reasoning that breeds a religio-political and ethnocentric ideology.

The same process unfolded in Islamic countries where minorities felt their identities threatened. In her book where she discusses Islamic fundamentalism since 1945, Milton-Edwards (2005) describes how even Sunni's and Shi'ites develop religio-political ideologies by way of a fundamentalist pattern of reasoning where they are minorities in respective countries (Voll, 1991:364 & Sachedina, 1991:403). When they felt threatened by the other group they form fundamentalist activist groups to protect their own identity by force. Religious fundamentalism as a result to fear of loss of identity is also alive amongst some sectors in the evangelical movement in America. Not all evangelicals are fundamentals, but some of them fear secularism and turn to the fundamentalist pattern of reasoning. This religious fundamentalism is then strongly aligned with extreme political conservatism. Furthermore, fundamentalism breeds potent nationalistic and ethno-

centric feelings. Although deeply rooted in religion, fundamentalism is thus not only a religious phenomenon. It breeds religio-political ideologies that can unleash radical and violent political action to protect the ethnic identity of people experiencing a threat.

5. Sociological perspectives

Religious fundamentalism is an aggressive and far-reaching reaction to change. To understand the sociological forces that can be unleashed by rigorous social, political, demographical and cultural change, Toffler's viewpoint expressed as early as 1970 should be reconsidered. He said then that the acceleration of change in our time is in itself an elemental force. This accelerative thrust has personal, psychological, as well as sociological consequences (Toffler, 1970:11). This experience leads to future shock which is "a time phenomenon, a product of the greatly accelerated change of society. It is culture shock in one's own society". The rising tide of religious fundamentalism is for many people a way out of their future shock; an escape route out of the disorientation they experience. Fundamentalists find solace in anchoring their lives in a few self-identified truths. These truths are seen as absolutes and they become the unchangeable framework within which their world and life view are formulated. These truths also determine the logic of their religion. Therefore, religious fundamentalism is not only conservatism or traditionalism with anger, but an aggressive attempt to live up to the self-identified truths in the wake of accelerating change.

The rise of Christian fundamentalism can therefore be ascribed to the deep rooted changes in Western culture, particularly the declining position of Christianity as the dominant cultural ethos. Christianity has been largely replaced by the emerging liberalism and humanism as cultural dominants (Vorster, 1981:233). Already in 1967 the prominent German theologian Moltmann (1967:305) commented that the Christian church can no longer present itself as the religion of society. Since then this declining influence accelerated and disrupted also the fixed relations of Christians (Anderson, 1990:26).

In an attempt to deal with the growing secularisation in Western societies, theologians challenged the traditional biblical hermeneutics, doctrines, forms of worship and roles of churches and proposed new theologies, that would, according to them, be more suitable for the future. The influential German theologian Bultmann (1967:25) introduced the hermeneutics of demythologisation, which urged scholars to question core doctrines of the Christian faith, such as the resurrection of Christ. Some even questioned the existence of a supernatural God and opted for a "God is dead theology" (Robinson, 1964; Altizer, 1966:95; Van Buren, 1967:50). New relevant theologies were introduced with the total emphasis on Christians and churches being agents of social and political changes, even by means of the support of revolutionary violence. In this regard the "Theology of Revolution" (Cox, 1967:66; Shaull, 1969:190); the "Theology of Transformation" (Castro, 1968:77-81; Verkuy, 1971); the "Theology of Liberation" (Gutierrez, 1974:223) and the "Black Theology" (Cone, 1975:75; Moore, 1975:78) can be presented as examples. These political theologies all questioned core values of traditional Christian faith (See Fierro, 1977). The growing secularisation of Western culture, as well as these fundamental changes in Christian theology, confronted Christians with a changing environment that left no sphere of their daily existence untouched. Change confronted them from the family structures to the church and from their deepest religious experiences to daily lifestyle. This comprehensive process of change triggered the retreat

to the secure enclave of religious fundamentalism. Contemporary Christian fundamentalism emerged as a reaction to the radical theologies of the seventies of the previous century (Barr, 1981:336). Moltmann (1994:82) actually predicted this development in 1994.

The same process can be discerned in the Islamic societies. Being a holistic religion these movements amount to a certain form of religious oppression. Furthermore, the Western influences that followed colonisation, such as Western political structures, impeded the application of the sharia'h – a further annoying factor for Muslims. They were confronted with Western values and often identified Western values with Christian values. These changes had a certain impact on the development of Muslim communities. After the independence of Islam states, two other major forces appeared on the scene. These are globalisation and Islam modernisation itself. Muslims regard globalisation as a new form of cultural colonisation, and modernisation in Islam itself as a deviation from core doctrines and values. Here also future shock caused aggression against the forces of change and a new interest in the “fundamentals” and the security they hold. Just as in Christianity, large scale social changes are responsible for the rebirth of fundamentalism in Islam. The most extreme exponent of this fundamentalism was the Taliban in Afghanistan (Maley, 2001:14; Davis, 2002:43).

When dealing with the sociological perspectives, another supposition should also be examined, and that is the thesis that religious fundamentalism is sociologically linked to certain societal trends. The question was asked whether fundamentalism is not limited to underdeveloped communities or the “lower class” where the benefits of science and technology have not yet born the fruits of social development and prosperity, or perhaps to culture. Is Islam fundamentalism limited to pockets of illiterate people in secluded and under-developed communities? Is the resurgent fundamentalism in African religious traditions in South Africa an observable fact only in the poor rural communities? Coreno (2002:340) describes how Marx and Weber argued that religious fundamentalism is more attractive to the lower classes because the moral certainty of doctrines provides infallible spiritual solutions to the problems of living in a world of economic and status insecurity. He also points out how Durkheim and Berger maintained that religion provides the values and rituals that help forge social bonds between believers. In this way religion can integrate social structural locations across society and create enclaves where a certain religious tradition can be observed. This cultural enclave can easily breed fundamentalism, which can be portrayed as a unique moral milieu, a special discursive community and an enclave culture.

Over and against these scholars Coreno (2002:343) himself opts for what he terms the “class-cultural” model to explain fundamentalism. He contends that the basic premise of the class culture model is that divergent cultural commitments, like religious beliefs and practices, often define the symbolic boundaries of distinct class culture. A class culture can be thought of as a subsection of the class structure in which distinct moral commitments are articulated and shared by a community. Therefore religious subcultures continue to flourish as defence against any number of existing forms of social malaise, whether these are defined as manifestations of alienation, anomie, or secularisation. He proposes that fundamentalist subcultures are embedded in class culture (Coreno, 2002:344).

With reference to other sociologists, Coreno (2002:344) argues furthermore that the class culture model stresses the importance of class fractions as well as more comprehensive class designations. As social groups carve out distinct niches, each class may splinter into contradictory and possibly antagonistic fractions, each defending its inter-

ests. A class culture may be attracted to religious fundamentalism and Coreno refers to studies that indeed indicate that the old middle class, for example, are more likely to be attracted to this way of thinking and living. As a fraction they formed a class culture because as a result of modern changes they perceived the threat of downward mobility, economic stagnation, status insecurity and declining political power. They embrace religious fundamentalism as defence against a world that they feel has been corrupted by secularisation and moral decline. If I understand Coreno correctly, any class or ethnic culture can in a certain point of time embrace religious fundamentalism when they experience a threat to their own security.

Barr (1981:90) rejects the class model. He also opposes the supposition of many people that religious fundamentalism is a product of a pre-scientific society, and that it will die away with the advance of scientific knowledge and the increasing secularization of life. Secular society seems to be a fertile soil in which religious fundamentalism flourishes. His impression is that fundamentalism is quite evenly spread through the different social and professional classes.

Religious fundamentalism is a radical reaction to change and the emergence of a perceived enemy that "threatens" the sanctity of old fashioned values, ideas and the safety of the traditions and customs of a community. Thus any community will expose a tendency to religious fundamentalism and its extreme ways in any given situation of change and uncertainty. The development of a national identity was what happened in India before their independence in 1948 over and against the "threat" of Islam. The interaction with the external environment moulded a diverse Hinduism into one geographical and political entity and created even amongst them a religious fundamentalist attitude.

6. Conclusion

Taking into account the research done by many scholars on this phenomenon, and in view of the facts revealed by the examination of the theological, psychological, political and sociological perspectives, I would offer the following description of modern-day religious fundamentalism:

Religious fundamentalism is a pattern of reasoning that breeds radical ideologies by way of singling out certain fundamentals of a religion and elevates them to absolutes. These absolutes form the paradigm of the ideology that develops as reaction to what it fears as a threat to its own identity, and which reacts if necessary by way of radical and militant methods.

Any attempt to discuss the management of religious fundamentalism where it threatens to destabilise a society should pay attention to the trends suggested in this definition. Against this background serious attention should be paid to the characteristics, roots and outcomes of contemporary religious fundamentalism and its violations of human rights in order to propose positive and workable steps in the management of this destructive force in a human rights environment.

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ISRAEL IDALOVICHI

The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Messianic Left

Abstract

This article examines some of the epistemological and socio-political issues that have emerged in the context of reflecting on the relationship between the Israeli left and messianic ideology. The old messianic vision finds its materialization in the revolutionary idea of establishing a new order, an order that includes all Jewish political, social, economic and religious spheres of life. The Israeli left tried to deal with and create coalitions with Jewish messianism even though its leaders pretended to be committed to a post-colonial ideology as well as to fundamental elements of classical Marxist ideology. The on-going crisis of the Israeli left demonstrates the need to reinvent socialism in the spirit of liberal democratic ideals as an old-new answer to the problems that torment Israeli society today.

Israel Idalovichi

Professor in Philosophy and Education at Achva Teachers College, The Hebrew University, Israel and The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy.

E-mail: israely1@bezeqint.net

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Messianism plays a unique role in all contemporary ideologies. In Israel, it has polarized the socio-political scene and is fuelled with controversy that resonates culturally and historically. A cry for battles stands at one end of the ideological spectrum of messianism; at the other, lies an object of scorn. In any case, an understanding of the significance of messianism is necessary in forming a clear picture of the spiritual ambience of Israeli society today. All the way through revealing the socio-political facets of this phenomenon, the major argument of this study is that the idea of messianism, together with the idea of nationalism, was and continues to be a mechanism of solidarity and a means for building a society according to common vision. Although the left eradicates messianic nationalism as a destructive vision that leads towards catastrophic deeds, its destructive impact on every domain of Israeli reality is noticeable. On the other side, the left occasionally makes use of latent and sometimes observable messianic ideas in order to provide their young society of emigrants and sons of emigrants a safe feeling of being at home as a means of mutual identification and a way of creating an authentic need for the majority of society.

The left – understood both historically and politically – refers to the segment of the political spectrum typically associated with several strains of socialism, Marxism, social democracy and liberalism (in the American form) which oppose right-wing politics. Notwithstanding the different types leftist ideology in the western world, the subject matter of this article is the particular phenomena of the Israeli left and its distinctive ties to the messianic ideas.

One well-known feature of the Western left is its ambiguous attitude towards every type of majority. Conceiving the majority per se as being corrupt and destructive, in the last decades the left has not manifested an interest in achieving a majority. On the other hand, in spite of everything, a majority is a mandate for building a society, a mandate that includes messianic nationalism that, in certain aspects, binds the majority as a society. Without a majority, no political act is possible, and without wanting a majority,

no political thoughts and deeds are possible. The left loses its political character when it minimizes the importance of politics and social struggles and turns to the sphere of interests. In addition, it relinquishes hope of constituting a majority or, at least, being a major force in society. The left lost its bond with the majority when it became dominated by the concepts of Western Marxism (although not the concept of proletariat). Formally, this form of Marxism is associated with moral and political philosophy, aesthetics or arts, culture or fashion but not with the idea of changing the world, well popular among the first disciples of Marx.

Messianism has proven itself to be a vital powerful force in the history of modern Israeli society and also serves as a powerful tool for the Israeli left which made use of it in order to revive and reinforce degenerating classical Marxism. In the past, messianism was considered a means of oppression by the classical Marxist and anti-colonialist movement; a source of the false-consciousness in many societies. On the other hand, messianism was a latent force in the modern history of the Jewish people, but in the last thirty years, parallel to the awakening of national-religious ideology, it has become an essential factor of the left and social-democratic emergence in the Israeli society.

The crises of Marxist ideology in the last decades have given the impression that its theory has been unable to accommodate itself with the major contemporary social-cultural schools of thought, i.e. postmodernism, deconstructivism and poststructuralism. Such an assumption is echoed in the triumph of liberal democracy and the domination of globalization, thus bearing a resemblance with *The End of History* (Fukuyama, 1992). On the other hand, Marxist footprints are to be found in all modern and postmodern movements, either in a latent form or in the dialectics of minor versus major visible in recent times and in the last theories formulated. As far as the special status and the conditions and the requirements of the left are to be analyzed, it is quite obvious that the left has been empowered by Marxism; Marxism has been invested in it and the powerful resonance of its theories are to be found in all contemporary social-cultural trends and schools of thought.

Even though the left has constantly looked for different social-cultural alliances and tried to broaden its socio-political scope, new members have appeared and taken to its worldview as well as in its praxis. At the end of 19th century and during the 20th century, when the left was at a crossroad, the decision had been taken to add another pillar to the great house of the left, to be precise: the pillar of messianism. At various times and at different occasions, the left adopted the ideas of messianism for the same reasons: (1) the lost of vision and its own distrust and disbelief in its own ideology and (2) the yearning for building a large socio-political consensus. In the case of Israeli society, it is not clear if socialism includes the messianic vision as one of its elements or if the messianic terminology and principles overcome the socialist ideology. Such a problematic approach of the left towards the messianic idea as well as the loss of its exclusive socio-political character in Israeli society should be analyzed carefully.

The Western left will never completely abandon Marxism, not for the reason that it could not adapt itself to the changing realities, but just the opposite: the left will never offer any reliable alternative to Marxism. Consequently, as soon as the left goes through a radical metamorphosis by allowing other ideologies or principles to attain a hold, there will be a strong effect on its Marxist fundamentals. In such a case, there is a loss of identity and goals. Such a challenging relationship as the one between Marxism and the messianic ideas should be closely examined by using synthesized sociological tools.

By using such tools, the goal of this study is to analyze this given phenomena,

namely the messianism and the Israeli socio-political left and the part they play in several trends of sociology and cultural criticism. In the course of this analysis (that makes use of various trends in sociology and cultural criticism), we examine and discuss the impact of the left and of the messianic ideas and their prima-facie dominance of contemporary development.

Every social-cultural analysis ought to start with the present and its dominating school of thought. Nowadays, every socio-cultural analysis should most certainly start with postmodernism. The fashionable methods of postmodernism bring about the dissolutive effects of deconstructionism and relativism. As a result, all contemporary cultural contexts, the socio-political included, cause a general historical obliviousness. At this juncture, revisionism flourishes; whole historical narratives feature a denial of the stability of the past, of its reality, apart from what the historian chooses to make of it, and thus of any objective truth about the past (Himmelfarb, 1993).

The assumptions of postmodernism draw our attention on the creation of the politics of identification along with the attacks on the subject itself. It also deconstructs the logic of domination. These suppositions evoke the new relativism so that, along with the Nietzschean extravagance, they have merely extended their exposure of the hollowness of the claims to objectivity to science, scientific thought and socio-political facts. Via this form of analysis, objectivity is seen as a mask for the exercise of power and thus provides a natural vehicle for the expression of class hatred. As a result, postmodernism's appeal comes from its being an other in the sequence of all unmasking strategies that offer a way to criticize the intellectual efforts of others not by engaging with them on the ground, but by diagnosing them from a superior vantage point and charging them with inadequate self-awareness.

For instance, the major postmodern attack on rationality launched against its Enlightenment's roots, lead to modernity, dehumanization and totalitarianism. This social-cultural critique of assistance facilitates the awakening and the instigation of the messianism in its modern and post-modern facets.

An additional sociological tradition that evokes the elucidation of the left messianism is of those believing that social systems have the need for some consensus story to link the historical bonds of their members and thereby provide a sense of collective identity. They have found a ground in the works of Emile Durkheim (1964). This tradition focuses on how social solidarity is obtained through cultural transmission of fundamental religious or political narratives, or through rituals and tradition. Typically, these narratives talk about ancestors who epitomized social ideals, legitimate contemporary causes or who provide benchmarks against which we understand ourselves, and our shared endeavors. In the case of the messianic left, ancient utopian prophetic visions together with modern socialist, prophetic foresight and socio-political analyses created the basis for a collective identify and collective cause.

Sociologists of the Marxist tradition approach false temporal consciousness as being one of the most powerful tools of oppression. Their methodology, in part, is designed to unmask the elites' uses of the past to legitimate their dominance and to create a false sense of historical progress in quality of life and social justice in the minds of the exploited. The explanation of all ostensibly rational forms of thought in terms of social influences is a generalization of the old Marxist of ideology, by which moral principles were all debunked as rationalizations of class interests.

One of the major fields of critique of the neo-Marxists versus postmodern tradition is reflected in the field of Cultural Studies. This very intellectual field of study con-

centrates itself on cultural issues as media, texts, metaphors, identities, art works, etc., but not with social-economical-political issues as inequality, poverty, political struggle, religious movements or ideologies or social solidarity. The postmodern culture praises the idea of freedom as a value in and of itself, based on its definition as a defense against any form of intervention. For the socialists, freedom cannot be conceived by a negative definition; on the contrary, freedom also means to be in control, to be free from history and not to be a slave to social context and an economic order.

Critical theory offers a sociological method that shows the relationships between ideas and theoretical positions and their social environment. Thus, it attempts to contextualize or historicize ideas in terms of their roots and social processes. In accord with critical theory, social theories are thus forms of social practice, which reproduce dominant forms of social activity. Traditional theory reproduces uncritically the existing society, while critical theory articulates activity to transform society (Horkheimer, 1972).

The boundaries between the various realms of existence are just artificial and abstract right through their reproduction in the fragmentation of the disciplinary sciences. In order to pay particular attention to theoretical knowledge and political issues, a supradisciplinary research method is required. This dialectical method of presentation demonstrates in concrete detail the interconnections and conflicts between the primary areas of the socio-historical system that constitutes the context and framework for thought and action. Social theory involves construction of a model of current society and a demonstration of the fundamental connections, conflicts and contradictions among the various domains of the current socio-political system. In sum, critical theory provides analyses of a mediated social totality that describes various relations among spheres of reality, rather than reducing all of society to political ideology, fundamentalistic religiosity or dynamics of economy.

At a later stage of the growth of sociological methods, a new complete method appears - critical reflection. Critical thinking is stimulated by the use of contradiction; critical reflection is evoked through making use of contradiction as an intellectual challenge that frequently results in a new way of seeing things. As a consequence, the path of dialectical contradiction leads inevitably to truth. The social-epistemological challenge appears as a result of the exposure to the ability to stimulate others to become critically reflective.

Critical reflection takes on new objects of concern; explicitly it turns upon itself. In this study, the messianic encounter of history should be treated by a critically reflected method. Walter Benjamin gave a secular shape to messianism as well as to the apocalypse, through his reflections and illuminations. This offers us the possibility of reintroducing an emancipatory point of reference just like the possibility of instating a genuinely classless society. Through critical reflection "nothing that has ever happened should be regarded as lost for history". To be sure, only a redeemed mankind receives the fullness of its past - which is to say that only for a redeemed mankind is its past citable in all its moments. Each moment it has lived becomes a citation *à l'ordre du jour* - and that day is Judgment Day" (Benjamin, 1977, p. 256).

By means of critical reflection, the past is not put out of sight or buried, but stands in need of reawaking. This is precisely where the theological moment enters and converges with the modernist emphasis on montage and the unconscious. In this way, Ernst Bloch endows us with a systematic examination and critical reflection of culture and society while the Marxist critique of ideology illuminates our entire reality. Bloch's dialectical analysis offers us a method by which the past which illuminates the present

can guide us to a better future. History is not only just an arsenal of past events but it is a reservoir of possibilities for future action. Our momentary reality is thus constituted by latency and tendency: the unrealized potentialities that are latent in the present and the signs and foreshowing that indicate the tendency of the direction and movement of the present into future (Bloch, 1986).

Beyond everything else, Bloch's philosophy is built on the Principle of Hope, a philosophy oriented towards the future, a dreaming forward, a projection of a vision of a future kingdom of freedom. By projecting the future in the light of what is, what has been and what could be, people engage themselves in the creative practice that will produce a world in which all humans are at home and realize humanity's deepest dreams. Accordingly, culture ranges for Bloch from an ideal type of pure ideology to purely non-ideological emancipatory culture.

All these socio-cultural methodological tools should aid us in the analysis of the performance of the left on the Israeli scene, together with its vibrant companion, i.e. the messianic vision. Consequently, in order to understand the major role of the messianic vision as well as the socialist ideology in Jewish history, the historical background of each ideology and its historical development must be brought to light. Subsequently, the present study starts from the presupposition that almost every ideology created or adopted by the Jewish people in the 19th and 20th centuries was intrinsically messianic, seeking the complete rectification of all the perversities of the present and the realization of all the good it so eagerly desires. The old messianic vision finds its materialization in the revolutionary idea of establishing a new order, an order that includes all Jewish political, social, economic and religious spheres of life. The revolutionary messianic socialists try to convince themselves and their public that the existing order is rotten to the core and must be overthrown in favor of a more desirable order. In addition, the Jewish intellectuals in Europe were the main protagonists of historical messianism, emphasizing the development of neo-Romanticism as necessary for the rebirth of Jewish messianism in its restitutive, utopian version.

Modern messianism made a start together with the emergence of secular Judaism in the 19th and 20th century – a development triggered by a reaction to weaknesses in the Jewish existence in Diaspora. Its appearance marked a fundamentally new phase in Jewish history, prompting secular Jews to champion a new reference for Jewish identity. Swept into the vortex of change that suggested new options opened by the advent of modern times, Jews pushed for major changes based on old messianic yearnings. The same messianic longings that had propelled Jews into exile in the Diaspora in the wake of revolt served to draw Jews out from the Diaspora and provided a renewed sense of belonging and concrete longing for their homeland. Yet, transposed within a secular context, messianic hopes have always had a universal as well as a particular Jewish significance (Schweid, 1985).

The Zionist movement is not only a manifestation of Jewish nationalism: it represents the idea that only the Jewish community can preserve and carry on the unique character of the Land of Israel. For this reason, every Jew must take upon himself the holy mission of becoming a Zionist and join in the struggle to realize that ideology of a Jewish homeland. Indeed, the dream for a Jewish homeland and the birth of the State of Israel came from a messianic idea of turning back history to create a different future for the new Jew. The Jewish-Zionist left as the force of national revival was indeed messianic. But, this was a messianism that, like the right-wing one, concerned the national and not the human-social sphere, as it is required of leftist ideology. This was a kind of

reversed mirror image of rightist nationalism in liberal wrapping. At this point in the history of the Jewish-Zionism left, the seed of inner discrepancy was disseminated. This resulted in failure precisely because it invested all its energies in blurring the differences between itself and the right, instead of emphasizing them and fighting for them.

Zionist national identity glorified the concept of “normalization” of the Jewish people, expressly despising the life of the Diaspora, which was deemed an unhealthy anomaly - a parasitic existence and pathological state. The roots of the Jewish malady were to be found in the nature of Diaspora’s life: constant wandering and always being the unbidden guest, subject to harsh socioeconomic straights, exposed to the anti-Semitic sentiment of the gentiles and subject to hostile treatment (Avineri, 1981). The foundations of a radically different society emerged in the Land of Israel with the revival of Hebrew culture and Hebrew society. These served as a core element that linked the disintegrating life of the Diaspora with all its contradictions to the new society being crystallized in the old-new homeland of the Jews.

Aspirations to become a non-Jew, that is, one who did not bear any resemblance to the traditional image of a Jew, was woven into the fabric of prevailing Zionist ideology, part of the cultural identity and way of life of the individual and of collectivity. The socialist Zionists incorporate the ideology of traditional Marxism that tends to view every socio-political process from a transhistorical perspective - class struggle within the framework of economic determinism - and to deal with the bourgeoisie by creating its own Socialist Man. Disassociation from the image of the Wandering Jew was an integral part of rejection of the Diaspora. The act of wandering received a negative connotation, while the act of settlement in the Land of Israel became a positive move. The Wandering Jew was perceived as an “other” - a person of the past who would be replaced by another designation coined by Zionist ideology - Ha’Yehudi He’chadash (the New Jew) - a figure who would fight the “otherness” of the Wandering Jew through a search for self-recognition and adoption of a new identity that would make him “normal” or “a liken to all the nations” - in essence, a battle against the “otherness” of the Jew. The New Jew has qualities similar to Socialist Man and turns out to be an authentic person, except for the messianic constituent, as Y.D. Berkovitz described him in his novel *Days of the Messiah* (Berkovitz, 1964).

The socio-political worldview of the founding fathers of the State of Israel was mostly a pragmatic one, except that the vision of creating a new-old society and the establishment of the state of Israel after 2000 years had been publicly proclaimed as a messianic interference and a miracle phenomenon. Committed to the ideal of a Jewish homeland, the “Fathers of Nation” rejected the religious doctrine of a personal Messiah while seeing a Jewish state as the fulfillment of the messianic dream. The moment when State of Israel was founded, the messianic vision had been realized and its fervent declaration justified the established socio-political pragmatism. In any case, the founders did not even attempt to identify the foundation of the State of Israel with “the beginning of redemption”. To confuse the present state of Israeli society with the kingdom of God seems to be ridiculous. The construction of the Israeli society has been comprehended as a long course of action, a developmental process and a vital one. Both are far away from the theory of the messianic age which requires a divine summing-up of the whole human enterprise on a transmigrated earth.

At a later stage, the messianic impulse was no longer needed to overthrow the existing order of the state and its society in order to build and shape new socio-political order. As a result, every ideology, including messianism, ought to be replaced by deeds,

by pragmatic decisions, by socio-political facts. It was agreed on by the establishment that historically, messianism, which is essentially a religious and spiritual phenomenon, ought to be removed out-of-the-way of the socialist/liberal systems of thought and their pragmatic implementations in the socio-political reality. The establishment preferred to eradicate the messianists gently: not to attack them head on, but mainly to ignore them and to ensure that they were kept away from any job within the establishment. The strong impact of Marxist ideology on Israeli society contributes to the condemnation of every religious value or impulse that takes the form of a myth and is designed to keep the masses enslaved or to blind them to their own enormous strength and their ability to take their dismal fate into their own hands and so to stave off the revolution.

The struggle between the religious versus socialist-secular ideology developed a certain dialectic that, in fact, imposes a common source to both counterparties: messianic thought and ground principles infiltrate the premises of both sides. Religious messianism carried on with its traditional beliefs while the socialist-secular counter partner developed certain beliefs such as “laws of history”, “progress”, “ultimate development” and “peace and prosperity for all forever”. In this way God’s laws and their total fulfillment at the end of days have been transformed, in the course of a certain ideological metamorphosis, in the course of history that ought to develop according to its own hidden principles. It was said that if the ways of God are unknown to humans so are historical processes; the course of history, just as the acts of God, follow their own inner logic. God’s ways are declared to be by secular prophets the laws of nature, but they have certain teleological ends.

Comprehending the laws of nature, of history or of society reveals a hidden reality in which every situation or historical moment is just a transition to a higher one. In this way history will reach its goals and the existing paradoxes, perversions and misery of the present will disappear. History’s goal is progressing, putting an end to social conflicts, exploitation, servitude, alienation and injustice, and to wars between peoples. All this will happen, of course, in the wake of a great revolutionary upheaval that will enable the oppressed to overcome their oppressors and lay down a just and harmonious new order. After that, mankind will be able to draw far more efficiently upon nature’s resources and use them to find solutions to all suffering, the source of which lies in want and in human arrogance. Messianism in this case is an infinite process of striving for an ideal, the ideal of progress. Such an ideal understood as *le fin de l’histoire* seems to be a kind of perfection that cannot come from human endeavor alone. For this reason God or any other supreme natural being must set the goal of progress and guarantee that man will reach it in the future.

The hegemony of the socialist Zionist ideology and its materialistic-dialectic myths, as we have seen, has had a great impact on the national religious messianism in the last thirty years. The most outstanding expression of this was the revival of the idea that people ought to take an independent, national, historical and social initiative by returning to Zion, settling all over the Land of Israel, and establishing a new legal, social and political infrastructure. All these deeds should be the first steps to be taken in order to greet the miraculous redemption which would come in response to this awakening. These changes in the prescribed means of hastening the redemption presuppose a transformation in the description of the messianic vision. The old religious messianic dream of the complete revival of the Jewish People was modified towards a national culture that would incorporate all elements of the social-cultural secular Marxist Zionism. So it happens that the common denominator of Marxist Zionism and National Zionism is the

same, that is to say the messianic inspiration and vision.

The combination of strong national feelings and religious orthodox extremisms results in two forms of modern Jewish messianism: the national-religious Zionism of the extreme Gush Emunim (Block of The Faithful) and the Lubavitch movement, which, although worlds apart and different in content, still fit the tradition or notion of messianism as a particular expression of extreme eschatological religiosity. The religious leaders of these movements have proclaimed that the messianic process of redemption of the Jewish people has begun and Jews have an essential role to play in this process. The most important religious imperative that every Jew must fulfill is the settling of the entire land of Israel. They have pointed to a number of signs of the messianic period that had been predicted in sacred writings: the fertility of the land, the ingathering of the Jews from all parts of the world, the foundation for an independent state, Israel, and the conquest of the city of Jerusalem. Disasters and catastrophes such as the Holocaust and the Arab-Israeli wars, as well as the continuous terror exercised by Palestine, are seen as the "birth pangs of the Messiah". What's more, they maintain that the Jewish people is able to reduce these "birth pangs" if they take their part in the act of redemption.

These religious messianic movements belong to the extreme right wing of Israeli society and their followers practice various rituals that, according to their worldview, will help the Messiah proclaim his appearance in the Land of Israel. In spite of this phenomenon of national religious messianism, this study maintains that the left wing followers (many of whom are secular liberals in every domain of life, with the exception of their belief in the end days vision and teleology) are different from their right wing Israeli counterparts. Interestingly, their structural vision also includes the messianic component. The endeavor to create a new reality in the Middle East, to develop new relationships with the entire Islamic World and Arab countries, i.e. a new Middle East – all these could be characterized as a messianic vision in a very secular socio-political and economic outward manner.

In the last thirty years, in Israel the left was and still is preoccupied mostly with its identity, vision and perspectives and to a lesser extent with deeds of gaining the majority. These problems to preoccupy the left resemble what goes on in national-religious opponents: the harder it is, the more absurd it is, the more people believe in it. Accordingly, for instance, it happened that peace has been transformed from a reasonable arrangement that is supposed to prevent violence between nations, into a concept of messianic deliverance. Such quests for salvation have readily recognized their socio-political power, so that these whole epistemological formations and its social implementations turn out to be at the heart of the left's ideology and its genuine operational program.

The left has always proposed programs of final settlement, programs that their counter-partners could neither accept nor comprehend, for how can the end of days be realized here and now. As a result, the left finds itself in a tragic-comic position of contemplating and anticipating messianic expectations regarding peace, and after facing reality, is experiencing either messianic disappointment or messianic reinforcement. In the last thirty years, the left has awoken from its nationalist aspirations. By examining its own colonial state of affairs, the left looks back in anger towards its own chauvinism, racism and abhorrence of the Other. So, the intellectual Jewish messianism and libertarian utopianism has replaced classical socialism and Marxism.

The unique and the impossible situation of the left in Israel has been exposed by many of its socialist leaders. Yossi Beilin, a key figure in the Oslo Agreements and the

present leader of a left-wing party proclaims loudly and clearly that socialism and Zionism cannot share the same abode. "This is a rare case in which a Jewish society arose out of practically nothing. These were ideal laboratory conditions for the socialist movement. Some of the socialists who came to Palestine hesitated between realizing socialism in Europe, immigrating to the United States or coming to the Land of Israel. They wanted to integrate in this country, bringing to it the socialist perception that spoke of a normal Jewish life in a country with a Jewish majority. Zionism and socialism interwoven - is that all possible? It would appear that these are two contradictory directions. It is very difficult to lead a national struggle against an enemy and to believe in class solidarity at the same time. This means that the working class in both peoples must evince solidarity in face of capitalism in the two nations. In this respect, and in many other respects, the story of Zionist socialism in the Land of Israel is the story of the impossible." (Beilin, 1999, p. 87)

The Israeli left did try to deal with, and create coalitions with Jewish messianism even though its leaders pretended to be committed to Post-Colonial ideology as well as to major elements of classical Marxist ideology. The hopelessness and unfeasibility of the left that does not rest on a closed ideology but on involvement, respect for the confusing nature of reality, the integration of ways of thinking and feeling and a desire for good ideas that do not necessarily go together, create a new platform for the postmodern left. This postmodern left revitalizes (in a latent form) certain anarchist tendencies such as those exhibited by Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig and Gerhard Scholem together with anarchist anti-authoritarian Marxists and Utopists such as Ernst Bloch and Erich Fromm.

Another faction of the messianic left was and still is celebrating the difficulties of true reality because they are unable to separate the wheat from the chaff: at certain moments they repeatedly declare that it has been discovered what the "real" left consists of. At that stage, the left is not preoccupied with doing new deeds or proposing new initiatives, but is engaged instead in setting moral ambushes for every follower and supporter per se: whose spirit has fallen and whose has not; who is still a part of the "authentic" left and was always known to be weak? The metaphor that is used to describe this typical situation of the left is also a Biblical one: it gives the people of the left the Job-like pleasure of sitting around the tribal fire, rolling around in the dust, scratching their sores, for the reason that their reality is so miserable and totally hopeless.

Israeli contemporary socio-cultural history is full of examples about the ideological coalition between socialist, globalization and messianists' ideas. Walter Benjamin's reflections and illuminations on messianism as well as apocalypse, in the course of their secular shape, found their best example in one of the major leaders of the Israeli left, Shimon Peres. Consider some quotations by Shimon Peres (former Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Defense Minister and at the moment the Minister of Kadima Party), after the Oslo Agreement exposed certain prophetic visions and messianic secular temptations that the end of days are here and now:

"The Trojan Horse of war is obsolete."

"War, as a method of conducting human affairs, is in its death throes."

"The hunting season has ended in history."

"The conflicts shaping up as our century nears its close will be over the content of civilization, not of territory."

"We are at the watershed. Our region is going through a period of transition. The dark days are at an end; the shadows of its path are lengthening. The twilight of wars is still red with blood, yet its sunset is inevitable and imminent" (Peres, 1993).

"Israelis and Palestinians must live side by side as good neighbors. I feel we have to help the Palestinians to build a state of their own. If Israel wants to have a hundred percent security, then we have to provide them with a hundred percent freedom. To make that possible, Palestine must be a modern, educated, prosperous, and democratic state." (Peres, 1998).

It is quite clear that the concept of time employed in these sentences is secular-messianic. It is a transcendental time that sets up the vision of eternal peace, prosperity and well-being. Reality is not any given authenticity but a visionary future which contradicts the present misery. Such statements which intended to shape public opinion in favor of supporting the Oslo Peace Accord and later peace talks with the Palestinians and other Arab countries seem to be closer to the words of the Prophet Isaiah than to typical socialist leaders. The vision of friendly cooperation on economic, technological, scientific and social base, a new brave reality that will bring a period of harmony between the Arab Nations and Israel, seems to be a part of messianic visions that can be found in the Middle East.

These examples expose the ideology of the messianic left. Because these ideas were the leading ones during the last years, the collapse of the Oslo Agreements, the despair of the Israeli public, the continuous bloodshed and terror, all created a general atmosphere that blames the Israeli left for the crashing down to earth of its visionary reality. The high expectations that the left leaders deliver to the general public, as the slogan of "Peace Now!" i.e. peace under any circumstances in its immature and pitiable form, has caused serious damage to the left. Naming those murdered by various acts of "peace offerings" to terror was a misuse of mystical terminology by the leaders of the left to such an extent that the peace process that had collapsed at the time was not in vain.

The leaders of the left decided that the goal of both sides, Israeli and Palestinians was to create a New World Order on the ashes of the old one. The descriptions of the New World Order as realized in the Middle East are visionary and include messianic components. The Middle East is a region where the first glimmerings of harmony for a religion whose bloody, intractable conflicts between Arab and Jew had outlived hot and cold wars alike to become an inescapable, insoluble fact of life in our modern age. Shimon Peres has called for nothing less than a total transvaluation of our thinking about the future of the Middle East. Peres gives us a compelling vision of the future of his religion in the Middle East. He sees a reconstructed Middle East, free of the conflicts that plagued it in the past. In his view, it is a new Middle East ready and willing to take its place in a new era - an era that will not tolerate backwardness or ignorance. He sees a social and economic revival fueled by the billions and billions of dollars wasted for decades on defense. And he offers a no less cogent analysis of how peace can be achieved. He seeks nothing short of an historic new chapter between two peoples to end hundreds of years of hostility and to begin hundred of years of peace and understanding. The New Middle East is a blueprint for the dawning of a New Age. Peres' books are a visionary manifesto of current events (Peres, 1998).

But the totality of such visionary descriptions of the Middle East is limited to theoretical implications and thus is just a utopian plan. The socio-political terminology of peace agreements includes certain messianic components that are far away from any Real Politic or pragmatic compromises. The demand for an end to the conflict and finality of claims are terms that do not impose any clear practical implementations but only the end of the day's arrangements in our time. Such terminology reflects the left's hidden worldview premises because through its usage aspects of the colonial ideology and colo-

nial ambitions of the right wing are included in its visions of changing the whole reality of the Middle East. The whole Middle East must be adopted by the Arab states and societies. The leaders of the left have developed the promises of wonderful plans based on pie-in-the-sky assumptions in a messianic ideological milieu. Unfortunately, it is far away from any real politic philosophy and distances itself even farther from Marxist systematic thought.

Every disagreement or contradiction to such visionary plans would receive answers such as, "It's a changed world and like many of us, you are thinking in the past." In these cases, the left confuses a final victory with a temporary respite, and it makes a mistake if it assumes that the current moratorium on force will last. Therefore, it is far less clear up to now whether Israel's doves (left wing) will be able to transform the momentary resuscitation of legitimacy by the general public into lasting political support that will sweep them back into power. The blemish of the failed Oslo process and the blame for the outbreak of the first and the second Intifada is an albatross for Israeli peaceniks and there is no indication that they will be able to make it go away.

The messianic visions of the Israeli left did not incorporate the moral force of Marxism and the insights of socialist movements, both intellectual and political, that could constitute a gradual socio-political change in the Middle East. The left is driven by a messianic impulse and tries to achieve too much under its theoretical umbrella. The new approaches towards creating a global liberal democracy, in particular, do not fit the socio-political and religious traditions of this area. Furthermore, the messianic vision of the left gives rise to the inevitable crucial question: is the left able to identify with what is called the peace camp? In other words, can they relate to what the rest of the world considers a leftist ideology, or should they integrate the liberal and national-messianic ideologies in order to get hold of the general public? Being a leftist, exactly like being a rightist, means holding a complete worldview that relates to broad aspects of human life and cannot be reduced to or discussed only in a Marxist perspective, even one so critical to our existence in the immediate range.

Indeed, the left should not be detached from the social-economic view, which entails at its base the Marxist decisive vision of the victory, one way or another, in the battle between socialism and capitalism. On the other hand, the high influence of the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals on the left ideology and praxis continue to be the major factor of the left's socio-economic policy. For this reason, in Israeli reality, the left is destined to get caught up in errors such as adopting messianic visions and ignoring the necessity for continuing the battle on the ideological plane.

The Israeli left - or more precisely, the Jewish-Zionist left - derives precisely from the fact that it has ignored the necessity to continue the battle in the ideological realm, because, most regrettably, it is not a left at all but rather a social-democratic reflection of a bourgeois-liberal worldview. In other words, it is impossible to understand the situation of the Jewish-Zionist left in Israel without pointing out the inherent internal historical contradiction. This paralyzes it a priori and neutralizes any of its possibilities to become a true left, as long as there is not an end to national-colonial phase that has gradually become nationalistic in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Messianism could have a positive manifestation as a utopian surplus that has the potential to project long-term goals for the individual or the entire society, or a political practice that provides alternatives to the miserable status quo. As a far seeing and future oriented ideology, as Ernst Bloch points out, Marxism as well as the contemporary left ought to include certain utopian elements in its ideology. Authentic Marxist issues such

as social-economical-political inequality, poverty, social justice, political struggle, social solidarity, etc, however, must balance these elements. Every ideology and utopia is often permeated with ideological mystifications but they should not dominate their agenda and lose sight of reality. This would allow the socialist idea to flourish in a similar structural form as the messianic vision, in the same way as Gustav Landauer envisioned it at the beginning of the 20th century: "Everyone who believes in socialism must see it as is an attempt to create a new reality by virtue of a certain ideal. Socialism is a cultural movement, a war for beauty, for greatness, for the spiritual plenty of nations. Anyone who does not see socialism as having evolved over hundreds and thousands of years, as the continuation of the movement of a long and difficult history, does not know what its nature is. The politicians who act in the spirit of the times cannot be socialists. The socialist perceives the completeness of society and the past; he feels and knows where we have come from and in accordance with this, determines where we are going. What we call socialism in this context is not socialism at all" (Landauer, 1978, p. 37).

The crisis of the Israeli left demonstrates the need to reinvent socialism in the spirit of liberal democratic ideals as an old-new answer to the problems that torment Israeli and Jewish society today. This does not require the invention of an entirely new form of socialism or Marxism for there are early strands of socialistic thought that can be revived. In view of this, messianism can also turn into a kind of corrective messianism when it is consolidated into a socialist ideology and takes on the urgency of an effort to stave off disaster. Messianism could then be a general consent to relinquish absolute ideals as the greatest good and finality as it points to an ideal whose achievement means redemption from apocalyptic visions and application towards a pragmatic attitude. But, this will not be easy because as Israelis increasingly question the moral validity of their national enterprise, new ideas justifying the continued existence of the Jewish state and the ideals of the Israeli society are strikingly absent in public debate.

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IULIA GRAD

Two Paradigms of Faith. Martin Buber on Judaism and Christianity

Abstract:

*This paper attempts to analyze the place that Christianity occupies within the framework of Martin Buber's thought and to present some of the arguments brought by Buber in order to support his conception regarding Christianity. There is a great number of books, articles and studies belonging to Buber that touch, on different levels, the topic proposed, nevertheless, the most significant for this paper is Buber's book *Two types of faith*, intended as a comparative analysis of Judaism and Christianity.*

Buber's perception on Christianity is characterized by the dualistic perspective that defines his whole philosophy. The two paradigms that represent the basis of Buber's entire thought (the world of Thou and the world of It) are to be found at the basis of "the duality of faith" he postulates. Thus, the analysis will be carried on two different levels, which, however sometimes share common elements.

Introduction

Martin Buber's work can be properly understood only if one takes into account Buber's faith as a Jew and the fact that Buber is first of all, a philosopher of dialogue. What he proposes as a philosophy of dialogue transcends the analysis of any particular subject. Thus, neither can the analysis of Christianity be taken out of the context of his philosophy, nor can it be understood without taking into account his conception on the I-Thou and I-It relations or the philosophy of realization.

The distinction between the two types of attitude that man can adopt towards the Otherness is always present in Buber's analysis of Christianity, but the resort to it is not explicit. In a few words, at the base of Buber's thought is the distinction between two types of relations: the I-Thou relation, the genuine relation that occurs between different and independent parts and creates the "spheres of the between" and the I-It relation that occurs between a subject and an object and has nothing to do with genuine meeting. The relation with God, (the Eternal Thou) is perceived also in these dual terms and the two types of faith that are at the base of the comparative analysis between Judaism and Christianity are paradigmatic for the two fundamental attitudes.

There are some useful methodological clarifications that should be stated before starting the topic of the paper.

The method used by Buber in his analysis is that of a "learned and intuitive reader of the Bible that has called into being a new method which does not dissect and disintegrate the traditional text into various sources, but rather regards every section which

Iulia
Grad

Department
of
Systematic
Philosophy,
Babes-Bolyai
University,
Cluj,
Romania
E-mail: iulia-
grad@gmail.com



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has a unity of content as a unit, seeking only to liberate it as far as possible from what are manifestly later additions and reworkings.” (Max Brod: 1967: 324)

The same style, the same keenness for the sense of words and for the particularity of every background is to be found in the book which goes beyond the confines between Judaism and Christianity, *Two Types of Faith*.

Buber’s analysis focuses on two main figures, Jesus and the apostle Paul. In his study concerning the role of Paul in Jewish-Christian polemics (*The Myth of the Traditional View of Paul and the Role of the Apostle in Modern Jewish-Christian Polemics*) Daniel L. Rangton mentions the fact that “Buber’s treatment was focused more on the faith systems of these two figures, than on any historical reconstruction of the men themselves. (...) Buber did not directly address the question of the reliability of the historical sources. But since he assumed throughout a good familiarity with Romans, and since there was almost no reference made to Acts, it comes as no surprise that Buber’s Paul was presented as highly Hellenistic in character.” (Daniel L. Rangton: 2005: 82)

The Duality of Faith

Thenceforth, the paper will bring into attention several elements that are present in Buber’s demarche of presenting the figures of Jesus and the Apostle Paul as essential for the arising of Christianity. From the very beginning, it must be said that Buber’s relation with Christianity is extremely complex causing thus different reactions from both Christian and Jewish thinkers. Buber wants to go beyond the image of Jesus proposed by Christianity and Judaism. This attempt should be perceived as coming from a Jewish thinker, as he defines himself, this precaution being required in order to avoid misplacing Buber either too close to Christianity, because of his friendly attitude towards Jesus, or in the middle of the Jewish tradition that rejects both Christianity and Jesus.

In *Two Types of Faith* Buber makes a distinction between *Emunah* and *Pistis*, which represent the cores of Judaism on one hand and of Christianity on the other.

As Buber announces from the foreword, the subject of the book is the “duality of faith”. In fact, this is the premise from which Buber starts: there is a great diversity of contents of faith, but there are just two fundamental forms which can be illustrated by two simple life facts: on one hand, the fact that I trust someone, without being able to offer sufficient reasons for my trust in him; on the other hand the fact that, also without being able to give sufficient reason, I acknowledge a thing to be true. The difference between the two types of faith is the difference between trusting somebody and believing somebody. On one hand, we have the trust that God is always present, that he is close to the soul, and on the other hand, the belief that God exists, the belief from the Epistle to Hebrews. (Biemann: 2002:108)

None of these types of faith has a rational fundament, rationality representing, says Buber, just a part of the being, while “I believe” implies the entire being. (Buber: 1951: 8)

The relation of trust is grounded on the contact of the entire being with the one whom I trust, while the relation of recognition is based on an act of acceptance by the entire being of the fact perceived as being true. Thus, the two forms of faith are introduced: *Emunah*, the Jewish faith that implies the trust in God and *Pistis*, the Christian faith whose center is the believing in Christ. Around this distinction Buber builds his attempt to analyze Jesus, situated between his Jewishness and the Apostle Paul. Buber

presents Jesus as belonging to classic Judaism, beside the prophets and a part of Pharisees.

The two types of faith imply two different manners of believing: the believer can find himself in the relation of faith or he can convert to it. Buber demonstrates that in the Synoptic Gospels the term faith is still used as *Emunah*. In St. John's Gospel and especially at Paul the faith starts to receive the Greek connotations of *Pistis*. The faith as recognition of something as true is alien to the Judaic spirit, being a Hellenic abstraction.

This conceptual structure that combines Greek and Judaic origin elements concurs with the moment of the emergence of Christianity as is conceived today, with the ending of the "immediate relationship with God."

Buber considers that the first way of believing characterizes the primitive period of Israel, while the second characterizes the early period of Christianity. Thus, the people of Israel emerged from the unification of several tribes with their common God, unification that implies the trust in a permanent contact. Christianity begins as Diaspora and mission, and the admittance into the Kingship of God has become an "act of conversion". The two types of faith have different natures but Buber admits that there are also common elements.

Buber describes the "Jewish soul" as an ellipse whose foci are in fact essential elements for the understanding of *Emunah*. One focus is the primeval experience that God is wholly raised above man, and yet that he is present in an immediate relationship with man. To know these things at the same time represents the living core of every believing Jewish soul. (Biemann: 2002:109) Thus, the fear of God shouldn't be understood as a fear that affects the relationship, but as trembling in face of God's incomprehensibility. "The fear of God is the creaturely knowledge of the darkness to which none of our spiritual powers can reach, and out of which God reveals himself. Therefore, the fear of God is rightly called the beginning of knowledge." (Biemann: 2002:109) This is just the beginning because it is a sort of gateway that leads to the knowledge that man receives from entering a mutual relation with the incomprehensible God. It is the knowledge from I and Thou, a knowledge that has nothing rational, but allows through grace the nearness of the totality of the other's being. (Buber: 1996:61) The act of faith implies a dialogue that God has with the believer through his whole life.

The second focus of the "Jewish soul" is the basic consciousness of the fact that God's redeeming power is at work everywhere and at all times but that there is no final state of redemption. The faith is a continuous process and does not belong, as happens with *Pistis*, to the moment when the believer says I believe. (Biemann: 2002:111)

A trait of Judaism is also a temporal tirade composed by three moments: creation, revelation, redemption. The original Christianity, especially, John's Gospel tries for the first time to knit revelation and redemption. The light that shines in the dark is at the same time revelation and redemption, because, through his coming into the world, God reveals himself and the soul is redeemed. (Biemann: 2002:104)

The two centers of Judaism, firstly, the God as absolute exteriority, yet that reveals himself in mutual relationship with the believer, and, secondly, the continuity of human history directed towards fulfillment and decision, represent the elements that differentiate it from Christianity. (Biemann: 2002:113)

The analysis of the two centers of Judaism contains, eventually, the essence of the critique addressed to Christianity. The tensive unity of distance and closeness that exist in the relation of God with man is resolved by Christianity by affirming the unification with man. The second tension, between God's omnipresent redemptive power and the

unredeemed state of the world is annulled by Christianity through Jesus Christ, that represents the change from absence of redemption to redemption, even if proleptic and partial. "One can clearly feel that for Buber, the Christians, with both this foci, cross a sanctified, inviolable border." (Rothschild: 1996:117)

The elements that compose the Jewish soul are to be found, in different forms, in Two Types of Faith, where Buber analyzes the Bible, compares the two types of faith and argues in favor of placing Jesus and the beginning of Christianity in the area of Emunah type of faith. As a personal confession, Buber's words from the Foreword reflect the special relation he has with Jesus:

"From my youth onwards I have found in Jesus my great brother. That Christianity has regarded and does regard him as God and Savior has always appeared to me a fact of the highest importance which, for his sake and my own, I must endeavor to understand... I am more than ever certain that a great place belongs to him in Israel's history of faith and that this place cannot be described by any of the usual categories." (Buber: 1951:12)

The usage of the word brother can stun in different ways both Christians and Jews and suggests that Buber and Jesus are similarly related to God, who is their father. (Novak: 1988: 126) Thus, he rejects both Judaic and Christian views, his Jesus being the inheritor of the prophetic tradition. The daring usage of the term and, of course, the perspective proposed on Christianity as a product of Paul's action have as result various reactions coming from Christians, many of them presenting Buber's work on the topic as a great attack against the core of Christianity. And, obviously, in a certain measure, this reticence is understandable, due to the fact that, unlike his friend, Franz Rosenzweig, "Buber could not acknowledge the equal validity of Judaism and Christianity, one as being already in the eternity of God, the other as being the historical way to God". (Friedman: 1985: 429).

As it is already stated, Buber realizes a comparative analysis, using applied methods and focusing on the sacred texts. Useful for the presentation of Buber's conception is the example he gives in order to bring new arguments in favor of the thesis mentioned from the very beginning. He presents the relation between the Synoptic stories and a similar fragment from John's Gospel, which speaks about the conceiving of faith. To the question that Jesus asks concerning who he is in the opinion of men and of the disciples, Peter answers, in the synoptic texts: "Thou art the Anointed-One", or "God's Anointed", or "the son of the Living God". In John's Gospel the question and the answer are missing and Jesus has no doubts. The words are said by Peter in other context. What was said in the synoptics in a direct relationship has become a disciples' declaration regarding Jesus' nature. Buber evaluates what was lost and what was gained in the course. "The gain was the most sublime of all theologies; it was procured at the expense of the plain, concrete and situation-bound dialogicism of the original man of the Bible, who found eternity, not in the super-temporal spirit, but in the depth of the actual moment. The Jesus of the genuine tradition still belongs to that, but the Jesus of theology does so no longer." (Buber: 1951:34)

The essence of Judaism, which is the immediacy of the biblical faith, is excluded with the emergence of Christianity, by two essential elements brought by Paul: the demonocracy, to which God's justice has given over this aeon, and the mediatorship of Christ's saving grace at the threshold of that which is to come. (Friedman: 1954:11)

An important element in Buber's analysis is the relation with the existence or the inexistence of God in the two types of faith. The proof of the existence of God is alien

to the man of the Old Testament, because the conception of a “non- being” of God is beyond what he can conceive. Moreover, says Buber, the category of the things that cannot be seen, as an “absolute non-perceability” of the eternal things is also alien to the Old Testament. Even if the God of the Old Testament is invisible, he shows Himself in manifestation that man experiences, and does not interpret without affecting his invisibility. Thus, the believer differs from the heathen not by “a more spiritual view of the Godhead, but by the exclusiveness of his relationship to his God and by the reference of all things to Him.” (Buber: 1951: 39)

Again, distinction is highlighted between to believe that God exists and to believe that God is here. For the New Testament in general “the existence of God is ‘not something to be taken as a matter of course, but an article of faith; man does not feel the nearness of God, but he believes in it’.” (Buber: 1951:38)

In Christianity the choosing between faith and non faith belongs to the present, to a moment; on the other hand, the Judaic realization of faith does not happen in one unique decision, but in the totality of the events that compose life. For Israel, says Buber, everything depends on what is to be realized. Faith is in fact the proving of trust within the totality of life, the Old Testament paradigm being Job, because “there is no true life for him but that of a firmly establish covenant between God and man”.

The analysis of the book of Job and particularly the four views on Gods relationship with man’s sufferings also emphasize this idea. The first view that appears in the Prologue, presents God as the God that works on the basis of enticement. The second is the God of Job’s friends. “This is the dogmatic view of the cause and effect in the divine system of requital: suffering points to sin.” (Buber: 1968: 194-6). Another view is that of the God of the protesting Job that works against every reason and purpose. The fourth is the God of revelation, the God that speaks from the tempest. This is a particular revelation to the individual, as an answer to the individual sufferer concerning the question of his sufferings. This God is different from the ironical and unreal view in the Prologue and also from the logical perspective of the friends. In contrast, Job’s view is real and so to speak, the negative of truth; as well, the fourth view, of the voice speaking from the tempest is the supralogical truth of reality. Accordingly, Buber states that Job is deeply rooted in the primitive Israelite view of life and this assertion may be a reason for placing Job in the paradigm of the Jewish type of faith. (Buber: 1968: 194)

Buber’s attempt to approach Jesus in a manner that differs from the traditional Judaic and Christian ones should be seen in the context of his perception of the law, and especially of the law in the framework of the relation between God and man. (Novak: 1988:126)

Referring to his own attitude toward the law, Buber, in an address to a Christian auditory said: “My point of view with regard to this subject diverges from the traditional one: it is a not a-nomistic, but neither is it entirely nomistic”. Further, he makes an important clarification: “For the teaching of Judaism comes from Sinai (...) but the soul of Judaism is presinaitic. (...) Jewish law put on the soul, and the soul can never again be understood outside of “the Law”; yet, the soul itself is not the Law.” (Biemann: 202:107). Thus, Buber’s relation with the term is complex and difficult to grasp. He is neither an anarchist, because he does not deny the validity of the law; nor an anti-nomian, because he affirms the normative character of God’s presence to human creatures. He does not reject the Law itself, but the ordering of the present relation I-Thou with God through the structure of the Law which can only be from the past is associated with the I-It relation and signals a transformation of the relation between God and man into

a subject-object relation. (Novak: 1988: 127-8)

In the analysis of the term law from *Two Types of Faith* Buber asserts that Paul distinguishes between two types of life, depending on the nature of the perception of God: a life determined by law or by faith. Through Jesus' coming into the world, the law is surpassed, men are redeemed from the "curse of law" and the rigid life in law is replaced by the life in faith. This faith divided from law does not exist in pre-Christian era. As it is already mentioned, the law is essential for the Judaic soul, but it must not affect the authentic dialogue closing it in the harshness of subject-object relationship. But we can say that the law suggests the regulation of an active relationship with the alterity, a relationship that occurs between and does not limitate itself to the interiority of "I believe that."

Starting in Antiquity the essential element of Judaism was the deed and not the faith, this also being the fundamental difference between Orient and Occident: the connection between man and God is for the first one the deed, whereas for the second, the faith. This difference is stronger in case of Jews. (Buber: 1996:44)

In *Two Types of Faith* Buber signals the slippery nature of this "Judaic activism", which can imply a weak presence of the divine grace. "But it is not so. We are not less serious about grace because we are serious about the human power of deciding, and through decision the soul finds a way that will lead it to grace." (Biemann: 2002:100).

The deed, this essential trait of Judaism points out to the important role played by the idea of unity of human life. This unity rejects the separation of the ethical sphere, conceived as a relation with the world, from the religious one, separation that is so familiar to the Occidental spiritual history. The centrality of unity within Judaism involves the fact that "the ethical life has entered into religious life and cannot be extracted from it. (...) In the last resort, "religious life" means concreteness itself - the whole concreteness of life without reduction - grasped dialogically, included in dialogue." (Biemann: 2002: 101). At this point, it is important to mention the famous text entitled *The question to the Single One* where Buber addresses some interesting challenges to Kierkegaard's category of Single One. The genuine relation with God cannot ignore the world. Emunah, the trust in God demands the presence of the Other, of the world, here meaning the Alterity which man must genuinely meet. The world, a very important concept in Buber's philosophy, is in fact the way to God.

An interesting analysis of the usage of the term world in Buber's philosophy is proposed by Remi Brague. He distinguishes several meanings of the term, such as: the things of the material universe; the human affairs, the sphere of interhuman, but also the realm of fallen realities that separates us from God. (Paul Mendes-Flohr: 2002: 139). Buber's affirmation from *I and Thou* illustrates this variety of meanings: "Men do not find God if they stay in the world. They do not find him if they leave the world. He who goes out with his whole being to meet his Thou, and carries to it all being that is in the world finds him who cannot be sought." (Buber: 1996:127)

The religious texts in which religion is conceived as a way of being in the world are strangely neglected by Buber even in *Two Types of Faith*, says Remi Brague. He is referring to the Gospel of John, where Christian ethics is conceived as a way of staying in the world but living in it as Christ did, and faith is said to be a victory over the world. (Paul Mendes-Flohr: 2002: 146)

Thus, the real faith means "holding ourselves opened to the unconditional mystery which we encounter in every sphere of our life and which cannot be comprised by any formula." This mystery approaches us as our personal experience, as life. To believe

is to meet the mystery of the world, to engage into it. (Buber: 1997:49)

A different distinction made by Buber is used by Dan Avnon in order to introduce another aspect of Buber's attitude towards Jesus. It is the distinction between two types of history (Jewish history): an ordinary history and a real one, a history "seen from above", apparent, produced by ordinary participants, events, conflicts and a history "seen from below", hidden, the history of the events that develop between Adam and Elohim. In this context, Jesus is seen by Buber as a servant of YHVH who revealed himself and his wisdom to a generation not prepared to fathom the depths of understanding he was eager to share. His inaccurate intervention in history led to an effect that was the diametric opposite of his intention: incomplete interpretations of his historical presence led to an institutionalized religion that, in fact perpetuated the separation between Adam and Elohim that Jesus, as a servant of YHVH, sought to bridge. (Avnon: 1998: 100-105)

Maurice Friedman also brings this aspect into discussion when he speaks about Jesus' messianic consciousness, but he thinks that his messianic consciousness was used by Paul and John as the beginning of the process of deification. On the other hand, Jesus "undoubtedly did not see himself as anything other than the hidden servant. And even in the end, he did not hold himself divine in the sense in which he is later held." (Friedman: 1954:11)

In order to better clarify the context of the discussion we should mention the distinction made by Buber between religion, a construction that preserves nothing essential from the direct relationship with God, a collection of rules, rites, behaviors that don't have anything from the divine presence and religiosity, that implies genuine relation with God and the presence of this relation in all aspects of life.

Starting with this distinction, Donald J. Moore describes Buber as a "prophet of religious secularism." The critique made by Buber to the institutionalized religion is studied in detail. Of course, this critique is better understood if it is situated in the context of his whole thought, since, "unless we understand his criticism as one rooted in his Jewish faith, and unless we understand something of his philosophy of dialogue which in its self strongly reflects his interpretation of Judaism, we will not be able to grasp the full dimension of the criticism he directs against the structure of religion and at the same time his deep reverence for the religious spirit of man." (Moore: 1974:3)

In order to argue in favor of his position, Moore uses all elements that Martin Buber identifies as fundamental for the distinction between religiosity, as genuine relation with God and religion, as "objective history of God." The most important element is exactly the type of faith that touches the believer. Finally, starting from this point, the other components entailed by the relationship with God are brought into attention. At the base of the distinction religion-religiosity is another distinction, between trust and belief. On this ground Moore builds an important part of his analysis. Also, the presence and the importance of dogma is an element of difference. Obviously, Buber asserts that there is a Jewish dogma but that it has a secondary role, the central one being played by the genuine meeting with God. "Whatever is enunciated in abstract in the third person about the divine, on the thither side of the confrontation of I and Thou, is only a projection onto the conceptual construct plane which, though indispensable, proves itself again and again to be inessential." (Biemann: 2002:89)

Essential in Buber's analysis is the Sermon on the Mount, which, as he himself says, has a fundamental link with the type of faith from the Old Testament. The starting point is the fragment from the Sermon on the Mount: "Therefore you shall be per-

fect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (11:14). In the Old Testament this commandment appears five times. It is based on a divine quality and invites to imitate God. The commandment is addressed in the first case to the disciples, and in the second case, to Israel assembled around Sinai: "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy". If the disciples are told how at the end of the world man can and must reach the divine through effort for perfection, the people are told because, and are given enough credit and considered able to fight the big fight for the sake of the divine sanctity. The address to the people concerns the life of the chosen people, while the words addressed to the disciples arise out of the eschatological situation, which demands and makes possible something extraordinary.

In Luke's Gospel, we find compassionate instead of perfect. According to Buber this term is similar to Pharisees' words: "Be thou compassionate and merciful as He is compassionate and merciful." In the Old Testament perfection has a different meaning and refers to the degree of devotedness to God and not to a general human attribute.

Moreover, Buber refers to Jesus' words from the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law of the prophets; I have not come to abolish but to fulfill." According to Buber, Jesus does not want to bring a new law; the law is still the old one, but it is understood in the absolute sense. This sense implies reinforcing the importance and the sanctity of the deed, which was its main traits and was diminished by the rigour of the Law.

In respect to the New Testament commandment to love one's enemy, Buber considers that it finds its roots in the Old Testament commandment to love one's neighbour. Buber notices that in the Sermon on the Mount the word usually translated by "as yourself" is absent, but is not missing in the reply to the scribe. Buber considers that the specification does not refer to the manner or the measure to love, because the love of yourself is totally alien for the Old Testament. The meaning would be "conduct thyself in such a way as if it concerned thyself". So, there is no difference between to love and the proof of love.

The universality of the commandment of love is found at the Pharisees. In this sense, Buber gives several examples, such as: "Whoever hates a man is as if he hated Him Who spake and the world was". (Buber: 1951: 73). These examples are similar to Jesus' commandments, and they show the founding of the morality on the reality of faith. Thus, asserts Buber, "the saying of Jesus about love for the enemy derives its light from the world of Judaism in which he stands and which he seems to contest; and he outshines it." (Buber:1951:75)

The primitive Christian teachings have the same content as the prophets' one: the sanctity of the deed and of the immediate relation with the Absolute. In fact, this is the main idea that resumes Buber's attitude towards Christianity. "It could with greater justification be called original Judaism – though in a different sense than that of the historical term – for it is much more closely related to Judaism than to what is today called Christianity. (...) whatever was not eclectic, whatever was creative in the beginnings of Christianity, was nothing but Judaism. This revolution of ideas had burst into flame in a Jewish land; it had first stirred in the womb of ancient Jewish communal societies, it had been spread by Jewish men, the people they addressed were, as is repeatedly proclaimed, the Jewish people and no other; and what they proclaimed was nothing else than the renewal, in Judaism, of the religiosity of the deed." (Buber: 1996:45)

Simultaneously, Buber suggests a similarity between the primeval Christianity and Hasidism. Nowadays, Christianity and Hasidism have very little in common with what they did at their origins. They both appeared as an attempt to renew Judaism and to

emphasize the importance of the deed. "And just as early Christianity had not wanted to abolish the law, so Hasidism too did not want to abolish it, only to fulfill it (...) to transform it from the rigidity of a formula into the fluidity of the immediate." (Buber: 1996:49)

Another essential part in Buber's attempt from *Two Types of Faith* is the analysis of prayer. As a conclusion regarding the fundamental Christian prayer, Buber reinforces the opposition between Jesus and the Apostle Paul when he asserts that with Paul, Jesus' conception about the immediate relation implied by the prayer is missing, here the prayer being mediated by Christ. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' words about the nature of the prayer have a genuine oral tonality and catch the real meaning of the prayer. "For your Father knows what ye need before ye ask Him", but He wants man to address Him directly, through the prayer. The oral tonality and the directness don't characterize the prayer mediated by Christ.

The opposition between Jesus and the Apostle Paul is the basis of Buber's view about Christianity and had provoked various retorts. For example, Ekkehard W. Stegemann emphasizes the fact that it is incorrect for Buber to deny Paul and to ascribe only to Jesus the Jewish type of faith. Buber misunderstands the fact that "the Christian faith concept did not change until the Christian tradition was transformed into Latin language and culture, especially in the fourth century." Moreover, "a great deal of what Buber would detect in Paul might, upon closer view, to be a retrojection for a later history of Paul's reception in Christianity. Some of what Buber recognizes in Jesus also pertains to Paul." (Rothschild: 1996:120)

An interesting investigation of Martin Buber's conception regarding Christianity is proposed by the Swiss theologian Emil Brunner and underlines some points similar to the ones we have mentioned above. At the end of his analysis, Brunner mentions several aspects, acceptable or problematic, for a Christian theologian, we must remind that.

Thus, regarding the antitheses that exist, according to Buber, between the two types of faith, Brunner considers that they are the result of a penetrating analysis and of an objective scientific study in comparative religion, that Buber's criticism strikes at the Christian doctrinal tradition, which, indeed, came about a kind of belief determined by the principle "that something is true", in opposition to the faith-principle of the biblical Emunah. Moreover, Brunner states that Buber renders Christians a great service by making clear that the teaching of Jesus, understood in connection to the Jewish faith, cannot be the basis of a faith in contradiction to the Jewish one. Rather, what divides the two parts is the faith in Jesus as the Christ. (Schilpp, Friedman: 1967:313-314)

However, Brunner also emphasizes the fact that he has reproaches against Buber's analysis. While Buber says that Paul forsakes the Old Testament faith of obedience by making a historical event the object of faith, Brunner criticizes that Buber, "in the presentation of Jewish faith, leaves the factor of historical revelation as good as out of consideration. The faith of Israel is based upon the fact that, by way of deeds and words, still more so in events which, through the prophets, became the Word of God for Israel, Yahweh revealed is name." The Christian theologian considers that Pistis, which, for Buber, is the mark of Hellenization of faith, "is not a precondition of faith, but an aspect of an indivisible act in which man opens himself to the self-communicating God." (Schilpp, Friedman: 1967: 315)

Brunner considers that for Paul, the event of the cross is not, as Buber affirms, the object of an abstract act of faith that has nothing to do with the living relation between man and God, but it is an event in which "occurred a self communication of God in

which God addresses man as a child of God in spite of his sin.” This faith does not have a Gnostic Hellenistic nature, but is of the same kind as the trust and obedience of the Old Testament believer. Furthermore, due to the fact that this faith is “a daring to go out of one’s self”, “a looking away from oneself, even from the pious believing self, and a depending solely upon the grace of God,” whereas, the believer from the Old Testament “is always gazing on himself and focusing on rightness of this his trust,” this faith “exhibits in complete purity what trusting in the Lord in the Old Testament always intended but could never fully attain.” (Schilpp, Friedman: 1967:316)

Nevertheless, Brunner affirms that Buber’s “excuse” is offered by Paul’s gnostic terminology and also by the fact that “the Christian Theology itself did not succeed in interpreting the Christian faith in such a way that it was understood primarily as an act of obedience”; in addition to this, he feels that he shares a common front with Buber in the spiritual battle against the danger represented by fundamentalist tendencies in both traditions.

There is a large variety of elements and aspects that are used by Buber in order to sustain the main distinction that founds his conception regarding the duality of faith and the association with Judaism, respectively with Christianity. Even if we are aware that the argumentation comes from a Jewish thinker and that this strong background transcends Buber’s conception, we cannot deny the fact that it stands firmly and makes possible, even for Christians, to accept, even though with additional specification, as we already saw, the duality of faith.

Contemporary paulinism

The last chapter of the *Two Types of Faith* returns to contemporary times and introduces a new idea. In Christian history, states Buber, one can identify periods dominated, at various degrees, by paulinism. Paulinism means not only a system of thought, but “a mode of seeing and being which dwells in the life itself” (Buber: 1951:162)

The trait of paulinism, unacceptable to Buber, felt so even nowadays, is Paul’s answer to the problem of evil. He creates two Gods: a God of wrath and one of deliverance, the last one almost disappears behind Christ. “Although the Christian Paulinism of our time softens the demonocracy of the world, it too sees existence as divided into ‘an unrestricted rule of wrath’ and ‘a sphere of reconciliation.” (Friedman: 2002: 331)

The paulinism that characterizes the contemporary period is one of the unredeemed, a paulinism that eliminates the place occupied by the divine grace. This paulinian attitude conquers also non-Christian milieus. The same as with Paul, in these milieus develops the experience of a world at the disposal of an uncontrollable power; the only thing that lacks is the manifest will to redeem the world, Christ.

Buber explicitly stated that Paulinism, this pessimistic world-view that combined a belief in an unredeemed cosmos controlled by inevitable forces with a powerful sense of personal alienation, could be found in both Christian and Jewish thought (and in secular culture, too). But, Daniel L. Rangton distinguishes in Buber’s assertions, despite his protests, the trace of some apologetic tendencies because Buber undoubtedly believed that the tendency was more pronounced in Christianity than in Judaism. (Rangton: 2005: 84).

Buber illustrates his idea by proposing a relation between the paulinian view with some pessimistic nuances about the world and the world in Franz Kafka’s novels. Both

The Trial and The Castle use the symbol of the door from the parable of the man who waits before a certain open gateway which leads to the world of meaning to be admitted until his death when he is told that the door was opened for him, but now it will be closed. The symbol is elaborated in the first novel in the dimension of time and in The Castle in the dimension of space. In the first case it suggests the lack of perspective in man's relation with his own soul, and in the second case, man's relation with the world. The world presented by these novels is "a world handed over to a maze of intermediate beings - it is a Pauline world except that God is removed into the impenetrable darkness and that there is no place for a mediator". (Buber: 1951:166) However, a quoted passage from Kafka speaks about man destined eventually to the paradise and suggests the shy and quiet manner used in order to express the antipaulinianism of this paulinist Jew, perceived by Buber not only as a nihilist author.

But Kafka knows God's hiddenness, and he describes most exactly from inner awareness 'the rule of the foul devilry which fills the foreground.' Kafka, the Jew, also knows that God's hiding Himself does not diminish the immediacy: 'In the immediacy He remains the Saviour and the contradiction of existence becomes for us a theophany. (Friedman: 2002:331) "This is the appearance of Paulinism without Christ which at this time when God is most hidden has penetrated into Judaism, a Paulinism therefore opposed to Paul." (Buber: 1951:169)

The contemporary society crisis affects, differently, both types of faith. Different in their nature, they differ also in their origin and in the crisis that affects them.

So, the Jewish Emunah takes roots in the history of the people, while Pistis in the history of the individual. Emunah is man's persistence in his relation with a guide, which although invisible, manifests himself. The personal Emunah of each individual is a part of the people and extracts its power from the living memory of the people concerning the fact that it was guided from the very beginning. The present crisis of this type of faith is caused by the fact that the faithful people are divided in two unconnected parts: the religious community and the nation. At the personal level, the crisis manifests through the lack of spontaneity and through its replacement with elements that belong to the sphere of Pistis and present a logical or mystical character. The only possible remedy is the renewal of the national faith. (Buber: 1951:171)

Pistis had emerged from the historical experience of the people and entered the individual's soul. Buber admits that this faith offers the possibility of rising to a complete renunciation, to a mystique of the communion of the being with the one that he believes in. In spite of the irrational basis, the character of his type of faith has a logical nature: to-accept-as-true and to-recognize-as-true what a sentence proclaims as an object of faith. This act has a truly Greek origin and is the action of a being kept apart from his people. Jesus speaks to the individual, but he hints at the community. The example given by Buber in this respect is the verse where Jesus speaks about the lost sheep. On the other hand, Paul doesn't mention the belonging to a national reality. The individuals become Christians as a result of an individual act of faith that has a Hellenic basis. The crisis emerges because of the disproportion between the sanctification of the individual and the lack of sanctity of his community, disproportion that is felt also by his soul.

Conclusion

The tone used by Buber to conclude his analysis is somewhat more optimistic,

characterized, as observes Max Brod, by a “patient trust”; the philosopher asserts “that there is a way which leads from rigid Paulinism to another form of Pistis nearer to Emunah. The faith of Judaism and the faith of Christendom are by nature different in kind, each in conformity with its human basis, and they will indeed remain different, until mankind is gathered in from the exiles of the ‘religions’ into the Kingship of God. But an Israel striving after the renewal of its faith through the rebirth of the person and a Christianity striving for the renewal of its faith through the rebirth of nations would have something as yet unsaid to say to each other and a help to give to one another – hardly to be conceived at the present time.” (Buber:1951:173-4)

Buber’s relation with Christianity is complex¹ and differs from his relation with Jesus. Buber goes beyond the traditional views about Jesus (the Christian one making too much of him and the Jewish one too little) (Novak: 1988: 126), and perceives him as a paradigm of an I-Thou relation with God “...how powerful, even overpowering is Jesus’ I-saying, and how legitimate to the point of being a matter of course! For it is the I of an unconditional relation in which man calls his You “Father” in such a way that he himself becoming nothing but a son . . . I and You remain; everyone can speak the You and then become I; everyone can say Father and then become son; actuality abides.” (Buber: 1996:116)

In an address delivered to a group of Christian theologians, Buber made an statement that resumes, in a way, his attitude toward Christianity: “What have you and we in common? If we take the question literally, a book and an expectation. To you the book is the antechamber, to us is the sanctuary but in this place we can dwell together and together listen to the voice that speaks here. (...) together we can redeem the imprisoned word.” (Biemann: 2002:113) Hence, Buber considers that Judaism and Christianity are united by a hope, the hope for “a unity to come to us from God”.

Nevertheless, the most important aspect in the relation between Judaism and Christianity is the fact that they are premessianically distinct. Judaism and Christianity are different, the types of faith that characterize each of them are different, and this is what Buber successfully attempts to demonstrate. And even if Buber’s attitude towards Paul is rather harsh, Buber renders the Christians a service (a Christian theologian admits that) by making clear that the teaching of Jesus, understood in connection to the Jewish faith, cannot be the basis of a faith in counterdistinction to the Jewish one.

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Notes:

1 This complexity is sustained by Maurice Friedman in the article *Martin Buber's Influence on Twentieth Century Religious Thought*, where he analyses the great influence Buber's thought had and still has on many important Jewish and Christian Thinkers, but also the misinterpretations of Buber's philosophy.

SILVIU TATU

Ancient Hebrew and Ugaritic Poetry and Modern Linguistic Tools: An Interdisciplinary Study

Abstract:

This article introduces the reader to the issue of verbal sequence in the poetry of the Hebrew Bible, a topic that was studied in-depth as a doctoral dissertation. After noticing the peculiarities of the poetic discourse, it surveys the solutions offered to this crux interpretum to date, but concludes that these solutions are insufficient. Several limitations of such a study are assumed from the outset. We confine ourselves to the Psalter for various reasons given below. Terminologically, we resist the temptation of modern terminology by making use of terms that are as neutral as possible. Methodologically, we employ Systemic Functional Grammar to describe the grammatical incidents wherein verbs are included. Lastly, the paper concludes with an overview of the potential contributions of such a study.

Reading Hebrew literature, and for that matter any literature, intelligibly is a painstaking exercise, involving interdisciplinary knowledge, exquisite sensitivity, and elevated literary ability, to name just a few prerequisites. One does not perceive form without content; meaning is a natural outcome of the balanced observation of the two.

Nevertheless, besides the text itself (utterance), the hermeneutical circle comprises an encoder (writer), a decoder (reader), and the proper response of the decoder to the encoder's stimuli. All these elements are important for the interpretation of the text. This theory of the process of communication guarantees that our expectations of finding meaning in literary forms may be met, if our response to the original stimuli is sensitive to the author's intention.

1. Differentiating poetry from prose

The general distinction between poetry and prose leaves disregarded a large diversity of texts. Critics generally agree on the matter that if there is such a thing as literature, there have to be at least two main literary genres, prose and poetry. Both of them, whether oral or written, are responsible for creating a specific effect on the audience. Judging them on the level of aesthetics, poetry is generally associated with subjectivity, vivid expression, and atemporality, whereas prose is completely the opposite. Theoretically, however, defining poetry as opposed to prose proves to be a rather diffi-

Lecturer
Silviu
Tatu, PhD
Pentecostal
Theological
Institute
Bucharest.
Author of
the books:
Profetismul
israelit în



documentele biblice: între fals și
authentic (2007), Interpretarea narați-
unilor biblice: analiza literară a
Judecătorilor (2004). Co-author of:
Curs de ebraică biblică, (1999),
Ebraică biblică (2001).
E-mail: silviuntatu@gmail.com

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cult task. This delimitation proves to be extremely difficult in the post-modern context, where relativism replaced standardization, and deconstruction became the norm (cf. Jakobson 1987, 368 ff.).

Aviram avoids the traditional definition of aesthetics, refraining from defining pure categories of poetry and prose. Instead, he promotes poetry and prose as hypothetical directions (Aviram 1994, 44f). The two opposite extremes are by themselves theoretical probabilities and factual impossibilities. Both of them represent asymptotic ends¹. Consequently, at one end of the spectrum lies ordinary language, which is supposed to be transparent, i.e., it draws the reader's attention not to its rhetorical features (style, images, figures), nor to its formal features (how it sounds), but rather to its thematic content. Expository and scientific writing share this quality. At the other end of the spectrum is opaque language, i.e. language with a strong interest in sounds, and therefore very difficult to understand. One can discover its meaning only in the larger context of a conventional system of signs with potential meaning (Aviram 1994, 49)².

Although he admits a diachronic evolution of poetry, Aviram is promoting a unique organizing principle, that of rhythm, with particular embodiments throughout history, because the concept of poetry is conditioned temporally. Jakobson militates for a more liberal, though holistic, approach to poetry, according to which poeticity is not to be reduced mechanically to its components. Instead, he invokes emotivity and opacity as the main characteristics of such texts (Jakobson 1987, 378).

It is obvious that both 'emotivity' and 'opacity' display a high degree of subjectivity. As we relate these observations to ANE literature, if the means to stir emotions in the mind of an Ancient Semite were different from those of a modern human, what were they? If rhythm as a state of mind was embodied in a particular way in ANE literature, how was it done? The matter of the conscious use of structures by the ancient poets, noted by modern scholars, remains with the purposive value of poetic language (Jakobson 1987, 250-61). Spontaneous creation is not excluded, particularly where revelatory texts are concerned, but this cannot restrict us from consciously and painstakingly undertaking the mission of careful analysis of the texts.

2. Particularities of the prose/poetry debate in Hebrew literature

One scholar who has applied the idea of binary scale to biblical criticism is Tremper Longman III (1987, 120-21), who concluded that poetry is characterized by a higher level of artistry than prose³.

Robert Alter subscribes to the idea that Hebrew literature consists of two main genres, prose and poetry, to which he actually dedicated two parallel volumes, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (1981), and *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (1985). In the case of Hebrew Poetry (henceforth HPy), he noticed a particular lack of epic works extant in all ANE literature except Hebrew⁴.

Alter believes in two pre-existing literary forms, prose and poetry, of which prose represented a continuous attraction for the Hebrew bards ever trying to render its characteristics into poetic lines. Narrativity lies latent in the Hebrew poems, in their minute articulations, from line to line, from unit to unit, articulation mainly generated by synonymy. This sense of articulation may be defined as consequentiality both in logical and temporal terms⁵.

Alter also tried to propose several elements marking poetry as opposed to prose.

Dialogue is considered a standard practice of prose, which defines the action and relation between actors. In poetry, characters have a rather emblematic presence without interacting with one another in terms of dialogue (Alter 1990, 48-9)⁶. poetry is denser than prose stylistically, but the distinctive marks of the poetic sub-genres refer to other criteria: the quality of the hearers (fictitious vs. realistic), tone (hortative vs. vocative), and hermeneutic value (individualistic vs. archetypal).

Wilfred G.E. Watson admits that poetic devices can be met in prose too (Watson 1984a, 44-62), but their presence in poetry is higher in density and in poetry they sometimes interplay with one another. poetry can be defined in opposition to prose (negative indicators) or by an analysis on its own merits (positive indicators, of which there are three categories: broad, structural, and other, see *infra*). Unexpectedly, at the end of a very convincing discourse on the multiplicity of facets of HPy, Watson refers to the factor of content in ANE poetry. Thus, prose is the vehicle used to render the language of letters, treaties, economic documents, etc., and poetry is preferred only for religious and mythological texts (Watson 1984a, 60)⁷.

Despite the detailed technique promoted in his books, he is far from being dogmatic about the procedure proposed. Therefore, he declares:

Ultimately, the decision owes a great deal to mature reflection which will consider content as well as form, with an eye on traditions both in Classical Hebrew and in ancient Near Eastern literature generally. (Watson 1984a, 55)

Alternatively, one can investigate HPy in comparison with poetry of Northwest Semitic origin or from world literature, looking for common features, provided the poetic features of that literature are clearly understood in their particular context. Invariably, one has to rely on the ability to identify and explain poetic devices specific to each piece of literature. The following section surveys several of the most significant contributions to the literary criticism of poetic devices specific to Hebrew literature.

3. Features of Hebrew poetry

Modern research has promoted various poetic devices as significantly important, even decisive, for the description of HPy. Robert Lowth's theory of parallelism in the prophetic Hebrew literature (Lowth 1753), so influential for centuries, has lost its hold on literary studies of Hebrew literature⁸. With George B. Gray (1915), parallelism received a sharper definition, making room for several specific categories, such as complete/incomplete and alternative parallelism. Hrushovski (1971, 1202a) redefined it as 'free-rhythm,' loose enough to accommodate various categories.

The syntactical theory of parallelism that O'Connor (1980) promoted does not seem to have gained overall scholarly support. It would be very difficult to prove that parallelismus membrorum functions at the syntactic level in HPy. His theory was applied first to prophetic texts, which are well known as being inspired by the HPy found outside the Canonical oracles. Despite the severe criticism received (Kugel 1981, 317; Miller, P.D. 1983; Geller 1982, 69-70), O'Connor's idea that Hebrew verse is organized according to principles that surpass structural and poetic language is of value. Although these principles escape the reader's grasp, we are still able to locate them and even apprehend them, without speculating on their formal definition and function (O'Connor 1980, 13-14).

Lowth's theory was severely assaulted by James L. Kugel. Although he declared

himself anti-Lowthian, others give him credit for producing a newer, more refined, definition of parallelism (Berlin 1985, 64)⁹. This is so much so that Landy (1984, 62-3) even sees in him the 'saviour' of the most criticized section of Lowth's theory of synthetic parallelism. What Kugel really did was to prove that parallelism is not a poetic device but rather a mental paradigm, which stimulated the creative energies of the authors, under the pressure of tradition and cultural interchange¹⁰. Kugel (1981, 26-8) admits that the three main characteristics of Ugaritic Poetry (henceforth UPy), namely frequent ternary rhymes, repetition of words and/or phrases, and word-pairs, represent fertile soil for searching for poetic devices in HPy, but he left this as a mere theory.

Once believed to be uniquely characteristic of HPy, parallelism is nowadays accepted not only as a traditional rhetorical device present in some other classic literature, but also as a common feature of literary writing. Whether quantitative in terms of metre and elements of clause structure, or qualitative in terms of phonetics and semantics, parallelism is found in much of world literature. Since Hebrew verse can hardly exist without it, it was inferred that in ancient literatures such as Hebrew and Ugaritic, parallelism is not a mere rhetorical device but an organizing principle that ties together two clauses in a meaningful unit.

Upon admitting a connection between poetry and music and an interconnection between neighbouring cultures, Abraham M. Habermann (1972, 670-93) agreed that HPy owes much to Canaanite aesthetics. As main characteristics, Habermann listed action, imagery, simplicity, vigour, and concreteness, which are portrayed, due to the extreme concreteness of the Hebrew language, by parallelism, strophe structure, metre, genre, and style. Although Habermann's approach to Hebrew poetic devices is diachronic, it resembles more of an outsider's approach offering a good and cautious resumé of the status quo in research.

Although parallelism of thought is the most highly esteemed device of HPy, there have been many scholars through the years who have suggested that metre or rhythm best describes HPy, be it number of syllables or number of words in each line¹¹. Christensen (1986, 62-3) promotes an even older method, that of counting 'morae' (i.e. vowels) and disjunctive accents.

Korpel (1998) illustrates from the book of Isaiah that, apparently, the Hebrew verse-line is made of two or three words that have an average of eight syllables. This process seems to be hindered by some irregularities of the Masoretic system, such as the frequent use of the conjunctive *māqqēp*, which permitted them to connect two or more words into one single stressed unit. Again,

far from being a tool enabling the scholar to emend the transmitted text metri causa, the rhythmical balance may sometimes function as an additional argument in the delimitation of cola and verse-lines. (Korpel 1998, 12)

In terms of syllable counting, Freedman and Geoghegan discovered that, in the case of the first three chapters of Lamentations, the average couplet length is 12 syllables, while line A has an average of 7.2 or 7.3, and line B an average of 5.7 or 5.8 (Freedman & Geoghegan 1999, 241)¹².

Christensen himself concluded that the careful assessment of verse-lines in relation to their 'morae' and disjunctive accents indicates a balanced and rhythmical construction of verses (1986, 68 and again 1988, 35).

Watson's contribution to the description of poetry in ANE literature is extremely valuable. The numerous indicators categorised into broad and structural types are more

or less members of two general categories, namely, conciseness and parallelism, and the result of their interplay. Although they vary in terms of the grammatical level at which they appear, from phonetics to morphology, word order, and semantics, parallelism is assumed as the fundamental principle that binds smaller units into larger ones.

Watson's arsenal of poetic devices includes the ellipsis, unusual vocabulary, conciseness, unusual word-order, archaisms, metre and rhythm, regularity and symmetry (as broad indicators), parallelism, word-pairs, chiastic patterns, envelope figures, break-up of stereotyped phrases, gender-matched parallelism, tercets (as structural indicators), rhyme and sound patterns (as other) (Watson 1984a, 44-62), as well as numerous figures of speech (Watson 1984a, 251-348). Some of these features resurface intermittently in his later studies.

Of particular interest for the diachronic study of poetry in ANE literature is the recognition of particular markers of poetical units or subunits. Among them, de Moor and Watson (1993, xv) include colometric orthography of some Ugaritic and Akkadian documents, or the accents, the traditional division into *p^etûhôt* and *s^etûmôt*, and the use of *s^elâ* in the Hebrew documents preserved by the Masoretes.

More recently, Alviero Niccacci (1997) proposed three characteristics as specific to HPy: (1) segmented communication, (2) parallelism of similar bits of information, and (3) a non-detectable verbal system. Niccacci's overall conclusion is that HPy is structured at the most basic level in parallel lines, arranged mainly grammatically in direct order (a b // a' b') or in chiastic order (a b // b' a')¹³.

So far, sufficient evidence has not been found to support the promotion of a particular poetic device as definitive for HPy. Therefore the poetic qualities of texts in Hebrew literature are still promoted heuristically, and the categories of poetry and prose are used only as qualifiers for those literary texts that manifest an obvious tendency towards opacity or transparency, respectively. A sharp distinction between the two types of texts is less probable when authors employed a mixture of devices to serve their particular purposes.

4. The verbal sequence variation in Hebrew poetry

Unlike narratives, poems allow a more flexible use of verb tenses, which can often frustrate the search for the intended meaning. The translators of HPy will find this situation especially difficult to handle. For instance, Psalm 6.10 says 'The Lord hear (*qāṭal*) my plea // the Lord answer (*yiqṭōl*) my prayer.'¹⁴ Most English translations consulted prefer to render the first lexical verb as a past perfect, with the exception of TNK, which prefers the simple present instead. Most translations continue by rendering the second verb as the habitual simple present (RSV, NRSV, NAB, NAS, NIB, NIV, ESV), although some opted for the future tense (KJV, NLT, NKJV, NJB, GNV), and a few others preferred the simple past (JPS, TNK), or even the past perfect instead (BBE).

It is obvious from the above selection that there is a clear lack of consensus in relation to how this passage should be translated. Whereas the large majority of translations agree on translating the *qāṭal* verb form as a past perfect, the consensus is lost when translating the verb of the second verse-line. However, it is the case that *yiqṭōl* verbal forms are more open to free translation, since they have the ability to function in various ways.

Despite his long experience as a scholar within the fields of HPy and of transla-

tion work, Wendland refrains from being dogmatic about translating verbal sequences. For Wendland, variations in verb usage, both in tense/aspect and voice, reflect a situation common to HPy wherein a 'logic' different from that of prose texts inspired the original poets (2002, 167-8).

As a general rule of thumb, he proposes that verbs are to be translated in relation to their near context, that is the strophe, and to their larger context, that is the poem. The presence of temporal adverbs or adverbial time phrases helps by suggesting a past time reference, whereas a vow to perform some religious activities indicates a future time reference. This treatment of HPy is commonplace among contemporary Bible translators.

Grammars also lack objective criteria to decide what translation to prefer, especially in terms of the tense of verbs in HPy. Non-perfective verbal forms fit well with gnomic perfect (IBHS, 506) and would make a good parallel as progressive and habitual non-perfective (pp. 504-6). Nonetheless, IBHS places greater value on the ability of *yiqṭōl* to represent a situation that arises as a consequence of another, particularly as a situation in the future, and illustrates copiously with samples from Psalms (pp. 512-3). The 'enigma' of the Hebrew verbal system is far from being elucidated, though¹⁵. The two main options, tense and aspect, are still disputed. Among the more recent and original contributors in relation to the verbal system as used in HPy, one can mention the divergent opinions of Diethelm Michel¹⁶ and Jan Joosten, which epitomize the ongoing debate over the function of verbal forms in Hebrew.

Michel proposes the aspect theory of the Hebrew verbal system based on a thorough investigation of *qāṭal* and *yiqṭōl* in the Psalms. Methodologically, he assumed that literary contexts (poetic genres) have influence on the syntactic usage of verbal forms. Hence, Michel progressed carefully in his study, considering the variations of *qāṭal* functions in relation to various poetic genres found in Psalms: lamentations, thanksgiving, reports of salvation¹⁷.

According to Michel, the suffix conjugation is not employed in the Psalms to express time, but rather to report an action that stands independently, that is 'self-important' (pp. 98-99). Such an action is considered absolute and factitive ('Fakt'). At the same time, the actions expressed by perfect have an 'akzidentiellen' character with regard to the acting person (p. 127). Michel noticed that the prefix conjugation is not expressing time either, but is used when meaning is derived from outside the action the verb expresses, and is therefore relative to it, and expressing an action ('Handlung') (Michel 1960, 176). In this case, the actions designated by *yiqṭōl* verbs have a 'substantiellen' character with regard to the acting person (p. 127).

The only place where the analysis of *qāṭal* and *yiqṭōl* interact in Michel's work is his chapter on the syntax of the conditional sentence. Four verbal sequence types are identified, some invariable with *yiqṭōl* or *qāṭal* throughout, and some displaying verb form shifting, from *yiqṭōl* to *qāṭal* and vice versa (Michel 1960, 190-2). Michel understands them as facts (*qāṭal*) and actions (*yiqṭōl*) in interaction (p. 194). Most of the samples extend over many clauses and verse-lines, and volitives are included in the category of 'imperfects.'¹⁸ Only two samples stay within the limits of couplets, namely Ps. 127.1 and 63.7.

The possibility that the Hebrew verb has aspect was contested repeatedly despite its venerable history, traced back to the German Arabic grammarians of the nineteenth century¹⁹. Most recently, Joosten (2002) rightly challenged the validity of aspect by attempting to prove that the most prominent functions attached to the imperfective in

acknowledged aspect languages, such as real present and attendant circumstances in the past, are not regularly expressed by *yiqṭōl* in Hebrew. Conversely, the predicative participle takes over such functions in Hebrew, whereas *yiqṭōl* expresses modality.

Verb usage is particularly important in the study of a verb-initial language, as Classical Hebrew has proved to be. Its importance is increased by the role of the verb in the analysis of prose, as recent research indicates (Andersen 1974; Longacre 1989; Eskhult 1990; Niccacci 1990; Schneider 1994; Hataf 1997; Goldfajn 1998 inter alia). Therefore, a careful look into the use of the verb in poetry may be illuminating for the understanding of its function both at the syntactic and pragmatic levels.

As becomes clear from rendering the Psalms into poetic lines, there are several tendencies to be noticed in the use of verbs between the parallel lines. Arguably, the couplet is the regular poetic unit in HPy, with one predicate per line and similar verbal forms in both lines being favoured due to parallelismus membrorum²⁰.

Consequently, verses with multiple lines²¹, couplets with multiple predicates per line²², the elision of the verb in one of the lines²³, and the *qāṭalnniyiqṭōl* verbal sequence or its variant *yiqṭōlnnqāṭal* would be exceptions.

Niccacci intuitively noted that the study of the verbal system as it is applied to poetry is “the most remarkable area of disagreement” between prose and poetry. The unanalysable alternation of *qāṭal*, *yiqṭōl* and *wayyiqṭōl* verbal forms in poetry allowed him to catalogue it as a free alternation. Although he mentions it only in passing, he admits that the parallelization of same root verbs proves to be a characteristic of UPy, HPy, and epistolary literature in Amarna (Niccacci 1990, 194-95)²⁴.

Several scholars have analysed verses with the QYYQ verbal sequence in Psalms in particular, some even in relation to UPy, as well as in other poetic canonical books,²⁵ thereby legitimating it as an object of study. Further limitations concerning the extent of our research, as well as terminological and methodological options, are detailed in the following sections.

5. The Psalter as a corpus of poetic texts

Our investigation will be limited to couplets in Psalms²⁶. Although this particular verbal sequence appears in HPy of various periods, including Archaic Hebrew, we prefer to limit our study to Psalms for several reasons.

The first reason to limit our study to Psalms is that there is a strong consensus among scholars that Psalms is a collection of poems representative for HPy. Second, Psalms stands as a united corpus of Hebrew literature. However, one cannot maintain that this document allows synchronically valuable observations, since it encompasses poems of a wide variety of origins (cf. discussion infra). Third, the phenomenon of couplets with **QYYQ** verbal sequence appears to be extensively represented in this document. Fourth, since the main thematic in Psalms is liturgical, there is a greater chance that its poetry would be less transparent than that of wisdom literature or prophecy, and hence more poetic than prose. Fifth, because a thorough investigation of the whole corpus of the Psalter was too demanding to permit extending it to other documents from Hebrew literature, despite the need and desire to do so.

At this point, some clarifications of the nature of our research corpus are necessary. Approaching the MT in order to localize our primary text, several problems arise. First, the age of the literary pieces that the original text consists of varies within rather

large limits, because the Psalter is a collection of poems. Second, Hebrew itself is no longer seen as a monolithic language. What is the impact of these matters on our study?

In recent years, scholars have viewed Hebrew as a language with a diachronic development in its own right. Early Hebrew (also called Archaic),²⁷ Standard Hebrew (or pre-exilic)²⁸ and Late Hebrew (or post-exilic)²⁹ were the idioms apparently known in the Holy Land and employed for written documents (Kutscher 1982, 12)³⁰. The picture is further complicated by the existence of diglossia (the existence of two varieties of the same language, one for literary and formal purposes, another for colloquial and informal purposes) and that of local dialects (such as Judahite/Southern or Israelite/Northern)³¹.

Several scholars have offered detailed studies on what the characteristic of the Ancient HPy may be. In 1975 (when their joint 1950 PhD thesis was finally published), Cross and Freedman provided orthographic, grammatical, lexical, and stylistic evidence for the ancient origin or influence of several poems outside the Psalter³². In his 1976 Harvard PhD dissertation, Geller provides us with structural evidence inspired by parallelismus membrorum displayed by ancient HPy³³.

More recently, Hadas-Lebel (1995, 70-72) traced the characteristics of Archaic HPy in several poems outside the Psalter (Exod 15.1-11; Jdg 5; Num 23-24; Deut 32; 33; Gen 49; 1 Sam 2.1-10) and in some poems from Psalms as well (Pss 17; 103; 116; 135). Sáenz-Badillos (1993, 57) also classified Psalm 68 as an archaic poem. Hadas-Lebel does not localize any post-exilic influences in any of the Psalms, although she admits that books like Job, Ecclesiastes and Canticles must have been written during this period (Hadas-Lebel 1995, 103). A similar approach is taken by Sáenz-Badillos (1993, 115)³⁴.

Of course, such a perception contradicts the expectations of the historical criticism school, which tended to hold, with very few exceptions, that the poems in the Psalms were composed in the exilic and post-exilic period³⁵. As becomes apparent from the study of the Psalms by means of the historical criticism method, a precise dating is beyond our reach. The criteria most preferred for dating Psalms include the historical evaluation of superscriptions, generally considered as editorial additions, internal references to cultic ceremonies or religious institutions, assessing the general tenor of poems in relation to historical incidents and character development accounted for in the historical books³⁶.

Although historical critics have also investigated the preference of terms in Psalms, it was only later that this type of study satisfactorily reached a higher degree of specificity and relevance³⁷. Tsevat's 1953 Jerusalem PhD dissertation proposes, on lexicographical grounds, the originality of the Psalms devotional language compared to other biblical documents, conserving ancient terminology specific to ANE lyricism of Canaanite and Ugaritic origin and even of Akkadian hymnic-epic origin (Tsevat 1955, 55-60). In terms of dating the Psalter, after comparing its language to that of the poems in Chronicles and noticing that they are very different, Tsevat (1955, 61-72) concludes that the Psalter must have been completed by 400 B.C., when the academic consensus indicates that the writing of Chronicles took place.

That leaves us with a corpus of poems produced during the monarchic and exilic periods of Israel's history, with several poems displaying characteristics specific to Archaic Hebrew or even originating before the monarchy. Although we cannot expect the same consistency as in a corpus of poetry that originated during a fifty years peri-

od, we are not left with a corpus that extends over almost a millenium either. But five hundred years is still a long period, and many changes must have been taking place diachronically in terms of style preferences. Nonetheless, as we will see below, the QYYQ verbal sequence is one of those poetic devices that has found a place in the literature of all these ages.

As any respectable linguistic exercise would demand, we rely extensively on a given text. Its quality should be established by its age, accuracy, and authority among MSS of similar persuasion. Although there are other Heb MSS available that are older than this, the only complete Heb MS known to date is Codex Leningradensis published as *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Its main weaknesses derive from its Western Masoretic origin, relatively late, though strong and coherent.

6. Terminology

Where terminology is concerned, there have been three main solutions offered so far. The first compared HPy with poetry from other world literatures more or less cognate with Hebrew and evaluated them from the perspective offered by the poetry theory at use at a given time. The second solution represents the other extreme, since it refutes any foreign influence upon Hebrew literature, preferring the original Hebrew terminology³⁸. A more balanced, mediating solution offered neutral terms, since Greco-Roman terminology was indeed alien to the Hebrew literature, while the original Hebrew terminology was completely obscure.

This work develops Margalit's terminology, valued for its coherence, for using neutral terms, and for being well defined and tested both in Hebrew and in Ugaritic literature (Margalit 1980, 219-28)³⁹. Thus, the verse (line for others) represents the main unit of poetry; it corresponds to the sentence in prose, meaning that it is at once a grammatical and a prosodic entity⁴⁰. The verse is subdivided by principal caesure into verse-lines (verset for others, A and B). The basic verse-type is the binary structure, called couplet (distich for others), which consists of two verse-lines divided by a caesura⁴¹. Monolines (monostichs for others), tercets (tristichs for others), and even quatrains (tetrastichs for others) are its structural variations with one, three, or four lines, respectively⁴².

The verse-line is subdivided by blanks into verse-units, mostly co-extensive with the individual vocabule or lexeme. There is a tendency towards limiting the number of verse-units per verse-line to three, but there are exceptions. The number of verse-units per verse is called the valence of that verse. The pattern of a verse, according to the valence of its corresponding lines, is represented as the numerical sum of the verse-units in the component lines (e.g., 4 + 3; 3 + 3; 3 + 2). Scansion stands for the process of determining the verse valence. The strophe is a conventionally structured sequence of verses in indeterminate quantity⁴³.

7. Method

Our investigation has two main stages, both applied to the primary text: verse-line delimitation and systemic functional analysis.

7.1. Verse-line delimitation

Verse-line delimitation is a heuristic process, meaning that a solution is proposed and then its alternatives assessed. As Kaddari (1973, 168) noticed, complex semantic units may appear (compound words, 'series,' 'expressions') and 'essential semantic links' (single semantic units whose constituent parts do not have any exact parallels) may be present as well.

A practical way to check the results is by identifying the topic of the semantic field as a whole. Units can stand in a topical relationship, although particular words may stand alone without explicit counterparts (Kaddari 1973, 170)⁴⁴. Once this analysis is completed, the semantic critic identifies only parallels sharing a common semantic field. Further more detailed analysis will reveal the relationship between semantic units belonging to a common field⁴⁵.

The result is checked against the Masoretic accents. When accents happen to contradict the fluency of syntax, they may also hinder the ease of interpretation (Kugel 1981, 109-16). Given their failure to provide strictly objective criteria for verse division, the Masoretic assessment of Hebrew verse is supplemented by a careful evaluation of the rhythmical balance of each line produced.

It appears that in terms of predication, the basic rule points to the fact that each poetic line has to contain not more than one predicate. In those cases where more than one finite verb is present in a particular line, one has to assess their role as predicates. Occasionally even non-finite verbs (such as absolute infinitives or participles) can function predicatively. The nominal clause represents the most notable exception to the previous observations, because of its implied verb and/or non-verbal predicators.

Adapting Margalit's terminology, we speak of kernel elements (verse, verse-lines, and verse-units) as well as expanded elements (strophes). Whenever more than one verse appears in a verset, verses are marked with small Latin letters (a, b, c). Since we work with the Hebrew text as preserved by the Masoretes, versets are marked according to the Masoretic text (henceforth MT), although it does not coincide entirely with all Christian traditions. The psalm headings are not included in our analysis because they lack the poetic character of the verse-lines of the poems.

Following the scanning of the poems, we identify the couplets with one verb per line, either *qāṭal* or *yiqṭōl*, but differing from one verse-line to another, and not necessarily of the same verb root. The division into verse-lines is compared with the divisions suggested by various ancient witnesses and modern interpreters of the MT⁴⁷. Variant relevant readings are given in the footnotes. Then, the couplets displaying a QYYQ verbal sequence are collected in two entirely new databases, one for the *qāṭal*//*yiqṭōl* verbal sequence and one for the reverse sequence (cf. Appendices 1 and 2). In order to make the analysis easier to understand, original texts appear in transliteration with a rendering in English accompanying them.

7.2. Systemic Functional analysis

When the first stage of our research has been completed, we can embark on the more elaborate second stage. Systemic Functional Grammar (henceforth, SFG) is a linguistic tool that integrates meaning with form and intentionality. Each of the couplets that display a QYYQ verbal sequence will be analysed at the three levels at which SFG holds that meaning is realized: textual, interpersonal, and ideational (experiential and logical). Individual constituents can have different functions at each of the three levels of

meaning. They will be analysed in their relationship with adjacent constituents with focus on the verbs.

The results of such analysis are printed in tables accompanying each verse-line, so that the multiplicity of functions is notable at a glance. Before interpreting the general results of the couplets with a QYYQ verbal sequence identified, one entire Psalm is analysed at each of the three levels of meaning in order to compare the use of the QYYQ verbal sequence in relation to other verbal sequence types.

8. Relevance of this study

Particularizing the ongoing debate on the difference between prose and poetry to Hebrew literature, critics agree that there is room for further refinement. There is an increasing consensus among scholars, though, with regard to the lack of decisive features that would provide the long expected criteria that distinguish a text as being poetry.

This study argues that the QYYQ verbal sequence is a poetical feature that allows the reader to distinguish with more accuracy between prose and poetry. Since it is not present in prose texts, with the exception of some conditional clauses, the QYYQ verbal sequence could be the feature that uniquely marks poetic language.

HPy is described by a multitude of features, of which parallelism (at various levels), rhythm, conciseness and ellipsis, inter alia, are particularly important. More recently, the QYYQ verbal sequence has entered the gallery of poetic devices as well.

This study defends the idea that the QYYQ verbal sequence is a poetic device in its own right, used successfully by ancient poets in the HPy of the psalms. Evidence of its usage also includes the alphabetic cuneiform tradition of UPy.

8.2. Relevance to the grammar of Classical Hebrew

Translators of the Hebrew Bible are not at ease with the deviation from the regular usage of verbal forms that is found in poetry. The lack of theoretical consensus one finds in grammars in relation to the use of Hebrew verbs aggravates the practical dilemma. Based on the careful observation of verbal usage in prose, it is noticed that scholars have relied on mere intuition in promoting the QYYQ verbal sequence as a valuable research topic and poetic device specific to HPy.

This study argues that *qāṭal* and *yiqṭōl* verbal forms, when part of the QYYQ verbal sequence in Psalms poetic couplets, can be used primarily for aesthetic reasons, with no individual reference to time or aspect. Arguably, the SFG analysis of lexicogrammar can provide a comprehensive interpretation of form and function, and an integrated approach to phonetics, morphology, and syntax.

8.3. Relevance to the exegesis of the Hebrew Psalms as preserved by the

Masoretes

Various practical and theoretical reasons have necessitated that the researcher limit the object of research to Psalms. Admittedly, Psalms is a variegated corpus in terms of authorship, implicit style, origin, topic, inter alia. At the same time, though, Psalms stands as a unified corpus of Classical Hebrew poems that does not display the features of Late Hebrew texts, and only some Psalms would convey features specific to Ancient

HPy. This study proposes a method for verse-line delimitation of HPy that integrates various contributions into a coherent step-by-step approach.

It also argues that the Masoretic text of the HB provides the best complete document for the study of the Psalter. Had this thesis not been correct, the Masoretic text could still be successfully employed for the study of the Psalter, since it stands as the instantiation of a civilization whose cultural values and language are dead.

At the same time, it generates a resourceful and fully retrievable database on the Masoretic text of the Psalter, which includes references to ancient, mediaeval, and modern authorities. Moreover, it argues that SFG offers the tools that allow the exegete to access information beyond the form, through the various functions a constituent can simultaneously hold at various levels of meaning.

The main contribution of this study consists in the SFG interpretation of the QYYQ verbal sequence it offers. Although previously accounted for as a rhetorical device and explained by means of pragmatic devices, this study argues that the preference for one verbal form or another in a couplet with QYYQ sequence can be explained successfully in relation to thematic, mood, transitivity/ergativity, and clause complex structure.

8.4. Relevance to Systemic Functional Grammar

Since its first theorisation in English, SFG was written and rewritten for various world languages and dialects. One of the basic assumptions of Systemic theory is that the language concerned is privileged for the description of each language. In other words, SFG offers only a general linguistic theory, not a theory of universals, and it must be applied to particular linguistic descriptions.

This study attempts to apply the principles of systemic functionalism for the first time to a corpus of Standard Hebrew prose texts, producing a tentative Systemic Functional Grammar of Hebrew lexicogrammar.

8.5. Relevance to Ugaritic studies

The connection between the Ugaritic literary tradition and its Hebrew counterpart has long been admitted, based on various poetic features common to both. Assuming that the QYYQ verbal sequence is a genuine poetical feature, its presence in literary texts originated in both traditions proves their kinship once again. This paper argues that the Hebrew literary tradition moves away from its Ugaritic kin when the use of the QYYQ verbal sequence is concerned.

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Notes:

1. By doing so, Aviram hopes 'to isolate the qualities that serve as criteria for what is more poetic or less poetic,' so that he may formulate a definition of poetry (Aviram 1994, 46).

2. One can render the binary opposition transparent: opaque as the two extremes

of a bipolar spectrum as an expression of the dual nature of the linguistic sign, as first described by de Saussure. Transparent language focuses our attention on the signified, whereas opaque language focuses it on the signifiers, which always mean more than just one thing. Signifiers are bound together into a network of contexts, and can easily lose their meaning, reverting to meaninglessness.

3. Longman defines artistry in terms of rhetoric. He identified three synthetic characteristics of HPy as present in all works of Hebrew literature, i.e. parallelism, imagery and terseness. One may reproach the school of New Criticism for mixing rhetorical devices with stylistics and structuralism (O'Connor 1980a, 10).

4. The historical Psalms (e.g. 78, 105, 106) are just a few exceptions catalogued more precisely as 'catechistic rehearsals of Israelite history,' doctrinal material that has no meaning in itself unless the historical account is known (Alter 1990, 27). However, Alter is more interested in tracing the characteristics that unite them, namely parallelism, narrativity, and the use of keywords.

5. See also Alter's explanations on David's Song (2 Sam. 22), Joel 2, and Deborah's Song (Jdg. 5). Although narrative is ignored in poetry, a sense of narrativity is still extant by the fact that metaphors are given a strong narrative realization (Alter 1990, 40). For example, 'the right hand' is a metaphor for authority, but in Judges it is used of Jael, who with her 'right hand' killed Sisera. Similarly, 'the way,' a stereotypical metaphor for the moral life in wisdom literature, is performed literally in Proverbs 7 by a young man going astray to a prostitute (Alter 1990, 45, 61).

6. Although imaginary, a short dialogue can still be traced in Jdg. 5 as if maids are responding to their mistress, Sisera's mother. Furthermore, dialogue can be encountered in prophetic poetry. For types and discussion of this 'technique of style,' see Alonso-Schökel (1988, 170-9). The personal participation of the characters in Job and Song of Songs are not considered literary dialogue, but rather monologues. Similarly, there are some liturgical responsorial pieces in Psalms.

7. A similar association between form and social function was suggested later, but asserts that myths, wisdom literature, and liturgical texts are cast in forms that better reflect the interest of their respective authors in a more ornamented use of language (de Moor & Watson 1993, xvii).

8. A complementary reading of O'Connor (1980), Kugel (1981) and Berlin (1985) can offer a panoramic history of parallelism.

9. Alter evaluates Kugel's contribution as 'a bold step forward, together with a giant step backward, in understanding the nature of biblical POETRY.' Kugel's sarcasm, enjoyed by Landy, is registered as stubborn resistance by Alter (see Alter 1998, 226-7). Kugel agrees with Lowth only where he was most vehemently criticised, on synthetic parallelism, but only after preliminary redefinitions have been stipulated (Alter 1985, 12ff).

10. This perception coheres with Meschonnic's distinction between the Hellenistic perception of poetry, where reason has priority over rhythm, and the Jewish perception of poetry, which is intrinsically rhythmical, as codified by the Masoretic accents (Meschonnic 1985, 466-75). Kugel, however, holds a contradictory opinion on the role of Masoretic accents in Judaism, namely, that they obscures the structure of the Hebrew verse, contributing to the forgetting of parallelism (Kugel 1984, 111-16).

11. For a criticism of the classical theories of stress counting of Ley-Sievers see W.H. Cobb, *A Criticism of Systems of Hebrew Metre* (Oxford: Clarendon; 1905, 111-28) or Gray (1915, 123-54).

12. This study was done on a peculiar type of text, with a specific rhythm (3 + 2), also known as Qina, but the measures of the first verse-line match the average length of a verse-line as discovered by others. This theory is not unanimously accepted among scholars, though (cf. de Hoop 2000).

13. The choice of illustrating such a method with Hebrew proverbs, we suspect, is not the best choice, since the canonical book of Proverbs, and especially its last two-thirds, from which this quote was taken (with the exception of Prov 6.8 [p. 86]), is by its own nature composed of binary-structures with compositional unity and self-sufficient content. Niccacci indirectly recognizes the limits of this application (1997, 89 n.52), but seems to be unaware of the lack of representativeness of his selection for the method he is proposing.

14. We prefer the more neutral *qāṭal* and *yiqtōl* for what traditional grammar terms the perfect and imperfect verbal forms, respectively, and will be used as such henceforth.

15. McFall's monograph *The Enigma of the Hebrew Verbal System: Solutions from Ewald to the Present Day* (1982), doctoral research presented to the University of Cambridge in 1981, provides a good historical overview of the main solutions given not only to the thorny issue of *wayyiqṭōl* in particular, but also to the Hebrew verbal system in general.

16. Michel's work is virtually unknown, for, to our knowledge, there were no reviewers of his work until his contribution was included in IBHS (470-4) and summarized by Gosling (1992, 5-15).

17. Isaksson (1987, 15-17) displays a similar awareness of the relationship between genre and grammatical categories that is so often exploited by text-linguists, although none of them give credit to it.

18. Cf. Ps 40.6; 141.5 (impf. - perf. without a conditional particle); 27.3b; 73.21-22; 120.7; 127.1; 139.8-11 (impf. - perf. with a conditional particle); 17.3; 37.21; 69.33 (perf. - impf. without a conditional particle); 7.4-6; 21.12; 41.7; 44.21-22; 63.7 (perf. - impf. with a conditional particle).

19. G.H.A. Ewald, *Grammatica critica linguae arabicae* (2 vols., Leipzig: Hahn, 1831).

20. Korpel and de Moor (1988, 1-4) advanced the idea that the basic unit of Ugaritic and HPy is the colon, the unit of the oral rendering of the poem, which developed into a couplet only later. For them, the smallest building block is the foot (i.e. a word containing at least one stressed syllable).

21. Verses with three lines can be produced by expanding a couplet (Loewenstamm 1969), while verses with four lines can be the result of rearranging two adjacent couplets producing an alternative couplet (Gray 1915, 62-4) or split-couplet (Watson 1997). Larger verses can be produced by means of numerical parallelism (Watson 1984a, 148-9; Watson 1991), enumeration and repetition (Watson 1984a, 187-90), vertical parallelism and Janus parallelism (Watson 1984a, 158-9).

22. Internal parallelism represents one notable exception (Watson 1984c, 1985a, 1988b, 1989b).

23. For the ellipsis of the initial verb in the secondary line, see Watson (1984a, 174-6).

24. Moshe Held (1962, 281-2) noticed occurrences of various verbal forms with the same root verb in HPy and explained them stylistically, proposing a similar rendering of both verbs as preterites (past simple).

25 Rata (2004, 12-13) quoted Nahum Sarna's 1955 Dropsie PhD thesis, *Studies in the Language of Job*, wherein the Jewish scholar recorded twenty-five cases of perfect verbal forms followed by imperfect ones and twenty-seven more cases of imperfect verbal forms followed by perfect ones. Gosling (1992, 514-21) noticed the existence of this phenomenon too and offered four samples (Job 3.3; 4.3; 15.7; 15.18), of which the last three are genuine. He proposed that the verbal forms in these last three samples should be translated similarly with reference to the past. Rata himself discussed occasionally such cases, but, since his interest resided with the verbal forms, his samples are scattered. Job 38.17, 22 on pp. 128-9 and Job 23.12 on p. 135 illustrate the use of long yqtl's with past reference. Job 6.25, 15.9, 33.13b and 35.6c illustrate the use of long yqtl's with present time reference in interrogative clauses (pp. 148-9). Job 21.29, 22.15 on pp. 159-160 illustrate the use of qtl's with past time reference. Job 9.2 on p. 163, Job 33.13 on p. 167 and Job 37.15 on p. 169 illustrate the use of qtl's with present time reference. The use of qtl alongside short yqtl, long yqtl and even wayqtl gives evidence to Rata for the classification of qtl as perfective and for the use of verbal forms in Job marked for aspect and not for time (Rata 2004, 227-8, as well as the final conclusions).

26. A discussion of their verbal structure follows (cf. chapter 3).

27. The biblical documents that fit in this category mainly include the poems from the Pentateuch and the Historical Books.

28. The texts in Standard Hebrew regularly include Genesis-Kings, a terminus ad quem of about 500 b.c.e. being maintained for them.

29. As main representatives of LH, Kutscher and others also list Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah.

30. These are followed by Mishnaic Hebrew, Rabbinic Hebrew, Mediaeval Hebrew and Israeli Hebrew.

31. Rendsburg defends the case of an Israelite origin of several Psalms (the Korah and Asaph collections and Ps 29), referring to linguistic evidence while applying Hurvitz's linguistic approach (1990, 14-15). Goulder (1982, 1996) is particularly fond of the theoretical northern origin of psalms from Korah and Asaph's collections.

32. Here are included Exod 15, Gen 49, Deut 33, 2 Sam 22, and even Jdg 5, and 1 Sam 2.20-26.

33. His corpus includes also the Song of Lamech (Gen 4.23-24), the Song of the Ark (Num 10.35), the Psalm of Habakkuk (Hab 3), and Psalms 24, 29, 68, 77 (only v. 17), 89, and 114.

34. For important studies on the lexical indications of post-exilic dating see A. Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem* (Cahiers de la Revue Biblique, 20; Paris: Gabalda, 1982). At the syntactic level, other studies could be useful, such as R. Corwin, *The Verb and the Sentence in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah* (Borna, 1909), R. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Towards an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (HSM, 12; Missoula, MO: 1976), A.R. Guenther, *A Diachronic Study of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1977), M. Eskult, *Studies in Verbal Aspect and Narrative Technique in Biblical Hebrew Prose* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990) as well as "Traces of Linguistic Development in Biblical Hebrew" (Hebrew Studies 46: 353-70) and Jan Joosten (2005).

35. Although there is agreement in principle, historical critics do not agree on the historical date of the Psalms individually. Following closely Ewald's *Commentary on the Psalms* (German edition 1866, English edition 1880), Arnold, Kitchener, Potts, and

Phillpotts (1867) accepted few Psalms as pre-exilic, namely 15, 19, 24, 29, 60. Briggs and Briggs (1906, lix-lxxix) proposed thirty-four psalms as belonging to the monarchic period (cf. pp. xc-xci). Buittenwieser (1938) reduced the number of pre-exilic psalms to twenty, but only six of them coincide with the ones that Briggs and Briggs list (i.e. 19, 20, 21, 24, 45, and 60).

36. This association of a given poem and its respective narrative (historical context) is particularly visible in Goulder's approach to setting psalms from Book Five in the context of Nehemiah, rebuilding the Temple, and Ezra, respectively (cf. Goulder 1998).

37. Various authors noticed several features that hold together individual poems into collections such as the Prayers of David (Pss 51-72) (cf. Goulder 1990, 20-30), the psalms of the Sons of Korah (cf. Goulder 1982, 1-23), or the psalms of Asaph (cf. Goulder 1996, 15-36 and 190 ff; and Nasuti 1988), the psalms of Ascent (cf. Crow 1996, 129-58, Goulder 1998, 24-7). Nasuti (1999, 141-62) defends the idea that the typicality of David's experience in the poems that are ascribed to his name functions as a hermeneutical key allowing the reader to unlock the meaning of individual poems that were built on a similar genre model.

38. For an expanded debate over similar terminological issues, see Tatu (2005).

39. Launched in 1975 (*Studia Ugaritica I: Introduction to Ugaritic Prosody*, Ugarit-Forschungen 7: 289-313), the method was applied extensively to Ugaritic literature in *A Matter of Life and Death: A Study of the Baal-Mot Epic* (CTA 4-5-6) [AOAT 206; Kevelaer: Butzon and Bercker, Neukirchener-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1980], and in *The Ugaritic Poem of Aqht: Text, Translation and Commentary* [Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1989].

40. Prosody is a term that assumes metre, whose presence, particularly in Ugaritic literature, has long been a serious bone of contention.

41. Although the idea that the couplet stands as the main prosodical and meaning unit of HPy is still debated, one can certainly argue that it as the most frequent type of verse. Our investigation indicates that 84% (381) of the verses in the Psalter are couplets, followed by a 15% presence of tercets. Even though van der Lugt's computation is lower, only 350 (2006, 425), closer to Fokkelman's 348 total (2000, 348), the variation is too low to count.

42. Both Fokkelman (2000, 17 and 41) and van der Lugt (2006, 523), against Korpel and de Moor (1988, 27-28), do not accept larger verses than the tercet.

43. For the most recent study of strophe as a structural unit in Psalms, see van der Lugt's 2006 monograph.

44. Nevertheless, Kaddari made use of the grammatical-syntactic structure of the utterance; he examined it in order to validate the parallelism traced down semantically. This procedure is considered 'a prerequisite for the proper establishment of a parallelism in regard to any word or phrase' (Kaddari, 1970-3, 172). By doing that, he actually discarded everything that did not fit the synonymous and antithetic categories, those previously named synthetic parallels.

45. According to Kaddari, there are two main situations semantic units can find themselves in. Sometimes they are in a parallel relation, although they regularly occur separately, outside the sphere of parallelism. At other times, semantic units appearing regularly together, even in non-parallel contexts, are split into the cola of a parallel verse. Semantic units belonging to the first category can develop three types of relations: synonymous, heteronomous, and partially antynomous. Semantic units belonging to the second category create two types of relations: composites of linked phrases are divided into

two co-ordinated parallel cola, and a series of co-ordinated types is split in parallelism (Kaddari 1970-3, 172-4). Despite all these ramifications, the author is realistic enough to accept that there are poetical units that do not display semantic parallelism, and also non-poetical texts that can be constructed in the style of semantic parallelism as well.

46. Commentators such as Talstra (1999, 114ff) give more prominence to the clause in their analysis than to the line, so that may find its value when poetical texts are analysed syntactically. Nonetheless, the main deficiency of such an approach is that it disregards the binding force of parallelism in HPy, whereby incomplete clauses or even groups of constituents can echo each other and hence produce artistic lines (though not co-extensive with clauses). Therefore the syntactic analysis cannot be done in a vacuum, as Talstra suggests, without endangering the understanding of the text. Syntactic variations can indeed have non-syntactic explanations.

AYŞEGÜL AYDINGÜN

Islam as a Symbolic Element of National Identity Used by the Nationalist Ideology in the Nation and State Building Process in Post-soviet Kazakhstan

Abstract:

The main intention of this article is to analyze the role of Islam in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and its utilization in the nation-building and state-building processes. It is argued that Islam in post-Soviet Kazakhstan is a cultural phenomenon rather than a religious one and is an important marker of national identity despite the competition of radical movements in the “religious field.”

**Ayşegül
Aydın**

Assist. Prof. Dr.,
Department of
Sociology, Middle
East Technical
University, Ankara,
Turkey.



Co-author of the books:

Tatarların Vatana Donusu:
Kimlik ve Kültürel Canlanma (2004),
The Meskethian Turks: An
Introduction to their History, Culture
and Resettlement Experiences (2007).

Key words:

post-Soviet Kazakhstan, national identity construction, religion as marker of national identity, Kazak culture

A situation of anomie became visible in Kazakhstan beginning in the Gorbachev period and increasingly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which necessitated a search for a new social order. Anomie, which was to a large extent the result of being in interaction with the dominant Russian culture and the oppressive Soviet regime, involved a feeling of despair that offered the opportunity of re-establishing the values and traditions of the past and new networks. Following independence, this feeling of despair, caused by the ethnocentric attitude of Russians who defined Kazak culture and nomadism as ‘primitive’ and wanted to replace it with a more ‘civilized’ modern Russian culture, was carefully elaborated by the Kazak elite aiming at building the Kazak nation. It is within this atmosphere of anomie that the cultural revival project has been launched.

The revival of Islam is expected to play a significant role in this project and Islam is being used as one of the basic elements of culture that will contribute to the integration of the new Kazak national identity. Islam, in this context, is also used as a tool in the struggle against the Russian and Soviet heritage and is expected to play an integrative role. This integrative function is perceived as necessary for the construction of Kazak national identity. The cultural revival project in general and the revival of Islam in specific emerged as a reaction against the dominant Russian/Soviet culture and to a more limited extent the non-Kazaks, who are mainly Russians living in Kazakhstan.

This reaction is in reality a nationalist reaction rather than a religious one. Religion in this case forms one of the basic elements of the cultural material that is going to be used to fill the content of the boundary of national identity. It is important to underline that the parallel revival of religion and nationalism is not a phenomenon specific to

Kazakhstan but rather a worldwide phenomenon mostly experienced by the third world societies. As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, post-Soviet societies have witnessed a similar process. However, it is also essential to note that these societies experience various forms of religious nationalism as a reaction to the forces of globalization of the emerging world system. To avoid false generalizations, it is important to realize that, as Spohn points out, the phenomenon of ethnic and religious nationalism should be considered together with secular and civic forms of nationalism that are developing simultaneously (2003: 265-266).

In the case of Kazakhstan, a certain religious nationalism emerged both as a reaction to global forces and to Russians. In light of those facts, it is possible to argue that the cultural revival project, which includes the revival of Islam, is revolutionary in nature. However, Islam, named as 'traditional' during the Soviet period, is now sponsored by the state and has become 'official.' Furthermore, the state elite minimized external influences and distinguished traditional Islam from fundamentalist movements. It is, in a way, very important to underline two issues: one is that religious revival in the case of Kazakhstan is not a conservative movement because it aims to change society rather than preserve the existing order, and the other is that this religious revival is in fact an important element used by the nationalist ideology aiming at building the Kazak national identity and the Kazak state. In other words, it is the protest of nationalists to the Russian expansion that goes back to the 16th century and to the anti-religious Soviet regime. Hans Kohn (1969:15) has argued that when competing identities are different religions, religion plays an important role in the defense mechanism of the weaker nationality. This explains why religion is used as a constitutive component of Kazak national identity.

The intention of this article is neither to discuss at length the theories of nationalism and state building nor the theories of religion. The main intention is to analyze the role of Islam in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and its utilization in the construction of Kazak national identity and the building of the independent Kazak state. The analysis of Islam in both pre-Soviet and Soviet Kazakhstan is essential for a better understanding of Islam in post-Soviet Kazakhstan where Kazaks are struggling to construct their own Islamic identity as part of their national identity that is still under construction, in contrast to a sizeable Orthodox Russian population.

This article is based on the interviews conducted with Kazaks in Kazakhstan (Astana, Almaty, Atirau, and the nearby villages of Atirau: Erkindala, Mahambet, Kulsari, Dossor; Almaty; Issyk, Kaynazar; Astana: Kosşı) in August 2002, June and October 2004, and December 2005. These cities and nearby villages are selected in order to grasp the potential differences between the three regions where three different population groups live. However, although some respondents argued that the middle group is much closer to the Russians, that the largest group is the more traditional one and is closer to Uzbeks, and that the smallest group is perceived as the one that has best preserved pure Kazak tradition, it was not possible to discern major differences among these regions during the interviews.

Islam in Pre-Soviet and Soviet Kazakhstan

The first encounter with Islam took place in the 8th century with the Arab invasions that reached today's southern Kazakhstan. Before that, various religions, including Zoroastrianism, Shamanism, Buddhism, and Christianity dominated the region.

Beginning in the 14th century, Islam spread to central, northern, and western Kazakhstan. However, until the late 18th and 19th century, the Kazak culture and popular religious practices were not significantly challenged by Islam. The self-sufficiency of the nomadic economy that limited contact with the Muslims in cities was an important element in postponing the internalization of Islam among Kazaks. The political organization in the Kazak lands was in the form of a khanate composed of various different tribes having different ethnic and religious origins. These differences did not constitute a barrier to loyalty to the political authority. However, the multi-religious character of Kazakh steppes and the nomadic way of life constituted an obstacle to the spread of Islam. The penetration of Islam to Kazakhstan took place via Sufism and the Volga Tatars. The orders of Yassaviya, Nakshbandiya, and Kubraviya have been very influential. Sunni Islam found more supporters than did Shi'a, and it can be argued that this paved the way for accommodating and incorporating the pre-Islamic rituals still surviving today. The liberal nature of the Hanafi School allowed the incorporation of pre-Islamic traditions and offered a relatively flexible framework of practice to believers. Furthermore, the Sufi tradition also contributed to the liberal nature of religion (Haghayeghi, 1996: 80-85).

The growing influence of Islam in the late 18th century, especially in the northern and central regions, was supported by the Russians via Tatars under the rule of Catherine II, who aimed to use Islam as a civilizing force that would bring order and stability a region that rejected Christianity. Imperial Russia encouraged the spread of Islam at the end of the 16th and early 17th centuries, aiming at developing strong relations with the Muslim clergy while trying to penetrate into the Kazakh steppes. 19th century Kazakhstan witnessed a widespread penetration of Islam, and Islam became an important social and moral force in the Kazak society. However, the increasing power of Islam did not cause the effect expected by the Russians. On the contrary, it entailed the development of an anti-Russian sentiment and a sentiment of unification with other Muslim communities, and in that sense, Catherine's policy partly failed (Sagdeev, 2000: 7; Mustafina, 1998; Olcott, 1995:18-19, 46-47; Haghayeghi, 1996: 71-80). It is also important to note that Islam in Kazakh lands had to coexist with Christianity due to the penetration of Russians into the region starting with the 16th century, and this obliged in a way the development of a dialogue and interaction aiming at finding a way of coexistence. The Russian expansion towards the region should not be perceived as a crusade against Islam since it was just a sort of a colonial expansion aiming at capturing new territories, new markets, and resources. However, the encouragement of religion was later replaced by strict control over Islam in the steppes after the completion of the Russian penetration. In other words, the Russian Empire did not interfere with the religious affairs of the Muslims; on the contrary, it encouraged the spread of Islam until the emergence of resistance to Russian expansion.

Two important interruptions occurred in the process of the spread of Islam. These are the Mongol conquest, which put an end to the Arab invasions, and the Bolshevik revolution, which aimed at a secular socialist society through eliminating religion. During the Soviet period, education on the basis of Islam, the practice of Islamic rituals, and the publication of religious books were forbidden. Furthermore, mosques and madrasahs were closed down, spiritual leaders were persecuted, and children were indoctrinated with anti-Islamic and anti-religious materials (Saray, 2002:41).

Anti-Islamic policies were part of the struggle of the Soviet regime against all religious faiths. Religion for the Bolsheviks was a cultural element to be eliminated. They

banned the religious institutions of all religions, including the Russian Orthodox Church. A sort of tolerance towards Islam existed just after the revolution until the early 1920s aiming at gaining the support of the Muslims of the Russian Empire. However, the collectivization period also turned out to be a period of strong campaigns against religion. During the Soviet era, the attitude of the regime towards Islam varied depending on periods, leaders, and conjectural conditions. Poujol argues that during the early years of the Soviet era, the regime adopted a relatively moderate attitude towards Islam in Central Asia to gain the support of Muslims and to weaken the Basmachi movement (1918-1928). This attitude was replaced by anti-Islamic policies in the late 1920s and 1930s. During the repressive years of Stalin, all mullahs, muftis, sheiks, and other religious figures were accused of resisting the construction of socialism and were either killed, imprisoned, or exiled. This period was also the period of destruction of mosques and all other religious institutions.

This anti-Islamist policy became relatively flexible under the pragmatism of Stalin during the Second World War, and Islam gained an official status with the establishment of four spiritual directorates until the period of Khrushchev, during which religious oppression regained significance. The period of Brejnev, however, was a period of ideological reformulation of official Islam in search of reconciling Islam with communism as opposed to the ideas of Stalin and Khrushchev. The argument was advanced that it is possible to be a good Muslim and a good communist (Poujol, 2001: 35-40). It can be said that the Soviet regime has been quite successful in eradicating Islamic learning and teaching despite the existence of a changing policy towards Islam depending on the realpolitik of certain periods, but it has not been equally successful in eliminating Islamic identity as part of an ethno-national identity. Pushed into the private sphere, excluded from the domain of politics, Islam survives as an element of cultural identity despite the intensive secularization campaign of the Soviet period, the promotion of atheism, and the persecution of Islam. One of the interviewees in Atirau, a 40 year-old teacher said,

I went to a Russian school. When we were going to cemeteries and mosques as Muslims, teachers used to tell us that we are doing wrong, that God does not exist and that Islam does not exist. They used to organize meetings to tell us that we should not believe in God, we should not go to mosques. But, we were not discriminated because of our nationalities.

As pointed out by Rorlich, the integration of Central Asian societies into the Russian Empire entailed their isolation from the Muslim world. These conditions have pushed people to reevaluate their identity and enhance the regional identity that evolved into a proto-national identity comprising Islam as one of its main elements. The conditions of the Soviet period transformed this proto-national identity into a national one, and Islam continued to be one important, if not the most important, attribute of this identity (1991: 187).

Islam in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan

After the Gorbachev reforms and especially after the adoption of the law on religion in 1989, a revival of Islam began to take place in Kazakhstan as in other Central Asian countries. The development of Islam that began quite timidly during the perestroika period became quite complicated after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Rorlich, 2003:157). The role of external influences has been crucial in this complication.

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, different external forces began to compete in the “religious field” (*champ religieux*) as it is termed by Pierre Bourdieu. According to Bourdieu, all technological, economic, and social transformations that are correlates of the development of cities, and in particular of the progress of the division of labor and of the separation of intellectual and material work, constitute the common conditions of two processes: the constitution of a relatively autonomous religious field and the development of a need for moralization and of systematization of beliefs and religious practices (1971: 301). It is clear that Bourdieu bases his argument on the developments that took place in Western societies. However, his approach also sheds light to the developments happening in Kazakhstan, which experienced very radical economic and social transformations during perestroika and after independence.

Bourdieu’s approach can be helpful in understanding competition in the “religious field” following the period of “dissolution of the religious” that took place during the Soviet period in Kazakhstan. This dissolution, which to a large extent emptied the “religious field,” caused a demand for a “religious field” that entailed a competition among different external forces attempting to capture that field and responding to the demands of the people (Bourdieu, 1971). Of course, this caused the competition of different religious and political forces aiming at becoming influential not only in the “religious field,” but also in the political arena. In that sense, the new cleavage is not so much between “traditional Islam” and “official Islam” but rather between “official Islam” (formerly traditional) and Islam imported by different external forces competing in the “religious field” and aiming at challenging the social order. However, the “religious field” in Kazakhstan still remains under the control of the political power.

People in Kazakhstan have witnessed a striking competition among Muslim countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan, which are attempting to introduce their interpretation of Islam. External influences towards Islam in Kazakhstan have been twofold. On the one hand, countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia have been active in exporting their versions of Islam in response to a demand in the field of religion. The Turkish influence did not take a radical form and was limited to the spread of Fethullah Gülen’s schools, the construction of mosques, and the support of religious personal. On the other hand, the Saudi Arabian Wahhabi version condemns Muslim celebrations, feasting, and other costly traditions such as Kalym (bridal dowry) as well as veneration of saints and deities. The latter version, known as the puritan version of observing Islam, perceives these rituals as contradictory to the purity of Islam. The Wahhabi influence is especially strong in the Fergana Valley, but it also has a limited influence in most other parts of Kazakhstan. It is influential in places where Uzbek minorities are living rather than among ethnic Kazaks (Haghayeghi, 1994; 1996: 89). This is mainly due to contradictions that exist between Wahhabi traditions and the traditional Islam observed by Kazaks. The puritanism of the Wahhabi tradition, which requires the dominance of Islam at all the levels of believer’s life, and his denial of mysticism and of certain practices such as the visit to holy places, is in strong contradiction with the Kazak experience of Islam.

Some authors (such as Trisko, 2005: 377) may argue that the radicalization of Islam in Sufi areas such as the Fergana Valley contradicts the view of Haghayeghi, who argues that Sufism limits radical Islam. However, we need to consider that the regions of Kazakhstan where radical movements are supported are mostly populated by non-Kazak Muslims, mostly Uzbeks. Radical Islamic political parties and movements primarily based in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have also had an impact on Kazakhstan. For example, the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) is one of the most powerful radical Islamist

political parties. However, even IRP activities in Kazakhstan are limited to certain southern cities bordering Uzbekistan such as Chimkent and Dzambul where politically active Uzbeks are living.

The limited influence of foreign and regional radical movements cannot be explained merely by reference to the legal restrictions that have been increasingly imposed since 2005. Although the role of legal restrictions is undeniable in limiting radical movements, one needs to consider the incompatibility between the radical versions of Islam and Kazaks' traditional Islam (Haghayeghi, 1994: 189). It is the fear of the impact of these external factors that pushes Kazak authorities to take certain legal measures against radical Islamist political parties and movements. The fact that people of Kazakhstan in general and the government in particular support an Islamic revival together with a secular state rather than an Islamic one is noteworthy. The government of Kazakhstan, as other Central Asian governments, has taken measures to protect the secular nature of their administrations. Although freedom of conscience is guaranteed, religious extremism is prohibited. For instance, President Nursultan Nazarbayev created a separate muftiate in Kazakhstan in 1990 to limit the Uzbek influence (Rorlich, 2003).

A brief summary of the analysis of Nazarbayev can shed light onto the official position on Islam in Kazakhstan. According to Nazarbayev, when the national integrity is in crisis in a society for any reason, religion enters the social and political life as a spiritual unifying force, and faith helps people in difficult times of their history. However, Nazarbayev argues that in some cases Islam is reinterpreted by some groups in order to satisfy certain aggressive interests or to confront a political position. This gives way to non-tolerance towards other religions, which is religious fundamentalism. The origin of the term "religious fundamentalism" has in fact no relation with Islam. It was first used in the 1920s of certain theologically conservative Christian communities. According to Nazarbayev, religious fundamentalism is everywhere, including in the US, Europe, and Asia, and lies at the heart of all religions. Religious fundamentalism requires the strict application of all rules of the primary religious sources in daily life. He stresses that it is impossible to practice these requirements of primary sources in a democratic, secular, and civic society because a secular state has to guarantee the rights of the individual and the freedom of conscience, whereas fundamentalism imposes its conceptions on the entire society. He mentions that certain layers of the society are conducive to fundamentalist ideas.

Nazarbayev also examines globalization and says that the consumption society characterized by the dominance of a unified culture entails a culture and identity loss, although some societies like Japan and China have managed to preserve their culture. The foreign influence that entails modernization and the consciousness of the inevitability of this influence nurtures fundamentalism because it leads to a cultural and confessional reaction. He argues that the conflict between governments and religious fundamentalism is widespread and adds that coercive methods against fundamentalism will not be helpful in sorting out the problem and that they are negatively perceived by the religious layers of the society. Besides these general comments, Nazarbayev specifically explains the situation in Kazakhstan and states eloquently that religious extremism in Kazakhstan is not at a serious level. However, he believes that religious extremism should be seriously taken into consideration, or else it may become a threat to the Kazak multinational and multi-confessional society. He argues that the roots of this threat do not necessarily lie in history and stresses that traces of the antireligious repression of the Soviet period still prevail.

Nazarbayev argues that he sees Islam as part of the Kazak culture, traditions, and customs because Muslims of Kazakhstan perceive the anti-religious policies of the Soviet period as an attack to their culture, traditions, and national customs based on religion. The revival of religion is entirely normal to him and this revival reestablishes the traditions among the elderly and the young. He sees cultural revival of spiritual traditions and the restoration of ancestral heritage as a very positive and rejoicing fact. He argues that the duty of a state is to ensure and enhance spiritual liberty as well as to oppose all threats against religion and encourage concord among religions. That is why he stresses the need for giving every citizen of Kazakhstan total liberty of conscience regardless of his/her nationality, and treating all religions equally. Indeed, Nazarbayev views Islam as a basic element of the cultural heritage and its revival as an important factor that stimulated the spiritual renaissance of the Kazak people. He argues that Islam is a factor that determines their way of perceiving the world, a symbol that pays homage to their ancestors and their Muslim culture, which, in fact, never entirely disappeared.

Nazarbayev restates that Islam in Kazakhstan is formed by the Hanafi School and Sufism, which provides a spiritual flexibility. It is this flexibility that gave room to the alliance of Islamic elements with pre-Islamic ones and the spiritual heritage of the nomadic ancestors. He also expresses that most Kazakhs follow the traditional Islam of the Sunnis, and that is why there is very limited support for radical conceptions (Nazarbayev, 2005: 61-84)

Thus, the revival of Islam is mostly interpreted and rationalized as an element of a cultural revival project that, as has been pointed out, is necessary for the formation of national identity and state-building. In other words, Islam as part of the traditional lifestyle and culture of Central Asians is used by these newly independent states, including Kazakhstan, as an important element of national self-identification. The "Islamic boom" (Sagdeev, 2000:10) can be seen in the swell of the construction of mosques and in the attitude of the former communist leaders who have ceased being shy about their Islamic identity.

Although perceived as paradoxical upon first analysis, Islamic revival and the secular regime developed simultaneously in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, using religion as an instrument for differentiating Kazaks from Russians in the process of national identity construction. While the new government encourages the development of traditional Islam and observation of its practices, it forbade religious political parties and restricted all radical Islamist tendencies.

Despite the aforementioned argument, the relationship between governments and Islamic political parties in Central Asia and also in Kazakhstan is far from being settled. Ahrari and Beal argue that Islam in Central Asian societies including Kazakhstan will play an important role in the politics of those states and that the leaders are well aware of this reality and are trying to postpone the inevitable (2002: 33-37). Although this comment reflects a fragment of the social reality in Kazakhstan, we have to realize that religious fundamentalism in Kazakhstan is an extension of international fundamentalism supported by certain internal opposition groups challenging the authority of the former communist nomenclatura. Thus, the approach of Ahrari and Beal overlooks the complexities of and the differences among Central Asian societies.

Considering the status of Islam in the legal domain, one should stress that Kazakhstan's first constitution was adopted in 1993 and proclaimed Kazakhstan to be a secular state. Indeed, Kazakhstan is the only secular Central Asian state that did not accord Islam a special legal status. The freedom of religion secured in the first constitu-

tion remained unchanged in the 1995 Constitution, which again stipulates that Kazakhstan is a secular state. In the first article of general provisions of the 1995 Constitution, Kazakhstan is proclaimed as a democratic, secular, legal and social state. Article 14/2 guarantees equality of all citizens regardless of characteristics including religion. According to Article 19, everyone has the right to indicate or not indicate his/her national, political, and religious affiliation. With Article 22/1 and 22/2 every citizen has been given the right to freedom of conscience, but it is proclaimed that freedom of conscience cannot limit universal human and civil rights and responsibilities before the state. Within this atmosphere of religious freedom, different religious groups and missionaries compete in the "religious field," as has been pointed out by some respondents. A 53 year old teacher in Atirau said,

There are missionary activities in Kazakhstan. For example there are 31 registered religious groups in Atirau. People from these groups come and distribute books. They especially invite Kazak youth to participate in their groups. The freedom of conscience is guaranteed in our constitution. There is no obligation to be a believer. There is freedom and that is why different religious groups act freely (Female, 53).

A 42 year old oil engineer from Atirau stated, "I know that there are some groups such as Christians and Hare Krishna people who distribute books and attract the young people to themselves."

The 2005 legislation that limited constitutional protections of religious freedom should be interpreted within this understanding. The national security amendments, enacted on July 8, 2005, imposed mandatory registration requirements on missionaries and religious organizations. Most religious groups, including minority and nontraditional denominations, reported that the legal changes were implemented in a manner that did not materially affect religious activities. Unregistered religious groups reported an increase in court actions against them and an increase in the level of fines imposed for non-registration (International Religious Freedom Report, 2006). The fact that according to the the new legal procedures, all religious associations should register with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan is noteworthy. However, although there are no reliable statistics, based on the interviews, certain non-registered religious organizations and activities that, in a way, challenge the power of the muftiate, do exist (Rorlich, 2003).

When it comes to the nature of Islam in Kazakhstan, the dominant version is a hybrid of the Sunni Islam of the Hanafi School, different forms of Sufism and some pre-Islamic practices. It is important to note that the different elements of Islam in Kazakhstan do not contradict each other; on the contrary, their combination results in a more philosophical and tolerant Islam, which is open to mysticism and distant from radical movements (Gunn, 2003). This is also supported by the comments of the respondents speaking about the survival of pre-Islamic practices. The following quotations are examples to these comments,

"There are some rituals or beliefs which are the remnants of pre-Islamic belief systems such as Shamanism. However, it is very possible to distinguish them from Islamic practices and rituals because they completely amalgamated into Islamic rituals. For example, in Kazakhstan, the cult of the spirits of the dead still prevails" (Male, 21, Atirau). "According to our beliefs the soul of the dead leaves the house three days after death." (Female, 18, Almaty). "We still have some superstitions. We usually say do not stand in the entrance and do not set foot on the ashes of fire" (Male, 40, Astana).

"There are certain characteristics that are not only specific to Kazaks but rather to

most Turkic people, such as respect to the elderly, the cult of the ancestors, the cult of the spirits, and being religious. I cannot say that Kazaks are not pure Muslims. But in the Kazak lands there was also Zoroastrianism, Shamanism, and several other faiths. Kazaks amalgamated all these faiths and they transmitted them to the following generations. In a Kazak family the preservation and transmission of those traditions is very important" (Male, 18, Astana).

Celebration of Nauruz is widespread in Kazakhstan and it is perceived as a religious holiday. This can be clearly seen in the interpretation of a teacher from Atirau,

"Religious feasts in Kazakhstan are celebrated very lively. Especially the celebration of Nauruz is marvellous. In those days, the *kiyiz üy* (traditional Kazak house) is mounted, national food *navrız köje* (a special meal prepared during Nauruz) is prepared. People celebrate each other. The rituals of that day are celebrated in a very beautiful and joyful way. Apart from Nauruz we also celebrate Kurban ayt. We sacrifice animals. This is also one of our religious holidays" (Female, 53).

Nauruz has been perceived by numerous communities as the beginning of spring, the beginning of a new year. From Central Asia to the Balkans, Turkic communities have celebrated Nauruz for centuries. Nauruz was celebrated both during the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. In Central Asia, and specifically in Kazakhstan, it is perceived as at least as important as the Kurban ayt and Oaza ayt, has become part of Islamic rituals (Köse, 2007).

Research has shown that not all Islamic rituals (especially the five pillars of Islam) are strictly observed by Kazaks, although there has been an increase in observance since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The respondents mentioned that the number of those who observe the fast and perform the daily prayers increased after independence. It was also mentioned that the young generation is very much interested in learning their religion. That attendance to religious institutions is quite popular among the young is stressed by the respondents. The research has demonstrated that the observance of Islamic rituals is on the rise especially among the young. In other words, support to the revival of Islam is not limited to the middle aged and the elderly. Most young respondents underlined the significance of the revival of traditions in general. They all mentioned the growing importance of religion after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in general and specifically among young people. A twenty year-old student said,

"My grand-parents are very religious. They used to tell me how, during the Soviet period, they had to pray in secret trying to escape the strict control of the NKVD, which was arresting religious people...Now, there are no bans... young people go to the mosque. There is a madrasa in the mosque where they learn how to read and write the Arabic alphabet and how to read the Koran. They also learn how to pray and observe the rituals."

It is interesting to note that of all the Islamic practices, the most widely observed are the rituals of circumcision, marriage, and burial as pointed out so well by Haghayeghi (1996: 98). The family, which is the basic element in the religious, ethnic, and social coherence among the Kazaks, secured the practice, although mostly in secrecy, of these rituals despite the oppressions of the regime. Almost all respondents have argued that they do not know a single Kazak man who hasn't been circumcised. Circumcision is perceived as a requirement of Islam but also a requirement of being a Kazak. Such approaches show that Islamic identity is an indispensable element of Kazakness. A young student from Atirau said, "As a requisite of Islam every man should be circumcised. Otherwise, I am afraid, he won't even be considered as a Kazak" (female, 20). One from Atirau said,

"In the past we used to think that if one is born Kazak, he has to be a Muslim. However, now there are a lot of religions and everyone is free to choose the religion he wants. Thus, it is possible to come across Kazaks who choose to believe in other religions" (Female, 33).

Similarly, interviewees have indicated that funerals were realized without any exception according the Islamic Kazak traditions. Cemeteries and mosques were places where people were able to express their religious identities with relative freedom during funerals. Most respondents stressed that these traditions survived during the Soviet period. Interviewees stated,

"During the Soviet (period) it was possible to observe Islam only through certain traditions. These were rituals related to birth, marriage, circumcision and death. Now it is different. We can freely practice everything. We celebrate openly all the religious feasts" (Male, 36, Astana).

"When I was at school during the Soviet period, people hated the children of mul-lahs and they were isolating them. Poor children felt so bad because of their fathers. Even Kazaks were isolating these children as far as my experiences are concerned. People were mostly believers but they were always hiding this. Everything was done under secrecy" (Female, 45, Almaty).

"During the Soviet period, there was only civil marriage. After the independence, people started to practice religious marriage. During the Soviet period, Kazak traditions were not properly and freely practiced. After independence, Sünnet Toy (circumcision ceremony) became a big event. According to our traditions, the circumcised boy mounts a horse. They decorate the horse and they take the boy from one house to another. People put gifts and pieces of fabric into the saddlebag. Nowadays we celebrate Sünnet Toy in this way" (Male, 69, Almaty).

These examples can be considered proof of the continuation of Islamic traditions despite the oppressive anti-religious and atheist propaganda of the Soviet regime. As Rorlich so well put it, the practice of rituals has been regarded as attachment to religious traditions (1991:192-193). The data gathered clearly indicated that observance of ceremonies including Kurban ayt, Oaza ayt and life-cycle rituals of engagement, marriage, birth, death, and circumcision survived during the Soviet period. Some traditions related to birth, marriage, death, and other events reflect very clearly the mixture of Islamic and pre-Islamic traditions that are now defined as part of religion regardless of whether they are linked to Islam or not. It is crucial to understand that some of the pre-Islamic rituals survived in an Islamic environment and experienced a transformation, during which they lost some of their features and became Islamised (Mustafina, 1998: 97). Some good examples are the tradition of celebrating Nauruz, the tradition of keeping the dead at home for three days (because it is believed that the spirit of the dead stays at home for three days), the tradition of constructing the tomb within 40 days (otherwise the dead will feel homeless, to avoid this a grave with a roof is necessary), and the tradition of calling for rain.

Research has also demonstrated that mosque attendance, fasting, and religious marriages have increased with independence, but it is not quite correct to claim that it has reached significant figures. A part of the interviewees have pointed out reasons for the increase of the practice of such rituals. Some have stressed that it became very trendy to practice certain rituals. A doctor from Astana said, "Religious marriages increased among young couples. I think it is trendy now. It has become very popular to practice it. I do not think that all those who go to mosques for the religious marriage are reli-

gious people" (Female, 50). Another interviewee mentioned a similar view, "Recently, religious marriages have become very popular. It has not much to do with faith. Few hours before the wedding, the young couple goes to a mosque together with family members and friends. The mullah asks the young girl what she wants as a gift. She usually asks for jewelry and the boy promises that he will buy it to show his love to the bride" (Female, 20).

Regarding the perception of Islam by the Kazaks, in all the interviews carried out in Kazakhstan, most of the Kazaks defined themselves as believers, but they also mentioned that they support a secular system. Based on the interviews, we can easily argue that the interpretation of almost all the respondents indicate that Kazaks perceive Islam as an important attribute of their traditions and see its revival as part of their cultural revival and as a constitutive component of their national identity.

As we can see from the quotations above, in the case of Kazakhstan we need to differentiate attachment to religious rituals/traditions from religiosity. These quotations show how these religion-based rituals are perceived as elements of Kazak tradition. Ceremonies related to daily life rituals of marriage, death, circumcision, the celebration of religious feasts (Kurban ayt and Oaza ayt) are most commonly observed traditions. These were also observed during the Soviet period, although not always very openly and freely as previously mentioned. In fact the characteristic of the Soviet period was such that people were both observing traditional rituals, celebrating traditional feasts, and celebrating secular Soviet holidays or certain Russian rituals transformed into Soviet rituals such as New Year or birthday celebrations. With independence, however, Soviet holidays were replaced by the national holidays of the newly emerged independent Republic of Kazakhstan, and as stated by all the interviewees, all religious feasts and rituals began to be practiced openly and freely. It would not be wrong to argue that Islam as part of the national identity is used as an element that differentiates Kazaks from Russians, but in fact this was a reaction against the Soviet regimes' anti-religious policy and oppression rather than a reaction to the Russians of Kazakhstan. This also explains why the former communist Nursultan Nazarbayev, who declared himself an atheist during the Soviet period, redefined himself as a believer and made the pilgrimage to Mecca when he became the president of Independent Kazakhstan.

An important point that was raised by a significant number of the respondents is the way the Russians perceived the Kazaks during the Soviet period. This was in fact a continuation of the perception developed during the expansion of the Russian Empire. A number of respondents have used the word 'shame' to define the feelings of most Kazaks about their culture during the Soviet period, because it was looked down on by the Russians. Interviewees in Atirau emphasized this view and the attitude of Russians during the Soviet period as expressed in the following quotations,

"According to what my grandmother said, the Russians were looking down on the Kazaks during the Soviet period. She said that they were trying to make the Kazak nation disappear. That is why the practice of all traditions was forbidden. Even during the weddings, most Kazak traditions were practiced in secrecy not to even mention religion" (Female, 20).

"Russians believe that they are superior to us. Since quite a long time they believe that they have been the greatest of all nations. They passed on these views from generation to generation. Kazakhstan and some other countries are providers of raw materials for Russia. They looked down on us. They perceive us as an uncivilized nation. They view themselves as more clever, more civilized, more developed and more modern than

us" (Female, 33, Teacher).

"Russians were looking down on us. They were perceiving the Kazak language as useless. Those who were not speaking Russian could not find a good job. We were ashamed of being Kazak because we could not preserve our language" (Male, 55, Doctor).

"During the Soviet period our culture was oppressed. We used to behave according to the instructions coming from above. After the independence our culture revived. People gained self-confidence. Now our writers and musicians express themselves freely. Most foreign countries respect our art and culture" (Male, 42, Engineer).

The last person quoted also mentioned during the interview that people were ashamed of not speaking Russian during the Soviet period, while they were ashamed to speak in Kazak because it was perceived as a 'primitive' language by the Russians.

During the interview, a teacher from Astana said,

"When I was a child, I remember that everyone was speaking Russian and they had Russian names. Once my grandmother called me and said 'come home Aliya'. I replied 'I do not want to be Aliya, I want to be Natasha'. In the past they were insulting us because of our Kazakness. I have been very sensitive to this issue since my childhood. Outside, and in buses, it was shameful to speak in Kazak. We preferred not to speak Kazak because we were ashamed of speaking our language" (Female, 43).

One of the respondents in Astana stated, "Russians think that we are hospitable people. I think that they also believe that we are lazy and not very hardworking people" (Male, 36). Another one said, "Russians think that we are uncivilized steppe people. They look down on us. They belittle us on all levels, in education, in civilization, in culture and in life standard" (Female, 20).

Crowe refers to Hilda Eitzen, who has pointed out in her article that Russians have always regarded the nomadic Kazaks as inferior barbarians and never understood the deeper meaning of the Kazak tribal culture (Crowe, 1998: 396). This view is supported by the collected data, as we can see from the quotations above. The fieldwork also indicated a change of attitude among the Russians of Kazakhstan towards Kazaks. Some of the respondents have mentioned this change. A Saleswoman from Almaty said,

"The attitude of Russians is a bit different now compared to the Soviet period. At that time, they thought of themselves as members of the upper class. Everything was Russified and there was little room for our own national or religious celebrations, and for our language and culture. After independence, however, they changed. I do not know how to explain this but they started to behave in a more respectful way and became more gentle" (Female, 45).

Conclusion

The nature of Islam in Kazakhstan as explained above is one of the most important obstacles impeding radical movements and fundamentalist Islam. In addition to that, the difference that exists between Kazakhstan (also Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan) and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan based on the classical settled-nomadic dilemma constitutes another obstacle to the spread of fundamentalism. The nomadic tradition is relatively late in conversion to Islam and thus the influence of pre-Islamic practices is still comparatively strong. Another important factor is, of course, the impact of the Soviet regime. Based on the collected data, it would not be wrong to argue that the secular policies of

the regime have taken roots in Kazakhstan. The last important factor that constitutes another obstacle to the development of radical Islam is the presence of Russians in the Kazak Steppes for centuries, which entailed the development of a certain way of cohabitation between Russians and Kazaks and thus a hybrid culture. The actual presence of Russians in Kazakhstan requires the continuation of the secular regime, especially considering that Russians have taken root and are a part of the Kazak nation.

In Kazakhstan, the cleavage is not only between Russians and Kazaks, but also between Uzbeks and Kazaks. It is essential to note that radical movements in Central Asia in general and in Kazakhstan in particular, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Hizb-ut-Tahrir, the Islamic Renaissance Party, or the leading figures of official Islam are mostly ethnic Uzbeks. This is a sort of proof to what has been argued above. We need to realize that Islam is not an umbrella identity in Central Asia, as is pointed out by some authors such as Nazpary (2002:171-174). Furthermore it is not even an umbrella within Kazakhstan.

Moreover, the fieldwork indicated that Islam is perceived as a cultural phenomenon rather than a religious one and is closely identified with national identity. Within this understanding, the Islamic revival in Kazakhstan is a component of the attempt to create a national identity, a reaction to the domination of the Soviet culture, which had the objective of eliminating religion in order to construct a common Soviet culture, and further presented nomadism and Islam as the most backward of ways of living, rather than being a spiritual search. While the term “nationalism” is perceived by Kazaks as loyalty to traditions and culture, including Islam, the term “believer” refers to self-identification with traditional Islam rather than Islamic fundamentalism. Nationalism and national identity in Kazakhstan combine varying religious and secular components. As argued by Poujol, the post-perestroika period permitted the utilization of Islam as an identity marker structuring the national claims about sovereignty and independence (2001: 47).

The new Kazak political power attempted to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet ideology at the beginning of the period of Perestroika through promoting ethical values within an atmosphere of insecurity. In other words, the careful promotion of religion that is under strict control of the government plays two significant roles: firstly, it fills the ideological and moral vacuum as a result of the disappearance of the Soviet system causing an important environment of insecurity, and secondly, it offered people an alternative to political parties that based their activities and projects on political Islam being in complete harmony with the position of the government (Poujol, 2000: 118). Although the tolerant Islam of Kazaks is sponsored by the state against fundamentalist Islam coming from abroad (Laruelle and Peyrouse, 2004: 185-193), it is not possible to argue that the danger of radical Islam does not exist considering the impact of global forces competing in the “religious field” for different purposes. The prevention of Islamic radicalism and the development of democracy in Kazakhstan will be strongly influenced by the nature of the economic restructuring and the distribution of wealth among all the different social and ethnic groups.

Another point that is necessary to consider is the hostility towards Islam that has developed in the West over the centuries, which has resulted in a simplistic approach to Islam that prevents the grasp of varieties in Islam and different types of religiosity. This simplistic approach entails in certain cases the failure of competing forces of the “religious field” since they overlook the complexities of historical heritage, local politics, and clan and ethnic networks.

Considering both the perception of Islam by Kazaks and the way it is used in the construction of national identity by the political elite, it is possible to conclude by saying that there will be no room for radical Islam in Kazakhstan. Although it is a strong element of the national identity, having being influenced by pre-Islamic practices and the secular Soviet Regime, the influence of Islam in daily life will remain symbolic, traditional, hybrid, and nationalist in nature. It is also argued that the newly independent republic of Kazakhstan, in need of gathering new symbols and cultural elements aiming at constructing a national identity and its common values, will continue to use Islam as an important cultural element through attributing it as a symbolic power rather than a radical and fundamentalist force. Islam in Kazakhstan is more tradition than faith, as can be seen from the state ideology, which encourages Islam as traditions and bans to some extent Islam as faith.

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YOLANDA AIXELA CABRE

Muslims in Spain. The Case of Maghrebis in Alicante¹

Abstract:

The aim of this article is to describe the social networks of the Maghrebis in Alicante, some of the problems they face in their daily life, and the role played by the “mosque” as a place not only of prayer but also of mutual help and support. At the same time, the analysis shows that Islamophobia has increased in the city, as it has done in other places in Spain and Europe following the Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks, with the resulting rejection of the Maghrebis clearly seen in their relationship with local inhabitants and in some of the local authorities’ political decisions.

*“Islam has definitely passed over to the West”
O. Roy (2003:13)*

Maghrebis, as perceived by the Spanish

The Maghrebis are becoming one of the most numerous groups in Spain (López García, 1996; López García et al, 2004)² but their fusion in the Spanish society is more difficult than that of other migrant groups. There are many reasons for this, but, basically, they come down to the disagreement between Islam and the West³, in this case illustrated by the controversial relations between the Maghrebis and the Spaniards throughout the recent centuries. Martín Corrales (2002:247) analyzed these with great clarity in his excellent, graphic review of the image of the Maghrebis in Spain over a period of five centuries and declared that “...from an analysis of most of the Spanish bibliography dealing with Hispano-Maghrebi relations, there is no doubt that the image the Spaniards had of the others (in this case, the Moroccans) between the 16th and 20th centuries was mainly negative. This is shown by the fact that stereotypes and clichés coined throughout the centuries are still with us today” and he adds that “it is thus necessary to reveal and, at the same time, neutralize the history of the construction of the image of Moroccans in Spain at the beginning of the 21st century”⁴.

Indeed, the disagreement between Spain and the Maghreb has developed over twelve centuries, a period in which the image of the North Africans in our country has systematically become “blackened” (Martín Corrales, 2002:244). This was also verified by Moreras (1999) in his pioneering study on the Muslims in Barcelona and, later, by

Yolanda Aixela Cabre

Lecturer at the University of Alicante.

Author of the books:

Género y Antropología Social (2005), El Magrib del segle XXI (2002) and Mujeres en Marruecos (2000). She organized o the following exhibitions (all with catalog): “Amazighs. Berber Jewels” (2005), “Barcelona, Cultural Mosaic” (2000), “Alí Bey, a Pilgrim in an Islamic Land” (1996), and “The Rif, the other West. A Moroccan culture” (1995).



Key words:

Maghrebi migration, Muslims in Spain, Islamophobia, the Maghrebis

Lacomba (2001) in the case of Valencia. In Moreras's view "both are culturally and socially homogeneous entities which history does not seem to have changed... their own definition is formulated based on the negation of their diverse alternatives" (Moreras, 1999:11). Therefore, the Maghrebi migrants may be said to have a socio-cultural representation in Spain that goes way back and is legitimized in their common history⁵. Bartra (1996) and Kilani (2000, 2003) pointed out that the construction of the "other" is always historical and interiorized in our collective imaginations.

The specificity of Hispano-Maghrebi relations is part of the rejection towards Muslims to be found in Europe:

"The image that Europe has of Islam comes from a long history profoundly rooted in every European country's encounter and/or clashes with Muslim countries... These cultural images, then, maintain a certain plausibility and a sort of cultural inertia, even now that, factually, the situation has completely changed due to the immigration and settlement of individuals of Muslim origin -and then families, groups, and communities- in European countries"⁶.

This tense relation in the West has been exacerbated by the Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in New York⁷, March 11, 2004, in Madrid and July 7, 2005, in London. For many, these attacks are solid grounds for denouncing that Muslims are a potential threat and that their values are incompatible with those of Western society⁸. Larson (2005:29) pointed out the impact and implications that 9/11 has had for Muslims in numerous countries: "Most, if not all, Muslim communities in the West were directly or indirectly affected by the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001... For example, after 9/11 Muslims in Sweden became the victims and targets of growing anti-Muslim and Islamophobic attitudes and behaviour"⁹. Suleiman (2006:9) had also made a similar exercise in the case of North America: "However, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks by Muslim Arab extremists, prejudice and discrimination against "Arabs" in the United States intensified greatly"¹⁰. In Spain, the attack on March 11 in Madrid intensified the negative image of the Maghrebis even more because, although some of the victims were North African immigrants, most of the terrorists were Maghrebis, which has increased the rejection and fear felt towards people from this region.

Another important aspect that distorts the perception of the Maghrebis in Spain and Europe should be mentioned: the fear of the consolidation of a supranational identity, based on Islam, and created separately from the national identity of the country on which it is established.

This idea of the "risk" that Muslims apparently represent has been criticised by some social scientists such as Roy (2003), Kilani (2000, 2003), Amselle (1997), or Taguieff (1995), since they consider that this type of discourse should not be encouraged because it could, on the one hand, lead to xenophobia and social exclusion, and on the other, foment the defence of Islam as a paradigmatic identity. Baumann (2002) also analyzed the discourse used by States and by dominant groups in their contempt of immigrants, in particular that of Western logic and hierarchical subordination. These appeared as the most perverse, sophisticated forms of looking down on others while, at the same time, reinforced one's own identity¹¹. Islamophobia¹² is not just a form of rejection that might result in violence, it is the cause of most of the negative cultural images of Muslims generated and activated in daily life. Islam may thus appear as an opportunity to recompose an identity and as a rebel for all those who feel unprotected or not represented by their new State. Amiraux (2003) pointed out that many Arab-Muslim women in France

(some of whom had obtained French nationality or were daughters of nationalized immigrants) have begun to use the veil in public in response to criticism of the Muslim identity¹³.

At the same time, Islamic networks are characterised by transnationality¹⁴ and a virtual Muslim community has even been created on the Internet. An example of this would be the Sufi neo-brotherhoods, that of the Muslim Brothers or Al-Qaeda itself. Roy (2003:205) believes that "the new forms of expression of Islam are closely linked to globalization, especially as regards reformulation of the traditional fundamentalism".

These questions acquire even greater significance when we consider that there are twelve million Muslims living in Europe; as Al-Shahi and Lawless (2003:100) explain:

At the beginning of the new millennium over seven million people of Middle East and North African background were legally resident in the 15 member states of the EU, together with Switzerland and Norway, about two per cent of the total population. Most of them were Muslims, and they constituted over half of the estimated 12 million people of Muslim culture living in Western Europe. Not all of them were immigrants; a growing proportion was born in Europe to immigrant parents, the so-called "second generation". Indeed, in some countries, a third generation had emerged. Not all of them were foreigners....

The size of this "minority" is crucial to legitimize their vindications: many wish to increase the visibility of Islam, while, at the same time, the wish to maintain their religious practices with the construction of mosques and Islamic places of worship. According to Roy (2003), nowadays, Europe is also Muslim. Hence, the Islam-West conflict, the historical Hispano-Maghrebi disagreement, the exclusive identity discourse, and the tension caused by the supranationality and transnationality of Islamic immigration form the basis of an Islamophobia that is extending throughout the West. As we shall see, it is also present in Alicante: it is subtle and silent but categorical when attempting to dismantle the emblem that reinforces the Muslim collective solidarity and community unity – the mosque.

Maghrebis in Alicante¹⁵

The ties between the Maghreb and Alicante have been particularly close in the case of Algeria, since the relations between the two dates back to the late 19th and early 20th century, when some Valencians emigrated to work in the Algerian agricultural exploitations or as servants of other Spaniards or Europeans (Monjo and Menages, 2007; Bonmatí, 1992). The independence of Algeria in 1962 saw the return of a large number of these Valencians to Alicante and also the start of Algerian migration to Europe, especially France. A large number of people migrated in the 60s and 70s, and migration has continued somewhat sporadically up to the present day. A tiny number of these migrants moved to Alicante¹⁶.

The Algerian community was the largest immigrant group in the city up to the 80s, although, paradoxically, there was no Algerian registered in the Alicante's municipal census in 1980. In the opinion of Gómez Gil (2006:16) this was due to the high degree of social exclusion of these immigrants in the city even at that time. The early presence of Algerians in Alicante is closely related to the existence of the ferry to Oran, which facilitates a constant flow of people and merchandise. As Sempere tells us (2000:112):

"Algeria and Alicante have maintained very close relations for many years due to the ferry service connecting them. The Algerians nowadays, and the French before Independence (1962), have made up a considerable part of the population of this city in recent centuries". Subsequently, in the late 70s and early 80s, Moroccans began to settle here and found unstable seasonal agricultural work (López García, 1996). In 2004 (the year of the last available census), there were 2,179 Algerians and 2,129 Moroccans registered in Alicante, 6.9% and 6.7% of the total migrant population respectively (Gómez Gil, 2005)¹⁷.

Some comments should be made on the specific characteristics of Maghrebis as compared with those of other immigrants from Europe, Latin America, or sub-Saharan Africa. The Maghrebis in Alicante are a very visible group for the rest of the population. They have their own particular way of dressing - especially the women - with the jellaba and the hiyab, and wear beards; they observe strict dietary rules (for example, the prohibition on the consumption of pork or alcohol); they celebrate certain festivals as a community (such as the most important days of Ramadan) while the faithful constantly practice their religion at the "mosque" (especially on Fridays)¹⁸. These clearly distinguishable aspects make the cultural specificities of the Maghrebis very explicit compared with those of the rest of the population. Since these aspects are visibly manifested in their daily life, they prevent an anonymity that is essential to favour multicultural intermingling in urban areas. Thus, the indifference towards migrants or "others", which in general is crucial to guarantee their fusion in the new context, is made more difficult¹⁹.

It is generally believed that the ideological, religious, and cultural determinants of migrants influence their chances of promotion in the new context²⁰. In this respect, there are certain differences among the Maghrebis themselves, especially between the Algerians and Moroccans. The Algerians migrate for socio-political reasons, whereas the Moroccans do so for economic reasons. *Latifa*²¹ is one of those who left her country to get away from the violence after the Civil War²²: "I am very happy to be here since my country is in a mess. The war!!!...In Algeria there are no opportunities for young people... Here the future is better, I have my family and for the moment we intend to stay here ".The Algerian migrants are better qualified than their Moroccan counterpart, which is explained by the fact that schooling is provided throughout Algeria. However, education is not sufficient to give them access to better jobs; the work they do is as low-paid as that of Moroccans. *Aisha* is an exception²³. She finished her studies here in Alicante and now has a good, skilled job (cultural mediator): "It was a big effort... Now, I'm appreciated, they are very happy with me and I am pleased because they appreciate what I am worth".

Regarding the employment situation of the Maghrebi migrants in Alicante, there are two types of activities that they do: activities carried out in the formal economy and those belonging to the informal economy. Jobs in retailing, catering and to a lesser extent construction are included in the former, whereas agricultural and building work and street vending form part of the latter. Many migrants describe the difficulties encountered in setting up a business or simply finding a decent job. Of course, after eventually finding a proper job and an employment contract, many families try to regroup, as *Latifa* tells us: "My son works in Alicante.... He's married. He was the one who brought me and all his sisters and brothers. His father didn't want to come". However, not everyone is as lucky as *Latifa's* son. *Abdalaziz*²⁴ explains how it is impossible for him to

regroup his family: "How am I going to bring my family here if I don't even have a place to live!!! What's worse is that I'd need 1,500 euros to bring my wife here and I haven't got any money. I've got enough to do to keep the restaurant going"²⁵.

Social perception of the Maghrebis: the increase in Islamophobia in Alicante

There are many factors that indicate an increase in Islamophobia in Alicante. Rejection is seen in everyday life but also, specifically, in certain actions of the local authorities or in other sectors of the city. Some of these situations have been reported by Sempere (2000) and Gómez Gil (2005, 2006).

Sempere (2000:112) relates how the town council thwarted the establishment of the Alicante-Nador shipping route in 1990 because they considered that there was already sufficient movement of Maghrebi migrants in the city; or how, later on, it decided to move the Alicante-Oran ship terminus to the new port area to the west in order to make it more difficult for Algerians to move around the centre of the city. According to Sempere (2000:118), these decisions were influenced by the general mistrust towards the Maghrebis and by the incidents and minor offences committed by them that reinforced the negative stereotype of the "Moors" among the population.

Gómez Gil (2005) draws our attention to the criminalization campaigns carried out against the Maghrebis by the town council of Alicante, as well as by some of the economic sectors and media between 1992 and 1999. He also mentions the substitution of the Maghrebi labour by the Latin American labour after 2002 due to the reaction to the terrorist attacks of September 11, March 11, and July 7. Mohamed²⁶ describes the changes that have taken place in recent years: "Before 1995, everything was fine here, but now things are bad. There's no work, nobody will give us a job. If you're from Ecuador or Latin America there's no problem but we are Moors... In 2002 many Algerian shops suddenly closed down. Now they're starting to open again". Mohamed also explains his situation and that of others who, after finding employment and bringing their families to Alicante, encountered some serious social problems:

How do they expect people not to steal if there's no work and we have nothing to do, and on top of that nobody will rent us accommodation so we have to pay 30 euros a night to stay in a hostel!.... Some can manage like that but I've got a family and I need a house. Before, we lived in a building that belonged to an Algerian who didn't charge us any rent. Seventeen of us lived there free for a year. But now the owner needs it and he gave us a month's notice. In the end I found a flat but they wanted a deposit of 2000 euros!!! I'll show you the contract....It's a disgrace. And it was unfurnished. The first ten days I had no electricity or water. Now we just have a TV and a mattress!

And with respect to his children's education Mohamed adds:

"They wouldn't take my son at the school. He's two and a half years old and even though Spanish children get a place immediately, they gave us an appointment in two months' time. Two months!!! They don't want us!!! What can I do?!... Well, take my son to the mosque where they look after our children when we can't find a school for them!!!."

Abdalaziz also explains that it was much better in Germany than in Spain because

at least they didn't deny them the basic services:

"In Germany I lived very well, I was a manager at one of the McDonalds. Germany is said to be racist but there I had access to all the welfare benefits, healthcare - you could rent a flat simply by making a telephone call, everything was easy. But Spain is very racist. Nobody will rent us a house or anything. Here, opposite the restaurant there was a flat to rent and when I went to ask about it the owner smiled at me and said that she'd decided not to rent it because one of her sons needed it. Then it turned out that she rented it to a foreigner! I can remember how she smiled at me!"

In addition, the local inhabitants tend to perceive the Maghrebis in a homogeneous way, and fail to distinguish between different nationalities or ethnic groups and the problems they face in their country of origin. In general, they are referred to with the derogatory term the "Moors" and only exceptionally are they called "Arabs", "Muslims" or "Maghrebis". Social rejection is widespread throughout society and is expressed in frequent acts of Islamophobia in every day life. In this respect, Mohamed explains: "They call us 'bloody Moors'. The police also treat us very badly, for them we are 'those Moors'. They say to us 'Moor, why don't you go back to your own country'. They reject us because we are Arabs....They treat us like thieves. They say -Moor, you can't work here...". Ahmed²⁸ also feels that the way in which they are perceived does not favour their insertion in society or in the labour market: "Yes, it's true, we have a lot of problems here with the people and with the police". Ahmed's opinion is shared by Abdalaziz: "I feel rejected. How am I going to integrate if they don't give me anything, not even a flat, and what's more they treat me badly... How am I not going to feel hurt? They leave us no alternative other than Arab people!! It's impossible for us to integrate!!!". The social rejection is shown in the isolation mixed marriages have to endure. Salima²⁹, for example, complains about the lack of support from her family: "...when I married him I lost part of my family: my father said -you're going to marry a Moor!!! You're going from bad to worse!! I don't want to know anything about it".

These accounts are not anecdotal and clearly illustrate the difficult integration of the Maghrebi national (Algerian or Moroccan), ethnic (Arab or Berber) and religious (Islam) identity with the national (Spanish) and religious (Catholic) identity of a large part of the population of Alicante³⁰. However, the rejection in Alicante is focussed on the religious aspect as shown by the closure of the "mosque" in December 2005³¹.

The social exclusion of the Maghrebis favours the establishment of community ties whereby the solidarity of groups of Muslims resolves numerous problems that arise in daily life, thus mitigating the social discrimination in which they find themselves. For example, Salima became isolated from her socio-familial setting when she married an Algerian and converted to Islam: "Some of my family, including my brother, say that I'm dead and they don't want anything to do with me. The same happened with my friends: I've lost them all except the one who was a true friend. I'm still the same person, I haven't changed at all, I don't understand why they treat me like this".

For many years, a place of mutual help and contact with the rest of the community has been the Centro Cultural Islámico de Alicante or "the mosque" in Alicante³², especially up to its closure in December 2005, and then again later when its activities were renewed. The work done by Abde³³ in this respect, both in the past and nowadays, is remarkable since he has attempted to activate solidarity networks, while, at the same time, he has criticised certain attitudes towards the Maghrebis or "others" and he

has demystified some cultural presumptions: "All sorts of people come to me- the local authorities, the police, the press, etc. I speak with all of them and try to help them".

Another factor that influences the significant rejection of the Maghrebis is their attire. Many Maghrebi women wear the jellaba and the veil (hiyab). The veil is particularly controversial since in Europe it symbolizes the subordination of Arab-Muslim women and affirms identity by making Islam visible in new contexts³⁴. *Merien*³⁵ describes the suspicion use of the veil causes among the rest of the population: "I always go around with a scarf on my head and everybody's used to it now. It's true that I started wearing it 5 or 6 years ago and my friends were very surprised but I prefer to wear it... Sometimes, on the street, I hear people make comments because they think that I'm not from here and don't understand what they are saying. Once, someone said very rudely: Look at how she's dressed!! But I don't care. I wear it because I want to and because it says so in the Koran". *Malika* also gave her opinion on this matter³⁶: "I don't wear a scarf anymore because I'm ashamed of it. All my friends would think it was strange because they're not used to see me wearing it. But I'd like to wear it and one of these days I'll put it on and I won't take it off. I'd prefer to wear it but I'm still not ready. I know that it will mean social rejection and for that reason I don't wear it".

Finally, it should be pointed out that this group's image is becoming even more distorted due to the media in general and the press in particular³⁷: the news reports and articles published give a biased, negative image that induces society to marginalize and criminalize the Maghrebis. They are thus excluded from the possibility of integrating, which would help reduce their differences as compared with the local identities.

Rejection of the "mosque" in Alicante

The first attempt to create a Muslim association and a mosque in Alicante dates back to 1987, but the lack of quorum in the Muslim population itself thwarted this initiative. Subsequently, in 1991, agreement was reached giving rise to the Alicante Islamic Community. One of the main objectives was the opening of a mosque for which they obtained financing from Algeria and a convention was signed by Oran and Alicante in which they were given a central plot of land on the condition that the mosque would be built within five years (Gómez Gil, 2005:16). At the end, the mosque was never built³⁸. Soon after, the Centro Cultural Islámico de Alicante was opened between the Juan Bautista Lafora and Jovellanos avenues opposite the Postigueta beach, one of the most popular beaches in Alicante. Religious services and other activities were held there. As *Jadiya*³⁹ explains the premises had all the basic facilities: "The mosque has everything, a room for women which is also the children's classroom, a room for men, a restaurant, toilets, study rooms...". For example, classes in Arabic are given in the mosque. *Abdel* tells us how he collaborated altruistically: "I spent several years giving classes on Saturdays to children so that they would learn the Arab language and culture and the Koran. I taught one of the classes in Spanish so that they would learn that language, too". *Jadiya* describes the help she received from the mosque in exchange for giving classes: "My government's grant has not been renewed but luckily since I spend very little and from what I was able to save from my grant together with what the mosque gives me for giving Arabic classes I have enough to get by on". The "mosque" has had a great influence on the daily life of the Maghrebis and has been maintained thanks to the help it receives from the community. As *Abdel* tells us: "The mosque gets no money at all

from the local authorities. We haven't paid the rent for months because we don't have the money. The mosque is kept going with what believers donate, some months more, other months less, depending on what they can afford".

The relationship between the "mosque" and the Alicante town council had its ups and downs in the 90s, while the order issued by the local authorities to close the premises in July 2001 was a sword hanging over its head. The terrorist attacks of September 11 coincided with the initiation of proceedings and police searches in establishments run by the Maghrebis, which resulted in the closure of around twenty premises: "Then, a political decision was made in response to the pressure exerted by the inhabitants and the tradesmen"⁴⁰. The mayor's office was criticized for ordering the closure of the only mosque right in the middle of the international conflict, and this halted the proceedings for a while. However, on December 17, 2005, the town council implemented the order and closed the "mosque" alleging that it did not have a licence for activities and the safety measures were deficient. The closure provoked the protest of the Muslim community and 300 believers occupied the Postiguet beach on the Friday of that week and they prayed there⁴¹. This image of the Maghrebis facing Mecca to pray on one of the busiest beaches in Alicante had a great impact on the population and produced immediate effects. That same day the town council promised to provide them with premises in Alicante and, very soon after, gave them the free use of a building on the Pla de la Vallonga industrial estate as a provisional mosque. The building was several kilometres away from the city and had been used previously as a warehouse for containers and street cleaning vehicles. Some members of the Magrebi community complained about the unsanitary conditions of the premises. Meanwhile, the building work being done on the "mosque" (el Centro Cultural Islámico de Alicante) was at a standstill due to the claim brought by the owners' association, Yoraco III, on the grounds that the work "disturbed the neighbours". In September 2006, the work was restarted when the court injunction was removed. During this period, some Maghrebis complained about how they were treated by the town council and the fact the provisional premises were in poor condition and situated outside the town: "I don't think it's the ideal place to worship but there isn't any other"⁴².

The services provided by the "mosque" in Alicante before it was closed down were diverse. As Abdel explains,

"in general, they are services rendered to mixed marriages, the local authorities, schools and Spaniards. Couples in mixed marriages come to resolve their marital problems, the local authorities to ask for things...in fact the police also come here very often and they have admitted that since the mosque opened the atmosphere has become much more relaxed and there are fewer conflicts, although this is something they don't acknowledge in public; teachers come because they have a lot of doubts and want to know more about our religion - we have managed to get them to provide special meals for the children in Ramadan and more attention for this group-; the Spaniards also come to find out more about Islam and we advise them on whatever is necessary."

One of the main reasons why the Maghrebi community went to the cultural centre was to pray (just as they did subsequently at the industrial premises). However, it should be mentioned that not all Maghrebis are practicing Muslims. Some explained to us that their partners never go to worship, others go with their spouse and some unmarried Maghrebis attend services once a week. For example, Salima commented that, after converting to Islam, she went to the mosque regularly without her husband:

"I converted and since then I have come to the mosque. My husband never comes and he laughs because I come so often, but I don't care, it's not that he disapproves; it's just that he doesn't care one way or the other and that's that. He stays home watching football. In fact he only goes out if he goes with me. We always go out together. It's good for me to come to the mosque because when I married my husband I lost some of my family..."⁴³.

The "mosque" has played a fundamental role in welcoming and helping those who arrived recently and also to those who continue to have the same problems as time goes by. Abdel describes the situation:

"We also collect money for people with the greatest problems, especially women, since many come to the mosque and we know that if we don't help them they'll end up prostituting because when you get to a certain limit there's no other option. We also help people return to their country although we are aware of the problems involved because in some cases we've bought them the ticket to return and they've resold it... We have also signed agreements with the Red Cross that gives us food that we distribute among the most needy."

The "mosque" has brought together a large part of the Maghrebi community and put the members in contact. In this respect, Salima says:

"For me, the mosque has been a consolation because, thanks to the fact that I come here, I've found new friends who are in the same situation and we help each other". Jadya thinks the same: "Until I went to the mosque I hardly knew anybody, but here I've got to know lots of people, I've made lots of friends...I'm very happy."

Mixed marriages are a specific case since they are a little-known, neglected minority. For example, Merien's daughter is such a case :

"My daughter recently got married to a Spaniard who converted to Islam and they are very happy. When her baby was born, she was only a year away from getting a degree, so now my husband, who's retired, and I look after the baby every day so that my daughter can finish her studies."

In short, the controversial "mosque" in Alicante, in addition to being a place of worship, has become a center for resolving socio-cultural differences, a place where mutual understanding and help are available, and conflicts between the Maghrebi community and Alicante society may be settled. As Abdel states: "The majority of the Muslims who come here do so for many reasons, not just to pray. The mosque plays an important role in resolving social problems both for Maghrebis and for the local people".

Conclusions

The objective of this article was, on the one hand, to describe the daily problems and social networks of the Maghrebis in Alicante and, on the other, to analyse the increase in Islamophobia in the city, a phenomenon that may be found in other places in Spain⁴⁴ and in Europe⁴⁵. Fortunately, Islamophobia detected is nothing like the xenophobic attacks on migrants that have taken place in recent years in some cities⁴⁶. As we pointed out in the introduction, it is a type of Islamophobia patent in daily life that rel-

legates the Maghrebi migrants to the lowest step on the ladder and prevents them from merging with the rest of the population. Indeed, most of the authors cited in this study have underlined, in different geographical contexts, that the Arab-Muslim group, or in our case, the Maghrebis, are the object of renewed, constant prejudice and discrimination that have intensified following the terrorist attacks of 2001.

It is possible that equality among people of different cultures would require not having a history, in that history reinforces the stereotypes of the collective imagination and cannot avoid the implied hierarchies over the "others". However, one cannot and should not dispense with one's history. Quite the reverse, it is necessary to foment historical and anthropological reviews that enable us to unveil and make cultural differences relative, studies which explain that any image of the other is a cultural construct in a specific time and space (Martín Corrales, 2002, 2004; Said, 2003; Bartra, 1996). Likewise, Baumann (2001) points out that national, ethnic, or religious identity in multicultural contexts are structured from different logics, such as the "orientalist" or that of hierarchical subordination. Revealing these logics allows for an understanding of the sophistication of a discourse that, while reinforcing the receptor culture, weakens the immigrant cultures. These logics of cultural identification have filtered through in the discourses that reinforce the construction of a supranational, transnational Muslim identity that, for many of these excluded migrants, is the only one that offers a desire for integration.

We should perhaps wonder whether "the failure of the model of (migratory) policies is nothing more than the consequence of the failure of the State-nation model for integration, not only of the different ethnic groups but also of a growingly important part of the national population" (Martín Díaz, 2003:181).

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Notes:

1. This article is based in part on the report I made for the project "Cultural diversity and citizenship: Alicante faced with multiculturalism" directed by Ana Melis (2003-2004). The main anthropological method used in my field study was that of participant observation. During the study, I visited the areas and places in the city where the greatest numbers of Maghrebis were to be found and carried out numerous interviews, ten of which were in greater detail. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Eloy Martín Corrales for his generous help in reading and commenting on the text of the report.

2. The valuable work being done on Maghrebis in Spain by the TEIM (UAM) under the direction of López García should be mentioned.

3. Said (2003:450) synthesised with great lucidity the confrontation between Islam and the West: "the European interest in Islam is not due to curiosity but rather to the fear of a culturally and militarily formidable, monotheistic competitor of Christianity". One of the main values of Said's work (2003) was that it denounced the sophisticated distortion that qualified academics or privileged Western elites made of the construction of the Arab or Islamic alternative.

4. Martín Corrales (2002:248).

5. Spain and Morocco have experienced periods of tense relations that have played a part in the historical construction of the term "Moor". In this respect, we should mention the study by Mateo Dieste (1997) that makes use of numerous "anecdotes" to illustrate the manipulation of the image of Maghrebis in Spain. For example, Mateo Dieste (1997:25) relates how, when Franco's troops entered Republican Barcelona in 1939, towards the end of the Civil War, their lorries were equipped with loudspeakers that repeated non-stop the Muslim call to prayer "Alá is great". Mateo adds that "since the lorries were empty, it appears that the manoeuvre was intended to frighten the population: they were playing on the cliché that people feared a Muslim invasion because of the cruelty attributed to the Moroccan mercenaries [that fought on Franco's side]".

6. Allievi (2003:141-2).

7. 9/11 also had an impact on Muslims. For example, Ali (2004) reviews some Muslim customs after this attack.

8. The studies by Huntington and Sartori take on greater importance after this date. Huntington, S. P., El choque de las civilizaciones y la reconfiguración del orden mundial, Barcelona, Paidós, 1997; Sartori, G., Pluralismo, multiculturalismo y extranjeros,

Madrid, Taurus, 2001.

9. We might mention Tamney's analysis (2004:603-4) regarding the qualified diversity of political positions after 9/11 in the USA: "The conservative anthropologist, Stanley Kurtz, wrote an essay about the veil, in which he warned that any attempt by the West to force Muslims to abandon the veiling of women would increase support for the fundamentalists. Kurtz claimed that fundamentalism is fuelled by the clash between traditional Middle Eastern family life and modernity. According to Kurtz, Muslim fundamentalists are most alarmed by messages in the Western mass media that imply the acceptability of premarital sex and love-marriages, while also ignoring the value of the extended family...Several points in Kurt's analysis are worth noting. First, similar to other conservatives, Kurtz is not supportive of feminism and thus is not calling for the introduction of freedom and democracy in family life. Second, Kurtz (p.604) blamed the current struggle against terrorism on western media spreading modern ideas about sex and love... In sum, political conservatives tend to see the current conflict as a struggle between civilization and barbarism. While some believe that Islam is incompatible with civilization, other conservatives believe that Islamic societies can westernize..."

10. One of the few advantages of the 9/11 attacks for Muslims was that from that moment they became their own spokespersons with the population and media. As Larson pointed out (2005:29): "it is clear that the terrorist attacks on the United States also gave rise to a new situation in which Muslims became their own spokespersons... For the first time in Sweden, it is now possible to argue that Muslims have become their own experts on Islam and Muslim cultures".

11. Baumann (2002) underlined the segmentary logic inspired by Evans-Pritchard, the orientalist logic based on the studies by Said, and the logic of hierarchical subordination that originated in the studies by Dumont. All of these are used to reject "the others", the migrants.

12. This concept is taken from the update proposed by Larson (2005:35) "I would agree with Tariq Modood (1997) and Steven Vertovec (2002) that Islamophobia is in general very difficult to separate from other forms of racism and discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, gender or skin colour... Modern prejudice against Muslims, according to Modood, is thus based on anxiety about what are perceived to be features of values and practices derived from Islam".

13. Regarding the visibility of Islam through women, see Aixelà (2000, 2002a, 2006).

14. For further information, see Eickelman, D, Piscatori, J., *Muslim Travellers*, University of California Press, 1990. Also Hoeber, S., and Piscatori, J., (eds.), *Transnational Religion and Fading States*, Westview Press, 1997.

15 The profile of the migrants under study is varied. Some have a complex migratory trajectory passing through various Spanish or even European cities, finally ending up in Alicante. Both men and women who were not related to each other were interviewed so as to ensure a more representative sample. Some of the interviewees worked or owned commercial establishments in the city (for example, a restaurant), others sold various goods (watches, glasses, sports, clothes, CDs, etc.) on the street, some worked for the local authorities, and some were students or had not worked for years. In general, financially, they belonged to the lower-middle class and their income in all but one case fluctuated. One of the interviewees was a woman who was married to an Algerian and had converted to Islam: the objective in this case was to gain knowledge of the religious and social situation of mixed marriages.

16. The objective of this text is to analyze how Maghrebi migrants are perceived in Alicante. Therefore, Maghrebi migrations will not be connected to each other or to the situation in the countries of origin, despite the fact that this is a very important aspect to consider in order to understand the phenomenon of migration in a wider context. As Tapinos (2000:305) rightly points out: "The debate on migration has become indissociable from questions of human rights, political organization, development in the states of origin, and of national cohesion and the future of the welfare state in the host societies".

17. For general data on immigration in Alicante, see Gómez Gil (2003).

18. Martín Corrales (2002:244), Moreras (1999), Lacomba (2001).

19. Delgado (1997), Baumann (2002), Blommaert and Verschueren (1998).

20. As Tapinos pointed out (2000:297) "We will consider emigration as a response to delayed development and the effects that it is likely to have on the economy of the country of origin".

21. Latifa, 64, was born in Oran. She is married and unemployed. She arrived in Alicante a year ago due to family regrouping (her son brought her). She has no family network in Spain apart from her children with whom she lives.

22. According to the data provided by Gómez Gil (2006), the Algerian civil war was also a factor that caused an increase in the number of Algerians arriving in Alicante between 1992 and 1999.

23. Aisha, 30, was born in Algiers. She is single. She lives in Alicante and works for the town council. She arrived in Spain 6 years ago and has no family network in Alicante.

24. Abdalaziz, 43, was born in Algiers. He is married, has a daughter, and his wife in Algiers has asked him for a divorce. He lives in Alicante and is the owner of a restaurant located in the old part of the city. He arrived in Spain five years ago from Germany where he lived for a few years. He has no family network in Spain.

25. For information on family networks established by migrants from the perspective of gender, see Heering (2004).

26. Mohamed, 34, was born in Algiers. He is married with two children (with another one on the way). He lives in Alicante where he works as a waiter. He arrived in Spain 12 years ago and settled here after trying unsuccessfully to settle in Huesca, Lleida and Barcelona. He has no family network in Spain apart from his nuclear family.

27. Mohamed declared: "Here the situation is very bad. Spain is at the bottom of the pile as far as Europe is concerned. It's the worst country of all. Spain is very racist! There is no respect here!!".

28. Ahmed, 31, was born in Algiers. He is single. He lives in Alicante and works as a shop manager. He has no family network in Spain.

29. Salima, 33, is Spanish and converted to Islam. She was born in Alicante and is married to an Algerian. She lives in Alicante and works as a hairdresser.

30. There is a similar situation in many Spanish and European cities. Baumann (1999) found this situation in London and Kilani (2000) in Paris.

31. Allievi (2003: 141) describes the same phenomenon in Italy "The religious presence of Islam in Europe seems to have become an important issue in the public debate. This also relates to the religious visibility of Islam itself".

32. The work done by the Asociación de Amistad Hispano-Argelina is also worth mentioning. This association was set up in the 80's by the Algerian Ibrahim Boulfrakh and the objective was to promote associative initiatives to defend the rights of the Maghrebi population. This association tried to help Maghrebis in the 90s, coinciding with

the Algerian civil war. For further information, see Gil Gómez (2006:18-19).

33. Abdel, 32, was born in a village near Tripoli. He is single but both his family in Libya and the "community" in Alicante want to arrange a marriage for him. He is a student and arrived in Alicante five years ago. He has no family network in Spain.

34. Aixelá (2002b, 2006).

35. Merien, 58, was born in Tlemecen. She is married to a Spaniard and has children. She lives in Alicante. Nowadays she is not employed but she used to work as a clerk in Dragados y Construcciones S.A. She arrived in Alicante 27 years ago. She has no family network in Spain.

36. Malika, 20, is Spanish - the daughter of an Algerian father and Spanish mother. She was born in Alicante. She is single and studying to be a beautician.

37. One of the antecedents in Spain is J. Bodas and A. Dragoevich (eds.), *El mundo árabe y su imagen en los medios*, Editorial Comunica, 1994. An excellent analysis of the impact of the press on the construction of "otherness" is found in T. Van Dijk, *Racismo y análisis crítico de los medios*, Paídos, 1997. Also worthy of mentioning is the research carried out between 1996 and 1999 into the image of Maghrebis in the press in the R&D project of the Ministry of Social Services - Women's Institute by M. Nash, D. Marre, H. Gaggiotti and Y. Aixelá: *Repensar las imágenes del otro/a: inmigrantes y otras culturas en la prensa española*.

38. The same has happened with other promises to build mosques in various Catalan cities such as Barcelona or Santa Coloma. The provisional figures at 1 January 2007 indicate that 13.8% of the Catalan population are immigrants, and the Moroccans are the most numerous accounting for 19.9% of all immigrants (El País, 29/4/2007).

39. Jadiya, 27, born in a village near Oran (Algeria) is single. She lives in Alicante and is a student. She also teaches children in the mosque (when it is open). She arrived in Spain three years ago. She has no family network here.

40. El País 17/10/2001: "Díaz Alperi makes U-turn and says that the mosque in Alicante will not be closed down".

41. El País 24-25/12/2005: "Muslims in Alicante protest at the closure of their only mosque and pray on the beach".

42. El País 3/10/2006: "Ramadan in a warehouse".

43. Merien also: "I go to pray every Friday".

44. The sociologist M. A. Cea (2005) showed in a study based on 2,496 interviews from 168 municipalities that between 1996-2004 xenophobia had increased in Spain from 8% to 32%, and the Moroccans were the immigrants that inspired the greatest rejection.

45. Larson (2005:32) detected a disheartening situation in Sweden, similar to that in Alicante, when he gave a questionnaire to 176 people asking them about the treatment they received: "If you have personally been the target of discrimination since 9/11, in what way or ways have you been targeted?: 1. People have voiced negative opinions about Islam and Muslim, 80 (44%); 2. People have shouted 'terrorist', 'bin Laden', 'go home', 80 (44%); 3. I have been threatened with violence because I have been identified as a Muslim, 13 (7); 4. I have been the victim of physical violence, 7 (4%)".

46. The most serious cases were those from El Ejido in February 2000 and Terrassa in July 1999. U. Martínez Veiga provides us with a very clear analysis, *El Ejido. Discriminación, exclusión social y racismo*, La Catarata, 2001. Also of interest is the study by E. Martín Díaz, "El Ejido dos años después. Realidad, silencios y enseñanzas" in J. De Lucas and F. Torres (eds), *Inmigrantes. ¿Cómo lo tenemos? Algunos desafíos y malas enseñanzas*, Talasa, 2002, pp.74-97.

MIHAELA FRUNZA

Ethical Aspects of Spiritual Medicine. The Case of Intercessory Prayer Therapy

Abstract:

The main purpose of this article is to explore, from an ethical perspective, one particular branch of what is today called "spiritual medicine": namely, prayer therapy. Several landmark studies in the literature will be thoroughly examined, respectively the classical study of Byrd (1988), the replica of Harris et al. (1999), and the controversial study of Leibovici (2001). Beginning with these studies and the related controversies surrounding them, the religious features and ethical consequences of prayer therapy are investigated. The ethical aspects of prayer therapy – the informed consent issue, the issue of respecting bioethical principles, and the issue of medical competence in offering such techniques – are thoroughly addressed. Finally, an alternative way of framing the prayer therapy discussion is offered, in the context of public-private dichotomy.

Mihaela Frunza

Lecturer,
Ph.D,
Department
of
Systematic
Philosophy,
Babes-Bolyai
University,
Cluj,
Romania.



Author of the book:

Ideologie si feminism (2004).

Editor of the books: Fețele toleranței (2003), Gender and the (Post) East-West Divide (2004), Tinerii și politica (2006).

E-mail: mihafrunza@yahoo.com

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In the future it will be considered unethical for a physician not to pray for his or her patient as part of quality health care.
- Larry Dossey, MD

The emergence of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is of such importance that the proponents of it speak about "the falling of the bamboo curtain" (Weeks 2001, IX). The connections with Cold War imagery that this metaphor evokes have never been more appropriate than in this case, both for physicians and for scholars studying religion. Today, under the influence of what various authors call "occulture" (Partridge 2005, 2), "wellbeing culture" (Partridge 2005, 3), or "the mystical nebulous" (Champion 1996), Western medicine is rediscovering the connections with (Eastern) spirituality.

A major factor for this phenomenon must be related to the holistic philosophy underlying CAM therapies, which aims at more effectively addressing the personal needs of the patients than does traditional, disease-oriented, medicine.¹ Inside this richly illustrated phenomenon that ranges from aromatherapy to Zen Buddhism, a particular place that is still subject to contestations is constituted by "spiritual medicine" which encompasses aspects connected to "the effects of religion and spirituality on health outcomes" (Lawlis 2001, 473) and covers techniques such as prayer therapy, therapeutic touch, shamanism, transpersonal medicine, etc. However, although widely used by those who

believe in praying when in suffering (patients and relatives alike), prayer therapy provokes many controversies that to date have not been solved.

Beware of Fruitless Discussions: Terminological Cautions and Endless Controversies

Before entering the discussion of prayer therapy itself, some cautionary and preliminary notes are needed concerning the key terms that are used in or ground the discussion throughout this paper. There are two basic areas of concern that deserve at least minimal clarification: that of the conceptual doublet “religion/spirituality” and that of “prayer therapy” itself. The aforementioned is linked to many controversies and arguments, while the latter phrase requires only some specifications for those who are unfamiliar with it. The broad context in which both the relations among concepts and the subsequent misunderstandings are grounded is deeply connected to the so-called “Western world” that traditionally included the European and North American countries.

When one enters the arena of discussions concerning the possible and actual relations between religion and spirituality, one may get the impression that one is witnessing a dialogue between deaf people. Although the thorough conceptual clarification of the latter distinction is beyond the aims of the paper, due to the notorious confusion that surrounds the existing debate, some preliminary remarks need to be made.

If, for any “innocent” scholar from outside the field, religion and spirituality may seem to come from the same conceptual family, for those involved in health-related issues, they can be viewed on a scale that ranges from total similarity to total opposition, with a whole range of intermediate positions. This may be related to their different connections with the field of medical specialties. If religion and medicine have been historically associated with each other, at least in the “Western world” since the days of the Hippocratic Oath, and this relation only deteriorated in the last few centuries, when medicine gained a more “scientific” methodology that excluded other ways as “superstitious” and “unscientific,”² the word “spirituality” has only entered the arena in the last few decades, as a result of a holistic, New-Age-type influence. Thus, in a review of the prestigious medical database Medline, the word “spirituality” is to be found only in the 1980s (Mills 2002, 1). Another possible explanation is that, for many scholars, the word “religion” itself is not neutral, but is (more or less consciously) equated with “Christian religion”.

Yet, as a new-comer in the picture, spirituality has spectacularly recovered this ground, as a quick passage through the literature shows. For instance, for some authors spirituality is seen as divorced from religion: “Spirituality, as conceptualized in this article, is not equated with any of the religious experience” (Long 1997, 497). At the least, it involves a broader and more complex concept (Dalmida 2006, 118). To make the picture even more blurred, some authors mention up to 35 different definitions of spirituality, which may be classified into three categories: “theological or dogmatic interpretations that supply a ‘definition from above’, anthropological understandings that emphasize human nature and experience, and historical-contextual approaches that accentuate experience rooted in a particular community’s history” (McGinn 1993, apud Moberg 2002, 48).

In this paper, I delineate myself from the line of argumentation that aims at opposing religion and spirituality by subsuming them to the simplistically “institutional” vs.

“personal” model.³ Although it captures most of the diffuseness of the concept of spirituality, there are several problems with this model. First of all, opposing religion, as something solid, already established, and without further questioning, to spirituality as something vague, deeply personal, and involving mysterious “entities” and “energies,” is similar to opposing science and religion, to the detriment of the latter. Furthermore, the opposition says nothing about spirituality itself, and only devalues it in the eyes of religious scholars. At the same time, the issue of “institutionalization” is both time-related and deeply dependent of the person who judges it. For instance, for a practicing parapsychologist, parapsychology itself is a discipline with institutions such as university courses, conferences, and peer-reviewed journals. It is well defined and cannot be mistaken for any other spiritual discipline with which it may have connections. Thus, if we are to do justice to the terms, we must treat them on equal footing, and not disqualify any of them because of an alleged inferiority.

A view that seems more balanced in this aspect is that of Thorensen and Harris, who interpret this relation “as two overlapping circles (Venn diagrams), with spirituality being the larger circle yet sharing with religion many overlapping areas, but each having nonoverlapping areas” (Thorensen and Harris 2002, 4). However, what I find questionable is precisely the existence of those “nonoverlapping areas”. Keeping the metaphor of Venn diagrams, perhaps a more accurate picture would be that of two circles, with spirituality being the larger one, and religion the smaller one inside it. In this view, religion is indeed connected with institutions – namely, communities, tradition, and canonical texts, while spirituality is more diffuse, emphasizing the individuality, and being deeply grounded in affections. Spirituality encompasses the subjectivization shift that is noticeable in the Western world, a subjectivization through which individuals attempt to rediscover a path “they have chosen” (Partridge 2005, 6-7).

The other issue requiring clarification is the concept of “prayer therapy” itself. The word “prayer” is derived from the Latin *precari*, to entreat. It has been defined as “an intimate conversation with a higher being for the purpose of imploring or petitioning for something or someone” (Maier-Lorentz, 2004, 25). Prayer may use words or be wordless, and may be directed (when one indicates the desired outcomes) or nondirected (when one asks for being ready for the outcomes). It may be petitionary or personal prayer (when one prays for him/herself) or intercessory prayer (when one prays for somebody else’s benefit). This paper refers only to intercessory prayer, which has drawn interest as a therapeutic method and has been subject to scientific experiments.

Re-Enchanting the Medical Act: The Proportions of a Phenomenon

Whereas only a few decades ago very few people would admit a connection between spirituality and medicine, nowadays “the ‘S’ word (spirituality) can be spoken with comfort” in health care organizations (Kaiser 2000, 6), and there are talks about religion and spirituality as “hot issues” in medical journals (Thorensen 2002, 3). Like many Western practices, “modern medicine is re-enchanted” (Partridge 2005, 24), which does not mean it is replaced, but rather supplemented, by complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

At present, there is a spectacular increase in the use of CAM therapies that in some cases led to discussions of whether or not they should be covered by the ordinary med-

ical insurance. According to statistics, between 35% and 50% of adult Americans use some form of CAM, and figures are similar for Europe (Makowski 2004, 4; Astin, Harkness and Ernst 2000, 903; Partridge 2005, 25). The number of people licensed to practice CAM therapies literally tripled from the 1970s to the 1990s. (Partridge 2005, 13-14). At the same time, more than 60 US medical schools out of 125 developed courses connected to religion, spirituality and health (Dossey 2000), although the content and quality of such courses is far from being unquestionable. Inside the medical field, the area that was most significantly touched by this phenomenon is undoubtedly nursing (Partridge 2005, 25-27).

Attesting to the importance of this phenomenon, almost every serious medical journal has begun to publish articles and even special issues dedicated to this topic. Thus, the number of published studies with the keywords religion and health and spiritual/spirituality and health included in the Medline database increased four times between the 1980s and the year 2000. Over a year, the rating of CAM as a subject matter in the journals of the American Medical Association increased from position 68 to 3 (Weeks 2001, VIII). Beginning in 1997, the John Templeton Foundation and the National Institute for Healthcare Research have sponsored conferences on the relation between religion and spirituality and physical health, while in 1999, the National Institutes of Health Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research created a separate panel of scientists in order to critically assess the publications in this field (Mills 2002, 1; Thorensen 2002, 3-4).

The studies documenting possible relations between religion/spirituality and health issues are so diverse, that they encompass almost everything in medicine (Gundersen 2000) from the immunity system (Roberts 1999) to cardiovascular diseases (Byrd 1988; Harris 1999), and from Alzheimer's (Stuckey et. Al 2002) to HIV-AIDS (Dalmida 2006).

Among the CAM procedures and techniques, "spiritual healing" was the fifth most frequent treatment used in the US. This can be related to the high value associated by Americans with prayer, which 82% of Americans believe to have healing powers (Astin, Harkness and Ernst 2000: 903). More importantly, high percentages of social workers seem to use intercessory prayer in their work, although the evidence regarding the success of this therapy remains controversial (Hodge 2007, 174).

Proponents of the power of prayer are more inclined to interpret positively any experiment done on prayer and to include sources that are questionable. Thus, Dossey enumerates 131 laboratory experiments on prayer effects, of which only 21 provided a statistically significance P factor at the .01 level. However, the legitimacy of these sources is questioned by those who note that "10 of these are unpublished doctoral dissertations, 2 are unpublished master's theses, and all the rest were published in parapsychological journals" (Baker 1994; Stenger 2001). Moreover, the scientific value of these studies is discounted by those who complain of the low scientific standards of the studies on which Dossey based his arguments. Thus, the statistical significance (the P value) of these studies is found to be inconsistent from a strictly scientific point of view (Stenger 2001).

A more objective literature review of the studies published before 2000 on "distant healing" (covering intercessory prayer, therapeutic touch and other forms of healing at a distance) concluded that in 57% of these studies beneficial results were reported (Austin et al. 2000, 910). The study further deduced that, as the number of studies that passed the selection criteria in the review was still low (for instance, only five studies on intercessory prayer were included), there was a need and indeed a necessity to intensify

research in this area by designing new studies. In another words: “they [the results of the tests] clearly provide evidence that the effects of prayer can be studied with empirical methods and can include objectively measurable and clinically important health outcomes...Needed at this point is replication of such effects by other researchers using very similar procedures and examining a broader range of person, health, and socio-demographic factors” (Thorensen 2002, 8).

However, a more recent survey on seventeen intercessory prayer experiments was more skeptical in concluding that: “the findings are unlikely to satisfy either proponents or opponents of intercessory prayer” (Hodge 2007, 185). Nevertheless, such literature reviews have their own limitations, such as the heterogeneity of the experiments included in the report, which clearly reduces their predictive power (Astin, Harkness and Ernst 2000, 908).

I chose to focus on three studies on prayer, two of them measuring the efficacy of prayer for cardiovascular diseases, and the third focusing on bloodstream infection. The first two are so vividly discussed in the literature that they can be considered almost “canonical” while the later one, more controversial, opens the discussion of the most paradoxical aspects of prayer-related studies.

Praying from/for the Hearts and Praying for the Past: Controversial Experiments

Two decades ago, in the 1980s, Dr. Randolph Byrd conducted a 10-month double-blind study at the coronary care unit of San Francisco General Hospital. A total of 393 patients consented to participate in the study, which aimed at assessing the effects of intercessory prayer. Roughly half of the patients were randomly assigned by a computer either to the “prayer for” group, or for the control group. The prayer group patients were assigned to three to seven people who prayed for them, while the the control group was not assigned for prayers. Neither the patients themselves nor the medical personnel knew who belonged to which group, although they knew about the study being developed. The intercessors belonged to the “born-again” Christians, mainline protestant churches, and the Roman Catholic Church. The two groups were similar at the start, meaning that there was no statistically significant difference between them. By analyzing what happened to the patients after entering the study, Byrd concluded that, overall, the prayer group did better than the control group: “the prayer group had less congestive heart failure, required less diuretic and antibiotic therapy, had fewer episodes of pneumonia, had fewer cardiac arrests, and were less frequently intubated and ventilated” (Byrd 1988, 829). For many of the factors analyzed in the case of the two groups, there were differences, either in favor of the prayer group (for instance, only 1% suffered gastrointestinal bleeding, compared to 2% of the control group), but the differences were not statistically relevant (the probability P was not above .05). In order to reach a higher degree of probability, he combined the items into a “severity score” for the entire duration of the hospitalization utilizing the values good, intermediate, or bad. Here, a statistically relevant difference was perceived in favor of the prayer group, which overall did better than the control group (Byrd 1988, 828). However, a factor that statistically did not differ between the two groups was the duration of hospitalization.

While there were some who praised Dr. Byrd’s study, their number was balanced by those who found various inconsistencies. For instance, there are authors who quali-

fy the experiment as allegedly showing: “that intercessory prayer is very effective in the healing process” (Maier-Lorentz 2004, 26). However, in the original article, Dr. Byrd’s own conclusion seems moderate, even tentative: “Based on these data there seemed to be an effect, and that effect was presumed to be beneficial” (*italics mine*).

A purposeful replication of Byrd’s experiment was done by Harris and colleagues several years later, using a larger sample ($n=990$) of patients admitted to the coronary care unit of a private hospital. One significant difference from Byrd’s experiment was that in this case, both patients and doctors were unaware of the study taking place, and informed consent was neither requested nor obtained from the patients. The intercessors were again taken from various Christian traditions (nondenominational, Episcopalian, Protestant groups, and Roman Catholics). In order to qualify, they were asked to agree with statements claiming faith in a personal God that is receptive to prayers. They were asked to pray for four weeks for the patients, about whom they knew only the first name and nothing else (Byrd’s intercessors were given updated information on the state of health of the subjects) (Harris et al. 1999, 2273-4). Although the Byrd’s severity score was proved to be statistically irrelevant for this study, another measure was designed to sum up the different variables of patients’ treatment in the hospital, the MAHI-CCU score (Mid America Heart Institute Coronary Care Unit). The results of this newly designed score showed a statistically relevant difference between the patients in the prayer group and those from the control group, in favor of the former. Similarly to Byrd’s results, the duration of hospitalization in CCU was not affected by the fact that the patient belonged to one or the other group.

If the two studies previously discussed are somehow fitting the profile of medical experiments, the third one provoked even more controversies. In 2000, Leibovici conducted a double blind, parallel group, randomized, controlled trial of a retroactive intervention in a university hospital. The subjects were 3393 patients who were diagnosed with bloodstream infection during 1990-1996. They were randomly assigned to two groups, one for whom prayers were made (prayers for the group, not for individuals) and a control group. The outcomes of their hospitalization were then compared, with significant differences found with respect to mortality rate, length of stay and days of fever, the general conclusion being that: “Remote, retroactive intercessory prayer can improve outcomes in patients with a bloodstream infection” (Leibovici 2001, 1451). The most controversial aspect of the experiment undoubtedly concerns the premise that a procedure may retroactively influence the status of patient. Here, the author’s explanations are at least provocative: “As we cannot assume a priori that time is linear, as we perceive it, or that God is limited by a linear time, as we are, the intervention was carried out 4-10 years after the patients’ infection and hospitalization” (Leibovici 2001, 1450).⁴

This experiment can be associated with a whole range of controversial experiments that attempt to investigate the effects of prayer and other forms of spiritual intervention on animals, plants, human tissues, fungi, yeast, bacteria, and cells (Lawlis 2001, 481-6; Dossey 2001). The reactions to these studies were highly divided, the more recent ones attracting numerous vivid replies from the medical and scientific community (the study of Harris et al. was followed by fifteen letters to the editors in the next volume of the journal that originally published it, while the online edition of Leibovici’ study received no less than 86 rapid responses, most of them ranging from outrage to mockery).

Quantifying the Unquantifiable? Methodological Flaws and Religious Concerns

There are several methodological problems that are criticized by authors reporting on them, and that are to some extent assumed by the authors of the studies investigated. The first issue concerns the necessity of ensuring two pure parallel groups for design purposes. Even if one uses a computer to randomly assign the patients into two similar groups, it is not possible to prevent additional prayer, either by the patients themselves or by those closely related to them. Therefore, no "pure" control groups can ever be obtained, simply because their special situation makes them even more suggestible to prayers (Cohen et al. 2000, 41).⁵ This factor was thought to be very annoying by all critics, some of whom even disqualified the whole enterprise by comparing it to something as trivial as "a hypothetical study allegedly demonstrating the beneficial effects of reading periodicals on the course of CCU patients" (Posner 1990) or even concluding that "there can be no such thing as a controlled experiment concerning prayer" (Avalos 1997).

Another problem concerns the methodological impossibility of directing prayers solely to the prayer group, when, for instance, patients' first names (which are revealed to the intercessors) may be shared by patients in the control group, who might unintentionally benefit from the prayers. Likewise, it is difficult to probe the quantity and the seriousness of the prayers, since the only people who can testify about the prayers are the intercessors themselves. Moreover, if we are to scientifically measure the effects of the prayers, then the prayers themselves should be uniform – which on the one hand would be impossible to prove, and, even if it would be possible, on the other hand it would discriminate against those who prefer other types of prayer or whose religion does not involve prayers (Cohen et al. 2000, 41-42).

In addition, some authors claim that the factors that were reported as showing an improvement in the condition of the prayer group are not independent, and thus are not reliable. For instance, two indicators that were statistically significant in Byrd's study – the incidence of pneumonia and the prescription of antibiotics, are closely connected in practice, and cannot be said to be independent (Sloan and Bagiella 2002, 16). Moreover, the probability factor of these experiments, and of experiments testing the efficacy of prayer in general, has been found to be inconclusive by several scientists (Cohen et al. 2000, 42; Sloan and Bagiella 2002, 16; Stenger 2001).

Finally, for each study testifying to the efficacy of prayer, a counter-study can be found that shows inefficacy or even negative effects of prayer. The literature review of Astin and colleagues found that nine out of twenty three controlled trials of distant healing showed no effect (compared to thirteen similar studies that found a positive result and one study that showed negative results) (Astin, Harkness and Ernst 2000: 908). However, the number of documented studies is still low and they are too dissimilar to allow for a meaningful comparison. For example, the number of subjects can range anywhere from a few dozens to a few hundreds, and the effects of prayer are tested for medical conditions as diverse as smoking dependence and severe leukemia (Hodge 2007, 177-180).

Among the aspects that were subject to strong criticism were the religious consequences. Many of those who devaluated prayer experiments has tried to show that these studies imply a very negative relation not only to prayer, but also to God. Although usually the authors designing the experiments carefully distinguished between God and

prayers that are addressed to God, proposing for their tests only the effects of prayer (regardless of theological difficulties concerning God's status),⁶ all the articles do involve at least some presuppositions about the character of a God that answers health-related prayers.⁷ However, there is a long way between these presupposition and such ironic statements as: "a scientific study... indicates that God exists, and that he had interceded in the recovery of a group of coronary care unit patients!" (Posner, 1990).

Scientists and religious people alike have shown reluctance in putting prayer to scientific tests, such as these double-blind, parallel group, random trials. One reason for this uneasiness is that they, in contrast to some authors' declarations, felt that not only prayer is being subjected to tests, but God himself is, and many assumptions involving the issue of prayer involve something unacceptable concerning God. For instance: "In prayer, God is petitioned, not controlled; God is trusted, not tested." Therefore, the profoundly religious gesture of a believer praying to the personal God cannot be reduced to a merely "mechanical exchange of supplications for goods and services" (Cohen et al. 2000, 43).

Similarly, if the result of the test was judged positive, i.e., testifying to the beneficial effects of prayer, than the critics observed it is unacceptable to think that God could be impressed by the sheer number of those who prayed and would answer only those prayers. If the results were negative, what would this say about God? Could he be unable to help those in suffering? In any case, quantifying the unquantifiable (e.g. the "quantity" of prayers for the prayer group vs. the nonexistence of such quantity in the case of control group) seems to lead to paradoxical formulations and problems (Posner 1990; Avalos 1997).

Religious people even noted that the issue of prayer to a personal God in the Judeo-Christian tradition fails to be addressed by such an experiment. Thus, a true believer never addresses petitionary prayers, not even intercessory ones, or even if s/he does, s/he by no means obligates God to answer them. God's answer arises from a magnitude of love, but is by no means determined by the prayer. And, consequently, answered prayer does not test its inner efficacy, but rather testifies to the omnipotence of God, who is above all prayers. As one author puts it, we cannot know whether a prayer has been answered by an infinite God, because we don't have the means to prove the existence of such an infinite being; especially in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and in theistic traditions in general, the possibility of scientifically testing prayer is severely undermined (Cohen et al. 2000, 42; Avalos 1997).

No Adverse Effects? Ethically Related Questions and Worries

Using intercessory prayer therapy as a medical remedy raises ethical questions about the very method itself. Apparently, there is a paradoxical situation: one needs to rely on scientific tests that can be replicated and can guarantee results, but the scientific experiments in which prayer therapy was tested are questioned particularly for their "unscientific" methodological flaws. Alternatively, one may indeed attempt to prove that prayer is beyond such ordinary human ways of proving efficacy, and that it cannot be subjected to tests, but then, how can one use it in clinical situations, if its efficacy cannot be compared with that of more traditional medicine?

One way of questioning the ethics of testing prayer as if it would be a scientific phenomenon that can be tested and replicated in a laboratory is to dispute the scientific-looking settling as a whole. The major factor that enables the connection with scien-

tific experiments is the design as a double-blind, parallel group, random controlled trial. It is necessary to include a control group for whom the alleged health-improving factor (prayer) is not provided.

On the other hand, for those who are really convinced by the healing power of prayer, there is the ethical question of refusing people what can be considered a form of treatment: "I realized that if prayer worked, withholding it might be the equivalent of denying my patients a valuable medication or surgical procedure... there are powerful personal, professional, and ethical repercussions for any physician who takes seriously the evidence supporting the effects of spiritual meaning in health" (Dossey 2000).

Therefore, these authors even conclude that prayers' effects can only be legitimately tested only on animals, plants, and other living creatures such as bacteria or fungi. However, this results in prayer being simultaneously offered and refused what is needed for accepting it into the clinical environment: namely, it is offered a scientific ground through experiments on lower life forms, but it is refused precisely what would legitimize its use, experiments on humans.

Among the ethical (negative) concerns, the most serious one targets the issue of informed consent, which many of the studies on intercessory prayer do not respect, and which is consequently regarded as "immoral experimentation on human subjects" (Turner 2006, 487). Concerning the studies we have already mentioned, the opinions of their designers were split. If, on the one hand, in Byrd's experiment consent was requested and obtained on behalf of the 393 participants (Byrd 1988, 826), in the study of Harris and colleagues, consent was not requested, and the authors even declared that they were granted an exemption from the rule of consent by the hosting institutions. The main reason invoked in support of this apparent rule violation was the concern that, if consent were to be sought and obtained, the patients willing to participate in the study would form a special group of people that were "prayer receptive" (Harris et. al 1999, 2275). That would have biased the study. Moreover, the study of Leibovici was designed in a way that made the issue of informed consent irrelevant. Indeed, how could one possibly request consent for allegedly improving the treatment of the patients ten years after the disease had passed?

However, Turner presents several arguments to show the importance of obtaining informed consent on behalf of the patients involved in the studies. Firstly, the fact that in Byrd's study 12.7% of patients declined to participate indicates that there is a potential number of people who, for various reasons, refuse to take part in such an experiment. Secondly, the very religious nature of prayer made it a delicate subject both for non-religious people, who might encounter difficulties in accepting prayer as a possible solution for their condition, and for people with a religion other than that of the intercessors. (Turner 2006, 488). Finally, the issue of possible side-effects of a "drug" that has not been officially tested (such as prayer) cannot be neglected. Turner even describes this attitude saying: "[it] is morally objectionable to doctors to subject patients to additional health risks" (ibid.).

If we are to comment on Turner's objections, he does bring some valuable issues to the discussion. The issue of informed consent is of crucial importance in medical ethics. Although specialists agree that there are cases in which the request of informed consent may be waived, in understandable cases such as those of children, persons with disabilities, unconscious persons, or persons requesting emergency treatment (O'Neill 2003, 47), testing for prayer efficacy does not seem to meet the criteria. Thus, the existence of people who actually refuse to participate in prayer-testing experiments shows

that, in the case of studies deliberately not asking for informed consent, there may be people whose wills are negated.

Secondly, the question of incompatibilities among the religious (and in some cases a-religious) views of patients and intercessors may open the question about the religious freedom of those patients, whose rights may appear to be violated. Although advocates of the efficacy of prayer regardless and even despite the religious convictions of patients and intercessors praise the effects of Buddhists' prayers for Fundamentalist Christians (Dossey 2002, 21), there may be people whose religious convictions would be deeply affected, should they even consider the possibility of non-canonical prayers on their behalf. Especially having in mind the special situation of ill people, the burden of having to cope with somebody else's (possibly conflictual) religion and convictions may have additional detrimental effects. This is related to the issue of how to address the spiritual needs of patients without asking embarrassing questions about one's religious affiliation and most intimate beliefs – especially in a state-supported, secular institution such as a medical clinic.

Thirdly, the issue of possible negative effects of prayer has been openly admitted even by the most open supporters of prayer.⁸ Thus, Larry Dossey, an advocate of prayers and its results, the author of more than half a dozen books on related topics, states in a magazine article that the power of negative prayers has been proven not only through experiments on lower organisms, because of ethical issues involved in applying them to humans, but also through apparently well-intentioned, positive requests: "If all the prayers for prosperity were answered, the environment would probably not be able to survive the impact" (Dossey 1997, 52).⁹ Coming back to medical ethics, the two medical principles of beneficence and non-maleficence need to be carefully weighted and balanced in order not to endanger the patient's health. This is true especially for suggestionable people.

What is interesting when talking about the possible harmful effects of prayer is that the issue is usually brought into discussion by the very people who oppose prayer therapy or are reluctant to admit any benefit of it. Although they raise serious doubts on the positive effects of praying, by questioning the relevance of the experiments and their possibility of replication, they tend to admit without much ado the probability of harming effects, and even dismiss entirely the "positive experiments" due to implausible adverse consequences. Yet, the negative effects of prayer for humans are even more difficult to document, as so far such experiments have been done only on animals or lower life forms.

Another line of argumentation is the objection that truly religious people who agree to pray for the patients in an experiment should attempt to subvert the experiment and pray for the patients in the control group as well (Turner 2006, 489). Actually, this objection is related to the methodological ones that question the possibility of establishing a pure "control group" for whom no prayers are said. However, the subtlety in this argument is to exploit an inner dimension of the religious feeling that grounds any type of prayer: compassion. Thus, really compassionate people who accept to intermeditate between ill patients and God must be horrified not to offer the same gesture for people that have been randomly assigned not to be the part of the prayer group.

Finally, there is a series of objections raised by those who claim that, even if prayer's therapeutic virtues can be somehow accepted, doctors are not the best qualified people to apply them, and consequently should keep themselves separate from these therapies. Either by saying that prayer is a complex phenomenon that cannot be mas-

tered by physicians (Lawrence 2002, 76) or by simply stating the physical impossibility of doctors utilizing the precious time dedicated for patients for practicing uncertain therapies such as prayer (Lawrence 2002, 74), the conclusion is that doctors should do what they were trained to do – i.e. treating the patients – and not engage themselves in time-consuming, poorly-managed techniques such as prayer.

The basic argument is that the medical professional ethics imposes several constraints upon the doctors that do not allow them to engage in spiritual activities such as praying at the bedside of patients (Cohen et al. 2000, 41). Although doctors should show respect for a patient's own religion, provided that it does not interfere with the medical act (such as in the case that a specific religious tradition impedes a patient from passing through a particular medical intervention), this “does not require that doctors and nurses substitute for chaplains and ministers” (Cohen et al. 2000, 45).

At the same time, the opposite idea is also advanced by proponents of prayer therapy, who claim that praying for/with the sick person should become a routine for doctors and nurses. Thus, there are doctors who openly admit to praying for their patients as part of their daily schedule (Dossey, 2000, 11-14) or who are at least willing to recognize that there are alternative ways in which patients may be healed: “just because you, as a physician, may not understand how a treatment works, never argue with a patient who has discovered an effective healing path” (Edelberg 1996, 6-7). As stated at the beginning of this section, these doctors even claim that it is unethical for qualified professionals not to use this valuable therapy, whose adverse effects are so far little, if at all, documented. In his provocative article, Leibovici even reinforces this argument with a financial one, by saying that prayer therapy is very cheap and that it should be used, even retroactively (Leibovici 2001, 1451).

One additional way in which prayer therapy could be understood from the ethical perspective is through the private/public debate. Indeed, through attempting to offer a scientific foundation for prayer, and consequently through including it in medically accepted procedures, one is attempting to take out a previously private practice (that was and is widely used by patients and their families) and introduce it into the public realm. Although the discussions concerning prayer therapy have not been framed so far in the terms of the private/public debate, the whole controversy reaches a new dimension when looked at from this angle.

This is true especially when one is familiar with the debates over the private and the public in the US context, especially those involving the civil rights' movements of the 1960s and onwards and the women's movements of the same period. In these cases, a similar endeavor was at stake, namely that of bringing into the public field issues previously constrained to the private realm, such as domestic violence, discrimination in employment and education, and so on.¹⁰ Constant struggles were needed on behalf of those involved in the civil rights movements and in women's movements in order to transfer previously “private” issue to the public agenda, because in this way “the public” was called to action to solve these problems. The difficulty of transforming these issues into public concerns is telling about the difficulties proponents of prayer therapy have to face when attempting to legitimize it through scientific experiments.

Similarly, although on a different scale, by attempting to “publicize” the so far “private” experience of praying, proponents of prayer therapy are (more or less voluntarily) raising questions about how to treat a practice that may be put on an equal footage with other respectable medical practices. Should prayer become a routine inside the clinical environment, like the morning report? Or perhaps it should be confined to a separate

zone, where intercessors could silently (or loudly, depending on their “technique”) pray for patients? Should patients be asked to be assigned to prayers and should they be allowed to withdraw – perhaps by displaying a “Do not pray for” sign similar to “Do not resuscitate”? Should intercessors in some way be rewarded for their “job” – if they are providing a service similar to intubating a person? These and other related questions remain to be resolved by anyone who envisage such a thing as transforming prayer into a publicly, possibly insurance-covered medical procedure.

Conclusions

Although widely used by those in suffering and their relatives (or perhaps because of this), prayer is still far from being generally accepted in the array of medical techniques and procedures. The scientifically-designed experiments through which the efficacy of prayer can be measured have provoked wide discussion and have raised questions about their methodological accuracy and about their religious implications. However, the ethical concerns surrounding this debate are especially intriguing, and are worth discussing at large. New insights on this matter are offered if one looks at it through the lense of the public/private debate.

Nevertheless, if proponents of prayer therapy wish to see their practice accepted by the medical profession, they must be willing to frame it in the scientific language of efficacy, probability, and disease-curing. This means more evidence is needed in the form of scientific tests and experiments that will perhaps become more accurate in methodological terms. However, if the perspective of the public/private debate is to be accounted for, then it will take more than a few additional experiments to legitimize prayer therapy so as to introduce it into the clinical environment.

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Notes:

1 "Holistic medicine, although not a specialty recognized by the American Medical Association, is more of a philosophical approach than a specific therapy. Holistic medicine addresses issues of mind, body, and spirit as a seamless whole when determining how a disease came about and where the best chances for healing lie" (Edelberg 1996, 6-7).

2 "Western medicine came to its dominant position at the turn of the twentieth century in part as a by-product of society's virtually unquestioning faith in scientific positivism" (Bowman 2004, 664).

3 For instance: "Religion is a particular doctrinal framework that guides sacred beliefs and practices in ways that are sanctioned by a broader community of faith... Spirituality refers to beliefs and practices that connect persons with sacred and meaningful entities and emotions" (Stuckey et al. 2002, 200).

4 In the "rapid responses" that the BMJ website received for this article, roughly a quarter of them joked about design of such a study, and suggested to the author to "pray for the other half of the patients" as well, to see if the results of the study would change.

5 This methodological problem was assumed by all the authors of the studies

investigated, perhaps most clearly by Byrd 1988, 829.

6 “For example, we have not proven that God answers prayer or that God even exists. It was intercessory prayer, not the existence of God, that was tested here” (Harris et al. 2277)

7 For instance, Leibovici’s study assumes that God’s intervention is not limited in time, as we are; intercessors in the study of Harris et al. were asked to state their belief in a personal God; while both Byrd’s and Harris’ studies are open to metaphysical questions about the role of God-directed prayer in times of sickness.

8 However, in his classic study, Byrd’s patients apparently ruled out the possibility of adverse effects. Thus, when asked about their consent, the majority of them seemed to agree that, if no positive results would have been obtained, surely a prayer could not be harmful for anybody.

9 A comic version of what unpleasant things would happen, if all prayers would be answered is shown in the popular movie Bruce Almighty.

10 For theories about the public/private dichotomy, especially in the case of women’s and feminist movements, see for instance Ehlstein 1993; Lloyd 1984, 77-78; Okin 1989, 23.

GEORGE BONDOR

Genealogy as a Hermeneutics of Religions

Abstract:

The main aim of this paper is to analyse the applications of Nietzschean genealogical method to the study of religions. We focus firstly on Nietzsche's basic concepts: force, will to power, value, evaluation, and power and then go on to discuss some genealogical investigations of the religious phenomena. According to Nietzsche, the nihilist structure of European history is metaphysics itself, understood as Platonism, otherwise explained as a separation between "the real world" (of values and ideals) and the "apparent world" (of sensitive things). With the help of genealogy, values and ideals are proven to be illusions or appearances; on the contrary, senses and instincts, feelings and affections are rehabilitated. In this way, Nietzsche discovers the finitude of man and reveals the original unity between body and value, between what is given to man and what he can do alone.

George Bondor
lecturer ,
Ph.D.,
Faculty of
Philosophy,
"Al. I. Cuza"
University,
Iasi,
Romania.

E-mail: bondor@uaic.ro



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genealogical method, Nietzsche, the hermeneutics of suspicion, interpretation, history of religions, hermeneutics of religions, nihilism

The Hermeneutics of Suspicion and the History of Religions

Philosophical approaches have often been decisive in the study of religions, imparting to this discipline not only a theoretical basis, but also the direction in which research should proceed. During the last two centuries, every important philosophical orientation has left its imprint on the investigation specific to this field. Neo-Kantianism and Neo-Hegelianism, the philosophy of life and pragmatism, psychoanalysis and marxism, phenomenology and hermeneutics, structuralism and deconstructivism, cognitivism and analytical philosophy have all bestowed their own style on the history and science of religions.

Taking Mircea Eliade as an example, one can ascertain that his approach does not eschew some methods and thinking styles which were very influential in the 20th century philosophy. Approaching religious phenomena at their own "scale", with the purpose of understanding their essence, educing religious structures (called archetypes), investigating the history of phenomena, of cultural conditionings and existential situations that favoured their coming into being and, last but not least, "integral" hermeneutics called into play by the historian of religions – all these methodological coordinates are tightly connected to various contemporary philosophical orientations. Among the methods identified by Mircea Eliade, one is, however, constantly questioned. In a section from *Ordeal by Labyrinth*, it is analysed under the name of demystifying attitude (Eliade 1985, 155-9). From the author's perspective, this seems to be totally inadequate with the object of the history of religions. That is because the mentioned attitude, often

present in the philosophical approaches of the discipline, is obviously a reductionist one, Eliade shows. According to this attitude, religious phenomena cannot and must not be researched from the perspective of religion itself, that is at their own "scale", but only in the light of other perspectives. There seems to be something hidden behind them, something that does not reveal itself, but that can be made manifest by means of certain interpretive techniques.

But what could there be behind the religious phenomena? The examples Eliade offers are eloquent: Marx and political economy, Freud and psychoanalysis, Lévi-Strauss and structuralism. With each one of the authors or the mentioned currents, religious phenomena are explained by resorting to various structures, each one of them considered ultimate or, anyway, more profound than religious facts. Thus, they are explained on the basis of some economic structures (Marx), of the structure of the unconscious (Freud) or of the collective mind and the institutions that are set up, in any community, as a result of it (structuralism). In other words, they are regarded as symptoms of economic, psychic and anthropological phenomena. According to Eliade, the element that imparts a unitary style to all of these approaches, rendering them convergent to one and the same point, is the conviction according to which religious beliefs are simple illusions. All the above mentioned authors start from the thesis that religious facts are inferred, almost mechanically, from certain impersonal and apparently objective structures.

This idea is not at all new. At first sight it seems to be a late and "exoteric" hypostasis of Hegel's idea of the "cunning of reason". Similarly to that, what is at play is the discovery of the manner in which man acts in the world in favour of an authority that is above him, but he acts with the conviction that his deeds are a result of his own will. Freedom is simply an appearance, as long as it is justified only by an economy that stands above it. However, the similarities with Hegel stop at this basic level. That is because the movement of the Hegelian philosophy is an integrating one, just as Eliade himself notices. Its stake is simply making the sense of things visible, which is identified as their place in the economy of the absolute is revealed. Therefore, the part acquires sense only through participation to the sense of the whole, that is to the speculative reason. For Hegel, this all-encompassing sense is the only real one. On the contrary, the sense of individual things proves to be no more than a moment in the vast meaning of the whole. (Afloroaei 1997, 222-3) Conceived in comparison with the hermeneutics implicitly at play in the Hegelian philosophy, the demystifying attitude seems to be rather the result of the 19th century Neo-Hegelian schools. It is not random that Marx and his followers made use of it without the least reserve.

This type of interpretation was analysed using the expression "the hermeneutics of suspicion", Nietzsche's name being often added to the list of the ones that practise it, whereas the reference to structuralism was sometimes missing. Gadamer, Foucault and Ricoeur contributed significantly to its clarification. According to them, its novelty is linked to the radical re-thinking of two themes: the status of the subject, on the one hand, and the status of the signs, on the other hand. With this hermeneutics, interpretation moves from what towards who, from what there is in the signified towards the subject that interprets it (Foucault 2001, 89). In other words, the focus moves from the object towards the act of interpreting, and also towards the one who interprets it. The reason for this transformation is that signs, which formerly used to guide interpretation, reveal their instability. Their fixity is only a "semiotic illusion". The hermeneutics of suspicion is born out of "the suspicion that language does not say exactly what it says". As Foucault shows, this suspicion represents an old habit of western culture. Once the

prima facie meaning of discourse is suspected, the placement in a post-semiotic age, in which signs get to be finally regarded as simple masks, becomes possible. Thus it is delineated the task of “exposing” the language, as removal of masks that language itself makes use of and gives credit to. The ingression into the world of the signs could thus dissipate the opacity that was attributed to them, opacity due to which they preserved their supremacy for so long (Foucault 2001, 80).

The interpretive techniques favoured by the advocates of the hermeneutics of suspicion have in common the fact that “we, too, the interpreters, have started to interpret ourselves with the help of these techniques” (Foucault 2001, 83). What exactly becomes manifest when interpretation is finally directed to the interpreter himself? What “truth” about him gets to the full light? In short, the discovered secret is that there is no secret. The pretended profundity of consciousness is delusive, and its eminence, often invoked by philosophers, is only a fake. Consciousness proves not to be what it thinks it is (Ricoeur 1998, 36): it is not identical to itself in all circumstances; it is not perfectly transparent and manifest. It is no longer master even of itself. Its scope is larger than it was believed in the past. That is because it contains unconscious data, that previous thinking had expelled from the sphere of sense, relegating it to the periphery of the human being (Ricoeur 1998, 45). In this regard, Eliade’s analysis is worthy of paying full attention to it: including the unconscious, consciousness starts to be explained through something situated below it, being reduced not only to alien, but also to axiologically inferior elements. The strategy of the historian of religions will be totally opposite. He will try to show the way in which consciousness constitutes itself through elements superordinate to it, the only ones that truly confer it a sense. Instead of the unconscious, he will resort to supraconsciousness. The perspective thus assumed will actually be exactly the opposite of the demystifying attitude. Because of this, Eliade will say that his great bet is trying to demystify the demystification itself (Eliade 1985, 158-9), by revealing the hidden presence of the sacred in a desacralised world.

Europe’s Nihilist Condition

Among the “hermeneutics of suspicion”, a really special place is held by the genealogical strategy, which can be understood both as method, and as way of philosophising. Introduced and theorised by Nietzsche, it knew some spectacular developments in the philosophy of the 20th century. First and foremost, it represented a possible model of destruction (*Destruktion*, *Abbau*), thematised by Heidegger in his early courses and in *Sein und Zeit*, but constantly exercised after the 1927 work as well. Then, during the second half of last century, its virtues were rediscovered by authors such as Foucault, Deleuze and Derrida, who included it in their own philosophical scenarios, finding out new possibilities for its development and, at the same time, new fields of application.

Genealogy’s excellence consists both in its multiple applications, and in the fact that there is a radical critique of the western metaphysics it gave rise to. Both directions actually meet at the same point, which we can consider decisive for Nietzsche’s philosophy as a whole. On the one hand, among the applications of the new method the one that stands out is the genealogical critique of religions and particularly of Christianity. On the other hand, through questioning the way in which philosophers conceive the divine, Nietzsche identifies one of their constant suppositions, namely the radical sepa-

ration between the “divine world” and the “sensitive world”. In short, the former of the two directions is equivalent to the critique of religion in general and of Christianity in particular, whereas the latter focuses on the metaphysical understanding of the divine, which constantly transforms it into a simple concept, a representation or an idea (the natural or rational theology). Therefore, the convergence point of these two kinds of critique brings together Christianity and the metaphysics born out of it. But in what way do they meet – and under what conditions – in Nietzsche’s thinking? Not last, what exactly is this point of convergence?

Their relationship, which Nietzsche seems to have been trying to pinpoint ever since his first works, is done by the very method he used. In other words, it is the specificity of the genealogical research that dictates the way of being of the researched thing. By investigating the origins of phenomena, Nietzsche always attacks on two fronts: a structural one and a historical one. The structural aspect comes into foreground when genealogical criticism discovers the logic of the phenomenon, its internal structure (even if it is temporary and conjunctural). The respective structure represents, at bottom, a simple delimitation of a certain moment, which appears as decisive in the whole history of the respective phenomenon. In fact, the two aspects are complementary. The logic of the researched phenomenon (its structure or grammar, the way in which it presents itself systematically) is neither bestowed on it by a miraculous beginning, nor is it consubstantial, appended to it from eternity. On the contrary, it constitutes itself – in an unspectacular manner, modestly, without brilliance – in the course of its insignificant evolution. In other words, it is a historical structure, a “historical a priori”, if we are to use Foucault’s terms.

Ever since he was writing his works *Human, All Too Human*, *Daybreak* and *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche’s analysis was directed at different socio-historical totalities: nations, peoples, social groups, sexes, professions, religions, institutions. In his subsequent texts, it becomes more and more evident that genealogical investigation cannot discover unrelated, disconnected facts, but it has got to highlight profound structures which make those facts possible. Looking for them, Nietzsche first speaks about a way of being of Antiquity, completely different from the modern one. Therefore, at that time, he regarded Antiquity and modernity as complex structures, based on which the majority of moral, religious and cultural phenomena can be interpreted. During the last period of his work, the philosopher reaches the idea of the total unity of the European culture, conceived as a vast structure by means of which all phenomena can be understood. The fundamental part of the unity he was looking for is the Platonist-Christian supposition of the two “worlds”, supposition which, according to him, defines European history as a deeply nihilistic one. Basically, “Platonism” consists in doubling the sensitive world, the only real one, by a so-called intelligible one. By dint of its transcendent character, the latter appears as the only “true” one. Consequently, the sensitive world is evaluated as “apparent”, impure, derived, getting its justification from the exterior. According to Nietzsche, this supposition is present throughout the European culture under different guises. The philosophers, for instance, imagine the “true world” as one accessible only to reason, with its logical functions. Within Greek thinking, Socrates and Plato are its main creators. Then, the religious man projects it under the guise of a “divine world” (“the another world”), a “denaturalised, anti-natural world” (Nietzsche’s favourite examples are Judaism and particularly Christianity). Finally, the moral man imagines it as a “free world”, that is “good, perfect, just, holy”. All these three worlds spring from a psychological error.

“The places of origin of the notion of ‘another world’:

the philosopher, who invents a world of reason, where reason and the logical functions are adequate: this is the origin of the ‘true world’;

the religious man, who invents a ‘divine world’: this is the origin of the ‘denaturalized, anti-natural’ world;

the moral man, who invents a ‘free world’: this is the origin of the ‘good, perfect, just, holy’ world.

What the three places of origin have in common: the psychological blunder, the physiological confusions.” (Nietzsche 1968, 322; KSA 13, 14 [168], 353)

As we can notice, the convergence point we mentioned before, the one where the critique of religion and of rational theology meet, consists in the genealogical destruction of the western metaphysics, destruction understood by Nietzsche as “Platonism”. In other words, the historical structure out of which European culture’s nihilism derives is the metaphysics itself. It constitutes the “grammar” of the respective culture, its “logic”. Thus, everything that has happened to the European man for two thousand years appears in a new light. His ways of thinking, his beliefs and representations, his vision about the world and about his own self are imbued, from the very beginning, by the latent nihilism of this in-depth structure. For Nietzsche, the decadent character – and, therefore, nihilistic – of (Christian) religion and of natural theology is the normal outcome of the nihilism present at the very heart of the European metaphysics. It is only in this way that the radical critique the philosopher launches against them can be adequately understood. Following it, we will be able to rigorously identify what the object of this critique is exactly.

Firstly, it is necessary to shortly present the fundamental ideas of Nietzsche’s thinking, the ones that make up a minimal outline in whose absence his methodological and philosophical bet would remain completely unintelligible. As it is known, the fundamental concepts of this outline are force and will to power. According to Nietzsche, forces are the elementary elements which go into the making of things. The world can be imagined as being made up of a plurality of forces in permanent dispute, their relations varying from one moment to the next. They can be defined through their quantities: more or less, bigger or smaller. By dint of their quantities, certain forces will dominate others, in a certain neighbourhood. Their hierarchy, as well as their way of being, depend, firstly, on these quantitative relations. Mighty forces will be active, whereas weak ones will spontaneously embrace a reactive behaviour, aspiring towards their own conservation, but at the same time reacting to active forces. (Nietzsche 1989 a, 77-8; KSA 5, 314; Deleuze 1962, 69) Their intersection is a sort of force centre, and each centre generates a perspective of the whole. These configurations with temporary stability exist because forces are held together on the basis of the principle of their synthesis. The dominant force unifies, synthesises the differences, giving the other forces sense and order. This principle, the “organising force” of the respective configuration, is the very will to power. Such a synthesis exists in any relation of forces. (KSA 11, 26 [204], 203; KSA 11, 34 [125], 463; KSA 12, 1 [4], 11)

„The victorious concept ‘force’, by means of which our physicists have created God and the world, still needs to be completed: an inner world must be ascribed to it, which I designate as ‘will to power’, i.e., as an insatiable desire to manifest power; or as the employment and exercise of power, as a creative drive, etc.” (Nietzsche 1968, 332-333; KSA 11, 36 [31], 563)

Similarly to forces, wills to power can have two qualities. They are either affirma-

tive, when what characterises them is growth and free expression of their overflow, or negative, when they are interested only in their conservation and in the desire to overturn the bad situation they are in. The will to power, Nietzsche insists, must be understood pluralistically. They are not multiple as individual elements, but each one of them is already plural, being nothing but a miniature world that does not last more than a moment. Will to power is only a name, a way “to define all efficient force unequivocally”. (Nietzsche 1990 a, 67; KSA 5, 55) Its unity is the result of the operation of signifying. Beyond it there is multiplicity of forces that reach a certain organisation, at a certain moment. That is why the will to power is neither monad, nor atom, nor substance, but the significance of a multiplicity, a simple name useful to understanding and communication. It is a fact of language resulted out of a process that will be called interpretation in many other instances in Nietzsche’s work.

Man is made up in the same way. The permanent dispute of forces – and, inferentially, of wills to power – represents, in this case, exactly the elements that define its corporality: instincts and senses, needs and drives, feelings and affections. As Nietzsche’s terminology evolved, all these elements were gradually included in the concept of will to power, non-existent in his first works. Nietzsche shows that, in every human body, there is an “aristocracy”, that is a “plurality of masters” which expresses itself by the fight of cells and tissues (KSA 12, 2 [76], 96; KSA 11, 40 [42], 650). In order to exert domination, the activities of corporeal wills to power diversify, through a “division of work”. At bodily level, the stronger element forces the weaker one to become a simple instrument for the growth of its power. Exerting power – namely, the difference between the dominant will to power and the one submitted to it – is permanently accompanied by the matchless feeling of power. If human life were to be reduced to this type of action of the body, then man would not be at all different from others forms of existence. However, things present themselves differently. According to Nietzsche, man carries in himself the way of being of both the inorganic and the organic realms, but is not reduced to them. That is because the dominant impulses, instincts, needs and emotions, dominated from within, go beyond the strict frameworks of their primary range of action, imposing themselves as values and ideals, as benchmarks that have to be followed in any relation with reality, in other words “as the highest courts of values in general, indeed as creative and ruling powers”. (Nietzsche 1968, 359; KSA 12, 7 [3], 257) In the human being, the “superstructure” of values and ideals turns back on corporeal “infrastructure”, decisively changing its relation with the world. Moral and religious values, bestowed upon things by man, often alter the way of acting of instincts – of wills to power which are found at the core of his being – thus radically changing his very “world”. Human evaluations do not derive mechanically out of his corporality, but are rather imposed from the outside. In Nietzsche’s terms, the quantities of forces (and of wills to power) are deeply influenced by their qualities, that is by values and ideals. (Nietzsche 1968, 304; KSA 12, 2 [157], 142-143) Man evaluates the world through values and ideals, hypothesised by his moral, culture and religion, then assumed by him as if they constituted final truths and transformed, eventually, into his most intimate convictions.

„Our ‘knowing’ limits itself to establishing quantities; but we cannot help feeling these differences in quantity as qualities. Quality is a perspective truth for us; not an ‘in-itself’. Our senses have a definite quantum as a mean within which they function; i.e., we sense bigness and smallness in relation to the conditions of our existence. If we sharpened or blunted our senses tenfold, we should perish; i.e., with regard to making possible our existence we sense even relations between magnitudes as qualities.” (Nietzsche

1968, 304; KSA 12, 5 [36], 197)

„Qualities are insurmountable barriers for us; we cannot help feeling that mere quantitative differences are something fundamentally distinct from quantity, namely that they are qualities which can no longer be reduced to one another. But everything for which the word ‘knowledge’ makes any sense refers to the domain of reckoning, weighing, measuring, to the domain of quantity; while, on the other hand, all our sensations of value (i.e., simply our sensations) adhere precisely to qualities, i.e., to our perspective ‘truths’ which belong to us alone and can by no means be ‘known’! It is obvious that every creature different from us senses different qualities and consequently lives in a different world from that in which we live. Qualities are an idiosyncrasy peculiar to man; to demand that our human interpretations and values should be universal and perhaps constitutive values is one of the hereditary madnesses of human pride.” (Nietzsche 1968, 304-5; KSA 12, 6 [14], 238)

Values are a part of the human nature. In their absence, the world would be perceived in a totally different manner. “Our evaluations determine what things we generally accept and how exactly we accept them. But these evaluations are brought in and reglemented by our will to power.” (KSA 11, 26 [414], 262) However, their main function is, according to Nietzsche, to increase domination. The explanation of this idea is precise and incisive. Man bestows his own meaning on things, imposing it as the only valid one, because in this way he can dominate both things, and people who live in their midst. Therefore, values contribute decisively to increasing the difference between the dominant will and the submissive wills. Out of all of them, the ones that fulfilled this function eminently are the very “good” and “evil”, namely the religious moral values.

“But a mightier power and a new overcoming grow from your values.” (Nietzsche 1969, 139; KSA 4, 149)

“Zarathustra has seen many lands and many peoples: Zarathustra has found no greater power on earth than the works these loving men: ‘good’ and ‘evil’ are their names.” (Nietzsche 1969, 84; KSA 4, 76)

“You exert power with your values and doctrines of good and evil, you assessors of values; and this is your hidden love and the glittering, trembling, and overflowing of your souls.” (Nietzsche 1969, 139; KSA 4, 149)

The whole being is already evaluated and interpreted, because is it submitted to man’s creative power. This gives birth both to artistic illusions, sprung from affirmative wills, from the yes said to life, and to instrumental illusions, born out of the negation of life: “The interpretations up to now have all had a certain meaning for life – to conserve it, to make it bearable, or to estrange it, to polish it and also to separate what is ill and cause it to atrophy.” (KSA 11, 40 [12], 633) Instrumental illusions rise out of the need of conservation. They are the work of weak and negative wills, that make use of them in an exclusively utilitarian manner. It is exactly in this respect that genealogical critique is necessary. Its role is to identify and fight off man’s great illusions, ideals and values that negate life. At bottom, there are a few ways to say “no” to life: resentment, the unhappy consciousness and the ascetic ideal, thoroughly investigated in *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Their common origin is given by the moral-religious perspective, in which the European man’s entire existence is rooted (Nietzsche 1968, 7-8; KSA 12, 2 [127], 125-126). With this perspective, the imperative according to which existence must have a meaning was imposed in the European culture: “The intelligible character of existence; the belief in ‘meaning’ is kept due to religious faith” (KSA 12, 2 [66], 91).

According to Nietzsche, this is practically the point where the European culture's substantial nihilism originates. Thus, the issue of the problem of nihilism appears as a perfectly equivocal one. On the one hand, it consists in the absence of meaning, in the disappearance of the absolute order of the being. The most radical form of this idea is the statement regarding "God's death". On the other hand, the reason for the respective disappearance is the very belief in such a state, in a meaning of existence taken as a whole. Consequently, it is not the event of "God's death" that is at the origin of nihilism, but a certain logic, a way of thinking present ever since the beginnings of the European culture.

„For some time now, our whole European culture has been moving as toward a catastrophe, with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade: restlessly, violently, headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect.“ (Nietzsche 1968, 3; KSA 13, 11 [411], 189)

According to Nietzsche, the nihilist manner of perceiving reality was born out of the negative wills to power, which gave life a meaning by which it was actually negated. It was thus that "supreme values" and the very idea of "true world" appeared. The latter is the invention of the reactive man, lacking creative will, which he replaces with "will to truth". Although reactive, this type of man did not deplete his "force to interpret", being capable of creating new fictions. The philosopher, the religious man and the moral man can be perfectly placed in this category. As a means of preserving life, morality – especially the Christian one – was, at a certain period of time, "the great antidote against practical and theoretical nihilism" (Nietzsche 1968, 10; KSA 12, 5 [71], 211). In contradistinction to the reactive man, the total nihilist does not believe in another world, but at the same time considers that this world should not exist at all. He "does no longer posses the force to interpret" as he "lacks will and force" and, because of that, believes that there is already a will and a meaning in things, a meaning that he needs to pertain to. In contrast to these two types of man, there is also the one endowed with "will to create" and to impose his own meaning on things. His way of being is affirmative and playful, and he comes up "at the end of a long drawn out error", when the "real world" becomes a fable and, once it retreats, "apparent" world disappears as well. As we can notice from the outlined typology, European history registers a discontinuity between the time of the emergence of (Christian) religion and the time found under the sign of "God's death".

Guilt and Sin. Genealogical Investigations

Let us return to Nietzsche's method, in order to further follow its applications on religious phenomena. What is it that particularly characterises genealogical investigation? What are its stakes and what new aspects does it bring to philosophy? In order to identify the origins of values, it sets out to understand the wills to power out of which they resulted, their differences and, last but not least, their actions in the field of power. The most important feature of genealogy is represented by pluralism. It does not reveal a unique origin, but the multiplicity of origins; not one truth, but multiple accidents, reversals, deviations, errors which lead to a phenomenon's value. Supporting this idea, Nietzsche polemises with an older interpretive practice, also termed genealogy by the English utilitarians. Paul Rée, for instance, believed that the whole history of morals derived out of the human tendency to utility. If things were to be this way, then it would

mean that, properly speaking, nothing happened in history, and the same ideas and logic succeeded along the time line. It would be as if words, ideals, goals and human values had not changed their meanings at all throughout time, a fact noticed by Foucault, too. Thus, the historian would flunk the very singularity of phenomena. All of them would have one and the same origin. The only way they could be distinguished would be by their accidents, which, however, according to the utilitarian method, do not have any explanation. But the aim of genealogy is to discover what exactly makes a phenomenon stand out, its differences, the marks that confer it a certain image. Then, if all moral phenomena were explainable by a unique origin (such as utility), this last one should be a kind of principle belonging to them, a miraculous origin (*Wunderursprung*) which would explain them formally, although remaining impossible to understand. Such a unique and immutable origin would be nothing else than a so-called permanent “essence”, which would provide the respective fact with a complete identity, thus perfectly explaining its entire behaviour. According to Nietzsche, beyond (or before) things there is nothing but a multiplicity of instincts, affections and of wills to power that fight each other, each of them trying to dominate all the others.

The non-linear perspective on history constitutes the second feature of genealogy. Refusing the idea that all identical phenomena would be justifiable through their principle, it focuses on the local context out of which the researched event emerges at a certain moment. As far as it is concerned, this is a common and insignificant context, lacking the greatness and solemnity of the “noble origin”. According to Nietzsche, the belief in the noble origin is an old metaphysical habit, one which supposes that “what is more valuable and essential would stand at the beginning of all things”. (KSA 2, 540) An event is nothing but the temporary configuration of wills to power. In a certain place and at a certain time, they find themselves in a certain balance, their play (or their dispute) registering a certain power relation. It is, so to say, the reference system of those forces and wills to power, a system of domination by definition. In other words, it is the stage on which wills fight each other. But, throughout time, they situated themselves on totally different stages, always playing different roles. That is the reason why history is not linear. This idea can be illustrated through the example of the ascetic ideal. This ideal does not have a universal meaning. There is not one ascetic ideal, but only multiple meanings, variable as far as the type of will we encounter is concerned. Ascetic ideals mean one thing for artists, and a different thing for “philosophers and scholars”, one thing for women, but something different for “the physiologically deformed and deranged (the majority of mortals)” and, evidently, a totally different thing for priests and saints. (KSA 5, 339; Kofman 1972, 178) Genealogy discovers that the fact we thought was permanent, fixed and already settled is, in reality, dependent on a fluid element, namely on the history of the changes of perspective, on the history of evaluations and interpretations which are truly part of the respective phenomenon. Therefore, genealogy’s task is to establish the place of some origins throughout history and the stages they act upon. Moreover, acquiring dominance over a stage of forces takes place, most often, by altering the precedent stage, or even by transporting the dispute from one stage to another. The rules of the preceding one, on which certain forces were dominant, are changed once the dispute takes place on a different stage. The new rules modify the preceding relation. That is another reason why genealogy fights against the idea according to which history would be linear. (Foucault 2001, 183, 192-4)

Genealogy always identifies two types of origin: the context out of which the researched phenomenon emerges, but also the decisive impulse which, in that situation,

leads to its configuration. So, this impulse is nothing else but the will to power that dominates the ones in its neighbourhood. But, as we have previously shown, each will to power is made up of a plurality of forces. They refer to belonging to a group (the “nobles” or the “poor”), to a tradition or a race, therefore to atavisms and hereditary aspects. The genealogical analysis identifies them at the level of the body: in the nervous system and the secretions, in difficult breathing, in bad nutrition and the ill functioning of the digestive system. Thus, this is not about reducing the individual aspect to something common to several people, but only to find again the sub-individual elements which, by crossing themselves, form the complex network that is the individual himself (Foucault 2001, 188). A good illustration of this last idea and, at the same time, of the coexistence of the two types of origin can be found in a fragment from *Human, All Too Human*, in which Nietzsche shows that human feelings are not unities, even if we are used to speaking about a moral or a religious feeling: “In truth, they are rivers with a hundred sources and tributaries”. “All intense moods bring with them a resonance of related feelings and moods; they seem to stir up memory. Something in us remembers and becomes aware of similar states and their origin (*Herkunft*). Thus habitual, rapid associations of feelings and thoughts are formed which, when they follow with lightning speed upon one another, are eventually no longer felt as complexes, but rather as unities”. (KSA 2, 35)

As we can notice, genealogy identifies discontinuities and new elements, that is, events. In order to suggest discontinuity, Nietzsche prefers the term invention (*Erfindung*), which he often invokes with a polemic purpose; namely, it is used against the idea of origin, with the meaning that classical metaphysicians and traditionalist historians attribute it. For instance, Schopenhauer’s thesis is criticised in *The Gay Science*. According to it, the origin of religion can be found in a metaphysical feeling common to all people. (Nietzsche 1974, 296; KSA 3, 589-590) However, history does not occur in this way. Here is Nietzsche’s argument, on which Foucault insists: if religion had its origin in a feeling, we should suppose that there is continuity between this origin (the feeling) and the analysed phenomenon (the religion itself). But, according to Nietzsche, there was a distance between the time when religion did not yet exist and the time when it does. Before its coming into being, it did not exist even virtually, as a possibility (Foucault 2004, 95). It did not exist in latent form, in a universal feeling of man, but in one that appeared at a certain moment, namely the feeling of guilt, correlated with the belief in sin.

“(…) Man’s ‘sinfulness’ is not a fact, but merely the interpretation of a fact, namely of physiological depression – the later viewed in a religio-moral perspective that is no longer binding on us.” (Nietzsche 1989 a, 129; KSA 5, 376)

The genealogy of sin and of the feeling of guilt represents a model of Nietzsche’s relationship with Christian religion. One of the most important contexts in which it can be encountered is the one in which the ascetic ideal is discussed, in a whole section from *On the Genealogy of Morals*. The previously mentioned ideal defines the way of being and the activities of the ascetic priest. His situation can be understood through the point of view of medicine. The priest is necessary just because of the disease he suffers from. That is because it is often that sick people are better taken care of by other sick people than by healthy doctors. “The necessity of doctors and nurses who are themselves sick” – it is in this that the vocation of the anchorite is revealed (Nietzsche 1989 a, 125; KSA

5, 372). The propinquity in illness with the ones already sick helps him to understand them perfectly. Incurably sick, he must, however, be strong as well, a master of himself. It is only in this way that he can win the trust and the respect of others; it is only thus that he can be a "God" for them. His action is contradictory. For the healthy ones, it is a curse: "as at such things it is good this wizard and beast tamer, around whom all that is healthy inevitably falls ill". For the ones already sick, he is a source of consolation. He is a sorcerer, "in whose presence everything healthy necessarily grows sick, and everything sick tame". Of course, this is the same as turning well. The patient turned into a doctor is, we can say, a real *pharmakon*: both cure and poison, both curse and blessing for his patients. But how exactly is it that he changes the direction of resentment, changing their way of being? It is here that his qualities can be seen, his gift as a teacher. It is only now that his power of seduction and conviction reaches its goal. In a word, he alters the most precious habit of sick people, that of looking for the reason of their suffering outside them, in a agent not only supposedly guilty, but at the same time alive, and thus accessible to suffering; "in short, some living thing upon which he can (...) vent his affects". (Nietzsche 1989 a, 127; KSA 5, 374) Thus they alleviate their suffering: they unload it in the same way one detonates an undesirable "explosive matter". Pain is anaesthetised by means of another, stronger, more violent and wilder emotion than itself (Nietzsche 1989 a, 127; KSA 5, 374). The true reasons for suffering can only be physiological. But how is it that the change of direction of resentment takes place? By what ruse does the ascetic priest succeed in achieving such a profound transformation of man? His strategy is simple: he forces his patient to consider himself guilty. Not being able to survive if he does not imagine a perpetrator, the sick person lets himself be convinced that he is the only guilty one. This is the "gift" the ascetic priest gives him. From that moment on, all sick people of this type will take their guilt upon themselves (Nietzsche 1989 a, 128; KSA 5, 375). In most religions, this phenomenon is called "sin". However, as we can see from the previously presented facts, the so-called "sinfulness" is a simple interpretation, just as the "psychological pain" is one (Nietzsche 1989 a, 129; KSA 5, 376). This is the mechanism by which the "direction of resentment is altered". The person who adopts such an interpretation, imposed as universal by the priests from all times, values his interiority in a totally different way. Even if in his case, too, it remains only a borrowed one, the sick person gets to conceive it as a "fact". In this regard, the ascetic ideal functions by the same model of faith in an immovable truth that science embraces as well (Nietzsche 1989 a, 152; KSA 5, 400). It is here that genealogy steps in. It is called in to demonstrate this imagined "fact", put into things by an interpretation whose status was forgotten in time, being taken as reality itself. The ascetic ideal has to do with what Nietzsche calls passive nihilism, which consists in "whatever refreshes, heals, calms, numbs emerges into the foreground in various disguises, religious or moral, or political, or aesthetic, etc." (Nietzsche 1968, 18; KSA 12, 9 [35], 351) This appears as "man would rather will nothingness than not will".

Besides the genealogy of sin, Nietzsche tries to identify the origins of the concept "God". This concept, a real turning point, as we find out from an aphorism, "represents a turning away from life, a critique of life, even a contempt of it" (Nietzsche 1968, 91; KSA 13, 15 [42], 436). Consequently, its origins can be found in the negative wills to power. The God of morality and of philosophers is man's creation, therefore a simple illusion. No matter what he is conceived like, as an image or as a simple concept, he is a human error. (KSA 4, 35; KSA 4, 109-110; KSA 6, 60). Obviously, this idea must be taken into account in connection with the theme of will to power.

„The sole way of maintaining a meaning for the concept ‘God’ would be: God not as the driving force, but God as maximal state, as an epoch – a point in the evolution of the will to power by means of which further evolution just as much as previous evolution up to him could be explained.” (Nietzsche 1968, 340; KSA 12, 10 [138], 535)

„‘God’ as the moment of culmination: existence an eternal deifying and un-deifying. But in that not a high point of value, but a high point of power.” (Nietzsche 1968, 379; KSA 12, 9 [8], 343)

According to Nietzsche, God is a simple moment of the will to power, a reactive expression of this one. But, as we know, two situations are possible: the increase of power, or, on the contrary, its weakening. This idea is presented in a paragraph from *The Anti-Christ*, in which the Christian notion of God is criticised. Each authentic people, which believes in itself, has still got its own God, Nietzsche shows. It projects its own feeling of power, its needs and joy into this God, with the purpose of being able to thank him for all this later. In other words, the concept of God is necessary in order to satisfy man’s need for gratitude: “one is grateful for oneself: for that one needs a God”. (Nietzsche 1990 c, 138; KSA 6, 182) According to this genealogical exercise, God is born out of a psychological need of man. But this type of needs do not resume to expressing gratefulness. In fact, man casts his entire psychological life in the mentioned concept. For this reason, God must be seen as a friend as well as an enemy, as cause of both good and evil, of useful things, as well as of bad things. That is why, the concept of an “emasculated” God, reduced to the function of good, is not sufficient for man: “One has as much need of the evil God as the good God”. The disappearance of the “evil” aspect from the being of a people’s God constitutes the most evident symptom of its weaknesses. When one realises that his God has become weak, then it is a sign that the respective people is perishing, that it has completely lost its faith in the future and its hope of freedom is vanishing completely. (Nietzsche 1990 c, 138; KSA 6, 182) The God characterized only by love can only be a “God for everybody”, “cosmopolitan”. “Formerly he represented a people, the strength of a people, everything aggressive and thirsting for power in the soul of a people.” (Nietzsche 1990 c, 138; KSA 6, 183) All along history, Nietzsche shows, one can only come across these two types of Gods. “There is in fact no other alternative for Gods: either they are the will to power – and so long as they will be national Gods –, or else the impotence for power – and then they necessarily become good...” (Nietzsche 1990 c, 139; KSA 6, 183)

In Nietzsche’s work, the critique of the Christian religion is extremely complex. It is directed both at the ecclesiastical institution, which would distort the original Christian experience, being in fact entirely anti-Christian, and at the effects of the Christian morality on the way of thinking of the European man. Both aspects – the critique of the institution of Church and of the European thinking – cannot be separated from the radical critique of metaphysics.

From Rational Theology to Dionysiac Pluralism

The manner in which Nietzsche conceives the critique of metaphysics has as a central moment the bringing forth of the theological component of metaphysics, acknowledged under the name of natural or rational theology. Taken literally, the enunciation regarding “God’s death” is truly terrifying. It is intended to be the precise description of a state of being, of a central event of the European history, deeply engrained by the phe-

nomenon of nihilism. In short, this means that the values and the ideals of the European culture are no longer efficient. Moreover, the respective event has deeper and much older origins. Nietzsche identifies it as an in-depth structure, as a logic that supports, from the very beginning, the way of being of the European man. The philosopher acts as a doctor in this respect: recording the symptoms of the illness, he finds out its hidden causes, in order to further come up with a treatment. When the foundation of European values – the nothingness – is brought forth, this fact is accompanied by panic, in the same way as the certainty of an illness terrifies the sick person. However, it is only the revelation of the illness that can convince him to bear the treatment. Nietzsche's analysis of the modern world, carried out in a quasi-medical language, as well as the prescription and the diagnosis he gave must be permanently referred to his philosophical outlook, at the heart of which there is life, understood as will to power. According to this "medical" scenario, the statement regarding God's death is equivalent to the acknowledgement of the falling of a whole world, followed by the identification of the reason for this: the nothingness.

But what exactly was that "world"? Was it just the supra-sensitive "world" of ideals, which represented, along many centuries, the main justification for reality? It had lost its efficiency, not being able to justify European man's way of being anymore. The history of this "error", as Nietzsche calls it, encompasses all instances that held, one by one, the central place in metaphysics, the place of purpose of the whole existence: ideas, God, the moral imperative, progress, happiness, culture and civilisation. It is this idea that stands at the core of Heidegger's interpretation, according to which the announcement of "God's death" supposes becoming aware of the reversal of the "value" of all preceding values. (Heidegger 1980, 205-263) Values that were considered "supreme" lose their status, their place being inevitably taken by the ones formerly regarded as "weak". But the principle of this reversal is the will to power. In Heidegger's interpretation, this is the pure and absolute will that wants itself (in other words, "will to will"). God's death occurs when his place is taken by another instance. But what is the "place" he holds? In other words, what is his function? Within metaphysical thinking, the place God holds is the one of causal efficiency and of conservation of the created world. It is exactly this place that stays unoccupied. With the beginning of modern age, it is the subject who has turned into the symbolic centre of the world. When man established himself as ego cogito, whose latest hypostasis is the will to power, God's death becomes unavoidable. In this regard, Heidegger's interpretation stays true to a famous fragment from *The Gay Science* (Nietzsche 1974, 181-2; KSA 3, 480-2): "Whither is God? (...) We have killed him – you and I! All of us are his murderers!" The madman who announces God's death to some unfaithful people cries incessantly: "I seek God!" This might be the beginning of the remedy, suggests Heidegger. The reason is easily understandable: Nietzsche attacks a certain, totally inadequate, image upon God, namely the one made up by man. The brought up figure of the divine is one of a moral idol. This idea is supported, by decisive arguments, by Jean-Luc Marion. Whereas the idol favours the purely human experience of the divine, transforming it into a simply present being, the icon preserves the distance between the divine and the human, rendering visible the image the divine itself can show. As Marion specifies, the divine visits us in the distance itself, beyond our sensitive and conceptual idols. In philosophical terms, if the supreme existence is an instance belonging to metaphysics, another image of the divine than the one offered by onto-theology should be looked for. Thus, a different experience of the divine would be necessary and, at the same time, a theology situated beyond onto-theology. Would the expo-

sure of the idols – the way Nietzsche achieves it – free a space not taken by idols? Does it come up with a different manner to test the divine? (Marion 1989, 22-6) Marion asserts that the simple announcement of “God’s death” is insufficient to overcome nihilism. Redeeming of the divine, as Nietzsche does it, takes place within metaphysics and nihilism, as it is achieved through a new idol – the will to power. Nietzsche remains idolater because he does not enter into the distance, but remains at the “pathos of distance”. In fact, absolute distance resides in the fact that no idol can announce God’s life or death, “who only had immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man had seen, nor can see” (1 Timothy, 6, 16). On the contrary, the pathos of distance (“the feeling of distance”), although found at the origin of the creation of values, ignores in fact God’s distance, trying to substitute itself to him (Marion 1989, 101-104). According to Marion, a totally different experience would only be to let the divine attain to the word, to interpellate us where we do not expect it, namely in the distance itself. In a fragment from the work *Beyond Good and Evil* (§ 295), Nietzsche invokes the idea that it is not the philosophers who attain to the divine, but the divine starts to philosophise:

“The very fact that Dionysus is a philosopher, and that gods too therefore philosophise, seems a by no means harmless novelty, and one calculated to excite suspicion precisely among philosophers.” (Nietzsche 1990 a, 220; KSA 5, 238)

The announcement of “God’s death” is neither an individual gesture of rebellion, nor the incontrovertible proof of Nietzsche’s atheism. It is the description of an event, maybe the most important in the modern history of the world. We find out what it actually supposes by means of three metaphors (Nietzsche 1974, 181-2; KSA 3, 480-2). “How could we drink up the sea?”, wonders the madman who proclaims this memorable phenomenon. The disappearance of the sea symbolises the negation of the infinite, of its presence in the finite world. “Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon?” As we know, the horizon is a metaphor of the limit, of the fact of encompassing things in a space where they acquire their outline, determination and shape. The disappearance of the horizon symbolises the negation of this space, of the world in which every thing reaches a determinate way of being. In the history of metaphysics, its role was played by the so-called “real world”, whose final hypostasis within modernity is, according to Nietzsche, the ego as such, with its various hypostasis. In the absence of the horizon, man becomes again free to give the measure of things himself. Finally, the madman wonders: “What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun?” The sun, analogon of the Idea of Good and of the Christian God, signifies the ultimate reason of the whole existence in the history of metaphysics. Its disappearance creates space for earth itself. Liberated by the justification through a “real world”, earth becomes sufficient to itself.

In fact, God’s death can be perceived only by the one who has experienced the divine in his own life and with his whole being, even if only as perception of his absence. The announcement brings forth the urgency of looking for a remedy, revealing, however, the possibility of some “new gods” occurring, as well. The idea is illustrated in the same aphorism from *The Gay Science*. The madman who announces God’s death shows his tragic condition, too. “Whither are we moving? (...) Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us?” The disappearance of the sun brings along the night. How can things be seen any more? Does not orientation become impossible? Is man ready to be himself the source of light of the entire being? “Is it not the great-

ness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?" The answer to the madman's questions is the superhuman. The situation Nietzsche puts up is worth being displayed in all its details. Before the superman's coming, the madman makes the memorable announcement in the pale light of a lantern. This is the damage light due to which the disappearance of the "real world" can be seen. But it cannot be put up with, as man has not yet discovered orientation in the immanence of this world, the only existing one. That is why the madman becomes sceptical: "At last he threw his lantern on the ground, and it broke into pieces and went out. 'I have come too early', he said then; 'my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men' (...)." (Nietzsche 1974, 182; KSA 3, 481)

The divine, understood in the most radical way, is not the God of morality and of metaphysics, but the God that "is about to come", therefore the one that occurs from the future towards the present. Acknowledging God's absence, that is his inefficiency for modern man's life as such, Nietzsche wonders what functions he used to fulfil, what his use was for life. The answer is not at all surprising. God was ensuring the fixity of values; he was the active force behind their transformation into immutable data that form the basis of both religion and morality. It was also him that was ensuring the truth, therefore the truth of science and knowledge in general, of the identity of things with himself, of their unity. God was the principle of the difference between truth and error, a measure of the separation between the true and the apparent world. He had to be "killed" in order to dissolve the onto-theological separation between the two "worlds" and the epistemological separation between truth and error. In all these cases, he was fulfilling a metaphysical function. It is the reason for which "God's death" entails a "long plenitude and sequence of breakdown, destruction, ruin, and cataclysm that is now impending" (Nietzsche 1974, 279; KSA 3, 573)

Nietzsche's model of critique did not go unnoticed in the 20th century. The critique of the rational theology has often come back into focus, its main purpose being to remove God's understanding as a simple concept, therefore as an idol, so as to reveal an original experience of the divine. For Heidegger, for instance, the philosophers' God remains a simple present being, a historical determination through which the being itself was represented as supreme existence. Also within the framework of phenomenology, authors such as Michel Henry, Emmanuel Lévinas or Jean-Luc Marion, to name just a few of the best known ones, try to go down to the roots of theology, in order to highlight the very possibility that the divine reveals itself and becomes a phenomenon. In a different register, Derrida draws an analogy between deconstruction and apophatic theology, investigating the conditions of possibility of what is, by definition, the very impossible, the incalculable, the indeterminate. Finally, within the framework of the Biblical hermeneutics, the expansion of the fact of interpretation is linked to exploring the weakened regime of the sacred text, which can be seen as any other text, therefore as a compilation of social games and reading practices, getting close to the status of the myth which, lacking a text of origin, permanently translates itself. (Greisch 1985, 28)

Rigorously speaking, the announcement of "God's death" does not necessarily prove the atheism of the one that professes it. In *Ecce homo*, Nietzsche states that, for him, atheism results from the instinct of not accepting an already given, definitely set answer.

"'God', 'immortality of the soul', 'redemption', 'beyond' - without exception, concepts to which I never devoted any attention, or time (...) I do not by any means know

atheism as a result; even less as an event: it is matter of course with me, from instinct. I am too inquisitive, too questionable, too exuberant to stand for any gross answer. God is a gross answer, an indelicacy against us thinkers – at bottom merely a gross prohibition for us: you shall not think!” (Nietzsche 1989 b, 236-7; KSA 6, 278-9)

In the foreground of Nietzsche’s “atheism” there is the programmatic refusal of the given. God as a simple answer – this idea is unacceptable to Nietzsche. The critique of values, of idols, of ideals has as a purpose the refusal of mediation, be it by means of an image, a concept or by language in general. (KSA 1, 878-881) Its stake is expressing the will to power in the absence of any mediation. Nietzsche’s enemy is God as an idol, as a simple present being, as mediator of life (and of the will to power) with itself. In his early works, the representation in the absence of the image and of the concept is attributed to the Dionysian art. (Liiceanu 1993, 168)

“God’s death”, Nietzsche shows, is the most important event of modern times, with important consequences on our way of being. It brings with it the complete nihilism, experimented by man as total absence of all meaning that was already formed. Thus, it opens up a space free of already fixed meanings and prejudices, a space in which new experiences become possible. For this reason, nihilism must not be seen as a negative occurrence. On the contrary, according to Nietzsche, it brings with itself “a new and scarcely describable kind of light, happiness, relief, exhilaration, encouragement, dawn”.

“Indeed, we philosophers and ‘free spirits’ feel, when we hear the news that ‘the old god is dead’, as if a new dawn shone on us; our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, premonitions, expectation. At long last the horizon appears free to us again, even if it should not be bright; at long last our ships may venture out again, venture out to face any danger; all the daring of the lover of knowledge is permitted again; the sea, our sea, lies open again; perhaps there has never yet been such an ‘open sea’.” (Nietzsche 1974, 280; KSA 3, 574)

In fact, this new way of being represents the condition which makes possible the creation of new values and of the yes said to the whole existence. “The concept ‘God’ has hitherto been the greatest objection to existence... We deny God; in denying God, we deny accountability: only by doing that do we redeem the world”. (Nietzsche 1990 b, 65; KSA 6, 97) Nietzsche values Antiquity’s pagan religious cults, which he understands as “a form of thanksgiving and affirmation of life”, one in which happens the overflow of a tragically, but fulfilled spirit, that assumes the contradictions and the questionable aspects of existence. (Nietzsche 1968, 542; KSA 11, 41 [6] [7], 680-2) For the “tragic man”, suffering is bearable because world as such is sacred in itself, in his vision. (Nietzsche 1968, 540; KSA 11, 41 [6] [7], 680-2) Dionysus’ image is invoked as symbol of plurality, just as we come across it, to a great extent, in the pagan religions of Antiquity. His preference for them is due not only to his option for pluralism, but also to the fact that they render possible the discovery of the factual life, the rooting of meanings and human values in the corporality of man and, by its mediation, in nature as such.

5. Conclusion

Genealogy discovers that values and ideals are rooted in man’s corporality, which carries the whole pre-human world in itself. Religious values and beliefs are not different. Is this a proof of the reductionism of Nietzsche’s method? Not at all. The fact that Nietzsche sets the focus on instincts, affects, needs and impulses does not mean that the

interpretation of religious phenomena will be limited to them. Rediscovering the “earth” of man, genealogy is not intended to reduce a group of phenomena to others. The stake of Nietzsche’s approach is to do justice to the element that was forgotten by classical thinking, an element that classical thinking even banished from the human “nature”. From religion to culture and metaphysics, all these aspects result out of man’s factual life, which is only a summary of the “text of nature” and, at the same time, its consequence. All human freedom, projected into the world through ideals and values, is decisively imbued by corporality. Not to see the union between the body, on the one hand, and values and ideals, on the other hand, favouring only man’s elevated part – this was the error of the previous thinking. Although it derives out of the corporality (of the forces and wills of power), values are the expression of man’s freedom, the assertion of his overflow and of his capability. Moreover, as we have seen, they go back to the insignificant element out of which they arise, changing it. Because of this, we can conclude that the stake of Nietzsche’s genealogy is to discover, in every phenomenon, the unity between body and values, between what it is given to man and his possibilities.

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AUREL CODOBAN

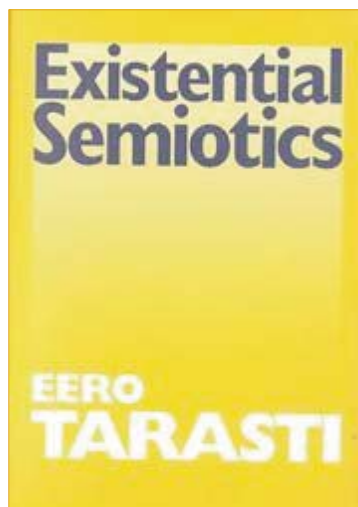
Eero Tarasti, *Existential Semiotics*

Indiana University Press, Bloomington
and Indianapolis, 2001

De la pragmatică semiotică la semiotică cu subiect existențial

În câmpul problematic al filosofiei continentale recente, semiotic și existențial sunt concepte relativ disjuncte. Relativ disjuncte pentru că opoziția categorică se plasează de fapt între semiotică (semiologie) și hermeneutică. Dar existențial, așa cum este el înțeles îndeosebi în contextul heideggeriano-sartreian, implică înțelegerea care, la rîndul ei, implică hermeneutica. Atari opoziții și-au mai făcut simțită prezența în istoria câmpului problematic al filosofiei occidentale. Astfel, ideea imobilității ființei, lansată de Parmenide s-a opus ideii devenirii, propusă de Heraclit. Mai târziu, Platon a dat dreptate atât lui Parmenide, cît și lui Heraclit, desigur asimetric, adică valorizînd mai mult cerul parmenidian al idelor pure imobile decît lumea devenirii heracliteene, în care ne aflăm noi. Atunci cînd, după formula lui Berkeley („a fi înseamnă a fi perceput”), ceea ce este a devenit relativ la ceea ce cunoaștem a apărut de îndată disputa dintre raționaliști și empiriști. Sinteza a aparținut lui Kant, care a dat dreptate atât raționalismului, cît și empirismului, desigur, tot într-un mod structurat și asimetric, adică un pic mai multă raționaliștilor, decît empiriștilor.

Acum, cînd tema filosofică a epocii noastre este cea a comunicării: ceea ce este și ceea ce cunoaștem este relativ la ceea ce comunicăm. Dar comunicăm noi în virtutea structurilor limbii sau în temeiul adversei reciprocități heideggeriene dintre Ființă și om? Iar intelcția semnelor ține de lectură semiotică sau de interpretare hermeneutică? Are dreptate semiologia structuralistă, în general semiotica, sau hermeneutica? După cum prea bine se știe, lipsește încă marele sintetizator de talia lui Platon sau Kant. Dar, în anumite condiții, îl așteptăm. Aceste condiții se referă la faptul că, așa cum a treia generație a semiologiei structuraliste, postmodernității, ne-a prevenit, timpul marilor narațiuni justificative, timpul marilor sisteme filosofice speculative pare să fi trecut definitiv. Așa că, diferit de o mare teorie, ar trebui, poate, să așteptăm o diferită și mai bună practică a comunicării. În cîte-



Professor Aurel Codoban, Ph.D.

Babes-Bolyai University,
Cluj, Romania.

Author of the books:

Repere și prefigurări (1982),
Structura semiologică a structuralismului (1984),
Filosofia ca gen literar (1992),
Sacru și ontofanie (1998),
Semn și interpretare (2001),
Amurgul iubirii (2004).

Email:

aurelteodor@yahoo.com

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va rînduri ea s-a anunțat și a părut să vină, într-adevăr, odată cu „gîndirea slabă” a grupului din jurul lui Vattimo sau cu deconstructivismul lui Derrida. Dar de fiecare dată, aceste formule n-au produs decît soluții punctuale și nu marea practică, jumelată între semiotică și hermeneutică, a comunicării.

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Semiotica structuralistă a dominat o bună parte din a doua jumătate a secolului al XX-lea. Ceea ce a făcut tăria epistemică a acestei semiotici, ceea ce i-a favorizat imperialismul metodologic a reprezentat însă și principala ei carență: din cele trei direcții posibile ale analizei semnului așa cum le identifică Morris, pe urmele lui Peirce, semantică (relația semnelor cu înțelesul lor), sintaxă (relația dintre semne) și pragmatică (relația dintre semne și oameni) proiectul structuralist al semiologiei a redus semantica la sintaxă și a ignorat programatic pragmatica. Desigur, punctul de plecare al acestei atitudini teoretice își are originea la Saussure. Pentru Saussure, care era lingvist, semnul privilegiat a fost cel al comunicării verbale, cuvîntul. Tot de la început, semnificarea a fost legată principial de sistemul limbii (langue), de ceea ce face posibilă comunicarea, nu de procesul vorbirii (parole), adică de exprimarea subiectului așa că, încă de aici, grație interesului exclusiv pentru comunicare, nu pentru exprimare, semnificația a început să fie legată exclusiv de relația dintre semne. Adică interesul omului față de semnele limbii a fost situat la o prea mare înălțime universal abstractă pentru a mai putea conta pentru pragmatica reală.

Interesul față de semne a lui Peirce, contemporanul lui Saussure, a fost mult mai larg, și de aceea el a legat semnificația mai degrabă de cognoscibilitate decît de comunicare. E adevărat că și această opțiune ridică probleme: dacă semnul este legat de cunoaștere, nu de comunicare, el rămînea în aria tematizării cunoașterii și nu mai primea pregnanța pe care linia saussureană, prin semiologia structuralistă, i-a asigurat-o. De altfel, mai tîrziu, unul din continuatorii săi, Morris, a preferat să lege semnificația de comportament. Pe această linie s-a dezvoltat ceea ce Eero Tarasti numește semiotica Americană, interesată de comunicarea non-verbală și alimentată de științele naturii și comportamentului.¹ Invocarea comportamentului ca și punct de plecare pentru semnificare poate fi deosebit de importantă dacă realizăm faptul că motivarea, caracteristică mai ales unor semne non-lingvistice cum sunt indicii, semnalele, simptomele și imaginile, trece astfel înaintea imotivării, arbitrarității semnului lingvistic, respectiv că analogicul trece înaintea digitalului, cum zice Watzlavick, în constituirea paradigmei semnului. Desigur, un atare model mai larg al semnului a avut cîștig de cauză în ultimul sfert de veac al secolului XX din cauza ascensiunii în comunicare în primul rînd a imaginii, și apoi a altor aspecte neverbale ale semiozei: sunetele, gesturile, mirosurile (parfumurile).

Dar nu această dimensiune a evoluției semioticii este urmată de către Eero Tarasti² în *Existential Semiotics* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2001). Mutația cea mai importantă pentru Tarasti este introducerea dimensiunii temporale. Într-adevăr, la fel ca și eleatismul parmenidian, ori ca raționalismul modern, semiotica clasică nu s-a dovedit convenabilă pentru analiza proceselor, mișcării. Or semiotica existențială a lui Eero Tarasti își propune să analizeze tocmai „processes, temporality, signs in flux, and particularly in the states before fixation into a sign, or what I call “pre-signs”.” (p. VII) „A semiotic act occurs as the production of an act-sign by means of the help of a pre-sign or enunciant/utterant; or the act takes place as the interpretation of the act-sign by means of the help of the post-sign or interpretant.” (p. 33) Într-adevăr, momentul semiotic cel mai interesant al semnelor este cel de dinaintea și de după constituirea lor, de vreme ce viața semnelor, care nu este nesfîrșită, dar nu are totuși limite de principiu,

nu se poate termina prin fixarea lor într-un obiect.³

La fel cum a ignorat aspectul pragmatic al relațiilor pre-semnelor cu oamenii, ca producători ai lor, semiotica dominată de structuralism a ignorat și cealaltă aripă a procesului pragmatic, adică însăși momentul înțelegerii. Semioticienii structuraliști s-au mărginit la o lectură a semnelor care rezida în aplicarea codului corect. Ei s-au interesat de condițiile posibilității înțelegerii și nu de momentul sau procesul înțelegerii. Dar fără înțelegerea semnelor nu există sens: simpla lectură a semnelor poate fi foarte bine apanajul mașinilor. Conform tezei filosofiei existențialiste, mai mult sartrienne decât heideggeriene, semnul apare într-o situație, într-o poziție dată, concretă spațio-temporal, adică într-un anumit context. Semnul e în relație cu situația în care apare: o neagă sau o afirmă. Dacă puterea semnului provine din situație, care e un fel de izotopie semantică, atunci semnul e un semn slab. Structuralismul a acordat mai multă importanță structurilor care susțin semnele, deci semnelor puternice în raport cu situațiile, decât situațiilor în care ele apar, adică tăriei semnului. În schimb, hermeneutica a preferat să contextualizeze semnele, să le slăbească astfel încât ele să se supună interpretării și înțelegerii, mai degrabă decât lecturii.

Desigur, a existat o perioadă când semiotica și hermeneutica erau nedespărțite și când lectura și interpretarea erau una. Hermeneutica retorico-filologică a începuturilor pornea de la explicitare, prin interpretare, spre înțelegere, într-o mișcare care seamănă mult cu cea a lecturii semiotice. Dar mereu hermeneutica a avut un adversar, o contrafigură în ceea ce privește interpretarea: hermetismul mai întâi, în modernitatea târzie, hermeneuticele negative ale măștrilor bănuiei pe care îi invocă Ricoeur (Marx, Freud și Nietzsche), iar acum, în modernitatea târzie și postmodernitate, semiologia. În opoziție cu hermeneutica heideggeriano-gadameriană, care s-a vrut antimetodică, semiotica, mai ales cea structuralistă, a vrut să fie sau s-a pretins a fi științifică, adică metodică în felul științelor naturii. De aceea, crede Erro Tarasti, ea nu s-a interesat, pînă de curînd, de procesele semnului ci de ceea ce poate fi cuantificat și obiectivat, ceea ce se potrivește foarte bine cu ceea ce Husserl numea înțelegerea semnificației. Examinînd din această perspectivă cele 15 definiții posibile ale înțelegerii (vezi p. 65-69), Erro Tarasti le identifică cu diferite operații semiotice. Acest lucru a devenit posibil întrucît din perspectiva finalului secolului al XX-lea și în urma evoluției și convergențelor interioare, semiotica acceptă acum ideea că semioza este comunicare plus semnificare, că semnul și înțelesul ca noțiuni centrale ale semioticii nu sînt epuizate prin descrierea procesului de comunicare ca o legătură de la emițător la receptor, nici că elucidarea structurii semnului, fără investigarea contextului, isotopiei sau sociosferei epuizează semioza. (p. 17)

Procesualitatea comunicării nu numai că implică dinamica semnificării, dar presupune, întrucît nu este un proces natural, ci unul artificial, cu finalitate, și un subiect care își caută expresia de sine prin acest proces. Odată cu această manieră de a gândi semnificarea, împotriva pozițiilor programatice structuraliste, chiar și semiotica europeană a început să facă loc interesului pentru pragmatică, pentru relațiile omului cu semnele și pentru calitatea acestui subiect semiotic. Dar dacă a făcut loc omului ca subiect semiotic după 1990, semiotica s-a interesat mai degrabă de rețelele neuronale sau de decît de calitatea efectivă de subiect semiotic a omului, adică de felul cum omul face uz de semne spre a se exprima. De aceea, programul lui Eero Tarasti este de a edifica o semiotică care să țină seama de ceea ce s-a numit pragmatică semiotică, adică de relația omului cu semnele, atît în calitate de semeiourg, de producător al semnelor, cît și în aceea de interpret al lor, dar totul în registrul expresivității existențiale.

Pentru a realiza acest program, Erro Tarasti nu mai recurge însă la lingvistica saussureană și nici măcar la științele psiho-sociale ale comportamentului, ci, în mod neașteptat, la fenomenologie, hermeneutică și existențialism, implicând în fapt o arie mai largă a metodelor de gândire, de la Hegel și Kierkegaard, la Heidegger și Sartre. Desigur, nu aceasta este calea pentru a restaura pragmatica, pentru că și hermeneutica fenomenologică exclude de fapt interesul fixat pe relația semnelor cu oamenii: diferit însă de semiologia structuralistă, ea reduce sintaxa și pragmatica la semantică. Totodată, spre deosebire de semiologia structuralistă, ea implică un subiect care, în perioada modernă a hermeneuticii psihologico-istorice, era o formă elaborată a celui kantiano-hegelian, pentru a deveni mai apoi, odată cu hermeneutica filosofică, heideggeriano-gadameriană, odată cu Heidegger și Sartre, un subiect existențial. Desigur, ca peste tot în gândirea occidentală, și aici situația este puțin mai complicată. Proiectul omului ca persoană a fost un proiect specific și fundamental creștin. Însă, prin filosofia kantiană, modernitatea nu l-a putut realiza decât dedublat – prin raportare la necesitate sau libertate – fie ca subiectul cunoașterii, felul cum este reprezentat omul în Critica rațiunii pure, fie ca subiect al moralei, felul cum este reprezentat omul în Critica rațiunii practice. Odată cu filosofia lui Heidegger și Sartre și odată cu hermeneutica heideggeriano-gadameriană apare un subiect diferit de cele kantiene, un subiect existențial care este mai aproape de ideea creștină a persoanei prin asumarea responsabilă și anxioasă a libertății. Acesta este subiectul pe care Eero Tarasti intenționează să-l recupereze în proiectul său semiotic. Desigur, el nu rămîne strict la acest subiect. Împotriva unității clasice a subiectului, prezintă și în cazul existențialismelor, împotriva monologizării interpretării, el adoptă ideea postmodernă a subiectului plural sau a pluralității persoanei: faptul că omul își schimbă rolurile îl ajută să vadă lumea din diferite puncte de vedere și este una din explicațiile bune ale posibilității înțelegerii. (p. 73)

Prin urmare, opțiunea programatică și explicită a lui Eero Tarasti nu este atît pentru o manifestă pragmatică semiotică, cît pentru o semiotică ce poate integra și, prin urmare, care suportă toate consecințele adoptării unui subiect existențial. Ceea ce își propune să facă Erro Tarasti cu teoria procesuală a semnului - negarea lumii semnelor obiective cu gramaticile și legile ei, revenirea la o lume goală de sensuri și afirmarea plenitudinii semnificante a sufletului lumii - este să invoce subiectul uman care pune în mișcare semnele în actul său de a exista. (p. 12) Transcendența e de fapt o transcendere – ca în Steppenwolf a lui Herman Hesse, ca să imităm stilul trimiterilor din Existential Semiotics -, și ea creează dialectica necesară atît corectării subiectivismului negativist al existențialiştilor, cît și plenitudinii pozitive a semnelor semiologiei structuraliste. În acest punct, Erro Tarasti se desparte de semioticienii care în general identifică semiotica cu comunicarea și care, orientați spre lume, studiază obiectele și textele ca semne. El se angajează mai degrabă în iluminarea existenței, printr-o metodă de transluminare care este opusă acelei științe care examinează detaliile, caută constantele și obține adevărul îndepărtîndu-se de prezența subiectului. Dimpotrivă, semiotica existențială tarastiană, caută individualitatea și particularitatea fenomenelor, sufletul lor, care se deschide numai în prezența subiectului. Ea operează dinspre abstract spre concret, de la biografia oficială la emoțiile cotidiene și experiențele interioare care ghidează alegerile oamenilor.

Dacă adoptăm această metodă, similară, de altfel, cu cea a marilor artiști, atunci realitatea fizică a semnelor se schimbă radical: semnele nu sînt mai mult decît o suprafață în interiorul căreia subiectul, sufletul, se mișcă. Nu semioticianul structuralist, ci artistul devine norma lecturii și producerii semnelor. Dar introducerea subiectului existențial în semiotică nu înseamnă o copiere a celui existențialist, sartreian sau heideggerian. și aceas-

ta nu atât sau nu numai pentru că, împotriva individualismului existențialist, el refuză de la început solipsismul în numele unei implicite comunități a creatorilor. Dacă la un prim nivel Erro Tarasti contrapune singurului tip de transcendență recunoscut de Sartre, negația, plenitudinea, la al doilea nivel el pare să contrapună simplei anxietăți „negarea anxietății prin latura ei pozitivă” apropiată nu numai de zen, dar și de quietism. Or, pentru Erro Tarasti semnul existenței subiectului existențial este anxietatea. Dar capacitatea de a rezista anxietății se revelează a fi capacitatea necesară creației. (p. 92) Adică Erro Tarasti are în vedere mereu artistul și creația sa ca și subiect semiotic și semioză pentru a impune o critică a comunicării dinspre semnificare, inversul poziției structuraliste care reduce semnificarea la comunicare. Subiectul semioticii tarastiene este un *semeiourg* sau un interpret, un subiect creator de semne și responsabil etic, în căutarea autenticității ceea ce corespunde situației umane a artistului. Foarte simplu, semiotica existențială poate fi definită semiotica subiectului anxios și autentic în căutarea anxioasă a autenticului.

A fost una din caracteristicile modernității faptul de a construi omul de jos în sus, pornind de la interes, dorință sau frică. Modernitatea târzie și postmodernitatea au pus accentul mai ales pe dorință, ceea ce este și cazul gramaticii narative greimasienne. Subiectul dorinței este mai puțin uman, este mult mai aproape de funcționarea mecanismelor; de aici refuzul lui Erro Tarasti de a construi omul în cheia dorinței. Anxietatea, în schimb, e un sentiment existențial învecinat cu cel creatural, avramic. E un fel de revenire, mult mai slabă desigur, la vechia manieră de a construi omul de sus în jos, dinspre o esență dată spre abaterile de la ea, spre cădere sau păcat. Tarasti însă utilizează semiotic anxietatea subiectului existențial pentru a indica o incongruență între semnificant și semnificat, un dezechilibru între expresie și conținut, un conflict între două sisteme semiotice: structura semiotică internă a eului și cea a lumii exterioare și mai ales pentru a putea afirma că rostirea precede limba. (p. 81-82)

Semiotica existențială a lui Erro Tarasti devine astfel o a treia încercare, după „gîndirea slabă”, propusă de Vattimo și grupul său, și „deconstrucție”, propusă de Derrida, de a rezolva problema sintezei dintre semiotică și hermeneutică, dintre lectura semnelor și interpretarea lor. Analizînd metamorfozele culturale ale cuplului categorial și stilistic structural/existențial, Erro Tarasti constată că el apare în multe variante și combinații. Din această perspectivă, combinația în care apar cei doi protagoniști – semiotica structurală și hermeneutica existențială în cazul lui Erro Tarasti însuși ar trebui numită semiotică (structuralistă) cu subiect existențial (hermeneutic).

Această semiotică existențială nu mai poate însă – după cum nici celelalte două încercări nu au putut – lua forma marilor teorii sau metodologii mai mult sau mai puțin speculative după cenzura pe care le-o contrapune acestora postmodernismul. Ceea ce are ea de făcut în forma „intuitivă” și „fragmentară” pe care se vede obligată să o adopte este să articuleze soluțiile date deja în cîmpul problematic al filosofiei. Desigur, mai mult sau mai puțin explicit și la fel ca marile sinteze ale lui Platon, față de eleatism, sau Kant, față de raționalism, Erro Tarasti dă mai multă dreptate semioticii decît hermeneuticii întrucît o consideră pe prima mai capabilă decît a doua să-și extindă analizele la comunicarea cotidiană. Totodată, semiotica lui este diferită de semiologia structuralistă pentru că include, urmînd tradiția americană, domeniul semnelor non-verbale.

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Dar ce perspectivă aruncă asupra comunicării cotidiene această semiotică cu subiect existențial? Survine, odată cu ea, așa cum spuneam la început că s-au manifestat speranțele în contextul postmodernismului și o practică diferită a comunicării? O parte

importantă a cărții lui Tarasti este consacrată tocmai analizei comunicării concrete, cotidiene. Oricum, proiectul schițat de Eero Tarasti al unei semiotici existențiale, tocmai pentru că este existențială, merge de la început și în totalitate mână în mână cu o critică a comunicării actuale. Constatarea imediată care ni se impune este că în civilizația noastră reprezentarea lumii ca text și, în general, primatul textului, a devenit caducă. Într-adevăr, am intrat irevocabil într-o civilizație a imaginii. Problema este că am făcut-o fără să ne apropiem astfel și de realitatea reprezentată. Aceste imagini pe care ni le oferă mass-media au aura indicală a imaginilor tradiționale, dar sunt deja produsul mai mult decât al unei reproduceri tehnice (Walter Benjamin), al unei construcții electronice, digitale (Vilém Flusser). În comunicarea mass-media semnele-imagini se referă unele la altele și se validează unele pe altele. Simțurile noastre nu mai sunt în contact direct cu obiectul. Între experiența originară și realitatea virtuală a intervenit unul din conflictele invocate de McLuhan, care ne prevenise asupra alienării simțurilor și experienței directe. Sîntem astfel privați de relațiile cu realitatea referențială prin intermediul iconurilor analogice directe și al indicilor-efecte, în favoarea unor indici indirecți produși și manevrați ca și limbaje – parfumurile, aditivii din mîncăruri etc- ori a unor imagini devenite limbaj mass-media.

Cea care îngăduie de fapt indicilor și imaginilor să devină un limbaj în noile mass-media este mecanismul de reprezentare a reprezentării. Desigur, faptul că omul este un creator de unelte cu care produce alte unelte îi caracterizează, după cum s-a spus, la fel de mult umanitatea ca și dubla articulare lingvistică. Problema este însă că diferit de artă, care e un fel de reprezentare, o simulare a realității, televiziunea, video-ul, computerele produc o lumea media care este un simulacrum în totalitatea ei. Diferența rezidă în aceea că reprezentarea artistică permite doar elaborarea unui model restrictiv al realității, pe cînd, în universul mass-media, realitatea este abandonată înainte de limitările modelului. (p. 210) Prin urmare, dacă dubla articulare a uneltelor îngăduie o mai eficientă intervenție în lume, reprezentarea reprezentării ne îndepărtează de realitate.

Civilizația noastră este pe cale de a părăsi realitatea pentru a se instala într-un nou mediu, într-o lume a cărei realitate devine virtuală. Dar forța civilizației actuale rezidă, ca forța tuturor civilizațiilor anterioare, în capacitatea de a-și construi și gestiona propriul mediu. E adevărat că și altădată, la fel ca acum, am fost preveniți de astfel de pericole care nu s-au dovedit chiar atît de efective. Numai că acum mediul construit de civilizația noastră pare să ne separe mai mult de realitate decât alte medii construite de alte civilizații în istorie. Emblema acestei situații o reprezintă realitatea virtuală cu caracteristicile ei atît de apreciate de către adepți: interactivitate și imersivitate. Dar, la o analiză atentă, interactivitatea se dovedește a fi, mai degrabă, intra-activitate, pentru că subiectul nu întîlnește un alt tip de realitate. Iar imersivitatea nu înseamnă scufundarea în altă realitate decât sine însuși. (p. 212)

Desigur, critica semiotică nu este atît de naivă încît să invoce o realitate absolută de genul lucrului în sine kantian. Pentru semiotica tarastiană, care este una existențială, problema realității este de fapt problema autenticității. Or, autenticitate înseamnă să fii aici și acum. Dar subiectul existențial al semioticii tarastiene își propune programatic să fie aici și acum. Semiotic First (Pierce) este realitatea, chiar dacă îmbogățită de urmele istoriei umanității, punctul zero în care eu, subiectul, pentru a fi autentic, trebuie să fiu

aici și acum, fără desituări și dezangajări. Caracteristica realității, așa cum o concepe semiotica existențială tarastiană, este faptul că ea se opune subiectului, că manifestă o rezistență, la fel cum, în procesul comunicării, celălalt, alteritatea, își manifestă prezența printr-o rezistență definitorie și necesară. În neînțelegere – adesea dezvoltată într-un conflict – stă posibilitatea întâlnirii autentice cu celălalt! În această prevenire împotriva oricărei mistici fuzionale se simte în filonul existențialist al gândirii tarastiene prezența creștinismului.

Dar practica actuală a comunicării mass-media, în pofida declaratei atenții acordate alterității, fie o dizolvă prin fuzionare, fie o ignoră pur și simplu. Realitatea virtuală se bazează pe categoria similarității, iar perspectiva ei asupra lumii este solipsismul extrem, autismul. De aceea jocurile de computer nu ne revelează, așa cum speră adepții lor și unii teoreticieni prea optimiști, din interior viața semnelor. Jucătorul este prins într-o eternă sincronie, este departe de durata creatoare bergsoniană. Chiar jocul cu un instrument tradițional rămîne mai complex decît mișcarea mouse-ului. Semiotica existențială tarastiană redescoperă astfel în procesul comunicării mediatice actuale schema hegeliano-heideggeriano-existențialistă a obiectivării ca alienare: cu cît investim inteligență în afara noastră, cu cît o obiectivăm în variate produse semiotice, mașini, computere, rămîne mai puțină inteligență pentru noi înșine, pentru propria noastră umanitate.

Comunicarea actuală este una tautologică și autistă, adică tautistă (Lucien Sfez). Ea a devenit prea autonomă, prea imperialistă în raport cu realitatea, pe de o parte, iar pe de altă parte prea parazitară în raport cu semnificarea existențială. „Specialiștii” mass-media uită că informația – o modalitate a lui „a ști” – e interrelaționată cu „a dori”, „a putea” (abilități tehnice), „a trebui” (norme), credințe, afecte. (p.210) În schimb, semioticianul existențialist care ține seama de toate aceste interrelaționări, poate să descopere și să cartografieze regiunea dintre ceea ce audiența crede că vrea (adesea manipulată de oficialii mass media) și ceea ce crede că nu vrea. (p. 211). Semiotica constituie aproape singura cunoaștere analitică prin care e surprinsă natura semiotică a mass-media fără să uite valorile umane. (p. 212) Prin urmare, semiotica existențială a lui Eero Tarasti își propune să fie chiar critica teoretică a practicii comunicării actuale, tautologică și autistă, și proiectul existențial al unei comunicări autentice. Nu numai că interesul se schimbă de la semn la felul cum oamenii utilizează resursele semiotice, pentru a comunica și pentru a interpreta comunicarea – ceea ce devine tot o formă de producție semiotică –, dar ea este și o practică orientată spre observație și analiză, pentru a face această utilizare cît mai autentică. Am putea, în sens wittgensteinian, spune că, prin introducerea subiectului existențial în centrul demersului semiotic, semiotica tarastiană își propune să lupte împotriva vrăjirii mijloacelor intelectului nostru de către mijloacele comunicării noastre mediatice și tehnologizate.

Note:

1. Să ne amintim, de altfel, că și în marginea semiologiei structuralismului francez s-a dezvoltat un curent care, de asemenea și împotriva semiologiei lingvistice dominante, lega semnificarea de comportament: Lucien Goldman și Pierre Francastel, inspirați de psihologia genetică a lui Jean Piaget.

2. Eero Tarasti (n. 1948) este un muzicolog și semiotician finlandez, Ph.D. al Universității din Helsinki (1978) profesor de muzicologie la Universitatea din Helsinki. Pe lângă *Existential Semiotics* (2000), a mai publicat : *Introduction to Semiotics* (1990),

A Theory of Musical Semiotics (1994), La sémiotique musicale (1996), Signs of Music (2002), Values and Signs (2004) și a editat La musique comme langage I-II (ed.) (1987-88), Semiotics of Music (ed.) (1987), Semiotics of Finland (ed.) (1991), Sémiologie et pratiques esthétiques (ed.) (1991), On the Borderlines of Semiosis (ed.) (1992), Musical Signification (ed.) (1995), Musical Semiotics in Growth (ed.) (1996), Semiotics of Music (ed.), Musical Signification: Between Rhetoric and Pragmatics (ed.) (1998), Snow, Forest, Silence. The Finnish Tradition of Semiotics (ed.) (1998).

3. Evident, distincția pre-semn și trans-semn nu se suprapune peste distincția intern – extern, adică endo-semn și exo-semn: problema nu este aici aceea a planului intern sau a planului extern al semnelor. După Eero Tarasti, fiecare din cele două fețe ale semnului, semnificantul și semnificatul pot fi văzute atât din exterior, cât și din interior. Endo și exo semnele sînt semne act pe care pre-semnele le precedă și trans-semnele le transcend. (p. 55)

SABINA UNGUREANU

Rene Girard

Prăbușirea Satanei

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Intenția mărturisită încă dintru început de René Girard este configurarea unei „antropologii a religiosului” care să desfășoare marea hartă a culturii umane.

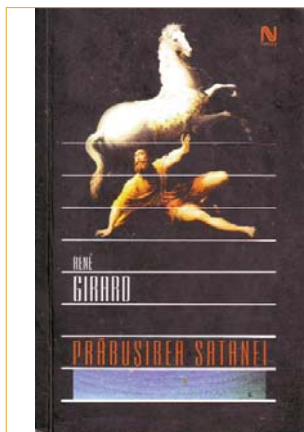
Deși rămâne fidel tematicii legate de sacru și de violența umană și se slujește de instrumentarul terminologic consacrat în Violența și sacral sau ȋapul ispășitor, o dată cu lucrarea de față se produce un viraj ușor deconcertant în optica gânditorului francez. Scriitura se îmbogățește și se impregnează cu semnificații religioase, nemaiaivând ca punct de plecare studiul sacralului în ipostazele sale mitologice și literare, ci cărțile biblice și evanghelice.

Declinându-și pretențiile filosofice și teologice, autorul întreprinde o pledoarie demistificatoare care încearca să reabiliteze spiritul tradiției iudeo-creștine, să spargă cercul prejudecăților care o circumscriu și să dizolve haloul mitic cu care timpul a aureolat-o. Ceea ce a reprezentat proiectul creștin nu a avut doar o valoare figurativă, redusă la dimensiunea pur alegorică a textelor biblice, incluse laolaltă în categoria „marilor povestiri”. Studiul atent al doctrinei evangheliilor lasă să se întrevadă, dincolo de aspectul revelatoriu, o profundă și complexă realitate antropologică, a cărei chintesență e însăși persoana lui Isus și miracolul Învierii. Prin vocea acestuia, creștinismul condamnă și dezamorsează mecanismele victimare și violența unanimă considerată de vechile colectivități umane benefică și ordonatoare.

Creștinismul original se înalță ca un far care luminează întinderile întunecate ale ignoranței mentalității arhaice, tributară violenței mimetice și omorului fondator, reflectate în mituri și reproduse într-o serie de rituri sacrificiale. Până la biblic, care le descoperă și le stigmatizează, aceste acte de violență au rămas adânc îngropate în „infrastructura mitologică”. Astfel, „Evangheliile sunt ca o hartă rutieră a crizelor mimetice și a rezolvării lor mitico-rituale, un ghid care ne permite să circulăm în religiosul arhaic fără să ne rățăcim”.

Abia în textele sfinte se problematizează pentru prima dată natura adevărată a ceea ce ramâne o constantă antropologică: violența colectivă, violență care se reiterează cu regularitate în sumbrul univers mitic, grație credinței în proprietățile sale transfiguratoare. Girard consideră Biblia și Evangheliile cheia de boltă pentru explicitarea acestui proces mimetic și al violenței care avea deja gravat pe ea principiul hobbesian care susține că „omul e lup pentru om”.

Împrumutând din etnologie metoda comparativă, Girard își propune să demonstreze diferențele care separă universul mitic de cel creștin. Pentru început Girard avansează teza similitudinilor textuale dintre unele mituri – ca cel al lui Oedip sau al mira-



Sabina

Ungureanu

Department of
Philosophy, Babes-
Bolyai University,
Cluj, Romania.

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Girard

colului lui Apollonios din Tyana – și episoade biblice pentru care ilustrative ar fi povestirea despre Iosif sau relatarea Patimilor lui Isus. Datele lor comune sunt regăsite chiar și în fenomenologia medievală a vânătorii de vrăjitoare.

Această corespondență surprinzătoare relevă de reperarea unei analogii structurale care îngăduie recompunerea unei realități infra și extra textuale comune celor două universuri. Intervalul comun dintre miteme și secvențele biblice constă într-o așa zisă „antropologie a mimeticului”, cu rădăcini în dorința și rivalitățile deopotrivă mimetice, inerente naturii umane. Existența aceluiași obiect al dorinței generează antagonisme care, datorită mimetismului mutual, șterge diferențele individuale și transformă adversarii în ființe interschimbabile, dublul aceluiași tip uman. O dată suprimate diferențele identitare, jocul mimetic al rivalităților sau al „scandalurilor”, cum le definește Biblia, își multiplică mișcarea și asupra celor din jur, seducând mulțimea și luând-o în stăpânire. Micile focare conflictuale proliferază și se extind vertiginos asupra colectivității, prin intermediul aceleiași forțe redutabile a mimetismului, escaladând tensiunile până la paroxismul unei crize generale. „Scandalurile dintre indivizi sunt pârlășele care se revarsă în marile râuri ale violenței colective. Se poate vorbi de o ambalare mimetică de natură a reuni într-un fascicul unic, împotriva aceleiași victime, toate scandalurile până nu demult independente unele de altele.” (p. 39)

În cadrul crizei generalizate, mulțimea devine o masă amorfă și omogenă, care acționează ca un singur trup, debordând de furie. Dar, în cele din urmă, uniformizându-se, violența reușește să se autoanihileze prin declanșarea mecanismul victimar, care funcționează ca o supapă, deflând tensiunile și polarizându-le asupra unei victime unice, potențial sacrificabile. E vorba de ceea ce modernii denumesc în mod generic cu apelativul de „țap ispășitor”, care dobândește virtutea de a eradica acel „bellum omnium contra omnes”, cu efecte fatale pentru societate.

Astfel, „toți contra toți” care fragmenta colectivitatea și o amenința cu aneantiizarea se preschimbă într-un unanim și reconciliator „toți contra unul”. Tranchilizarea mulțimilor și neutralizarea discordiei rezidă chiar în perfecta unanimitate a linșajului spontan. Numai în acest fel „criza e încheiată, calmul e restabilit, ciuma e vindecată, stihiiile se potolesc, haosul dă înapoi, ce era blocat se deblochează, neîmplinitul se împlinește, lacunarul se completează, nediferențiatul de diferențiază”. (p. 82)

Socotită la început periculoasă și deci inoportună, victima devine în ochii comunității un salvator divin care a restituit ordinea și a guvernat reconstrucția sistemului cultural. Prin urmare, miturile atestă o dublă transfigurare victimară: mai întâi, aceasta are parte de culpabilizare și de sacrificare, pentru ca mai apoi să se metamorfozeze într-un binefăcător și un restaurator al liniștii.

În comunitățile pre-creștine, acest fenomen de mulțime își reproduce neîncetat ciclul mimetic în structuri ritualizate, de rutină, care constituie formele fruste ale sacru-lui arhaic, rudimente ale religiosului, pe care creștinismul nu le recunoaște și le consideră manifestările păgâne ale „iluziei satanice”.

Ciclul mimetic și violența colectivă care se consumă în mod repetat în universul arhaic al miturilor cunosc o largă diseminare și în context biblic. Cu toate acestea, finalitatea lor e întotdeauna diferită, iar în cadrul Evangheliilor, schema mitică se răstoarnă. Ocultarea violenței, falsificarea mecanismului victimar prin nedreptățirea unei victime inocente, apoi divinizarea și victimizarea divinului, generatoare de false epifanii, sunt considerate de viziunea creștină drept morfologia pretensei sacralități arhaice. Noua realitate revelată prin figura mesianică demistifică ambalările contagioase ale mulțimii și iluzia persecutoare, recunoscând lipsa de vinovăție a victimei și dezbrăcând-o de valențele

sacre.

Abia „știința biblică a violenței descoperă resorturile care acționează violența și care nu posedă deloc virtuți catarctice, ci reprezintă Satana prin excelență”. După ce s-a mulțumit să cerceteze în paralel miturile și povestirile biblice, Girard operează acum o schimbare de direcție, aplicând peste universul arhaic grila de lectură creștină și adoptând retorica textelor evanghelice.

În acest spirit, autorul revalorifică noțiunea evanghelică de Satana asimilând-o însuși mimetismului conflictual. Diavolul devine suveranul acestei lumi, căci, profitând de ignoranța subiecților umani, el pune în funcțiune mașinăria circularităților mimetice, insinuându-se în sânul mulțimilor și ambalându-le până la limita supremă a crizei mimetice. Dar tot el se retrage și declanșează mecanismul victimar care pune capăt crizei și împiedică autodistrugerea comunității. E ceea ce în Biblie apare sub sintagma „Satana expulzează pe Satana”. Acest unghi de vedere elucidează și enigma societăților mitico-rituale. Acestea căzuseră pradă lanțului infinit al ambalărilor mimetice tocmai pentru că nu aveau conștiința caracterului lor real, erau incapabile să sesizeze în acestea articulațiile proiectului satanic. Însă limbajul simbolic al Evangheliilor divulgă și depășește limbajul obscur al violenței umane. Mai mult, ceea ce au însemnat Patimile lui Cristos dezamorsează mecanismul victimar instituit de Satana și-l neutralizează. Satana a fost, la rândul-i, mistificat și dezarmat, redus la neputință. Legitimitatea religiei creștine, impusă prin forța revelatoare, aruncă în dizgrație fetișismul practicilor și credințelor arhaice. Ea reprezintă triumful concepției creștine monoteiste asupra falselor divinități mitice, născute din sângele victimelor nevinovate.

Urmărind firul proiectului său antropologic, Girard străbate versanții culturii umane, trecând de la infernala spirală mitologică, cu circumvoluțiile dantești ale rivalităților, ambalărilor mimetice, escaladărilor conflictuale și sacrificiului uman violent, la revoluționara gândire creștină, care aruncă o nouă lumină asupra tenebrei credințelor mitice. Călăuzit de această lumină, scriitorul își incheie periplul pe pământul lumii moderne și al celei actuale, în care adânc implantata tradiție iudeo-creștină, deși revolută și reprimată în subteran, cunoaște apariția unui rod nou: preocuparea modernă pentru victime, fenomen căruia nici o societate anterioară, oricât de religioasă, nu i-a înțeles adâncile semnificații.

Scrisă la sfârșit de secol XX, această carte are într-adevăr o grea miză antropologică. Dincolo de sistemul semnificant cu care operează Girard, dincolo de abaterea de la direcția epistemologică pe care și-o propune înspre o operă ce are mai curând aspectul unei profesii de credință și a unei apologii a religiei creștine, se întrezărește un scop mai subtil. Într-un secol care a asistat la cele mai cumplite orori și a cunoscut recrudescența, mai violentă și mai deumanizantă ca oricând, a vechilor mitologii, sub aripa de fier a ideologiilor, trebuie să aibă loc o prăbușire a Satanei. Tocmai de aceea vede Girard în principiile creștinismului un balsam, o speranță, deschiderea spre o re-umanizare. Cu aceasta, însă, e vizibil faptul că Girard se îndepărtează de spiritul general al operei sale, deschizându-se spre o antropologie de tip teologic.

SILVIU TATU

Nicholas P. Lunn

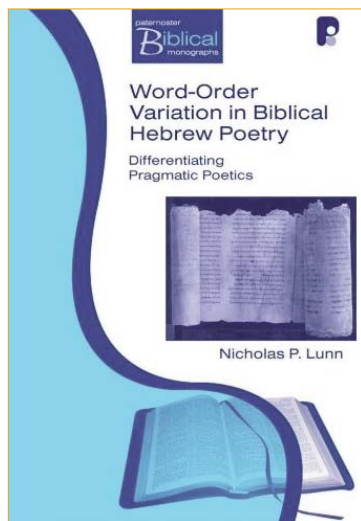
Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics.

2006. Paternoster Biblical Monographs. Milton Keynes: Paternoster. 373 pp. + xiv, bibliography, appendices, indexes.

In his 2004 Brunel Ph.D. thesis, Lunn employs pragmatics, more specifically the theory of information structure, in order to account for the large number of defamiliarised clauses (non-canonical word order) found in Hebrew poetry. Deriving from the linguistic tradition of Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), Lunn embarks on a long-awaited study. He is not aware, though, that on the other side of the Atlantic, in a similar theoretical context, S.L. Fariss approached the question of word order in Hebrew poetry producing *prima facie* opposite results.¹ One cannot wait to see how these two works will get along together.

Lunn praises Knud Lambrecht's theory of information as a more refined one and criticises Rosenbaum and Walter Gross for preferring a more traditional approach (pp. 255-273). He also argues that none of them was able to differentiate objectively between variation, which is purely poetic and that which is pragmatically marked. Although restricted to a particular group of texts or samples, none of the afore-mentioned authors attempted a more integrated analysis of the phenomena. Hence, Lunn prefers an extended database to accommodate many texts from Hebrew poetry and his interpretation of the data is very detailed and tabular. Exactly in this lies the deficiency of Lunn's method, because the texts in his database are too varied in terms of genre and date, and this is a matter that he never addresses.

Lunn noticed that Hebrew poetry displays a higher degree of deviation from the regular VSO word order than BH prose. Lunn's database included 1190 verbal clauses from Hebrew prose and 1243 verbal clauses from Hebrew poetry, with a higher percentage of verbal clauses in Hebrew poetry preferring a marked word order (34 per cent)



Lecturer Silviu Tatu, PhD

Pentecostal Theological Institute Bucharest.

Author of the books:
Profetismul israelit în documentele biblice: între fals și authentic (2007),
Interpretarea narațiunilor biblice: analiza literară a Judecătorilor (2004). Co-author of: *Curs de ebraică biblică*, (1999), *Ebraică biblică* (2001).

E-mail:
silviuntatu@gmail.com

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than in Hebrew prose (only 14.5 per cent) (p. 8). The database of verbal clauses from Hebrew poetry included, though, more than 7400 samples, drawn from more than 4000 verses of Hebrew poetry, including Psalms, Isaiah 40-66, Job 3-14, Proverbs 1-9, Song of Songs, and Numbers 23-24 (cf. Appendix 2).

As becomes apparent from the ninth chapter (pp. 195-254), the equivalent proportions produced after studying a corpus of 112 verbal clauses confirmed the more general results. Here Lunn discusses only those verses with verbal clauses that display non-canonical word order derived from a database that includes Psalm 1 and 103, Job 12, Song of Songs 1, and Num 23.7-10. Seventy-four (66 per cent) of those clauses displayed a canonical (regular) word order, whereas the rest (34 per cent) displayed a non-canonical one.

After criticising Buth (1992) for the insufficiency of his explanations and Shimasaki for his ignorance (rather unfairly picking a fight with him), Lunn concludes 'as a general rule in Hebrew poetry that the ordering of clause constituents in B-lines of parallel cola is not something governed by linguistic rules relating to pragmatic functions.' (p. 105)

Alternatively, he maintains that the word order variation is purely poetical, the technique thus being readily branded as 'poetic freedom'. This conclusion is based on the indecisive results of marked word order against the regular word order (330 vs. 360), on the degree of variation (one or more preverbal constituents) and on the diversity of variations found in line B (various permutations of the constituents) (p. 106). As a result, one should look for poetic devices that influence a certain preference with respect to word order. Among the possible options, Lunn includes chiasm (pp. 107-108) and parallelism (pp. 110-111).

Following Lambrecht, Lunn promotes 'Setting' as pragmatically unmarked (pp. 55-59). Particles *gam*, *'ap*, *raq*, and *'ak* are interpreted as focus particles that accompany marked clauses, the first two expanding the focus, the last two restricting it (pp. 64-71). Chapter 4 (pp. 61-95) argues for the usage of marked constituent order in Hebrew poetry following the model of Hebrew prose. 'Variation in word order figures prominently within the context of parallelism.' (p. 96). Lunn advocates a distinction between a defamiliarised line structure (DEF) for poetical reasons and a Marked line structure (MKD) for pragmatic reasons (pp. 110-112).

He also proposes several factors that serve to distinguish defamiliarised word order from that which is pragmatically marked. First, the literary environment (whether line B, text-boundary, or peak); second, the presence/absence of pragmatic connotations which require an explanation of word order with reference to topicality or focality; third, the presence of a focus particle hinting at a pragmatic function of the pre-verb structure; and fourth, the extent of the variation, since the more divergent the word order is, the more likely it is to be the product of defamiliarisation (pp. 229-230). Pragmatic markedness is employed when introducing a new topic, contrast, replacing focus, specifying focus and other categories of focus (p. 230).

Secondary lines of poetic units are said to display the highest level of freedom in terms of word order. The B-line paralleling a regular A-line is considered the typical place where defamiliarisation occurs (CAN//DEF) and is, therefore, called the 'common environment'. Its counterpart (DEF//CAN) is rarer, therefore labelled 'limited environment' (p. 115). Occasionally, pragmatic marking co-occurs with poetic defamiliarisation. Since most samples come from Isaiah (44.16; 61.11; 64.9; 65.25a; 66.3-4 and Ps 44.9), Lunn explains this particular type of marked parallelism as a matter of style. Constituents that

index setting or pronominal subject/object in the primary line regularly, do not appear in the secondary line (pp. 151-155).

Lunn defends the priority of line A over line B by underlining the dependence of the secondary line on its antecedent in terms of topical reference, gapping, gender parallelism, even tense-shifting, pragmatic dependence (pp. 115-119). In this context, Lunn endorses even Buth (1986, 26) for describing tense-shifting as a purely poetic device, the verbal form of the secondary line being just a variation of its counterpart in the primary line. The verb in line-A establishes the temporal component of meaning that the verb in line-B follows. 'This phenomenon is therefore simply another manifestation of defamiliar language characteristic of poetic genre' (p. 118).

It is obvious that Lunn promotes the priority of poeticality over pragmatic markedness in Hebrew poetry. Chiasmus (a rhetorical pattern) needs to be distinguished from contrast (a semantic relationship) since chiasm exists in Hebrew poetry predominantly in synonymous relationships. Even the traditional category of antithetic parallelism, as defined by Lowth, becomes obsolete, because the construction of the secondary line in such a case is motivated pragmatically not semantically (pp. 129-30).

The probability that the secondary line will be marked is higher when the primary line displays a pragmatically marked word order too (pp. 132-150). In the case of a Marked A-line, defamiliarisation of B-line does not function freely anymore. The constrictive force of markedness constrains the author to draw attention to the equivalent constituent in the secondary line as well (p. 156-157).

Although the majority of samples in Lunn's database, constituting what he calls the 'universal distribution', follow the above rules, he also noticed some exceptions, including verse-lines with initial defamiliarised, Marked, or gapped structures. They are interpreted as playing other roles, such as signalling aperture, closure, and peak (pp. 160-194).

Surprisingly, although he deals primarily with word order, Lunn delves into the study of clause relationships at the level of poetic verses, noting three main possibilities. Some verses link together two independent clauses (HEAD1 + HEAD2), others connect a subordinate clause by its regent (HEAD + Subordinate),² or even have the units of the same clause extended over two lines (HEAD [Phrase1 + Phrase2]). When poetic verses extend the couplet, various structures are noted (pp. 21-25).

The greatest contribution of this work resides in the clear distinction promoted between poetic defamiliarisation and pragmatic marking. Lunn succeeded in convincingly applying a modern version of the theory of information structure to texts from Hebrew poetry and proving the connection between parallelism and word order variation in Hebrew poetry. His main thesis is that word order variation appears usually in line B of a verse. Defamiliarisation appears in line B of a verse given an unmarked line A and is by no means uniform. A marked line A prompts a marked line B as well. Gapping appears in line B, given that the correspondent constituent in line A is not marked.

Envisaged as a domain of freedom in creativity, poetry was considered to escape the limitations enforced on language through grammar. To the relationship between stylistics and pragmatics, a more recent embodiment of the traditional debate between form and content, Lunn advocates a middle way, according to which, in poetry, word order serves entirely aesthetic purposes.

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Notes:

1 Working under the supervision of Longacre, under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Fariss (2003) engaged in a study that sprang out of the Herring and Hock survey of word order and syntax in old Tamil poetry and early Indo-European poetry, respectively (Susan C. Herring, *Poeticity and word order in Old Tamil* (pp. 197-236) and Hans H. Hock, *Genre, Discourse, and Syntax in Early Indo-European, with Emphasis on Sanskrit* (pp. 163-96), both in the volume *Textual Parameters in Older Languages*, edited by S.C. Herring, P. van Reenen and L. Schosler (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000)). She was inspired to conduct her research on HPy by the lack of interest towards this particular type of discourse. In order to discover word order choice and variation, Fariss selected thirty texts, of five different types of texts (speaking in textlinguistics terminology), and analysed them from the perspective of poeticity and transitivity. It appears that the probability for word order variation grows proportional to transitivity.

2 It should be stated here that there are situations when the subordinate precedes its regent clause.

