

JOURNAL *for the* STUDY *of* RELIGIONS *&* IDEOLOGIES

anul I • nr. 2 • mai-aug. 2002

Editata de S.C.I.R.I.
<http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/JSRI>

ISSN: 1583-0039

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Leonard Swidler

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND DIALOGUE

Full freedom of religion did not come into existence until the end of the 18th century, and authentic dialogue only in the 20th century. All civilizations had at their heart a religion which shaped and reflected that civilization; all problems had to be resolved within the thought-structures of the dominant state-enforced religion. Those thought limitations sooner or later prevented arriving at the necessary solutions, and thus led to the decline of every civilization – except ***Christendom-Become-Western Civilization-Becoming-Global Civilization***, which has exponentially surpassed all previous civilizations. The separation of religion from the power of the state has allowed the “infinite” spirit of humanity (“Image of God”) to continually resolve the always new problems. Dialogue, meaning being open to learn from the “other,” moves Globalization from destruction toward construction.

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I. SOMETHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

Religious freedom is a relatively new phenomenon in human history. It was a goal of Christian thinkers and writers before Constantine in the early fourth century C.E. —but not afterwards when Christianity became the state religion. It was not a desideratum even in the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. Despite a more benign attitude at times and places in the history of the other large monotheistic religion, Islam, the now largely Muslim world from Dakar to Mindanao did not become so without Muslim armies.

Religious freedom as a human right and a social reality did not appear on the human stage until the latter part of the eighteenth century, most clearly in the inception of the United States of America and in the French Revolution. It was one of the core human rights – if not the most fundamental – that were declared simultaneously in 1789 in the French *Declaration des droits des hommes et citoyens* and the American *Bill of Rights*.¹

Dialogue among religions is an even newer idea to rise in prominence in the story of humankind. Dialogue, as we use the term today – meaning to talk, in the broadest sense, with those who think differently from us so *we* can learn—is a new consciousness born slowly in the twentieth century. One can see its beginning in the 1893 Chicago *World Parliament of Religions* and followed by the launching in 1910 and 1912 of the *Ecumenical Movement* among Protestants and Orthodox Christians, and joined by Catholics at the *Second Vatican Council* (1962-65), and then gradually by other religions and ideologies as well.

Freedom of religion or belief – or even more specifically, disconnecting religion (or ideology) from the *power* of the state, for that is the essence of religious freedom – and *dialogue* are two of the most powerful, transformative concepts in the history of humanity, matching in magnitude the influence of the invention of writing millennia before. I would like to reflect a little on each of these key insights separately and then on their relationship to each other.

II. DISCONNECTING RELIGION FROM THE *POWER* OF THE STATE

1. *Union of Religion and State All-Pervading*

In all past civilizations, religion has been an integral, a constitutive element. Among other things, religion supplied the ethical basis on which the authority of the state and law was built. As a result, in all past civilizations there has been a very intimate relationship between religion and state. Very often that relationship was so close that one could speak of the union of religion and state. In that close relationship, at times religion tended to dominate the state, and at other times the state tended to dominate religion. We have seen both in recent times and still even today. The Soviet state's domination of Orthodox Christianity was an example of the former and the Ayatollahs' and Mullah' domination of the state in Iran is an example of the latter. The emergence of a neutral state committed to the recognition of freedom of religion or belief is a unique phenomenon in human history which occurred first in the modern West – more about that below.

In the early centuries of Christianity in the Greco-Roman world Christian writers were strongly in favor of religious liberty. After the Constantinian embrace of the Christian religion in the fourth century, however, they quickly switched to the position that the state had the responsibility of seeing that the truth was protected and favored – and of course Christian-

ity had the truth.² In theory of course no one was to be forced to accept Christianity, but not infrequently the theory was not translated into practice. With the development of medieval Christendom in the western half of the former Roman Empire, almost everyone became Christian, with the exception of the Jews, who for the most part were allowed to continue a separate existence, often in ghettos.

The history of Islam was not very different: in theory no individual or community was to be forced to embrace Islam. But in practice the *Jihad*, in the sense of a Holy War against non-Muslim states, not infrequently was in fact launched aggressively. Although the *millet* system allowed non-Muslims within a Muslim-conquered state to practice their religion, the non-Muslims were clearly second-class citizens – which fact doubtless encouraged conversion to Islam, and surely not the contrary.

At various times during the intertwined history of Christianity and Islam one side or the other pointed, usually with justification, an accusing finger at the other as a brutal aggressor. In fact, neither Christianity nor Islam can claim to have been predominantly the victim and the other the aggressor; the acid of history dissolves any such claim from either side. *Jihad* and the Crusades easily match each other in gratuitous aggressiveness.

2. Development of the Disconnection of Religion from the Power of the State

Something unique in history, however, began to take place in Western Christianity, Christendom: the gradual, painful move toward disconnecting religion from the power of the state. Some might trace its beginnings to the Gregorian Reforms when Pope Gregory VII (1021-1085 A.D.) attempted dramatically and substantially to separate the Catholic Church from the power of the Holy Roman Empire and other civil powers. Of course no one at the time promoted the notion of the separation of church and state. Rather, each side attempted to wrest power to his side; witness the thirteenth-century “imperial interregnum” manipulated by the popes (when for fifty years the popes effectively prevented the election of a Holy Roman Emperor), followed soon by the imprisonment of that most authoritarian of all popes, Boniface VIII, by the king of France, Phillip the Fair, at the beginning of the 14th century.

But it was precisely this mammoth power struggle that encouraged a weariness with the unquestioned assumption of the union of church and state. The Renaissance with its shifting of interest from the divine to the human provided a further basis for the gradual questioning of the wisdom of the union of church and state. This questioning manifested itself visibly in the so-called left-wing of the sixteenth-century Reformation: the Anabaptists and related sects clearly and vigorously rejected the idea of the union of church

and state, for which, of course, there were viciously persecuted by Catholics and mainline Protestants.

In the end it was the pitting of Catholics and Protestants against each other that magnified the incipient weariness with the consequences of the union of church and state - induced by the earlier struggle between the pope and civil rulers – to the point of the full embrace of the principle of the disconnection of religion from the power of the state during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Antecedents began to emerge in the Netherlands and Britain, but it was the 1789 U.S. Constitution that for the first time raised religious freedom to constitutional rank. From that time it spread throughout the West in various juridical expressions, and from there increasingly around the globe.

3. Developments in Islam

Like all previous civilizations, Islam (speaking now of Islam as a civilization which has the religion Islam as its vital source) initially grew vigorously, sustained a level of dominance for a time and then, as many Muslim scholars themselves have descried, began losing its dominance. The loss of dominance became increasingly apparent from the eighteenth century onwards. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries much of the Islamic world fell under Western colonialism and was increasingly dominated by Christendom, now largely become “the West.”

The observation of the decline of the dominance of Islamic countries vis a vis Christian ones cannot be a warrant for Christian arrogance. Doubtless many Christians attribute the unprecedented advances of Western Civilization mainly to Christianity, but that is because they do not recognize that it is more the **dis**-engaging of Christianity (and all religions and ideologies) from the power of the state that is the main source of those ongoing advances.

In fact, Muslim scholars have increasingly been articulate about the depressed state of Islamic countries. For example, in Dr. Seyed Othman Alhabshi's book³ explaining the background of the newly founded “Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia” we find the following strong statement: “The Muslim world is currently plagued with almost nothing but negative attributes of a civilization.” He then went on to list some of the “plagues”: “underdevelopment, backwardness, poverty, inequitable income and wealth distribution, high inflation, acute illiteracy and serious unemployment, economic and political instability.” If possible, even clearer was the comment: “Although eight hundred years was long enough to accumulate a wealth of experience to ward off various human ills, the Muslims declined almost without any rebound till this day.”⁴

Then recently several Muslim nations, e.g., Iran, Sudan, have tried to regain their former Islamic glory by reuniting religion and state through the embrace of “Islamism,”⁵ (the term Muslim scholars use rather than the perhaps less accurate Western term, “funda-

mentalism”); the same goal is being sought by radical Islamists within other Muslim countries, e.g., Egypt and Algeria. Unfortunately, rather than regaining former “Islamic Glory” the Islamists are thereby insuring that their nations will remain backward societies. That fact seems to be dawning slowly even on that bastion of Muslim religious conservatism, Saudi Arabia – judging from recent tentative moves to suppress Islamism and start down the path toward democracy.

4. *The Unique Quality of Western Civilization*

When historians like Arnold J. Toynbee survey the total history of humankind they find that there have been a number of civilizations which have come into existence, flourished, and then declined (Toynbee discerns 26 civilizations in human history). Many of them achieved admirable accomplishments, the Greco-Roman Civilization being the one best known to Westerners. Its achievements were indeed great, so much so that during the late Renaissance there was a lively debate about whether the Ancients (meaning the Greeks and Romans) or the then moderns had attained greater cultural heights. But doubtless the Greco-Roman accomplishments were in many regards matched, and in some surpassed, by the Chinese and Islamic Civilizations.

However, it is no cultural hubris to be aware that the rising arc of Western Civilization (which is largely of a synthesis of [1] the Judeo-Christian tradition, [2] the Greco-Roman tradition, [3] the Germanic tradi-

tion, [4] with a significant influence of medieval Islam, and [5] modern science and thought) has reached far beyond where any of Toynbee’s other twenty-five civilizations have gone, whether in culture, science, politics, economic prosperity, technology, etc. Moreover, Western Civilization together the rest of the World’s existing civilizations are now being transmorphed into Global Civilization in a way that had never occurred before, and this process of globalization appears to be intensifying in exponential fashion. This is not to discount “Western-cum-Other-now-becoming-Global Civilization’s” defects, blind spots, and seething problems – some of the most critical of which are largely a result of its very accomplishments, e.g., the population explosion (because of, *inter alia*, medical and agricultural advances), the ecological crisis (because of, *inter alia*, technological advances and the population explosion). But even that illustrates the main point: Western Civilization-transforming-into-Global Civilization’s greatest problems flow not from its weaknesses, but from its even more awesome, unparalleled achievements.

5. *The Disconnection of Religion from the Power of the State a Vital Key*

One of the *essential* elements in the advances of Western Civilization in culture, science, politics, economic prosperity and technology, the like of which, as said – for all of its problems, which are correspondingly massive – were never before experienced in hu-

man history, is the disconnection of religion from the *power* of the state. And religion here includes any “ideology” that functions like a religion, as, for example, Atheistic Marxism (it is clear to see today in Eastern Europe and the former USSR what disaster the union of state and the “religion” of Marxism led to).

Christendom in the Late Middle Ages began reaching the cultural level of the earlier Greek and Roman, and the then contemporary Islamic, civilizations. All historical data strongly suggest that Christendom would have plateaued at approximately that level for a longer or shorter period of time, and then slipped from dominance – *as had all other civilizations before then*, and as eventually the Chinese, the Greco-Roman, the Islamic, etc. Civilizations did as well.

That did not happen, however. Why? One very fundamental reason was that – starting with the Gregorian Reforms, through the Renaissance, the Reformation and on into the Enlightenment and beyond – religion and the power of the state slowly and very painfully began to be disconnected. This disconnection broke the forced quality of religion/ideology and consequently freed the human spirit and mind to pursue its limitless urge to know ever more, to solve every problem it confronts. This resulted in a series of what historians call revolutions in the West: the Commercial Revolution (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries), Scientific Revolution (seventeenth century), Industrial Revolution (eighteenth century), Political Revolution (epitomized in the eighteenth-century American and

French Revolutions), and on into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with myriads of revolutions of all sorts occurring at geometrically increasing speed and magnitude.

As Christianity became less and less the religion of the state in the West, so too The West became less and less *Christendom* and was transformed into what is today usually called *Western Civilization*.

With the “exponential” advances in capabilities in the West, of course, the possibilities of destructiveness increased correspondingly – as the medieval philosophers said: The corruption of the best becomes the worst, *corruptio optimae pessima*. Nevertheless, because freedom is of the *essence* of being human, even though we may well destroy ourselves if we do not learn wisdom and live virtuously, we can never turn back to an unfree stage of human development – any more than an individual can roll back the transforming effects of puberty.

Hence, those societies which try to reunite religion/ideology with the power of the state prevent themselves from harnessing the almost unlimited energy that liberty releases. New problems and challenges will always arise in human societies. Humans, however, have a virtually limitless capability of intellect, imagination, and spirit (which is another way of saying what the book of Genesis in the Bible meant by recording that God made humans in God’s image, the *imago Dei*) with which to address and overcome those problems and challenges ever anew. Unfortunately, when that innate human creative spirit is imprisoned in a

doctrinal strait-jacket (“ortho-dox,” “straight-doctrine,” becomes in fact “strait-doctrine”) imposed from above by the power of the state it will die or be severely weakened from spiritual strangulation. And then that society will fall behind, and perhaps even succumb to, those societies which retain their creativity.

That is why, for example, in India the present attempt of resurgent Hindu “fundamentalists,” brandishing their *Hindutva* (“Hinduization”), seems so fraught with dangers for the progress and development of the second largest country of the world. The path to recovery lies not in trying to impose a narrow dogmatism by coercion but by finding ways to promote more open exploration of ways that core Hindu values can contribute to meaningful life in contemporary settings.

Of course, the same disastrous consequences would also result, e.g., if the efforts of Islamists to re-establish the Muslim law, the *sha’ia*, in the Muslim world succeeds—and China, North Korea and Vietnam will likewise always remain relatively “backward” as long as they maintain a union of ideology and state.

Extremist Jewish and Islamist apologists argue that Judaism or Islam is different from the West and its major religion, Christianity, because, unlike Christianity, Judaism and Islam are holistic religions which include politics as well as all other aspects of life. In this, unfortunately, they are forgetting that Christendom was exactly the same for well over a millennium – the Constantinian Era. It was only when Christendom be-

came “the West” and began to break out of that mischievous marriage of religion/ideology and state (only allegedly virtuously “holistic”) that it embarked on the path of human freedom with its limitless possibilities of creativity (and destruction).

As we know, however, at its best, the separation of religion and state did not, and does not, mean hostility between religion and state. Rather, it frees each, religion and state, to fulfill its respective function untrammelled by, but closely related to, the other. For the state, that function can be briefly described as the responsibility “to organize society so as to protect the rights of all, and promote the common good,” and for religion, “to provide an explanation of the ultimate meaning of life, and how to live accordingly.”

Clearly the West does not have the perfect solution to the question of the relation between religion and the state; it has many different imperfect solutions. The quite “anaemic” condition of a Christianity not completely disconnected from the power of the state in Germany, Scandinavia, England, and other European countries, vis a vis its turbulent but comparatively vital condition in the U.S. with its quite complete disconnection of any particular religion, or of religion as such, from the *power* of the state further bears out the thesis of this essay that the separate but creative relationship of religion and state is good for both religion and state, and hence, for humankind.

The “perfect” solution of the relationship of religion and state lies only in an “infinite” future, toward which humans are always striving. But also clearly, the

West – and countries such as Japan, South Korea, etc., inspired by the principles of democracy and religious liberty – have shown that the disconnection of religion (or ideology) from the *power* of the state is *essential* to the true full functioning of both religion and state, and to human progress to “Infinity.” Said in other words: The disconnection of religion from the *power* of the state is a *necessary*, though not *sufficient*, cause of the unending creative development of humanity.

III. DIALOGUE, A WHOLE NEW WAY OF THINKING

1. A New Consciousness for Humanity

Another concept essential to the full flourishing of humanity is *Dialogue*, not in any pedestrian sense, but in the sense of a **Deep-Dialogue**, a transformative kind of consciousness which seeks to primarily *learn* from rather than teach those who think differently from us.

The world is becoming ever more inter-dependent on all levels. Democratization and globalization are increasing at an exponential rate. Therefore, in order to become full citizens of our nation and the globe, espousing democratic and ethical values, we humans must develop to the fullest our core competencies of knowing and deciding/ loving, utilizing all our faculties (rational, emotional, physical). That means: 1) to intel-

ligently hold a position, while being open to the Other; and 2) to think clearly and critically and decide/love with care – so the differing worldviews we humans build can be creatively related in a dialogic and critically reflective and caring manner.

These core human competencies, which I and my *Global Dialogue Institute* (GDI) names **Deep-Dialogue/Critical-Thinking** (one may of course use other names for the fundamental realities), must be developed as the *new basic mentality*—and consequent practice – on which all education, cradle to the grave, indeed, all thought and action, is built. **Deep-Dialogue/Critical-Thinking** embodies democratic and ethical values, and thus ought to be both the all-embracing *matrix* of human thinking and being in the world within which all thought, action, and education needs to take place – as well as the *mindset*, the *consciousness* (and consequent practice) that all education, cradle to the grave, should seek to develop as its fundamental goal.

2. Why Dialogue Arose

One can, of course, justifiably point to a number of recent developments that have contributed to the rise of dialogue - e.g., growth in mass education, communications and travel, a world economy, threatening global destruction – nevertheless, a major underlying cause is a paradigm-shift in the West in how we perceive and describe the world. A paradigm is simply the model, the cluster of assumptions, on whose basis

phenomena are perceived and explained: For example, the geocentric paradigm for explaining the movements of the planets; a shift to another paradigm - as from the geocentric to the heliocentric - will have a major impact. Such a paradigm-shift has occurred, and is still occurring, in the Western understanding of truth statements which has made dialogue not only possible, but even necessary.

Whereas the understanding of truth in the West was largely absolute, static, monologic or exclusive up to the nineteenth century, it has subsequently become deabsolutized, dynamic and dialogic - in a word: relational. This relatively anew view of truth came about in at least six different but closely related ways.

0) Until the nineteenth century in Europe *truth*, that is, *a statement about reality*, was conceived in an absolute, static, exclusivistic either-or manner. It was believed that if statement was true at one time, it was always true, and not only in the sense of statements about empirical facts but also in the sense of statements about the meaning of things. Such is a *classicist* or *absolutist* view of truth.

1) Then, in the nineteenth century scholars came to perceive all statements about the truth of the meaning of something as being partially products of their historical circumstances; only by placing truth statements in their historical situations, their historical *Sitz im Leben*, could they be properly understood: A text could be understood only in context. Therefore, all statements about the meaning of things were seen

to be deabsolutized in terms of time. Such is a *historical* view of truth.

2) Later on it was noted that we ask questions so as to obtain knowledge, truth, according to which we want to live; this is a *praxis* or *intentional* view of truth, that is, a statement has to be understood in relationship to the action-oriented intention of the thinker.

3) Early in the twentieth century Karl Mannheim developed what he called the sociology of knowledge, which points out that every statement about the truth of the meaning of something was perspectival, for all reality is perceived, and spoken of, from the cultural, class, sexual, and so forth perspective of the perceiver. Such is a *perspectival* view of truth.

4) A number of thinkers, and most especially Ludwig Wittgenstein, have discovered something of the limitations of human language: Every description of reality is necessarily only partial for although reality can be seen from an almost limitless number of perspectives, human language can express things from only one perspective at once. This partial and limited quality of all language is necessarily greatly intensified when one attempts to speak of the Transcendent, which by "definition" "goes-beyond." Such is a *language-limited* view of truth.

5) The contemporary discipline of hermeneutics stresses that all knowledge is interpreted knowledge. This means that in all knowledge I come to know something; the object comes into me in a certain way, namely, through the lens that I use to perceive it. As Thomas Aquinas wrote, "Things known are in the

knower according to the mode of the knower.”

(*Summa Theologiae*, II/II, Q. 1, a. 2) Such is an *interpretative* view of truth.

6) Further yet, reality can “speak” to me only with the language that I give it; the “answers” that I receive back from reality will always be in the language, the thought categories, of the questions I put to it. If and when the answers I receive are sometimes confused and unsatisfying, then I probably need to learn to speak a more appropriate language when I put questions to reality. For example, if I ask the question, “How heavy is green?” of course I will receive a non-sense answer. Or, if I ask questions about living things in mechanical categories, I will receive confusing and unsatisfying answers. I will likewise receive confusing and unsatisfying answers to questions about human sexuality if I use categories that are solely physical- biological: Witness the absurdity of the answer that birth control is forbidden by the natural law—the question falsely assumes that the nature of humanity is merely physical-biological. Such an understanding of truth is a *dialogic* understanding.

3. Meaning of **Deep-Dialogue** and **Critical-Thinking**

In brief, our understanding of truth and reality has been undergoing a radical shift. The new paradigm which is being born understands all statements about reality, especially about the meaning of things, to be historical, praxial or intentional, perspectival, language-

limited or partial, interpretive, and dialogic. Our understanding of truth statements, in short, has become “deabsolutized” it has become “relational,” that is, all statements about reality are now seen to be **related** to the historical context, praxis intentionality, perspective, etc. of the speaker, and in that sense no longer “absolute.” Therefore, if my perception and description of the world is true only in a limited sense, that is, only as seen from my place in the world. Then if I wish to expand my grasp of reality I need to learn from others what they know of reality that they can perceive from their place in the world that I cannot see from mine. That, however, can happen only through dialogue.

Thus, dialogue, in this sense of **Deep-Dialogue**, very simply means to:

1. Reach out in openness to the Other in the search for Truth and Goodness.
2. Be open to the Other *primarily* so **WE** can learn, find truth and goodness.
3. Perceive that for us to learn, to find the good, the Other must teach and open themselves – and vice versa.
4. Recognize that because Dialogue is a two-way project, we then *both* learn – and share the good.
5. Learn there are Other ways of understanding, of embracing the world than our own.
6. Learn to recognize our commonalities and differences – and value both.
7. Learn to move between different worlds and integrate them in care.

8. Learn that **Deep-Dialogue** thus gradually transforms our inner selves—and our shared lives.

Further, the converse, the flip side of the single coin of authentic humanity is **Critical-Thinking**, which very simply means to:

1. Raise our **un**-conscious **pre**-suppositions to the conscious level.
2. After analysis, make a reasoned judgment (“critical,” Greek *krinein*, to judge) about them.
3. Recognize that **our** view of reality is **one** view, shaped by **our** experience
4. Become aware of multiple worldviews.
5. Understand all statements/texts in **their** *con*-texts.
6. Only then apply them to **our** contexts.
7. See that each worldview is a new meaning network.
8. Again, only then can we reasonably critique them.
9. Understand and use very **precisely** each word and phrase so that our deliberations and decisions are informed with clarity and grounded in reality.

Thus, the relationship between **Deep-Dialogue** and **Critical-Thinking** means:

1. **Deep-Dialogue** and **Critical-Thinking** are two sides of the one human reality.
2. **Deep-Dialogue** entails at its root clear, reflective, **critical** thought.
3. **Critical-Thinking** entails a **dialogue** within our own minds and lives – and hence, at its root is dialogic.

4. **Deep-Dialogue** and **Critical-Thinking** are thus two sides of the coin of Humanity.

5. **Deep-Dialogue/Critical-Thinking** eventually must become a **habit of mind and spirit**, traditionally known as a **virtue** – a **new basic mentality**, and consequent practice.

IV. DIALOGUE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN PRACTICE

There of course are myriads of interreligious dialogues going on in the world today. Let me mention only briefly just a few that I personally have been involved in very recently as a small sample. For those interested in the basic *Ground Rules* for dialogue that I have found exceptionally practical and helpful since I first published them in 1984, they can be found in the added Annex.

1. *Standing Up for Dialogue and Freedom: Morocco*

The Muslim world today is under pressure from the radical Islamist states such as the Afghanistan, Sudan, and Iran (and increasingly Pakistan⁶) to reject positive relations with other religions and modernity. Both religious liberty and dialogue are anathema to them. In the face of this, and internal, pressure from Islamists, the new King Hassan of Morocco made a bold move as one of his first public profile acts. Through his Personal Advisor Andre Azoulay (who is

Jewish!) The king co-sponsored with the Spanish “Foundation for the Three Cultures of the Mediterranean” (Jewish-Christian-Muslim) a Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue on “Religion, Tolerance and Modernity” at Al-Akawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco, October 14-16, 1999.

Though the organizers of the dialogue, and indeed, most of the participants, were clearly new at dialogue, the very fact that the conference was held was an extraordinary event in itself. In effect, the new king publicly rejected the extremists’ three rejections: (1) dialogue with other religions, especially Judaism and Christianity, (2) dialogue with “the West,” (3) dialogue with “Modernity,” and did so in the name of religious freedom and tolerance!

2. Interreligious Dialogue Efforts at Peace and Freedom: South Asia and Indonesia

There are doubtless many organized efforts at promoting interreligious dialogue among persons of various religions in South Asia. I will mention only one which is easily accessible around the world through its web site—and recommend regularly visiting it. It is entitled the *Association for Communal Harmony in Asia* (ACHA). It was begun by a Hindu in Oregon, USA in 1993, but includes members from most of the world’s religions.⁷

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, having more Muslims than all the Arab countries together! It is, despite the recent outbreaks of in-

ter-religious and inter-ethnic violence (mainly fomented by former regime corrupt power-brokers who fear losing their power if democracy succeeds), recognized as the most dialogue-oriented, free-spirited living version of Islam. There have been a number of organizations that have been promoting dialogue among the religions for years. The latest integration of these manifold efforts is *MADLA (Masyarakat Dialog Antar Agama) SIDA (Society for Inter-religious Dialogue)*, which works on the adult-education and activist levels.⁸

There was already under the dictator Suharto a general freedom of religion, though not of belief in the form of Marxism or of Confucianism. Hence, there developed the series of inter-religious activities referred to above. Under the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid (a widely revered Muslim scholar and “Holy Man” who headed the 40 million strong Muslim organization, *Nadatul Ulama*) freedom of both religion and belief was promoted, as well as interreligious dialogue. For him the two went together. He was able to reinstate the official recognition of Confucianism and was attempting to do something similar about communism when he lost power. President Wahid also vigorously promoted interreligious dialogue, most prominently by hosting in the Presidential Palace in Jakarta the festive opening of the Jewish-Christian-Muslim sponsored by GDI February 2000.

Perhaps the potentially most far-reaching and interesting project in Indonesia at the present time is the education project undertaken by GDI in conjunc-

tion with UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia, the *Whole Child Education* Project. This is a project designed to fundamentally change the teaching method from one which is authoritarian and student-passive to one that fosters a dialogic and critical-thinking *mentality*. It was substantively launched in the July 2001 initial training of the first batch of Indonesian school teachers and teacher trainers. Happily, the response of the teachers and trainers was extremely positive, and the commitment to making the project successful on the part of the leadership within the two ministries and the UNICEF staff is enthusiastic.

V. DIALOGUE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE FUTURE

1. *The Relationship between Dialogue and Religious Freedom*

Religious liberty can become a reality only to the degree that religion, or ideology, is disconnected from the *power* of the state. Also, to the extent a dialogic mentality spreads, it will become apparent that no single religion or ideology is *absolute*, that is, can encapsulate all knowledge and goodness. Hence, the expansion of a dialogic consciousness will automatically promote religious liberty for it will be seen to everyone's advantage for all religions and ideologies to be free so all can learn ever more from each other.

2. *Religion-In-Dialogue the Core of the Global Civilization*

Since the beginning of history there has been at the heart of every civilization a religion which both reflected the core meaning of that civilization and foundationally shaped it: The Egyptian religion was at the core of Egyptian Civilization for millennia, Chinese religion was at the center of Chinese Civilization, Christianity at the heart of Christendom, Islam of Islamic Civilization – and Marxism at the core of Communist Civilization. But now the world is entering a new stage, the like of which was never seen before, the emergence of Global Civilization. While it is true that Western Civilization has been the precipitator of this emerging Global Civilization and has played a major role in shaping it, the latter will be not simply Western Civilization “writ large,” but will be a pluralistic civilization with multiple centers. It will, indeed, be an *Unum e pluribus*, a unity made out of many.

But then, if this is really an emerging *civilization* – not just a congeries of disparate cultural elements, but a true civilization with an essential kind of unity (*not* uniformity) – what will be its heart? What will be the religion/ideology that both reflects and shapes it? The answer is at hand: The core of the emerging Global Civilization is *Religion-In-Dialogue*. And that *Religion-In-Dialogue* will be **Free!**

THE DIALOGUE DECALOGUE

(*Journal of Ecumenical Studies*-JES, 1984)

Ground Rules for Interreligious, Interideological Dialogue

Dialogue is a conversation on a common subject between two or more persons with differing views, the primary purpose of which is for each participant to learn from the other so that s/he can change and grow. This very definition of dialogue embodies the first commandment of dialogue.

In the religious-ideological sphere in the past, we came together to discuss with those differing with us, for example, Catholics with Protestants, either to defeat an opponent, or to learn about an opponent so as to deal more effectively with her or him, or at best to negotiate with him or her. If we faced each other at all, it was in confrontation – sometimes more openly polemically, sometimes more subtly so, but always with the ultimate goal of defeating the other, because we were convinced that we alone had the absolute truth.

But dialogue is *not* debate. In dialogue each partner must listen to the other as openly and sympathetically as s/he can in an attempt to understand the other's position as precisely and, as it were, as much from within, as possible. Such an attitude automatically includes the assumption that at any point we might find the partner's position so persuasive that, if we would

act with integrity, we would have to change, and change can be disturbing.

We are here, of course, speaking of a specific kind of dialogue, an interreligious, interideological dialogue. To have such, it is not sufficient that the dialogue partners discuss a religious-ideological subject, that is, the meaning of life and how to live accordingly. Rather, they must come to the dialogue as persons somehow significantly identified with a religious or ideological community. If I were neither a Christian nor a Marxist, for example, I could not participate as a “partner” in Christian-Marxist dialogue, though I might listen in, ask some questions for information, and make some helpful comments.

It is obvious that interreligious, interideological dialogue is something new under the sun. We could not conceive of it, let alone do it in the past. How, then, can we effectively engage in this new thing? The following are some basic ground rules, or “commandments,” of interreligious, interideological dialogue that must be observed if dialogue is actually to take place. These are not theoretical rules, or commandments given from aon high, but ones that have been learned from hard experience.

FIRST COMMANDMENT: *The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, that is, to change and grow in the perception and understanding of reality, and then to act accordingly.* Minimally, the very fact that I learn that my dialogue partner believes “this” rather than “that” proportionally changes my attitude toward her; and a change in my attitude is a significant change in me. We enter

into dialogue so that *we* can learn, change, and grow, not so we can force change on the *other*, as one hopes to do in debate – a hope realized in inverse proportion to the frequency and ferocity with which debate is entered into. On the other hand, because in dialogue *each* partner comes with the intention of learning and changing herself, one's partner in fact will also change. Thus the goal of debate, and much more, is accomplished far more effectively by dialogue.

SECOND COMMANDMENT: *Interreligious, interideological dialogue must be a two-sided project – within each religious or ideological community and between religious or ideological communities.* Because of the “corporate” nature of interreligious dialogue, and since the primary goal of dialogue is that each partner learn and change himself, it is also necessary that each participant enter into dialogue not only with his partner across the faith line – the Lutheran with the Anglican, for example – but also with his coreligionists, with his fellow Lutherans, to share with them the fruits of the interreligious dialogue. Only thus can the whole community eventually learn and change, moving toward an ever more perceptive insight into reality.

THIRD COMMANDMENT: *Each participant must come to the dialogue with complete honesty and sincerity.* It should be made clear in what direction the major and minor thrusts of the tradition move, what the future shifts might be, and, if necessary, where the participant has difficulties with her own tradition. No false fronts have any place in dialogue.

Conversely—*each participant must assume a similar complete honesty and sincerity in the other partners.* Not only will the absence of sincerity prevent dialogue from happening, but the absence of the assumption of the partner's sincerity will do so as well. In brief: no trust, no dialogue.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT: *In interreligious, interideological dialogue we must not compare our ideals with our partner's practice, but rather our ideals with our partner's ideals, our practice with our partner's practice.*

FIFTH COMMANDMENT: *Each participant must define himself.* Only the Jew, for example, can define what it means to be a Jew. The rest can only describe what it looks like from the outside. Moreover, because dialogue is a dynamic medium, as each participant learns, he will change and hence continually deepen, expand, and modify his self-definition as a Jew – being careful to remain in constant dialogue with fellow Jews. Thus it is mandatory that each dialogue partner define what it means to be an authentic member of his own tradition.

Conversely—*the one interpreted must be able to recognize herself in the interpretation.* This is the golden rule of interreligious hermeneutics, as has been often reiterated by the “apostle of interreligious dialogue,” Raimundo Panikkar. For the sake of understanding, each dialogue participant will naturally attempt to express for herself what she thinks is the meaning of the partner's statement; the partner must be able to recognize herself in that expression. The advocate of “a

world theology,” Wilfred Cantwell Smith, would add that the expression must also be verifiable by critical observers who are not involved.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT: *Each participant must come to the dialogue with no hard-and-fast assumptions as to where the points of disagreement are.* Rather, each partner should not only listen to the other partner with openness and sympathy but also attempt to agree with the dialogue partner as far as is possible while still maintaining integrity with his own tradition; where he absolutely can agree no further without violating his own integrity, precisely there is the real point of disagreement – which most often turns out to be different from the point of disagreement that was falsely assumed ahead of time.

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: *Dialogue can take place only between equals, or par cum pari* as Vatican II put it. Both must come to learn from each other. Therefore, if, for example, the Muslim views Hinduism as inferior, or if the Hindu views Islam as inferior, there will be no dialogue. If authentic interreligious, interideological dialogue between Muslims and Hindus is to occur, then both the Muslim and the Hindu must come mainly to learn from each other; only then will it be “equal with equal,” *par cum pari*. This rule also indicates that there can be no such thing as a one-way dialogue. For example, Jewish-Christian discussions begun in the 1960’s were mainly only prolegomena to interreligious dialogue. Understandably and properly, the Jews came to these exchanges only to teach Christians, although the Christians came mainly to learn.

But, if authentic interreligious dialogue between Christians and Jews is to occur, then the Jews must also come mainly to learn; only then will it too be *par cum pari*.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: *Dialogue can take place only on the basis of mutual trust.* Although interreligious, interideological dialogue must occur with some kind of “corporate” dimension, that is, the participants must be involved as members of a religious or ideological community – for instance, as Marxists or Taoists – it is also fundamentally true that it is only *persons* who can enter into dialogue. But a dialogue among persons can be built only on personal trust. Hence it is wise not to tackle the most difficult problems in the beginning, but rather to approach first those issues most likely to provide some common ground, thereby establishing the basis of human trust. Then, gradually, as this personal trust deepens and expands, the more thorny matters can be undertaken. Thus, as in learning we move from the known to the unknown, so in dialogue we proceed from commonly held matters – which, given our mutual ignorance resulting from centuries of hostility, will take us quite some time to discover fully – to discuss matters of disagreement.

NINTH COMMANDMENT: *Persons entering into interreligious, interideological dialogue must be at least minimally self-critical of both themselves and their own religious or ideological traditions.* A lack of such self-criticism implies that one’s own tradition already has all the correct answers. Such an attitude makes dialogue not only un-

necessary, but even impossible, since we enter into dialogue primarily so *we* can learn – which obviously is impossible if our tradition has never made a misstep, if it has all the right answers. To be sure, in interreligious, interideological dialogue one must stand within a religious or ideological tradition with integrity and conviction, but such integrity and conviction must include, not exclude, a healthy self-criticism. Without it there can be no dialogue – and, indeed, no integrity.

TENTH COMMANDMENT: *Each participant eventually must attempt to experience the partner's religion or ideology "from within";* for a religion or ideology is not merely something of the head, but also of the spirit, heart, and "whole being," individual and communal. John Dunne here speaks of "passing over" into another's religious or ideological experience and then coming back enlightened, broadened, and deepened. As Raimundo Panikkar notes, "To know what a religion says, we must understand what it says, but for this we must somehow believe in what it says": for example, "A Christian will never fully understand Hinduism if he is not, in one way or another, converted to Hinduism. Nor will a Hindu ever fully understand Christianity unless he, in one way or another, becomes Christian."

Interreligious, interideological dialogue operates in **three areas**: the **practical**, where we collaborate to help humanity; the depth or "**spiritual**" dimension where we attempt to experience the partner's religion or ideology "from within"; the **cognitive**, where we seek understanding and truth. Interreligious,

interideological dialogue also has **three phases**. In the **first** phase we unlearn misinformation about each other and begin to know each other as we truly are. In phase **two** we begin to discern values in the partner's tradition and wish to appropriate them into our own tradition. For example, in the Buddhist-Christian dialogue Christians might learn a greater appreciation of the meditative tradition, and Buddhists might learn a greater appreciation of the prophetic, social justice tradition – both values traditionally strongly, though not exclusively, associated with the other's community. If we are serious, persistent, and sensitive enough in the dialogue, we may at times enter into phase **three**. Here we together begin to explore new areas of reality, of meaning, and of truth, of which neither of us had even been aware before. We are brought face to face with this new, as-yet-unknown-to-us dimension of reality only because of questions, insights, probings produced in the dialogue. We may thus dare to say that patiently pursued dialogue can become an instrument of new "re-velation," a further "un-veiling" of reality – on which we must then act.

There is something radically different about phase one on the one hand and phases two and three on the other. In the latter we do not simply add on quantitatively another "truth" or value from the partner's tradition. Instead, as we assimilate it within our own religious self-understanding, it will proportionately transform our self-understanding. Since our dialogue partner will be in a similar position, we will then be

able to witness authentically to those elements of deep value in our own tradition that our partner's tradition may well be able to assimilate with self-transforming profit. All this of course will have to be done with complete integrity on each side, each partner remaining authentically true to the vital core of his/her own religious tradition. However, in significant ways that vital core will be perceived and experienced differently under the influence of the dialogue, but, if the dialogue is carried on with both integrity and openness, the result will be that, for example, the Jew will be authentically Jewish and the Christian will be authentically Christian, not despite the fact that Judaism and/or Christianity have been profoundly "Buddhized," but because of it. And the same is true of a Judaized and/or Christianized Buddhism. There can be no talk of a syncretism here, for syncretism means amalgamating various elements of different religions into some kind of a (con)fused whole without concern for the integrity of the religions involved – which is not the case with authentic dialogue.

Notes

¹For details see: Leonard Swidler, "Human Rights and Religious Liberty – From the Past to the Future", Leonard Swidler, ed., *Religious Liberty and Human Rights*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1986, pp. vii-xvi.

²In the second/third century the North African Christian Tertullian wrote: "It is a fundamental human right, a privilege of nature, that all human beings should worship according to their own convictions; one human person's religion neither harms nor helps another. It is not proper to force religion. It

must be undertaken freely, not under pressure". *Ad scapulam*, Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina*, I, p. 699.

In a way, a high point of religious liberty, and thus much of the basis of human rights, was reached publicly with the universal declaration for the whole Roman Empire in the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313) by Emperor Constantine: "We should therefore give both to Christianity and to all others free facility to follow the religion which they may desire". (From the Edict of Milan as contained in *De mortibus persecutorum*, in Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina*, VII, pp. 267f..) This moment of freedom was, however, short-lived, for in A.D. 380 the Edict of Thessalonica was issued by Emperor Theodosius, stating that: "It is our will that all the peoples who are ruled by the administration of Our Clemency shall practice that religion which the divine Peter the Apostle transmitted to the Romans". (*Codex Theodosianus*, XVI, I, 2, in, Coleman J. Barry, ed., *Readings in Church History* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1960), vol. I, p. 142.)

³Seyed Othman Alhabshi, *An Inspiration for the Future of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia, 1994), p. 8.

⁴Ibid., p. 12. One finds not only an acknowledgment of the present stagnation of Islamic nations, but also a determination to do something positive about it in certain leading Muslim circles, for example, in Malaysia: "None of the Muslim countries are considered to be developed or advanced, despite about ten are among the rich nations of the world.... Muslim countries Aare so weak politically, economically, socially and even educationally.... Muslims have become so weak and dependent on others in almost every field".

⁵See the excellent volume by the Moroccan/Spanish Muslim Khalid Duran: *The Children of Abraham. An Introduction to Islam for Jews* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 2001). Duran provides a sympathetic and realistic presentation of Islam, including present-day Islamism and Jihadism. This latter earned him a

death contract (*fatwa*) from an Islamist extremist in Jordan, as well as innumerable letters of support and laudatory reviews.

⁶ See the dozens of articles by the brilliant, irenic Indian Muslim scholar Asghar Ali Engineer, Founder and Director of the *Institute of Islamic Studies and Centre for Study of Society and Secularism* they are collected at: <http://ecumene.org/IIS/csss.htm>., web site designed and maintained by *Global Dialogue Institute* Web Editor, Professor Ingrid Shafer.

⁷ See <http://asiapeace.org/acha.htm>, designed and maintained by *Global Dialogue Institute* Web Editor, Professor Ingrid Shafer.

⁸ See <http://ecumene.org/MADIA/MADIA.htm>, designed and maintained by *Global Dialogue Institute* Web Editor, Professor Ingrid Shafer.



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Stadiul dialogului interreligios si perspectivele sale in ecumenismul european

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The present ecumenical inter-religious dialogue is more centered on the relationship between politics and traditional forms of religiosity expressed at societal level. It is obvious that after the events of 11th September 2001 the next century will be more focused on cultural and religious dimensions than the last one. From this perspective I present in this paper the stage of inter-religious dialogue from major Christian churches' point of view and how churches understand their role within the broader European context and world affairs' challenges.

Introducere: Dialogul interreligios si constructia Comunitatilor europene

Inercarea de a defini stadiul dialogului interreligios in sistemul european actual ne duce mai intai la organizarea sociala si politica a Europei, stiut fiind faptul ca nu putem avea un dialog fara o identificare clara a actorilor care trebuie sa se afle fata in fata.

La nivel european este important de mentionat crearea, dupa anii celui de-al doilea razboi mondial, a Comunitatii Europene, transformata apoi in Uniunea Europeana, o realizare in primul rand politica si economica, care a avut in spatele ei dorinta de

unificare a intereselor pe termen mediu si lung, dar in acelasi timp si gasirea unei solutii comune pentru evitarea unui eventual razboi si implicit pentru asigurarea stabilitatii, pacii si bunastarii cetatenilor tarilor lor. Subliniez acest aspect deoarece el nu ar fi fost posibil fara un dialog nu de multe ori considerat ca imposibil (reconcilierea franco-germana), si nu fara putine obstacole caracterizate de personalitati marcante (De Gaulle) sau de tendinta de izolare fata de o Europa comuna a unor anumite tari (a se vedea in aceasta sens atitudinea guvernului britanic fata de orice initiativa comunitara).

Faptul ca pe langa dimensiunea politico-economica, se detaseaza in ultimii ani o dimensiune noua, cultural-spirituala a facut ca in decembrie 1997 Parlamentul European sa adopte un buget care includea explicit referinta la “Un Suflet al Europei”.¹ Este mai mult ca sigur ca intemeitorii Comunitatii Europene nu au avut in vedere crearea unei Europe unice din punct de vedere religios, sau mai mult, interesul lor primar nu a fost identificarea unei Europe unite religioase. Insa, in momentul in care unitatea europeana a devenit mai mult decat un deziderat, cat o solutie concreta, spatiul politic a inceput sa se deplaseze si spre fundamentul social, in care religia joaca un rol esential pentru stabilirea unei identitati comune europene. Din acest motiv, justificarea bugetara prezentata mai sus afirma: “creditul are ca intentie suportul activitatilor in cadrul larg al reflectiei la nivel european pe sursele etice si spirituale de constructie europeana (...); Programul “Un suflet

pentru Europa” are ca scop strangerea impreuna a umanistilor, crestinilor, evreilor, musulmanilor si a altor traditii pentru a reflecta despre implicatiile etice si spirituale ale integrarii europene; (...) ne aflam la o rascruce de drumuri a istoriei europene in care ... constructia Europei nu e doar un exercitiu politic si economic dar de asemenea o dimensiune spirituala si etica.”² Dialogul la nivelul interreligios a devenit astfel o necesitate in ultimii ani, si in cadrul larg al extinderii europene, tocmai pentru armonizarea punctelor de vedere si pentru incercarea de definire a unei viziuni comune a Europei intregi.

Dialogul nu a fost mereu un lucru usor de realizat. Diferitele traditii, istorii, forme de percepere a culturii, a relatiei om-societate-Dumnezeu, a actiunii umane pe acest pamant, sunt elemente care diferentiaza marile religii intre ele atunci cand vin in contact. Ca element pozitiv in aceasta directie la colocviul “Pluralismul cultural si religia in Europa” din 1997, reprezentantii musulmani au subliniat faptul ca religia islamica cunoaste o inflorire spirituala in Europa. In aceasta directie s-a pus accentul pe crearea unei identitati comune din care “sufletul” islamic in Europa trebuie sa faca parte, iar aceasta identitate ar fi viabila nu doar pentru comunicarea interetnica si interreligioasa, dar si pentru relatiile mai largi ale Europei cu statele arabe.

Programul “Un suflet pentru Europa”, chiar daca nu a avut rezultate foarte evidente in primii ani, poate fi un punct de plecare viabil in comunicarea cultural-religioasa. Faptul ca oficialii Uniunii Europene considera necesara promovarea acestor elemente,

pentru prima data de la inceperea constructiei europene, este o evidentiare a intoarcerii spre valorile interioare ale civilizatiei europene in ansamblu.

Pentru a-si afla identitatea in perspectiva largirii integrarii atat la nivel orizontal cat si pe verticala, Europa trebuie sa-si caute unitatea mai intai prin cultura³, inaintea problemelor economice, sociale si politice care divizeaza continentul. Aceasta unitate poate fi realizata la nivelul lumii vizibile prin convergentele dintre diferitele culturi, dar si prin unitatea deasupra lumii vizibile, facand apel la teologia crestina care priveste creatia unui Creator unic dar divers prin Persoanele Treimice.⁴ De altfel in mesajul adresat de Papa Ioan Paul al II-lea membrilor Comisiei Episcopilor din Comunitatea Europeana, se accentueaza acelasi aspect al unei Europe unite nu doar din punct de vedere religios, ci si cultural. Procesul de integrare europeana nu este doar unul economic si politic, ci si unul religios si cultural, prin prezenta multiplelor valori si a traditiilor semnificative a continentului.⁵

Dialogul interreligios in cadrul organizatiilor ecumenice

Dialogul interreligios isi are originea intr-o forma institutionalizata, inca de la sfarsitul secolului trecut, prin promovarea miscarii ecumenice in cadrul crestinismului. Evolutiile ultimilor ani arata o incercare de intensificare a legaturilor ecumenice, chiar daca ele au cunoscut o scadere imediat dupa anii 90. Pentru o

mai buna reflectie asupra stadiului interreligios in cadrul institutiilor ecumenice europene, voi incerca sa ma rezum la nivelul ultimilor ani si implicit a perspectivelor proiectelor in derulare. In cadrul realizarii unei viziuni cat mai ample a situatiei actuale a ecumenismului european ne izbim de problematica resurselor documentare care sunt insuficiente pentru a forma un sistem riguros si precis a pozitiiilor ecumenice, aceasta lipsa de material fiind simtita si in cadrul dialogului general, cand nu de putine ori deciziile importante la nivel inalt al liderilor religiosi nu sunt cunoscute si nici aplicate la nivel local.

Consiliul Ecumenic al Bisericii

Consiliul Ecumenic al Bisericii (CEB) (World Council of Churches) este, asa cum prevede si statutul, o adunare a Bisericii care marturisesc pe Iisus Hristos ca Dumnezeu si Mantuitor conform Scripturii si cauta astfel sa-si implineasca chemarea impreuna catre slava unui singur Dumnezeu, Tatal, Fiul si Sfantul Duh.⁶ Scopul principal al adunarii Bisericii este chemarea la unitatea vizibila intr-o credinta unica si o lucrare euharistica unica, exprimata in rugaciunea si viata comuna in Hristos, prin marturia si munca adusa lumii, progresand spre unitatea comuna a Bisericii si implicit a lumii.⁷ Membrii CEB sunt Biserici Crestine din peste 100 de tari, numarul lor fiind de 342 in prezent⁸, existand de asemenea o permanenta deschidere spre noi membri⁹.

Actiunea ecumenica a CEB se exprima prin intelegerea termenului “ecumenic” in forma sa greceasca, si anume tot ceea ce are legatura cu sarcina Bisericii de a propovadui Evanghelia la intreaga lume. In ultima perioada insa, un numar crescut de voci din interiorul CEB, in special din Asia si America Latina vorbesc de un “ecumenism mai larg” sau “macro-ecumenism”, intelegand prin aceasta o deschidere a ecumenismului de pana acum si la alte religii si traditii culturale din cadrul comunitatilor crestine.¹⁰ Aceste ambiguitati in intelegerea sensului de ecumenic pot crea mari dificultati, ducand pana la diviziunea in cadrul miscarii ecumenice.

A VIII-a Adunare Generala a CEB de la Harrare, Zimbabwe

Ultima adunare generala tinuta la Harrare (Zimbabwe), din 3-14 decembrie 1998, a avut ca tema centrala “Sa ne intoarcem catre Dumnezeu intru bucuria sperantei; accent deosebit asupra pacii si dreptatii in Africa” sarbatorindu-se in acelasi timp 50 de ani de la infiintarea oficiala a CEB. “Bucuria sperantei” evocata in tema centrala este de fapt raspandirea in lume a Evangheliei, Vestea cea Buna prin excelenta – ca Hristos a inviat.

“Problema Ortodoxa”

In ciuda participarii prealabile, motivate si constructive a Bisericilor membre si a partenerilor

ecumenici in procesul ce a durat aproape noua ani, in legatura cu “o viziune si o intelegere comuna asupra Consiliului Mondial al Bisericilor”, inainte de aceasta adunare au fost exprimate o serie de temeri, in special din partea Bisericilor Ortodoxe, care si-au manifestat ingrijorarea fata de dificultatea tot mai evidenta de a-si sustine punctele de vedere. Este vorba in primul rand de problema unei restructurari a CEB, apoi despre natura notiunii de “Biserica membra”, ca si de natura notiunii de “comunitate de Biserici”. In fond, aceste probleme au aparut odata cu evenimentele ce au condus la caderea comunismului, si s-au soldat cu documentul “Catre o conceptie si o viziune comuna” a CEB adoptat de Comitetul Central in septembrie 1997, pe care Bisericile membre l-au primit cu rezerve si comentarii.

Biserica Ortodoxa a Georgiei, sub presiunea mediilor sale conservatoare, a renunat la calitatea sa de membru al CEB. Chiar in timpul Adunarii, Secretarul General, pastorul Konrad Raiser a primit o nota oficiala privind iesirea din Consiliu a Bisericii Ortodoxe a Bulgariei. In ciuda tuturor problemelor, aceste doua Biserici au fost totusi reprezentate la Adunarea Generala, prin invitati oficiali (un preot georgian si un grup de bulgari).

A devenit tot mai evident faptul ca Bisericile Ortodoxe si Bisericile de traditie protestanta se dezvoltă in directii opuse, tendinta Bisericilor protestante de a adopta anumite caracteristici liberale occidentale reflectandu-se in Ordinea de zi a CEB, dominata de un etos protestant occidental marcat de

limbajul inclusiv aplicat lui Dumnezeu, hirotonia femeilor, casatoria homosexualilor etc. *Declaratia de la Tesalonic*, elaborata in aprilie-mai 1998 de catre reprezentantii Bisericilor Ortodoxe Calcedoniene, in care se afirma ca “CEB trebuie structurat radical pentru a permite o participare ortodoxa mai adecavta”, a fost un alt avertisment adresat Adunarii privind pozitia ortodoxa. Atmosfera generala a fost de colaborare, semnalele primite de la intrunirile interortodoxe de la Tesalonic si Damasc fiind luate in serios. In final s-a hotarat alcatuirea unei Comisii speciale, formata din reprezentanti ai Consiliului si respectiv ai Bisericilor Ortodoxe, pe o perioada de trei ani, care sa faca propuneri de restructurare a CEB, in acest sens SS Bartolomeu I rugand pe Intaistatatorii Bisericilor Ortodoxe sa delege 1-2 persoane care sa le reprezinte.¹¹

In mai multe ocazii, Bisericele Ortodoxe au propus ca CEB sa se transforme intr-un forum crestin, fara un numar fix de membri si sa fie organizat dupa principiul “familiilor”. Aceasta ar avea ca rezultat o paritate a participarii tuturor traditiilor de baza din crestinism in cadrul unui dialog interconfesional. Astazi, desi nu a fost adoptata o pozitie oficiala in urma acestei propuneri, ar putea lua fiinta trei astfel de familii: ortodoxa, protestanta si asa numitele “biserici libere”, pe viitor putand fi inclusi chiar si romano-catolicii.¹²

Intrunirea Comitetului Central al CEB, Postdam, Germania

In perioada 29 ianuarie - 6 februarie 2001 s-a tinut la Postdam, Germania, intrunirea Comitetului Central al CEB, care e responsabil cu adoptarea politicilor aprobate de adunarea de la Harrare, a programelor CEB si adoptarea bugetului. Cateva din punctele din agenda acestei intruniri a celor 158 membri ilustreaza pe deplin problematica larga in care CEB isi face simtita prezenta la nivel mondial: a fost lansat programul “Un deceniu pentru a invinge violenta”, terminat cu prefigurarea redactarii unui raport asupra problematii folosirii violentei in scopuri umanitare; dorinta implicarii mai active a CEB, conform dreptului international, pentru gasirea unei solutii pasnice in conflictul din Orientul Mijlociu; cererea adresata Sudanului pentru a nu mai bombarda populatia civila; un apel la reunificarea Ciprului; o cerere adresata Indoneziei pentru a gasi solutii pasnice de terminare a conflictului de aici; prezentarea faptului ca dintre cei 82 de milioane de germani, o treime nu se afla intr-o biserica ca membra a CEB. A noua adunare generala se va tine in 2006, fara a se preciza inca locul oficial. Presedintele Republicii Federale Germania, Dr. Johannes Rau, a aratat ca ultima intrunire a Comitetului Central al CEB pe teritoriul Germaniei s-a realizat in urma cu 13 ani, cand aceasta era inca divizata, si si-a exprimat convingerea ca actiunea CEB trebuie sa fie in directia “utilizarii justitiei, pacii si a invingerii violentei”.¹³

Se observa si din agenda prezentata mai sus ca rolul CEB este mai mult decat promovarea discutiilor religioase la diferite niveluri si directii (*Unitate si reinnoire; Bisericile in misiune; Dreptate, pace si creatie; Intrajutorare si slujire*¹⁴), ci si o accentuare a misiunii Bisericii in societate, si inclusiv in lume, prin luarea de pozitie asupra fenomenelor majore actuale, cu impact direct asupra oamenilor si asupra viitorului umanitatii intregi. Aceasta forma de exprimare a viziunii comune a tuturor bisericilor in fata problemelor social-politice majore nu este impartasita de majoritatea bisericilor, mergandu-se de la pozitii deschise pentru o reformare a intregii structuri a CEB, pana la negarea completa a rolului in CEB pe arena mondiala.

In zilele de 9-15 mai 2001 s-a desfasurat la Bucuresti cea de a IV-a intalnire a responsabililor ecumenici din cadrul unor Biserici membre ale CEB (celelalte trei avand loc in mai 1996, februarie 1998 si noiembrie 2000 in Elvetia). Cei 35 de participanti pe langa prezentarea proiectelor si programelor in care CEB este implicata in acest moment au discutat activitatea Comisiei speciale privind participarea ortodocsilor in CEB, instituita la Harrare, rezultatele dialogurilor teologice, actiunea diferitelor documente teologice comune care s-au semnat la nivelul unor Biserici si felul in care este inteles rolul responsabililor ecumenici in cadrul Bisericilor lor in crearea unei retele de comunicare mai eficienta intre acestea.¹⁵

Pozitii si realitati impotriva miscarii ecumenice

Problema ortodoxa in CEB a devenit acuta in ultimii ani deoarece, desi numarul credinciosilor crestini ortodocsi numara aproape o treime din numarul total al crestinilor reprezentati in CEB, Bisericile Ortodoxe s-au vazut in fata unor probleme noi, straine chiar de traditia lor, si inclusiv de invatatura lor; de asemenea, reprezentativitatea in organele de conducere a acestora e reduca. Iata motive de ingrijorare si de reflectie asupra viitorului CEB si a fiabilitatii lui in conditiile unui sustinut manifest impotriva ecumenismului de catre unele voci ale Ortodoxiei. Merita de mentionat in acest context faptul ca Biserica Ierusalimului, Biserica veche greaca, Biserica de rit vechi romana si Biserica Ortodoxa a rusilor de peste hotare nu fac parte din CEB, avand dimpotriva o atitudine refractara fata de orice actiune ecumenica a acestuia.¹⁶

Principalele acuze aduse de ortodocsii care resping ecumenismul sub forma instutionalizata a CEB sunt in legatura cu canonul 45 apostolic si al 23-lea al sinodului de la Laodiceea, care interzic orice contact si rugaciune impreuna cu ereticii de orice forma si indiferent de intentia lor. De asemenea, conform acestei viziuni CEB n-ar promova unitatea bisericilor, deoarece ar intra in contact cu alte religii, pierzandu-si astfel unitatea primara. Prin faptul ca Biserica Romano-Catolica nu este membru deplin in CEB, avand doar calitatea de observator, a dat nastere in

cadrul miscarii ecumenice la unele pozitii intransigente fata de orice contact cu alte persoane apartinand altor religii.¹⁷

Semnele cele mai vizibile in alterarea ecumenismului au aparut la inceputul anilor 70, cand in cadrul CEB au inceput contactele cu conducatorii spirituali ai celorlalte religii ale lumii, iar aceste contacte s-au bazat pe o formula initiala care contravine spiritului primar al ecumenismului, si mai mult, cu traditia Bisericii Ortodoxe. Astfel, la intalnirea Comitetului Central al CEB de la Addis Ababa din ianuarie 1979, Mitropolitul Georges Khodre al Beirutului (Biserica Ortodoxa a Antiohiei) i-a revoltat pana si pe delegatii protestanti, cand nu numai ca a lansat apelul la “dialog” cu aceste religii, dar i-a si indemnat pe credinciosii crestini sa “investigheze viata de autentica spiritualitate a celor nebotezati” si sa-si imbogateasca experienta cu “comorile care se afla la sanul comunitatii religioase universale”, deoarece atunci cand “brahmanul, budistul sau musulmanul isi citeste scriptura sa, el primeste in lumina pe Insusi Hristos”.¹⁸ In spatele tuturor conferintelor la nivel inalt a reprezentantilor religiosi exista acuza permanenta de tendinta de asimilare religioasa a tuturor oamenilor intr-o “comunitate mondiala a religiilor” potrivit filosofilor intemeiate de Vivekananda, Ramakrishna, Gandhi, Schweitzer prin participarea la rugaciuni supraconfesionale, in care “fiecare se roaga potrivit propriei sale religii”.¹⁹ Aceste neintelegeri al spiritului ecumenic au produs dezaprobarea contactelor pe care crestinii trebuie sa le realizeze la nivelul CEB si in

acelasi timp au intarit pozitia celor care se declara impotriva organizatiilor ecumenice si a spiritului promovat de acestea. Nu trebuie uitat ca in SUA in anii 90 s-a realizat chiar si un Parlament al Religiilor la Chicago lipsit insa de o reprezentativitate prea mare si de putere la nivel global a actiunii sale.²⁰

In afara problemei contactului cu celelalte religii, o acuza importanta este legata si de actiunea ambigua pe care CEB o are in legatura cu scena politica a lumii. CEB nu se poate erija in aparator sau organismul suprem religios in care deciziile politice ale marilor puteri sunt justificate, insa nu putine au fost situatiile in care hotararile sau absenta unor hotarari in cadrul intrunirilor au favorizat anumite interese politice evidente pe arena internationala, si acest lucru a creat o noua dezaprobare a rolului pe care CEB trebuie sa-l aiba in viata crestina.²¹

Nu putem nega anumite evenimente in care CEB a fost implicat, dar nu trebuie uitat ca, in perioada razboiului rece, orice actiune la nivel major cu implicatii pe care le presupuneau deciziile CEB, erau fara indoiala trecute prin prisma autoritatii politice a celor aflati in spatele reprezentantilor religiosi. Caderea comunismului ar trebui sa duca la reformarea institutiei in ansamblu, deoarece, chiar daca nu mai exista presiuni externe, totusi putem afirma ca se manifesta unele tendinte de creare de blocuri culturale, bazate pe traditia istorica si religioasa, in genul “teoriei confruntarii civilizatiilor” (tendinta majora de impunere a unor practici straine Ortodoxiei cum ar fi acceptarea homosexualitatii sau a hirotoniei femeii, ce

este promovata de traditia democratica in majoritatea tarilor protestante).

Conferinta Bisericilor Europene

Dupa infiintarea sa in 1959 Conferinta Bisericilor Europene, (CBE) a devenit unul din forumurile crestine cele mai importante din Europa fata de problemele majore ale Europei de astazi. Bisericile au devenit din ce in ce mai constiente de rolul pe care trebuie sa il aiba in cadrul procesului continuu de schimbare ce se petrece in Europa, atat in cazul fenomenelor positive cat si al celor negative. Libertatile promovate odata cu caderea comunismului au adus atat noi sanse de valorificare viabila pe calea dialogului cat si aparitia nationalismului exacerbat si a intolerantei religioase. Pe de alta parte, problemele ridicate de integrarea economica si politica, de emigratie (fortata sau benevola) au adus vecini de credinta si culturi diferite, cu care infruntam impreuna problemele individualismului si secularizarii.

Bisericile din cadrul Conferintei Bisericilor Europene sunt solidare in fata acestor probleme si au realizat de asemenea o platforma program cu urmatoarele recomandari:

1. Este nevoie de o vindecare a memoriei (*healing of memories*) in Bisericile din Europa. Pentru a indrepta unele judecati de valoare bazate pe ignoranta si confuzie la adresa altor Biserici, este nevoie de o abordare comuna in cadrul unui dialog cu partenerii

ecumenici. Responsabilitatea revine in acest caz atat istoricilor Bisericilor cat si liderilor religiosi.

2. Se afirma Traditia comuna a Bisericii nedivizate, luand ca model pe Sfintii care ar putea sa inspire Biserica la o marturie autentica.

3. Ecumenismul trebuie predat ca disciplina de studiu in cat mai multe facultati de teologie din Europa, tocmai pentru o cat mai buna cunoastere reciproca.

4. In contextul afirmarii pluralismului in tarile europene, se adreseaza un apel de a se lua in serios experienta altor Biserici din propriul spatiu cultural, in special Bisericile minoritare, si sa se abordeze impreuna cu acestea, ca parteneri egali, chestiuni referitoare la educatie, politica si drepturile omului.

5. Impacarea este o sarcina a fiecarui crestin si nu doar a Bisericilor²²

A doua Adunare Ecumenica Europeana de la Graz

In zilele de 23-29 iunie 1997 s-au desfasurat in localitatea Graz, Austria, lucrarile celei de-a doua Adunari Ecumenice Europene care a avut ca tema: “Reconcilierea – dar al lui Dumnezeu si izvor de viata noua”.

CBE si-a afirmat pozitia oficiala in fata schimbarilor produse de la prima Adunare Ecumenica Europeana care s-a tinut la Basel, in 1989 si a documentului elaborat atunci “Pacea si dreptatea pentru intreaga creatie”, in urma schimbarilor

intervenite la nivelul politicii continentului european prin incheierea razboiului rece. Se recunoaste in “Mesajul Final” al Adunarii de la Graz ca toti participantii, desi fac parte uneori din Biserici dezbinat, au totusi aceleasi temeri, tensiuni si probleme comune ca toti crestinii, indiferent de zona continentului careia apartin.

Ceea ce motiveaza Bisericile in dialogul lor este viziunea comuna crestina asupra reconcilierii si in aceasta privinta, participantii s-au angajat:

- sa vesteasca popoarele din Europa ca “Dumnezeu era in Hristos, impacand lumea cu Sine Insusi” (2 Cor. 5, 19);
- sa caute unitatea vazuta;
- sa demareze procesul de vindecare a memoriei, in respectul istoriei;
- sa favorizeze colaborarea in toate domeniile, cum ar fi misiunea, dialogul si respectarea constiintei fiecarei persoane;
- sa se afirme egalitatea statului, a drepturilor Bisericilor si popoarelor minoritare;
- sa se incurajeze asociatiile locale, institutiile publice si organisme europene in munca lor de reconciliere;
- sa se continue dialogurile interreligioase;
- sa se organizeze intruniri ecumenice la nivel local si regional pentru a continua experienta de la Graz.²³

La ultima mare intalnire a Comitetului Central la Nyborg in Danemarca, intre 21 si 26 septembrie 1999, s-a adoptat o “Declaratie privind depasirea diviziunilor existente in Europa”. S-a exprimat atunci dorinta de

realizare a unei Europe in care sa domneasca pacea si justitia, o Europa in care se intalnesc bogatia diverselor culturi, traditii si confesiuni in cautarea unei unitati si intelegeri mai mari. In particular s-a cerut noii conduceri a institutiilor si organizatiilor europene sa promoveze depasirea diviziunilor din cadrul Europei. Unul din exemplele de diviziune politica din Europa este linia ce desparte Nicosia si intreg Ciprul. Folosirea violentei a crescut in intreaga lume, iar evenimentele din Kosovo nu sunt decat o alta fateta a problemelor ce cer o urgentare a actiunii autoritatilor politice. In acest sens membrii Conferintei au fost indemnati sa participe mai activ in domeniile intr-ajutorarii umanitare, a reconstructiei, a reconcilierii si a contruirii unei societati civile bazata pe valorile democratice si totodata sa participe la respectarea drepturilor omului in toate comunitatile etnice si religioase.

In Declaratie se mai face referire si la Raportul ONU privind nivelul de dezvoltare a tarilor din Estul Europei si din CSI, iar statisticile prezinta in ansamblu lucruri ingrijoratoare pentru intreaga Europa: a scazut media de viata in mare parte a acestor tari; a crescut gradul de saracie; exista un declin in securitatea economica si al rolului politic al femeii; s-a deteriorat educatia; au crescut de asemenea somajul, munca la negru si nesiguranta sociala. Bisericile sunt de cele mai multe ori primele care se confrunta cu problemele credinciosilor lor, inaintea organelor politice institutionale si din aceasta cauza e imperativ ca sa existe un front comun in abordarea acestor probleme,

prin unitate, si reconciliere si cautarea implementarii efective a drepturilor omului.²⁴

Charta Oecumenica

Conferinta Bisericilor Europene reprezinta majoritatea Bisericilor Ortodoxe, Protestante, Anglicane, a Vechilor Catolici si a Bisericilor independente din Europa. Biserica Romano-Catolica este reprezentata in Consiliul Conferintelor Episcopilor din Europa.²⁵ Aceste doua organisme au realizat recent, la Strasbourg, in 22 aprilie 2001, o *Charta Oecumenica* privind angajarea comuna pentru dialog si reconciliere. Ea descrie responsabilitatile ecumenice fundamentale din care rezulta o serie de angajamente si linii directoare. De asemenea, scopul elaborarii ei este de a promova o cultura a dialogului ecumenic si a cooperarii la toate nivelurile vietii bisericesti. Desi nu are un caracter dogmatic si nici nu este legata sub imperativul legislatiei canonice a Bisericilor, autoritatea sa deriva din angajamentul voluntar al Bisericilor din Europa si al organizatiilor ecumenice, prin construirea pe baza acestei Charte a unor agende locale, desemnata sa indeplineasca problemele specifice la fiecare nivel in parte.²⁶

Prin acest document Bisericile sunt astfel indrumate sa realizeze urmatoarele:

- sa depaseasca sentimentul auto-suficientei din cadrul fiecarei Biserici si sa elimine prejudecatile;

- sa promoveze deschiderea ecumenica si cooperarea in educatia crestina si invatamantul teologic;

- sa actioneze impreuna la toate nivelurile vietii bisericesti, acolo unde conditiile permit;

- apararea minoritatilor si reducerea neintelegerilor dintre bisericile minoritare si cele majoritare;

- sa se roage impreuna pentru unitatea in Hristos;

- sa invete si sa cunoasca traditia si alte forme spirituale de imbogatire reciproca intre Biserici;

- sa se continue dialogul constient si intensiv la toate nivelurile dintre Biserici, si sa se examineze cum pot Bisericile sa implementeze rezultatele acestui dialog;

- in cadrul controverselor, si in special al celor referitoare la credinta si morala, sa se caute dialogul in lumina Evangheliei;

Se mai recunoaste totodata responsabilitatea comuna a tuturor Bisericilor in cladirea unei Europe unite, considerandu-se ca valorile comune care unesc aceste Biserici pot constitui un punct viabil de plecare in constructia europeana. Se incearca astfel:

- cautarea unei responsabilitati sociale si reprezentarea in comun in fata institutiilor laice europene;

- apararea valorilor fundamentale impotriva oricarei denaturari;

- rezistenta impotriva oricarei forme de folosire a religiei in scopul cresterii nationalismului extremist, sau folosirea religiei in razboaie;

- intarirea pozitiei femeii si promovarea drepturilor egale dintre barbati si femei in societate;
- opunerea fata de orice forma de anti-semitism in Biserica si societate si intensificarea dialogului cu evreii;
- realizarea unui dialog constructiv cu musulmanii din Europa si actiunea comuna in rezolvarea problemelor specifice.

Dialogul interreligios din perspectiva Bisericii Romano-Catolice

La nivelul dialogului interreligios, Biserica Romano-Catolica are de infruntat doua probleme: incercarea unei constructii durabile a unui dialog cu Bisericile Ortodoxe si cele Protestante pentru aplanarea unor disensiuni si a promovarii valorilor comune, dar si a unui dialog cu celelalte religii, avandu-se in vedere dimensiunea spatiala majora pe care Biserica Catolica o are in intreaga lume. Misiunea dialogului nu a fost punctul forte al Romano-Catholicismului pentru o buna perioada de timp, divergentele doctrinare imprimandu-se uneori chiar in structura etnica a populatiei catolice si efervescenta unor miscari nationaliste gasind in credinta catolica justificarea actiunilor xenofobe si chiar ultranationaliste (ca de exemplu atacul terorist si confruntarile protestante-catolice din Belfast, Irlanda de Nord).

Prin Conciliul Vatican II insa, prin Directiva "Despre ecumenism" (14 mai 1967) se merge foarte departe fata de atitudinea manifestata pana atunci, accentuandu-se chiar comuniunea in taine intre

catolici si ortodocsi, ca un prelude al deplinei comuniuni care se urmareste in viitorul apropiat.²⁷ Se admit astfel rugaciunile in comun intre cele doua confesiuni pentru anumite ocazii, catolicii putand fi nasi si nuni pentru crestinii ortodocsi si ortodocsii pentru crestinii catolici, se admite de asemenea catolicilor sa se spovedeasca, sa se impartaseasca si sa primesca Maslul de la preotii ortodocsi, credinciosii catolici care participa din anumite motive la Liturgia ortodoxa se socotesc ca si cand ar participa la Missa catolica etc.²⁸

Dintre numeroasele documente adoptate in/si dupa Conciliul Vatican II (1962-1965) cateva au o referire directa asupra teologiei si misiunii Bisericii Romano-Catolice, in relatie cu modul in care se intelege dialogul interreligios :

1. Decretul Conciliar *Ad Gentes*, se refera la misiunea Bisericii, deschizand orizonturi noi pentru misiologie, propunand in acelasi timp "o viziune teologica, spirituala si practica despre ceea ce este misiunea Bisericii".²⁹ Conform acestui decret, "Biserica, fiind trimisa de Dumnezeu la popoare pentru a fi sacrament universal de mantuire, in virtutea exigentelor profunde ale propriei catolicitati, ascultand de porunca Intemeietorului ei, se straduieste sa vesteasca tuturor oamenilor Evanghelia".³⁰

2. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, (8 decembrie 1975) publicata la 10 ani dupa promulgarea decretului *Ad Gentes*, enunta linia hristologica si ecclesiologica a misiunii crestine, evidentiindu-se centralitatea Imparatiei lui Dumnezeu si definindu-se natura relatiilor privind misiunea.

3. *Redemptoris Missio*, (7 decembrie 1990) odata cu comemorarea a 25 de ani de la primul decret, reia tezele misiologice consacrate si distinge intre activitatea misionara si cea pastorală. Totodata ea dezvolta un concept nou: “re-evangelizarea”, prin care se desemneaza lucrarea specifica a Bisericii, in spatiile crestine secularizate, la nivelul tuturor popoarelor.³¹

Dialogul Bisericii Ortodoxe cu Biserica Romano-Catolica

In cadrul relatiilor cu Bisericile Ortodoxe, doua elemente majore trebuie mentionate ca reprezentative pentru atitudinea ultimilor ani: pe 7 decembrie 1965, in cadrul a doua ceremonii concomitente la Vatican si la Constantinopol, au fost ridicate anatemele dintre cele doua Biserici datand din 1054; si intre 7-9 mai 1999 Papa (Ioan Paul al II-lea) viziteaza pentru prima data in istorie o tara majoritar ortodoxa³². La 30 noiembrie 1979, sub semnul primului eveniment, Patriarhul Dimitrios I anunta la Constantinopol ca o Comisie Ortodoxa-Romano-Catolica a fost infiintata pentru dialogul dintre Biserici.³³

Comisia mixta internationala de dialog teologic era alcatuita din 28 de ortodocsi (cate doi din fiecare Biserica) si tot atatia catolici. Pana la a 6-a sesiune a Dialogului (iunie 1990, Freising, Germania) lucrarile Comisiei au mers destul de bine. Schimbarile politice din Europa răsăriteana din 1989 au repus in drepturi fosta Biserica Greco-Catolica, numita acum in

documentele Vaticanului, Biserica Catolica Orientală. Reinviind aceasta Biserica si recapatandu-si dreptul la existenta, Bisericile Ortodoxe au constatat ca aceasta reintegrare se face in multe locuri abuziv, netinandu-se seama de normele dialogului dintre cele doua Biserici stabilite pana atunci.

Comisia s-a intrunit astfel cu greutate in a 7-a sesiune in 1993 la manastirea Balamad in Liban, elaborand un document de mare importanta privind problema uniata, denumit “Documentul de la Balamad”. Prin acesta s-a prevazut clar ca unitii nu sunt o a treia Biserica, ci sunt integrati in Biserica Romano-Catolica (art. 3 si 16), iar concluzia intrunirii a fost declararea faptului ca uniaticismul nu poate constitui un model si o metoda de unire intre aceste Biserici (art. 2, 4 si 12), ci este necesara gasirea altor metode pentru infaptuirea unitatii.³⁴

Unul din documentele de prima marime in cadrul dialogului cu Bisericile Ortodoxe il reprezinta Scrisoarea Pastorală a papei, *Orientalis Lumen* din 1995, prin faptul ca pune in lumina chipul lui Hristos asa cum a fost inteles si trait de Biserica Răsăriteana de la inceput pana astazi, in virtutea mostenirii apostolice: “Traditia crestina răsăriteana implica un mod de a primi, de a intelege si de a trai credinta in Domnul Iisus. Ea este foarte aproape de traditia crestina occidentala, care se naste si se hraneste din aceeasi credinta. Si cu toate acestea, ea se distinge, in chip legitim si minunat in masura in care crestinele răsăriteane are un mod propriu de a simti, de a intelege si de a trai, intr-un fel original, raportul sau cu Domnul. As

dori sa fim aproape, cu respect si emotie, de actul de adorare pe care il exprima aceste Biserici, mai curand decat tendinta de a izola, unul de altul, punctele specifice ale teologiei, aparute polemic in decursul secolelor, in dezbaterile dintre apuseni si rasariteni”.³⁵

O problema prezenta in afara divergentelor care mai raman in privinta uniatismului este cea exprimata de posibila reorientare a pozitiei Bisericii Romano-Catolice in a considera Biserica Ortodoxa ca Biserica sora. Astfel, la doua zile dupa beatificarea papei Pius IX, pe 5 septembrie 2000, a fost prezentata oficial la Vatican, Declaratia Sfintei Congregatii despre Doctrina credintei cu titlul *Dominus Iesus. Despre unitatea si universalitatea mantuitoare a lui Iisus Hristos si a Bisericii*. Scopul ei explicit e acela de a raspunde pericolului la adresa misiunii Bisericii, reprezentat de teoriile teologice de tip relativist care incearca sa justifice pluralismul religios, prin negarea caracterului revelational definitiv si complet a Revelatiei adusa prin Mantuitorul Iisus Hristos. Cu privire la “Unitatea si unitatea Bisericii” (art. 16) se arata: “Credinciosii sunt tinuti sa marturiseasca ca exista o continuitate istorica, inradacinata in succesiunea apostolica. (...) Aceasta este unica Biserica a lui Hristos pe care dupa Inviere Mantuitorul nostru a dat-o spre pastorire lui Petru (...) Aceasta Biserica constituita si organizata ca societate *subzista* in Biserica catolica, guvernata de succesorul lui Petru si in episcopii in comuniune cu el”. Interpretarea celor care din formula *subsistit in* (subzista), deduc teza potrivit careia unica Biserica a lui Hristos ar putea subzista si in Biserici si comunitati ecleziale necatolice,

e contrara sensului autentic al textului conciliar. Conciliul a ales cuvantul *subsistit* tocmai pentru a clarifica ca exista o unica “subzistenta” a adevaratei Biserici, in timp ce in afara hotarelor ei vizibile exista numai *elementa Ecclesiae* care – fiind elemente ale aceleiasi Biserici – conduc si tind spre Biserica Catolica.

Aplicarea practica a acestei teorii – reprezentand probabil adevaratul obiectiv al ecumenismului catolic pentru perioada urmatoare – o reprezinta un alt document intern, denumit “Nota asupra expresiei Biserici surori” adresata de cardinalul Ratzinger inaintea Sesiunii a 8-a a dialogului teologic catolico-ortodox de la Baltimore din 9-19 iulie 2000³⁶ si trimisa tuturor presedintilor Conferintelor episcopale romano-catolice din lume. Aici se incearca explicarea “ambiguitatii” folosirii in ultimii 40 de ani a expresiei “Biserici surori” de catre ecumenistii catolici, privind Bisericile Ortodoxe, Anglicane, Reformate si Luterane, considerandu-le devieri de la doctrina oficiala potrivit careia Biserica Catolica poate fi numai o “Biserica mama” si nu o “Biserica sora” propriu-zisa. Ramane ca Bisericile Ortodoxe sa ia act de aceste documente in evolutiile contactelor viitoare si sa actioneze conform invataturii Sfintilor Parinti si a Sinoadelor Ecumenice.³⁷

Dialogul Bisericii Romano-Catolice cu Bisericile Protestante

Biserica Romano-Catolica nu este membru deplin al Consiliului Ecumenic al Bisericilor, ci are doar statut de observator si face parte din Comisia “Credinta si Constitutie” (“Faith and Order”). In spiritul Conciliului Vatican II este evidenta deschiderea spre celelalte confesiuni crestine, afirmandu-se de altfel ca promovarea unitatii in Hristos este unul din dezideratele extrem de dificil de indeplinit intre oameni.

In cadrul relatiilor de dialog cu protestantii, cele mai vizibile progrese au fost realizate cu Bisericile Luterane din Europa. Dialogul luterano-catolic a investigat semnificatia Botezului si a Euharistiei, iar in cele din urma chiar infailibilitatea si primatul papal si doctrina justificarii, realizandu-se unele convergente intre parti. Fara indoiala ca multe din rezultatele dialogului au fost respinse sau aprobate la nivel local intre credinciosi, dar ele raman semnificative atat prin faptul ca exista perceptia apropierei Bisericilor, cat si in forma cunoasterii reciproce.

Dialogul Bisericii Anglicane cu Biserica Romano-Catolica, ce s-a desfasurat intre anii 1967-1981, a promovat acorduri semnificative in privinta Euharistiei, a oficiului pastoral si a autoritatii Bisericii. Raportul final al Comisiei Internationale Anglicano-Romano-Catolica isi exprima convingerea ca acordul realizat nu reprezinta o convergenta deplina ci o piatra de temelie spre unitatea organica. Totusi, au fost destule voci care au negat rolul si eficacitatea acestor dialoguri, din aceasta cauza progresele ramanand la nivelul acelor ani.³⁸

Dialogul interreligios cu celelalte religii

In Duminica Rusaliilor din anul 1964, Papa Paul al VI-lea a instituit un departament special al Curiei Romano-Catolice pentru relatiile Bisericii cu cei de alta credinta, cunoscut sub denumirea de Secretariatul pentru Ne-Crestini, fiind redenumit in 1988 sub denumirea de Conciliul Pontifical pentru Dialogul Interreligios (CPDI-Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue). In 1984, Secretariatul a elaborat un document intitulat “Atitudinea Bisericii fata de credinciosii altor religii: Reflectii si orientari in dialog si misiune” care exprima pozitia oficiala. In acest mod, dialogului cu necrestinii trebuie sa I se acorde o atentie deosebita, deoarece religiile difera una fata de alta, incurajandu-se orice forma constructiva de dialog. Se recunoaste faptul ca dialogul este o sarcina dificila de realizat si, din aceasta perspectiva, se propun solutii concrete: trebuie realizate studii specifice de dialog luandu-se in calcul zona geografica si contextul socio-cultural, sub atenta supraveghere a Conferintelor Episcopale Catolice, care pot solicita astfel de studii unor comisii speciale sau institutelor pastorale si teologice. In lumina rezultatelor, aceste institute pot chiar organiza cursuri speciale pentru initierea si invatarea modalitatilor de dialog, atentie deosebita acordandu-se tinerilor care traiesc in medii multireligioase, si care in activitatea cotidiana se intalnesc cu credinciosi ai altor religii. In activitatea de zi cu zi, toti credinciosii trebuie sa implore ajutorul Sfantului Duh, pentru ca Acesta sa-le acorde

“inspiratia planurilor, initiativelor si activitatii evanghelizatoare”.³⁹

Daca in urma dialogului credinciosii “religiilor traditionale” nu doresc sa devina crestini, dialogul trebuie sa ia “forma intalnirilor, intelegerii reciproce, respectului, descoperirea semintelor Cuvantului in acea religie si cautarea comuna a indeplinirii voii lui Dumnezeu”.⁴⁰ Totodata, Biserica Romano-Catolica, prin intermediul acestui Conciliu pentru Dialog Interreligios, trimite anual diferite mesaje de promovare a dialogului si a colaborarii interreligioase cu marile religii ale lumii.⁴¹

Ca perspectiva a dialogului interreligios cu celelalte religii atat in Europa cat si in restul lumii, Biserica Romano-Catolica doreste elaborarea unui document intitulat “Spiritualitatea Dialogului” in lumina documentelor de pana acum (*Declaratia Nostra Aetate* a Conciliului Vatican II, *Atitudinea Bisericii fata de credinciosii altor religii* – 1984 si *Dialogue and Proclamation* – 1991). In acest mod, episcopii trebuie sa raspunda la mai multe intrebari, care sa ilustreze stadiul actual: care e experienta dialogului interreligios din dioceza fiecaruia, care sunt dificultatile intampinate, care este rezultatul de pana acum, care este impactul contactelor cu necrestinii pentru spiritualitatea diocelui, care puncte trebuie promovate din acest document?⁴²

O alta dimensiune a dialogului promovat de Biserica Catolica este incurajarea organizatiilor crestine pentru implicarea mai activa a laicului in special, in rezolvarea unor conflicte locale, Comunitatea San'Egidio fiind un exemplu elecvent in acest sens⁴³.

Intalnirea de la Bucuresti din 30 august - 1 septembrie 1998 intre 193 de personalitati religioase din 40 de tari sub tema “Pacea este numele lui Dumnezeu. Dumnezeu, omul, popoarele” a ilustrat ca dialogul ecumenic este mai necesar ca oricand. In acest sens I.P.S. Serafim, Mitropolitul Germaniei, Europei Centrale si de Nord a BOR, in cadrul mesei rotunde cu tema “Ecumenismul” arata: “Oare, noi crestinii, trebuie sa invatam de la cei din afara Bisericii ca dialogul este singura cale de rezolvare a diferendelor si ca numai impreuna putem infrunta marile ispite care ataca temeliile insasi ale credintei? Nimeni nu se poate inchide in autosuficienta sa, fiecare crestin, fiecare confesiune are nevoie de toti ceilalti crestini si de toti oamenii, chiar daca in Biserica sa marturiseste plenitudinea adevarului. Sau, mai degraba, tocmai pentru ca traieste in Adevar, se simte responsabil fata de toti semenii sai, in umanitate. Daca un membru sufera, sufera toate celelalte madulare. Nimeni nu se mantuieste singur, ci numai in comuniunea semenilor sai, pentru care este dator sa-si puna viata ca si Hristos.”⁴⁴

Dialogul interreligios din perspectiva Bisericii protestante

Bisericele protestante considera ca sarcina principala a ecumenismului, lupta si rugaciunea pentru “unitatea duhului cu ajutorul pacii” si pentru a cauta comuniunea diversilor membri ai corpului comun al lui Hristos indeplinind intarirea in adevar si in dragoste

(Efes. 4, 15) Toata expresia Bisericii este partiala si toata cunostinta adevarului este incompleta (I Cor. 13, 9-12), si din aceasta perspectiva toata confesiunea credintei este determinata si limitata de epoca respectiva, de context si de experientele care au precedat - si mai ales de limitele umane.

Bisericile protestante din Elvetia au adoptat recent un document privind *Liniile directoare privind o actiune ecumenica viabila*. Sub acest aspect, angajamentul ecumenic naste o privire autocritica care trebuie sa ne faca constienti de relativitatea noastra, putand afirma ca avem nevoie de ceilalti membri ai trupului lui Hristos, doar si pentru diferenta lor. Nici o Biserica nu posedea pe deplin cunostinta Adevarului, nici plenitudinea Duhului si nici cea a ministerului.

Angajamentul ecumenic trebuiesc fie un fundament dinamic a tuturor crestinilor si a tuturor Bisericilor.⁴⁵

Necesitatea cooperarii ecumenice in viziunea protestanta nu depinde doar de ratiuni teologice sau istorice, ci si de factori sociologici, deoarece traim intr-o societate care este din ce in ce mai secularizata si mai multireligioasa. Pentru multi oameni credinta crestina nu are o semnificatie semnificativa in viata lor, chiar daca isi mentin apartenenta nominala in cadrul unei Biserici. Vocea Bisericii a ajuns o simpla optiune intre multe alte opinii religioase sau ideologice concurente, si sub acest aspect diferentele religioase isi pierd importanta. Astfel, in cadrul cercetarilor recente de sociologie a religiilor se observa un proces acut de "deconfesionalizare", manifestat si in numarul mare de casatorii mixte ducand la permeabilitatea

frontierelor confesionale. Bisericile sunt confruntate de asemenea cu mari deficite sociale si etice ale lumii in care traim. Li se cere astazi o contributie la gasirea solutiilor problemelor actuale cum sunt justitia, pacea, somajul, rasismul, dezvoltarea, migratia etc.

Complexitatea si anvergura acestor probleme impune unirea eforturilor in gasirea solutiilor eficace.⁴⁶

Majoritatea Bisericilor protestante activeaza in cadrul miscarii ecumenice in cadrul institutionalizat a CEB si CBE, in ultima perioada vorbindu-se de doua dimensiuni a ecumenismului: unul *intraconfesional* si altul *interconfesional*. Visser't Hooft, un cunosctor direct al dialogului interreligios afirma: "Martin Buber, cel care ne-a dat ceea ce este probabil cea mai profunda analiza a dialogului, a spus de la bun inceput ca premisa unui dialog genuin nu este ca partenerii sa cada de acord asupra unei relativizari a propriilor lor convingeri, ci sa se accepte ca persoane. Pentru a intra intr-o relatie profunda cu o alta persoana, nu se cere ca aceasta sa fie de acord cu mine, sau ca eu sa fiu de acord cu ea, sau ca impreuna sa negociem un compromis, ci sa ma intorc spre ea in vointa de a o asculta, de a o intelege si a cauta o imbogatire reciproca. Este posibil pentru crestinii convinsi sa intre in dialog cu hindusii, musulmanii sau evreii, ba chiar cu sincretistii, fara a ceda din convingerile lor fundamentale. Aceia dintre noi care am avut prilejul de a participa la astfel de discutii ne-am gasit adesea umiliti si stimulati de marturia unei adevarate devotiuni de credinta nestramutata fata de adevar asa cum acesta este inteles de adeptii altor religii".⁴⁷

Dialogul interreligios din perspectiva Bisericii Ortodoxe

Din punct de vedere ortodox, prima coordonata a ecumenismului este unirea tuturor Bisericilor crestine in integritatea invataturii apostolice marturisita de Biserica nedivizata de la inceput. Natura institutionala a Bisericii nu consta decat prea putin in jurisdictie, cancelarii, ordine si referate, ci in mod predominant in comunicarea harului si in intretinerea vietii de comuniune prin aceleasi Taine, si in ministeriul special, recunoscut de toti cei care le administreaza. Ecumenismul inteles din imbratisarea tuturor valorilor divine sau umane, sau din actualizarea tuturor valorilor umane in lumina lui Hristos de catre fiecare crestin, intr-o unitate in diversitate, trebuie sa fie deschis omenirii intregi. Aceasta necesitate sta in special in acord cu doua imprejurari: Dumnezeu este activ si dincolo de frontierele crestinismului vazut, iar invatand din lucrarea lui Dumnezeu, intr-o lume care devine tot mai unificata in varietatea ei, Bisericile se pot apropia si ele de unitatea lor in varietate.

Refacerea unitatii vizibile a Bisericii crestine a constituit mereu o preocupare activa a Ortodoxiei, Enciclica Patriarhului Ecumenic Ioachim III din 30 mai 1902 fiind un exemplu in acest sens pentru modul in care este perceput dialogul cu eterodocsii: conditia *sine qua non* este ca “sfanta doctrina pe care Hristos ne-a dat-o sa se pastreze neschimbata, neamestecata, neimpartita si nedespartita, asa cum sfintii si de Dumnezeu purtatorii Parinti au hotarat-o in sinoadele

ecumenice”.⁴⁸ Parintele Dumitru Staniloae spunea ca ecumenismul este o stare, o realitate in care Duhul Sfânt indeamna Bisericile sa se iubeasca intre ele pentru ca dezbinarea lor nu a fost numai un conflict deschis ci si o lipsa de iubire, iar Patriarhul Antiohiei, Ignatie al IV-lea arata ca la originea fiecarei dezbinari exista si o lipsa de iubire.

Biserica Ortodoxa intelege ca principalele obstacole in realizarea unui ecumenism viabil sunt astazi urmatoare probleme: *secularizarea*, care se manifesta ca relativism cu privire la doctrina si morala crestina, cu privire la intrebarile ultime ale existentei, intr-un context al pluralismului religios, cultural si etnic; *confesionalismul radical si fundamentalismul religios* ce provin din teama ca prin dialog si cooperare cu altii se pierde propria identitate si integritate; *prozelitismul agresiv al sectelor*, care folosesc criza economica ca pe o ocazie de a converti oameni. Asa cum afirma si IPS Daniel, Mitropolitul Moldovei si Bucovinei, “de fapt nu exista astazi o criza a ecumenismului adevarat (duhovnicesc), ci exista o criza a ecumenismului superficial si secularizat. Ecumenismul nu poate fi inlocuit azi prin ura confesionala sau razboaie religioase, prin izolare sau aroganta, deoarece Evanghelia Domnului nostru Iisus Hristos ne cheama la unitate si iubire fata de frati si surori. Ecumenismul de astazi trebuie reinnoit printr-o profunda si existentiala convertire la Hristos si printr-o spiritualitate mai puternica, spiritualitate prin care vin apoi speranta si puterea in eforturile noastre pentru comuniune si cooperare in lumea noastra dezbinata”.⁴⁹

In ceea ce priveste pozitia ortodoxa, mesajul patriarhului ecumenic Bartolomeu I cu ocazia vizitei sale in Romania in 1999 dovedeste perspectiva răsăriteana a dialogului: dimensiunea dragostei și a sacrificiului, și nu a dominației și puterii. Principiul care trebuie să domnească este acela al egalității și respectului popoarelor și a tradiției culturale. “Dacă Europa occidentală dorește să iasă din impasul spiritual în care se găsește astăzi, ea trebuie să se întoarcă la sursă și să reîntărească legăturile ei cu Dumnezeu și creația acestuia, în loc să cadă în orgoliu și într-o atitudine de superioritate... Noi, episcopii ortodocși, îi asigurăm pe frații catolici și protestanți că Biserica noastră nu are nici o intenție de a rupe relațiile fraterne cu ele.”⁵⁰

Dialogul Bisericii Ortodoxe cu Bisericele protestante

Cel mai reprezentativ aspect al dialogului dintre Biserica Ortodoxă și Bisericele protestante este exemplul oferit de dialogul dintre Biserica Ortodoxă Română și Biserica Evanghelică din Germania. Astfel, între 3 și 8 octombrie 1998 s-a desfășurat la București a 8-a întâlnire de dialog între cele două Biserici, aceasta întâlnire având o importanță aparte prin faptul că participanții au rememorat progresele realizate în cei aproape 20 de ani de la începerea dialogului.

S-a alcătuit un raport comun, adresat conducătorilor celor două Biserici, cu privire la stadiul de dialog existent, iar raportul intitulat “Dialogul

apropierii în credință” accentuează unele particularități: faptul că acest dialog se realizează între “Biserici”, amintindu-se contactele de secole dintre protestanții și ortodocșii din România; Sfânta scriptură și Sfânta Tradiție au fost tratate în legătură cu Marturisirile de credință ale Bisericii; Taina Marturisirii a fost tratată în contextul importanței ei pentru reînnoirea și mântuirea credincioșilor, iar “Mântuirea în Hristos” în contextul restaurării lumii. Datorită acestui dialog, s-a putut constata că, în Biserica Evanghelică, alături de Sfânta Scriptură, care joacă un rol important, există și o pregnanță și viață tradiție bisericească.

Participanții la acest dialog au subliniat încă o dată în comunicatul final atitudinea pozitivă a BOR și EKD vizavi de integrarea europeană: “Ele sunt gata să intervină pentru o Europă unită și să constituieze din nou importanța spiritualității creștine pentru noua structură a Europei. Bisericele și popoarele noastre aparțin Europei și pot să-și aducă contribuția lor specifică la noua structurare a continentului nostru”.⁵¹

În cadrul dialogului cu Biserica Anglicană, este demn de menționat vizita în România a Gratiei Sale Dr. George Leonard Carey, Arhiepiscop de Canterbury, Primat al întregii Anglii și al Comuniunii Anglicane din întreaga lume, între 6-10 septembrie 1993. Relațiile de dialog dintre cele două Biserici datează din secolul XVIII, iar în perioada interbelică au existat numeroase contacte în căutarea unei linii comune spre unitatea credinței. Ultima întrunire de dialog teologic a avut loc la Toronto, Canada între 10-17 septembrie 1990, însă pentru moment s-a intrat

intr-un impas semnificativ, din pricina hotararii Sinodului General al Bisericii Angliei, din 11 noiembrie 1992 de a permite hirotonia femeilor.⁵²

In dialogul Bisericilor Ortodoxe cu Alianta Mondiala a Bisericilor Reformate, ultima intrunire (a 4-a) s-a realizat la Limassol, Cipru, intre 8-13 ianuarie 1994. Cele trei sesiuni precedente s-au concentrat asupra invataturii despre Sfanta Treime asa cum este exprimata in Crezul Niceo-Constantinopolitan. In intalnirea de la Limassol s-au prezentat urmatoarele prelegeri: “Sfanta Treime in Creatie si in Intruparea Domnului”, “Comunicarea Insusirilor si Indumnezeirea firii umane” si “Hristos al Revelatiei” si “Hristos al Istoriei”.⁵³

Dialogul interreligios promovat de UNESCO

Sub egida UNESCO exista mai multe catedre ce promoveaza dialogul interreligios, atat in cadrul credintei crestine, cat si intre religii. Catedrele UNESCO in acest domeniu sunt: in Franta – Catedra UNESCO pentru relatia cunoasterii reciproce a religiilor, a traditiilor spirituale si culturilor specifice, - Catedra UNESCO pentru drumuri culturale si religioase, in Israel – Catedra UNESCO pentru studii interreligioase, in Kyrgyzstan – Catedra UNESCO pentru studiul culturilor si religiilor, in Uzbekistan – Catedra UNESCO in studiul comparativ al religiilor lumii, in Romania – Catedra UNESCO pentru schimburi culturale si interreligioase, in Marea Britanie – Catedra UNESCO pentru studii interreligioase si in

Tunisia – Catedra UNESCO pentru studiul comparativ al religiilor.

Ultima conferinta internationala privind dialogul interreligios sub egida UNESCO a avut loc in Tashkent, Uzbekistan intre 14-16 septembrie 2000 si a abordat 4 probleme specifice ale dialogului interreligios: 1. cunoasterea reciproca si interactiunea dintre religii si traditiile spirituale; 2. educatia interreligioasa si dialogul interreligios; 3. dialogul interreligios si intercultural in Asia; 4. actiunea comuna pentru pace si prevenirea conflictelor⁵⁴. In conceptia promovata de UNESCO, dialogul interreligios este necesar, deoarece exista o lipsa de cunoastere reciproca si de intelegere intre religii. In ultimii ani, in numele religiei s-au desfa^ourat conflicte in Balcani si in Asia de Sud-Est iar declaratiile Natiunilor Unite de libertate religioasa au fost incalcate. Este astfel de o importanta majora ca prin educatie sa se realizeze o constientizare a valorilor fundamentale a tuturor religiilor, iar liderii religiosi sa poata in acest mod sa se apropie mai mult si sa depaseasca divergentele care pot degenera in timp in conflicte sangeroase.

Concluzii

Miscarea ecumenica si institutionalizarea acesteia pentru o parte a lumii crestine are la baza ideea si dorinta unei misiuni si a unei marturii crestine unitare. Din acest motiv, scopul ecumenismului este realizarea unitatii vizibile a tuturor crestinilor, a Trupului unic al lui Hristos. Pentru aceasta, comisiile ecumenice de

studiu, pe baza experienței spirituale, liturgice și sacramentale creștine, inspirate și de tradițiile diverselor Biserici membre ale CEB și CBE, în încercarea de a găsi formulele cele mai viabile pentru unitate, elaborează concepte de unitate care, deși nu întrunesc întotdeauna consensul teologic, reprezintă totuși factori de convergență teologică, în speranța unui progres spre unitatea creștină.

Problema stadiului actual de dialog în cadrul ecumenismului european continuă să rămână nu atât la nivelul deschiderii ierarhilor față de dialog cât la nivelul implementării deciziilor și acordurilor obținute, și aceasta în mod special pe plan local, regional. Lipsa de informații și chiar de deschidere spre dialog în concordanță cu întrunirile internaționale sunt elemente care împiedică pentru moment o mai mare culturalizare a procesului de dialog ecumenic în rândul popoarelor din Europa. Dacă s-ar realiza o deschidere în acest sens, și mă refer nu la simpla acceptare și cunoaștere a minorităților prezente în regiune, ci și a tradițiilor și spiritualității religioase și culturale a țărilor europene, atunci unitatea Europei ar fi mai aproape ca oricând. Unitatea prin cultură ca prim pas pentru înfaptuirea unei Europe unite, după cum arată și Denis de Rougemont, este astfel nu doar o deschizătoare de dialog ci și promovarea unei culturi a înțelegerii și a unității vizibile. În plus, în afara dialogului realizat prin organizațiile ecumenice și prin contactele diferitelor biserici la nivel național sau internațional, apare din ce în ce mai evidentă necesitatea pregătirii unor persoane special formate în problemele

ecumenismului tocmai pentru a înțelege mai bine și a căuta modalități concrete de aplicare a rezultatelor în sânul fiecărei Biserici în parte⁵⁵.

În acest moment, când Europa este încă în căutarea unui viitor politic, în Balcani se mai simt încă urmarile războiului din fosta Iugoslavie și din Kosovo. Ecumenismul mai are de realizat astfel nu doar acțiuni concrete de reconciliere între părțile implicate în conflict, dar trebuie să producă, suplimentar o constientizare majoră la nivelul factorilor de decizie și a populației Europei, pentru împiedicarea prin orice mijloace a folosirii forței în vederea rezolvării disputelor teritoriale. Acțiunea trebuie realizată atât în cadrul dialogului interconfesional creștin cât și cu celelalte religii, cunoscut fiind faptul că Balcanii sunt prin excelență o regiune multietnică și multireligioasă.

Vorbind despre viitorul Europei unite prin intermediul dialogului, Václav Havel arată în mesajul său din februarie 1999, necesitatea unei inspirații venite de sus pentru construirea ei: “Europa trebuie să aibă o reflecție hotărâtă privind ambiguitatea contribuției ei la dezvoltarea omenirii (...) Europa trebuie să înceapă cu ea însăși (...) să respecte ordinea superioară cosmică ca pe ceva ce ne depășește și, de asemenea, ordinea morală ca consecință. Umilinta, amabilitatea, respectul a ceea ce nu înțelegem, sentimentul profund de solidaritate cu ceilalți, voința de a face sacrificii sau fapte bune pe care numai vesnicia le va răsplăti, acestea sunt tot atâtea valori care ar putea fi programul construcției europene.”⁵⁶

Iar din aceasta perspectiva, dupa cum se arata si in Mesajul Bisericii Ortodoxe la 2000 de ani de la Nasterea Mantuitorului: “Unitatea – element constitutiv al existentei si marturiei Bisericii in lume”, in cadrul intalnirii Intaistatatorilor Ortodoxiei la Constantinopol si Niceea intre 23-27 septembrie 2000, unitatea Bisericii nu priveste numai Biserica in sine insasi, ci unitatea intregii umanitati. “Unitatea Bisericii se ofera ca exemplu viabil pentru unitatea oamenilor, pentru acea unitate care sa respecte specificul fiecarei persoane si a fiecarui popor intr-o perioada de evolutii si dezvoltari impetuoase ale diferitelor tendinte si forme de globalizare”.⁵⁷

Note:

¹ Alastair Hulbert, *A Soul for Europe: Ethics and Spirituality*, Careffours Newsletter, Forward Studies Unit – European Commission, November 1998, no. 8, p. 12

² *Ibidem*, p. 13

³ Francois Saint-Ouen, *L’idée de culture européenne chez Denis de Rougemont*, in *Denis de Rougemont. De Neuchatel a l’Europe*, *Nouvelle Revue Neuchateloise*, automne 1995, no. 47, p. 75

⁴ Prof. Dr. Martin Hauser, *Quelques obstacles a franchir sur le chemin d’une interculturelle heureuse pour l’Europe*, lucrare prezentata la Conferinta Internationala *Intercultures’ 97*, Brasov, 1997.

⁵ Mesajul Papei Ioan Paul al II-lea membrilor Comisiei Episcopatelor Comunitatii Europene, *L’Eglise contribue au processus d’integration européenne dans un esprit de cooperation*, in *L’Osservatore Romano*, 10 aprilie 2001, n. 15 (2669), p. 2

⁶ World Council of Churches, *Constitution, Chapter I: Basis*.

⁷ World Council of Churches, *Constitution, Chapter III: Purposes and Functions*.

⁸ www.wcc-coe.org

⁹ In anul 2001 au fost acceptati ca membri: Biserica Africana din Sudan, Asociatia Bisericilor Baptiste din Rwanda, Biserica Luterna Evanghelică din Ghana, Biserica Luterna Evanghelică din Namibia, Biserica Presbiteriana Unita din Africa de Sud, Conventia Bisericilor Baptiste din Filipine, Biserica Evanghelică Mara, Myanmar, Ekalesia Niue-Pacific, Biserica Unita Reformata din Scotia.

¹⁰ *Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches. A Policy Statement*, September 1997, p. 11

¹¹ Pr. Mihail-Daniel Lungu, *Cea de-a 8-a Adunare Generala a Consiliului Mondial al Bisericilor* (Harrare, Zimbabwe, 3-14 decembrie 1998). *Reportaj*, in BOR, anul CXVI, nr. 7-12, 1998, p. 210-218

¹² Serghei Ciapnin, *In CEB ne simtim tot mai putin acasa*, traducere din *Nazavisimaia Gazeta*, (Rusia), in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, anul XI, nr. 218-219, 31 ianuarie 1999, p. 7

¹³ World Council of Churches, Central Committee 2001, www.wcc-coe.org

¹⁴ Prof. Univ. Dr. Petru I. David, *Ecumenismul. Factor de stabilitate in lumea de astazi*, ed. Gnosis, Bucuresti, 1998, p. 99

¹⁵ Pr. Michael Tita, *Intrunirea responsabililor ecumenici din cadrul Bisericilor membre ale Consiliului Mondial al Bisericilor*, in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, anul XII, nr. 270, 1 iunie 2001, p. 6

¹⁶ *Why Orthodox Do Not Accept Ecumenism*, The Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, Washington, 2000 www.stjohndc.org

¹⁷ *Ibidem*

¹⁸ Ieromonah Serafim Rose, *Ortodoxia si religia viitorului*, FEP-Tipografia Centrala, Cartea Moldovei, Chisinau, 1995, p. 27

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 26

²⁰ Mihai Urzica, *Ecumenismul si devierile lui*, in *Ortodoxia si internationalismul religios*, ed. Scara, 1999, p. 30-31 si *Biserica si viermii cei neadormiti sau cum lucreaza in lume taina faradelegii*, ed. Anastasia, 1998, p. 238

²¹ Astfel, desi in 1965 Consiliul CEB a publicat cele sapte conditii pentru asigurarea liberatatii religioase, totusi nu a facut nici o aluzie la nerespectarea acestor conditii in tarile de dincolo de cortina de fier, in plus in 1968 conducerea CEB a refuzat chiar in fata a 750 de delegati din peste 80 de tari sa poarte discutii in legatura cu persecutiile credintei crestine din estul Europei. Infiltrarea comunismului si in cadrul CEB a fost vizibila si in condamnarea din 1962 a actiunii unilaterale a SUA in Cuba, fara sa pomeneasca nimic despre construirea de catre sovietici pe acel teritoriu a bazelor de lansare a rachetelor. Totodata, reprezentantii Bisericii din Est si-au aratat simpatia fata de acea "teorie a revolutiei" privind lupta dusa de insurgentii din America Latina si din Asia impotriva guvernelor lor, iar in alta situatie Consiliul CEB a sustinut impreuna cu 209 de delegati americani o petitie in favoarea reverendului Sloan Coffin, inculpat in SUA pentru amestec in reseaua de propaganda si incurajare a dezertarii militarilor americani din Vietnam. Un exemplu elocvent este si urmarea conferintelor de la Geneva (1966) si de la Uppsala (1968) cand cei 27 de membri ai Comitetului Executiv al Consiliului – reprezentand 293 de Biserici protestante, anglicane, ortodoxe si ai vechilor catolici au votat in unanimitate subventionarea cu 200.000 dolari a celor 19 miscari de eliberare din Africa, dintre care 11 erau notorii comuniste, fara sa se prevada nici un mijloc asupra utilizarii acestor fonduri.

²² Prof. Vorel Ionita, *Conferinta Bisericilor Europene si opera diaconica a Bisericii Evanghelice din Germania, Seminar despre educatia si formarea ecumenica, Durau, 16-23 august 1999*, in *Teologie si Viata*, anul IX, nr. 7-12, 1999, p. 158

²³ *Mesajul Final adoptat la a doua Adunare Ecumenica Europeana, Graz, Austria, 23-29 iunie 1997*, in BOR, anul CXV, nr. 1-6, 1997, p. 47

²⁴ *Statement: Overcoming Divisions in Europe*, Meeting of the Central Committee, CEC, Nyborg, Denmark, 21-26 September 1999.

²⁵ <http://www.cec-kek.org/>

²⁶ *Charta Oecumenica: Guidelines for the Growing Cooperation among the Churches in Europe*, Metropolitan Jeremie, President of Conference of European Churches and Cardinal Vlk, President of Council of European Bishops' Conference, Strasbourg, 22 April 2001.

²⁷ Prof. Univ. Dr. Petru I. David, *op. cit.*, p. 318

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 319

²⁹ Mgr. H. Teisser, *La mission de l'Eglise*, Desclee, Paris, 1985, p. 36 apud Pr. Gheorghe Petraru, *Ortodoxie si Prozelitism*, ed. Trinitas, 2000, p. 96

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 97

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 106

³² PF Parinte Patriarh Teoctist afirma cu acest prilej ca "Acesta intalnire nu este altceva decat vrerea Tatalui si lucrarea Duhului Sfânt", cosemnat in *O intalnire sub semnul harului*, Vestitorul Ortodoxiei, anul XI, nr. 226-227, 1 iunie 1999, p. 1

³³ Hans Schwartz, *One Lord and One Church. Wishful Thinking and Hard Realities*, Myriobiblos, The Etext Virtual Library of the Church of Greece, 1992, p. 2 <http://www.myriobiblos.gr/index.htm>

³⁴ IPS Antonie, Mitropolitul Ardealului, *Participari ale delegatilor Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane la reuniuni ecumenice: Dialogul dintre Biserica Ortodoxa si Biserica Romano-Catolica cu privire la uniatisim*, in BOR, anul CXI, nr. 3-4, 1993, p.43

³⁵ *Orientale Lumen*, Il regna, 9/1995, p. 266 apud Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Popescu, *Ortodoxie si Catholicism. Dialog si Reconciliere*, ed. Romania crestina, 1999, p. 125

³⁶ Pr. Prof. Dumitru Abrudan, *Dialogul teologic ortodox-catolic*, in *Telegraful Roman*, anul 148, nr. 29-32, 1 si 15 august 2000, p. 1-2

³⁷ Arhid. Conf. Ioan I. Ica Jr., *Dialogul Ortodoxo-Catolic*, in *Renasterea*, anul XI, nr. 10 (130), octombrie 2000, p. 8-9

³⁸ De exemplu, Cardinalul Ratzinger a Congregatiei Sacre despre Doctrina Credintei si Episcopul Alan D. Clark din aceeasi Comisie internationala de dialog au semnat o declaratie

a doua zi dupa incheierea Raportului Final sub egida Declaratiei Comune a Papei Ioan Paul al II-lea si Arhiepiscopul de Canterbury (29 mai 1992) in care isi expimau convingerea ca “raportul nu reprezinta un acord substantial.” in Johannes Lütticken, *Anatomie eines oekumenischen Dialogs. Zum Abschlußbericht der anglikanisch- katholischen Kommission*, Herder Korrespondenz 36 (June 1982):297-301 apud Hans Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 2

³⁹ *The Attitude of the Church Towards the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission*, 1984, p. 816-828 pe http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/

⁴⁰ *Pastoral Attention to Traditional Religions. Letter of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue to the Presidents of Episcopal Conferences in Asia, the Americas and Oceania*, 21 noiembrie 1993;

⁴¹ Ca de exemplu: *Education for Dialogue: A Duty for Christians and Muslims. Message for the end of Ramadan 'Id al-Fitr 142 A.H./2000 A.D.; Message to Buddhists for the feast of Vesakh 2001. Buddhists and Christians: Together Promoting a Culture of Dialogue; Message of the Potifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue to the Hindus on the Feast of Diwali, 27 octombrie 2000.*

⁴² *Letter to Presidents of Bishops' Conferences on the Spirituality of Dialogue*, Vatican, 3 martie 1999;

⁴³ Etape importante sunt Intalnirile Interanationale pentru Pace pe care Asociatia le organizeaza in fiecare an, incepand din 1987 in diverse orase europene: Roma – 1987: Rugaciunea ca izvor al pacii; Roma – 1988: Oameni ai rugaciunii in cautarea pacii; Varsovia 1989: Niciodata un nou razboi; Bari – 1990: O mare de pace intre Occident si Orient; Malta – 1991: Religiile pentru o mare a pacii; Bruxelles – 1992: Europa, religiile, pacea; Milano – 1993: Pamantul oamenilor, invocatii catre Dumnezeu; Assisi – 1994: Pritenii lui Dumnezeu, marturisitorii pacii; Firenze – 1995: Pamanturi si ceruri de pace; Roma si Assisi – 1996: Pacea este numele lui Dumnezeu;

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⁴⁴ I.P.S. Serafim, Mitropolitul Germaniei, Europei Centrale si de Nord citat in Diac. Dr. Mircea Alexa Uta, *Oameni si religii. Ultima mare intalnire religioasa a acestui secol*, Almanah Bisericesc, Arhiepiscopia Bucurestilor, 1999, p. 30-40

⁴⁵ *Lignes Directrices de l'Action Oecumenique de la Federation des Eglises protestantes de la Suisse*, Federation des Eglises Protestantes de la Suisse, 1994, p. 3-4

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 6-7

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 436-437

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 324

⁴⁹ IPS Daniel, Mitropolitul Moldovei si Bucovinei, *Ideal si criza in Miscarea ecumenica. Ecumenism spiritual si ecumenism secularizat*, in Vestitorul Ortodoxiei, anul XI, nr. 218-219, 31 ianuarie 1999, p. 1-2

⁵⁰ Patriarhul ecumenic Bartolomeu I, *Biserica ortodoxa si Europa contemporana*, Cuvantare la deschiderea anului universitar, Bucuresti, Vestitorul Ortodoxiei, anul X, nr. 236, 15 noiembrie 1999, p. 2

⁵¹ Pr. Lect. Constantin Patuleanu, *Dialogul teologic bilateral dintre EKD si BOR – Glosar VIII – Bucuresti, 3-8 iulie 1998*, in BOR, anul CXVI, nr. 7-12, 1998, p. 145

⁵² Prof. Liviu Stoina, *Vizita in Romania a Gratiei Sale, dr. George Leonard Carey, Arhiepiscop de Canterbury, Primatul intregii Anglii si al Comunitatii anglicane din intreaga lume*, in BOR, anul CXI, nr. 7-9, 1993, p. 124

⁵³ *** *A IV-a Intrunire a Comisie Mixte pentru dialogul teologic dintre Bisericile Ortodoxe si Alianta Mondiala a Bisericilor Reformate, Limassol, Cipru, 8-13 ianuarie 1994*, in Teologie si Viata, anul LXX, nr. 1-4, 1994, p. 164

⁵⁴ www.unesco.org

⁵⁵ Prof Dr. Martin Hauser ii numeste in aceasta privinta “pasteures d’oecumenisme”, in *Okumene. Das eine Ziel – die vielen Wege. Oecumenisme. Un seul but – plusieurs chemins*, Festschrift zum 30jahrigem Bestehen des Institutum Studiorum Oecumenicorum

der Universität Freiburg (Schweiz), Iso Baumer und Guido Vergauwen (Hrsg.), *Okumenische Beihefte*, Freiburg, CH, 1995, p. 287

⁵⁶ Vaclav Havel apud Elisabeth Behr-Siegel, *La place de l'Eglise orthodoxe dans la construction europeenne*, *Contacts*, 190, 2000, pp. 157-169

⁵⁷ Casian, Episcopul Dunarii de Jos, *Biserica Ortodoxa paseste in mileniul III sub semnul unitatii credintei de la Niceea si Constantinopol*, *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, anul XIII, nr. 261, 15 ianuarie 2001, p. 2-3

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Islamism Vs Secularism: A Religious- Political Struggle in Modern Nigeria

This paper is a historically based approach to the topic of contemporary political and religious status of Nigeria. Recently, the secular administration by Islamists has generated violence between Muslims and Christians. The latter view Islamism as a gradual Islamisation of the country. Modern Islamists plead for a re-introduction of shari'a and OIC membership. They reject the secular status of Nigeria, the Islamic banking and educational system, etc.

The meaning and purpose of these are not different from hijrah, and mahdism of early 20th century. The issue is about restoring the ousted Caliphal system, and about rejecting the Western system and secularism, which were introduced by imperialists. The spirit of Islamism is increasing, especially among the grass-roots, elite, and politicians. In these circumstances, the phenomenon has to be assessed in an interdisciplinary way.

I. Introduction

Islamism is an idea for restoring the political side of Islam in modern times. This movement has been identified as a new phenomenon emerging among Muslim societies as a result of the political and cultural domination of the West through colonization. Westerlund suggests that the idea of Islamism basically developed in the 1970's. It is a kind of reformist and puritanical movement, similar to previous ones, which have been occurred in earlier centuries, as a reaction to the process of avoiding the Qur'an and sunnah, which form the basis of the shari'a'.¹

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An alternative sense of Islamism is used in this paper, meaning Muslim individual and/or organizational efforts which have as their goal the establishment of Islamic law as background for a Muslim governmental system and to plead for the re-emergence of Ummah.

On the other hand, secularism means a movement in society directed from other-worldliness to life on Earth. Secularism started as a reaction to the attitude of religion of despising human acts (in pre-Renaissance Europe). Secularism expressed itself in the development of humanism, wherein human being began to show more interest in human cultural achievements and limit the excesses of religion in public life.

The idea of secularism was introduced into the Muslim world by European colonialists. The concept was perceived by Islamists, as Hoebink demonstrates, as one of the imperialists' shrewdest devices to perpetuate Western dominance of Muslims and to cause them to deviate from their own religion, thus relentlessly contesting and challenging its basis and purport.² In this context, the term secularism refers to the system of separation between politics and religion, restricting religion only to private acts. Meanwhile, secularist refers to a person, group, or state that encourages the idea of secularism.

It is absolutely unavoidable to consider the two sides of the premise, particularly in countries with a deep history of political Islam and colonial domination. Nigeria is one such country. It is one of the African states which experienced the Islamic Jihad that

configured a Caliphate (founded by Usmanu Danfodiyo in the 19th century). It has a long history of mahdism against the colonial conquest of the Caliphate. After independence the struggle continued as a de-colonization process. It was pursued by Islamists who had both Islamic and Western education.

The debate continued to manifest itself in different ways, such as the idea of making shari'a, a federal Court, which would necessarily include criminal jurisdiction. Shari'a need not be limited to civil cases only. Other topics of the debate are: Nigeria's membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), and the status of the country as 'secular' or 'non-secular'. In the later, these discourses ended up in violence and carnage, which affected thousands of lives and properties. The persistence of this problem threatens the corporate existence of the Nigerian state and requires a serious assessment from different perspectives, in order to understand the phenomenon and to proffer possible solutions.

This paper approaches the following issues: the genesis of the Islamists' challenge to secularism, the nature of their demands and the ways in which the 'secular' Nigeria and secularist individuals respond to those demands, the political and religious implications of these conflicts on the Nigerian State, and how the relative peace has affected coexistence in this multi-religious nation. In addition, it discusses the possible solutions of these problems.

II. Historical Background

It is interesting to notice that both Islamists and secularists in Nigeria found their arguments in the historical experience of the country. The Islamists' point has always been the Caliphal legacy of the Islamic system, in which daily life developed according to the precepts of the Qur'an and the sunnah of the prophet, before the British imperial occupation. The history of the Caliphate and its administration remain as an inspiring source for Islamists and their demands. One of the well known voices of Islamism in Nigeria, Malam Ibarhim Sulaiman, consistently assesses that, 'the Muslims in Nigeria want to create an Islamic state, similar to the one that was founded by Usmanu Danfodiyo'.³

Usmanu Danfodiyo's jihad started in 1804. An Islamic state was founded in 1809, with Sokoto as its center. The Caliphate incorporated almost all the northern parts of the country, which constitute more than a half of the vast areas of contemporary Nigeria. Its influence also extended to some areas in Niger republic, Chad, Cameroon, and other areas in the West African region. In theory and practice, the Caliphate ruled for a century, utilizing the tenets of Islam.

Later, as a result of European imperialist expansion, the Caliphate came into contact with European powers such as Germany, France, and most significantly, Great Britain. However, as a result of the treaties signed with different Emirs and Sultans of the area, the British crown claimed the right to occupy

the region. Thus in 1900 Lord Frederick Lugard declared the Caliphate a protectorate of the British crown. The declaration was subsequently followed by pacification and annexation of southern emirates as Ilorin, Bida, Kontagora, Bauchi, Gombe from 1901 to 1902. The trade center of the Caliphate (Kano) and the capitol (Sokoto) were subjugated by British forces in February and March of 1903⁴.

The conquest was immediately followed by political and religious structural changes of the area. Basically, the shari'a was restricted to civil matters only. Criminal cases were the High Commissioner's, the Resident's, or their representative's jurisdiction. In the ceremony which marked the beginning of British rule in the Islamic state of Sokoto, Lugard made the following assertion to the Muslim leaders, the ulama, and the crowds,

"The old treaties are dead: you have killed them. Now these are the words which I, the High Commissioner, have to say for the future. The Fulani in old times under Danfodiyo conquered this country. They took the right to rule over it, to levy taxes, to depose kings and to create kings. They in turn have by defeat lost their rule which has now come into the hands of the British...All men are free to worship God as they please. Mosques and prayer places will be treated with respect by us... You need not have fear regarding British rule, it is our wish to learn your customs and fashion, just as you must learn ours"...⁵

As a result of the fact that people in the Caliphate continued to show their discontentment with the new

administration and policies, which were generally considered as alien and Christian, the pledge of ‘non-interference with the religion of Islam’ was announced by the government. That was decided in order to avoid religious unrest of the masses, which the British were neither ready nor able to contain. The opposition to the British, however, continued in different ways. Part of people chose to leave the country, viewing it as having been invaded by the Nasara-Christians. This included the sultan Attahiru I and other prominent scholars of the Caliphate opinion (such as Alqadi Abdullah). Another part decided to stay, either to continue the fight (the Satiru and Hadejiya revolts, in 1904 and 1906, have to be mentioned in this respect) or in order to continue the fight intellectually (the party of Waziri Bukhari is to be mentioned in this context). The revolts failed, due to their weak military support and outdated weapons in comparison to the British. The Sultan Attahiru I refused to cooperate with the new government. He had fled the country, choosing hijrah- (migration), following the prophet’s way from Mecca to Medina. The Sultan was chased and killed by British forces after four months of fight, on his way to the Holy Land (in July 1903).

However, the intellectual opposition continued in the colonial period. Yadudu and Doi⁶ argued that although the colonial government succeeded in paralyzing the shari’a and the entire Islamic system except for the parts of it which favored the colonial administration, the agitation for the previous system could not be displaced. As Alqadi Abdullah mentioned, the

reason for the consistent opposition to the system introduced by the Europeans was that ,

...”(it) creates a good opportunity for Christians to interfere in the Muslim world and to gradually pollute Muslim values and ethics. It (meaning the British rule) would be the cause of bad habits such of those who do not believe. Meanwhile, the weak-hearted have got used to their shameful traditions and cultures and the children have grown up under the influence of their religion. Eventually, Islam would be degraded.”⁷

It could be clearly stated that the Muslims’ contempt for the European way of life and moral standards served as the main argument of their opposition to Europeans

The Islamists’ fight in modern times originated in the opposition that started with the British imperial occupation of the Islamic Caliphate of Sokoto. Jonathan Reynolds asserts that its legacy and spirit refused to give up with the conquest of the Caliphate in early 20th century . He stressed that “it could be doubtful that the debate over the legacy of the Sokoto Caliphate was a way in which the northern region’s inhabitants (Muslims) could seek a meaningful political system rooted in history and modern times”⁸.

Williams asserts the same. According to her, “the message of Danfodiyo, the founder of the Caliphate, is as relevant to contemporary Nigeria as it was to the 19th century society,”⁹ due to the way in which the contemporary Islamists’ movements refer to it.

Thus, the new independent government of Muslims, dominating the northern region, had to face both the demands and aspirations of its citizens, after the colonialists were gone. Rev. Matthew Kukah noticed that Sardaunana Sir Ahmad Bello, the Premier of the northern region, was trying win the trust of his people. He had to promise to perpetuate the Caliphal system, as follows:

“...the restoration of the pre 1900 era , modernized, polished, democratized, refined, but not out of recognition, reconstructed, but still within the same framework and on the same foundation...the school, the college, the fertilizer, the hypodermic syringe, have transformed Usmanu Danfodiyo’s world, but the basis is still the same.”¹⁰

This certainly demonstrates the attachment of people to the former system and it actually proves that the dead Islamic state of Nigeria (the Sokoto Caliphate) continued to be present in the political life of Muslims. Therefore, it was quite normal that, when Zamfara’s state governor re-introduced shari’a, after the democratic election of 1999, people saw him as the reviver of Danfodiyo’s legacy. Thereafter he was given the title of a mujaddid- reformer.¹¹

Thus, the fight between Islamists and secularists has its basis in what Muslims consider as their cherished Caliphal system (which they uphold as needing to be revived). Opposed to this is the idea of perpetuating the colonial legacy of separating religion from politics, which was introduced after the colonial occupation.

III. The content

The main issues of political and religious debate in contemporary Nigeria are the ‘secular status’ of the country, the topic of the implementation of shari’a, government involvement in the religious sphere (as the administration of Hajj), membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), etc. These issues are the trigger of the current conflict in the Federation, as a result of the increasing waves of Islamism in the country. We will to briefly analyze the above mentioned issues.

a) Status of Nigerian State

Beginning with the British occupation of the Sokoto Caliphate, the separation between the state and religion was institutionalized. The Islamists refused to accept the term ‘secular’ to describe the status of their country, since they consider it to be a denial of religion by the state. The secularists view ‘secular status’ as a possible way of protecting themselves from Islamic dominance within a Nigeria’s multi-religious society. The Christians are also afraid that this could be detrimental to their religion, while some Muslim secularists consider the increasing Islamists’ demands as a way of achieving political goals which are not necessary for the progress of Islam.

In a recent research article published by the International Institute for Democracy and Electorate Assistance (IIDEA) in Nigeria, one could notice that:

“Islamic and Christian actors have turned the concept of secularism into a major political stake, which is assumed to favor Christianity and to be against the interest of Muslims”¹²

This perception may have been configured as a result of different meanings and ways of using the term in modern politics. Quoting Kambasaya, Williams states that: “secularity ... while being described as a belief in secularism, can more appropriately be seen as a state of being neutral in religious affairs, neither opposing, nor promoting religion ... as such it respects the belief while, at the same time, keeps an eye on religion, so that it does not overstep its boundaries to infringe in matters of public interest, thereby jeopardizing public peace.”¹³

It seems to be obvious, from the above quote, what the Islamists oppose. They believe that, instead of jeopardizing public peace, religion is a source of peace, without which society will continue to deepen in moral crisis, in spite of scientific and technological progress. In Ilesanmi’s opinion, “the term secular can not mean religious neutrality, from a historical point of view (as Peter Berger argued); there is an inherent connection between Christianity and the features of modern Western world, so that the modern world could be viewed as a high fulfillment of the Christian spirit.”¹⁴

According to P.B. Clarke, this debate on the term ‘secularism’ has been a controversy for a century in Nigeria. The debates concerning the future of postcolonial constitutional aspects¹⁵ are continuing debates from the colonial period (especially discussions from the 1940’s and 1950’s). However, the debate has been strongly manifested during the sessions of the Constitutional Drafting Committee, focusing on the transition to civil rule (which took place from 1975 to 1978). The constitution of Nigeria specifies that the status of the country is:

“Indivisible Sovereign Republic, Secular, Democratic and Social.”

Later the term ‘secular’ was avoided, as a result of Muslim opposition, and the term multi religious was adopted. As Clarke stressed, these debates may have had political dimensions, but they were also about religious faith and practice and the whole question of ensuring that Nigeria had a fitting and workable constitution. These debates were also extended to include law and order in general, and issues such as cultural identity, imperialism, the colonial legacy, mental and legal de-colonization.¹⁶ Thus, the “fight” has been on the issue of either maintaining the legacy of the British conquerors with the separation of religion from the state, or reviving the Caliphal system, in which religion and state can not be divided. However, the historical background has been considered by both Islamists and secularists in contemporary Nigeria.

Mushirul Haq pointed out in his study of Islam in Secular India that Muslims can tolerate a secular state

if it provides religious freedom (freedom of worship) to every citizen. They hesitate to accept secularism as a way of life, if it involves any restrictions of religious matters. This is not the way of life proper to the Muslims as “what follows” (the after life) is their goal.¹⁷ However, in the Nigerian case, even if the term “secular” has been abandoned, the status of the country remains a secular one. Nevertheless, freedom of religion was clearly stated in the constitution of the federation. However, section 10 of the constitution prohibits from consideration any religion as a state religion.¹⁸

There is another debate that has to be mentioned and considered. It concerns the issues of joining the OIC and of applying shari’a as the legal code of Muslims.

b) Nigeria’s membership in the O.I.C.

Another conflict episode between Islamists and secularists was the controversy on Nigeria’s membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference. Most of the Muslims viewed the membership as a fulfillment of their right to be represented in an international forum that takes into account issues regarding their religion and other economic and political problems. On the other hand, the Christians consider that the ‘secular status’ of the country would be violated as if organization is affiliated to a certain religion. Furthermore, the membership was viewed as a step to a gradual Islamization of the country which they could notice.

It has to be noted that Nigeria had held the status of observer in the organization since 1969, which was reiterated in 1971. This status was maintained till 1986, when it applied for a full membership. The Political Bureau decided the political future of Nigeria at that time.

As it was a sensitive issue. The Constitutional Review Committee and the Constituent Assembly deliberated it, in their 1987/88 and 1988/89 proceedings. It is also important to observe that the issue of OIC membership, decided the Christians for the first time in rejecting Babangida’s ‘secular’ government (which was against Islamists). The Christians argued that the political implications of the membership were that the presidency of the country and the ministry of foreign affairs, as institutions, would permanently belong to the Muslims.

This view was, however, rejected by Muslims, who argued that other countries with non-Muslim presidents and ministers were members of the organization and the secular status of their countries was not violated, nor were their religious beliefs affected. Countries such as Chad, Cameroon, Uganda, Guinea, Burkina Faso, etc., were already members of the organization. The Islamists lamented²⁰ that Christians in Nigeria were more intolerant than Christians from other countries.

The Archbishop of Kaduna (which is one of the areas of religious crisis of Nigeria) stated in an interview, “my assessment of the implication of this admission into the OIC is that it can trigger off a big

misunderstanding between Christians and Muslims.”²¹ The issue was discussed in the framework of a meeting of Catholic Bishops of Nigeria. Their conclusion was, “Now that the fact is clear after mature deliberations and having listened to various presentations from Christians and some Muslims, we do not, and shall not, agree to Nigeria’s membership in the OIC.”²² In this context, the Christians proved that they did not approve of the government’s decision to join the organization.

In order to clear up its position regarding such a decision, the government of Nigeria tried to demonstrate that the decision was based solely on legal international relations. Meanwhile, it tried to keep good diplomatic relations with other third world countries that constituted the majority of the organization. The government’s response was that:

“...we shall not neglect any opportunity to serve our national interest in any reasonable international forum. The same policy of propagating our national interest has been pursued by many nations inside and outside of the African continent with very positive results for their national well-being and international standing. To this end, the Nigerian flag will be raised in every international forum which we have sufficient reason to belong to or to attend. Our attitude to the world must not be one of fear, but one of a spirit of engagement, discovery and co-operation”.²³

The Nigerian government could hardly be free of economic interests. It was interested in obtaining free loans and financial aid from the Islamic Development

Bank and other Muslim countries of the Middle East. It was a time of economic recession, but Nigerians asked the government not to take IMF/World Bank loans.

Even though the government tried to win trust concerning the membership of OIC, the Christians refused to accept the situation and intensified their opposition to membership. Ultimately, membership was not accepted. The Islamists viewed this fact as a victory for the Christians and therefore they continued to plead for and to try to force membership.

Hunwick noticed that the Christians are “nervously following the matter and the actions of Muslim organizations for any hint, real or imagined, that Nigeria may be moving towards an Islamic state.”²⁴ This is, therefore, one of the unresolved tensions in the political and religious situation in Nigeria.

c) The Shari’a issue

The shari’a controversy has been the cause of bloodshed and loss of lives in Nigeria. This issue has been a persistent one in the 20th century: from the final conquest of the Sokoto Caliphate in 1903 to the declaration of full fledged shari’a by the Zamfara state government in 2000. Shari’a, as a way of life and a Muslim legal system, “is primarily based on the Koran and Hadith in its composition and application. Its use is all-inclusive. The shari’a legal system had been applied, in most of the northern states, long before the advent of the British.”²⁵

Due to the Muslims' abhorrence to other legal systems, the problem of shari'a was one of the foremost problems that the colonial administration had to face. Even some of Qadis, who accepted employment in the service of the colonial government, preferred dual judgments for the cases/situations they had to judge: one according to the demands and restrictions of the new system, and another according to the shari'a (usually accepted when out of office).

As shari'a had been seriously entrenched in the northern parts of Nigeria, to eliminate it proved to be difficult. It is only the part that concerns the criminals' cases that had to be judged by courts. In order to get rid of the tension which the issue of shari'a had created, Luggard, the British High Commissioner of northern Nigeria, said the following to the Emirs:

"you Emirs can go administering justice (shari'a) as before, but without any suspicion and corruption. I also add that you should stop cutting hands of thieves, you must leave everyone with his feet and hands..."²⁶

In order to achieve this goal, the government reformed the court hierarchy, they introduced the repugnancy test, and they allowed European law graduates to screen all court proceedings and judge without referring reverse to the Qadis or Emirs.²⁷ Even in these circumstances the emirs and Ulama continued to insist for a full implementation of shari'a.

As a colonial officer, Joseph Schacht visited northern Nigeria in 1930. Afterwards, he reported on the status of Islam through several centuries. What he

found fascinating was how the issue of shari'a was vigorously followed by the Muslims. He stated :

"The next ambition of the Muslim ruling class in northern Nigeria is to continue in the same direction and to seek the removal of the few restrictions which the British administration had to impose on the full application of Islamic law. Their immediate objective is either to be left free to apply the Maliki law of homicide to the letter, or to be relieved altogether of this matter, in which there is an obvious conflict of Islamic and British ideas of justice. Their motive" (for the agitation, he further emphasized) "in this is, beyond doubt, a sincerely religious one, it is a question of conscience for them ...The debates of the house of chiefs and the House of Assembly show how jealously the members of these bodies watch over the shari'a, and how apt they are to oppose even the most innocent administrative measures on the grounds that they interfere with pure Islamic law."²⁸

This Muslim belief in shari'a, as a divine rule that comes from Allah, in its supremacy over any other laws that human beings impose, and in its capacity to solve their problems of society, is a strong factor that compels them to continue to insist on its implementation. Murray Last observed that, "The shari'a issue as Allah's blueprint for ensuring order and justice: to reinstate the shari'a, people say, will enable Nigerian Muslim society realistically to escape from the morass of corruption and misgovernment, from the breakdown of justice, from the immoralities of conspicuous wealth, drunkenness, whoring, epidemics of both

petty burglary and vicious armed robbery, from the desperate joblessness of the urban young.”²⁹

In Yadudu’s perspective, this thought of the Nigerian Muslims, reinforced by their historical antecedents, is the reason for their demand for the reintroduction of shari’a, a system they had strongly believed in. It was functional for centuries, before being eroded by the English Common law. He further observed that, “in the democratized Nigeria, where Nigerians are asserting group or ethnic rights, the grassroots and elite of the Muslim areas are fervently active in restoring the shari’a system.”³⁰ They tried to shatter the legality of the imposed English laws, as the laws were based on foreign principles, being enforced by military British forces. Obviously, these laws were not popular among these people, mostly because they had a Christian origin.

Dr. Kumo, one of the Muslims’ leaders trained in the Western legal system, asked the insightful question “why the transplanted English law, which was imposed in the country by the colonial regime, should be allowed to remain the common law of Nigeria.” At least from the nationalist point of view, the independent Nigeria needs to evolve its own legal system, to make distinguish it from the system of the colonial period

Professor Yadudu asserted that “if shari’a could not be accepted on the fact of its religious background, the English laws also should suffer the same fate.” The English law is basically Christian. He makes his point, quoting Lord Sumner, “Ours is and has al-

ways been a Christian State. The English family is built on Christian ideas and if the national religion is not Christian, there is none. English law may well be called a Christian law.”³¹

The statement was reaffirmed recently, in 1986. Yadudu was reacting to those who accepted the English law in Nigeria’s constitution and were against mentioning shari’a in the constitution. A member of the CDC lamented in 1978 (during the proceedings): “I, as Muslim, will not feel that I am completely practicing my religion, without accepting shari’a... if we accepted the freedom of religion, there is no need to narrow my freedom.”³² This will make religious freedom meaningful and fair, among Nigerians of different religious backgrounds.

On the other hand, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), warned that a religious conflict will start if shari’a is accepted. In an open letter addressed to the president during the constitutional drafting meeting, they mentioned that “Sudanese experience was enough for Nigeria to profit from and eschew anything which has to do with the shari’a in our constitution. If not, the consequences will be too grave and obvious.”³³ Indeed, the Christians of Nigeria demonstrated their stiffest opposition when they provoked Muslims to a violent encounter, in the Kaduna and Bauchi states especially. It was spread to other cities in Nigeria and it damaged lives and properties.

It could also be argued that apart from religious reasons, there are also some other possible aspects

that could motivate the Muslims' plea for the Islamic system, despite all the difficulties Christians and even some Muslim secularists generated. It is a known fact that after independence, the desires (needs) of Nigerian people for their very own system increased. Muslim actors stated that the failure of the system was not only caused by operators, but by structures that the state was built up on. They think that the only solution is Islam. In his article "Politics : Islamic approach", Falaki assesses the situation thus:

"Muslims are beginning to appreciate that the civilization they have been copying and cherishing does not possess the good qualities needed for human organization. What the West has so far offered to Muslims is nothing more than continuous decline and moral degeneration resulting in frustrations as well as loss of purpose and direction."³⁴

Another Muslim activist went further in blaming the secular administration for the social, political and economic crisis that saddled the Nigerian state. In his opinion, "all the crises facing the Nigerian state are the result of the secular system, which demoralized people and accustomed them with materialism." The spread of crimes such as armed robbery, the absence of law and order, fraud, and corruption are the results of secularism. He concluded that "the only system that takes us to the way of sanity is Islam" (by applying shari'a).³⁵

The current economic and political problems in Nigeria are multi-dimensional, being the results of many elements. Such a statement has become typical

for an Islamic slogan. It involves the idea of a necessary reassuming of the Islamic values and of a necessary abandonment of Western, European systems and policies.

For example, the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria made the same statement, as follows:

"When the governments that have ruled Algeria have demonstrated their inability to cope with the multidimensional crisis that is shaking the country to its very depths, the Algerian people have initiated a process of resurgence which is moving them in direction of a democratic and pluralist polity anchored in an authentic Islamic societal foundation. The failure of different ideologies, Western and Eastern, have compelled us to turn to our religion in order to safeguard and protect our history and civilization and our human and natural recourses."³⁶

Thus, Nadvi argued that "the frustration and utter skepticism of the Muslims with the Western models accelerated the speed of revivalism. The Muslim nation states, divided into capitalist and communist systems, failed to attain any progress. They followed the Western culture in its entirety at the cost of Islamic values, but in vain."³⁷ Therefore the eagerness to return to Islam became obvious. What is very interesting in the Nigerian context, is the way in which the Islamic actors try to achieve their goals. They do not want to demolish, but to modify the democratic system, in order to make it functional.

IV. The Muslim Activists and Secular Democracy

One of the Nigerian Islamists' interesting feature is their relationship to 'modernity'. Issues such as western education, participation in governments and administrations of non-Islamic regimes, democratic elections, women's rights, and participation with non-Muslims are issues to be debated for "ulama". A general feature of Nigerian Islamists is that they combine both Western and Islamic education. They work as administrators, academics, politicians, and sometimes they are involved even in the army and other paramilitary activities. In his study, Jibrin Ibrahim pointed out this development. He noticed that:

"...the new Muslim activists have acquired both western and Islamic education and speak Arabic as well as French and/or English and local languages. As Islam is very plural, these intellectuals have become the vectors of this plurality. Some of them, for example, operate in the brotherhoods, while others oppose the brotherhoods. Their point is that of a return to the source, the Qur'an, the development of the Ummah - the Islamic community - and the struggle against western ideology and hegemony."³⁸

However, the main problems of the activists in modern times are not Western education or the political system, but the way in which these are implemented.

Other topics were more debated, with a view toward motivating people to live according to Islamic values: the proper way for female students to dress, the problem of making school schedules (exam timetables, especially), not to contradict the religious calendar, and adjusting school calendars.

The Muslim activists view the political involvement, the elections and democratic processes as ways of protecting Islam from the domination of non-Muslims in multi religious Nigeria. This is a legacy that Shaykh Abubakar Gumi introduced and suggested to other activists. It is a known fact that Gumi challenged his traditional ulama's counterparts, who criticized his political position, especially by organizing a fatawa (legal opinion) to demonstrate that politics was more important than prayer.

In his study on 'Islamic Reform and Political Change' in Nigeria, Roman Loimeier detailed and analyzed this aspect. It is enough to present Gumi's view on participation of both men and women in the voting system in this context. According to him :

"It is said that if the Muslims rest, the unbelievers will make war on them. So it is a duty for men and women to take up arms...Well (by this analogy), it is (a duty) to cast a vote. Now since this will be beneficial to oneself and moreover beneficial to the Muslim community, it is Satan who prevents them (women) from going out... As long as a man's wife covers her body properly, there is no problem. If you hear somebody say that this is a gathering of men and women, we don't want it, this is Satan who urges the unbeliev-

ers, men and women to oppress the Muslims. I personally will go out with my wives, with our children following. If this is not done, even to the point of letting unbelievers predominate, then what is our position? ... This religion, if you do not protect it, it will not protect you. This is what makes me say that politics is more important than prayer... With politics one stands and worships together, where as prayer is only part of this ... It is a necessity that every man takes his women and children above the age of eighteen to register so that we can predominate over the non-Muslims.³⁹

This demonstrates how the Nigerian Muslim reformers consider that modern politics could cope with religious practices. Gumi's opinion has remained a main reference in the contemporary democratic processes. Abubakar Gumi's followers reiterated his words, especially for his opponents. The democratic period in Nigeria turns out to be the best time to fully implement shari'a. Such an issue could not have been debated this way during the colonial occupation of Sokoto Caliphate.

Currently, there are twelve states in the Muslim areas whose official legal system is the shari'a.⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that the various House Assemblies in the shari'a states follow the conventional ways of deciding the law, debating and voting the bill and sending it to the executive to be accepted.

There is no Islamic party formed in Nigeria; which is not the case of other Muslim nations (Pakistan or Sudan). This fact also proves how secular democracy

is being appropriated by the Islamists. According to Murray Last, "Madeleine Albright, when recently visiting Kano (one of the states that have shari'a), was taken aback when thanked (albeit ironically) for introducing shari'a: "but it was due to democracy," she was told.⁴¹

The new class of Islamists now living in Nigeria uses democracy to achieve its goals instead of violence. Esposito eloquently explained this fact:

"The participation of Islamic organizations in electoral politics, using ballots not bullet, has ironically made them an even more formidable threat to regimes in the Muslim world and some in the West. The justification for the condemnation and suppression of Islamic movements was that they were violent extremists, small non-representative groups on the margins of society, who refused to work within the system, and as such were threat to society and regional stability. Those who once dismissed their claims as unrepresentative and who denounced their radicalism as a threat to the system now accuse them of an attempt to 'hijack democracy'.⁴²

This approach to politics and democracy has tremendously changed the way that the secular administrations deal with the Islamists in Nigeria. In the recent shari'a crisis, even the president could not reject the adoption of the legal system, since he did not want to loose part of his electorate .

Another topic to be debated in Nigeria is that of electing non-Muslims by Muslims. The large majority of Muslims elected President Obasanjo (a Christian) in

the last election, even if Abubakar Gumi asserted that Muslims should never elect a non-Muslim.

In an interview for Quality News Magazine in 1987, Gumi emphasized: “the two party system of government will not be South against the North, but Islam against Christianity. Once you are a Muslim, you cannot accept the choice of a non-Muslim to be your leader.” The response of the President of CAN, Archbishop Okogie, was that “The country will be reduced to ashes if a non-Christian president is elected.”⁴³

This also proves the importance of elections for various religious groups in Nigeria. They want their interests to be protected by the center. Concerning the issue of education Gumi’s position was very positive. He said in an interview:

“Nigerian society is like any other society, if you educate them it becomes good, if you don’t educate them, it becomes like any bad society. Between mankind and beast, the difference is education. When you educate them you elevate them.”

The model of shari’a state in Nigeria proves the success of the Islamists.

The debate on the possibility of appointing non-Muslims and women to high offices has been positively managed. In Zamfara there are about three women who work as permanent secretaries in the state cabinet, for instance. In Sokoto state the Permanent Secretary for the Agency for Rural Development is a Christian, and a woman is the commissioner in the cabinet. Similarly, two other, very important offices of the state are managed by

women. The first one is Shaykh Gumi’s daughter.⁴⁴ In the state of Niger, a shari’a state, there is a Christian deputy as governor. Similar situations could be found in almost all the Muslim states of Nigeria. Indeed, the Islamists’ appropriation of secular party policy and democracy to entrench the Islamic system has marked a turning point in the history of Islamic revivalism in contemporary Nigeria.

V. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to view the rising of Islamism in modern Nigeria as a challenge to secularism. It has demonstrated that most of the new Muslim activists in Nigeria are the product of Western education and civilization. These vanguards of Islamism are either trained in the universities of Nigeria and the Middle East, or in European and American universities.

The main source of conflict between the secularists and Muslim revivalists must be identified in the historical experience of the country: the emergence of an Islamic state, the Sokoto caliphate, with shari’a as the official system of the state, and the idea of separation between state and religion, which was a result of colonialism. These issues are reference points for the contemporary debates.

Moreover, the economic, social, and political crisis of the 1980’s and 1990’s has contributed, to a certain extent, to an alternative political system, in which Is-

lamic values have been seen as a solution for the failed Western political models of democracy and military. It has been argued that the Islamic system is an antidote for the sicknesses that has saddled the country's progress and the welfare of its citizens, in spite of the fact that the country is endowed with huge natural and human resources.

Instead of violence, Nigeria's Islamists have adopted political, peaceful modalities to achieve their aims (although shi'ah groups of El-zakzaky's leadership are still partaking in the political activities of Nigeria, which is not ideal for Muslims, it is said). This can be viewed in their participation in democracy, elections, and in the administration of the 'secular' state. They have not formed Islamic political parties, in order to participate at elections and other political processes (which is different from other Muslim countries). This fact has made them a voice in the democratic era, due to their electoral power; they are perceived more as allies than as a threat to the administration.

This paper suggests that a system of federalism has to be institutionalized, in order to avoid conflicts and violence, which are sometimes the result of rivalries between the Islamists and secularists. The federal government is able to maintain neutrality regarding religious matters, creating a climate of understanding and peaceful co-existence of all religions.

The states that chose shari'a system or any other system of law which the people voted for should be constitutionally allowed to implement their choice.

This is due to a heterogeneous culture, religion, and tradition in Nigeria. In this way the tensions and violence in religious and political matters will be reduced.

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International Birth Control Politics: The Evolution of a Catholic Contraceptive Debate in Latin America

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Official Catholic opposition to contraception has long been portrayed as a stand that is based in antiquated doctrine and “out of touch” with society and its problems. In fact, Catholic arguments often have been less devoted to doctrine and more reflective of concerns for social justice and human rights. This was certainly the case in Latin America, as international birth control programs evolved in the mid to late 20th century. Programs were targeted at developing nations like those in Latin America which were experiencing what was termed a “population explosion.” This article describes how, in this primarily Catholic region, Catholic authorities responded to population policy, arguing that overpopulation should not be considered the primary cause of economic strife, nor should birth control be promoted as the solution.

More than three decades ago, Ivan Illich warned of the difficulty of implementing a policy of population control in Latin America, saying, “Only a strongman could afford simultaneously to dare traditional Catholics who speak about sin, communists who want to out-breed the United States imperialists, and nationalists who speak about colonizing vast unsettled expanses.”¹ In an era in which the birth control movement centered much of its public arguments on the empowerment of women, Illich was keenly aware of the ways in which religion, communist ideology and nationalism complicated population policy.

This was particularly true in Latin America where the Catholic Church remained strong, communists demanded alternative solutions, and nationalist identity promoted strength in numbers. But while opposing sides of the debate appeared unwaveringly polarized in the 1960s, the dialectic contributed to a new perspective on international population policy present at the dawn of the new millennium. According to that new perspective, global population cannot be addressed without considering economic justice and human rights, both espoused by both Marxists and the Catholic Church in their opposition to population control.

The Catholic Church's position against birth control has long been regarded as antiquated, unchanging and steeped in medieval doctrine vilifying sexuality. However, modern Catholic teachings on human rights and economic justice have been significantly more influential in shaping Church arguments on birth control since the early decades of the 20th century. It was in that period that the religious debate over birth control placed the Church into the role of "enemy," as other denominations shifted their positions toward acceptance.² The debates took place primarily in the United States and Western Europe, where birth control activists sought to legalize contraceptives through a feminist initiative to lift the Victorian ban on contraceptives and contraceptive information. Ultimately, however, pro-birth control arguments appealed to eugenicists, race theorists and neo-Malthusians who saw social and economic ills worsening as a result of over-

population particularly among the poor and inferior. The Church refused to shift its position for a variety of reasons—Catholic authorities often arguing that birth control was not a solution to economic problems and that no human life should be regarded as inferior. These arguments played important roles when the debate was taken to Latin America.

The birth control movement became almost immediately international in scope as Margaret Sanger and other activists organized international conferences to address issues of global poverty, migration, war, etc. and how they related to uncontrolled births. The era of World War I marked the rise of intensified global concerns, and in the post war period birth control activists appealed to the League of Nations to include a birth control platform in its plan for world peace. The Great Depression brought a new perspective to the birth control debate, shaping new economic arguments, but it was not until the post-World War II era that the International Planned Parenthood Federation and other organizations were successful in getting the world to acknowledge a need for global population policy. India and China gained significant attention from the beginning of the birth control movement, with nationalist politics and large populations challenging the roles of the United States and Western Europe in the geo-political/economic sphere. Attitudes toward birth control and population in Latin America evolved somewhat differently. First, the traditional relationship between Latin America and the United States resulted in the evolution of more specific U.S.

influence in population policy directed to the South. Second, the prevalence and nature of Catholicism in Latin America molded unique birth control questions that were not only theological, but political in character. And third, the strength of socialism introduced human rights and economic justice into birth control dialogue that both paralleled Catholic teaching and confronted the United States' political-economic philosophy and action.

The international birth control movement was first introduced to Latin America during the era of the Mexican Revolution. Margaret Sanger had opened her first birth control clinic in the United States in 1916, and supported the opening of others throughout the United States. She and other activists saw themselves as liberating women everywhere from "incessant childbearing" and planned to open clinics wherever possible. Conditions in Mexico seemed favorable, not because of overpopulation, as Mexico was essentially sparsely populated and the population was actually declining due to high infant mortality, war casualties and migration. Rather, revolutionary ideology embracing human rights combined with political attacks on the Church opened the door for birth control. Constitutionalist were willing to address women's rights and Mexican feminists demanded access to contraceptives, particularly in the radical state of Yucatan. In the early 1920s anti-Catholicism had pervaded the birth control movement in the United States, and though virtually all denominations opposed the use of artificial contraceptives, the Catholic

Church had been branded as the enemy. The strength of anti-clericalism in Mexico during the same period influenced the opening of three birth control clinics, and under the presidency of the anti-cleric Plutarco Calles, Sanger's booklet "Birth Regulation" was freely distributed.³ But Mexican women did not embrace contraception in the 1920s. It is difficult to determine exactly the reasons behind the failure, though it is important to recognize a number of determining factors. Mayan culture and the adherence to Catholic teachings among the people of the Yucatan acted as obstacles to contraceptive use. In addition, the people of the Yucatan were largely poor and illiterate, and they lacked clean water, making it difficult to use the recommended diaphragms and spermicidal jellies. But although this was a comparatively brief episode in birth control history, it illustrates a division in cultural understanding that would pervade the evolution of international population policy in coming decades.

In the 1930s, reformers and women's reproductive rights activists were overshadowed by the power of the conservative eugenics movement and of economic arguments pointing to population pressures as contributing to the global depression. It was in this era that the Catholic Church cemented its stand against the use of artificial contraceptives as other denominations shifted toward acceptance. In Latin America a pro-natalist program began at the same time, urging births to strengthen nations and support economic development. The depression spurred im-

port-substitution industrialization in Latin America, as nations hoped to lessen dependency on foreign investment through internal economic development. Within this initiative, leaders saw population growth as fundamental to economic growth. This philosophy contradicted the claims of more developed nations that high birth rates caused economic problems, but mid-20th century Latin American development more clearly paralleled 19th century U.S. development, where population growth—through births and immigration—was encouraged. The political position of the Catholic Church was in question at the same time, as fascists (who supported traditional Church hierarchy) and socialists (who attacked Church authority) vied for control of nations. The Church's position on birth control seemed irrelevant as the population/economic arguments of the developed world did not seem to apply to the expansive Latin America before the 1960s, and Latin American pro-natalism upheld Church teaching. Policy makers saw human potential as the country's greatest asset, and in one study conducted during the 1960s, half of the respondents saw Mexico's heavy population increase as leading to economic power.⁴ Traditional clergy in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America embraced Church teachings that promoted large families as healthier and more prosperous.⁵

The exception lay in Puerto Rico. In the 1930s, U.S. eugenics and birth control movements inspired experimentation on Puerto Rican women. Claiming overpopulation contributed significantly to poverty

there, the United States initiated a sterilization program in 1938, with an estimated one third of Puerto Rican women of childbearing age sterilized by the 1970s. During the 1950s, Puerto Rican women also served as subjects of research for early oral contraceptives, which contained dangerously high doses of hormones. The program was not reflective of any more general development supporting women's reproductive rights, as women were largely kept ignorant of other real contraceptive choices, and even of the consequences of tubal ligation itself. Rather, it was publicly promoted as an economic solution directly affecting women who would not lose precious time on the job due to childbearing. Women supplied the majority of labor in poorly-paid garment production, and corporations had a vested interest in keeping them working. In addition, authorities hoped that the Puerto Rican experiment could serve as a model for economic development through population control. Though the majority of Puerto Ricans were professed Catholics, they actively participated in the program, demonstrating one of many cases where Catholic behavior deviated widely from Vatican teaching. Politically there was little difficulty in introducing the program as Puerto Rico was a U.S. possession and thereby could not be termed a "Catholic nation." Very importantly, however, the episode served in later debates as a prime example of the imperialist nature of population control. Implementing principles of eugenics which were widely accepted in the United States before World War II, the program targeted

“undesirable and unbridled procreation, especially among the poor and less cultured strata of the population.”⁶ Anti-U.S. sentiment from Cuba, Nicaragua and elsewhere in Latin America, as well as the claims of organizations such as DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, founded in the 1980s) point to the Puerto Rican story to describe U.S. intentions and action.⁷

As the presence of socialism grew in Latin America, so did attacks on U.S. participation in population control. Socialists argued that the control of births among the poor was simply a capitalist response to economic disparity, where a more effective solution might lie in substantive economic restructuring. Ironically, participants in the Catholic social action movement took a similar position. Without attacking capitalism, and certainly without supporting socialism, the teachings of Catholic social action claimed that an address of economic justice should be encouraged before implementing birth control.⁸ This position was outlined as early as 1916, when Monsignor John A. Ryan, director of the United States’ National Catholic Welfare Conference, argued that if the working class were paid a living wage, talk of birth control would be unnecessary. Marxists argued along similar lines, maintaining that “excess population” was a by-product of capitalism, and that the solution lay not in birth control, but in economic reorganization. Centuries-old arguments that the poor contributed to their own poverty by having more children than they

could afford resurfaced in the 20th century, and social Catholicism and socialism responded vigorously.

Socialist arguments against birth control gained new significance by the early 1960s, as the Cold War intensified in Latin America. The CIA-led invasion of Guatemala in 1954 and the CIA-backed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 illustrated the extent of U.S. fears of socialism in the western hemisphere, demonstrating to Latin American socialists that the U.S. might certainly be capable of supporting the control of population there. In the first United Nations World Population Conference held in Rome in 1954, capitalists and Marxists clashed over the role of population and development, while Third World nations (ultimately the primary target of population policy) looked on. But the 1960s also marked the greatest rate of population growth in the world—implying the doubling of population in some developing countries within 25 years or less, fueling capitalist fears that underfed, ill-housed, and generally poverty-stricken masses might turn to socialism. The tremendous growth stemmed from the success of pro-natalist programs, but more significantly from effective modernization programs that decreased infant mortality and increased life expectancy.

During the 1950s, Catholic statements on population and family size appearing throughout Latin America mirrored Pope Pius XII’s conservative teachings on family planning. In 1951, the Church officially sanctioned the rhythm method, or periodic abstinence, as a method of limiting births as long as it was

not used “habitually” for less than “grave” reasons. Though to some the move appeared to be a response to growing population pressures,⁹ Catholic teaching continued to promote large family size. International political conditions promoted large family size as well. Population growth was encouraged in both the United States and the Soviet Union as a measure of potential strength and as a protection in the case of military attack. In developing countries also, population growth was viewed as a sign of strength. Where nationalistic sentiments reigned, pronatalism was sustained by patriotism and was viewed as a protection against enemies.

In 1959, the Draper Report recommended that the United States offer birth control information in connection with foreign aid. A four-star general, William Draper served as Under-secretary of the Army during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, and later as chairman of the Export-Import Bank during the Reagan administration. In 1959, he began to report the benefits of population control in foreign development. The recommendation ignited a debate, with U.S. bishops attacking the use of the term “population explosion” to instill fears among the American public, and claiming that American Catholics would not support public assistance to promote artificial contraception abroad. When Catholic Senator John Kennedy, an aspiring candidate for the presidency was forced to take a position on the matter, he commented “I would not think it wise for the United States to refuse to grant assistance to a country which

is pursuing a policy it feels to be in its own best interest.”¹⁰

After 1960, U.S. support of birth control programs in Latin America grew rapidly. In May of 1963, Foreign Aid Director David E. Bell supported international assistance for birth control, arguing that population increases in underdeveloped countries were diminishing the effect of the foreign aid program.¹¹ In January of 1964, the United States Agency for International Development (US AID) developed a special population unit on Latin America, the agency’s first special unit on population. US AID subsequently recommended that all AID missions in Latin America establish family planning programs within the structure of existing health care institutions. It also recommended that each mission appoint a “high official” to oversee population programs and explore attitudes of host government officials.¹² Government officials throughout Latin America were pressured by foreign agencies to implement birth control but resisted developing state-led programs.¹³

New Catholic arguments continued to unfold in the 1960s as

international assistance programs increasingly embraced birth control. The Second Vatican Council inspired alternative perspectives and approaches to addressing the needs of the world’s poor. The Vatican called for thousands of priests and nuns to be sent to Latin America to help meet those needs. Faced with seemingly overwhelming challenges, clergy found themselves competing with socialists and birth control

activists, both of whom had been condemned by the Vatican. In their common argument against birth control, Catholic clergy and socialists found themselves on the same side, and increasingly, fundamental teachings on social justice contributed to a melding of the two in the creation of liberation theology. In Latin America during the 1960s, pervasive oppression of the poor combined with the presence of socialism and Catholicism set the stage for this unique address of poverty. Though individual clergy sometimes became involved in the discreet distribution of contraceptives and contraceptive information in Latin America, liberation theology sought alternative economic solutions to poverty.

It seemed that the Church's opposition to contraception might soften, but it was in fact crystallized in 1968 with the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. The encyclical in part evolved in response to debates over a new and fundamentally revolutionary method of preventing conception: the birth control pill. Offered to the public in 1960, the pill initially appeared to side-step Catholic teaching that opposed the use of artificial barriers between a man and a woman during intercourse, forcing the Church to re-examine its teaching. Three separate commissions appointed by the Vatican advised that the Church liberalize its position on contraception. However, Pope Paul VI ignored their advice, choosing to restate opposition in *Humanae Vitae*.

Reaction against the encyclical ranged from anger to bewilderment, with U.S. Catholics wondering why,

in this atmosphere of Church concern for world hunger, global poverty and human dignity, did the pope disregard such strong sentiment favoring a shift? Studies showed that Catholics in Europe and North America had long ignored official teaching on contraception, with sociologist Andrew Greeley noting that the encyclical initiated even more deliberate disobedience among devout Catholics.¹⁴ *Humanae Vitae* held little significance in Africa and Asia, where the Catholic population was minimal. Latin America is the region where it could have played the most significant role. On an individual level, Latin Americans appeared unaffected by the encyclical. There was no immediate increase in the overall birth rate, and women who professed to be practicing Catholics continued to request contraceptive services.¹⁵ On the national level, however, the impact was clear. Latin American governments which were traditionally tied to the ecclesiastical hierarchy feared reproach, publicly condemning birth control and creating obstacles to contraceptive services.¹⁶

Latin American clergy reaffirmed the official position outlined in *Humanae Vitae* in the Second General Conference which met in Medellin, Colombia in 1968. Bishops recognized tremendous need among Latin Americans but maintained that the rapid population growth in Latin America should not be considered the cause of all ills. They added that the Pope's teaching in the encyclical clearly opposed all use of artificial contraceptives.¹⁷ Critics questioned whether pronouncements on individual conscience originating in

the Second Vatican Council might be considered by couples who were attempting to make moral decisions regarding preventing conception. Before and after *Humanae Vitae*, Catholics from Europe and the Americas appealed to the Church to recognize that the practice of contraception was an act of conscience and deserved the sanction of the Church, one appeal in 1966 noting that “a very large number of Catholic couples decide in conscience and for objective reasons that mere physiological integrity does not constitute an essential prerequisite governing the truly human character of each conjugal act,” suggesting that mechanical and chemical means were used widely and with “conscientious convictions.”¹⁸

But although the appeals were often made with Catholics and Catholic doctrine in mind, the majority highlighted concerns of politics and global society. John A. O’Brien, University of Notre Dame professor of theology who had written for more than 30 years on the subject of birth control argued that no one denomination should have the political power to force its will on those of other faiths. He noted:

Nations with abundant resources should help the underprivileged, sharing with them scientific knowledge and technical skills and thus enable them to achieve a thriving economy of their own. These are noble ideals and, if they could be achieved, their realization would help mightily in closing the gap between the ‘have’ and ‘have-not’ nations. It would enable the peoples of the underdeveloped countries to achieve their ‘revolution of mounting expectations’ without

violence and without surrendering their aspirations for freedom and a democratic form of government. In short, the implementation of these ideas would promote stability of governments, halt the spread of Communism, and safeguard the peace of the world.

But, he added:

The failure to help the underdeveloped countries solve their population problems not only largely nullifies our foreign aid program but renders more distant the day when these people will be able to stand on their own financial feet—the goal of every self-respecting people. It also raises the question as to how much longer our own economy can stand the strain of pouring out billions of the taxpayers’ money, when millions of our own people are unemployed and the burden of defense armament mounts steeply and steadily.¹⁹

In response to the traditional papal argument that artificial methods of contraception violated natural law, critics argued that advances in technological science such as immunizations also interfered with natural law, and that their success in keeping children alive had contributed to the population explosion as much as anything.

Beginning in 1968, following *Humanae Vitae* and its criticism, a wealth of literature on the subject appeared in Latin America. But the analyses approached the subject far more often from a socio-po-

litical ethic than from a theological or doctrinal position.²⁰ This dialogue unfolded in Mexico in 1973, as the government instituted a national birth control policy. The relationship between church and state in Mexico remained tense, with Mexican leaders—both civil and clerical—promoting modernization while answering to a Catholic populace. Mexican bishops ultimately supported President Luis Echeverría's program to legalize contraceptives, which emphasized the preference for natural family planning but opened the door to acceptance of other methods. Some argued that the bishops' motive responded to a potential weakening of the Church, as there were too few priests to minister to the growing population. However, it is more likely that they were responding to a growth that was truly phenomenal—Mexico's population was doubling every twenty-one years—and to a significant number of illegal abortions. Clergy often promoted family planning with the hope that it would curb the abortion rate.²¹

For those who warned of the dangers of a population explosion in Latin America, it was common to blame the Catholic Church. The prevalence of Catholicism combined with the Church's prohibition on contraceptive use suggest that it has been adherence to Catholic teaching that has contributed to rapid population growth. However, numerous studies have shown that contraceptive use among professed practicing Catholics has been common. And even to researchers who recognize demographic changes significant enough to warrant study, there is no evidence to

justify a causal relationship between Catholicism and population growth.²²

In 1974, the United Nations intensified its efforts to address population pressures and policy, sponsoring a World Population Conference in Bucharest. In preceding weeks, Conference Secretary-General Antonio Carrillo-Flores assured anxious observers that the divisiveness that had prevailed in previous population dialogue had in fact subsided, with various players reaching common ground:

In the General Assembly, in the Economic and Social Council, in the Population Commission, and in other agencies and organizations concerned with population problems or their effects, old adversaries [have been] moving closer together. Representatives of Western Europe and the United States began to agree publicly with the socialist position that economic development brings with it the resolution of many population problems. Representatives of socialist countries agreed that in certain instances, it might be profitable to attack population problems directly without waiting for economic advance to mediate them.

He went on to write:

The Roman Catholic Church reaffirmed its traditional support of responsible parenthood, so that the debate between the Church and the family planning advocates turned away from basic principles to a dispute over methods. On their side, the family planners

conceded to the Church their obligation to respect the dignity of the individual under all circumstances. These were not so much shifts in old positions as the kinds of public statement that are meant to generate harmony, the sort of things that are said when those holding various points of view have decided to reach areas of agreement instead of persisting in fruitless debate.²³

In fact, major players clashed deeply at that conference. Catholic representatives attacked what they considered the widespread use of abortion in countries where population programs had been implemented. Early birth control activists, including Sanger, had fought to legalize contraceptives in part to reduce the rate of abortion, but by the 1970s, abortion and contraception had seemingly become inseparable in the feminist movement for reproductive rights. The Vatican still condemned both, but many Catholics, including the Mexican bishops, were considering them separately. At the time of the 1974 Budapest conference, the Catholic anti-abortion movement was clearly gaining momentum. Furthermore, divisions between developing countries which were targeted for birth control and the countries that funded and directed international programs appeared deeper than ever. The Indian delegation led the call of developing nations that “donor countries”—primarily the United States—recognize that “development is the best contraceptive.”²⁴ This argument appealed to Latin American nations that sought effective and sustain-

able development as a means to combat poverty and overall economic inequity.

Through the 1970s, Catholic critics of birth control found themselves on the same side as Marxists who argued that poor distribution of wealth was the cause of poverty in Latin America, not demographic problems.²⁵ But the similarities in arguments extend even further. The Latin American Episcopal Council (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano or CELAM) argued in 1977 in Church, Family and Responsible Parenthood in Latin America that there were numerous agents of the “demographic apocalypse” who happened to represent concentrated capital and transnational corporations. The Population Council was in fact funded primarily by the Rockefeller and Ford foundations, while others heavily involved in developing international population policy included Mobil Oil, American Telephone and Telegraph, the Carnegie Foundation and the universities of Harvard, Berkeley, Princeton, Chicago, and Colorado.²⁶ According to CELAM representatives from Colombia, the Population Council worked to carry out its own agenda in limiting births throughout the Third World, and was currently active in Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, Jamaica, Bolivia and Bermuda.²⁷ Maria Eugenia Carvajal de Guerrero, a Colombian social worker, argued that from the very beginning that Malthusian theory

warned not only of quantity of population but of “quality.” Birth control activists often cited Malthus’ 1798 treatise which warned of unchecked population growth and the demands on limited resources. But Carvajal pointed out that Malthusians blame the numbers of the poor for poverty and calls birth control campaigns “instruments of social discrimination.” In the case of Latin America, she notes, where the minority owns 80% of the wealth, policy makers are suggesting that the solution to poverty is to rid the country of excess population.²⁸ Marxists generally saw birth control as a tool of capitalism, and some considered it necessary if serious economic structuring did not take place. According to Mexican Marxist Antonio Vargas MacDonald, “if the policy of our government does not aim at a radical transformation of the economic system, but only institutes limited reforms, then it must necessarily adopt a position on the explosive growth of population, that is, a demographic policy.”²⁹

Catholics for a Free Choice, with membership from various Latin American countries under the name *Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir*, oppose the Church’s ban on contraceptives and promote what they consider a more compassionate approach to population concerns through Catholic social teaching. Supporting change in economic and social structures that create and sustain poverty, CFFC maintains that poverty cannot be blamed on population growth, rather “poverty arises from injustice, and slowing fertility rates is not a single or simple solution to pov-

erty.”³⁰ But the organization recognizes reproductive rights as grounded in human rights—as first asserted at the 1968 International Conference on Human Rights in Teheran, Iran: “Parents have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and the spacing of their children.” (United Nations International Conference on Human Rights, Proclamation of Teheran –Teheran, Iran—May 13, 1968).³¹ And it notes that the Vatican does approve of family planning, but that the only accepted method—natural family planning—provides no protection from the spread of AIDS. CFFC condones the use of other methods, as their use does not contradict fundamental theological treatments that allow for the prevention of conception “naturally” and publicly supports the use of condoms as a public health measure.³² The issue of AIDS introduced a new Catholic argument in the international debate over population policy by the 1990s, as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) implemented the distribution of condoms, particularly in Africa, to stem the spread of the disease. Catholics argued that they supported public health programs, but questioned the intentions of UNFPA in distributing condoms widely, claiming population control was being implemented under the guise of public health.³³

The Vatican responded to reports originating from the United Nation’s international conference on population held in Mexico City in 1984, as it had to the 1974 Bucharest conference, objecting clearly to warnings of a population explosion and claims that

birth control should be a primary focus. But the nature of population programs had changed by the time of the conference in Cairo in 1994. In reports preceding the Cairo conference, there was evidence that a shift was at hand. In her 1992 report, Maria Helena Henrique-Mueller of the Pan American Health Organization-World Health Organization noted that earlier population conferences “stated the need to overcome misery and poverty and made population goals and programme priorities explicit”—goals which included the reduction of the average number of children born to women and the increase of “contraceptive prevalence.” However, she observed that the relationship between economics and population were far more complex than previously recognized. Henrique-Mueller recognized that the 1980s brought increased poverty and economic disparity to Latin America, even though population control programs had been widely implemented. She wrote, “Given the nature of the changes that took place in Latin America during the 1980s, as well as the experiences of below-replacement fertility and foreign migration policies in other regions, it is clear that population policy cannot be based on a simplistic concentration on fertility control.”³⁴

Though the Vatican criticized significant portions of the conference’s recommendations, the Cairo conference embraced new notions of poverty eradication, sustainability and the empowerment of women as they relate to population, and the Vatican adopted the Programme of Action as a whole. The Vatican placed reservations on the following phrases: contraception,

couples and individuals, family planning, reproductive health, reproductive rights, sexual health, sexual rights, widest range of family-planning services, and women’s ability to control their own fertility.³⁵ There is no question that the nature of the objection coincided with previous statements made by the Church, but the Vatican did not act as the only opposition in this case. Seven nations, including four Latin American nations (Argentina, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua), also objected to the language. In March of 1995, Pope John Paul II issued his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life) once again condemning contraception. He also claimed that through contraceptive campaigns, international institutions are involved in a “conspiracy against life.”³⁶ In subsequent developments, bishops of Peru and Brazil officially reiterated papal opposition to contraception, particularly the distribution of condoms and surgical sterilization. Latin American nations joined in Vatican objections to the promotion of sexual and reproductive health outlined in the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing.

The opposition to contraceptives comes in a variety of forms from numerous Latin American nations. Bishops officially object to the use of condoms, recommending abstinence for preventing the spread of AIDS, and to the creation of sex education programs for adolescents. But bishops in Nicaragua continue to be particularly critical of international birth control programs as imperialistic, claiming the country was suffering under a campaign of “antireproductive colo-

nialism.”³⁷ This sentiment is especially prevalent where liberation theology evolved and where U.S. intervention is most vehemently condemned, in Central America and Cuba in particular.

Latin American critics continue to point to the most public of programs—U.S. implementation of its massive birth control program in Puerto Rico. Birth control policy in Puerto Rico was considered a pure example of anti-natal colonialism, but to Nicaraguans and others, virtual colonialism in the rest of Latin America was driving U.S. funded international population programs. This characterization largely originated from the Left, as the Left saw capitalism as responsible for colonialism. Such critics point data showing that in 1990 the United States contributed \$280 million to population programs, France \$143 million, Norway \$26 million, Germany \$16 million, the United Kingdom \$15 million, Sweden \$14 million and other nations \$64 million. In addition, UNFPA contributed \$180 million, the World Bank \$124 million, and the World Health Organization (WHO) \$28 million, while a number of foundations and non-governmental organizations (including the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the IPPF, MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and Population Council) contributed a combined total of \$46 million.³⁸

Such episodes in Latin American birth control history have aided in the evolution of anti-U.S. sentiment, as well as anti-international population program sentiment. Furthermore, the strength of Catholicism

in any one Catholic Latin American country has supported resistance to birth control efforts. But contemporary policy, shaped in the 1990s as a response to globalization and articulated in Cairo in 1994 reflects demands made by the Church, Marxists and others to recognize human rights and economic justice as essential to any serious examination of the world's population. And the most current research and reports presented by the Population Council and related organizations approach birth control as a matter of reproductive health, women's rights, and one related to the demands for economic reform.³⁹

Notes:

¹ Ivan Illich, “Sexual Power and Political Potency,” in David Chaplin, ed., *Population Policies and Growth in Latin America* (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1971), p. 177, in Frederick C. Turner, *Responsible Parenthood: The Politics of Mexico's New Population Policies* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1974), p. 1.

² See Kathleen A. Tobin, *The American Religious Debate Over Birth Control, 1907-1937* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2001).

³ Anna Macias, *Against All Odds: The Feminist Movement in Mexico to 1940* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), pp. 13-15; Anna Macias, “Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Women's Liberation in Mexico,” in *Latin American Women's Historical Perspectives*, ed. By Asuncion Lavrin (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 291; G. Cabrera, “Fertility Change in Mexico As Related to Population Policies,” paper presented at the Symposium of Induced Fertility Change, Bellagio, Italy, February, 1990.

⁴ Frederick C. Turner, *Responsible Parenthood: The Politics of Mexico's New Population Policies* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1974), pp. 7-8.

⁵ Balogh, Alejandro, "Vamos a sobrevivir," *Revista Javeriana*, Tomo 39 (1953), 256; Valtierra, Angel, S.J. "Razones y sin Razones del Birth-Control," *Revista Javeriana*, 1953; *Pastoral acerca de la familia cristiana del Episcopado Chileno* (Abril de 1955); in Luis Lenero Otero, ed., *Poblacion, Iglesia y Cultura: sistemas en conflicto* (Mexico, D.F.: GALVE – for Federacion Internacional de Institutos de Investigaciones Sociales y Socio-Religiosas, FERES, A.L., 1970), pp. 142-144.

⁶ Annette B. Ramirez de Arellano and Conrad Seipp, *Colonialism, Catholicism, and Contraception: A History of Birth Control in Puerto Rico* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), p. 51. Sonia Correa, *Reproductive Rights: Feminist Perspectives From the South* (London: Zed Books, 1994), pp. 30-31. Also see William J. Kelly, *A Cost-Effectiveness Study of Clinical Methods of Birth Control: With Special Reference to Puerto Rico* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971.)

⁷ Correa, pp. 10-30; E. Berquo, "Confrontacion Sur-Norte," *Mujeres y Politicas de Poblacion*, (Mexico: Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe/Isis Internacional, 1993); Betsy Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population control and Contraceptive Choice* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987).

⁸ Mary Shivanandan, *Crossing the Threshold of Love: A New Vision of Marriage in the Light of John Paul II's Anthropology* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999), pp. 180-186.

⁹ "Catholics and Contraception: A Struggle for Control," *Catholic Voices At One With the Cairo Consensus* (Washington, D.C.: Catholics for a Free Choice, 1999), p. 3.

¹⁰ *San Francisco Sunday Chronicle*, November 27, 1959; John Leo, "Church, Public Policy and Birth Control," in William Birmingham, ed., *What Modern Catholics Think About Birth Control* (New York: Signet Books, 1964), p. 143.

¹¹ Leo, p. 143.

¹² *Population Program Assistance* (Washington, D.C.: Agency for International Development, Bureau for Technical Assistance, Office of Population, 1969), pp. 11-12. For more on U.S. support of Latin American birth control programs, see Bonnie Mass, *Population Target: The Political Economy of Population Control in Latin America* (Brampton, Ontario, Canada: Charters Publishing Company, 1976), p. 51.

¹³ Correa, pp. 30-31.

¹⁴ Andrew Greeley, *The Catholic Myth: The Behavior and Beliefs of American Catholics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990), p. 91; *Catholics and Reproduction: A World View* (Washington, D.C.: Catholics For a Free Choice, 1997), p. 2.

¹⁵ Benjamin Viel, M.D., *The Demographic Explosion: The Latin American Experience* (New York: Irvington Publishers, Inc., 1976), p. 177.

¹⁶ Viel, p. 177.

¹⁷ CELAM, Segunda Conferencia General de Episcopado Latino Americano, Imesco, Medellin 1968, pp. 66-67.

¹⁸ John A. O'Brien, *Family Planning in an Exploding Population* (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1968), pp. 172-173. Also see Thomas Shannon, "Ethical Dilemmas in Population Policy," *Conscience*, vol. VII, no. 2 (March/April 1986): 1-6, p. 4.

¹⁹ O'Brien, pp. 6-7, 10-11.

²⁰ See Eduardo Bonnin Barcelo, *Etica y politicas demograficas en los documentos del episcopado latinoamericano* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Pontificia de Mexico, 1986); Luis Lenero Otero, *Investigacion de la familia en Mexico: Presentacion y Avance de Resultados de una encuesta nacional* (Instituto Mexicano de Estudios Sociales, A.C., 1968).

²¹ Turner, pp. 13-31.

²² Luis Lenero Otero, p. 11.

²³ Antonio Carrillo-Flores, "The United Nations and the World Population Conference, 1974," Occasional Paper no. 5, The Stanley Foundation, 1974, pp. 8-9.

²⁴ United Nations Secretariat, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Information Policy Analysis, "Evolution of Population Policy Since 1984: A Global Perspective," *Population Policies and Programmes* (New York: United Nations, 1993), pp. 27-41.

²⁵ Viel, p. 175; Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano—CELAM, *Iglesia, Familia y Paternidad Responsable en America Latina* (Bogota: Secretariado General del CELAM, 1977), p. 19.

²⁶ CELAM, 1977, p. 23.

²⁷ CELAM, 1977, pp. 23-24.

²⁸ CELAM, 1977, p. 92.

²⁹ Antonio Vargas MacDonald, "Ser mexicano es ser macho, es tener muchos hijos; Muertos de hambre? Alla Dios y ellos parenle!" *Siempre!*, no. 986 (May 17, 1972), pp. 22-23.

³⁰ "Catholic Voices: Reflections from the Paseo de la Reforma—Mexico City, December, 1998," *Catholic Voices At One With the Cairo Consensus*, p. 2.

³¹ Ibid, pp. 2-4.

³² Ibid., p. 4. Also see Peter Hebblethwaite, "What the French are not saying about condoms," *National Catholic Reporter*, Feb. 3, 1989 and *Origins* 18:446.

³³ See www.unfpa.org and www.c-fam.org for both sides of the argument.

³⁴ Maria Helena Henrique-Mueller, "Population Policy Issues in Latin America and the Caribbean," in *Population Policies and Programmes, Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group*

Meeting On Population Policies and Programmes, Cairo, Egypt, 12-16 April 1992 (New York: United Nations, 1992), p. 83.

³⁵ "Catholics and Cairo: A Common Language," p. 6.

³⁶ Pope John Paul II, *The Gospel of Life Evangelium Vitae* (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 23-30; "Acting Against the Grain: A Chronology of Church Action to Block Cairo's Implementation," *Catholic Voices At One...* p. 2.

³⁷ Obispos Catolicos condenan 'Colonialismo anticonceptivo'," *La Tribuna*, August 15, 1996; "Acting Against the Grain," p. 3. For other anti-contraceptive action in Latin America see "Al Servicio del *Evangelio de la Vida*," comunicado de los Obispos de Peru, 4 de agosto de 1995; Carta de los Obispos de Peru a los fieles creyentes, "Construyamos una Cultura de Fe," 2 de febrero de 1996; *The Catholic World Report*, March, 1996; "Honduran Church Blasted For Halting Condom Giveaway," Reuter wire service, November, 1996; "El condon no es totalmente seguro, dice el arzobispo Rivera Carrera," *Cronica*, 25 de agosto de 1997; "Cardenal Vargas Alzamora critica contenido de educacion sexual," *El Comercio*, 10 de abril de 1998; "Cardenal pide a los feligreses boicotear metodos artificiales para control natal," *Expreso*, 12 de mayo de 1998.

³⁸ Correa, p. 19.

³⁹ Figueroa and Stern. Also see Claudio Stern y Carlos Javier Echarri, comp., *Salud Reproductiva y Sociedad: Resultados de Investigacion* (Mexico, D.F.: El Colegio de Mexico, 2000).



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An Analytical Perspective on the *Creatio ex nihilo* Concept

The theoretical background of the analysis of the **creatio ex nihilo** syntagm is constituted by the requirements of the semantics of possible worlds. Here the philosophical and logical research is implicitly valued in the modal reconstruction of the ontological argument. In the relations between concept, language, and object, several changes which are controlled by universally valid methods are possible. These are the following:

1. The antinomy given as a mystery of the world's origin is reduced to a non-contradictory logical structure, to a concept.
2. It can be proved that to this concept - **creatio ex nihilo** - several things correspond. The **idea of a possible world** grants subject-object unity to **nihil**, as an absolute determination and ontological correlation of **creatio**, as a possible determination of the existence.
3. A system that grants possibility to the idea of creation has its basis in the dialectic game between ontological identity and difference.

1. Preliminary Aspects
2. Reference and Denomination
 - 2.1. Divine Acts and the Question of Faith
 - 2.2. The Denomination of **Creatio ex nihilo**
 - 2.2.1. The Cultural - Linguistic Paradigm
 - 2.2.2. On «Nothing» as a Possible World
3. **Creatio ex nihilo** and the Idea of «The Ontological Difference»

1. Preliminary Aspects

The question of the **creatio ex nihilo** syntagm may be preceded by the question: *how can one understand the connection between a concept (**nihil**), which gives us*

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the absolute non-determination, and another one (creatio), which gives us the absolute determination of the world in which I myself exist and I am the occurrence of this question? Motivated by the sentence **credo sed intelligere volo**, I do not overlook my subjectivity on the mystical idea. On the contrary, I consider that the analysis of the language bearing the Christian doctrine is an exercise meant to increase the degree of understanding of the crossing between faith and knowledge.

Creatio ex nihilo is part of a class of concepts, understood as «mystery». Many writers have concerned themselves with the creation of the world, but, if we remain at the level of these interpretations, we risk entering a redundant circuit controlled by **argumentum ad hominem**. I do not deny that each author had something to say about the question raised by **creatio ex nihilo**, but in this study I do not want to explain the words, therefore the reference to them is an implicit one and depends on a subjective motivation exceeding some embarrassing disagreements. Vladimir Lossky, for example, considers that «the idea of creatio ex nihilo is found in the Bible (Maccabees 7,28)» and illustrates this by the fragment "... you should know that God has created them out of nothing"¹. In the Romanian version of the Bible (the issues of 1968 – 1997), the same fragment is translated in the following way: "you should know that God has made them of something that has not been". When W. Tatarkiewicz wrote the history of the concept of creation, he had in mind **creatio ex nihilo** and he made reference to the Second

Book of Maccabees, and provided another translation of the same fragment, that is «ouk ex ónton» (not of something real)². Almost the same meaning is rendered as Nothing by the theologian Dumitru Staniloae, who states that «Anything is not a real vacuum»³. The question : «Why is nothing the ontological correlative of creation?» cannot be avoided. The question requires two conditions: a) transition from description to explanation, from concept to analysis, and b) connecting the object which is studied to the epistemic object; an aspect that is inferred from the fact that the analyses of some variables (causes, reasons, religions, philosophical justification, and so on) are assumptions which are related to human existence. The human being uses concepts and principles, gives definitions, classifies; in other words, he mediates his relation to the surrounding world by means of a pattern which has epistemological and pragmatic alternatives (including religious ones), but not logical ones. The structure Subject – Language – Object is felt as a logical and ontological unit based on the presumed connection between the mystery of the existence of the world and its pattern accepted by Christianity (the patterns may be mythological, religious, philosophical, or scientific). I will build up analogies and reasons as premises for the concept of **creatio ex nihilo**. I have in view:

1) *If the creation of the world is in the power of God's word, then ontology has its origin in meditation through language. This means that using logical, linguistic, and metaphorical – symbolical structures, we describe and explain the exist-*

ence and the creation of the world; more precisely, we reveal the meanings which are built out of phrases and sentences.

2) If there is the word „NOTHING”, and if any word from the group of categorematic terms is a sign for something, namely a concrete or abstract, a real, ideal or imaginary entity, then, it means that the word NOTHING is a sign for something. In this case, the unit given by the reference relation is of a cultural nature, which is understood in its general meaning and also considered in a particular meaning, that of the Christian theological aspect.

The reference made to language implies certain specifications. These are:

a) There are differences of essence between language as an external object, and the act of thinking of an object (definition or notion);

b) Wittgenstein has demonstrated that “language conceals thinking”, and that the surrounding world becomes understandable only by means of a theoretical or symbolical reconstruction. It may be stated that: „sentences are patterns of reality in the way we imagine it”⁴

c) Defining the real of the logical – linguistic or the metaphorical – symbolical structures at the language level implies operating on the bases of the possible;

d) It is possible that at the language level, the logical isolation and the analyses of facts will provide information for identifying the Christian pattern of the world by universal methods of reasoning.

2. Reference and Denomination

The *Creatio ex nihilo* syntagm is a formula assigned by Christian theology for naming the way God has created the world through His Word. The acts of creation are described in the first two chapters of the Book of Creation, but there is not a single reference in the text to acknowledge that the world is made *ex nihilo*. So, we have to distinguish two aspects, namely:

1) The biblical description of the divine actions which begin with the sentence: „Let there be light” (Genesis 1,3), also known as the first day of creation, and ending with the utterance „Then God said: And now I will make the human beings; they will be like us and will resemble us” (Genesis 1,26), known as the sixth day of creation.

2) The conceptual – doctrinal abbreviation of the days of creation, that is, the **creatio ex nihilo** denomination given by the Christian theologians. This implies both faith and interpretation. It is difficult to notice the differences between the **acts of God** by which he has created the world, **the biblical descriptions of the facts of Divine Creation** which represent the beginning of the holy history, and the **denomination given to creation and the creation description** which is part of the Christian dogma, and connotes expression of faith.

In order to work systematically, it is necessary to make a brief analysis of the above-mentioned terms and the meanings they are conveying.

2.1. The Divine Actions and Act of Faith

Usually, a divine action means something that happened in reality (for example, the creation of man).

A logical meaning of the divine act means the content of a sentence uttered by God straightway, or out of a biblical sentence that describes a divine action, namely of the Bible inspired by God himself. The fact that God said „Let there be light” and there was light or Jesus Christ said: „I command you, get up, take your bed and go home!” (Luke 5,24), and the sick man was cured, stand as examples of divine acts.

With this in mind, one can notice that if we logically separate the first day of Creation (Creation 1, 3-5), we must consider a set of distinct facts, each of these reflecting something of the complex determinants which give distinctiveness to divine creation. I make reference to:

a) Imperative sentence: „Let there be light!” – its content is the updating of God’s thoughts in a understandable linguistic assertion that makes reference to the light phenomenon. This section of the creation can be named „the creation of light” – a phrase with a double meaning: the sentence meaning (bearing a word- symbol) and the existence of light. God’s thoughts are the incognoscible reference (we have in view the connections pointed out by the „semiotic triangle”).

b) Reflection of word on itself in an axiological judgement to justify the meaning of the sentence „Let

there be light” and the consequence of this meaning, namely „God was pleased with what He saw.” The content of the axiological judgement is the act of a value-based identification of light by the adequate correspondence between the term “light” and the designated object. I will name this „acknowledgment of the light.”

c) Choices of entities created in an appositional way, a fact rendered by the sentence „Then he separated light from darkness”- its content confirms an order (a cosmic one) but one which presupposes several subjective meanings (the symbolism of light and darkness). I think that this divine operation may be named “classification of opposite genres.”

d) Act of divine denomination, that is, the sentence “And He named the light **Day** and the darkness **Night.**” This is an act that engenders a secondary correspondence through the referential relation between name as abbreviation of a definition and the denominated object. From a pragmatic perspective, one can define the act of divine denomination as the “designation of opposite genres”.

e) The temporal delimitation of the actions of the creation (actions named by the phrases: “creation of light,” “acknowledgment light”) using the formula “Evening passed and morning came – that was the first day”. The essence of this biblical pattern is the reality of creation as the constitution of the world that emerges from the divine utterance seen as a temporal passing within a period of time assumed by the divine awareness and, then, by the Christian consciousness. I

consider that these acts governed by the reiteration of this pattern can be named „the act of growing aware of the creation,” because it establishes the limits of the ontological levels. However, through a mimetic act, the man himself, Adam, ascribes a name for each thing in the world in the sixth day, thus, assigning a related identity to the signs (words) of the natural language.

It is not necessary to extend the analytical exercise to the other “days” to point out an act of faith making use of several divine acts described. The names or descriptions (“definition of opposite genres”, the act of being conscious of the creation, etc.) express the belief that the name renders the essence of the divine act. The name has not only the role of designating something objective, but it also gives the object a certain significance without which this cannot exist in the human beings’ opinion. I may say that by denomination, the act of language operates on objects. We have the right to know the ineffable of creation.

In order to avoid confusion, I think that it is necessary to mention that due to the nature of this study, the hermeneutics of the letters prescribed by the Jewish Kabbala can’t be called upon as an example. Kabbala and its aim of recreating the act of Adam of naming and governing the world using the combination of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and their corresponding numbers is restrained by a speculative mysticism which resides in the chimeras of the imaginary world. The resurrection of the “secret science” is unknown to us, and to “think as in a fairytale”, as

Eminescu said, is anachronic in the 21st century; nonetheless, should this century be a mystical one, according to Malraux, then, it would embody the mystical aspect of reason, including the Supreme reason, God’s reason.

My point of view partially covers the sphere of the “concept of justified faith” suggested by Risto Hilpinen in his epistemological analysis on faith, knowledge and the systems of reasoning. Provided that the act of faith should have a value similar to the theoretical act of knowledge, “the pieces of knowledge should satisfy a certain additional epistemic requirement”, namely: „**R**’s belief that **p** is fully satisfactory (**R** knows **p**) only if **R** is justified in believing that **p** ⁵.

Hilpinen’s formula has a logic of belief according to which the sentences that are specific to a faith system may be accepted, rejected or deferred, and in time, any of the three may be subjected to changes.

Evaluating only the situation of acceptance, one has to admit that a phrase or a sentence, which is taken out of a system (in this case, see chapters 1 and 2 of the Book of Creation) must be analyzed according to the truth of the Christian faith, more exactly, to a function of absolute presumption – Kant named it “postulate”- that is, the existence of God; an idea that gives coherence to the system and to the interpretations of the latter. Let’s take again the example. „Let there be light!”, we admit that its meaning is given by: a) God’s interest for presenting the idea of „light” and b) the faith of the devout Christian that the sen-

tence presents the truth of faith. Considering these assumptions, here is the result:

1) *Utterance of the sentence „Let there be light” causes the achievement of light phenomenon (Symbol OA ? B).*

2) *Belief of the devout Christian that the phrase „Let there be light” is the original sentence of creation (p), this is a real faith, if and only if the faith of the devout Christian that p originates in the free acceptance and conviction that p exists.*

From the Christian perspective, a faith defined on empirical bases takes into account that man is free. A Kantian influence can be found in the above-mentioned sentences, that is, the faith in the rationale order of the world which is one of the fundamental conditions for a human thinking to become possibility. Whitehead – a famous mathematician and philosopher of the 20th century – also considered that the metaphysical ideas represent the general principles of Knowledge, namely, the belief “on which Knowledge is based on, is that of the rationality of the world, according to which the real is managed by logical laws and aesthetic harmonies. This belief emerges from the human being who comes into contact with the real aspect of the world.”⁶

It seems that the truth of faith has its background in the absolute assumptions (existence of God, resurrection of Jesus Christ, etc), and in the logic of faith.

2.2 The Denomination *Creatio ex nihilo*

From paragraph 2.1., one can draw the conclusion that this denomination is both a manifestation of

faith and an analysis of a cognizable outcome of a definition. If we accept that the characteristic of a religious pattern to make reference to something already given and expressed is also the core of its meaning, then, when analysing **creatio ex nihilo**, we have to take into account two complementary aspects. These are:

1) *Creatio ex nihilo* denominates the world created by God because the description *creatio ex nihilo* applies only to the act of creation through God’s Word and to nothing else, regardless of the context.

2) *Creatio ex nihilo* is the mystical significance of language over the objects, because this denomination is only the faith which represents and legislates a Christian image of the world.

The utterance of the sentence : „Let there be light” may happen or it may not. This ability of rendering real or not the idea of light is also found at the logical level of the exclusive disjunction – everything or nothing.

In the Book of Creation, the “days” of creation are chronologically described, and it is through the name of God that we explain the genesis of the world either theologically or dogmatically.

The profane world of the human beings is regarded as alienation from the original sacred state, and it becomes understandable by the mediation of the ontological categories of becoming: creation, possibility, necessity, occurrence, freedom, etc, that is, by an ontological outlook. Thus, it has been created as an ontological fact as a representation of language, bear-

ing the linguistic competence and the discursive one which is considered in its pragmatic accomplishment. “A speaker- said Constantin Noica – may express everything, a language, in its turn, as the generality of utterance includes in it all the possible assertions. But the difference here is the following: the determinants of the nature are contingent and belong to the real, while those which are general, are necessary and belong to the absolute thing”⁷. I think that the denomination of **creatio ex nihilo** renders in a fundamental way, the absolute totality – the world- and the mystic of nothing which is an axiological integration: God – language – man (communicating in theological language).

2.2.1. Cultural linguistical paradigm

The decoding of the absolute totality, that is, the world and the mystic of nothing, implies reference to a cultural linguistic structure even if the cognizable volume is not so broad.

The pattern *Creatio ex nihilo* was not present in the Greek language for quite a long time:

a) For example, Parmenide’s human being lived in a world where only imitation was possible. The word “creation” did not exist. The Greeks had the verb “to make” (*poiein*). This state of affairs is very well described by Plato in his “Republic”. The philosopher provides arguments for the clear cut distinction between Idea, Thing and imitated thing.

b) Nothing is found in the original chaos, and in philosophy, namely, in the structure of non-existence – existence, which is logically absurd. I want to discuss in brief the trilemma of Georgias, that is, the epistemological argument against nothing, as well as the inability to prove that it exists, that it can be recognized, and that one can put into words any informatinal details about it⁸.

If one knows the proper way of using these words and phrases in Latin, the following will be disclosed:

c) The word creation cannot accommodate the present meanings because it neither makes reference to gods and their activity, nor to any kind of creator, for example the poet. Its meaning is the choice of a magistrate or a tutor (*creationis magistratum*; *creationis tutoris*).

d) *Nihil* is a vague and chameleon-like word because its nucleus has concealed context-related senses. It is found when expressing existential, cognitive, moral, and pragmatic aspects. For example Cicero uses patterns „*ex nihilo orini* (it is born of nothing) and “*in nihilum occidere*” (to end in nothing), Plinius writes about “*nihil facere*” (not to estimate at all) and “*nihili est suum qui officium facere immemor*” (he who forgets to do his duty, is a man who values nothing). *Nihil* can achieve different values when it is combined with the negation non. Therefore, we have: 1) *non nihil* (something), which yields a partial, relative aspect, and the phrase „*non nihil temporis*,” which refers to a certain unit of time; 2) *nihil non* (everything) signifies the whole, and the pattern “*nihil non ad*

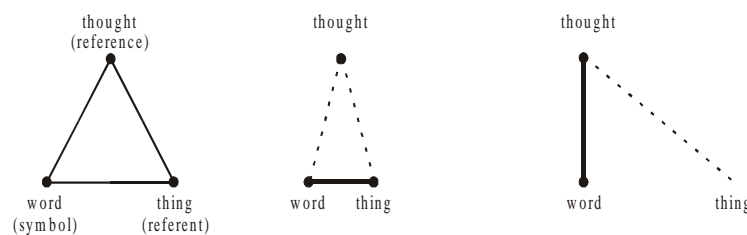
rationen dirigebal” makes reference to the way in which the whole was managed according to a calculus.

No matter how hard one is trying to discover the creatio ex nihilo pattern in the works of the Latin writers one will not find it.

Analyzing the Hebrew language, I want to point out the discussion of Andrei Cornea who distinguishes between Hebrew and Greek. (it was in the latter that the Holy Scripture (Septuagint) was written and transmitted to us). I will make use of the “semiotics triangle” of Richards and Odegon in order to study the two languages.

The Hebrew vocabulary records “dabar” which means “word”, “utterance” and “thing”; the testamentary pattern “akarey haddebarim ha ele” may be translated: “after these words” “after these facts” or “after these things,” but if dabar is accompanied by the negation, it no longer mean “no word” but only “nothing”. The phenomenon of reifying the word can’t be found in Greek as in this language, the word is related to the thought, and thus separated from the thing, or the object. A. Cornea shows the different ways the „semiotic triangle” is distorted. Comparing these languages we will obtain the following scheme⁹.

Figure 1



- a) semiotic triangle
- b) distortion in Hebrew
- c) distortion in Greek

‘Nothing’ in Hebrew means absolute silence, the reality of the being as self or that of the hidden thought of the unseen and unknowable Yahveh. “Creatio” identifies with the divine utterance, the logos that makes the word “thing” be understood and perceptible; the pattern “Be light” can be heard and read, understood in agreement either with the definition of the mystical light or with the definition of the natural light.

2.2.2. On Nothing as a possible world

Creatio ex nihilo seems to be an antinomial structure. In fact, this “opinion” is reinforced by the practice of the Orthodox Christian theologians in opposition with the rationalism of Antiquity. John Meyendorff wrote that “The most evident and positive truth of the Christian experience has been expressed in such kind of antinomies, namely in sentences which, in a logical form, expel one another, without being irrational”. Cultivating antinomy “reflects a dynamic and subjective understanding of God”¹⁰, in opposition to the world of ideas of Plato, to the rationalism of the Greek philosophy in general. If we separate the word “creatio” from the pattern, we will find ourselves in front of the individual things. John Meyendorff considers that the meaning of this term implies two aspects: a **general form** of things

and their **possibility**, whereas, the word **nothing** seems to have no special correspondence in reality. But if we refer to reality as the contents of the present world in which we envision an effective existence, **something** in opposition with that which is possible, then **nothing (nihil)** can't be synonymous with non-existence, but rather it names a possible existence or a formal, ideal existence. Of course, by these considerations I do not assert the substantiality of **nothing** or the existence of a mysterious matter of which God has created the world.

When we say that **nothing** bears as characteristic the possible, we have in view the fact that this notion expresses a certain state of God himself as the subject of creation, and as the unique being. It is impossible for this state of affairs to be described in the early years of Christianity, but it can be suggested by metaphorical terms such as “very bright dark,” that is by antinomies as in Dionysus. God is the undetermined absolute. Speaking about God, Dionysius said: He is “not one, unity, divinity, kindness, spirit, as we know him”. This state is neither empirically perceptible, nor understandable by means of philosophical categories. The divinity substance in itself cannot be determined because “there is no word for it, no name, no knowledge”¹¹. We have to content ourselves to repeat the absolute presumption that God exists, He is “the One Who Is.” It is in this way that one can explain the negations of Saint Dionysus when making any reference to God, reducing Him to the “the mystic of nothing” employing the apophatic method.

Let's return to the analytical analyses of **nihil**; we have mentioned that what is known, is not contradictory to any notion (for ex., Light), as a unique form, and it should be conceived independently from the word (for ex., the Romanian word for **light** is “lumină”, and it is different from the forms existing in other languages: lux – Latin, lumière – French, light – English, etc.)

The utterance of the Divine order “Let there be light!” means founding the unity of the notion and the word. The words “lumină” or “lux” or “light” make reference to the thing “light” (mystic or natural light) through the eternal LIGHT.

The fact that language is a good mediation between man and God is confirmed by the role of prayer in an accepted system of faith. The problem which now arises, is the possibility of describing the quality of the relation (**ex**), that is **nihilo – creatio** and that of placing the famous intuitions of Dionysus in a logical up-to-date system.

If, according to Dionysus, we deny the created word and the qualities assigned to God, we do not deny His existence but only the determinants of the biblical and traditional writings, that is, the attribute by which He becomes understandable. But in this situation, as Kant argued, there is only one conclusion “if one thinks of existence only through the pure category (eliminating predication), there is no wonder that we cannot indicate any criterion to distinguish it out of a simple possibility”¹².

Using the idea of possible, contemporary philosophers and logicians have revealed a non-contradictory understandable world and thus, the antinomies are not necessary any more. Moreover, the metaphorical concept of the “possible world” of Leibnitz has become a technical instrument in solving the problem of validity in modal logic; it serves to formulate certain alternatives of the present world, which are not logically impossible.

In the analysed case we have:

a) The real world which, due to the fact that it exists, that means it is actual, therefore, it is also possible (w_1 = actual world);

b) The world of God’s thoughts (w_0 = original world of the creation days.)

c) The relation of accessibility (R) from one world into another is given by language, namely the creation sentences, and from the point of view of the devout Christian this is rendered by the sentences of the faith system.

At a symbolical level, the relation between the two worlds is the following: $W_0 R W_1$. This means that a true sentence in W_0 is possible

in W_1 .

In order to obtain an intuitional relation between actual truth – possible truth, integral constituent – ontological relation for W_0 and W_1 , I need to make the following specifications:

1) In W_0 , the idea of light is the **object of the Supreme Divine reason** and God’s thinking is **the ideal, eternal domain of existence**.

In W_0 , the notion of **light** is tautologically “shut” in its own definition. The simple logical laws $A = A$ or $A \rightarrow A$, shows that the sentences which express the identity of light in the ideal sphere of existence bears only the value of truth. It is in the omnipotence of God, that derives the fact that any idea may become possible, and the possibility of putting into practice the ideas always implies a true _expression or sentence. The false value of a sentence, and also the true one, is conditioned by the unattainable. Still, this property does not exist, as it is in opposition with the presupposition of the omnipotent characteristic.

The outcome is the achievement of a reality, of God’s ideas which are the equal to the unlimited possibility or “the mystic of nothing” which is not the ontological equivalent of “nothingness” or of non-existence.

2) In W_1 , the notion of **light** can be understood by the word “light”, and in accordance with the phenomenon of light (mystical light or natural light) as its referent. The notion of light may be found in the structure of certain sentences which have as value either the truth or the false.

The value of truth of the sentences in W_1 is not defined by itself as it is in the case of W_0 . In W_1 the reference of the logic principles is absolutely necessary, namely:

a) **the principle of identity**: a sentence has a sole value of truth, this value can only be either true or false;

b) **the principle of non-contradiction**, in a sentence (p) and its negation (-p), only one is true (either p or -p);

c) **the principle of the excluded middle**– this means that either sentence (p) or its negation (-p) is true, the third possibility (that both are true) being excluded.

The prescriptions mentioned in (1) and (2) require a reply. Although there is the condition of the relation of accessibility, that is the true sentence in W_0 , it is possible in W_1 . This condition does not imply the identity between W_0 and W_1 . As stated, W_0 and W_1 , happen in different contexts. The distinction between the eternity of the world W_0 and the temporal character, finite, of the world W_1 , is of major importance.

Augustin said that **the world was not created in time, but within time**. W_1 may also be understood as multiple states which are achieved for each integral constituent element. Therefore, one may speak of a succession of different states of the one and the same referent. **The world** is a reference for states which are attained in different ways. From this are derived the following judgements:

(1) **The World is a Creation of God.**

(2) **The World is not created.**

Corresponding to the following states of affairs:

(1a) **The state of the world being the contents of the sentences uttered by God.**

(2a) **The state of world being of uncreated matter.**

Both states (1a) and (2a) are descriptions of the states of the present world W_1 . The state (1a) may be called the **world of homo religiosus**, and we will refer to it as W_h , The second state (2a) may be the **profound world** (W_p). W_p includes many states which are determined by the contents: **metaphysical worlds, imaginary worlds, positive worlds**, and so on. If to the above-mentioned symbolical notations we add:

A = omnipotence of God (the unlimited possibility and, then, un-determination of the source of the ideas).

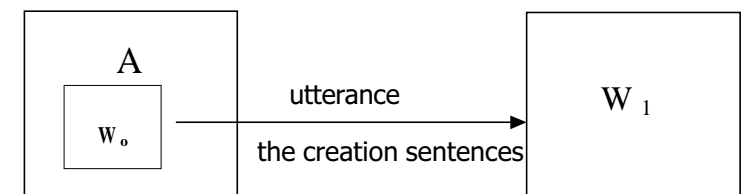
C_x = competence of a certain language given by the possibility in that language (Greek, Hebrew, Romanian) to build sentences.

S_c = the system of faith (Christian faith system presumes a world as it is envisaged in the Christian dogma).

Now, we may draft two schemes to describe this:

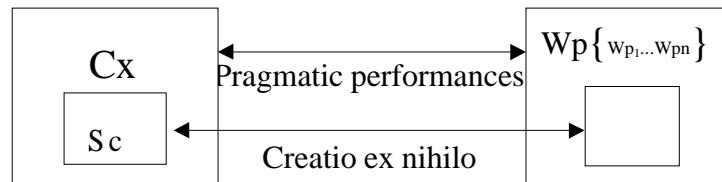
Figure 2

(1) Creation of the world, or creatio ex nihilo



3. Creatio ex nihilo and the idea of the “ontological difference”

2) Christian interpretation of the world created as **creatio ex nihilo**



Alvin Plantinga says that “a possible world is, then, a state of the possible things, this state is possible in an expanded logic meaning.” But, for a state of things to create a possible world, it has to be complete. There is a definition “a state of “S” things is **complete** or **maximum** if for any of the state of things, S^1 , S includes S or S excludes S^1 .” W_1 (present world) certifies that “one and only one causes **at least** a possible world” and, also that “one and only one causes at the most one”¹³.

Creatio ex nihilo is the possibility of the relation of accessibility. $W_0 R W_1$, are also relations which are formed as: a) sentences of creatio (for example: Let there be light!) and b) sentences of the Christian faith system (for example “Light is creation of God”).

In the Christian faith, the world and its creation through the divine verb, implies interpretative sequences. The interpretation of the divine act, for example the sentence „Let there be light” provides a certain significance, that is to reveal a certain contents of the sentence. But in the particular case of the sentences of the creation, we notice that they are a **state of acts** by themselves. These sentences are **non-refereential** because the subject or God stands for himself, yet this does not mean that they are linked sentences. The creation sentences as states of the subject indicate:

- a) **The thinking of God** as existence from which everything exists or does not;
- b) **The object of thinking or the object of faith** for the devout Christian, of which we state something in accordance with a system of sentences justified as axioms.

Therefore, every sentence of Creation is the divine form of the world – **God is_in the subject – sentence**, and we, the people, cannot be but outside of these sentences because we define ourselves **as the subject – sentence through faith**.

This means that, in a judgement with reference to a Creation sentence, one states the logic – grammar subject which is a sign of the real subject, outside the sentence, that is subject-sentence or God. Călin Candiescu explains this situation through an analogy.

Making reference to the mechanism of predication and the relationship it implies, he builds a “predicational triangle”. This scheme clearly shows that „the predication is not a direct relation between P and S, but an **indirect** one, **mediated** by S”¹⁴.

Figure 3



Legend: S = logic – grammar subject

Sp = subject of predication (S real)

Rp = predication relationship

Rc = copulative relationship (inside the sentence context)

Rs = supposition relationship

The predication justified by the Christian faith and by the logic principles indirectly connotes something beyond the sentence of my utterance, namely the sentences uttered by God himself, that is the God’s state of being the subject, of being the word itself or “God was the word” – as John the Evangelist says. It means that God is the presupposition of the logic subject,

that is the real subject. Without the supposition of the existence of the real subject, the sentences have no meaning.

The sentences of the system of faith, although interpretations of the real subject, represent the additional sentence of an independent world which we called the **world of homo religiosus** (W_h) in paragraph 2.2.2., a world which is in a relation of accessibility with W_0 . Even if we analyze W_h only, we are aware that its background is W_0 . This aspect is a result of the scheme of the “predicational triangle”.

Returning to the idea of the subject itself, I underline that the Creation sentences are non-referential, thus, they are undetermined, they are **nothing** in correlation with man’s own ability to produce an ontological speech which is understood as predication or assignment, namely a speech of something about something, or of W_1 about W_h . Determinants are essential in a judgement or sentence. And the idea of “ontological difference” emerges from this. **But the idea of “ontological difference” has a legitimacy which is immanent in the human world through the concept of creation**. Creation is not only the logic location deriving from the crossing of existence and human being, but it is also a sui generis possibility of a relation as “ontological difference” between man and God – so as Nikolai Berdiaev has explained: “the world has been made not only of creation but also creative. Within the former, one is in the image of the Creator, it means that there are creators among the created”¹⁵. Of course, the image of a world created

which is opened to creation is contrary to the one described in the metaphysics of the ancient Greek. When Parmenides says that “it is the same thing to think and to be”¹⁶, he acknowledges the idea of the “ontological identity”, justifying an ontology built on the logical relation of identity ($A = B$).

Paradoxically, in the early times of Greek philosophy, Anaximanders set *àpeiron*, a negative concept which represented a fundamental principle in ontology, was later modified by the formula of Parmenides. In poetic language, and also in philosophical language, *àpeiron* will receive the meaning – as Gh. Vladupescu says – “of that which is undetermined in itself, and through itself”. The concept provides “the well established condition” namely the „undetermined becomes the subject (*hypo* – *keimenon*) both in a linguistic sense and, by analogy, in an ontological aspect.” Due to Anaximander, the physical vision of the Milesians opens towards metaphysics. This change does not happen “directly, from **water as principle** to the **principle as principle**, but through the mediation of **àperion** as principle”¹⁷.

Àperion seems to be something between fact and logic, something based on faith, that is the inner principle of things. The idea is underlined by Aristotle in his “Physics”, where he quotes one of the few original fragments remaining from Anaximander, that is: “*àpeiron* is the divine. It is eternal and everlasting”¹⁸. In *De Civitate Dei* (VII, 2) Augustin also makes reference to the Greek philosopher describing his concep-

tion according to which any thing is generated by its own principles, principles that have an infinite nature.

At first sight, the ambiguity provoked by concept appears to indicate an equivalence between the notions **àperion** and **nihil**. But if one brings into discussion the substantiality of *aperion*, than it can be distinguished from **nihil** as an undetermined mystical state linked to creation as a contents to the creation sentences.

A religion of the Book – to borrow a phrase of Mircea Eliade – where the matter of Creation is the Word, has founded a world where creation has become its ontological base. The W_1 has a meaning – “sense of creation” says Berdiaev – and is not an act of rendering it proper in the principle of agreement, but a reconstruction.

Giving sense to the world through a secondary creation of man also means re-signifying that which is given, so that the new significance becomes **critic or the new cultural object** (culture means, here, a new socio-human reality which is structured on different levels: religious, metaphysical, scientific). The “ontological differences” set by the formula $W_0 \text{ R } W_1$ is promoted in the states of the present world W_1 . The idea is also sustained by Whitehead, who says: „**creativity** is the basic category of existence, in the sense that existence is transformed and organizes itself on each level through a creative advancer”¹⁹. In the context of the present world, the “difference” is - as Alexandru Boboc says – a semantic one, and then an ontological one, in the same way as the correct meaning precedes

and conditions the logical – formal one, by means of which one enters.

That is what Kant named “the land of truth” and further on in understandability (possibility of human **being** as human **being** beyond the human **being** as being)”²⁰.

The world is also the work of man. The hermeneutic circle ensures the technical objective condition of turning to good account.

Augustins concept of time is more precisely the **present out of past and the present out of present**. I find myself wandering at the history of the world, and the one who facilitates this miracle could be somebody who sometimes was named Socrates. It is possible that Socrates could be my contemporary; as in any of Socrates’s dialogues, one begins with the **state of nothing**, the axiom “I know that I know nothing” and reaches the **state of truth** as an uncreated state of the world.

It is the state of truth that stands for a link for Knowledge and faith.

Notes

¹ Vladimir Lossky, *Teologia mistică a Bisericii de Răsărit*, Editura Anastasia, Bucuresti, pp. 121-122.

² Wladyslaw Tatrkiewicz, *Istoria celor sase notiuni*, Editura Meridiane, Bucuresti, 1981, p. 361.

³ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Chipul nemuritor al lui Dumnezeu*, Editura Mitropoliei Olteniei, Craiova, 1987, p. 244.

⁴ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, Editura Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1991, propozițiile 4.002 și 4.01.

⁵ Risto Hilpinen: *Belief Systems, Knowledge and Reasoning*, Prelegeri sustinute la First Summer School for Theory of Knowledge, Warszawo-Madralin 1997, p. 36.

⁶ Cf. D. Botez, “Realism și relativism: problematică actuală. Bibliografie principală (1925-1992)”, în *Realism și relativism în filosofia științei contemporane*, Editura DAR, Bucuresti, 1993, p. V.

⁷ Constantin Noica, *Devenirea întru ființă*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucuresti, 1981, p. 254.

⁸ Gorgias, “Despre nonexistent și despre existent”, în *Filosofia greacă până la Platon*, vol. II, partea a 2-a, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucuresti, 1984, pp. 461-465.

⁹ Andrei Cornea, *Sciere și oralitate în cultura antică*, Editura Cartea Românească, Bucuresti, 1988, pp. 74-79.

¹⁰ John Meyendorff, *Teologia bizantină*, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, Bucuresti, 1996, p. 300.

¹¹ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, “Teologia mistică”, în *Opere complete*, Editura Paideea, Bucuresti, 1996, p. 250.

¹² Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure*, Editura Științifică, Bucuresti, 1969, p. 480.

¹³ Alvin Platinga, *Natura necesității*, Editura Trei, Bucuresti, 1998, pp. 115-116.

¹⁴ Călin Candiescu, “O interpretare logico-semantică a predicatiei, descrițiilor și numelor proprii” în *Probleme de logică*, vol. IX, Editura Academiei, 1986, p. 27.

¹⁵ Nikolai Berdiaev, *Sensul creației*, Editura Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1992, p. 129.

¹⁶ *Parmenides*, în *Filosofia greacă până la Platon*, vol I, partea a 2-a, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucuresti, 1979, p. 232.

Religious Folklife and Folk Theology in the Sanctuary Movement¹

This is a study of a religious movement with political overtones, the U.S. the Sanctuary movement, which lasted from 1982 to 1992. The movement was comprised of about 500 congregations that gave shelter to Central American refugees in defiance of the U.S. government. In its theology, Sanctuary had folk religious elements because, like liberation theology on which it was based, it involved the reinterpretation of scripture, it was oppositional in intent to official religion, it developed a new social structure within the congregation, it utilized the concepts of folk saints and martyrs as well as new liturgical elements, and it espoused an alternative version of Christ. Furthermore, Sanctuary, like liberation theology, emphasized action, namely the taking in of strangers, as an essential component of religion.

This is a study of a political movement in the U.S., inspired by faith, that led to the development of emergent religious traditions. At the height of this movement, known as the Sanctuary movement, one would hear the statement, “If you knew the truth, then surely you would help us,” echoing the refrain of Central American refugees in the U.S. According to some estimates, there were during the 1980s more than half a million refugees from El Salvador in the United States, and another 200,000 from Guatemala. From El Salvador they fled government-backed death squads and bombardment of civilian populations which claimed more than 75,000 lives during the civil

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war between 1979 and 1992. From Guatemala they fled army massacres that probably killed well over that many, as well as detention and military control of the government and the countryside. From both countries they fled from hunger, malnutrition, high infant mortality, torture, and government repression. Many of these refugees arrived without papers, as undocumented aliens in the U.S., and even in Mexico through which they passed. During the Reagan years, political asylum was granted to fewer than 3%. Those deported back to Central America often faced persecution or retribution, and many were taken directly into police custody at the airport and never heard from again.²

In response, the Sanctuary movement sheltered, sponsored, and protected about one thousand of these refugees in over 400 local houses of worship, in defiance of the federal government of the United States. These faith communities—Catholic, Quaker, Mennonite, mainline Protestant, and Jewish—attempted to criticize and change the Reagan administration's support of the brutal and repressive governments and armed forces of these two Central American nations from the perspective of the refugees. Furthermore, these congregations hoped to force the government to obey its own immigration laws as well as that international law to which the U.S. is a signatory.³

While originally I had appreciated the ingenuity of the political statement, as a student of Folklore and Folklife—as opposed to Political Science, Sociology, or

other disciplines—I wondered about the cultural aspects of Sanctuary: Did it really have something to do with religion? Or was it merely a clever guise for a trendy—albeit appropriate—political statement? It did not take long to discern that Sanctuary was not only a (folk) political movement, but also a folk religion, one which was based on traditional Latin American liberation theology, only adapted for North American white middle-class congregations. In fact, rather than remain a humanitarian gesture by well-meaning North Americans, the Sanctuary movement developed a culture of its own, with profound changes in the theology, religious practice, political and social consciousness, liturgy, music, foodways, dress, material culture, language, and social structure—in short, the folklife—of its participants. It is this folk religious nature on which I concentrate in this article.

The definition of folk religion I would like to use is a well-known one in the discipline of Folklore and Folklife, by Dr. Don Yoder. I find it especially helpful for the purposes of thinking about religious practice. “Folk religion,” he writes,

“is the totality of all those views and practices of religion that exist among the people apart from and alongside the strictly theological and liturgical forms of the official religion”⁴.

What I intend to show is that the Sanctuary movement, like liberation theology, was a folk theology, that is, that it took and reinterpreted some concepts of official Judeo-Christianity, and emphasized other concepts which official religion has overlooked

or spurned. The theological basis for the Sanctuary movement drew equally on two traditions: Latin American liberation theology, and the Biblical concept of “sanctuary,” meaning “sacred place.” To understand the movement it is necessary to examine both of these traditions and the interplay between them.

While I cannot dwell at length on the historical development of liberation theology,⁵ it is necessary to discuss some of its basic features, in order to show its links to the Sanctuary movement. Briefly stated, liberation theology is based on the belief that through a change in the interpretation of scripture (specifically the Bible in Judeo-Christian liberation theologies) and through action based on that change, the poor and oppressed can bring about their liberation—political, cultural, and personal. The classic Judeo-Christian model of this liberation is the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, detailed in the Book of Exodus. Liberation theology more or less formally originated in 1962, when Pope John XXIII referred to this “Church of the Poor,” as he called it, in a speech concerning the Second Vatican Council.⁶

Six years later, at a conference of bishops in Medellín, Colombia, the Latin American Bishops formalized the discussion of the Church’s role in liberation from poverty and oppression, in the context of Latin America. Far from being an official religion, however, the theology of liberation has frequently met with disapproval from the Vatican since Pope John XXIII,⁷ and various theologians and clergymen have

been summoned for official conferences and even questioning in Rome.⁸

If the official church, as represented by the Vatican, has shown such antipathy to liberation theology, particularly during the 1980s, then it is easy to see how liberation theology could be considered a folk religion, since so much of its theory and practice fall outside the bounds of the official Church. Certainly, too, the sense of opposition has been mutual. Pope John Paul II was heckled by a crowd in Nicaragua during his trip there for, among other things, failing to condemn the terrorism of the U.S.-backed contras, who had massacred seventeen civilians only a few days earlier. Feelings in El Salvador and elsewhere were similar; the Pope was seen as an ally of the oppressors, that is, those with land, money, and military authority. For example, in one editorial cartoon in a Salvadoran refugee newspaper of the time, a general turns to a poor peasant and, pointing to the Pope, who appears on a television screen placed at the center of the cross, says to the peasant, “Listen to this. It’s exactly what I’ve been telling you.”⁹

The government, the United States, and the capitalist system are frequently depicted as the enemy of God and the people. Often national governments can only exist with the blessing of the U.S. government, and often those who rise to the top of the Church hierarchy in such countries, like then Archbishop (now Cardinal) Miguel Obando y Bravo in Somoza’s Nicaragua, are those who are politically compatible or at least ideologically meek enough to survive.¹⁰

Various visual and verbal manifestations of the religion of the people indicate the perception of this relationship between governments and the Church. Thus for example, some Salvadoran folk art during the war would depict the Bible or a church about to be destroyed by bombs or helicopters with “USA” painted on them.¹¹ And one piece of graffiti written on a wall in Bogotá read, “The International Monetary Fund knifed the Christ child.”¹²

Like many dissident movements, Liberation theology was and is seen as the true word of God, in the context of the social reality of Latin America, while the official church and its traditions can be the creation of fallible human beings. As one Latin American Episcopal priest and exponent of liberation theology now living in the United States explained to me in an interview,

The Pope went to Nicaragua and didn’t understand what the hell was going on, ’cause he’s so [steeped] in [the] tradition. You see tradition has its place, but tradition is a fabrication of human beings. Theology is the expression of God’s will. And when these collide, God has precedence over tradition. [The Pope] says obey your bishops and do what they say, but if your bishops are allied and identified with the oppressors, the hell with that. Who’s going to obey oppressors? Jesus’ defiance of the religious authority of his day is a clear example.¹³

One Roman Catholic priest I interviewed disagreed with my interpretation of the Sanctuary movement as “folk”:

“Christianity today is looking at renewal. It is looking at getting back to Biblical roots. It is getting away from this split between, you know, heaven and earth. It’s a holistic thing, and so, who’s going to do it—everybody or some small numbers? And small numbers are doing it. To me it’s just, I mean, the opposite of what I would see as folk religion. I think it’s really an orthodox thing, but it’s going to have smaller numbers. To me, you know, the minute we step one inch away from Biblical theology, liberation theology becomes nothing”¹⁴.

Sometimes this true word of God, then, exists in conflict with the existing hierarchical religious structures, or with the beliefs of large numbers of people. For the practitioners of liberation theology and Sanctuary, though, this new theology is “orthodox” (which of course means “right belief”). But the Yoder conception of folk religion defines “folk” in relation to official, hierarchical, and institutional practice, the “strictly theological and liturgical forms” which are but human constructs. Therefore, in relation to the official practice established by the hierarchical power structures, liberation theology is, by definition, folk.¹⁵ The word “folk” should not lessen, and is not intended to detract from, the validity of liberation theology as a legitimate religious system.

I want to emphasize here that to folklorists such as myself the term “folk” carries neither pejorative nor disrespectful connotations. Folk religion should not be considered low, impure, bastardized, common, or devolutionary. Ironically, I became aware of amuse-

ment and trepidation on the part of people I am studying in regard to this issue. (One woman turned to a friend of hers to whom I was being introduced and said to him, “Did you know we’re a folk religion?”). What folklorists mean by “folk” encompasses the Yoder definition but also includes the notion of expressive culture in small, local communities.¹⁶ Many of the people I met in the context of this research, both Central and North American, would have an almost implicit understanding of this perspective. Others occasionally took “folk” to mean illegitimate, un-Biblical, or antiquated. I hope it is clear from this article that folk religion, in the conception of our discipline, is none of these.

Aside from the opposition between the official church and liberation theology, though, there are additional aspects of liberation theology which make it folk. First of all, and most important, as a theology it calls for a fundamental re-interpretation and re-emphasis of Biblical scripture, focusing in this case on the oppressed nature of most people in Latin America. Second, the structure through which liberation theology is transmitted are the so-called Christian Base Communities (or Comunidades Eclesiales de Base), neighborhood or regional Bible study groups of a relatively non-hierarchical nature. These can also serve as an economic collective in especially poor areas, such as the barrios of San Salvador or the zones of the most intense conflict during the war. They constitute the core structure of religious practice in many parts of Latin America. Leonardo Boff, the Brazilian theolo-

gian, has called them “authentic universal church become reality at the grassroots.”¹⁷ Fr. Ernesto Cardenal, a priest and Minister of Culture in the Nicaraguan cabinet, has published transcripts of one such Bible study group in a book entitled *The Gospel in Solentiname*, which I believe will emerge as a classic of theology.¹⁸ Third, like other folk theologies, liberation theology, particularly in revolutionary situations, has utilized the concept of martyrs and folk saints. The most famous martyr of all—who has in fact become a symbol of the Sanctuary movement—is Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated while saying mass in 1980. He had only recently condemned the Salvadoran government and landowning oligarchy for their war against the poor and their human rights abuses. He foresaw his assassination, and had said, “As a Christian, I don’t believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadoran people.”¹⁹ In El Salvador today, he is known among the poor as “Saint Romero,” and by 1985 there were already reports of healing miracles attributed to him.²⁰ In addition, his funeral turned into a massacre, as government forces opened fire on the crowd and bombed the area around the Cathedral square. Consequently, there is now a kind of saint’s day for St. Romero, March 24th, the anniversary of his assassination. During the period of the Sanctuary movement, Church services and demonstrations took place in El Salvador and the U.S. and the first North American churches to declare themselves public Sanctuaries for

Central American refugees did so on the second anniversary of his assassination.²¹

There are of course other elements of traditional Latin American folk religion which are important as well in liberation theology. For example, Christ's role as a poor worker, *Cristo trabajador*, occurs throughout liberation theology. The most vivid example of this, perhaps, occurs in the *Misa campesina nicaraguense* (Nicaraguan Peasant Mass) in a song entitled, "Tú eres el Dios de los Pobres" ("You Are the God of the Poor"):

"Yo te he visto en un camion de carga, cortando la caña y el maíz; te he visto vendiendo lotería sin que te avergüence ese papel. Yo te he visto en las gasolineras checando las llantas de un camion; y hasta componiendo carreteras con guantes de cuero y overol".

(I have seen you in a freight truck, cutting cane and corn; I have seen you selling lottery tickets without being embarrassed in that role. I have seen you in the gas-stations checking the tires of a truck; and even repairing highways in leather gloves and overalls.)²²

Also, the Virgin of Guadalupe, so important in Latin American folk religion, is particularly important in Mexican and Mexican-American liberation theology, since she has long been a symbol of justice and social change, from Hidalgo to Zapata to César Chávez.²³ There have also been changes and new

genres in religious folk art, in Nicaragua, Peru, and elsewhere.

There is one other significant difference between liberation theology and official religion—the emphasis on action, or "praxis," rather than passive experience. The ultimate object of the Church of the Poor is the creation of the Kingdom of God on earth, not in heaven, by ending injustice and inhumanity. Leonardo Boff has written a particularly good explication of this idea. Citing passages in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew and the Book of Isaiah, he writes that the Kingdom of God "is presented as good news for the poor, light for the blind, healing for the lame, hearing for the deaf, freedom for those in prison, liberation for the oppressed, pardon for sinners and life for the dead." He then makes the forceful conclusion that "it follows that the Kingdom of God is not the other world, but this world transformed and made new."²⁴ The interplay between faith and action—political action—is not only the crux of liberation theology; it became an important aspect of the Sanctuary movement as well, as liberation theology moved into the United States. Liberation theology, and by extension Sanctuary, moves people from seeing religion as orthodoxy ("right belief") to seeing it as orthopraxis ("right practice").²⁵

The Sanctuary movement borrowed several of its central implicit concepts directly from Latin American liberation theology. The notion of "oppression," for example, was defined in a Third World post-colonial context; that is to say, the standard features of op-

pression—poverty, economic exploitation, racism, sexism, torture and other human rights abuses, and the lack of freedoms of religion, speech, and opinion—were outgrowths of an unjust economic and political system which depends upon the domination of many for the benefit of few. Consequently, “liberation” is the extensive reorganization of this hierarchical system, in the political, cultural, and personal spheres. “Sin,” according to one liberation theologian, the Peruvian Gustavo Gutiérrez, is

“evident in oppressive structures, in the exploitation of man by man, in the domination and slavery of peoples, races, and social classes. Sin appears, therefore, as the fundamental alienation, the root of a situation of injustice and exploitation”²⁶.

In the realistic Salvadoran novel, *One Day of Life*, by Manlio Argueta, the narrator (in actuality a real woman interviewed by Argueta) says bluntly, “To let a child die is the worst sin one can commit.”²⁷ Thus, “salvation,” a collective rather than individual process, is, according to Gutiérrez, “to work, to transform this world to build the human community.”²⁸ And “every obstacle that degrades or alienates the work of men and women in building a humane society is an obstacle to the work of salvation.”²⁹

Another concept central to the Sanctuary movement was love and solidarity. The most important Biblical commandment—cited over and over both in the literature and by people in the Sanctuary community—is “to love thy neighbor as thyself.” In the

words of Gutiérrez (which could practically be incorporated verbatim into a Sanctuary sermon):

“Universal love is a question of loving all people, not in some vague, general way, but rather in the exploited person, in the concrete person who is struggling to live humanly³⁰”.

Also applicable is this statement from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire:

“The oppressor is solidary with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, cheated in the sale of their labor—when he stops making pious, sentimental, and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love”³¹.

The Sanctuary movement represented a thousand such risks, and many such acts of love. Sanctuary workers themselves referred to that relationship as “subversive love.”³²

The fact that attention was paid to the “oppressor class” was an important shift between liberation theology and the Sanctuary movement. Virgilio Elizondo, a theologian living in San Antonio, Texas, presaged this kind of awakening in 1975:

A time comes when certain members of the oppressor group—normally good people who had never realized they were oppressors—awaken to the fact of oppression. To awaken and to stay uninvolved i[s] a sin; to see evil and to allow it to continue is itself evil. Some of the awakened members of the oppressor group will join the oppressed in their struggle.³³

Sanctuary produced this awakening, both among people who had never been politically active before, some of whom come from conservative and even fundamentalist backgrounds, and among people who had been active in prior peace and social justice causes. One Methodist woman (raised Roman Catholic) in Philadelphia told me:

“I think I didn’t have very much awareness of Latin America at all... I think up until Sanctuary, I didn’t really believe—I knew from Vietnam and ... from being a peace activist for probably close to twenty years... and in nuclear disarmament issues, that our government could lie and that we’re not always out for people’s best interest. You know, I know a lot about the history of this, You know, Westward expansion and the destruction of the Indians.

Still, I think it was this movement that’s really showed me how arrogant and insulated we are.

And I’ve been thinking a lot about that today, I’ve been thinking about that banner I saw yesterday in the march, and it said...”Central America—Our Neighbors, not our Backyard.”

You know, up until Sanctuary I think that in some way I still pictured that as our backyard.... I think there was an assumption that somehow, there was this mass of humanity down there,

that I didn’t have to be very much concerned about, and I just didn’t know very much about them, and I didn’t want to know very much about them”³⁴.

When individuals came to recognize their status as members of the oppressor or oppressed class or nation, notice the sinful situation around them, and decide to work with the oppressed to change that system, that would begin a conversion process Freire calls *conscientização*, awkwardly translated into English as conscientization, or, more weakly, consciousness-raising.

Action, or praxis, was at the heart of the Sanctuary movement. It is the work of salvation, building and creating a more human world according to the examples in Exodus and the Gospels, and the solidarity of universal love. This is the ultimate conclusion of both Freire and Gutiérrez. “True solidarity,” writes Freire,

“is found only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis. To affirm that men are persons and as persons should be free, and yet to do nothing tangible to make this affirmation a reality, is a farce”³⁵.

To which Gutiérrez adds, “Only by participating in their struggles can we understand the implications of the Gospel message.”³⁶ It should be clear that this is exactly the message that the Sanctuary movement attempted to convey.

The second tradition upon which the Sanctuary movement drew is the Biblical and historical role of the “sanctuary.” The original sanctuaries, in Biblical times, were cities or houses of refuge for criminals who feared retribution. The fugitive would then either

leave the area or surrender to the authorities, the sojourn having lasted usually a short period of time. This practice existed into the Middle Ages. Such sanctuaries, according to Mircea Eliade, were traditionally built at the sites of theophanies (divine manifestations), hierophanies (insertions of the sacred realm into the earthly world), and signs. Thus they are traditionally seen as places of communication between people and God.³⁷ North American history has drawn on this Biblical tradition several times. Only during colonial times, however, were refugees criminals.³⁸ Since then refugees have been victims of persecution or victims of conscience rather than criminals, and the length of the stay has been indefinite. The first instance of such sanctuaries in North America occurred in the 1750s, when Quakers in Philadelphia sheltered several hundred Acadian refugees from Nova Scotia.³⁹ More famous, of course, was the Underground Railroad before the U.S. Civil War. Many of those involved with that movement were also Quakers. Most recently, in the 1960s, there were sanctuary churches for Vietnam War deserters and draft resisters, although that sanctuary movement was considerably less organized and more spontaneous than today's. Pastors such as William Sloane Coffin were involved⁴⁰; he went on to become pastor of The Riverside Church in the current Sanctuary movement.

Given this theological and historical background, we can see how the traditions meld in the American Sanctuary movement. The theology of Sanctuary was basically derived from one theme in the Bible, stated

in Leviticus 19:33-4 (and elsewhere in different forms):

“If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not oppress him. But the stranger that dwelleth among you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt”.

This commitment motivated all those who work in Sanctuary (and became so axiomatic within the movement, that by the time of the Tucson Sanctuary trial in 1986 the special hotline established to disseminate up-to-date trial information was 1-800-LEV-19:33). Rev. Philip Wheaton, a pastor of a congregation that declared itself a public Sanctuary, reflected in writing on this concept of the stranger, finding that most of the Biblical usage concerns actual, historical examples of strangers (as opposed to symbolic or metaphorical ones). Thus the Sanctuary movement must realize that for the refugees, the concern is not how well they will be treated here, but rather the situation that made them leave their lands in the first place. This set up an interesting tension between the purposes of the congregation and the purposes of the refugee, although Wheaton is quick to resolve that tension:

“As concerned citizens of such a foreign land, we therefore must not use our humanitarian response to avoid or cloak this fundamental contradiction for the refugee [W]e must never forget this basic injustice - that they were forced to come here. This is unavoidably a political question. Therefore, our humanitarian

concern for the refugee personally cannot be separated from their political reality as outcasts from their own land. [emphasis in the original]”⁴¹,

This is what I believe Freire writes about when he refers to “risking an act of love.” The love here is not merely humanitarian, but must be an act of political solidarity against the oppressors. One risk is the threat of arrest that faces both North and Central Americans. But sheltering refugees is a necessary risk.

Another essential idea in the theology of Sanctuary concerned the nature of God. Citing the Gospel of Matthew (“I was a stranger and you took me in”) and the Epistle to the Hebrews (“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”), Wheaton says the issue forces North Americans to choose between “all the little ‘laws,’ or the larger Law of God.” In the Sanctuary movement, he concludes,

“here, God’s law prevails; we cannot be faithful to Yahweh’s call and turn away the stranger, for who knows, it may well be Jesus himself outside the door, knocking and asking to come in. To close the door to these aliens may well mean alienating ourselves from God”⁴².

This idea corresponds exactly with the many new conceptions of the nature of Jesus in liberation theology, as is shown, for example, in the *Misa campesina nicaraguense* quoted above.

Having detailed some of the theology of Sanctuary, I would like to briefly describe some of the features of the praxis of Sanctuary, since, after all, praxis

played such an important role in the movement. At the physical center of Sanctuary, obviously, was the refugee or refugee family. The relationship between congregation and refugee was intense, particularly among those North Americans who participated in the 24-hour companionship of the refugees early on in their stay. Sanctuary refugees were carefully selected from the large refugee pool described at the beginning. Usually, the Sanctuary refugees were young, between the ages of 18 and 35. Many were active in their countries of origin, in human rights work, religious work, education, medicine, journalism, union organizing, and all had to leave because of specific threats against their lives, the murder of close relatives or other close friends and associates.

Sanctuary members emphasized that Sanctuary is a process, not an end-product. The core feature of this process, which I have written about elsewhere, is the testimony of the refugee.⁴³ Throughout Sanctuary, this personal experience narrative was what attracted followers, converted disbelievers, educated and enlightened both the congregation and the community at large. And refugee testimony was what inspired other congregations to declare themselves public Sanctuaries, and thus the movement grew. Needless to say, with testimony including stories of murder, rape, death lists, and torture, such storytelling was very emotional for both speaker and audience.

Sanctuary was an expression of faith by the entire congregation or community. It was a statement of moral opposition to policies and religion that harms

or ignores the oppressed. And it was an expression of unity, solidifying a religious community and strengthening their faith. Rev. Wheaton told me at a dinner that he was pleased that Sanctuary was sending people back to their Bible.⁴⁴ This may be so, but it did so in ways that emphasized analysis, thought, and re-interpretation. One Protestant minister in Philadelphia explained this change in the interpretation of scripture to me in an interview:

“I really think though that you can read the Bible with a view towards your own security, and you’ll read it one way,

and you could read the Bible with a view toward change and freedom and it will be a very different book...

...Take any passage having to do with “shepherd.”... In... the Gospel of John [10:11-18] there is “I am the good shepherd” passage, and you know a “good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

I’d say one way of interpreting that is that Jesus is the good shepherd and Jesus died for our sins, and laid down his life for us and therefore salvation is assured.

And the other is if you see that as... if we’re shepherds one to another, as Christ is in you and I, and we’re in a situation of oppression or of ... persecution,

therefore that becomes a call to risk and to put your life on the line...”⁴⁵

This call to risk and to share in the struggles of the persecuted became particularly important as this theology was translated into U.S. contexts. But, like all the

theology from which Sanctuary developed, it had Biblical referents.

This may explain why North American church hierarchies did not condemn Sanctuary, and have in fact often endorsed the movement, as did Pope John Paul II on a trip to the U.S. In this case what let us deem Sanctuary “folk” is that so many of its component parts existed not in opposition to, but, in Yoder’s words cited above, “alongside the strictly theological and liturgical forms of the official religion.”

But significantly, Sanctuary could also be an intensely personal expression of commitment, in at least two ways. First, many in the movement were aware of, and constantly related themselves to, a larger historical perspective. American immigration around the turn of the century, the Depression, and the Sixties—a time of personal growth and rebellion—recurred in interviews as formative periods or periods of historical influence. Others turned to Sanctuary out of a deep religious feeling, as part of a spiritual journey. Two people interviewed on separate occasions began their religious journeys after having experienced a theophany, a manifestation of God. Both were eventually been led to the Sanctuary movement and both were among the most dedicated practitioners I met. Thus, while people in the Sanctuary movement may have been part of a political opposition, their motivations clearly arose out of a cultural and religious sense of justice and duty. Naturally, this sense cannot be mandated and must be felt by the individual. Hence

not all members of a Sanctuary congregation participated equally in the practice and belief.

Typical Sanctuary services would incorporate the personal testimony of the refugee, sermons by one or more clergy, music chosen specifically for the event, reading of significant scripture and litanies (sometimes bilingual), and communion, often with the Host a corn tortilla. Certain occasions merited special church services the arrival of a new refugee, the commemoration of the martyrdom of Archbishop Romero (the first churches declared their participation in Sanctuary on the second anniversary of his assassination) and the four North American churchwomen, holidays such as Good Friday, Passover, and the Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, or the release on bail of refugees captured by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Naturally, there was variation in the service depending upon the religion or denomination. But the amount of ecumenism and the number of interfaith services associated with Sanctuary were extraordinary. It was not uncommon to see a rabbi at Mass or to hear a Presbyterian minister deliver a homily in a synagogue. I myself have in my life participated in only two havdalah services, to mark the end of the Jewish sabbath. Both of these related to the Sanctuary movement. One took place in the basement chapel of a Catholic church; the other, in a combined United Church of Christ and Presbyterian church, was followed by communion. Both were conducted by rabbis (with Protestants administering communion).⁴⁶

Clearer examples of folk religion would be hard to produce.

There were also associated customs which are part of Sanctuary. Refugee-led Bible study classes were common, as were the traditional Salvadoran (or Guatemalan) beans-and-rice church suppers and female congregants wearing Guatemalan woven *huipiles*. Some congregations printed newsletters, complete with information about nuts-and-bolts political action, such as lobbying and contacting representatives in Washington. Visual iconography and material culture were also very important. For example, Archbishop Romero's picture was frequently displayed from pulpits, on posters and banners, and on keychains and all types of ephemera. The most famous symbol was the bandana, usually red, which in early days of the movement (before 1987, say), often covered the refugee's face during public presentations. This, like the assumed names that all refugees took, would aim to prevent identification outside the church and protect the refugee's family from governmental retribution in Central America. The bandana was an extremely striking image and visual reminder. One church in Philadelphia issued miniature red bandanas, about two inches long, for congregation members to wear on their lapels in support of the refugees. As a result, the symbol became common throughout the Philadelphia region. Other communities across the country had similar customs.

The Sanctuary movement was among the most visible theologies of liberation in the U.S. but was not

the only one. There are feminist, Black, and Hispanic liberation theologies, and by the late 1980s, there were Christian Base Communities among North Americans in at least four U.S. cities.⁴⁷ Sanctuary, however, became the most visible in the U.S. media because it was white and middle-class, and because it defied the policies of the Justice Department. As for why it remained predominantly middle-class, it was in part because Sanctuary was very expensive; congregations needed to have lawyers, doctors, and bail money available as well as funds for the support of the refugees. (There were, however, Black and Hispanic churches and Native American groups which participated actively in the Sanctuary movement, although their story was not so well publicized.)

Finally, I would like to consider the oppositional nature of Sanctuary as a folk religion, drawing on the ideas of Raymond Williams and José E. Limón.⁴⁸ Without a doubt, liberation theology opposes the dominant religious order in Latin America. Both Sanctuary and liberation theology opposed the dominant socio-political order, or hegemony, in North and Central America. But what was the nature of Sanctuary in doing so? To use Williams' paradigm, the Sanctuary movement had elements of the residual in it; certain "experiences, meanings, and values" of Sanctuary were residual, particularly the literal reading of the Exodus, Isaiah, and Gospel messages of liberation from slavery, building God's Kingdom on Earth, and universal love. But the structures of Sanctuary, the "new meanings and values, new practices, new rela-

tionships and kinds of relationship" were emergent. By these I refer to disobedience of the Reagan administration combined with personal testimony, personal relationships, and subversive love, as well as new liturgy. Ultimately, I maintain it was the cultural dimension which ran at the deepest level of opposition, because of its emergent nature. Not only did one hear "the voice of the voiceless," to use Monseñor Romero's famous term, the word functioning as critique, but we saw religion as critique in truly new ways. Here religion was practice, dialogue, folklife, structure, and interpersonal relationship. Some oppositional movements, according to Raymond Williams, "represent areas of human experience, aspiration, and achievement which the dominant culture undervalues, opposes, represses, or even cannot recognize."⁴⁹ And though Williams says such movements are residual, Sanctuary was not residual but emergent. Most important, if we heed the advice of folklorist José Limón, and examine not merely the content of folklore, or in this case folk religion, we affirm that Sanctuary was oppositional not only in content but also in structure. One minister in Philadelphia addressed this issue in a homily, citing Luke 5:38: "But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins."⁵⁰ In Sanctuary, we saw not just new wine, but new wineskins as well. It was this ideal construction of personal relationships within Sanctuary communities and, moreover, between members of the oppressed and oppressor class, and the work that proceeded from that partnership

that truly challenged the system. In this aim we have an unusual liberation—of the oppressors.

Since liberation theology is a folk religion that truly intends to change the dominant system (particularly at that time in Central America), it is indeed oppositional or contestational folk culture in the fullest sense of the term.⁵¹ It is oppositional not merely in its content, which draws on residual elements, but also in its praxis, which is primarily emergent. Liberation theology follows H. Richard Niebuhr's model of "Christ the transformer of culture"⁵² not just by re-interpreting or re-observing, but by setting out to achieve that transformation. The Sanctuary movement appeared to be pivotal because it contested the oppressors, and those who contested the oppressors were themselves, in the case of the North Americans involved with Sanctuary, often from the same class background. These people had already been liberated from their dominant role, and the process of this movement, which has liberated them, continued to liberate the oppressors during its lifespan.⁵³

It should also be noted that Sanctuary established, or codified, a challenging relationship between members of the dominant classes and their government, because, in the words of Jim Corbett, a Quaker and one of the movement's founders, "[i]t presupposes that the church has come to occupy an institutional place within society that permits it to limit and even challenge the state's uses of violence."⁵⁴ Furthermore, the Sanctuary movement confronted the dominant force of the U.S. Government since the central act di-

rectly opposed the enforcement of U.S. immigration and foreign policy, which practitioners not only condemned as immoral, but counter-charged was even illegal.

Thus, to summarize, Sanctuary was clearly a folk religion because, like liberation theology, it involved the reinterpretation of scripture, it was oppositional in intent to official religion, it developed a new social structure within the congregation, it utilized the concepts of folk saints, martyrs, and the Virgin of Guadalupe, and it promoted a version of Christ as worker and exile rather than King and ruler. Furthermore, Sanctuary, like liberation theology, emphasized action as an absolutely essential component of religion. Sanctuary also created new liturgical forms, including folk music, art, and storytelling traditions, brought in political consciousness as an important feature of religious belief, and emphasized the taking in of strangers which, while Biblically mandated, does not in most cases receive the same emphasis in the official church.

* * *

An historical note: the first version of this paper was originally written on the eve of the trial of eleven North American Sanctuary workers in Tucson, Arizona in 1985. These included two priests, a nun, and a minister, among others. Eight were eventually convicted, six of felonies. Much of the evidence for the prosecution came from two paid informers, who wore concealed microphones and taped church services, Bible study classes, and private conversations. In pre-

trial motions, the judge, Earl H. Carroll, repeatedly refused to throw out the case on the grounds of illegal search and seizure, freedom of religion, and selective prosecution of alien harborers. Furthermore, witnesses, defendants, and defense attorneys were prohibited from talking about their religious motivations, political or social conditions in Central America.

Judge Carroll said that “the enforcement of immigration laws [creates] only minimal and incidental interference, if any, to the practice of religion.”⁵⁵ Clearly this was and remains contested, for as we have seen, the arrival and the personal experience of the refugees is central to the development of Latin American liberation theology in white middle-class North America, and Sanctuary proponents argued that the Biblical commands to welcome the stranger, visit the imprisoned, and set free the oppressed were all being contravened by government action. Soon thereafter, another Sanctuary worker, Stacey Lynn Merkt, served time in federal prison in Texas. (But years later, in 1999, the Bible was banned in the Elizabeth [N.J. Immigration] Detention Center, because these very sections of the Gospel pertaining to welcoming the stranger and visiting those in prison were being discussed in Bible-study groups.)

What we see with Sanctuary, then, was a failure (or unwillingness) on the part of government authorities to recognize the folk theological nature of the Sanctuary movement, while they nonetheless fully appreciated its contestational nature. The folk religious nature of Sanctuary should not be underestimated; once

again, what may not seem like religion to an outsider may well be a tremendously powerful force for the transformation of individuals. The results of this misunderstanding—if indeed it was that and not a deliberate failure to acknowledge theological legitimacy—were often tragic; in retrospect they may have even been catastrophic. Yet, even to this day there remains the hope that through interfaith caring and nonviolence, the dominant culture may be transformed.

Notes

1 This is a slightly revised version of a paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society, Cincinnati, Ohio, on October 19, 1985, a date which, coincidentally, had been declared National Day of Justice for Immigrants and Refugees. I am above all grateful to the many people in the Sanctuary movement, Central American and North American, who have shared insights, ideas, and experiences with me and have shown me a tremendous amount of trust. Research on this topic was begun for a seminar with Dr. Don Yoder. I have also benefitted from close readings of this manuscript and comments by Richard Shaull, Nancy Johns, Gary MacEoin, Robert Coote, and Leonard Norman Primiano, and an anonymous reader at the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. I am very thankful to all of them.

2 This information is all well documented, particularly in reports from Amnesty International, Americas Watch, the United Nations, the Archdiocese of San Salvador, and a number of human rights commissions in both El Salvador and Guatemala.

3 Much has been made, in the media, of the ideas that Sanctuary workers are breaking the law. Evidence, however, indicates the opposite: that the law in fact protects refugees and

Sanctuary workers alike. The best discussion of the legal issues I have read is by immigration attorney Ignatius Bau, in *This Ground is Holy* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985): 38-74.

4Don Yoder, "Toward a Definition of Folk Religion." *Western Folklore* 33 (1974): 14.

5Excellent overviews are provided in Phillip Berryman, *The Religious Roots of Rebellion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1984) and Penny Lernoux, *Cry of the People* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982).

6Harvey Cox, *Religion in the Secular City* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984): 110.

7See Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"* (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1984).

8Christine Gudorf, "Ratzinger, Gutiérrez, and the Bishops of Peru," *Commonweal* 112 (1985), p. 77 and Marlise Simons, "Liberation Theology: 2 Sides Polarize," *The New York Times* (June 3, 1985), p. A3.

9*Nosotros* 1:10 (May 1985), p. 3.

10See specifically in this case Gary MacEoin, "Nicaragua: A Church Divided," *America* 151 (1984): 294-99.

11Seeds painted in 1980 by CONIP (Coordinadora Nacional de la Iglesia Popular) folk art co-operative, collection of the author.

12John F. Talbot, S.J., "A Menacing Cry from Latin America," *America* 153 (1985): 11.

13Interview with Fr. Guy, September 4, 1985. His name, as well as all others cited in this article, except those in the public domain, has been changed.

14Interview with Fr. Donald, August 4, 1986.

15Yoder's definition implicitly creates a dichotomy. Certainly the power relationships, from a social, historical, economic, and political perspective, place the official, the hierarchical, the authoritarian even, at the top, with any variations on that, whether Biblical or not, being "folk."

16See Dan Ben-Amos, "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context," *Journal of American Folklore* 84 (1971): 3-15.

17Leonardo Boff, *EcclesioGenesis: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church* trans. by Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986 [originally published 1977]): 22.

18Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 4 vols. Translated by Donald D. Walsh. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976 [originally published 1975]). Cardenal himself has been publicly scolded by Pope John Paul II and was later suspended from the priesthood for the duration of his government service.

19Plácido Erdozaín, *Archbishop Romero: Martyr of Salvador* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981): 75.

20Personal communication with Gregorio, a Salvadoran refugee in the United States, October 16, 1985. There are crutches, respirators, etc. in the Cathedral in San Salvador along with notes attesting to the Archbishop's healing powers.

21See Gary MacEoin, "A Brief History of the Sanctuary Movement," in his collection of papers by various authors, *Sanctuary: A Resource Guide for Understanding and Participating in the Central American Refugees' Struggle* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985): 14-29.

22Comisión Diocesana de Musica y Liturgia, *Cantemos en Comunidad* (Diócesis de Cuernavaca, 1982): 193-4. Translation mine.

23See the expanded discussion by Cox, pp. 243-7. Also, I am aware of at least one Sanctuary service in the U.S. in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe, New York City, December 7, 1985.

24Leonardo Boff, "Salvation in Jesus Christ and the Process of Liberation," translated by J.P. Donnelly. In Claude Geffre and Gustavo Gutiérrez, eds., *The Mystical and Political Dimension of Christian Faith* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1974): 81.

25Personal communication, Gary MacEoin, August 13, 1986. By "right practice" MacEoin means working for justice.

- 26Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* trans. by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973 [originally published 1971]): 175-6.
- 27Manlio Argueta, *One Day of Life* trans. by Bill Brow (New York: Vintage Books, 1983 [originally published 1980]): 23.
- 28Gutiérrez, p. 159. See also Cardenal, vol. 1, pp. 1-12.
- 29Gustavo Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History* trans. by Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1983 [originally published 1979]): 32.
- 30Gutiérrez, *Theology*, p. 276.
- 31Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* trans. by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Seabury Press, 1970 [originally published 1968]): 34-5.
- 32Personal communication with Gregorio, October 16, 1985. This term is said to be more common in the Los Angeles area.
- 33Virgilio Elizondo, *Christianity and Culture* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1975): 146.
- 34Interview with Carol, 21 April 1985.
- 35Freire, p. 35.
- 36Gutiérrez, *Theology*, p. 269.
- 37Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959 [originally published 1957]): 24-29.
- 38Bau, p. 159.
- 39George P. Bible, *An Historical Sketch of the Acadians, Their Deportation and Wanderings* (Philadelphia: Ferris & Leach, 1906): 103-4. Also see Garry Wills, "Quaker Hero Started Sanctuary Movement," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 3, 1985), p. 7-C.
- 40Michael Ferber and Staughton Lynd, *The Resistance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971): 186-200.
- 41Philip Wheaton, "Responding to the Stranger in Our Midst: An Old and New Testament Theological Reflection" (Washington, D.C.: EPICA Publications, 1984): 2.
- 42Ibid., p. 12.

- 43William Westerman, "Central American Refugee Testimonies and Performed Life Histories in the Sanctuary Movement," in Rina Benmayor and Andor Skotnes, eds., *Migration and Identity: International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories* 3. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994): 167-181.
- 44Philadelphia, March 30, 1985.
- 45Interview with Rev. John Hutchins, Philadelphia, 21 June 1986.
- 4627 September 1986 and 24 March 1985 respectively.
- 47See the works of Dorothee Sölle, James Cone, and Virgilio Elizondo respectively for introductions raised by each group. For reference to base communities in the U.S. see specifically Elizondo's article, "Toward an American-Hispanic Theology of Liberation in the U.S.A.," in Virginia Fabella and Sergio Torres, eds., *Irruption of the Third World* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983): 51. The Plowshares movement is another such liberation theology active since the War in Southeast Asia.
- 48Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) and José E. Limón, "Western Marxism and Folklore: A Critical Introduction," *Journal of American Folklore* 96 (1983): 34-52.
- 49Williams, pp. 123-4.
- 50Rev. Hutchins, 24 November 1985.
- 51See also Luigi Lombardi-Satriani, "Folklore as Culture of Contestation," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 11 (1974): 99-121.
- 52H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951): 209-212.
- 53Much remains to be written about the decline of Sanctuary, which was natural as circumstances changed in Central America, and its overall success or failure. While some participants were changed for their lifetimes, and some changed only temporarily, the eventual impact on U.S. refugee policy was not wholly successful. In fact, it could be argued that in terms of changing U.S. refugee and asylum policy, the Sanctuary movement failed.

54Jim Corbett, *The Sanctuary Church* (Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill Pamphlets, 1986), No. 270, p. 12.

55Quoted in James A. Gittings, "Religion, the Bill of Rights, and Sanctuary," *Christianity and Crisis* 45 (1985): 375-6.

Thanks to the many Sanctuary activists who opened their places of worship, their lives, and their homes to me during the course of research. Research was partially funded by a Mary Campbell Graduate Fellowship of the American Friends Service Committee. This is a slightly revised version of a paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society, Cincinnati, Ohio, on October 19, 1985, a date which, coincidentally, had been declared National Day of Justice for

Immigrants and Refugees, and other portions were delivered at the 1987 annual meeting of the American Studies Association, in New York City. I am above all grateful to the many people in the Sanctuary movement, Central American and North American, who have shared insights, ideas, and experiences with me and have shown me a tremendous amount of trust. Research on this topic was begun for a seminar with Dr. Don Yoder. I have also benefitted from suggestions and comments by Richard Shaull, Nancy Johns, Gary MacEoin, Robert Coote, Dorothy Noyes, and Leonard Norman Primiano, and an anonymous reader at the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. I am very thankful to all of them.



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No Religion, No (Political) Values? Political Attitudes of Atheists in Comparison

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On the basis of survey data for Switzerland, this study systematically compares the political attitudes of atheists with the ones of theists. As expected theoretically, there are indeed statistically significant differences in the attitudinal structures of these two groups. Atheists are more to the political left than theists, they have a higher degree of interest in politics, but less trust in established institutions. These results lead to two conclusions. First, the author pleads for a more systematic integration of the religious cleavage into the analyses of politics. Second, he maintains that key political and societal institutions have to adapt their strategies in order to include atheists.

Introduction

Attitudes can be described as a “type of sub-system of beliefs” and are acquired through the “principles of learning” (Rokeach 1968: 454, 450). They are learned “before the adult is fully mature”, and they tend to be “relatively stable” during a person’s life (Sears and Funk 1999: 1). During socialization, attitudes are “powerfully shaped” by a person’s surroundings, namely by the social and political context, by

group memberships and by the “context-dependent experience of the given moment” (Bergman 1998: 82-83; Miller 1992: 428).

Religion and church membership are considered to be key formative elements of an individual’s political attitudes, they give “individuals their most comprehensive ideas about reality and the meaning of events” (Lovin 1992: 521). According to this argument, different religious or confessional beliefs are linked with specific moral and ethical values and certain political and social attitudes. This line of thinking led Max Weber to his famous thesis of the Protestant work ethic, and historical analyses have underlined that the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation had indeed left a deep “moral imprint” on society (Ozment 1993: 217). Latest empirical studies have shown that religion still matters in politics, even though secularization in most Western nations¹ has unquestionably weakened the impact of religion on politics, political norms and behavior, and policy (Lovin 1992; Jelen 1993; Castles 1994; Barnea and Schwartz 1998; Geissbühler 1999).

It has been demonstrated that the relevance of the confessional cleavage has continuously decreased in Western Europe since the end of World War II. At the end of the 20th century, the political attitudes “of devout Catholics differed much more from those of uncommitted Catholics than those of devout Protestants”. This finding leads to the conclusion that confessional differences have become less and less significant politically, while “the religious cleavage is of

lasting importance” (Geissbühler 1999: 236).² In other words, people who go to church more often think and act politically in different ways than persons who go to church seldom or not at all. More religious people tend to be more conservative and more to the political right, and they also show above-average support for key state institutions (Geissbühler 2001: 220).

We do not know much, however, about the political attitudes of the ever-growing number of atheists in Western countries. Do they differ from people who still belong to a church or religious group? Are these differences, if they really exist, relevant for the long-term development of politics and policies in Western nations and the way sociologists and political scientists analyze political attitudes? These are the core questions I would like to answer in this short article.

Theory, Theses and Data

Theoretically, it would not be surprising to find specific political attitudes among atheists. As underlined in the introduction, political attitudes as well as moral and ethical ones are, to a good degree, “learned” during an individual’s phase of socialization (Sears and Funk 1999), “children are not born with this knowledge” (Bennett 1993: 12). One historian has accordingly argued that because “religion is intrinsically social and cultural, it informs and shapes a people’s moral behavior [...] profoundly” (Ozment 1993: 217). Therefore, a religious upbringing and education should lead to different outcomes than an edu-

cational framework which does not include religious teachings. Regular church attendance should furthermore reinforce specific values and attitudes.

Doubtlessly, Judeo-Christian traditions had a “major formative influence” on Western societies (Bennett 1992: 206). Thereby, religion is, according to an outspoken contemporary American conservative philosopher, “a wellspring of the civic virtues that democracy requires in order to flourish. [...] It lifts each citizen outside himself and inspires concern for community and country. It is a call to kindness, decency, and forgiveness [...] At the same time, it offers a sense of purpose and a frame of reference for claims that transcend everyday politics” (Bennett 1992: 207-208). If these considerations are correct, we should see differences in the political attitudes of people who belong to a church or religious group and of atheists.

But what differences can we expect? According to Bennett (1992), we should anticipate atheists to care less about community and country than religious people. Atheists should be less kind and less decent. Indeed, there is – as Michael Martin (1990: 7) has documented – a school of philosophical opinion that associates atheism with “low moral character”. Of course, such a thesis is not very convincing because it includes fervently normative, even deeply ideological elements. It cannot be our goal to judge atheists or their political attitudes. This is a sociological article and not a political one, and Martin (1990: 23) has correctly emphasized that atheism “does not entail moral relativity”. Without judging differences in attitudes, I

would still maintain that atheists are indeed politically different from theists.

Generally, I argue that atheists are more autonomous in their thoughts and more open to change. While theists stress tradition, conformity and security, atheists prefer values such as self-direction, independence and hedonism (Barnea and Schwartz 1998). Based on this broad reasoning, I have developed the following three theses.

My first thesis is that atheists are more to the political left. There has traditionally been a strong tendency among the left to judge religion negatively (Bloch 1968). Theists also tend to accept hierarchy and tradition and other value systems linked to conservatism and the political right. Second, I argue that being an atheist is often related to a difficult personal decision to “leave” a church or religious group. Such a decision is probably linked to careful deliberation and discussion. This leads me to the conclusion that atheists are particularly open to discussion and political debate, too (Barnea and Schwartz 1998). Theists on the other hand are integrated into a relatively stringent system of thought that does not leave a lot of room for interpretation and debate. I would therefore argue that atheists are more interested in politics and more actively involved in it than theists. Third, people who belong to a church have to accept a “higher” authority, namely a god and often a (hierarchical) church organization, too. Atheists do not accept such an authority, they question religious dictates, and they stress the importance of autonomy of thought (Barnea and

Schwartz 1998). This is a first indication that it might be easier for theists than for theists to accept organizational structures. Furthermore, many religions explicitly ask their followers to recognize state institutions. Therefore, I claim that theists tend to have more trust in institutions than atheists.

The data basis for this article is the 1998 Swiss labor market survey (“Schweizer Arbeitsmarktsurvey”), with more than 3’000 respondents one of the largest and most comprehensive surveys ever conducted in Switzerland. It includes a wide variety of attitudinal variables. In the survey, 45.1 per cent are Catholics, 38.5 per cent are Protestants, 11.5 per cent are atheists and the rest belongs to other Christian or non-Christian groups (n = 3017). These numbers correspond very well with the results of the 2000 Swiss census which came up with the following percentages: 44.1 per cent Catholics, 36.6 per cent Protestants and 11.7 per cent atheists (Federal Office for Statistics 2002: 41).

Throughout this article, I will look at two groups. The first group consists of the atheists, of persons who stated that they did not belong to a church or religious group. The second group consists of all the persons in the survey who stated that they belonged to a church or religious group. The individuals in this group are called theists throughout this piece.

Atheism, Left, and Right

According to my first thesis, atheists should be more to the political left than theists. In the 1998 sur-

vey, atheists positioned themselves on an average 4.67 point on the left-right-scale between 1 (far left) and 10 (far right). The mean for the theists on the other hand was 5.10. Clearly, theists are more to the right than atheists. This correlation also exists if one calculates a regression model with the left-right self-placement as the dependent and atheism as the independent variable (0 = theists, 1 = atheists) (see Table 1).

Table 1
Left-Right Self-Placement and Atheism: Regression Model

<u>Variable</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>Beta</u>	
Constant	5.096		R ² adj. = 0.01
ATHEISM	-0.425	-0.077**	n = 2721

Source: Schweizer Arbeitsmarktsurvey 1998.

Remarks: ATHEISM: 1 = atheist, 0 = theist;
LEFT-RIGHT SELF-PLACEMENT: 1 (far left) to 10 (far right). Statistical significance: ** < 0.01.

But does the relation also hold if other independent variables are taken into consideration? The second regression model with three control variables (age, income, political interest) underlines the relevance of atheism in explaining left-right self-placement (see Table 2). According to the Beta coefficients, income and age have a slightly more substantial impact on left-right self-placement than atheism. Richer, older and politically less interested individuals tend to be more to the political right than younger

and politically more interested persons with less income. But the independent variable atheism is still highly significant, too. Atheists are, even if we control for age, political interest and income, approximately 0.5 points more to the left than theists ($B = -0.478$). Therefore, we can safely argue that atheists tend to be more to the political left than theists.

Table 2
Left-Right Self-Placement and Atheism: Regression Model with Control Variables

Variable	B	Beta	
Constant	3.855		
ATHEISM	-0.478	-0.087**	
AGE	0.013	0.097**	
INTEREST	-0.126	-0.068**	$R^2 \text{ adj.} = 0.03$
INCOME	0.000	0.112**	$n = 2211$

Source: Schweizer Arbeitsmarktsurvey 1998.

Remarks: ATHEISM: 1 = atheist, 0 = theist; AGE: years; INTEREST: 4 = politically very interested, 3 = politically interested, 2 = politically not interested, 1 = politically not at all interested; INCOME: CHF per months net income; LEFT-RIGHT SELF-PLACEMENT: 1 (far left) to 10 (far right). Statistical significance: **<0.01.

Not surprisingly, more atheists than theists with an attachment to a political party feel close to the Social Democrats (57%, $n = 131$ vs. 34%, $n = 1051$), too. This finding furthermore emphasizes the tendency of atheists to the political left.

Atheism, Political Interest, and the Trust in Institutions

In regard to political interest, I expected atheists to be slightly more interested than theists. The data underscores this thesis. The correlation between political interest and atheism is positive and statistically highly significant. Second, the same result emerges if one asks how often an individual talks about politics with colleagues or friends. Atheists discuss politics more often than theists.

Moreover, I have looked at trust of atheists and theists in key institutions (see Table 3). The results are remarkable and underline the thesis mentioned above. Persons who belong to a church or a religious group are significantly more likely to have trust in almost all institutions than atheists. The difference between the two groups is particularly large in regard to trust in the church, the military, the police, and the banks. It is still considerable in regard to the national, cantonal, and communal government, justice and law, and the United Nations. In fact, only one institution is trustworthier for atheists than for theists, namely the environmental movement.

Table 3
Atheists vs. Theists: Trust in Institutions

Institution	Atheists	Pearson's r
Church	Less trust	-0.329**
Military	Less trust	-0.166**
Justice / Law	Less trust	-0.070**

Police	Less trust	-0.128**
Media	No difference	0.020
Television	No difference	-0.034
National Government	Less trust	-0.093**
Cantonal Government	Less trust	-0.097**
Community Government	Less trust	-0.102**
Parliament	Slightly less trust	-0.050*
Political Parties	Less trust	-0.061**
Large Enterprises	No difference	-0.041
Banks	Less trust	-0.102**
Labor Unions	No difference	-0.016
Environmental Movement	Slightly more trust	0.053*
Women's Movement	No difference	0.013
European Union	No difference	0.007
United Nations	No difference	-0.040

Source: Schweizer Arbeitsmarktsurvey 1998.

Remarks: n is between 2144 and 2443. TRUST: 4 = much trust, 3 = trust, 2 = little trust, 1 = no trust. Statistical significance: **<0.01, *<0.05.

On the other hand, it is quite surprising – at least at the first glance – to see that atheists have a much more developed non-institutionalized action repertoire than theists. We are clearly able to empirically underline the thesis that “those who are politically less trusting [...] engage more in legal [and illegal] direct action tactics” (Kaase 1999: 18). Atheists are significantly more ready to write letters to the authorities, to participate in demonstrations, to spray (political) slogans on walls, to participate in strikes, to damage property and to disobey police officers than theists (see Table 4).

Table 4

Atheists vs. Theists: Non-institutionalized Action

Action	Atheists	Pearson's r
Write letters to authorities	More ready to write	0.057**
Participate in a demonstration	More ready to participate	0.134**
Spray slogans on walls	More ready to spray	0.132**
Participate in a strike	More ready to participate	0.131**
Damage property	More ready to damage property	0.116**
Disobey police officers	More ready to disobey	0.089**

Source: Schweizer Arbeitsmarktsurvey 1998.

Remarks: n is between 2307 and 2468. Statistical significance: **<0.01.

Conclusion

Of course, this study is only a first, small step towards a more profound understanding of the political attitudes of atheists, the differences between atheists and theists in regard to politics, and the possible repercussions of these differences on the political system as a whole.

I started this article with the thesis that attitudes emerge “from established, group-specific structures” (Bergman 1998: 86). The systematic comparison of the political attitudes of two groups, namely of atheists and of theists, indeed showed surprising differences in the attitudinal structures. Atheists are more to the political left than theists, they have a higher de-

gree of interest in politics, but less trust in established institutions.

First, we have to keep in mind that the group of atheists is growing rapidly. In Switzerland, more than 10 per cent of the population are atheists. In other Western countries, the respective percentage is even higher.³ At same time, trust in almost all political and societal institutions is decreasing (Brunner et Sgier 1997; Putnam 1995), and “interpersonal and institutional attachments are becoming more fluid” (Dalton et al. 1984: 6). It is certainly too early to speak about a full-fledged crisis of institutions (Freitag 2001). It is, however, disturbing to see that especially atheists are poorly integrated into the long-established institutional fabric of society. It will be necessary to include this group and to translate the evident interest of atheists in politics into a positive force for the institutional “re-awakening” of Western nations.

Second, I strongly plead for a more systematic integration of the religious cleavage (atheism vs. theism) into political science and sociological analyses. The four “classical” social cleavages – center/periphery, church/state, rural/urban, class – presented “in one of the most cogent and influential accounts of the development of modern Western European politics” (Gallagher et al. 1992: 89) by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) are still important today (Geissbühler 2001). Empirical analyses have shown that there is no or certainly not a profound “decline of cleavage politics” (Franklin 1992). It is therefore puzzling to observe that the religious cleavage has not been included in

many newer studies of political attitudes. Without a doubt, the confessional cleavage, the differences between Protestants and Catholics, has lost much of its traditional importance. However, the differences between theists and atheists are, as this study has demonstrated, still important.

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Notes

1 Cf. *Le Monde* (24. 7. 2002): 2.

2 The confessional cleavage has, however, not completely vanished. Apart from the studies mentioned above, I would particularly like to point to a stimulating article by Geser (1997) on the persistence of confessional political cultures in Switzerland.

3 *Le Monde* (24. 7. 2002): 2.



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Primul concept de ideologie elaborat de Marx – între *praxis* si religie

Ideology is an extremely comprehensive, yet ambiguous concept. Several aspects of the ideological thought are made obvious through discussing Marx's first view on ideology, which is the one elaborated in *The German Ideology*. Here, ideology is understood as an imaginary construction that can be suggestively described as a distorted image in *camera obscura*. Despite the objectivity and scientificity claimed by Marx's vision (and especially by the subsequent Marxism-Leninism), various interpretative perspectives brought into discussion argue that, in order to gain in persuasion and to mobilize masses conscience, Marxist discourse uses, in its very heart, mythological and imaginary structures. In this way, Marxist discourse is proved to be much more closer to the fictional discourse and to the forms of religiosity, than to the science, in spite of Marx's belief that the critique of religion is the model of any other critique.

Majoritatea teoreticienilor subliniaza caracterul ambiguu al termenului ideologie. Ambiguitatea este adesea insotita de caracterul peiorativ pe care termenul il capata indeosebi o data cu epoca gindirii occidentale ce incearca sa se aseze sub semnul sfirsitului ideologiilor.

Asa se poate explica si rezerva pe care majoritatea ideologilor o au in a desemna propriul lor sistem ca fiind o ideologie. Exista un fel de mecanism intern de autoaparare care se manifesta sub forma unei naivitati metodologice care ii determina pe teoreticieni sa se lase ispititi de o tentatie, pe care McLellan o gaseste a fi una extrem de raspindita, aceea de a califica drept

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ideologie doar perspectiva celuilalt, in raport cu care viziunea proprie se constituie ca un punct de referinta al obiectivitatii ce permite o decelare corecta a caracteristicilor si a mecanismelor gindirii ideologice¹.

Dificultatea de a propune o definitie operationala, cu cea mai larga posibilitate de acoperire a cimpului ideologiilor, poate fi sesizata relevind marea varietate de intelesuri pe care termenul le exprima. Terry Eagleton ne ofera urmatoarea lista de definitii prin care este exprimata in mod curent semnificatia termenului ideologie: “ a) Procesul de producere a semnificatiilor, semnelor si valorilor in viata sociala; b) un corpus de idei caracteristice pentru un anumit grup social sau clasa sociala; c) idei care contribuie la legitimarea unei puteri politice dominante; d) idei false care contribuie la legitimarea unei puteri politice dominante; e) comunicare distorsionata sistematic; f) acel ceva care ofera o pozitie pentru un subiect; g) forme ale gindirii motivate de interese sociale; h) gindirea identitatii; i) iluzia sociala necesara; j) conjunctura discursului si a puterii; k) mediul in care actorii sociali constienti dau sens propriei lumi; l) set de convingeri orientate spre actiune; m) confuzia dintre realitatea lingvistica si cea fenomenala; n) inchidere semiotica; o) mediul indispensabil in care indivizii isi manifesta relatiile cu structura sociala; p) procesul prin care viata sociala este convertita intr-o realitate naturala”².

In incercarea de sistematizare a pluralitatii intelesurilor pe care ideologia le ofera, David McLellan contureaza doua traditii principale ale dezvoltarii

termenului ideologie. O prima traditie este cea care se origineaza in iluminismul francez si este nuantata in mod semnificativ de empirismul anglo-saxon. Ea propune o viziune consensualista asupra societatii si o abordare contemplativa a adevarului. Incercind sa se opuna rezistentei la modernizare pe care o cultiva traditia gindirii religioase, gindirea iluminismului francez declanseaza un conflict deschis si asiduu, intre maniera teologica de legitimare si semnificare a vietii sociale si modul rational de reinterpretare si reintemeiere a acestor realitati in perspectiva ideologiei ca noua stiinta a ideilor. In discutii privind ideologia ca stiinta putem remarca efortul de a pune in evidenta un concept de stiinta in lumina caruia ideologia este un model naturalist de stiinta, care realizeaza o demistificare a realitatii sociale in aceeasi maniera in care stiinta exploreaza lumea naturala. Caracterul stiintific pare insa, sa paleasca destul de devreme in favoarea semnificatiei peiorative a ideologiei prin amprenta negativa pe care i-o imprima utilizarea polemica a termenului “ideologie” de catre Napoleon³, iar apoi de catre Marx si de catre alti ginditori. O alta traditie izvoraste din mediile intelectuale germane si are tendinta de a evidentia starile conflictuale ce caracterizeaza schimbarea sociala si de a considera ca in interpretarea socialului este in mai mare masura adecvata o perspectiva coerentista asupra adevarului⁴.

O contributie esentiala la consacrarea discursului asupra ideologiei o are gindirea marxista. Marx poate fi chestionat din perspectiva ambelor traditii mai sus mentionate. In rindurile de fata ne vom opri doar

asupra perspectivei marxiste care asociază ideologia cu lumea reprezentărilor, a imaginarului, a relațiilor răsturnate în raport cu realitatea. Perspectiva propusă în *Ideologia germană* este inspirată de critica feuerbachiană a religiei. Marx afirmă o poziție particulară în înțelegerea filosofiei și a modului filosofic de abordare a vieții reale și a religiei.

Ideologia germană constată că toată critica filosofică germană se mărginește la critica reprezentărilor religioase. Ea propunea dominația religiei ca ceva dat. Toate relațiile erau considerate ca fiind de tip religios și erau treptat transformate într-un cult, astfel încât “peste tot aveai de a face numai cu dogme și cu credința în dogme. Lumea a fost canonizată pe o scară tot mai mare”⁵. Conștiința era prin excelență una teologică sau religioasă și omul declarat ca fiind religios. Întreaga activitate umană, cu încorsetările și demersurile ei apărea în această perspectivă drept un produs al conștiinței. Potrivit lucrării sus amintite, necesitatea de a depăși constrîngerile aduse de reprezentările, ideile, noțiunile care le guvernează existența, îi determină pe oameni să depășească printr-o conștiință critică starea de conștiință din care acestea deriva. Schimbarea de conștiință ar coincide în acest caz cu o schimbare de interpretare a existenței. Marx le reproșează ideologilor tineri hegelieni că se rezumă doar la o critică a ideilor și că nu și-au pus problema unei legături între filosofia germană și realitatea germană, între critica lor și condițiile vieții materiale. Marx propune o nouă perspectivă care să aibă drept punct de plecare indivizii reali, activitatea lor

și condițiile lor materiale de viață, premise constatabile pe cale pur empirică. Marx susține că are în vedere indivizii reali, care acționează și produc bunuri materiale, nu indivizii așa “cum ar putea ei apărea în propria lor imaginație sau în imaginația altora”. Identitatea acestor indivizii umani reali coincide “cu producția lor, atât cu ce produc cât și cu felul cum produc. Deci ceea ce sînt indivizii depinde de condițiile materiale ale producției lor”⁶. Modul în care indivizii realizează producția este considerat a fi determinant nu numai în ceea ce privește înțelegerea a ceea ce ei sînt, ci și pentru relațiile sociale și politice. De aceea se considera necesar ca observația empirică să pună în evidență modul în care se relatează structura socială și politică cu producția. Apare astfel o strînsă dependență între reprezentările și ideile prezente într-o anumită epocă și activitatea materială care “constituie limbajul vieții reale”. Producția materială se reflectă în limbajul politicii, legilor, moralei, religiei, metafizicii, ș.a. Pentru Marx “Conștiința nu poate fi niciodată altceva decît existența conștiinței, iar existența oamenilor este procesul real al vieții lor”⁷.

În ciuda mereu invocatei realități și a dimensiunii transformatoare a *praxis*-ului, în fapt, Marx nu face altceva decît să înlocuiască o viziune idealistă asupra omului cu o construcție fantastică asupra omului, demnă de a fi asociată cu pagini de eshatologie biblică ce situează viața eternă a omului într-un paradis pămîntesc. Este sugestiv în acest sens modul în care Marx considera că starea de instrainare și de subjugare a omului presupusă de diviziunea muncii va fi

suprimata o data cu noile modalitati de relationare a productiei cu structura sociala. Iata mediul fictional in care se afirma “omul real” al lui Marx: “in societatea comunista, in care nimeni nu are un cerc exclusiv de activitate, ci se poate perfectiona in orice ramura ar dori, societatea reglementeaza productia generala si tocmai prin aceasta imi da posibilitatea sa fac azi un lucru si miine altul, sa vinez de dimineata, sa pescuiesc dupa-amiaza, sa ma ocup cu cresterea vitelor seara si cu critica dupa cina, dupa cum am pofta, fara sa devin vreodata vinator, pescar, pastor sau criric”⁸.

Pretentia lui Marx de a institui noi raporturi intre idei si lucruri, intre constiinta si realitate, se bazeaza pe credinta intr-un nou mod de a concepe filosofia. Pentru Marx, filosofile poarta amprenta epocii in care ele sint formulate. Tocmai de aceea, filosofia apare drept “intelepciunea lumii acesteia”, “filosofia lumii actuale”, “chintesenta spirituala a epocii ei”⁹. Caracteristic pentru modul marxist de intelegere a filosofiei este credinta lui Marx exprimata in *Articol de fond din nr. 179 al lui “Kolnische Zeitung”*: “Acelasi spirit care construieste sistemele filosofice in creierul filosofilor construieste caile ferate cu miinile muncitorilor”¹⁰.

Filosofia marxista se delimiteaza polemic de gindirea religioasa a epocii printr-o semnificativa suita de opozitii in privinta modului propriu filosofiei de a se raporta la problemele filosofice si la cele religioase: “voi va pronuntati asupra lor fara sa le fi studiat, ea se pronunta dupa ce le-a studiat; voi proferati injurii, ea povatuieste; voi promiteti cerul si pamintul, ea nu

promite decit adevarul; voi cereti cititorilor sa creada in credinta voastra, ea nu le cere sa creada in concluziile ei, ci le cere ca indoielile sa fie supuse cercetarii; voi inspaimintati, ea linisteste”¹¹.

Pentru a pune in evidenta noua modalitate critica adusa de filosofia sa, Marx porneste si el de la ideea ca premisa oricarei critici este critica religiei. Fundamentul criticii religiei il constituie faptul ca “omul creeaza religia, nu religia il creeaza pe om”¹². Marx denunta realitatea fantastica a cerului, aratind, pe urmele lui Feuerbach, ca religia nu este decit o extrapolare in ceruri a realitatilor umane, ca lumea cerului nu este altceva decit imaginea reflectata a lumii omului. Astfel, religia ar propune o conceptie rasturnata despre lume, ar propune o lume iluzorie care naste continuu nevoia de iluzii. Critica marxista a religiei doreste sa il elibereze pe om de iluzii, sa il orienteze spre actiunea creatoare a vietii lui reale. In acest proces, sarcina filosofiei este aceea ca dupa ce a inlaturat forma de instrainare adusa de religie, sa demaste formele profane ale instrainarii. “Critica cerului se transforma astfel in critica pamintului, critica religiei in critica dreptului, critica teologiei in critica politicii”¹³. Critica religiei se incheie cu o rasturnare a relatiilor stabilite de filosofia post-hegeliana, ceea ce are drept rezultat “invatatura ca omul este fiinta suprema pentru om”¹⁴.

Avind ca premisa ideea ca religia este forma ideologica prin excelenta, Marx – intr-un mod reductionist si agresiv – aplica metoda]criticii religiei la analiza ideologiei, in speta a ideologiei germane. El constata ca ideologii isi reprezinta oamenii si relatiile

lor “cu capul in jos, ca intr-o *camera obscura*”¹⁵. Ei sint interesati doar de oamenii ginditi, reprezentati, imaginati, de oamenii asa cum se inchipuie ei insisi in discurs. Avind in vedere ca unul dintre cele trei sensuri ale ideologiei puse in evidenta de Ricoeur este cel al ideologiei ca distorsiune-disimulare, Ricoeur considera cu totul remarcabil faptul ca Marx incearca sa explice ideologia folosindu-se de metafora camerei obscure. Pornind de la interpretarea religiei ca distorsiune-disimulare a realitatii, pe care o considera modelul exemplar al mecanismelor ideologice insesi, el extinde acest principiu pentru a evidentia existenta unei dualitati: existenta unei vietii reale a oamenilor si oglindirea acestei realitati in imaginatia lor. Aceasta lume a reprezentarilor este ideologia. “Ideologia devine astfel procedeul general prin care procesul vietii reale, *praxis*-ul, este falsificat de reprezentarea imaginara pe care oamenii si-o fac despre el”¹⁶. Ricoeur constata ca nici Marx nu se poate sustrage functiei imaginative, intrinseca fiintei umane.

In opozitie cu modul ideologic de gindire, Marx si Engels isi propun sa ajunga la oamenii reali, dincolo de “plasmuirile nebuloase ale creierului oamenilor”. Morala, religia, metafizica, sint considerate forme ideologice care isi pierd aparenta de independenta de indata ce sesizam ca gindirea si produsele gindirii se dezvoltă in pas cu dezvoltarea productiei si a relatiilor de productie. *Ideologia germana* incearca scoaterea omului din “izolare si imobilitate imaginara”, incercind sa argumenteze ca “Nu constiinta determina viata, ci viata determina constiinta”¹⁷.

O asemenea sentinta ramine la nivelul cartii amintite o simpla sentinta sapientiala, chiar daca ea va fi dezvoltata in lucrari ulterioare. Era necesar ca ea sa fie formulata in acest context deoarece se considera ca ideologii, pornind dinspre ideile privind lucrurile in intelegerea lucrurilor insesi, nu fac altceva decit sa confere gindirii rolul pe care imaginatia il ocupa in mitologie. Marx considera ca depasirea stadiului imaginativ mitologic poate fi realizata doar prin luarea ca baza a producerii oricarei teorii “producerea vietii materiale insasi”. Incercind sa se elibereze de orice constiinta imaginativa prealabila, el propune o perspectiva critica a tuturor formelor de idealism. Aceasta critica se doreste a fi o conceptie care “ramine mereu pe *terenul* real al istoriei, nu explica practica prin idee, ci explica formarea ideilor prin practica materiala si, in consecinta, ajunge la rezultatul ca nici una din formele si produsele constiintei nu pot fi nimicite prin critica spirituala, prin dizolvare in “constiinta de sine” sau transformare in “strigoi”, “fantome”, “ticneli” etc., ci numai prin rasturnarea practica a relatiilor sociale reale din care au izvorit aceste aiureli idealiste, ca nu critica, ci revolutia este forta motrice a istoriei, ca si a religiei, a filosofiei si a oricarei teorii”¹⁸. Revendicarea de a aduce filosofia sociala cu picioarele pe pamint constituie elementul forte al constituirii noii filosofii propusa de Marx si modalitatea de raportare la filosofii idealiste, la formele de gindire ideologica, ce construiesc o viziune rasturnata a vietii reale.

Marx considera ca utilizind metoda ideologica, filosofii muta procesul istoric real pe tarimul ideologiei, fabricind in mod arbitrar legaturi fantastice intre idei, rupindu-le astfel de viata reala¹⁹. Refuzind orice conotatie mistica a procesului istoric real, Marx considera ca “Orice viata sociala este in esenta *practica*. Toate misterele care duc teoria spre misticism isi gasesc dezlegarea rationala in activitatea practica omeneasca si in intelegerea acestei practici”²⁰. Relatia dintre teorie si practica, dintre adevarul obiectiv si explorarea si transformarea lumii reale poate fi sesizata si in cea de-a doua teza despre Feuerbach, in care se subliniaza faptul ca adevarul obiectiv nu este o problema teoretica, ci una de natura practica si ca metoda de verificare a adevarului nu este una care se reduce la punerea in miscare a mecanismelor gindirii, ci presupune verificarea in activitatea practica. Dimensiunea transformatoare, revolutionara a filosofiei intemeiata pe criteriile impuse de practica productiva poate fi sesizata cel mai bine in cea de-a 11 teza despre Feuerbach: “Filosofii n-au facut decit sa interpreteze lumea in moduri diferite, este vorba insa de a o schimba”²¹.

Filosofia marxista se revendica a fi nu numai o filosofie materialista si practica, ci si o filosofie proletara, dupa cum reiese din afirmatia reductionista a lui Marx din *Contributii la critica filosofiei hegeliene a dreptului*: “Dupa cum filosofia isi gaseste armele ei materiale in proletariat, tot astfel proletariatul isi gaseste armele lui spirituale in filosofie”²². Astfel, materialismul istoric formulat de *Ideologia germana* este o

filosofie ce reflecta constiinta de clasa a clasei proletare. Datorita faptului ca lupta de clasa joaca un rol insemnat in gindirea marxista, caracterul de clasa este imprimat si viziunii ideologice.

Marx considera ca ideile dominante ale unei epoci sint ideile clasei dominante, astfel incit nu se poate face separatie intre ideile dominante si purtatorii acestor idei. In opozitie cu tezele idealismului de inspiratie hegeliiana, Marx neaga toate cele trei artificii prin care el considera ca se argumenteaza suprematia spiritului in istorie: 1) neaga viziunea potrivit careia ca ideile dominate trebuie despartite de indivizii care domina intr-o anumita epoca, deoarece aceasta viziune crediteaza faptul ca ideile sau iluziile domina procesul istoric; 2) ideile dominante nu sint supuse unei succesiuni de natura mistica, nu sint “autodeterminari ale notiunii”, nu sint doar autodiferentieri, distinctii facute de gindire; 3) ginditorii, filosofii, ideologii nu sint “fabricanti ai istoriei” care intrupeaza constiinta de sine personalizata in reprezentanti ai “notiunii” in istorie²³. Necesitatea deducerii proceselor reale din gindire, necesitatea de a ajunge de la gindire la viata poate fi justificata – in viziunea materialismului istoric – doar de iluzia filosofilor, doar de constiinta filosofica, care nu poate sesiza originea acestei separari de viata a unei filosofii aflata in cautarea unui cuvint misterios, a unei “notiuni” care sa joace in structura ideatica si lingvistica un rol similar celui pe care “in fantezia crestina il joaca dumnezeul-om-mintuitor-printre oameni”²⁴. Analizele privind limbajul mitologic si

elementele de imaginar religios prezente în discursul revendicat drept materialist al marxismului, au evidențiat faptul că locul acestei “noțiuni”, căutată de către idealisti, a fost luat, în textele lui Marx și apoi ale marxism-leninismului, de o imagine ideală a unei clase muncitoare ce-și poartă lupta și destinul mesianic prin istorie²⁵.

O altă teză importantă a clasicilor marxismului arată că schimbările istorice presupun apariția unei clase revoluționare care să susțină idei revoluționare. În acest sens poate fi invocată o altă funcție a ideologiei pusă în evidență de Ricoeur: a ideologiei ca legitimare, ca justificare. În procesul de dominare se naște un proces justificativ prin apelul la un set de norme și reguli, ca și la un simbolism social care fundamentează o retorică a discursului public. Recurgând la noțiuni capabile să devină universale, discursul public conexat cu acțiunea devine ideologie în momentul în care este pus în slujba legitimării autorității²⁶. Ricoeur consideră că toate sistemele de autoritate atrag după ele cerința de legitimare. De obicei, pretențiile de legitimitate ale sistemelor de putere depășesc limitele a ceea ce se poate oferi ca simplu act de credință, a ceea ce apare ca fiind legitimitate naturală. Aceasta implică o persuasiune mereu crescândă a discursului legitimator.

Pentru a eficientiza această persuasiune, interesele unei clase care ajunge să fie dominantă sunt exprimate întotdeauna ca interesele societății în general. Pentru a-și atinge obiectivele, clasa dominantă trebuie “să dea ideilor ei formă generalității, să le infatiseze ca singurele rationale, general valabile”²⁷. Mai mult decât atât, ea

trebuie să le integreze unei tradiții. Se releva aici cea de a treia funcție a ideologiei analizată de Ricoeur: funcția de integrare a fenomenului ideologic. Ricoeur are în vedere faptul că autoritatea unui sistem se naște din sisteme de autoritate anterioare. Ea se integrează unei tradiții prin care păstrează legătura cu evenimentul întemeietor. Cel mai bine se poate vedea acest lucru în locul important pe care îl ocupă ceremoniile pe care o comunitate le reactualizează în legătura cu evenimente pe care le consideră întemeietoare pentru propria identitate. “Funcția ideologiei este atunci aceea de a servi drept legătura pentru memoria colectivă, pentru că valoarea inaugurală a evenimentelor fondatoare să devină obiectul credinței întregului grup”²⁸.

Nevoia de întemeiere a discursului este evidentă în încercarea autorilor lucrării *Ideologia germană* de a invoca justificator istoria ca și cum aceasta ar fi urmărit prin întreaga ei desfășurare să valideze teoriile și practicile marxismului. Funcția fondatoare a ideologiei va crește în importanță o dată cu cistigarea puterii politice de către clasa muncitoare și instaurarea regimurilor totalitare. Ritualizarea evenimentelor publice și construcția mitologică a biografiilor personalităților, ca și a istoriei partidului sau a celei naționale, uzează de formule ale imaginărilor ce tind să aibă o cuprindere cosmică, în ciuda criticii pe care o formulează Marx la adresa intervenției elementului imaginativ în explicarea socială.

O critică a imaginărilor însoțită de încercarea de eliminare a acestuia din analiza științifică a faptelor sociale întâlnim și la Durkheim, considerat alături de

Weber și Marx printre părinții întemeietori ai sociologiei. Cu toate că imaginarul capătă o dimensiune mult mai pozitivă decât în viziunea lui Marx, și în acest caz imaginarul este asociat ideologiei.

Durkheim sesizează faptul că există situații în care, în momentul când un nou fenomen devine obiect al științei, acesta există deja în sfera reprezentării, atât în forma imaginii cit și prin diverse concepte. Adesea, știința încearcă organizarea metodologică a acestui cimp al reflexiei. Durkheim este conștient de faptul că omul nu poate trăi fără a-și formula idei despre realitatea care îl înconjoară. Problema apare, pentru el, atunci când omul tinde să acorde o mai mare importanță ideilor despre lucruri decât lucrurilor ca atare și face din aceste idei chiar obiectul științei, transformând faptele doar într-un mijloc de a proba ideile noastre despre ele. Adică prenoțiunile pe care le formulăm în legătură cu lucrurile devin substitute legitime ale lucrurilor. O dată ce ideile își găsesc suportul în realitatea lucrurilor, ele devin “ca un val care se așază între lucruri și noi și care ni le ascunde cu atât mai bine cu cât îl socotim mai transparent”²⁹. Exigența durkheimiană este formulată în cea dintâi regulă a metodei care spune că este necesar “a considera faptele sociale ca lucruri”³⁰. A pleca de la idei spre lucruri înseamnă a face o analiză ideologică. Ea înlocuiește știința realităților, careia îi revine de a pleca dinspre lucruri înspre idei. Analiza ideologică se bazează pe faptul că omul și-a formulat o serie de prenoțiuni în legătură cu lucrurile din sfera socială, astfel încât acestea par un produs al activității

omenestă. Ele par a fi produse de punerea în practică a ideilor despre aceste lucruri, par a fi o simplă aplicare a ideilor la diverse fapte ce însoțesc relațiile umane. Aceste fapte par a-și dobândi realitatea doar prin “ideile care sunt germele lor”³¹.

Durkheim sesizează prezenta unor prenoțiuni sau “noțiuni vulgare” nu numai la fundamentul științei, ci și în structura raționamentelor: “În starea actuală a cunoștințelor noastre, nu știm sigur ce este statul, suveranitatea, libertatea politică, democrația, socialismul, comunismul etc; metoda ar cere deci să ne abținem de la orice întrebuintare a acestor concepte, atât timp cât nu sunt elaborate în mod științific. Și, cu toate acestea, cuvintele care le exprimă revin fără încetare în discuțiile sociologilor. Le întrebam curent și cu siguranță că și cum ar corespunde unor lucruri bine cunoscute și definite, deși ele nu trezesc în noi decât noțiuni nelămurite, amestecuri indistincte de impresii vagi, de prejudecăți și de pasiuni. Ridem astăzi de ciudățele raționamente pe care medicii din Evul mediu le construiau cu noțiunile de cald, de frig, de umed, de uscat etc., și nu ne dăm seama că aplicăm aceeași metoda la ordinea de fenomene care o permit mai puțin decât oricare alta, din cauza complexității sale extreme”³².

În primul corolar, Durkheim arată că trebuie să ne eliberăm de toate prenoțiunile pentru a depăși modul ideologic al analizei sociale și pentru a întemeia științific cercetarea socială. Durkheim atrage atenția asupra faptului că renunțarea la conceptele consacrate ideologic este dificil de realizat, deoarece în cercetările

societalului, alaturi de structurile imaginarului, intervine, adesea, si sentimentul. Omul pune mai multa pasiune in faptele morale si politice decit in cele referitoare la lumea fizica, iar felul pasional in care se ataseaza de aceste idei se comunica si modului in care acestea sint explicate.

Potrivit autorului *Regulilor metodei sociologice*, pentru a se ajunge la obiectivitate, fenomenele trebuie judecate in functie de proprietatile lor inerente, nu prin prisma unei notiuni ideale, nici in functie de o idee a spiritului. Cu atit mai putin poate fi luata in considerare vreo doctrina mistica ce cere ca sentimentul sa fie criteriu al adevarului stiintific. A accepta ca sentimentele apartin stiintei inseamna, pentru Durkheim, “a da facultatilor inferioare ale inteligentei stapinire asupra celor mai inalte”³³.

Critica elementului imaginativ in cercetarea sociala are in vedere, in primul rind, relevarea nevoii de obiectivitate in stiintele sociale. Ea este cea care ne asigura ca, in constructiile noastre privitoare la realitate, surprindem fenomenul vietii reale si nu constructe ideale proiectate asupra unor fapte sociale care sint constrinse sa se adapteze modelului explicativ. Materialismul dialectic si istoric se dorea si el o stiinta revolutionara despre lume si viata. Materialismul istoric era, la rindul, sau minat de dorinta de a restabili raporturile concrete, adecvate intre lucruri si idei, intre oamenii reali si reprezentarile asupra lor, intre viata reala si iluziile filosofilor. De aici deriva intreaga critica a practicii rasturnate a idealismului si pretentia (care ulterior s-a dovedit

neputincioasa, nejustificata) de a elimina din explicarea societalului toate “prenotiunile”, “ideile preconceptione” si imaginile preconceptione ale oamenilor despre ei insisi.

Avind in vedere aceasta pretentie la stiintificitate putem sa ne intrebam daca Marx ar fi fost de acord cu etichetarea filosofiei sale drept ideologie. Nu exista indoiala ca, avind un caracter de clasa, ideologiile puteau fi formulate de oricare dintre clasele sociale, inclusiv de catre cea a proletariatului. Astfel, privind retrospectiv – prin prisma practicii sociale si a reconstructiei imaginative realizate de traditia marxista –, putem spune ca, desi se doreste o stiinta, “filosofia proletara” este la rindul sau o ideologie. De altfel, raporturile dintre stiinta si ideologie au fost destul de mult nuanate de Marx in scrieri ulterioare cum ar fi *Contributii la critica economiei politice* si *Capitalul*. Imprimarea unei dimensiuni ideologice si consacrarea marxismului ca ideologie se datoreaza dezvoltarilor ulterioare, in special celor realizate de Lenin, cele cunoscute drept “devierea stalinista” si, desigur, de catre gindirea din sistemele totalitare in care traditia marxist-leninista s-a impus³⁴.

O critica a pretentiilor de stiintificitate a ideologiilor este realizata de catre Hannah Arendt. Ea constata ca ideologiile formuleaza o dubla pretentie la stiintificitate. Ele se considera a fi o filosofie stiintifica si o practica stiintifica. Ideologiile, promovate de sistemele totalitare, devin un substitut al unui ghid de actiune de care conducerea totalitara are nevoie pentru a trasa principiile de comportament ce dau indivizilor o dubla calitate: fiecare devine, deopotriva, victima si

calau. Prin urmare, autoarea considera ca este greu sa creditam pretentiile de stiintificitate ale ideologiilor. Prezenta sufixului “logie” nu indica o identitate a demersurilor acesteia cu demersurile propuse de stiinta. Cultivarea unei asemenea identitati ar putea cel mult sa transforme ideologia intr-o pseudo-stiinta.³⁵ Hannah Arendt ne propune sa intelegem ideologia pornind de la sensul literal al termenului, care indica faptul ca “este logica unei idei”. Avind ca subiect de studiu istoria, ideologia, pe langa un sistem explicativ, propune cu prioritate un sistem de actiune, bazat pe o procesualitate a carei legitate decurge din “expunerea logica a ‘ideii’ sale”. In virtutea acestei legitati, ideologia este interesata de realitatea ca atare, in devenirea ei ce implica dezvoltarea si criza, armonia si conflictul. Incercind sa depaseasca orice preocupare care sa aiba in vedere misterele existentei, ideologia explica intreaga miscare istorica drept un proces coerent unitar, astfel incit “istoria nu apare in lumina unei idei... ci drept ceva ce poate fi calculat prin ea. Ceea ce face ca o ‘idee’ sa se conformeze acestui nou rol este propria sa ‘logica’, adica o miscare ce este consecinta ‘ideii’ insasi si care nu are nevoie de nici un factor exterior pentru a o pune in miscare”³⁶.

Arendt ne atrage atentia asupra faptului ca ideologiile incearca sa explice intreaga complexitate a realitatii, pina la cel mai mic eveniment, deducind-o dintr-o singura premisa logica a sistemului. Intelegerea miscarii istorice presupune transformarea unei singure idei in premisa unui proces de deductie logica. Este evident ca aici nu utilitatea analizei sau deductiei logice

este pusa in discutie de autoare, ci dogmatizarea proceselor logice. Arendt isi exprima rezerva fata de inchiderea in ele inele a mecanismelor logicii, proces in care logica, in loc sa fie vazuta ca un control necesar al gindirii, este transformata intr-o miscare a gindirii caracterizata “de evidenta strict interna a logicii, de la care nu exista nici o abatere”³⁷. Procedind astfel, “ideologiile admit totdeauna postulatul ca o singura idee e suficienta pentru a explica totul in dezvoltare plecind de la o premisa, si ca nici o experienta nu poate invata nimic pentru ca totul este cuprins in aceasta progresie coerenta a deductiei logice. Primejdia de a schimba nesiguranta necesara a gindirii filosofice pe o explicatie totala, asa cum ofera ideologia si *Weltanschauung*-ul ei, nu este atit riscul de a cadea in asertiuni vulgare si intotdeauna necritice, cit acela de a schimba libertatea inerenta capacitatii umane de a gindi pe camasa de forta a logicii cu care omul se poate constringe aproape tot asa de violent pe cit este de constrins de vreo putere exterioara”³⁸.

In viziunea Hannei Arendt, natura reala a ideologiilor a fost dezvaluita doar prin rolul pe care aceasta il joaca in dominatia totalitara. In aceasta perspectiva exista “trei elemente specific totalitare” ce caracterizeaza orice gindire ideologica: 1) Ideologiile exprima pretentia de a oferi o cunoastere totalizatoare asupra trecutului, prezentului si viitorului. In aceasta tendinta explicativa, ideologiile par “sa nu tina seama de ceea ce este, de ceea ce se naste si moare”, fiind “preocupate exclusiv de elementul miscarii”; 2) Ideologiile se rup de existenta imediata considerind ca

exista o realitate “mai adevarata” care “reclama un al saselea simt prin care sa putem deveni constienti de ea”. Acest al saselea simt este cultivat prin “indoctrinare ideologica speciala” in institutii educationale. La H. Arendt, un element esential al educatiei ideologice si al propagandei are in vedere “sa injecteze un inteles secret in orice eveniment public si concret si sa suspecteze o intentie ascunsa in spatele oricarei actiuni politice publice”. O data cu dobandirea puterii, elementul conspirativ dobandeste un rol important in modelarea si resemnificarea realitatii sociale; 3) Fiind capabile sa transforme realitatea, ideologiile afiseaza o consistenta inexistentă in sfera realitatii, ordonand faptele intr-o structura absolut logica, deductibila din ideea asumata ca premisa axiomatica a intregului sistem. Surprinderea miscarii istorice se realizeaza ca urmare a unui proces de imitatie logica sau dialectica in care miscarea gindului se autogeneraza, iar orice experienta viitoare lasa intact procesul anterior al argumentarii logico-deductive³⁹.

Este evident ca cele trei elemente specifice ideologiei, relevate de H. Arendt, o apropiere mai degraba de mecanismele gindirii si comportamentului specifice religiei, decit de cele ale stiintei. Pretentia de a da o cunoastere totalizatoare asupra existentei ca rememorare a trecutului, reflectare a prezentului si prescriere a viitorului este una de sorginte religioasa. Sintem in fata unei tendinte de a pune in miscare un angrenaj care sa raspunda intr-o forma seculara unor necesitati care revendica o interventie a sacrului. Acestui fond de religiozitate i se datoreaza si tendinta

ideologiilor de a fi exclusiviste si de cele mai multe ori totalitare. Religiiile, si in special teologiile, sint prin chiar esenta lor dogmatica, sisteme totalitare. In ciuda invocarii tolerantei – ca o valoare dezirabila si de neinlaturat o data ce apare ca o cucerire a modernitatii – teologiilor le este constitutiva o forma de exclusivism care tine de mecanismele de aparare, de conservare a sistemelor teoretice si practice respective. Ele isi bazeaza existenta pe o explicatie totala, fara rest, a intregii existente umane si cosmice. Prin urmare, ele nu pot face concesii.

Cel de-al doilea element pus in evidenta de Arendt sugereaza faptul ca in deturnarea dinspre teologic inspre logica unei idei ramine un rest. Acesta este transformat intr-un mister confuz, prin procedeele propagandei. Acest gol – care e o dovada a prezentei religiosului si care trebuie rationalizat – este resemnificat in teorii conspirative⁴⁰ care, cel mai adesea, sint menite sa explice o parte a disfunctionalitatilor aplicarii sistemelor ideologice.

In ce priveste cel de-al treilea element, surprinderea miscarii istorice pornind de la o idee fondatoare ne conduce la prezumtia ca metoda deductiei elementelor sistemului dintr-o premisa este o forma deturnata a modelului teologic ce presupune ca un dat existenta citorva principii dogmatice minime, din care, intr-o maniera logica, decurg toate ideile si practicile unui sistem teologic. Deosebirea esentiala consta in faptul ca ideologiile deturneaza instituirea axiomatica dinspre continuturile revelationale inspre o idee fondatoare. In desfasurarea acestor mecanisme argumentative

intervine un for dogmatic care are misiunea de a veghea cu religiozitate asupra desfasurarii proceselor. In acest sens, este semnificativ un citat din Trocki oferit de H. Arendt: “Nu putem avea dreptate decit cu si prin Partid, caci Istoria nu a oferit nici un alt mod de a avea dreptate”⁴¹.

Desigur, prezenta unor elemente care apar cercetatorului ca o mostenire a unui fond religios nu transforma in mod automat ideologia intr-o religie, sau intr-o alternativa la religie. Sugestive in acest sens par a fi analizele lui Alain Besançon, care considera ideologia ca fiind mai degraba o gnoza decit un substitut de religie. Trebuie sa fim atenti la faptul ca, in mod restrictiv, aici prin religie se intelege cu precadere traditia dezvoltata de credinta biblica, excluzindu-se din planul religiosului gnoza, care, desi contine elemente obligatorii ale credintei, presupune un alt mecanism al relationarii omului cu sacralitatea. In aceasta interpretare, autoritatea gindirii ideologice nu este fundamentata pe o dogma care se constituie in contraparte sau in paralel cu dogma religioasa. Ea isi intemeiaza certitudinea prin apelul la stiinta, care o deschide spre orice spirit rational. Centrul legitimator nu pare a fi dominat de religios, ci mai degraba de nazuinta stiintifica. Autorul apeleaza la distinctia intre religie si gnoza spre a evidentia specificitatea ideologiei. Astfel, spre deosebire de religie, care este fundamentata pe credinta, gnoza are drept elemente esentiale urmatoarele: chiar daca apeleaza la un sistem de credinte, se doreste a fi rationala; presupune functionalitatea unei logici deductive a sistemului;

presupune o incredere totala in datele inerente sistemului, obtinute pe baza unei reflectii personale⁴². Besançon descopera in cazul ideologiei o structura similara cu cea a cunoasterii gnostice: “ideologia este rationala, centrala, enciclopedica. Ea comporta o morala, dedusa din doctrina si relativa la deductia planului cosmic, a carui realizare, calauzita de cunoasterea teoretica, echivaleaza cu obtinerea mintuirii”⁴³.

Cu toate acestea, dezvoltarea unei soteriologii nu este considerata a fi un element care apropie ideologia de religie. Ea este asociata nazuintei de universalitate pe care ideologia incearca sa o materializeze prin apelul la pozitivitate si la caracterul de stiinta. Ideologia nu este privita ca o alta religie, nici ca o gnoza propriu-zisa, nici ca o modalitate de semnificare mitica. Si aceasta in ciuda faptului ca putem sesiza la nivelul practicii ideologice dezvoltarea unei forme de cult si a unui comportament ritualic; cu toate ca ideologia pastreaza citeva “idei-forma” specifice religiei si cu toata complicitatea pe care o intretine cu religia. Besançon atrage atentia asupra faptului ca ideologia neaga orice inrudire cu religia, si cel mai adesea renunta la raportarea la religie in efortul de clarificare conceptuala. El considera ca, daca ideologia propune adeptilor sai o mintuire, aceasta este de un fel deosebit de cel al religiilor, este o mintuire realista care nu are in vedere raportarea la o transcendentă, nici macar la o transcendere in planul istoriei. Ea se bazeaza pe descifrarea stiintifica a ordinii cosmice si pe o practica politica ce vizeaza transformarea radicala a societatii⁴⁴.

In aceasta mintuire – care capata un sens foarte larg – realizata in planul temporalitatii, fiinta umana trebuie transfigurata prin actiunea politico-istorica, nu prin participarea la harul divin. “Mintuirea e pusa in miinile omului” astfel incit se ajunge la o “mintuire colectiva care are loc in istorie”⁴⁵.

In cazul marxismului, este vorba de o doctrina ce se revendica drept ateista si in care se realizeaza “un salt al credintei pe dos”⁴⁶. Besançon vorbește de un “biblism comunist”, aducind argumente ale unei *perversa imitatio* a iudaismului si crestinismului. Ceea ce da comunismului caracterul seducator par sa fie tocmai elementele de imaginar religios pe care acesta le contine printr-o valorificare a unor traditii eretice ale religiozitatii occidentale.

Insa, nu putem trece cu vedrea ca, potrivit lui Marx, “Comunismul desfiinteaza insa adevarurile eterne, desfiinteaza religia, morala, in loc sa le dea o forma noua”⁴⁷. Totodata, nu putem sa nu remarcam faptul ca, in ciuda criticii religiosului si a imaginarului prezente in viziunea materialista a lui Marx, aceasta nu se poate sustrage unor elemente care tradeaza prezenta unui substrat de sorginte religioasa. Una din obiectiile pe care Ricoeur le aduce interpretarii ideologiei prin metafora imaginii rasturnate are in vedere strinsa interdependentă dintre real si imaginar: “daca actiunea nu e deja modelata de imaginar, nu vedem cum s-ar putea naste din realitate o imagine falsa”, scrie Ricoeur⁴⁸. Pe linia acestei pozitivari a imaginarului, Ricoeur remarca legatura ideologiei cu mitul, indeosebi in functia de integrare a acesteia. El

considera ca, in aceeasi maniera in care miturile rememoreaza elementele esentiale ce vizeaza conditia umana, o comunitate isi asigura stabilitatea si permanenta prin imaginile fondatoare prin care se exprima pe sine: “un grup isi reprezinta intotdeauna propria existenta prin intermediul unei idei, al unei imagini idealizate; si aceasta imagine este cea care, in schimb, ii intareste identitatea”⁴⁹.

In ciuda pretentiilor lor la stiintificitate, ideologiile politice sint profund impregnate de mit si imaginar. R. Girardet analizeaza foarte convingator modul in care cultura politica este profund marcata de o serie de elemente care scapa oricarei rationalitati aparente, evidentiind ca marile evenimente au fost intotdeauna insotite de o efervescenta mitologica. Elementele ce tin de imaginarul mitologic si politic pot fi regasite in planul secund al multor constructii doctrinale, “chiar si printre cele care isi revendica in mod insistent rigoarea demonstratiei si caracterul stiintific al postulatelor lor”⁵⁰. Prezenta unor “constelatii mitologice” este regasita de autor la cele mai variate orizonturi politice, astfel incit, constituindu-se intr-o credinta coerenta si completa, mitul asigura o serie de elemente de permanenta la nivelul limbajului, al imaginilor, al simbolurilor, al rezonantelor afective.

Analizind situatia mitului in lumea moderna, Rivière constata un proces dublu: de reinviere a miturilor in epoca moderna dublat de un proces invers de uzura, de desprindere de realitatea sociala. Miturile moderne releva un transfer dinspre religios inspre profan. Dintre caracteristicile miturilor moderne,

Rivière aminteste: mitul modern se integrează într-un discurs abstract și mobilizează printr-o inflație de limbaj și de imagini; utilizează nu naratiunea epică, ci mijloacele actuale de comunicare în masă; proclamă instituirea unei puteri sociale, nu a unei ordini divine sau naturale; predomină miturile revoluționare și de discontinuitate în raport cu miturile cosmogonice și ale continuității istorice; promovind mai degrabă un erou colectiv, miturile pun în valoare acțiunea decisivă a unui mintuitor și fac apel la un panteon de oameni iluștri; spre deosebire de miturile religioase miturile moderne par efemere și fragmentare datorită indeosebi alternanței la putere a diferitelor grupuri și a modului în care devin actori principali ai evenimentelor mediatice; prezentul conflictual este înlocuit cu un viitor luminos. “Pe scurt – ne spune Rivière – modernitatea poate fi interpretată ca un proces de ideologizare care încorporează mituri: mitul științei, substitut al revelației, mitul transcendenței puterilor, mitul individului ca exaltare reacțională și reciclare a unei subiectivități multă vreme innabusite de exigentele supraeului, mitul schimbării vesnice, parodie a revoluției, mitul nemuririi care stă la baza experiențelor de criogenizare a cadavrelor... Faptul că mitul suferă contrafaceri în ideologie nu înseamnă că vremea lui s-a sfârșit”⁵¹.

Prezența elementului mitologic pare să contrazică “tirania logicii” invocată de Hannah Arendt ca bază a regimurilor totalitare în mobilizarea maselor. Nu trebuie să uităm că autoarea relevă faptul că “tirania logicii” acționează ca o constrângere interioară și duce

la cedarea libertății interioare. Tirania logicii duce în cele din urmă la ruperea tuturor relațiilor interpersonale și, în planul ideologiilor, la ruperea de orice contact cu realitatea⁵². În această perspectivă devine mai puțin paradoxal faptul că “supusul ideal al dominației totalitare” nu este adeptul convins al ideologiei ci, în mult mai mare măsură, oamenii pentru care nu mai există o deosebire între fapt și ficțiune, între adevăr și fals⁵³.

Această alunecare în ficțiune și în relații imaginare apropiate, într-o variantă secularizată, ideologia de mit sau religie și o îndepartează de pretențiile ei de științificitate. Construcțiile ficționale, imaginare și cele de tip religios nu au lipsit nici în teoria lui Marx, nici în materialismul istoric ce s-a construit plecând de la aceasta. Devierea de la teoretizarea științifică a realității în operele tradiției marxiste a fost acurat remarcată de Ludwig Grünberg, când scria: “Sînt prea aproape experiențe care să ne lase să uităm că ori de câte ori am considerat că există canoane sacrosante... am transformat o concepție revoluționară despre lume, lucidă și raționalistă, într-o mistică sui-generis, care deplasa aplicarea principiului ‘crede și nu cerceta’ de la textele biblice la alte texte, substituind zeilor cerești zei pămîntesti. Faptul este cu atît mai bizar cu cît asemenea abdicări de la elementare cerințe ale unei filosofii raționaliste sînt efectuate și prin invocarea numelui lui Marx, cel care n-a conținut să sublinieze că, atîtă vreme cît mai pulsează un strop de singe în inima ei, filosofia trebuie să adopte o atitudine prometeică

‘indreptata impotriva tuturor zeilor ceresti si pamintesti’⁵⁴.

Prezenta unui bogat material imaginativ, distorsiunile pe care le produce la nivelul interpretarii realitatii, ca si o serie de pretentii totalizatoare, universaliste ale marxismului i-au determinat pe o serie de ginditori sa considere ca insusi marxismul este fie un substitut de religie, fie chiar – intr-un sens foarte larg – o religie mundaneizata. Reprezentative in acest sens sint afirmatiile categorice ale lui J. Schumpeter: “Marxismul este o religie. Pentru credincios, el reprezinta, in primul rind, un sistem de aspiratii ultime care intrupeaza intelesul vietii si sint standardele ultime in functie de care sint judecate evenimentele si actiunile; iar in al doilea rind un ghid pentru aspiratiile ce implica un plan al mintuirii si pentru indicarea raului de care umanitatea, sau o parte aleasa a umanitatii, trebuie salvata”⁵⁵.

Pare extrem de greu de acceptat o asemenea interpretare, avind in vedere critica pe care Marx o aduce gindirii idealiste si religiei. Insa, la fel de dificil de respins este pozitia lui Robert C. Tucker ce presupune o nuantere rarefiata a religiosului. In viziunea acestuia, esenta religioasa a marxismului a fost superficial camuflata de respingerea de catre Marx a religiilor traditionale. Ateismul lui Marx insemna doar o negare a dumnezeului transcendent, ceea ce in termeni pozitivi se putea traduce prin faptul ca omul trebuie privit ca fiinta suprema, ca obiect esential de preocupare. In felul acesta, ateismul aparea ca o afirmatie religioasa pozitiva. Pentru Tucker este evi-

dent ca marxismul nu este o religie numai in cazul in care prin religie intelegem sistemele religioase traditionale. Dincolo de acest sens, marxismul invita la o analiza ca sistem religios.⁵⁶

Desigur, acceptarea unei asemenea pozitii teoretice ar putea sa ne conduca la o mai buna intelegere a marxismului ca ideologie. Insa, ea se potriveste in tot mai mica masura, deodata ce privim gradual dinspre marxismul sistemelor totalitare inspre Engels si Marx si apoi spre opera de tinerete a acestora. Totodata, convietuirea unei critici a religiei si imaginarului cu o viziune care cistiga in persuasiune doar prin substratul religios, imaginativ, ni se pare o caracteristica a filosofiei materialiste, care incepe cu Marx si se transforma intr-o ideologie totalitara mai tirziu.

Note:

¹ David McLellan, *Ideologia*, Ed. Du Style, Bucuresti, 1998, p. 24.

² Terry Eagleton, *Ideology. An Introduction*, Verso, London, 1991, pp. 1-2.

³ Ideologia, aceasta metafizica nebuloasa, este cea care, prin cercetarea subtila a primelor cauze, doreste sa stabileasca pe aceasta baza o legislatie a popoarelor, in loc de a-si obtine legile din stiinta inimii umane si a lectiilor istoriei...” citat in David McLellan, *Ideologia*, ed. cit., p. 29.

⁴ David McLellan, *Ideologia*, ed. cit., pp. 31-32. O analiza a principalelor concepti asupra ideologiei poate fi urmarita in Ian Adams, *The Logic of Political Belief. A Philosophical Analysis of Ideology*, Hawster Wheatsheaf, London, 1989.

⁵ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana. Critica filosofiei germane moderne in persoana reprezentantilor ei Feuerbach*, B. Bauer si

Stirner si a socialismului german in persoana diferitilor lui profeti, Ed. de stat pentru literatura politica, Bucuresti, 1956, p. 15.

⁶ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 17.

⁷ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 22.

⁸ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 29. In ciuda proiectiilor imaginative prin care comunismul este infatisat, in aceeasi lucrare ni se spune: "Pentru noi comunismul nu este o stare care trebuie creata, un ideal dupa care va trebui sa se ghideze realitatea. Noi numim comunism miscarea reala care suprima starea actuala". p. 32.

⁹ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, editia a II-a, Ed. politica, Bucuresti, 1960, p. 28.

¹⁰ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 27.

¹¹ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 30.

¹² K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 37.

¹³ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 38.

¹⁴ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 46.

¹⁵ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 22.

¹⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *De la text la actiune. Eseuri de hermeneutica II*, Ed. Echinoc, Cluj, 1999, p. 359 O analiza pe larg a opozitiei dintre praxis si ideologie, identificata cu opozitia intre realitate si ideologie poate fi urmarita in prelegerile din Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986, pp. 21 si urm.

¹⁷ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 23.

¹⁸ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 35. Privind retrospectiv modul in care marxismul a jucat in "terenul real al istoriei", putem sesiza cum elementele vietii reale au fost mereu camuflate "prin dizolvare in constiinta de sine" a proletariatului sau "prin transformare in "strigoii", "fantome", "ticneli" etc", spre a folosi expresiile lui Marx la adresa viziunilor idealiste.

¹⁹ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 500.

²⁰ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 615.

²¹ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 615.

²² K. Marx, F. Engels, *Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 52.

²³ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 47.

²⁴ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 492.

²⁵ Edificatoare in acest sens sint lucrarile lui Nicolae Berdiaev, *Un nou Ev mediu*, Ed. Omniscope, Craiova, 1996; *Originile si sensul comunismului rus*, Ed. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1994. Pentru o perspectiva teoretica mai larga interesanta este indeosebi partea privind "Profetia lui Marx" expusa de K. R. Popper, *Societatea deschisa si dusmanii sai, Volumul II, Epoca marilor profetii: Hegel si Marx*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1993.

²⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *De la text la actiune*, ed. cit., p. 361.

²⁷ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia germana*, ed. cit., p. 45.

²⁸ Paul Ricoeur, *De la text la actiune*, ed. cit., p. 363. O analiza detaliata a viziunii din *Ideologia germana* poate fi urmarita in Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. cit., pp. 69-102.

²⁹ Émile Durkheim, *Regulile metodei sociologice*, Ed. stiintifica, Bucuresti, 1974, p. 69.

³⁰ Émile Durkheim, *Regulile metodei sociologice*, ed. cit., p. 68.

³¹ Émile Durkheim, *Regulile metodei sociologice*, ed. cit., p. 71.

³² Émile Durkheim, *Regulile metodei sociologice*, ed. cit., p. 75.

³³ Émile Durkheim, *Regulile metodei sociologice*, ed. cit., p. 85.

³⁴ Daca primul concept este unul peiorativ (imaginea rasturnata la Marx, falsa constiinta la Engels), cel de al doilea concept de ideologie porneste de la imaginea inginerasca a bazei si suprastructurii. Baza este formata din relatii de productie carora le corespund forte de productie determinate. Pe aceasta baza se edifica suprastructura, cu forme determinate ale constiintei politice, juridice, artistice, religioase etc. Teoria marxista considera ca ideologia interfereaza toate formele constiintei sociale, fara sa se suprapuna integral niciuna. O prezentare pe scurt a celor doua concepte de ideologie, ca si a raportului stiinta/ideologie in gindirea marxista poate fi urmarita in Petru Berar, *Ideologie, stiinta si umanism in conceptia lui Marx*, apud *Marxismul si contemporaneitatea*, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1968, pp. 373-393.

³⁵ Ca argument ni se propune exemplul deismului. In cazul acestuia, ideologia “trateaza despre ideea de Dumnezeu, cu care se preocupa filosofia in maniera stiintifica a teologiei, pentru care Dumnezeu este o realitate revelata”. Hannah Arendt considera ca deismul nu poate fi inteles numai ca o dezvoltare stiintifica a unei idei. Pe langa realizarea unui corpus de afirmatii stiintifice sau producerea unor asertiuni despre un Dumnezeu inteles ca idee, el utilizeaza ideea de Dumnezeu pentru a explica ceea ce se intimpla in evolutia lumii. Prin urmare, deismul nu poate fi redus la preocuparea sa de a realiza un corpus de asertiuni stiintifice. Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1994, p. 607.

³⁶ Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., p. 608.

³⁷ Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., p. 619.

³⁸ Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., p. 609.

³⁹ Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., pp. 610-611.

⁴⁰ O excelenta carte ce analizeaza functionarea teoriilor conspirative, de data aceasta in context romanesc, este semnata de George Voicu, *Zei cei rai. Cultura conspiratiei in Romania postcomunista*, Ed. Polirom, Iasi, 2000.

⁴¹ Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., p. 613.

⁴² Pentru a convinge asupra faptului ca ideologia este mai apropiata de gnoza decat de credinta, Besançon invoca urmatoarele elemente care deosebesc credinta de gnoza: credinta presupune o adeziune la un sistem de credinte care pur si simplu trebuie crezute; credinciosul poate sa accepte sau sa refuze adeziunea la obiectul credintei; ceea ce este crezut nu are o evidenta rationala, el poate aparea uneori ca fiind rational, dar mereu ramine un rest care scapa intelegerii personale; in cazul gnozei, adeptul adera nu la un dat revelat, ci la sensul pe care el il descopera in acest dat; acest sens se da ca o evidenta rational demonstrabila, astfel incit adeptul nu poate sa oscileze in asumarea gnozei deoarece cunoasterea pe care o obtine este una rationala, complet controlata si bazata pe o dezvoltare a

intelegerii personale. Alain Besançon, *Dilemele mintuirii. Criza Bisericii Catolice*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 2001, pp. 76-77.

⁴³ Alain Besançon, *Dilemele mintuirii*, ed. cit., p. 79.

Viziunea lui Alain Besançon privind relatia dintre ideologie si gnoza poate fi intregita prin lectura cartilor acestuia: *Confuzia limbilor*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1992; si *Originile intelectuale ale leninismului*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1993.

⁴⁴ Alain Besançon, *Nenorocirea secolului. Despre comunism, nazism si unicitatea “Soab”-ului* Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1999, p. 9.

⁴⁵ Alain Besançon, *Nenorocirea secolului*, ed. cit., p. 92.

Autorul mai precizeaza: “Cum se vede, ideologia nu este o alta religie, nici macar coruperea directa a religiei. Intre aceasta si religie exista gradul intermediar al gnozei. Iata de ce ideologia poate sa nege usor religia si sa-si propuna sa o distruga”. Alain Besançon, *Dilemele mintuirii*, ed. cit., pp. 81-82. In privinta indepartatelor inrudiri si a complicitatii cu religia, Besançon mai scrie: “Comunismul leninist s-a hranit din necredinta evreilor si din apostazia crestinilor”. *ibidem*. In lucrarea *Marxism and Religion. A Description and Assessment of the Marxist Critique of Christianity*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1987, David McLellan ofera o perspectiva mult mai nuanzata si riguroasa asupra raporturilor marxismului cu crestinismul si in general cu ceea ce in mod cliseizat e numit traditia iudeo-crestina.

⁴⁶ Alain Besançon, *Nenorocirea secolului*, ed. cit., p. 98.

⁴⁷ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Manifestul Partidului Comunist in Despre religie*, ed. cit., p. 82.

⁴⁸ Paul Ricoeur, *De la text la actiune*, ed. cit., p. 360.

⁴⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *De la text la actiune*, ed. cit., p. 365.

⁵⁰ Raoul Girardet, *Mituri si mitologii politice*, Ed. Institutul European, Iasi, 1997, p. 3.

⁵¹ Claude Rivièr, *Socio-antropologia religiilor*, Ed. Polirom, Iasi, 2000, p. 70

⁵² Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., p. 614.

⁵³ Hannah Arendt, *Originile totalitarismului*, ed. cit., p. 614.

⁵⁴ Ludwig Grünberg, *Optiuni filosofice contemporane*, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1981, p. 321.

⁵⁵ J. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, apud David McLellan, *Marxism and Religion. A Description and Assessment of the Marxist Critique of Christianity*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1987, p. 158.

⁵⁶ Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1961, p. 22.

Art, Politics and Religion. Historical Perspectives on Self- defining

Approaching this kind of subject implies an exigency of understanding that aims at the conditions of possibility of the status of the modern person. Starting with the European Illuminist Age, this is represented by the acknowledgment of the other as a person, based on a certain rational conditioning of the community. One should not confine religion to a "black-hole", by separating it from the political, but should rather try to see the middle-way between the radical solution of atheism, on the one hand, and the legitimating of a political religion, on the other.

The second part of this essay is an analysis of the double modern conditioning of art (understood as the expression of the creative faculty): first, of the political aspect of the Modern Age; secondly, of the religious problems connected to politics. Seen as a whole, this area of artistic production implies two types of fundamental relationships: 1) an analysis of art as the expression of the self and of its status in the world; 2) a direct connection between art and the social and political aspects of the contemporary age.

I. The self-defining of the political

The first lights of the Modern Age are confined to a radical reassessment of the relationship between man and the Divine, following the long chain of ontological, social and moral implications of this fundamental cultural step. Hans Blumenberg sees the intensity of the separation between these two areas (the Divine and the human) in the legitimating process of the Modern Age. The key-concept in this game of "perspective construction," as Nietzsche would say, is the term "secularization." Modernity has, as Blumenberg puts it, a destiny of its own, of following the long way to the "world-making of the world" (*Verweltlichung der Welt*). This process lends a very important role to the institutional effort of the State,

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seen as a purely “demystified entity”. The results of this “purging” have created a dehumanized authority; the price for this liberty has been paid: the effect was the collapse of humanity and liberty in the case of the individual. Blumenberg makes a strong point when observing this “secularization”. Thus, we cannot use the term in an appropriate sense, because we always define “secularization” relating it indirectly to the religious. The illegitimacy appears when we use “secular” connected to “religious,” saying that there is a transfer of power from mythology to non-mythology (e.g. moment A – Christianity; moment B – decadent Christianity). We cannot step out of this circle of understanding. The problem with “secularization” is that “one cannot make secular the very process from which this secularization began”¹.

This point in Blumenberg’s theory is a stronghold against the similar analysis of Karl Löwith – *Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen. Die theologischen Voraussetzungen der Geschichtsphilosophie*. As for Löwith, says Blumenberg, the cardinal term of “secularization” would turn into a kind of “historical substantialism”, which would force us to think of the progress apocalyptically. Löwith could not succeed in hiding a latent metaphysical scheme, which includes the idea of “decay,” as well as the old dualism between the transcendent and the mundane. “Secularization” is here the “decay” of the divine transcendent, that would reintroduce the religious thinking in the modern world. The decay of the religious supposes as an initial mo-

ment the religious; that would bring only the unfruitful circularity of the theory of secularization.

Thus, the legitimacy of the Modern Age could not be explained without this transposition of the theological contents into an alienated and historical form. Blumenberg corrects Löwith’s thesis: the “secularisation” would be “the new occupation” of the vacant positions, the “restoring” from the cultural corruption of the Middle Ages. The idea is that in the case of the Modern Age, one cannot accept a compensatory solution, one cannot accept the continuity with tradition. Modernity rises by legitimating itself from its lack of legitimacy, we might say. If we would understand secularization as a corruption of values, Blumenberg says, then this kind of interpretation “would alter the authenticity of the Modern Age, by transforming it into a relic, into a pagan substratum, into a residue that remained after the retreat of the religious from the dominating position into an alienation from the world”². The historical and political legitimacy of the Modern Age would rely on a major discontinuity. Blumenberg rejects Hegel’s idea of a historical secularization.

Blumenberg’s response is based on the concept of “self-defining” (*Selbstbehauptung*). “Self-defining” encompasses all the analysis concerning legitimacy, discontinuity, and new occupation. The concept identifies itself with a “project of existence which imposes on man that he would determine his relationship to the surrounding reality by the actualization of its own desires with the help of the enormous technical po-

tential of science, seen as the great instrument of self-defining”³.

Indifferent to historical conditioning, the Modern Age differentiates itself by its autonomous essence. Its autonomy relies on the concept of “pure negativity.” Modernity has its own “sufficient reason;” it seems that this whole era is a “creation out of nothingness.” By theorizing the independence of reason in relationship to technique, Blumenberg ignores a fundamental question: who or what could legitimize the self-defining process itself? If the answer is reason, then we would have a circular answer and a limitation in the theory itself.

We have given these quite simple explanations (compared to the multiplicity of the problems that this theory raises) with a view to presenting the relationships between political and religious thinking within the early days of Modern Age theories. Karl Marx is, by all means, the author that announces the radical split between political and religious power. When reading Marx, we see that, for man, religion is profoundly alienating, so therefore the autonomy of the individual is based on the demise of religious thought. In *The Jewish Question* (1844), Marx follows Hegel’s idea about the liberty and rationality of the State, but rejects his opinion on the possibility of a Christian State. The philosopher proposes a total autonomy of the political power; thus, politics, from now on, would no longer be responsible but for itself: “The State is emancipated from religion by emancipating itself from State religion, that is, by the fact

that is no longer recognizing religion in general, and thus, by defining itself as a pure State.”⁴ The political split from religion is the ultimate condition “of the rational character of liberty,” says Marx, assuming the Hegelian thesis of the State as an embodiment of reason. Marx’s strongest point appears in the *Introduction to Hegel’s Philosophy of Right* (1844): “the critique of religion is the preliminary condition of every critique.”⁵ We can analyze this Marxist amendment to Hegel’s position in two different ways: 1) as a complete self-defining of secularization, seen as a victory of atheism over religion; 2) as a fundamental thesis of the Modern Age, which acts as a victory of negativity and contributes itself to the self-defining of the Modern Age.

We can see that, at its beginning, the modern thinking could legitimate its existence only by founding itself on the necessary condition of the “critical” status, and implicitly, by separating from the Christian transcendent. We can understand modernity as a gap in the history of mankind, as a permanent negativity, that conditions its existence by an eternal revolution, by a radical outrunning of the Christian and pagan ontological coordinates. Is there a strict relationship between modernity, negativity, and absence of religion, as Marx says at the beginning of his career? In any case, Marx contemporaries have adopted his convictions and transmitted them as an unconditioned reflex to the entirety of modern thinking: religion is an exclusively human product. The idea that religion is the idealized source of certain production-relation-

ships would soon become the central thesis of atheism.

Marx knew that the social critique of religion is not sufficient for the legitimating of his generalized theoretical counterstrike. In *The Manifest of the Communist Party* (1848) religion becomes a dangerous fetish, confined to a certain ideology: “laws, moral, religion are so many bourgeois prejudices, hidden behind so many bourgeois interests.” In the eyes of the theorist of political power, religion becomes a political instrument in the class struggle between the bourgeois and the proletariat. By relegating religion to political bourgeois ideology, it develops into an “enlightened” and “demystified” spiritual form, as a source of social evil, as the scapegoat of all misery. In fact, Marx tried to justify his bourgeois resentments by criticizing the thing that he considered to be the source of social injustice.

Religion seen as an ideology is the specific feature of the Modern Age. Marx himself argued for this principle, claiming that religion is a product of a “false consciousness” (*falsches Bewußtsein*). The false consciousness is the diabolical mind that forges everything that comes into its area, and it is a sign of social schizophrenia. Actually, this formula implies a programmatic suspicion towards anyone who does not hold the same opinion as you do. The steps to ideology, as Karl Mannheim declares, are based on “the suspicion and the lack of trust, that man shows to his adversaries in every step of historical development; these can be seen as the preceding elements of ideol-

ogy”⁶. Mannheim distinguishes two kinds of ideologies: a) one that implies the skepticism of one individual to the representations of the other; b) a total ideology – “when we attribute to one historical epoch one intellectual world and to ourselves another one, or if a certain historically determined social stratum thinks in categories other than our own, we refer not to the isolated cases of thought-content, but to fundamentally divergent thought-systems and to widely differing modes of experience and interpretation.”⁷

Marx had already introduced the concept of “class-ideology” in *The Misery of Philosophy*: “the same men that establish social relationships according to their material productivity, also produce the principles, the ideas, the categories according to their social relationships”. The fact that there is a strong correspondence between particular social status and the individual perspective over the world is well known in modern sociology. Mannheim’s thinking is typically Marxist: the dominant class raises a kind of ideology that blocks the way to the social transformation process. The subordinate class is motivated by its desire to transform and be transformed. The struggle between ideology and utopia produces the dynamic process of social classes, and thus, the development of society. Ideologies often become real and global constructions of false realities and, as has been seen, can generate tremendous social and human disasters. Because of its conception of religion, Marxism has never accepted the fact that religion is not a perfect institutionalized opposing force, but a cosmopolitan human-

ism that may be the key to the moral and spiritual security of the individual. Facing the provocations of the Modern Age, religion will reconsider its status only at the end of the XXth century; now, one must recognize the major influence of religion in social and community dynamics.

II. The self-defining of arts

All these features of the social aspect will contribute to the construction of a “sense-horizon,” in which art will develop towards a certain course, assuming all the contradictions of modernity.

The Romanticist movement of the XIXth century understood art in relationship to the idea of negativity: “The Romanticist movement unleashes the destructive and self-destructive power of the imagination. This fact separates it from the Classicism, which saw arts in relation with the Good and the Noble. The traditional concept of “creation” is based on the idea of *mimesis*, the imitation of a certain given reality, by overemphasizing or criticizing it. In the case of the Romanticist movement we have, the second time after the Renaissance, the idea of *poiesis*. The creative capacity, the freedom of expression are reconsidered as the supreme value, alongside of the self-possessed consciousness. Thus, creation seems to be an experience of negativity.”⁸

Unlike in medieval thought, modernity gives credit to the individualistic and self-legitimizing feature of the arts. Creation becomes a real *hybris*, a “creation

out of nothingness” which defies and vies with God’s creation. While for Augustine art is an icon of Beauty and God, for the modern it also becomes a response to the beauty of Creation.

The modern artist re-creates and vainly defies with his gesture: he does not imitate, but he assumes the freedom to create something entirely new, ignoring the classical canon of imitation, founded, as we have seen, on a religious idea of Beauty. The tragedy of man’s freedom will deepen alongside the presence of evil in works of art. The interesting point is, as the German essayist Rüdiger Safranski said, that the artist will be understood only by his product and the intention of the production. The cultural conditions of the XXth century have profoundly attached art to the ideologies of social and political movements. The concept of “engagement” is typical to the manifestation of avant-garde art. In this context, art is viewed as a consequence of the social and the political. The idea of art as a social instrument is found at the very beginning of European culture. Plato, for example, saw art in relationship with social welfare and the moral Good. Later, art will become the symbol of a certain project and will function as an instrument for the justification of social evils existing in the modern world. To fulfill its mission, art needs a justificatory conditioning (*Rechtfertigungszwang*). In the case of a modern social and political activism, art could be considered responsible for the actualization of Good, by carrying out three conditions: to restrain evil, to indicate it, and to respond to the ideology of the subordinate class.

The problem that follows is this: can art and ideology coexist? Can art, seen as a form of negativity and free expression, furnish a motivation for a certain activism or ideology? Is not the very condition of “free art” menaced by these particular aspects of Modern Age?

This kind of problem has been the object of an interesting debate in the work of Theodor Adorno or Herbert Read. Accepting the risk attendant upon generalization, art theorists have understood modernity as an episode of a long process of alienation of man from the world. The break between humankind and nature can be seen as a process of industrialization and inventing of means of production. Herbert Read⁹ indicated three special features that can be considered as having a major part in the construction of the actual image of society: 1) the alienation from the senses and the use of mechanical products, elements that obliterate the totality of humanity and transform it into a “dull-eyed, bored and listless automaton, whose one desire is for violence in some form or other – violent action, violent sounds, distractions of any kind that can penetrate to its deadened nerve;” 2) the decline of religious faith, not substituted by any progress of the society’s ethical standards; 3) the presence of the non-artistic categories, which have undermined culture, confining it to a “mass culture.” Read speaks about the presence of a new product of television culture, the impostor, which seems to be a defender of public liberty and still, he persuades us that “the truth must not be disturbed.” Complacency, joined by complicity, tries to minimize the effect of art, which can

only be seen as an instrument against ideologies and political illusions. The English author is right when, in post-war Europe, he tries to bring the anti-ideological effects of art to a level of a general common sense, facing the new publicity culture of the 60’s: “Art, on the other hand, is eternally disturbing, permanently revolutionary. It is so because the artist, in the degree of his greatness, always confronts the unknown, and what he brings back from that contemplation is a novelty, a new symbol, a new vision of life, the outer image of inward things... The artist is what the Germans call *ein Rüttler*, an upsetter of the established order. The greatest enemy of art is the collective mind, in any of its many manifestations.”¹⁰

Read’s critique follows the same criteria that the Frankfurt School used as premises in its theoretical developments. Thus, we can understand Adorno’s post-war analysis in the *Aesthetic Theory* as a kind of thinking that is based on a social criteria that tries tactically to reject the old German ideologies. Germany exerted a great effort in surpassing the war crisis. It is clear then that Adorno’s theory offers an uncompromising radical image of the artistic movements, in an endless struggle for the “new.” Although Adorno’s theory is much more complex than the first avant-garde theories in Germany, it will be interesting for us to show what may have influenced Adorno to see art in general as a programmatic separation from the tradition, as a process of permanent “being in history”. Hegel’s theory about the lost essence of art, seen as an ontological “death” of art, had a great influence in the

theories of the Frankfurt School. In Adorno's theory, art cannot rely on its internal elements, but rather must be theorized from an external point of view. Art is also an expression of anti-ideology and negativity. Adorno draws the conclusion that, in the Modern age, religious art could no longer exist, because religion is a kind of ideology. The author explains that art is essentially anti-ideological, and cannot sustain a "tyranny of majority:" "In other words, art, and so-called classical art no less than its more anarchical expressions, always was, and is, a force of protest of the humane against the pressure of domineering institutions, religious and others, no less that it reflects their objective substance. Hence there is the reason for the suspicion that wherever the battle cry is raised that art should go back to its religious sources there also prevails the wish that art should exercise a disciplinary, repressive function"¹¹. Thus, religious symbolism is nothing but a "metaphysical circumscription of the mundane," a useless creation of our imagination: "Any attempts to add spiritual meaning and thus greater objective validity to art by the re-introduction of religious content, for artistic treatment, are futile."¹² Art, on the other hand, cannot be a social activism; it is only an anti-ideological humanism: "Art should, as the word goes, « convey a message » of human solidarity, brotherly-love, all-comprising universality. It seems to me that the value of these ideas can only consist in their inherent truth, not in their social applicability, and even less in the way they are affectively propagated by art"¹³.

III. Contemporary debates over religion

The contemporary world pays a great tribute to the beginnings of the Modern age, because it sustains a model of separation between politics and religion. Theorists try to see this kind of model as a middle-way between the anti-religious State and the mixtures of religion and politics; this intermediary solution may be the only acceptable one for preserving social and spiritual freedom for the individual. Starting from the fact that the purpose of the free society is the individual as a value in itself (this premise is viable for the Christianity, too), we might say that good cooperation between religious and political institutions would be the guarantee of respect for religious freedom and for the value of persons as individuals. We have here a positive aspect of the separation between State and religion: "the separation between politics and religion means the birth of religious freedom and tolerance. The State is the political governing institution that preserves the existence of the freedom of faith; that's why it has to remain structurally a-religious and a-theistic. The political authority expels religion to the area of free society. Religion will become an individual problem, because it has no part in the State order. The purpose of religion is being emancipated from the State and given freedom in the public sphere. Religious freedom includes not only the possibility of open and private recognizing of any religion, but also the right not to recognize any."¹⁴ Religion can help

the political, because this, as W. Böckenförde says, “lives from the preliminary conditions that it itself cannot guarantee.” That is the reason why the state must bring a minimum of norms, which religion should preserve. From this point of view, cardinal Lehmann understood religion as a true “alternative of modernity.”

The purpose of our contemporary debates is to strengthen the idea of the person as a moral and sensible subject who recognizes the other as also a person, with the help of the strong relationship between the political and the religious in the public sphere.

Notes:

¹ Hans Blumenberg, *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M., 1974, p. 16.

² Hans Blumenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

³ Walter Fratticci, «La modernità come secondo (e definitivo) superamento della gnosi. Hans Blumenberg e la legittimità dell'età moderna», *Dialegesthai. Rivista telematica di filosofia* [in linea], anno 2 (2000) <<http://mondodomani.org/>>.

⁴ Karl Marx, *apud* Maurice Barbier, *Religion et politique dans la pensée moderne*, Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1987, p. 225.

⁵ Karl Marx, *apud* Maurice Barbier, *Religion et politique dans la pensée moderne*, Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1987, p. 228.

⁶ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia. An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (ed. Bryan S. Turner), Routledge, London & New York, 1991, p. 54.

⁷ Karl Mannheim, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

⁸ Rüdiger Safranski, *Das Böse oder das Drama der Freiheit*, Carl Hanser Verlag, München, 1997, p. 229.

⁹ Herbert Read, *Art and Alienation. The Role of the Artist in Society*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1967, pp. 7-14.

¹⁰ Herbert Read, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

¹¹ T.W. Adorno, *Thesis upon Art and Religion Today*, in *Gesammelte Schriften II, Noten zur Literatur*, p. 648.

¹² T.W. Adorno, *op. cit.*, p. 648.

¹³ T.W. Adorno, *op. cit.*, p. 650.

¹⁴ Karl Lehmann, *apud* Bernhard Vogel, *Das Verhältnis von Politik und Religion*, in: *Die Politische Meinung*, no. 386, January 2002, p. 8.

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Mihaela Frunza

Intre obsesii nationaliste si fantasme religioase. **O analiza simbolica a „Clujului tricolor”**

The author proposes a symbolic analysis of the national flags and other objects painted in the national colors, that have been recently erected in the city of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The interpretative approach focuses on three levels: the first one uses the tools of the political imagery, by connecting the flags and painted objects with the idea of ethnicity. The second level involves an analysis that is situated between semiotics and phenomenology, treating the different types of objects as markers or implants that modify the environment of the city. At the third level, the national symbols are interpreted through the lenses of the science of religion. Finally, the lack of reaction of citizens is called into question and various types of motivations are analyzed.

* Imaginile la care face trimitere textul pot fi accesate pe site-ul revistei.

„Trei culori cunosc pe lume...” (Fostul imn al Republicii Socialiste Romania)

Cei care trec prin orasul Cluj pentru prima data pot fi surprinsi de multimea insemnelor tricolore din oras. La tot pasul - pe strazi, in parcuri, in pietele publice - diverse obiecte familiare au fost vopsite in culorile nationale ale statului roman, multiplicind efectul pe care il ofera steagurile propriu-zise, atat de multe incit vizitatorii se pot crede la vreo sarbatoare nationala. In anumite zone, densitatea de culori nationale se

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masoara in patru-cinci-steaguri-plus-o-pubela-si-un-stilp pe metru patrat. Pe langa acestea, banci, trotuare, tobogane... toate in rosu-galben-albastru. Localnicii par sa priveasca cu indiferenta aceasta colorare a orasului. Cel putin, nimeni nu a protestat in public, blocind circulatia, nimeni nu s-a legat cu lanturi si nu a facut greva foamei pentru a protesta, cum se intimpla cind mai da faliment o banca. Odata cu sfirsitul comunismului, a murit si proprietatea colectiva, si cu ea, orice preocupare pentru ceea ce, aparținind tuturor, nu apartine in fapt nimănui: o piata publica, un centru „istoric“, parcurile prin care trecem cu totii. La televiziunile locale, gestul de a mai vopsi inca un tip de obiecte a cazut in categoria senzationalului derizoriu, intre stirile despre cateluse cu sapte pui nazdravani si suspendarea ultimei sedinte a consiliului local, din pricina faptului ca primarul a legat de masa scaunele citorva consilieri. Pina la urma, vopsirea unei banci este mai inofensiva, pentru ca nu ii opreste pe tineri sa se sarute asezati pe tricolor. Este oare cu adevarat acest lucru inofensiv? Ce semnificatie au (pe langa cheltuielile din banii publici peste care se trece cu destula usurinta¹ culorile nationale afisate la tot pasul? Si de ce oare acest lucru ii lasa (aproape) indiferenti pe cei din jur?

„Vrem camine, nu statui!“

(Lozinca din timpul unei greve studentesti, 1995)

Invazia tricolora nu este decit ultimul act al unei piese care a inceput in 1992, o data cu venirea la

conducerea orasului a primarului Gh. Funar. Figura politica cel putin controversata, acesta s-a remarcat intotdeauna printr-un discurs de coloratura nationalista si patriotarda. Initial lider al unui partid care ulterior s-a destramat (PUNR - Partidul Unitatii Nationale din Romania, care se vroia o „replica“ romaneasca la Uniunea Democrata a Maghiarilor din Romania), Funar face in prezent parte din conducerea Partidului Romania Mare (fiind vicepresedintele acestuia). Clujul este de altfel unul dintre fief-urile de prima marime ale PRM-ului, atit primarul cit si majoritatea consilierilor fiind propusi de aceasta formatiune. Per ansamblu, de la ultima campanie electorala din 2000, acest partid, prin liderii sai, a virat politic spre ceea ce expertii numesc „neopopulism“², in care temele nationaliste si extremiste sint oarecum „imblinzite“, de un radicalism mai „disimulat“.

Am putea adauga ca, daca acest radicalism este „disimulat“ in discursul politic, el cu siguranta se afiseaza intr-un loc in care este vizibil in special pentru locuitorii orasului: in spatiul public. In perioada 1992-2002, orasul a suferit importante schimbari de imagine. Voi prezenta pe scurt celelalte simboluri nationale pentru a insista mai pe larg pe insemnele tricolore.

Statui prezente, trecute si viitoare

Majoritatea statuiilor nou aparute celebreaza diverse momente ale istoriei nationale: Avram Iancu, din fata Catedralei sau Clopotul de pe Bulevardul Eroilor. Pe langa acestea, apar si monumente cosmopolite, care probeaza neopopulismul anterior mentionat - vezi

bustul lui Woodrow Wilson din curtea Facultatii de Medicina de pe strada Pasteur³. Altele asteapta sa fie instalate, bugetul nepermitind inca - din fericire - amplasarea lor. Este cazul replicii „in marime naturala“ a Columnei lui Traian, ce ar urma sa fie amplasata in Piata Unirii. De remarcat ca toate aceste statui exploateaza preponderent o singura dimensiune - cea verticala (cu cit mai sus, cu atit mai bine), tradind lipsuri estetice grave si o pasiune ciudata pentru simbolurile falice.

„Sapaturi arheologice”

Clujul a fost, ca multe orase din Transilvania, un burg medieval respectabil. Zidurile vechi care inconjurau orasul stau inca - partial - in picioare, desi nu am vazut eforturi deosebite ale municipalitatii de a le conserva. Nu trebuie sa uitam ca orasul este, de asemenea, ridicat pe vechile ruine romane ale anticului Napoca. De altfel, hartile virtuale ale ruinelor romane au fost deja trasate de istoricii clujeni. Asta inseamna, teoretic, ca oriunde sapi in vechiul oras, poti sa te astepti sa dai peste niste ruine. Asta nu impiedica insa aceeasi municipalitate sa tina deschise niste gropi imense in fata statuii lui Matei Corvin - si in fata liceului de muzica - impotriva unei parti a arheologilor care considera ca respectivele ruine sint cit se poate de obisnuite, si mai mult ca sigur se intind sub o parte din Bulevardul Eroilor, unde totusi nu exista - inca - gropi.

Placute comemorative

Acestea sint legiune. Pe aproape orice casa mai acatari exista cite o placa mentionind unul din fostii locatari ai casei - neaparat mare patriot - sau alte virtuti nationale ale respectivului imobil - loc de adăpost pentru vreun persecutat politic, „prima casa in care a locuit un dascal de limba romana“ sau orice altceva. In schimb, se manifesta o alergie ciudata la orice fel de placute bi- sau tri-lingve, a caror amplasare este, totusi, prescrisa prin lege.

„Totul este tricolor - agresiv si provocator in modul cel mai evident”

(Valerian Stan, *O reusita importanta*, in Cotidianul, 3 mai 2001)

Dupa schitarea - absolut fugara - a „antecedentelor“, trecem la prezentarea „Clujului tricolor“.

1. Steaguri

Intr-o dupa-amiaza, stind in autobuzul oprit la stop, am numarat mai mult de 40 de steaguri tricolore in piata care inconjoara Catedrala Ortodoxa (douazeci pot fi numarate doar in poza nr. 1, incadrind statuia lui Avram Iancu). Bietul Pristanda ar fi dat cu siguranta faliment. Cert este ca steagurile se vad inca din tren, inainte de intrarea in Cluj. Strazile principale ale orasului sint flancate, din stilp in stilp, de cite o pereche de steaguri. Cladirile principale arboreaza la rindul lor steaguri. Cele doua „centre simbolice“ ale orasului - Catedrala Ortodoxa si Biserica Sf. Mihail sint

literalmente inconjurate de steaguri (lucru ciudat, la un moment dat, prin aprilie 2002, la Catedrala Ortodoxa aparusera steagurile albastre cu stelute aurii ale Uniunii Europene, strajuiind fratern flamurile nationale. Acum, o parte s-au mutat pe colt la Hotelul Continental - vezi poza nr. 6). Orice calcul aproximativ este descurajant.

2. Fanioane tricolore.

Filfie gratios in fata Bisericii Sfintului Mihail (poza nr. 7).

3. Banci tricolore.

Primele in ordine cronologica dupa steaguri, au aparut in Parcul Central si apoi, treptat, in tot orasul - in principal in parcuri - cel din spatele Teatrului, dar si in Piata Mihai Viteazul sau pe Bulevardul Eroilor (poza nr. 3). Recent, in Piata Cipariu s-au amplasat trei rinduri de scaune - unul rosu, celalalt galben si al treilea albastru.

4. Beculete si ornamente tricolore.

Noaptea, in special in perioadele de sarbatori, pe arterele centrale ale orasului - centrul, dar si Str. Napoca sau Str. Memorandumului, pe langa stilpii de iluminat se aprind si beculute colorate, fireste, tricolor. Pe langa acestea, cu ocazia Mileniului, au aparut diverse ornamente de iarna - clopotei, stelute, etc. - tot tricolore, la care nu s-a mai renuntat.

5. Stilpi tricolori.

Initial aparuti pe Str. Napoca (pozele nr. 5-6), acestia se extind treptat in oras. E vorba de micii stilpi alb-negru care strajuiau trotuarele si au fost inlocuiti cu un fel de bare cilindrice vopsite pe cite o treime in rosu, galben si albastru (pe Napoca), sau, mai nou, vopsiti individual in cite una din cele trei culori (pe str. Babes - poza nr. 4, Memorandumului etc.) Pe langa acestia, mai exista stilpi foarte inalti in fata Catedralei Sf. Mihail, vopsiti si acestia tricolor.

6. Leagane, tobogane, alte jucarii tricolore.

Pot fi admirate in parcul din spatele Teatrului, in alte parcuri, in curtea unei gradinite de pe strada Pavlov.

7. Trotuar tricolor.

Fie bucati de pavaj hexagonale, fie efectiv o parte mare a trotuarului, din pietre colorate tricolor. Pe strada Babes (poza nr. 4), pe straduta care duce la caminele studentesti din Hasdeu, in fata Primariei (aici, culorile nationale sint dispuse in „V“).

8. Cosuri de gunoi tricolore.

Peste 40 de pubele purtind inscriptia „Primaria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca“, insirate in centru (pozele nr. 2, 8).

9. Panouri tricolore.

In fata „rezervatiei arheologice“ din Piata Unirii, un panou galben explica, in rosu si albastru, motivele sapaturilor (in romana si engleza) (poza nr. 8). De

acelasi tip sint si panourile montate cu extrase din Constitutia Romaniei. De exemplu, pe str. Memorandumului.

10. *Baraci, tarabe tricolore.*

O baraca se afla in piata Cipariu; de la ea se vind oua. O taraba de flori este pe strada Motilor, iar una de ziare in Piata Mihai Viteazul.

11. *Luminari tricolore.*

Oferite gratuit de primarie in piata Catedralei, cu ocazia slujbei de Inviere.

12. *Mingi de fotbal tricolore.*

Pe acestea nu le-am vazut personal, dar am citit in ziar ca au fost recomandate scolilor de catre primar si sint produse de o firma din Hunedoara⁴.

Lista ramine deschisa.

„Obiecte fetise, instrumente de sanctificare, semnaluri de adunare, detinatoare a unui sens, subiecte de neintelegeri, care sint apoi aruncate sau aparate „pina la moarte“, drapelele au generat pasiuni pe care, in cinismul nostru deziluzionat, ne este greu sa le acceptam“.

(Lucien Sfez, *Simbolistica politica*, p. 75)

Nu intentionam sa realizam in acest cadru o analiza exhaustiva a insemnelor tricolore. De

asemenea, nu dorim sa confundam intentionalitatea finala, a „produsului“ care este „Clujul tricolor“, cu intentiile - reale sau declarate - ale celor responsabili de noua imagine a orasului. Intr-un demers teoretic de acest tip, cele din urma conteaza mai putin. Este treaba analistilor politici, a comentatorilor de presa, a psihologilor (probabil) si a istoricilor sa ia in calcul aceste motive.

Ceea ce dorim sa facem este sa propunem o analiza care sa surprinda citeva din datele esentiale ale fenomenului. Schematic, putem decupa demersul pe trei niveluri. Mai intii, trebuie tinut cont de faptul ca toate insemnele tricolore raspindite prin oras reitereaza, intr-o prima instanta, steagul romanesc. Cu alte cuvinte, le putem privi ca pe instante simbolice ale drapelului, el insusi simbol al natiunii. Este necesara, la acest nivel, un demers ce face apel la acel domeniu al stiintelor politice care analizeaza *imaginarul politic*. In al doilea rind, insemnele ca atare (inclusiv steagurile) pot fi interpretate ca adaosuri, implanturi ce modeleaza geografia orasului, contribuind la schimbarea imaginii acestuia. Existenta lor - cea fizica, la fel ca si cea simbolica - marcheaza *material* orasul, in felul in care tatuajele insemneaza corpul uman. Analiza se va plasa in acest caz intre o *fenomenologie* si/ sau o *semiotica a spatiului*. In al treilea rind, putem sa citim simbolurile si semnele despre care am vorbit anterior intr-un alt registru si sa observam ca limbajul pe care il folosim ca sa le decodam - simboluri, mituri, ritualuri - este unul ce tine de o *stiinta a religiilor*. Astfel, chiar daca avem de-a face cu obiecte „laice“, manipularea lor simbolica

tradeaza scopuri religioase - e drept, nu in sensul tare al religiei, ci mai degraba in cel lax al unei religiozitati difuze.

In fapt, cele trei niveluri functioneaza inter-relationat, iar decuparea lor didactica nu poate constitui decit un preambul. La acestea, ar trebui sa se adauge, pentru validarea modelului, o componenta de *feed-back*. In cazul nostru, ar trebui sa putem arata cum este posibil ca locuitorii orasului sa ramina indiferenti, sau cel putin civic-inerti, in fata fenomenului⁵. In lipsa - deocamdata - a unor studii cantitative socio-antropologice sau politologice, tinind cont si de absenta masiva a reflectarii fenomenului in mass-media, vom oferi doar citeva explicatii cu titlu de sugestie.

„In mod analog, drapelul nu este o bucata de stofa frumos decorata, ci intruchiparea unei natiuni; si intr-adevar, o natiune este definita de catre drapel in aceeasi masura in care drapelul este definit de natiune”.

(David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, politica si putere*, p. 19)

„Politica se exprima prin simboluri“, spune David I. Kertzer in introducerea volumului sau *Ritual, politica si putere*, din care este extras si citatul care prefateaza aceasta sectiune⁶. Importanta simbolurilor in viata politica este relevata prin apelul la o anecdota relatata de Th. Carlyle: daca, spune el, prin absurd, la o ceremonie militara pompoasa, hainele demnitarilor ar disparea, cine l-ar mai recunoaste pe ducele cutare, in absenta straielor tipice?! (Este limpede ca, din

perspectiva autoritatilor orasului, Clujul ar fi irecognoscibil in lipsa steagurilor si a celorlalti „marcatori“. Este el oare?)

Simbolurile politice de tipul steagurilor, stemelor, etc. au o functie chiar mai importanta, deoarece ele „invesminteaza“ ceea ce altfel ar ramine la stadiul de idee abstracta, altfel spus de fictiune: statul, natiunea. Cu alte cuvinte, un drapel poate tine locul ideii de stat, el fiind arborat de obicei in imprejurari oficiale, de tipul zilei nationale, a parazilor militare, pe cladirile oficiale. El insa poate intra in registrul mai emotional al „natiunii“, atunci cind, de pilda, este asociat ideii de unitate, de limba, de singe⁷. In cazul Clujului, este limpede - dupa cum au demonstrat-o destule evenimente - ca steagul maghiar este perceput ca o amenintare - nu atit din partea *statului* maghiar, cit mai cu seama a *natiunii* maghiare, a nebulos-definitului „pericol unguresc“⁸. Credem ca nu este gresit, prin analogie, sa sustinem ca sutele de steaguri si alte insemne care le reflecta in oglinda sint mai putin un simbol al statului roman, cit al ideii natiunii. Or, dupa cum arata un cunoscut analist al imaginarului politic, Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, daca pericolul statului sta in prea multa ratiune, pericolele natiunii se leaga de caracterul ei infra-rational, care poate duce la aparitia unor „monstri“ de tipul totalitarismului⁹.

Acelasi autor dezvolta o serie de consideratii pe o tema relationata. Astfel, vorbind despre popor ca entitate politica, el identifica doua puncte in care imaginarul politic are tangente cu „solul“, stabilind legatura dintre acesta si locuitorii sai: consacrarea

acestui ca si „pamint propriu - patrie“ si legatura cu memoria stramosilor, care consfinteste permanenta unica de-a lungul istoriei. Astfel, teritoriul face de obicei obiectul unor „rituri de apropiere“, a carui alegere se bazeaza pe o naratiune genealogica. Posesiunea teritoriului se legitimeaza, spune Wunenburger, fie prin „dreptul primului venit“, fie prin memoria stramosilor, ale caror relicve sau semne marcheaza respectivul pamint¹⁰.

In cazul teritoriului orasului, naratiunea „primului venit“ (generalizabila la nivelul intregului teritoriul al Romaniei, prin consacrarea la nivelul istoriei „de manual“ a tezei continuitatii daco-romane-romanesti pe acest pamint) este in mod traditional contestata sau cel putin pusa in discutie de istoriografia maghiara concurenta¹¹. Fara a ne propune sa intram in detalii istoriografice care nu fac obiectul prezentului articol, o observatie se impune: atunci cind legitimitatea posesiunii unui teritoriu este disputata, intra in joc reactia identitara. Cineva, a carui identitate nu este mai presus de orice indoiala, incerca nevoia de a si-o reintari constant, prin semne care sa o consfinteasca. In acest caz, regasim cea de-a doua solutie teoretizata de Wunenburger - respectiv „relicvele“ si „semnele“ incarnate de obiectele „rezervatiei arheologice“, statuile care stabilesc contactul cu diverse momente ale istoriei si mai modernele steaguri si insemne tricolore, care fac parte din arsenalul „civic“. Toate acestea urmaresc, cu vorbele lui Wunenburger: „sa faca manifesta prezenta imanenta a statului si sa insufla in

constiinta un sentiment de apartenenta la o lume comuna“.

Insa unul din efectele „perverse“ ale unei identificati „comune“ solidificate este acela ca ea se constituie prin excluderea celuilalt. Din simboluri civice, pretins neutre¹² prin repetitie, steagurile ajung sa conoteze caracterul etnic al romanitatii, care in acest caz se constituie (si) prin excluderea celorlalte etnii - maghiara, germana, evreiasca, rroma. Desigur, repetitia poate duce si la banalizare si grotesc (am vazut, de pilda, in cartierul Marasti un garaj tricolor), insa potentialul de excludere nu poate fi in nici un caz neglijat. In acest fel, imaginea traditionala a „Clujului multietnic“ si multicultural se estompeaza in fata afirmarii agresive a etniei majoritare.

**„Toate marginile sint periculoase.
Nesupravegheate, ele pot fi distruse, facind
categoriile noastre sa se prabuseasca si
intreaga lume sa dispara in haos“.**

(Roger Darnton, *Marele masacru al pisicii*, p. 169)

Intr-o alta ordine de idei, am putea sa concentram analiza asupra tipurilor *de obiecte* atinse de furia tricolora. Astfel, exista o categorie de obiecte care tin de ideea de verticala, de legatura dintre pamint si cer. Tipic pentru acest gen sint stilpii, pe care orice analiza simbolica ii anexeaza simbolisticii „axei lumii“, a „relatiei dintre diferitele niveluri ale universului“¹³. Pe aceeasi dimensiune se situeaza si steagurile, care adauga la conotatiile precedente pe cea a protectiei -

si luminarele, ce simbolizeaza in plus lumina si credinta (desigur, in registru crestin, dar sa nu uitam ca ele au fost impartite la o sarbatoare crestina)¹⁴. Ne aflam in plina intrepatrundere a politicului si religiosului, ideea politica (a natiunii) solicitand sacralitatea conferita de *axis mundi*. Teoria lui Mircea Eliade poate fi exemplificata si cu cazul Clujului: sacrul se camufleaza in profanul cel mai hulit, respectiv in profanul politic¹⁵. Nu este intimplator ca stilpii cei mai inalti, pe care sint cocotati drapele, se afla in cele doua centre cu potential religios al orasului, respectiv in fata Catedralei Ortodoxe si a Bisericii Sfintului Mihail. In felul acesta, spatiul orasului stirneste cu adevarat „pasiunile complexe“ despre care vorbeste Ricoeur, oferind cadrul pentru „deplasare, apropiere si indepartare“¹⁶ si mentinind o legatura constanta cu timpul „povestit“ al istoriei si memoriei. Totusi, tot acest imaginar este profund ambivalent, dupa cum afirma in repetate rinduri teoreticienii sai: astfel, imageria stilpului pastreaza suplimentar trimiterile falice care pot fi identificate si in cazul statuiilor.

Aceiasi stilpi pot fi plasati si intr-o alta categorie de obiecte simbolice, alaturi de trotuarele tricolore, de fanioanele, beculutele si ornamentele asisderea. Figura pe care o traseaza in comun este cea a marginii, a limitei, a frontierei sau, folosind un sinonim, al imprejmuirii. Frontiera poate fi citita in acelasi registru al religiosului; astfel, dupa fixarea axei lumii si a directiilor fundamentale, teritoriul sacru este consacrat, ne spune Eliade, prin trasarea limitei care simultan il cuprinde intr-un tot si il separa de

restul profan: cosmosul este separat de haos¹⁷. In cazul orasului, pot fi surprinse mai multe tipuri de frontiere: care fiecare traseaza (cel putin) o opozitie: spatiu pietonal/ spatiu stradal (trotuar tricolor vs. strada); spatiu artificial/ spatiu natural (trotuar tricolor vs. pamint); spatiu propriu/ spatiu strain (fanioane, drapele vs. restul orasului); lumina / intuneric (beculete colorate vs. noapte). Intr-un anume sens, chiar si bancile, toboganele si cosurile de gunoarie se integreaza in acest gen de simbolism: spatiu de sedere / spatiu de mers (banci); spatiu pentru copii/ spatiu pentru adulti (tobogane, alte jucarii); spatiu derizoriu/ spatiu plin de semnificatie (cosurile de gunoi). Spatiul orasului se constituie din astfel de marcaje si excluderi, semnificatiile sale fiind facute vizibile de variatele limite, ce tematizeaza frontiera (fenomenologic invizibila)¹⁸, materializind-o, deloc intimplator, prin culorile nationale.

Toate aceste obiecte pot fi considerate ca apartinind suplimentar unei categorii extrem de generale, si anume celei numite de Edelman a „decorului politic“¹⁹. In fond, elementele arhitectonice care au o functie preponderent ornamentala constituie echivalentul „recuzitei“ teatrale. Trecind astfel de la fenomenologie la semiotica, un prim element important al decorului politic este, in viziunea lui Edelman, „caracterul sau elaborat“, manifestat prin *masivitate*, *ornamentatie* si *caracterul oficial*. Recunoastem toate aceste elemente in cazul Clujului tricolor: multimea si diversitatea obiectelor tricolore se constituie intr-un argument al

masivitatii; simultan, ele au teoretic misiunea de a infrumuseta orasul, altfel spus de a-l ornamenta²⁰; cit despre caracterul lor oficial, acesta nu mai poate fi pus la indoiala, avind in vedere ca ele sint un produs al Primariei.

Toate acestea il conduc pe autor la concluzia ca decorul politic nu poate fi unul neutru: el se potriveste/ nu se potriveste evenimentelor, are o functie statica dar si una dinamica. El este destinat sa impresioneze un auditoriu larg, de aceea elementele sale vor tinde sa capeteze cit mai multi oameni (simbolistica nationala se inscrie in aceste caracteristici; mai mult, prin ambiguitatea civic-etnic, ea in principiu poate incorpora si alte grupuri decit cel majoritar). Mai important insa ni se pare faptul ca decorul trebuie, in viziunea lui Edelman, sa stabileasca sau sa intareasca „o anumita definitie a eului unei persoane politice“. In consecinta, decorul conditioneaza nu doar actele politice, ci si „personalitatea actorilor“. Atit ego-ul unei persoane politice proeminente (in cazul de fata, fara nici un dubiu, primarul Clujului), cit si, prin influenta, ego-urile individuale influenteaza si reflecta decorul politic, fiind la rindul lor influentate de acesta. Faptul poate avea consecinte remarcabile, care vor fi discutate in sectiunea referitoare la reactiile publicului.

„Statul pastreaza mereu caracteristici ale bisericii, chiar si cind se afla la capatul unui lung proces de laicizare. Tine de natura puterii sa intretina, sub o forma vizibila sau mascata, o adevarata religie politica“

(Georges Balandier, *Antropologia politica*, p. 120)

Despre ideea religiosului am amintit deja, referindu-ne la capacitatea acestuia de a „incarca“ cu sacralitate un spatiu eminamente profan. In acest caz, pare a fi vorba de una din caracteristicile sacrului de a se manifesta „cratofanic“ ca si *putere, forta*. Aceasta nu exclude, dupa cum vom vedea, celalalt pol al sacrului, respectiv „sacrul ca forma“²¹.

Astfel, Georges Balandier vorbeste despre coexistenta a doua fenomene interconectate, in cazul relatiei dintre sacru si putere: primul este „sacralizarea unei *ordini* necesare securitatii si prosperitatii“ (ordine ce trimite mai degraba la forma), celalalt fiind „recurgerea la *forta*, care permite ordonarea“ (trimiterea la putere este in acest caz evidenta). „Responsabil“ de mentinerea ordinii este ritualul, in timp ce reprezentanta fortei este actiunea politica. Ambele, concluzioneaza Balandier, contribuie la impunerea unei obediente fata de o ordine globala, prezentata drept conditie a vietii sociale²².

In ce fel sint importante aceste consideratii pentru analiza noastra? Daca apelul politicului la religios s-a dovedit a fi relativ neproblematic si oarecum inofensiv, aceste analize ne ajuta sa depistam fata „negativa“ a acestei relatii politica-religie, desigur in cazul care ne intereseaza, respectiv al Clujului tricolor.

Astfel, reversul solidaritatii politica-religie este, in opinia lui Balandier, faptul ca „atacurile impotriva puterii“ ajung sa fie considerate *sacrilegii*. Se petrece, cu alte cuvinte, ceea ce Nietzsche descria, la un alt nivel in

Genealogia moralei. Acolo, „bun“ si „rau“ treceau din domeniul ontologic in cel religios, al „virtutii“ si „pacatului“²³. Acest lucru confera, practic, puterii seculare a Clujului o serie de avantaje simbolice: adversarii politici se transforma in veritabili „pacatosi“ fata de „religia“ nationala, care trebuie „anatemizati“ si exclusi dupa regulile discursului religios. Faptul ca putini sint dispusi sa-si asume un asemenea risc este dovedit si de absenta vocilor protestatare la adresa monopolizarii tricolore a orasului.

„Unde este cea mai frumoasa toamna, daca nu la Cluj? Unde se aud pasii lui Blaga, daca nu aici, la Cluj?”

Florin Lazar, in Flavia Teoc, *Din capitala provinciei*, p. 99

Ajungind la reactiile cetatenilor, ne-am confruntat cu o serie de probleme. Reactiile mediatice investigate sint mai degraba izolate (cu siguranta, nu se poate vorbi de o campanie mediatica in privinta simbolurilor tricolore de felul celei, sa zicem, referitoare la manualele alternative), multe articole fiind constatative, putine exprimind o atitudine clara si inca si mai putine una critica²⁴. Motivele sint, in buna parte, obiective: dupa frenezia cu care sint colorate obiectele orasului, ne aflam, se pare, in cursul campaniei de „tricolorizare“, astfel ca reactiile publice sint, cu un termen imprumutat, *in progress*.

Pentru a avea totusi un punct de plecare, profitind de aparitia unor volume de interviuri, am analizat diversele reactii ale unei parti a elitei Clujului (reprezentata de scriitori, intelectuali)²⁵. Intr-unul din volume, o mare parte a intervievatilor erau chestionati despre Cluj. Este drept, pentru o parte semnificativa (mai mult de jumatate), intrebarea viza o perioada specifica din istoria orasului, respectiv anii '80, '70, sau '60. Intrebarea genera de regula raspunsuri mai mult sau mai putin nostalgice si mai mult sau mai putin realiste despre „Clujul tineretii“. Totusi, o parte din autori (8 din 25), intrebati sau nu explicit, vorbesc despre Clujul actual. Modul de raportare la oras - in acelasi timp personal si anistoric, cu o exceptie - mi se pare absolut remarcabil prin idealismul sau. Astfel, Clujul tricolor se dovedeste, rind pe rind, o „muza masculina“, „un oras din vis“, un oras-„personaj“, un oras „care te face sa fii frumos“, „oras-unicat, cu o mare personalitate“, un oras in care, desi strain „te simti acasa, nu in exil“, in fine, un „oras cultural“.

Desigur, orasele sint fascinante tocmai prin multimea perspectivelor individuale prin care pot fi descrise - totusi, scriitorii clujeni citati anterior par sa se raporteze mai degraba la un oras ideal decit la unul material. Cu siguranta, este exclusa orice raportare la orasul politic - cu o singura exceptie: intr-un caz, Clujul este descris, mai aproape de spiritul articolului nostru, ca „locul unde cred ca se intineaza si se compromite la modul cel mai inalt idealul national prin manipularea lui politica si prin folosirea propagandistica a simbolurilor

romanesti sacre“. Totusi, in context, reactia pare mai degraba izolata.

Pentru a incepe discutia despre (lipsa de) reactie a cetatenilor Clujului, vom reveni la consideratiile lui Kertzer. El considera ca simbolurile prezinta citeva caracteristici cruciale. Mai intii, este vorba de *condensare*: simbolurile individuale au capacitatea „de a unifica si reprezenta o diversitate de conotatii“. In al doilea rind, trebuie mentionata *plurivocitatea*: oameni diferiti inteleg simbolurile in moduri diferite. In fine, este semnificativa si *ambiguitatea*: conotatia simbolului nu este exclusiva; dimpotriva, forta lor o reprezinta „complexitatea si nebulozitatea“²⁶.

Transpunind aceste observatii intr-un limbaj semiotic, este limpede ca simbolurile - in acest caz, cele politice - nu fac parte dintr-un cod inchis, de tipul codului de circulatie. Acolo, anumite semnificatii sint fixate printr-o conventie: culoarea rosie a semaforului reprezinta interdictia trecerii. Daca soferii nu ar reactiona in acelasi fel in fata acesteia, cu siguranta s-ar produce destule accidente. In fata unui steag, sau doar a unui cos de gunoi vopsit tricolor, reactiile nu sint univoce. Daca tricolorul ar conota fara nuante solemnitatea statului, probabil ca oamenii ar ezita in a se aseza pe o banca tricolora sau a-si azvirli resturile intr-o pubela asisderea.

De asemenea, un observator malicios ar putea remarca faptul ca, departe de a fixa in constiinta oamenilor ideea nationala, multimea steagurilor si a obiectelor relationate ar putea avea chiar un efect contrar: acela de *a cobori insemnele nationale in derizoriu si*

in trivial. Ce se poate spune astfel despre gestul banal de a arunca o hirtie intr-un cos de gunoi de pe strada, atunci cind recipientul in cauza este tricolor? De aici pina a imagina Romania ca o imensa lada de gunoi nu este decit un pas.

Vom apela in final la Edelman pentru concluziile provizorii ale acestei sectiuni. Spuneam la un moment dat ca ego-urile individuale sint influentate de decorul politic. In ce fel se produce aceasta influenta? Referindu-se la semnificatia decorului, unul din factorii in functie de care variaza aceasta este cel de „a legitima o serie de acte viitoare“ (al caror continut este inca necunoscut) si de a incerca sa obtina asentimentul si confirmarea la ele²⁷ (desigur, din partea publicului). Din perspectiva (lipsei de) reactie a cetatenilor, putem fi siguri ca administratia si-a atins acest scop, prin introducerea treptata a diverselor elemente - statui, sapaturi, placute, steaguri, banci, etc. Asta, din nou, nu inseamna neaparat ca toate acestea sint elemente ale unui plan conspirativ bine pregatit; ele nu tradeaza nici macar un plan constient. Dar totodata, ceea ce este demonstrat este imensa eficienta a decorului politic: prin caracterul sau anticipator si teoretic-inofensiv, el neutralizeaza rezistentele, incorporindu-le intr-un sistem progresiv de asteptari ulterior confirmate. Am putea adauga ca, in felul acesta, desi *nu* este neutru, decorul se estompeaza, se auto-neutralizeaza, se „pierde in decor“. Nu este astfel de mirare ca, pentru multi oameni, chiar pentru intelectuali, desi tricolor, Clujul continua sa ramina un oras nostalgic, un oras de vis, un oras unic²⁸.

„[P]e panouri se labarteaza tricolorul, desi nu cred ca se indoieste cineva ca sintem in Romania... Nu mai ramine decit sa se vopseasca si cosurile de gunoi in cele trei culori (altele nu se cunosc pe lume) si o sa stim ca sintem la Cluj.”

(a. l. s., Dilema)

Pina la urma, a infige un steag inseamna apropierea - simbolica sau nu - a unui teritoriu. Primii colonisti infigind steagul Spaniei in solul viitoareii Americi. Steagul lui Amundsen, fluturind la Pol in fata nefericitului Robert Scott. Steagul american pe Luna. Sint imagini pe care mediatizarea le-a transformat adesea in clisee. Gestul nu trebuie sa fie neaparat unul violent, cum sint cele sugerate de acest repertoriu (psihanalizabil pina la urma). El se poate transforma, consumerist si edulcorat, in imaginea familiara a unei multimi defilind pasnic cu mini-stegulete portocalii, marca «Orange», la o sarbatoare laica a berii. Semnificatia initiala - de posesiune, de cucerire, de luare cu forta a unui teritoriu - real sau virtual (vezi bannerele de pe internet si cit de agresive pot fi ele) persista.

In acest context, ce poate sugera un oras care geme sub povara flamurilor, a stilpilor, bancilor, pubelelor etc. tricolore? De la cine trebuie cucerit acest oras, de cine trebuie protejat si cui mai trebuie sa i se demonstreze *romanitatea* locului? Care este modul in care ne putem raporta la aceasta invazie tricolora, care

graveaza, asemeni tatuajelor si pierce-ingului, trupul orasului, marcindu-i cerul prin beculute, pamintul prin trotuare, istoria prin steaguri si viitorul prin tobogane? Clujul ofera imaginea unui oras asediat si cucerit, bucata cu bucata.

Exista o poveste pe care o ascultam in copilarie pe un disc «Electrecord». Era vorba de un imparat care, intr-o tara cucerita, declara razboi culorii albastre, izgonind-o din orase (darimind casele), de pe cimpii (rupind florile), din ochii oamenilor (leagindu-i la ochi), din ape (tulburindu-le) si de pe cer (acoperindu-l cu valuri cernite). Pina la urma, imparatul isi afla sfirsitul sub greutatea pietrelor albastre pe care le «rechizitionase» de la localnici, cu scopul de a le distruge. Mesajul povestii - aparuta, sa nu uitam, in timpul comunismului - era mai degraba incifrat si simbolic: nu te poti lupta cu o culoare dupa cum nu te poti lupta cu o idee - in special cu albastrul, care este culoarea libertatii.

Ceea ce se intimpla actualmente in Cluj este o rasturnare perversa a povestii fara titlu. Daca acolo, batalia se ducea *impotriva* unei culori (sau a unei idei), aici, ea se poarta *in numele* unor culori - mai mult sau mai putin «nationale» (Romania nu detine «monopolul» asupra combinatiei de rosu-galben-albastru, vezi de pilda steagul aproape similar al Columbiei, doar ca acolo culorile sint pe orizontala). Dupa cum reiese dintr-o poveste glumeata a unui reporter de la *Dilema*, tricolor a devenit sinonim cu Clujul²⁹. In aceasta poveste postmoderna, pare simplu sa arati cu degetul spre cuceritorul-bufon si sa invoci

fie obsesia nationalistă, fie alte obsesii patologice, pentru a explica totul ca pe o gluma smecheră. Mai greu este să recunoaștem celălalt personaj din această poveste: cei «asediați» sau «colonizați» sintem noi.

Note:

¹ Conform informațiilor din presa, un cos de gunoi tricolor costa 1.148.019 lei iar o minge de fotbal tricoloră, 400.000 de lei.

² Adrian Cioflană, Tentative neopopuliste în Europa de Est, în *Revista română de științe politice*, vol. 2, nr. 1/2002, 196-210.

³ S-ar putea ca amplasarea bustului să facă aluzie la faptul că acest președinte american, W. Wilson, a patronat Tratatul minorităților și Pacea de la Versailles care a integrat Transilvania în grănită România. În acest caz, el ar trebui considerat aproape un erou național. Totuși, în economia simbolică a Clujului, și în contextul discursului politic ambiguu referitor la SUA, consider că statuia cu pricina poate fi considerată un monument cosmopolit.

⁴ Vezi Vasile Magrădean, „Elevii clujeni vor trage suturi în tricolor”, în *Monitorul de Cluj*, 08.01.2002. (De remarcat ironia din titlu).

⁵ Chiar dacă îi eliminăm pe cei aproximativ 60% dintre clujeni care au votat cu Gh. Funar la ultimele alegeri - și care potențial sunt de acord cu ceea ce face liderul lor - tot mai rămân 40% dintre locuitori, potențial nemulțumiți de gesturile primarului.

⁶ David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, politică și putere*, Ed. Univers, București, 2002.

⁷ Pentru evoluția relației dintre stat și națiune în perioada modernă, vezi Jean-William Lapierre, *Le pouvoir politique et les langues. Babel et Leviathan*, PUF, Paris, 1989, în special pp. 15-18. În general, ideea de stat se referă la componenta civică, la cetățenie; prin opoziție, națiunea trimite mai degrabă la origine (etnie, limbă).

⁸ Vezi modul în care a fost interpretată arborarea steagului de către consulatul maghiar.

⁹ Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Omul politic între mit și rațiune. O analiză a imaginii puterii*, Ed. Alfa Press, Cluj, 2000. În special capitolul 8, „Rational și irațional în ideea de națiune”, pp. 145-157.

¹⁰ Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Imaginaires du politique*, Ed. Ellipses, Paris, 2001, în special pp. 34-44.

¹¹ Pentru o abordare a disputei istoriografice romano-maghiare, vezi Lucian Boia, *România, țara de frontieră a Europei*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2002, pp. 45-47. Pentru invocarea „dreptului primului venit”, nu este totuși lipsit de interes de observat că, pe panoul tricolor ce închide „rezervația arheologică” (numele codificat pentru săpăturile arheologice din Piața Unirii) Clujul este denumit „Municipiul daco-roman Napoca”.

¹² Cu toate acestea, un teoretician al multiculturalismului cum este Jacob T. Levy arată în lucrarea sa *The Multiculturalism of Fear* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, cap. 8) că simbolurile oricărui stat (de la numele locurilor, fixarea sărbătorilor, etc.) oricât de inofensive ar părea, nu sunt neutre. Acesta este, am putea spune, paradoxul oricărei identități: acela de a nu putea fi neutră. Chiar și la nivel logic, A constituie, prin simplă afirmare, un non-A (fie și numai discursiv) în raport cu care se disociază și fără de care nu s-ar deosebi de „nimic”. Revenind de pe tarimul logic pe cel simbolic, întrebarea care se pune este în ce măsură identitatea, chiar nefiind neutră, reușește să fie toleranță, sau mai degrabă esuează în agresivitate.

¹³ Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dictionar de simboluri. Mituri, vise, obiceiuri, gesturi, forme, figuri, culori, numere*, Ed. Artemis, București, 1995, vol. 3, p. 264.

¹⁴ Idem, p. 268. Vol. 2, p. 242.

¹⁵ Mircea Eliade, *Nostalgia originilor. Istorie și semnificație în religie*, Ed. Humanitas, București, pp. 208 și urm. Pentru delegitimarea politicului în rîndul populației, vezi popularitatea de care se bucură în sondaje asocierea dintre politică și corupție, frecvența cu care sunt aprobate în aceleași sondaje asertiuni de tip „Oameni ca mine nu pot face mare lucru pentru a influența evenimentele politice”. Pentru analiza lor, vezi de

pilda Alina Mungiu Pippidi, *Politica după comunism. Structura, cultura și psihologie politică*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2002.

¹⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Memoria, istoria, uitarea*, Ed. Amarcord, Timisoara, 2001, p. 181.

¹⁷ Mircea Eliade, *Sacral și profanul*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 1995, pp. 45-47.

¹⁸ Pentru o abordare fenomenologică a limitei, vezi Virgil Ciomos, „Inspatiere și insularitate. Figuri analogice ale individuatiei”, în Lucian Boia, Anca Oroveanu, Simona Corlan-Ioan (coord.), *Insula. Despre izolare și limite în spațiul imaginar*, Colegiul Noua Europa, București, 1999, pp. 163-174. Alte abordări de inspirație fenomenologică a spațiului, realizează de o bună bucată de vreme Augustin Ioan, care ține de altfel o rubrică la *Dilema* intitulată „Pierduti în spațiu”. Mai multe volume consacrate analizei spațiului au apărut la Editura Paideia.

¹⁹ Murray Edelman, *Politica și utilizarea simbolurilor*, Polirom, Iași, 1999, în special cap. 5, „Decorul politic ca simbol”, pp. 95-105.

²⁰ Primarul Gheorghe Funar a susținut în repetate rânduri că a ales tricolorul din motive predominante estetice: acestea sunt „cele mai frumoase culori din lume”, fiind, cu siguranță, cel puțin în pictură, „culori fundamentale”. (Putem observa că de la „fundamental” la „fundamentalism” e un pas mic, pe care autoritățile sînt dispuse să-l facă.)

²¹ Raportul dintre hierofanie și cratofanie este comentat pe larg de Aurel Codoban, *Sacru și ontofanie. Pentru o nouă filosofie a religiilor*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 1998, pp. 77 și urm.

²² Georges Balandier, *Antropologie politică*, Amarcord & CEU, Timisoara, 1998,

²³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogia moralei*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 1994, pp. 320 și urm.

²⁴ Cîteva titluri din presa sînt: „Elevii clujeni vor trage suturi în tricolor”, „Pubele tricolore la Cluj”, „O reușită

importantă”. Dintre articolele critice, menționăm cel al lui Eugen Tomiuc, difuzat de Radio Europa Liberă, „Romania: Cluj Mayor Steps Up Ultrnationalist Behavior”.

²⁵ Ne vom referi în special la al doilea volum de interviuri al Flaviei Teoc, *Din capitala provinciei. Interviuri cu scriitori clujeni*, Ed. Limes, Cluj, 2002.

²⁶ David I. Kertzer, op. cit., p. 24.

²⁷ Murray Edelman, op. cit., p. 99

²⁸ Este extrem de relevant, în acest sens, un comentariu al lui Leon Volovici: „În legătură cu reacția (sau pasivitatea) cetățenilor, ceea ce lipsește este gestul public - scrisori în presă, opinii la TV, discreditarea funarismului prin satiră și ironie. Pasivitatea sau chiar acceptarea sînt, cred, de sorginte ceaușistă. La fel și obiceiul de a reacționa critic, dar numai „între amici”, prin „bancuri” despre Funar. Atunci s-a produs un fel de legitimare a nationalismului agresiv, kitsch și xenofob, iar Funar speculează persistența reflexelor de atunci, inclusiv conformismul, frica, atrofierea spiritului critic”.

²⁹ După cum se poate citi la rubrica 3,14, «De cînd au fost instalate ditamai panourile la intrarea în cele două parcuri din apropierea casei mele (Icoanei și Ioanid), pe care scrie mare «Primăria sectorului 2», am aflat și eu că, atunci cînd trec strada, trec, de fapt, dintr-un sector într-altul... Una la mină. Doi (pentru că așa sînt eu, mai chichiricios): «Parcul» Icoanei s-a numit, de cînd îl știu, *Grădina Icoanei*; există vreo decizie, vreun document semnat, ceva, care să permită rebotezarea ei? Trei: pe panouri se labartează tricolorul, deși nu cred că se îndoiește cineva că sîntem în România... Nu mai rămîne decît să se vopsească și cosurile de gunoi în cele trei culori (altele nu se cunosc pe lume) și o să stim că sîntem la Cluj. (a. l. s.)». *Dilema*, nr. 487, 2002.

Spatiul Ghetoului

This article aims at analyzing the relation between what „ghetto” signifies beginning in the Christian Middle Age (the Jewish Quarter) up to the modern time (the Central-European Jewish Ghetto, the West-European labor district, the Afro-American neighborhood of North-American cities) and what the “closed area” (any kind of district situated in a contemporary metropolis) signifies. I have tried to analyze this relation in its evolution, approaching both the continuity, the similarity of original types of ghettos to contemporary ones, and the discontinuity, the differences existing between the two types of ghetto. The segregation and self-isolation policies define and differentiate the ghetto in its essence. Starting from a contemporary point of view, I try to analyze the ghetto from a theoretical perspective, and from an architectural point of view.

Prin mecanismele sale simultane de combinare a unor elemente in esenta contradictorii sau de fragmentare a semnificatiilor, contemporaneitatea reuseste sa plaseze discursul despre *gheton* undeva in spatiul conceptual constituit intre granitele transparente ale diferentelor si cele ale similitudinilor. De aceea, relatia dintre ceea ce semnifica ghetoul incepind cu Evul Mediu crestin (*cartierul evreiesc*) pina in epoca moderna (*ghetoul evreiesc* central european, *cartierul muncitoresc vest european*, *cartierele negrilor* in orasele nord americane), pe de o parte, si ceea ce semnifica spatiul inchis (orice tip de *cartier* aflat intr-o

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metropola) in zilele noastre, pe de alta parte, va constitui obiectul acestui demers analitic.

Ceea ce este ciudat si, in acelasi timp, greu de decriptat este tocmai faptul ca notiunea de *ghetou* se pastreaza in limbajul uzual, chiar daca desemneaza propriu-zis realitati socio-culturale diferite macar ca forma, daca nu ca si continut. Acest aspect tradeaza oarecum faptul ca *ghetoul* ca spatiu public conserva atitudini, modalitati specifice de raportare la spatiu, comportamente similare sau chiar identice din punct de vedere antropologic, nu numai acelasi tip de structura arhitecturala; de la o epoca la alta, apar, in esenta, similitudini socio-culturale de configurare a spatiului, aceasta evolutie istorica putind fi definita mai potrivit in termenii adincirii diferentelor cultural-atitudinale.

Afirmatia ca exista o interdependenta a omului cu spatiul locuit, ca acesta din urma, ca proiect arhitectural, influenteaza comportamentul uman, viata celui caruia ii este destinat, are o veritabila istorie. Formind si justificind atitudini, norme de comportament, viziuni asupra lumii si mentalitati umane, aceasta afirmatie refuza abordarile simpliste si se constituie ca *hybris* al discursului hermeneutic aflat la intilnirea arhitecturii cu filosofia si antropologia.

Se poate, deci, in contemporaneitate, discuta despre *ghetou* doar in termenii aparent (si spun aparent pentru ca este vorba atat de o continuitate, cit si de o ruptura, de o pastrare si de o schimbare de paradigma totodata) contradictorii *de identitate* si *diferenta*, atat la nivel conceptual discursiv, cit si la nivelul ontic, al

realitatii fizice. De aceea, atat o raportare diacronica, cit si una sincronica (intrucit se pastreaza si elemente ale ghetoului medieval pina in contemporaneitate) la spatiul ghetoului si la conceptul care corespunde acestui spatiu devin necesare din perspectiva transdisciplinara contemporana, intrucit asemenea strategii complexe pot da seama de unilateralitatea si simplismul abordarilor ce tind spre definitii unice, atotcuprinzatoare.

Diferentierile conceptuale si reale (arhitecturale, spatiale, sociale), pe care le aduce cu sine contemporaneitatea fata de istoria de pina la ea, largesc parca intelesurile sau sensurile vechi si prea impietrite, conservate cu stoicism de orice tip de demers principal ontologic asupra problemelor spatialitatii urbane.

Prin aceste strategii noi se pot surprinde cel mai bine aspectele privind largirea conceptului de ghetou odata cu afirmarea noului mecanism modern si postmodern de “ghetoizare” a urbanului si a valentelor si functiilor spatiale ale acestuia.

Ceea ce socheaza in aproape orice discurs contemporan despre spatialitate este faptul ca adesea, pentru a desemna noi functii, valente si utilizari ale unui anumit spatiu nu se cauta, nu se creeaza concepte noi, ci aceste functionalitati, valente si utilizari noi sint treptat integrate organic in viziuni vechi, printr-o largire a generalitatii conceptelor deja existente. Drept urmare, chiar daca aceste concepte “mai” generale in aparenta saracesc si/sau esentializeaza limba, intrucit absorb in ele nuantele, in realitate ele o elasticizeaza si

o fac totodata mai functionala. Tentant, dar riscant, in acest context, este sa se ramina doar la nivelul superficial al utilizarii mecanice, la nivel lingvistic, al conceptelor respective, fara o explicare efectiv patrundatoare a notiunilor si, deci, a obiectelor, a spatiilor pe care acestea le desemneaza.

Discursul contemporan despre orice tip de spatiu devine, asadar, cu atat mai important si mai dificil cu cit el este provocat sa elimine acest risc al cantonarii in *absolut* si sa surprinda in profunzime multitudinea sensurilor si a functionalitatilor, contradictiile, fragmentarea si mecanismele mereu in miscare, mereu in schimbare, ale unui anumit tip de viziune cu privire la spatiu – si acestea in cadrul unor abordari relativiste, chiar daca demersul pare restrins la desemnarea unui singur concept. Aceasta este dificultatea primordiala cu care se confrunta cel ce doreste sa discute “pe marginea” spatiului urban numit *gheton*. A discuta despre un tip de spatiu inseamna a-l subiectiviza, a-l apropria prin limbaj, dar, totodata, a te distanta de el, a te separa sau distinge de acesta, deci, a te orienta in spatiu si a distruge uneori “insuportabila usuratate” a obisnuintei si familiaritatii caldute, blinde, pe care omul o dobindeste fata de spatiul in care se misca. Discursul despre spatiu transforma indiferenta si ignoranta fata de spatiu intr-o cunoastere reala si o posesie (in sensul *aproprierii*) a lui.

Dar dincolo de aceste consideratii teoretice se ascunde totusi o realitate socio-culturala de cele mai multe ori difuza, si, deci, cu atat mai greu de aproximat sau de evaluat. Ambiguitatea originara a spatiului

ghetoului, remarcata de multi ebraisti, se datoreaza concomitentei sau lipsei de simultaneitate a doi factori culturali ce-l instituie in Evul Mediu tirziu european: pe de o parte, intoleranta crestinilor, iar pe de alta parte, inadaptabilitatea evreilor. Chiar daca ideea de “cartier evreiesc” intr-un oras impinzit de alte comunitati confesionale se nastea inca din antichitate si se constituia mai degraba ca un concept “moale”, lipsit de orice violenta segregationista si definit mai degraba printr-o preferinta voluntara a membrilor comunitatii evreiesti de a trai “intr-un mod care le-ar permite sa-si pastreze legile si obiceiurile si sa-i apere de atacuri ostile, in caz de nevoie”¹, ideea de cartier evreiesc si implicit in spatierea ei, prin marcarea teritoriului ei, s-a conturat in Evul Mediu crestin transformind semnificatia intr-un concept “tare” (tare atat prin rezistenta sa in timp, cit si prin inradacinarea lui afectiva in limbajul arhitectural), valorizat ambiguu din perspectiva “toleranta postmoderna”.

Initiala necesitate de apartenenta la un spatiu a unei minoritati etnoreligioase “persecutate si degradate” de majoritatile confesionale crestine, aspiratia de a-si cuceri un loc al ei, un spatiu ocrotitor, o sinagoga, un cimitir, dar si servicii sociale de asistenta mutuala, pentru a reduce insecuritatea, e dublata de vointa de a se permanentiza in si prin intermediul unui spatiu marcat, delimitat, in interiorul oraselor. Firescului intrebarii referitoare la alegerea cu precadere a spatiilor urbane pentru asezarea unei populatii evreiesti, fara de tara, fara de pamint, aflata mereu in cautare de loc, de asezamint, i se poate

raspunde in primul rind prin faptul ca orasul oferea, in orice timp, un anumit anonim (fie el doar partial, de scurta durata) atat de necesar traiului linistit al unei comunitati inchise, receptate prin excelenta ca fiind *straina* si, deci, *amenintatoare*, caci evreul devenise “prototipul strainului, al celui alt”². *Strainul*, fiind perceput de multe ori in constiinta colectiva a comunitatilor ca un virtual opozant, a determinat nevoia populatiei evreiesti de a se concentra intr-o comunitate, iar evreului pe aceea de a cauta vecinatatea cu fratele, cu coreligionarul sau, sau de a se putea aseza de-a lungul unei singure strazi, intr-o singura zona din oras. Ghetoul ofera comunitatii sansa de a se auto-izola (si de a-si pastra anonimatul misterios, dar si periculos in acelasi timp), aceasta aspiratie fiind recognoscibila in aproape toate tarile central-europene. Ceea ce se dorea a fi nontransparenta, ascundere de vizibilitate, neobservabilitate ajunge in final sa “sara in ochi”, “sa sperie”, sa apara ca primejdie pentru comunitatea matca. Aceasta “primejdie” evreiasca, resimtita puternic de diversele confesiuni crestine, s-a concretizat si ea arhitectural prin trasarea unor granite vizibile, apasatoare, sinonima construirii zidurilor despartitoare, a portilor inalte, edificate in jurul cartierelor evreiesti, oriunde s-ar fi aflat acestea: in centrul oraselor sau la periferia lor. Dupa ce, in Italia, evreii au fost deposedati de toate bunurile de catre Biserica “...se pare ca abia in 1566 si 1569 s-a adaugat inchiderea efectiva a zonei ghetourilor intre ziduri si inchizatori, circumscriindu-se astfel un spatiu inchis

sever”³. Aceste spatii devin enclave, macro-inchisori, cu un impact major in mentalul colectiv, prin acele narative ce se constituie cu scop pseudo-moralizator pentru comunitatea majoritara. Totodata, ghetourile devin si vor ramine, pina in modernitatea tirzie, si *pattern*-uri arhitecturale conotate negativ, considerate modele de evitat in constructia urbana, separationiste, nedemne de idealul “orasului deschis”.

Comunitatea evreiasca oscileaza intre o nevoie instinctuala, ancestrala aproape, a oricarui om si a oricarei comunitati umane inchise, de apropiere a spatiului locuit sau de situare in prelungirea spatiului (in sensul inradacinarii) si separarea fortata impusa din exterior, avind scopuri punitive sau, in cel mai bun caz, de mentinere a ordinii si echilibrului comunitar, prin plasarea obligata intr-un spatiu ce devenea apasator, sufocant, mereu mai inchis.

Ideea separarii este lizibila chiar din radacinile sau etimologia cuvintului ghetou: *get* inseamna in ebraica *anunt de separare*, chiar daca notiunea de ghetou vine, fara indoiala, din italianescul *geto nuovo*, adica noua turnatorie (de tunuri), ce desemneaza locul primului cartier evreiesc separat in Venetia anul 1516. Acest an marcheaza, probabil, si “institutionalizarea ghetoului”⁴, adica transformarea a ceea ce pentru evrei insemna “refugiul in oras” intr-o insula izolata, printre canalele venetiene. Astfel, “refugiul” devine “exil” si se instituie ca un prim ghetou al modernitatii. De acum, ceea ce era desemnat prin latinesul *Judaeorum*, spaniolul *Juderia*, frantuzescul *Juiverie*, italianescul *Giudecca*,

englezescul *Jenny*, germanul *Judengasse*, polonezul *Ulica Zydowska* devin acum internationalul *ghetou*.

Ideea separarii este totodata materializata si marcata arhitectural prin ziduri, granite brutale intre lumi, intre societati-culturi. Ele transformau adesea spatiul ghetoului in cetati sau orase in orase, marcind ingustimea si strimtoarea paradigmatica definita in termenii lui “aici” si “acolo/dincolo”, simbolizind violenta locuitorilor dintre ziduri si a celor de dincolo de ziduri (dar mai putin a acestora din urma) ce se legitimeaza prin acele metereze din jurul cetatii mereu “pregatite sa faca fata unei permanente stari de asediu”⁵.

“In acest sector al orasului solutia este ascunsa si dificila. E un loc ce se autoexcluse, fiind asemenea unei haine intoarsa pe dos”⁶. Se considera ca, o data cu “orasul deschis” al modernitatii tirzii si al postmodernitatii, nici o cetate sau urbe nu-si mai pastreaza zidurile, acestea fiind “invinse de istorie”, de timp si de mutatiile produse in constiintele indivizilor si comunitatilor urbane, care au realizat ca zidurile “nu-i pot apara de ei insisi”⁷. Se mai spune ca “orasele s-au deschis atunci cind oameni au capatat sentimentul interioritatii, iar raportarea la sine in surpriza necontenitei descoperiri a cistigat teren in detrimentul contrapunerii belicoase fata de celalalt: alt neam, alt tinut, alta cetate”⁸. Dar cum se face atunci ca “zidurile” culturale, frontierele imateriale ramin si sint inca atat de vii in urbele noastre? si cum se face atunci ca semnele linistitoare aparari de ceilalti devin ele in seze spatii atat de locuite?

Blocurile cartierelor noastre, aceste ziduri “domesticite”, cu ferestre mici, ce nu mai ascund arcasi, ci ochi care “securizeaza”, “observa indiscret” (caci indiscretia devine “acea religie neoficiala a societatii blocurilor”⁹) voyeurist uneori orice miscare a vecinului sau a trecatorului. Nu sint ele oare asemenea unor ziduri de ghetou, ce ascund sau mascheaza realitati?!

Aflat *intra muros*, intocmai ca un evreu medieval ghetozat, segregat, locuitorul spatiului urban inscris automat in institutia vecinatatii, in care vecinul “devine din persoana concept”¹⁰, caracteristica oricarui tip de societate citadina, fie ea medievala, fie ea moderna, isi dramuieste libertatea, proprietatea, cit si publicitatea in functie de cel de linga el, de *strainul* de linga el. Si spun *strain* pentru ca, chiar daca ideea constructiilor inalte, de sorginte corbusiana, se dorea a fi un model de *deconcentrare a spatiului*, de eliberare a lui, un spatiu ce se vroia a fi functional, util si cuprinzator, menit sa comunizeze (nu neaparat in sens negativ), se transforma intr-o “viata constrins comuna”¹¹, intr-o izolare treptata, intr-o instituire conceptuala a vecinatatii apasatoare, coercitive: “stringerea la un loc provoaca un efect invers de indepartare, de rupere a relatiilor de vecinatate, de autoclausturare”¹².

Luata in deridere de cultura de “ghetou postcomunist”, aceasta realitate transpare in muzica hip-hop “si s-au facut zeci de blocuri ca sa fim impreuna/sa ne cunoastem intre noi si sa ducem o viata buna” sau „toti traim aici si cartierul este casa” sau „in ghetou convietuieste o anumita clasa/atunci

cind tu te etalezi ca prostul aici te ard in masa”¹³.

Modelul separationist ce este uneori folosit de instrumentarul arhitectural, de constructia zidului (fie el zid efectiv, fie el “frontiera” de cartier sau de periferie) influenteaza cu siguranta comportamentele individuale si colective si formeaza tipuri noi de cultura sau subcultura (*cultura de cartier*, *cultura de ghetou* sau *cultura underground*). In acest sens, conceptul de *subcultura* nu capata neaparat un sens peiorativ, de marcare a inferioritatii, crezut prea des adjudecat si vazut in/prin ruptura sa de mediul fizic in care apare. Ideea nu este una noua, ci, dimpotriva, ea pare a fi una definitorie pentru orice tip de comunitate urbana, caci “si in Evul Mediu cartierele isi aveau “gastile” lor, care se bateau intre ele, cu folclorul si granitele lor”¹⁴.

Este recognoscibila, astfel, o continuitate in contextul ideii de separare: nevoia de organizare a unui spatiu fizic si social echilibrat, securizat, controlabil si controlat, ce se constituie el insusi ca un *altul*, adesea conotat negativ, al oricarui oras. Daca *ghetoul evreiesc* a devenit sub aspect sociodemografic un furnicar, un conglomerat de cladiri, din ce in ce mai aglomerat prin suprapopulare, e posibil ca *ghetoizarea* sa fi urmarit la un moment dat si un scop de aparare, in fata acestei cresteri fortate a natalitatii. Cartierele periferice din orasele comuniste din Centrul si Estul Europei, dar nu numai, (pentru ca tendinte de ghetoizare gasim si in state democratice precum SUA – voi reveni la aceasta mai tirziu) pastreaza acelasi tipar mental-arhitectonic, desi unii pretind ca s-a ajuns aici prin viteza de

constructie si prin neglijarea cerintelor urbanismului de a tine cont de spatii, de distante.

Spatiul ghetoului a ajuns astfel sa fie, de-a lungul vremii, unul labirintic, ce necesita automat initierea. “Cu greu pot fi evidentiata locurile pe unde se poate intra si iesi... in interiorul acestui spatiu te pierzi mereu pentru ca, desi locul e foarte mic, fiecare straduta si intezarire presupune ceva diferit de ceea ce se vede si pasul urmator ramine mereu ascuns. De aceea, este foarte interesant sa studiezi arhitectura acestui loc.”¹⁵ Locul ascuns jumatate in real si jumatate in imaginar, creionat de nesfirsite ziduri si canale de beton este cel care ofera complexitate ghetoului modern sau postmodern. Labirintul aduce cu sine insa si o senzatie negativa de perpetua pierdere, iar aceasta stare tortureaza prin inchidere omul care-l parcurge.

Ghetoul este construit adesea din stradute inguste, marginite si marcate de cladiri mai inalte ce claustreaza, dind senzatia de prabusire in interior si de aglomerari de case sau miniblocuri. Acelasi model il regasim si in “ghetourile” oraselor “noi” din tarile socialismului real.

Ghetoul evreiesc se definea arhitectural prin conectarea caselor, a locuintelor, prin unirea lor unele de altele, prin pasaje si/sau porti pentru a facilita miscarea, raporturile familiale sau de vecinatate. Blocurile lama sau turn, inalte, de cite zece etaje, si lungi, avind cite cinci sau sase scari preiau parca modelul acesta al pasajelor si gangurilor din ghetou, dar totodata mascheaza aglomeratii labirintice, spatii nemodernizate, insiruii prost numerotate de blocuri. Nerecunoasterea si neinitierea in “tainele” acestor

cartiere “incepute si neispravite”, neglijarea posibilitatilor de evacuare putea fi si inca mai poate fi fatala. Acestea presupun practici repetate de initiere. Acest ritual de initiere necesar oricarui *outsider* decodifica un anumit “tribalism” al spatiului, in sensul de salbaticie, de necunoscut. Violenta nu este nici ea la vedere in labirintul ghetoului, ci la ea are acces doar initiatul. Intr-un alt sens, a fi strain de configurarea spatiului, a nu cunoaste geografia gangurilor, a strazilor mici, a scarilor de bloc, a subsolurilor, a santierelor parasite, a pravaliiilor, a maidanelor, locuri de intilnire a microcomunitatilor, grupurilor sau bandelor postmoderne de cartier, locuri ferite de locul voyeurist sau indiferent al locuitorilor ghetoului sau blocului, insemna a nu fi integrat intr-un anumit grup, intr-un anumit “trib” sau “clan” alcatuit, ierarhizat aproape dupa modele organizationale mafiotice (in limbajul codificat de cartier intilnim adesea notiuni precum *ghetto-clan*; iar notiunea de clan duce cu gindul mai degraba la organizatii secrete precum Ku-Klux-Clan-ul ce persecuta negrii in SUA, decit la sensul originar din antropologia clasica) ce te ajuta *sa supravietuiesti*: “si atunci ce sa faci sa supravietuiesti?/te gindesti sa tepuiesti, /te gindesti sa jefuiesti,/ sa te combini si tu la ceva sa iasa in plus/sa faci bani, sa traiesti, sa fii un pic mai sus” sau: “esti legat de anturaj, frate, si el de tine/daca tie-ti merge treaba, si pentru el e bine/dar o sa-ti dai seama intr-adevar daca e tovarasie/atunci cind o sa fie in buzunare doar o mie”¹⁶. Aceasta idee remanenta de supravietuire tradeaza relatii de putere intergrupuri, asemanatoare celei dintre tortionar si

torturat, amintind de acea oprimare fatisa si segregare a strainului sau evreului, de impingere a lui in spatiul *ghetoului*. Ideea de inchidere intre ziduri, de plasare in exterior sau la margine, pe care o aduce cu sine periferia orasului, mahalaua sau cartierul, pe linga zidul bloc de zece etaje ce distinge *cartierul* de *oras*, sau de cartierul nobil de *strada principala* sint probabil elementele care instituie pentru cartier notiunea de ghetou, ca fiind definitorie. Graitoare pentru realitatea saraca dar ascunsă totodata a ghetourilor de azi (romanesti, in special) sint versurile: “Dupa blocuri gri stam noi majoritatea/Sint mai inalte la sosea sa nu se vada foamea”.¹⁷ Blocul insalubru ajunge el insusi sa se instituie ca *ghetou* si totodata sa mascheze spatiul interior al *ghetoului* “*de dupa blocuri*”. Aceasta realitate arhitecturala pastreaza ceva din arhaicitatea notiunii romanesti de *botar*¹⁸, ce implica si aduce cu sine o nevoie tribala de impartire a teritoriului. Spatiul ghetoului, ce claustreaza, induce atitudini de revolta (vezi exemplul negrilor revoltati¹⁹), comportamente individuale violente ce reflecta ca intr-o oglinda impactul spatiului inchis asupra psihicului uman si, implicit, in ceea ce se numeste larg spatiul social.

In evolutia arhitecturii si a necesitatii de spatiu a omului devine transparenta cel putin aparent tendinta moderna de a construi pe verticala, care nu se datoreaza numai unei nevoi atavice de delimitare individuala in spatiu, caci pamintul nu este neaparat suprapopulat ci mai degraba se poate distinge aici o inclinatie inversa de centralizare, de coagulare comunitara. Urbanistii si arhitectii par a gindi inca

orasul in termenii dihotomici opusi de *centru-periferie*, viziune din care centrul este profund incarcat de semnificatii, iar periferia ignorata total ca si cum n-ar exista. Orasele moderne pre- si post-industriale incorporeaza “marginii interioare, periferii aflate chiar in inima orasului, limite ale unor gauri negre, zone de ruptura in structura si tesutul urban”²⁰: santierele permanente, zone vechi paralizate de multiple disfunctii, implanturi straine si instrainante, ce functioneaza si ele ca insularitati negative, ca ghetouri. Se pot distinge aici tentative segregationiste ale centrului urban de a-si ghetoiiza periferia. Intrucit centrul pare a o refuza, din aceasta perspectiva, periferia (cartierul insusi) se constituie frecvent ca “ghetou” al orasului, receptacol al “rebuturilor”, al esecurilor, al paraginii urbane, al saraciei, al industriei poluante si, deci, ca un spatiu exclusiv anti-ecologic. Este ciudata insa aceasta deturnare, pentru ca initial aceste cartiere se doreau a fi septice, ecologice, spatii aproape medicalizate. Ele ajung sa cunoasca insa o evolutie in revers. Chiar daca spatiul ghetoului Evului Mediu si al ghetoului modern, de exemplu, nu se afla neaparat plasat in marginea orasului, el insusi era definit ca o margine, ca o *sub-urbie* si ca o *sub-urbe*, un spatiu nedemn de “maretia” si “mindria” centrului. Ideea de marginalitate, de hotar se pastreaza in conceptul de ghetou, chiar daca nu este marcata din punct de vedere arhitectonic.

Aduceam mai sus in discutie problema apropierei spatiului ghetoului. Ea este comuna atit ghetourilor evreiesti, cit si celor postmoderne, de cartier.

Ghetourile ajung uneori sa se transforme in mici orase prospere – cu conditia ca spatiul sa fie administrat echilibrat: ele se pot constitui ca “*stetl*-uri, tirguri independente, semirurale-semiurbane, cu un substantial aport economic si comercial in regiune”²¹.

Ghetoul medieval si modern convine societatilor evreiesti atita vreme cit acestea acceptau conditia de populatie de rang secund, dar protejata de un sistem de reguli de viata ferme si permanente, de comportamentele comunitare.²²

„...au fost infiintate doua ghetouri; unul mare, care ocupa patru strazi in centrul orasului, si inca unul mai mic, pe mai multe stradute de la marginea orasului. Strada pe care traiam era in ghetoul din centru. Traiam inca in propria noastra casa, dar fiind situata pe colt, a trebuit sa acoperim ferestrele ce dadeau spre strada din afara ghetoului. Am cedat citeva camere unor rude ce fusesera alungate din casele lor. Incet,incet, viata a reintrat in normal. Virtejul, care ne adunase pe toti la un loc, nu ne mai inspaiminta. Din contra, incepusem sa apreciem pozitiv situatia in care ne aflam si sa fim multumiti cu ea. O mica republica evreiasca... Am format un consiliu evreiesc, o politie evreiasca, un oficiu de asistenta sociala, un departament al muncii, un serviciu de salubritate-un intreg aparat guvernamental. Toata lumea era multumita: nu mai trebuia sa infruntam chipurile ostile, privirile pline de ura. Traiam printre evrei, printre frati....Bineinteles ca existau inca momente neplacute; in fiecare zi nemtii veneau in ghetou ca sa ia oameni pentru incarcarea carbunelui in trenuri. Nu erau prea multi voluntari pentru o astfel de munca. Dar, in rest, atmosfera era linistita si incurajatoare. Opinia generala era ca vom ramine in ghetou pina la sfirsitul razboiului, cind ne va

*elibera Armata Rosie si viata va fi din nou ca inainte. Ghetoul nu era condus nici de nemti, nici de evrei, ci de iluzii.*²³

In cartierul-ghetou romanesc, de exemplu, aceste incercari de apropiere a spatiului vin tocmai dintr-o acuta lipsa a lui. Comunizarea care transforma indivizii din proprietari in chiriasi²⁴, plasandu-i pe toti in dependenta de stat, privirea (ce lasa lucrul sa fie, dar il face totodata sa fie al privitorului) devine si ea un mod de apropiere a spatiului, de teritorializare, pe langa cele mult mai concrete de ingradire a spatiului verde sau a celui de joaca din cartier, de montare de dispozitive, de blocare pe locul de parcare, sau de aducere cu macaraua a unui garaj de beton, sau de vopsire a locului de plasare a proprietatii mobile care este masina, pina la violenta cu care bandele, aceste simptome ale “lagarelor culturale”²⁵, isi marcheaza teritoriile (in care, se stie, nu e bine sa pasesti daca nu esti “de-al lor”). Toate acestea redau, in grad ridicat, atmosfera de “tribalism” de care se face vinovata *suburbia* contemporana, ca si ghetoul oraselor moderne.

Desigur, de un anumit “tribalism” pot fi acuzate, intr-o mai mica sau mai mare masura, orice comunitate inchisa. Ideea de ghetou (spatiu ce caracterizeaza orasul in termeni de ruptura) se largeste, deci, treptat, de-a lungul timpului, trecind de la prima acceptiune a sa, de “casa” iudaica sau de “acasa” evreiesc, la o formula ce se extinde si inglobeaza populatii minoritare de alta natura (diferente de confesiune, cultura si rasa) decit cea evreiasca (negri, rromi), precum si grupuri sociale considerate periculoase pentru “siguranta” si “sanatatea” morala a

comunitatii in care se afla (prostituate, hoti, violatori). O data cu trecerea timpului se poate remarca si o crestere in violenta segregationista ce caracterizeaza constructia interioara a spatiului ghetoului.

“Ghetoul rasial, profesional, social (cu monocorde conotatii negative) este antimodelul prin excelenta al orasului de azi”²⁶ spre deosebire de cel evreiesc care, in complexitatea sa, cuprindea in primul rind valente pozitive.

Black Belt (centura neagra), *Pruitt Igoe* din St Louis sau *Harlemul* din New York, cu viata lor libera si dezordonata, prototipuri ale ghetoului negru, nu mai sint arhitectural despartite de oras, nu se delimiteaza prin granite, ziduri reale de beton, ci prin “granite” mai degraba simbolice.

“Traim inghesuiti unul peste altul, si abia ne putem misca. Pericolul este peste tot. Exista prea putina intimitate sau tihna si nu este niciodata liniste. Si lumea ne priveste pe toti ca pe niste cobai, care traiesc intr-o rezervatie ca leprosii... O mahala privata a devenit una publica”²⁷. Aceasta este, cu aproximatie, starea psiho-sociala a ghetoului negrilor, caracterizat in primul rind prin “saracie permanenta”, prin saracie etnicizata, prin insalubritate. Cuvintul ghetou isi pastreaza doar o parte din semnificatiile primordiale, si o data cu ele se conserva deci si ideea de marginalitate, cu omul sau hibrid, marginal, cantonat intr-o cultura a saraciei, chiar si dupa ce acele ghetouri medievale, precum si cele macabre naziste, au fost demult desfiintate. Spatiul ghetoului desemneaza zone clare din orasele industriale nordice din SUA, locuite de

populație de culoare. Conceptul se mentine, deci, intrucat este in continuare vorba de o populație indezirabila, care nu vrea sa traiasca in izolare, dar nu are o alta optiune. Saracia uniformizata impiedica, am putea spune, alegerea locuirii in afara unui cartier nenorocit si uitat de soarta si ea este totodata cea care ghetoizeaza, astazi; etnicul sau confesionalul fac loc altor criterii economice si financiare. Ghetoizarea capata astazi, cel putin in spatiul romanesc, un caracter economic. Cartierul-ghetou se afla deci la interferenta fenomenologica a celui evreiesc european si a celui negru american, imprumutind, din punct de vedere cultural, moduri de manifestare, iar din punct de vedere arhitectural *pattern*-uri antiecologice din ambele modele. Cultura de cartier, suburbana, isi are originile in subcultura neagra americana.

Acea “corectitudine politica”, invita o data cu democratizarea contemporana a arhitecturii si urbanismului schimba, insa, orientarea: dintr-o incapacitate a sa si, implicit, a megapolisului, ce se dorea deschis tuturor *intilnirilor culturale*, se tinde spre realismul acceptarii si asumarii greselilor si vinovatiei de a fi creat *zone crepusculare, intunecate, puncte negre*, precum este ghetooul, cartierul ghetoou, militindu-se spre concepte ca cel de “oras interior”²⁸. Aceasta schimbare de optica, nu doar de natura lingvistica, situeaza notiunea de ghetoou in spatiul argotic.

Pentru subcultura de cartier, hip-hopul, un fenomen strict urban, nu a produs decit un stil de comunicare intr-un spatiu strict fragmentat in care comunicarea este redusa drastic, precum in ghetooul de

azi. Acest mod de comunicare, instituit recent, vorbeste elocvent despre duritatea vietii de cartier-ghetou, tratind probleme si experiente reale, prezentind realitatea asa cum este. Cel ramas fara casa, sau cel „plecat de acasa” in-temeiază, prin marcarea instinctuala a teritoriului, ghetooul ca o noua forma de apartenenta, de inradacinare la/in spatiu. Aceasta marcarea a teritoriului, aceasta delimitare a lui ofera celui ce traieste in acel spatiu-tampon frontiera intre urban si rural sau intre urban si periurban, adica in suburbie, un sentiment de siguranta ontologica, de apartenenta la o comunitate.

Periferia (ghetooul) poate avea uneori o imagine cromatica apocaliptica, dar ea se poate, totodata, insinua ca un *non-spatiu* (in sensul de lipsa de spatiu datorata aglomerarii), in care experienta si simbolul se ivesc cu greutate, intens locuit de oameni ce devin, tocmai din aceasta pricina, preocupati, egocentri, plasati pe verticalitate in blocuri imense, inghesuiti ca intr-un furnicar.

Traiul in ghetoou al tinarului, impreuna cu cei de o seama cu el, creeaza o cultura de cartier ce-l ajuta sa se afirme intr-o lume dura. Tinarul se simte discriminat in aceste cartiere si se autoghetoizeaza adesea, se autoexclue si isi construiește o noua viata, una “adevarata”, “reală”, intotdeauna plina de primejdii in acel spatiu predilect al intimplarii, al imprevizibilului, care este strada. Pentru el, strada este totdeauna mai importanta decit locuinta, iar ghetooul-cartier se constituie ca un spatiu alternativ asumat.

Politicile de segregare, definite de Pierre van den Berghe pe trei nivele: *microsegregarea* referitoare la spațiile publice (piete, parcuri, mijloace de transport), *mezosegregarea*, definită în termeni de vecinătate urbană prin delimitarea strictă a locuirii, și *macrosegregarea* ce se referă la un teritoriu național (apartenența religioasă, etnică, culoarea pielii) caracterizează ghetoul în plurivalenta acestuia și îl face recognoscibil de-a lungul istoriei pînă în contemporaneitate, în aproape orice zonă a Terrei. Ghetourile de azi, avataruri cu precadere ale statelor cu regimuri totalitare, dictatoriale sau autocratice, pot fi descoperite înșă și în state așa-zis democratice, datorită și prin intermediul acestei extensii pe care conceptul de ghetou o dobîndeste. Ambiguitatea și nuanțele sint cheile de lectură pentru spațiul real al ghetoului și pentru conceptul care-l desemnează, acela de ghetoizare.

Note

- 1 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, MacMillan, 1983, p. 82.
- 2 Andrei Oisteanu, *Imaginea evreului în cultura română*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2001, p. 83.
- 3 *Architettura judaica in Italia: ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi*, Flaccovio Editore, Palermo, 1994, p. 333.
- 4 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. cit., p. 82.
- 5 Romeo Popa, *Orasul deschis*, în “Suplimentul de marti al ziarului Observator de Constanta” nr. 28-31, 16 mai 2000, p. 2., http://asalt.tripod.com/a_031.htm (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).

- 6 *Architettura judaica in Italia: ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi*, ed. cit., p. 336.
- 7 *Ibidem*.
- 8 *Ibidem*.
- 9 Mihai Grigore, *Intra-muros*, în “Suplimentul de marti al ziarului Observator de Constanta” nr. 28-31, 16 mai 2000, p. 3.
- 10 *Ibidem*.
- 11 Cristian Oprea, „Cartierul-Ghetto“, în *Architect Design*, nr. 2/2001, http://www.arhitextdesign.ro/ad_2/c6-feb-2.html (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).
- 12 *Ibidem*.
- 13 BUG Mafia – *Dupa blocuri*, <http://www.bugmafia93.50g.com/Texte/Cartierupantelimon.html> (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).
- 14 Mihai Grigore, *op. cit.*
- 15 *Architettura judaica in Italia: ebraismo, sito, memoria dei luoghi*, ed. cit., p. 336.
- 16 BUG. Mafia – *Dupa blocuri*.
- 17 BUG Mafia – *Dupa blocuri*
- 18 Radu Dragan, *Lumile rasturnate*, Ed. Paideia, 2000, p.102.
- 19 Peter Hall, *Orasele de maine. O istorie intelectuala a urbanismului în secolul XX*, Ed. All, București, 1999, p. 447.
- 20 Angelica Stan, „Periferia urbană românească: ruptură și continuitate“ în *Architect Design*, nr. 2/2001, http://www.arhitextdesign.ro/ad_2/c6-feb-1.html (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).
- 21 Andrei Oisteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
- 22 Valentin Protopopescu, „Mahala versus ghetou“, în *Architect Design*, nr. 2/2001, http://www.arhitextdesign.ro/ad_2/c6-feb-3.html (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).
- 23 Elie Wiesel, *Night*, pag. 9, <http://www.efnord.eforie.ro/holocaust/ghetou.htm> (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).
- 24 Augustin Ioan, *Architettura si putere*, film documentar.

- 25 Thrasher 1926, p. 3. *Apud*, Peter Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 420.
- 26 Valentin Protopopescu, *op. cit.*
- 27 Boely, 1978, p. 124. *Apud*, Peter Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 438.
- 28 Harrison Forbes, *Internet in slujba comunitatilor*, in PC Report Nr 97 / Octombrie 2000, <http://www.pcreport.ro/pcrep97/072.shtml> (ultima consultare: 28.08.2002).



Mirela Calbaza-Ormenisan

Spatiul carceral – instrumentalizare excesiva, ocultarea binomului religie-putere

The point of departure of this article is the relation between religion and power. In general this relation is based upon the complex process of individualization and socialization. The scope of this study is to translate the problem of the relation between religion and power in a phenomenological study of „lock-up space” (prison space). The study is organized around the concept of delimitation. This concept involves the spatial dimension of constitutionality on the general forms of a person’s being -in-the-world. Regarding “lock-up space,” two complementary actions are brought into discussion: “obfuscating” the architectural types in the “lock-up space” and the “instrumentalization”(fr.) excessive in this type of space by the increase of the delimitation “mechanism.” Finally, the central problem of this analysis can be formulated in the following way: How can we find the binomial religion-power in the “obfuscating” manner of habitat (at the level of the „lock-up space”)? Does the excessive delimitation in “lock-up space” destroy the balance between individualization and socialization?

Religia si puterea reprezinta doua constante ale omului ca fiinta sociala si ca individualitate autonoma la nivel cultural. La nivelul tematizarii juridice, raportul in care se exprima cele doua constante este instituit gratie relatiilor existente intre Biserica si Stat. Biserica si Statul, Religia si Puterea devin forte unificatoare care tematizeaza procesul complex al socializarii si individualizarii¹. Incercarea de a stabili valente comune intre cele doua constante antropologice deschide posibilitatea de a pune in discutie functionarea acestui proces complex.

In eseu intitulat “Religia si cresterea puterii” Ioan Petru Culianu examineaza rolul socializant pe care l-au avut intotdeauna riturile religioase. Intentia autorului este aceea de a descoperi “lucrul” *comun* intre religie si putere considerate in sens larg.² Demersul

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metodologic imprima o abordare conceptuala a puterii, care poate fi inteleasa atat in sens subiectiv cit si obiectiv³. Semnificatia acordata puterii se concentreaza in primul rind pe “aspectul” subiectiv al acesteia (“pentru noi ea este in primul rind o realitate subiectiva experimentabila de catre subiect”⁴). Afirmind ca sarcina traditionala a religiei a fost aceea de a furniza o arie rituala pentru implinirea individului in conditii socialmente tolerabile⁵, autorul pune in discutie rolul pe care aceasta ar trebui sa si-l asume in conditiile in care riturile si miturile traditiei nu mai reusesc sa-si indeplineasca functia integratoare si compensatorie in Occidentul secularizat⁶. Echilibrarea vointei de putere proprie indivizilor cu exigentele de socializare indica orbita pe care se inscriu cei doi termeni: individualizare si socializare. Antagonismul potential al acestora exprima mai mult decit o relatie duala. “Dincolo” de exigentele unei analize interdisciplinare (de o complexitate extraordinara), se poate trasa un cadru precis de investigare care sa urmareasca modul activ de co-implicare a acestor forte pentru a le evidientia.

In ce sens individualizarea si socializarea traseaza liniile la intersectia carora se poate cauta “lucrul” comun al puterii si al religiei? Cum se poate defini puterea, tinind cont de faptul ca aspectul dublu al acesteia – subiectiv si obiectiv – se pliaza pe caracterul ambivalent al individualizarii si socializarii?

Interdependententa acestor factori ambivalenti se incapatineaza sa mentina caracterul dual la limita unei anihilari reciproce. Puterea se anihileaza in trecerea de

la subiectiv la obiectiv; ea este reafirmata in anihilarea legilor prin opera individului. Maxima putere in sens obiectiv coincide cu un minimum de putere in sens subiectiv. Acest fenomen complex indica dificultatea de a pune in discutie conceptul de “putere”. Ferindu-ne de sintagme periculoase, putem oare analiza cadrele de manifestare ale acesteia, stiind ca nu ne este permisa operatia de asociere? (este evidenta imposibilitatea de a identifica puterea ca atare ca “obiect” vizat si cadrul de manifestare al acesteia ca “obiect” al analizei). Cadrele trebuie sa isi pastreze functia de instrument, avind in vedere caracterul extrateritorial al puterii. Ea nu se poate gasi in spatii privilegiate si circumscrise. Ea irumpe intr-un spatiu social discontinuu si eterogen, fiind difuza, imposibil de asociat cu un loc anume. Daca vorbim despre manifestarile puterii, probabil ca singura sansa de a le percepe este identificarea unui spatiu de “actiune”, pastrind demersul metodologic la limita autoanihilarii, din lipsa unui obiect de studiu ca atare⁷. O propunere in acest sens este aceea de a investiga spatiul carceral, folosind metoda fenomenologica. Astfel, el poate fi considerat ca spatiu de “actiune” al puterii, consientizind faptul ca acesta nu poate sa-si aroge statutul de spatiu privilegiat.

Inchisoarea – “edificiu public” specific

Constituita initial in afara aparatului judiciar, inchisoarea se poate defini ca forma generala a unui aparat destinat sa-i faca pe indivizi, prin intermediul

unor actiuni precise, (distribuirea lor in spatiu, constituirea in jurul lor a unui aparat de supraveghere elaborat minutios, de mentinere a indivizilor intr-o vizibilitate permanenta etc.) sa-si ispaseasca pedeapsa. Puterea punitiva a societatii a reusit sa-si atribuiе, gratie inchisorii, un spatiu special consacrat in care se manifesta, spatiu care devine pedeapsa insasi. Aceasta dubla functionalitate a spatiului de detentie se intemeiaza pe rolul sau presupus sau cerut, cel de aparat de transformat indivizii. Inchisoarea e mai mult decit un spatiu punitiv – ea este o structura reproductiva a societatii. Dublul sau fundament, evidentiat de Michel Foucault, juridico-economic si tehnico-disciplinar⁸, a facut ca inchisoarea sa fie considerata drept cea mai civilizata dintre toate formele de pedeapsa.

Analiza spatiului carceral din punct de vedere fenomenologic reprezinta o varianta de abordare in ceea ce priveste posibilitatea de a elabora un demers care sa propuna conceptul de “putere” ca si corelat intensional.

Dificultatea de a defini “puterea” este tematizata prin co-planaritatea care exista intre acest concept inteles ca act si spatiul de manifestare al acestuia. In acest context, inchisoarea reprezinta spatiul inchis in care puterea inteleasa obiectiv (constringerea normativa) se manifesta. Spatiul carceral nu se identifica cu produsul arhitectural ca atare, respectiv cu inchisoarea, dar in acelasi timp nu este independent de aceasta. Din aceasta explicitare preliminara rezulta necesitatea metodologica de a structura discursul pe

doua planuri: emergenta spatiului carceral prin raportare la obiectul arhitectural “inchisoare”, respectiv emergenta acestuia la nivel intersubiectiv.

Spatiu carceral – inchisoare (obiect arhitectural)

Din punct de vedere arhitectural, inchisoarea poate fi considerata ca o forma ocultata a locuintei, a edificiului public, a “spatiului” religios (biserica). O analiza fenomenologica a acestui produs arhitectural este menita sa puna in evidenta caracterul sau special de obiectualitate .

Inchisoarea, ca si corelat obiectiv al actelor constiintei, presupune o analiza a actului donarii de sens la nivelul sintezei pasive. Trebuie subliniat faptul ca acesta sinteza data prin activitatea actelor perceptivе (ca si cimp perceptiv in proximitatea eului ca si corporeitate) isi corespunde siesi odata cu istoricitatea advenirii sale pe un fond intersubiectiv originar. Conceptul de spatiu carceral trebuie analizat ca spatiu trait, tinind cont de faptul ca obiectul arhitectural in genere poate fi definit ca gestul insusi de a dona (co-dona) un spatiu in vederea locuirii..

Actul de de-limitare este esential in constituirea unui spatiu in genere. El poate fi analizat urmind trei straturi constitutive: fixarea pozitiei prin raportare directa la obiectul ca atare⁹ (in cazul de fata constructia, respectiv inchisoarea); de-limitarea spatiului corpului propriu; constituirea corpului viu, respectiv procesul de instrumentalizare a spatiului¹⁰. Explicitarea acestor straturi constitutive ar necesita o analiza complexa care nu poate fi asumata in acest

context. Ceea ce este important deocamdata este stabilirea modului în care se produce ocultarea tipurilor arhitecturale în ceea ce privește spațiul carceral (nivel intersubiectiv).

Ca obiectualitate aparte, închisoarea se diferențiază de cele trei tipuri arhitecturale. Spațiul arhitectural intim (casa) exprimă o lume a proximității care poate fi denumită *lume familială* (*chez-soi*). Casa descrie sensul cel mai puternic al de-limitării, spațiul devine un “acasă” (*chez-soi*) originar, o proprietate care este instituire prin raportare la ceilalți. Acest tip de raportare suferă o mutație în cazul închisorii. Se produce o alocare de spații – și nu e vorba neapărat despre lipsa intimității, ci de forța cu care sunt impuse regulile de conviețuire: practic, deținuții sunt lipsiți de gesturi prin care să poată institui o lume familială. Este foarte dificil de explicat în ce sens lipsa sentimentului de proprietate, dincolo de o abordare psihologizantă, poate reliefa modul în care spațiul familiar impus nu poate fi denumit *chez-soi*.

Ceea ce deosebește închisoarea de un edificiu public este tocmai rasturnarea principiului gazduirii, specific tipului arhitectural de locuință. În cazul edificiului public, principiul gazduirii apare în calitate de loc care oferă un anumit tip de așezare. El, descoperind sensul obiectual al edificiului public, e re-situat în proximitatea întâlnirii cu celălalt, prin ocrotirea conofertă de acest tip spațial. El exprimă localizarea în comun, care poate fi numită folosind expresia *chez-nous* (o largire a sferei familiale). Ca spațiu public, prin valențele sale de obiect arhitectural, edificiul poate

folosi dialogul cu urbanismul adeseori conflictual între spațiul public și cel privat. Acest conflict este marcat de Norberg-Schulz¹¹, care consideră că edificiile publice sunt cele care intrupează un *Weltanschauung* comunitar cu dezideratele sale și nu spațiul retractilității – muzeul memoriei care este locuința (casa). Conflictul existent între spațiul public și cel privat nu anihilează posibilitatea de a gândi edificiile publice ca reprezentând un mod al locuirii – conflict care în cadrul închisorii tinde să fie abolit.

Spațiul arhitectural religios¹² poate fi considerat ca o largire a spațiului public, ocazionând o modalitate specifică de a acționa împreună, fiind în fond un loc de întâlnire. El este totuși un *chez-nous*, dar investit cu alte conotații spirituale. Se intensifică o relație complexă la întrepătrunderea a două “abilități” ale corpului: calitatea lui de liber miscător în virtutea căreia face experiența unei exteriorități tridimensionate volumetric (dănd astfel spațiul “interior” al obiectului arhitectural de factură religioasă) și o transmutare a acestei abilități în “puterea” eului corporal ca suport al senzațiilor, ca centru în jurul căruia se grupează spațiul sacru. Donarea unui “Altul Absolut” nu este propriu-zisă, el e vizat ca trăire potențială “schită” în intenționalitatea creatoare de sens, o schitare nemărturisită, ci doar invocată în încercarea de a-l tematiza (un Altul, adică o absență care, depozată de loc, se poate “traduce” la nivelul superior al constituirii ca *chez-lui* apersonal). Problema care se impune este dacă spațiul carceral descrie trecerea de la puterea religiei la religia puterii. Imaginea care poate

insoti aceasta idee este cea a detinutului intr-un proiect de penitenciar, care isi face rugaciunea in celula sa, cu fata intoarsa spre turnul central de supraveghere.

Raportat la cele trei concepte, propuse in cadrul analizei tipurilor arhitecturale, *chez-soi*, *chez-nous*, *chez-lui* *apersonnel*, spatiul carceral ar putea fi conceptualizat gratie termenului *chez-nous impersonnel*. Constituirea unui spatiu in genere corespunde gestului de a trasa, de a de-limita. Determinatiile acestui gest pot fi exprimate prin notiunile de forta, energie, miscare, flux. Ele determina gestul arhitectural ca putere originara de a instrumentaliza spatiul in vederea locuirii. Gestul constituant nu poate fi localizat: ca de-limitare pura el este dis-locarea ca atare, deschidere. Paradoxal, spatiul carceral nu oculteaza locuirea ca modalitatea insasi a omului de a fi in lume prin slabirea gestului de a de-limita, ci prin accentuarea acestuia, respectiv prin instrumentalizarea excesiva a locului. A locui nu este o simpla fixare de pozitie ci o “minuire” a spatiului, o instrumentalizare ¹³.

Astfel reies doua aspecte ce caracterizeaza spatiul carceral. Asociat produsului arhitectural ca atare, conceptul de putere se legitimeaza la nivelul unei forte impersonale ce deriva din modalitatea de “a fi in” lume.

Pe de alta parte, specificitatea locuirii fiind ocultata printr-un proces de instrumentalizare excesiva, ea pune in discutie urmatoarea intrebare: este pina la urma spatiul carceral un cadru de slabire a puterii? In acest spatiu sint comprimate (comprimare care evident altereaza) cele trei tipuri arhitecturale: locuinta,

edificiu public, biserica. Nu e vorba numai de o diluare vadita a puterii individuale gratie normelor rigide care il controleaza, ci si de o rasturnare a constituirii de-limitative care tinde sa fie destituita din rolul sau de a dona spatiul.

Potrivit lui Foucault, evolutia puterii penale cunoaste, la cumpana dintre secolele al XVIII-lea si al XIX-lea, trecerea spre o penalitate de detentie. Functia penalitatii continue asumata de politie si de sistemul penitenciar marcheaza tendinta de a abstractiza violenta legitima (se elimina supliciu), punind totodata accentul pe supraveghere si terapie. Conform analizelor intreprinse de Foucault, supravegherea se manifesta de la inceputul modernitatii (proces menit sa substituie pedepsirea). Acest proces se inscrie in nevoia statului de a controla in mod profitabil acest nivel de manifestare a ilegalitatii. Eficacitatea supravegherii impune un mecanism al alterizarii pe care “partajul penal” (despartirea delincventului de societate) il exprima.

Comprimarea tipurilor arhitecturale in cadrul spatiului carceral corespunde nevoii de a re-crea la nivel micro o societate complexa, abolind co-implicarea fireasca a acestora in decursul unei “istorii”. In acest caz, echilibrarea vointei de putere proprie indivizilor cu exigentele de socializare devine imposibila. Cei doi termeni, individualizare si socializare, nu pot sustine, dincolo de antagonismul potential dintre ei, mai mult decit o relatie duala. Aparent, sarcina traditionala a religiei de a furniza o arie rituala pentru implinirea individului in conditi

socialmente tolerabile, a fost preluata in cadrul spatiului carceral, de catre aparatul normativ minutios elaborat, aflat in slujba puterii juridice. In contextul general al Occidentului secularizat, Statul, a carui functie sociala si psihologica este diferita de cea a religiei, si-a asumat sarcini care in mod traditional erau rezervate acesteia. Aceasta preluare este viciata la nivelul spatiului carceral. Instrumentalizarea excesiva a spatiului face imposibila preluarea acestei sarcini. Cadrele socializante sint create artificial in acest context; cadre care, la nivelul societatii in genere, sint regasite in ea insasi, cea din urma nefacind decit sa le constientizeze.

In final, este necesara schematizarea drumului parcurs. Problema spatiului carceral a fost tratata pe fundamentul relatiei existente intre cele doua constante ale omului ca fiinta sociala – religia si puterea. Punind in discutie rolul socializant al religiei, precum si sensul obiectiv si subiectiv al puterii, ne situam in “miezul” procesului complex al socializarii si individualizarii. Scopul analizei spatiului carceral in acest context este acela de a reliefa o modalitate de tematizare a relatiei religie-putere. Conform analizelor intreprinse, au fost aduse in discutie doua procese complementare: ocultarea tipurilor arhitecturale in spatiul carceral, respectiv instrumentalizarea excesiva a acestui “tip” spatial prin accentuarea “mecanismului” de de-limitare. Avind in vedere spatiul restrins alocat acestui scop, precum si dificultatea unei asemenea analize care se situeaza in proximitatea dublei noncoincidente spatiu carceral-obiect arhitectural (generic considerat inchisoare), spatiu carceral-putere,

concluziile se pot formula deocamdata doar in maniera interogativa. Astfel, problema centrala a analizei se poate formula astfel: in ce masura se regaseste binomul putere-religie in maniera ocultata a locuirii? In ce sens este implicat in acest cadru procesul de secularizare? Excesiva de-limitare ce caracterizeaza spatiul carceral distruge echilibrul dintre socializare si individualizare?

NOTE:

1 Riturile religioase pot constitui o arie de implinire a puterii in dublu sens de integrare si compensare: “Transcendenta este constituita de grupul insusi, de asezarea lui ecologica si de istoria lui; toate aceste sint exprimate in mituri si reluate prin rituri. In societatile pdeudospecifice, incepind cu initierile de pubertate, o intreaga retea rituala acopera in intregime existenta individului, cu scopul de a-l face sa recunoasca normele, de a-l include in societate, de a-i aminti in orice clipa ca face parte dintr-o cultura cu motivatie transcendentă. Riturile de acest fel se pot numi integratoare”. “Contrar riturilor integratoare, aceste rituri compensatorii stavilesc efectul daunator al refularilor psihice produse de constringerile sociale, permitind descarcarea tensiunilor acumulate in cadrul unei societati.” I. P. Culianu, “Religia si cresterea puterii” in Gianpaolo Romanato, Mario G. Lombardo, Ioan Petru Culianu, *Religie si putere*, Ed. Nemira, Bucuresti, 1996m p.182, 183.

2 Gianpaolo Romanato, Mario G. Lombardo, Ioan Petru Culianu, *Religie si putere*, ed. cit., p.164.

3 Puterea in sens subiectiv, care este experimentabila in diverse moduri in functie de cultura de apartenenta a individului, ramine constant, in modul ei de manifestare si dincolo de orice fel de justificare ideologica, o modificare de stare interna

suferita de individ sau de colectivitate, printr-o investitie de natura variabila. *Ibid.*, p.164.

4 *Ibid.*, p.198.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 227.

6 Statul, din punctul de vedere al functiei sale sociale si psihologice, se diferentiaza de religie. Sistemul de productie occidental axat pe relatia putere-avere ignora dimensiunea subiectiva a puterii. Se constata doua fenomene complementare: inlaturarea frinelor inhibitoare ale religiei si neputinta statului de a controla fortele obscure care s-au descatusat. “Agresivitatea care se dezlantauie in tarile Occidentului reprezinta fenomenul cel mai alarmant al epocii noastre si totodata incheierea unui lung drum istic si cultural”. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

7 Nu se urmareste gasirea unui spatiu privilegiat al puterii. Modul de manifestare al acesteia poate fi insa analizat prin trasarea unui cadru precis – in cazul de fata fiind vorba despre spatiul carceral. Puterea “circumscria” spatiului carceral poate fi obiectivata – in sens fenomenologic – pastrand rezerva acordarii statutului de obiect. La limita, ea nu poate deveni obiect fara trasarea unor cadre precise – dar, desi aceasta incadrare este posibila, ea trebuie sa isi pastreze statutul de instrument instaurat la nivelul dublei non-coincidente spatiu carceral-produs arhitectural (denumit generic inchisoare), spatiu carceral-putere.

8 Michel Foucault, *A supraveghea si a pedepsi*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1997, p. 345.

9 Am propus conceptul de de-limitare ca si constanta in procesul de constituire a lucrului in scris in situatia de vis-à-vis a subiectului care percepe si a lumii, urmind indicatiile husserliene in *Chose et Espace. Leçons de 1907*, P.U.F, Paris, 1989.

10 Pentru constituirea corpului viu ca si centru al orientarii, vezi E. Husserl, “L’aperception de la corporéité spatiale (Raumkörperlichkeit) de mon corps vivant en tant que présupposition de l’empathie” in *Autour des Méditations Cartésiennes* N° 15, Ed. Millon, Paris, 1998.

11 Ch. Norberg-Schulz incearca sa reintroduca spatiul ca dimensiune existantiala prin circumscrierea relatiei locuire-loc, dezvoltind tema cultivarii prezentata anterior de Heidegger in “Construire, locuire, gindire” *Genius Loci (paysage ambiance architecture)*, Ed. Pierre Mardaga, 1981.

12 Ioan Augustin invita cititorul in lucrarea “Spatiul Sacru”, Ed. Dacia, Cluj, 2001, la o dezbatere in profunzime a temeiurilor pe care se fundamenteaza intreaga tema a spatiului sacru.

13 E. Husserl a dat un fel de definitie a instrumentelor in sens originar acestea fiind obiecte fizice prin care se prelungeste corpul viu intr-o maniera “finalizanta”. A instrumentaliza in acest context releva de maniera in care la nivel spatial se produce o apropiere a lucrului prin transformarea orientarii in zero (o abolire a distantei astfel incit corpul viu isi pastreaza identitatea).

Calcul sau Credinta? Aplicatii ale teoriei alegerii rationale in studiul religiei

The theory of rational choice is one of the most recent paradigms for the study of religion that strongly argues against previously dominant approaches such as the secularization thesis. The theory relies on more or less acceptable assumptions drawn from economic models of rational behavior, and offers interesting explanations or predictions supported by an impressive amount of data. The innovative approach introduced by the advocates of rational choice is a shift in focus from the demand side to the supply side of religion, emphasizing religious entrepreneurs and competing churches that act rationally in a religious market. In spite of the criticism directed to their assumption, the ambiguousness of the utility concept, the male centered perspective, or the total disregard of the influence of emotions when making decisions, the theory of rational choice remains one of the most serious challenges to alternative theories of religious behaviour.

introducere

Pana nu de mult studiul religiei a fost dominat de teoria secularizarii. Conform acesteia, modernitatea, cu aspectele ei de industrializare, urbanizare, si rationalitate, era perceputa ca reprezentand principala cauza a un prezumtiv proces de secularizare. Pietatea individuala si trairea religioasa privata ar fi trebuit sa devina principalele forme de practica religioasa. Impactul stiintei asupra religiei s-a presupus ca va avea un efect covarsitor iar secularizarea a fost vazuta ca un proces ireversibil. In fine, teoria secularizarii ar fi trebuit sa poate fi aplicata la nivel global. Multi autori astazi considera toate aceste reprezentari si predictii ca fiind nefondate si eronate (Stark 1999).

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Una dintre alternativele cele mai coerente, mai inclusive din punct de vedere explicativ, si mai usor de supus unei investigatii critice bazate pe date empirice, masurabile, este cea a teoriei alegerii rationale. Vazuta de unii ca o forma de colonialism intelectual practicata de economisti sau de cei care sustin modelele economice, sau, si mai specific, de economisti barbati, modelul alegerii rationale are in mod indiscutabil, cred, rezultate provocatoare care merita cel putin supuse atentiei.

obiective

Sutinatorii interpretarii religiei bazate pe comportamentul rational al actorilor sociali isi propun cateva obiective foarte indraznete, poate prea indraznete. In mod declarat, ei incearca crearea unei unitati in stiintele sociale, unitate ce ar gravita in jurul modelului alegerii rationale si reintroducerea in stiintele sociale a modelelor deductive. De asemenea ei spera in abandonarea completa a teoriei secularizarii si in inlocuirea ei cu explicatiile lor care, din punctul lor de vedere, au capacitatea de a face predictii corecte despre procesele sociale la orice nivel, fie el individual, al gospodariei, organizational sau societal. Avand o viziune popperiana a stiintei, avocatii alegerii rationale reproseaza majoritatii celorlalte modele explicative ale dinamicii religioase faptul ca nu sunt decat clasificari *post hoc* ce nu reusesc decat sa descrie un proces dupa ce a fost observat. In opinia lor, orice teorie explicativa trebuie sa porneasca de la afirmatii abstracte si generale in baza carora sa se poate deriva

prin inferente logice propozitii care raspund la intrebarea „de ce?” iar apoi predictiile oferite de aceste propozitii sa poate fi coroborate sau invalidate empiric (Young 1997, Stark 1997). Elementul cel mai novator si mai provocator dupa parerea mea este schimbare cu 180 de grade a analizei de la cererea la oferta de natura religioasa.

Si fiindca vorbim de cerere si oferta, asa cum va asteptati de la orice discurs inradacinat in teorii economice, vocabularul acestuia este colorat de o terminologie economica; astfel, „bunul” credincios devine un actor rational in cautarea maximizarii utilitatii, preotul sau misionarul devin antreprenori religiosi, biserica devine o organizatie religioasa orientata spre profit, iar relatia dintre biserici devine o competitie intr-o economie religioasa care se supune legilor pietei.

Din deja impresionantul volum de literatura care a fost publicat de catre teoreticienii alegerii rationale in sfera religiei, am ales sa va prezint cateva propozitii mai generale, iar apoi ma voi apleca asupra recompenselor si a compensatorilor religiosi, asupra magiei si religiei, asupra schimbului dintre oameni si zei si, in cele din urma, asupra economiei religioase

propozitii generale

Primele propozitii pe care Stark si Finke le ofera in volumul intitulat „Acte de credinta. Explicarea laturii umane a religiei” publicat in anul 2000 sunt:

P1. Oamenii inearca sa faca alegeri rationale in limitele informatiei si intelegerii lor, constransi de optiunile disponibile, si ghidati de preferintele si gusturile lor.

P2. Oamenii sunt fiinte constiente, dotate cu memorie si inteligenta, care sunt capabile sa formuleze modele (explanations) despre modul in care recompensele (rewards) pot fi castigate si costurile (costs) evitate.

D1. Modelele sunt simplificari conceptuale sau reprezentari ale realitatii care adeseori ofera proiecte ce ghideaza actiunea umana.

P3. Oamenii inearca sa evalueze modelele pe baza rezultatelor lor si le pastreaza pe acelea care par a fi cele mai eficiente.

Trebuie remarcate cateva puncte importante continute de aceste propozitii generale. In primul rand ele exprima ceea ce autorii inteleg printr-un comportament rational: o activitate orientata in mod consistent catre atingerea unui obiectiv care este de fapt obtinerea unei recompense si evitarea unui cost. In al doilea rand, alternativele se evalueaza si se compara pentru a fi memorate si utilizate cele mai eficiente. In al treilea rand este recunoscuta o dimensiune subiectiva care limiteaza alegerile. Ea este data de informatia disponibila individului si de puterea lui de intelegere. In ultimul rand, se admit si constangerile de tip structural (cum ar fi pozitia individului intr-o retea sau intr-un grup, constrangeri care, la randul lor, fac unele alegeri posibile in timp ce elimina altele.

recompense si compensatori religiosi

Unul dintre cele mai importante concepte introduse este conceptul de compensator sau inlocuitor (*compensator*). Stark (intr-o lucrare editata de Lawrence Young in 2000 si intitulata „Teoria alegerii rationale si religia”) defineste compensatorii ca substitute pentru recompensele pe care oamenii le urmaresc. Compensatori ofera explicatii, metode, sau retete daca vreti, despre cum se pot obtine recompensele sau alternativele lor echivalente. Ceea ce caracterizeaza aceste metode este faptul ca presupun din partea oamenilor actiuni indelungate si laborioase, a caror validitate nu poate fi stabilita in momentul actiunii. Un exemplu simplu este o bicicleta pe care si-o doreste un copil si pe care parintii i-o promit daca de-a lungul unui intreg an isi va face curat in camera si va lua numai note bune. Bicicleta reprezinta recompensa iar modul de comportament dorit de parinti si necesar pentru obtinerea bicicletei este compensatorul. Ceea ce diferentiaza recompensa de compensator este faptul ca recompensa este cea dorita in timp ce compensatorul este modul de a obtine recompensa.

Definitia formală a compensatorilor propusa de Stark si Bainbridge (1987) este:

D18. Compensatorii (compensators) sunt postulari de recompense in concordanta cu modele (sau explicatii) care nu sunt susceptibile imediat la evaluari univoce.

Oamenii prefera intodeauna recompensele si nu compensatorii, dar acestea nu sunt intotdeauna

disponibile pentru toti oamenii iar altele nu sunt disponibile deloc, aici si acum, pentru nimeni. In sfera religioasa un exemplu ar fi imortalitatea, salvarea, sau mantuirea. Multe religii ofera instructiuni cum pot fi atinse aceste recompense ultime. Odata ce un individ credincios isi doreste mantuirea si incepe sa urmeaze metodele propuse pentru obtinrea ei, putem spune ca el a acceptat aceste metode ca si compensatori.

Exista doua tipuri de compensatori: specifici si generali. Compensatorii specifici substituie o recompensa unica, cei generali substituie un grup de recompense sau recompense mai importante si de o anvergura mai mare.

Un ultim lucru ar mai trebui adaugat despre recompense si compensatori: partizanii modelor alegerii rationale nu isi propun sa discute in nici un fel valoarea de adevar a recompenselor si compensatorilor religiosi iar din interpretarile pe care le propun nu se poate deduce validitatea sau falsitatea acestora.

magie si religie

Un prim exemplu de aplicare a teoriei alegerii rationale pe care vi-l propun este despre magie si religie. Mai intai cateva definitii:

D22. Religia se refera la un sistem de compensatori generali bazat pe presupozitii despre supranatural.

D23. Organizatiile religioase sunt institutii sociale al caror principal scop este de a crea, mentine si oferi la schimb compensatori generali bazati pe supranatural.

D52. Magia se refera la compensatori specifici ce promit sa ofere recompensele dorite fara a implica dovezi despre mijloacele folosite.

Pornind de la presupozitiile si definitiile prezentate anterior Stark si Bainbridge, in volumul intitulat „O teorie a religiei” publicat in 1987, au propus urmatoarele propozitii:

P91. Magia este mult mai vulnerabila decat religia la invalidari.

P92. Nu este in interesul specialistilor religiosi sa riste invalidarea compensatorilor pe care ii ofera.

P93. In timp, specialistii religiosi vor tinde sa reduca volumul de magie pe care il ofera.

P94. Atat timp cat cererea de magie continua dupa ce specialistii religiosi au incetat sa o mai ofere, altii se vor specializa in oferirea ei.

Se observa in cazul acestei propozitii gandirea de tip economic conform careia acolo unde este cerere se creeaza si oferta care sa vina in intampinarea ei.

P96. Magicienii nu pot cere altora sa se angajeze in forme de schimb stabile si de durata.

Pe de alta parte, specialistii religiosi pot cere aceste forme de angajament.

P97. In absenta unor forme de schimb stabile si de durata, o organizatie compusa din magicieni si membri laici nu poate mentinuta.

P98. Magicienii servesc clienti individuali; ei nu vor conduce organizatii.

P99. Magicienii sunt mult mai putin puternici decat specialistii religiosi.

Ultimele propoziti enuntate sunt in concordanta cu faimoasa teorie durkheimiana despre biserica si magie. Durkheim sustinea la inceputul secolului trecut ca nu exista biserica a magiei. Magia, pentru el, era compusa din rituri, mituri si dogme, la fel ca si religia. Ceea ce diferentiaza magia de religie este accentul pus pe obiectivele tehnice si utilitare care ii sunt specifice si absenta interogatiilor de tip teologic. Intre magicieni si reprezentantii bisericilor exista o ostilitate declarata. Durkheim mai scotea in evidenta si faptul ca magicienii nu au decat relatii accidentale si tranziente cu clientii lor, la fel ca cele dintre doctori si pacientii lor (Stark 1997, Durkheim 1912).

schimburile cu zeii

As dori sa va prezint in continuare un grup de propozitii si definitii care, impreuna cu alte deductii asupra carora nu vom avea timp sa ne aplecam, sugereaza explicatii si predictii foarte interesante legate de evolutia reprezentarii zeilor si a relatiei oamenilor atat cu zeii cat si cu reprezentantii lor pe pamant. Aceste explicatii si predictii se sprijina in mare parte pe „schimbul” care exista intre oameni si zei si pe disponibilitatea cunoscuta a oamenilor de a evita sau amana pe cat posibil costurile, pe de o parte, si de a mari pe cat posibil recompensele, pe de alta parte. Urmatoarele propozitii au fost propuse de Stark si Finke in 1987.

P4. Oferta de recompense, incluzand si pe cele care nu tin de universul observabil, este intotdeauna limitata.

P5. *In masura in care recompensele sunt rare sau nu sunt disponibile deloc, oamenii vor tinde sa formuleze si sa accepte modele pentru obtinerea lor intr-un viitor indepartat sau intr-un alt context ce nu poate fi verificat.* (cu alte cuvinte, vor alege compensatori).

P6. In cautarea recompenselor oamenii vor incerca sa utilizeze si sa manipuleze supranaturalul.

P7. *Oamenii nu vor recurge la supranatural daca alternative mai ieftine si mai eficiente sunt cunoscute si disponibile.*

Aceste propozitii sunt consistente cu teoria lui Malinowski conform careia pescarii din insulele Trobriand folosesc magia numai cand ei nu au la dispozitie alte mijloace de a-si atinge scopurile intr-un mod direct. Ei nu foloseau magia ca sa curete pamantul de buruieni inasa o foloseau atunci cand vremea era nefavorabila. De asemenea, cand pescarii studiati de Malinowski porneau la pescuit in laguna unde nu existau riscuri iar pestele se gasea cu siguranta ei nu simteau nevoia recurgerii la magie. Cand, inasa, urmau sa pescuiasca in largul marii, ceea ce presupunea riscuri mari si incertitudinea succesului, ei recurgeau intotdeauna la magie (Stark 1997, Malinowski 1948).

Dar sa continuiam grupul de propozitii legate de schimbul cu zeii

P8. In incercarea de a obtine recompense, oamenii vor cauta sa intre in relatii de schimb cu zeii sau cu dumnezeu.

D5. Religiiile sunt constituite din modele generale ale existentei ce includ si termenii schimbului cu zeii sau cu dumnezeu.

P9. Cu cat este mai mare numarul zeilor venerati de un grup, cu atat este mai mic pretul schimbului cu fiecare dintre ei.

P10. In schimburile cu zeii oamenii vor plati un pret cu atat mai mare cu cat zeii sunt perceputi a fi mai de incredere (dependable).

D6. A fi un zeu de incredere inseamna a te putea baza pe el ca isi va tine promisiunea si va avea un comportament consecvent in relatia sa cu oamenii.

D6a. Zei buni sunt acei ze care vor sa permita oamenilor sa aiba schimburi profitabile cu zeii.

D6b. Zei rai sunt acei ze care vor sa pacaleasca oamenii sau sa impuna schimburi ce rezulta in pierderi pentru partenerii de schimb umani.

D6c. Zei inconsecventi sunt acei ze care alterneaza imprezibil intre atitudini bune sau rele fata de oameni.

P11. In schimburile cu zeii, oamenii vor plati un pret mai mare in masura in care zeii sunt perceputi a fi mai receptivi (responsive, in original).

D7. A fi receptiv inseamna a fi interesat de oameni, a fi informat despre ei, si a actiona in numele lor.

P12. In schimburile cu zeii oamenii vor plati un pret mai mare in masura in care zeii sunt perceputi a avea o anvergura (scope) mai mare.

D8. Anvergura unui zeu se refera la diversitatea puterilor lui si la aria sa de influenta.

P13. Cu cat anvergura zeilor este mai mare (si cu cat sunt mai sensibili), cu atat este mai plauzibil ca ei vor oferi recompense ce tin de lumea-de-dincolo. In

mod contrar, schimburile cu zeii de anvergura mai mica vor tinde sa se limiteze la recompense lumesti.

P14. In cautarea recompenselor lumii-de-dincolo, oamenii vor accepta relatii de schimb extinse.

D9. O relatie de schimb extinsa este una in care oamenii fac plati periodice de-a lungul unei perioade substantiale de timp, adeseori pana in momentul mortii.

P15. In cautarea recompenselor lumii-de-dincolo, oamenii vor accepta relatii de schimb exclusive.

D10. O relatie de schimb exclusiva este una in care oamenii pot face schimburi cu un singur zeu (si cu zeii subordonati acceptati, cum ar fi ingerii).

D12. Organizatiile religioase sunt institutii sociale al caror obiectiv primar este de a crea, mentine, si oferi religie unui set de indivizi si de a sustine si monitoriza schimburile lor cu unul sau mai multi ze.

P16. Oamenii cauta sa amane plata costurilor religioase.

P17. Oamenii cauta sa minimizeze costurile religioase.

P18. O organizatie religioasa poate pretinde membrilor un angajament extins si exclusiv in masura in care ofera recompense ce tin de lumea-de-dincolo.

Dati-mi voie sa rezum si sa reformulez ideea care mi se pare esentiala in propozitiile pe care tocmai le-am enumerat. Oamenii sunt cu atat mai dispusi sa plateasca un pret mai mare pentru recompensele dorite si oferite de zeii cu cat zeii sunt mai receptivi si mai de incredere. Prin urmare, din punctul de vedere al organizatiilor religioase care administreaza „schimbul”

cu zeii, divizarea zeilor in zei buni si zei rai este necesara. In acest fel, specialistii religiosi pot impune o relatie de schimb destul de costisitoare, indelungata si exclusiva intre credinciosi si zeul cel bun si pot pune pe seama zeului cel rau toate inadvertentele dintre teorie si realitate, dintre efort si rezultat. Supravietuirea si cresterea organizatiilor religioase depinde, in ultima instanta, de disponibilitatea membrilor lor de a accepta costurile acestor schimburi.

economia religioasa

Cu aceste idei am patruns in zona predictiilor legate de economia religioasa. Sfera religioasa, din punct de vedere al organizatiilor si credinciosilor, fie ei deja afiliati sau in cautarea unei afilieri, este conceputa de teoreticienii alegerii rationale ca o piata a carei functionare este supusa legilor cererii si a ofertei. Iannaccone, un economist specializat in studiul economiilor religioase, considera ca la temelia oricaror judecati despre dinamica pietii religioase trebuie sa stea principiile de baza ale teoriei alegerii rationale, si anume: comportamentul in scopul maximizarii, echilibrul pietei si preferintele stabile (Iannaccone 1997).

Sustinatorii teoriei alegerii rationale considera ca monopolul religios, asa cum este cazul unei unice biserici nationale, este in detrimentul economiei religioase din punctul de vedere al participarii si al eficientei. Pluralismul religios, conform acelorasi autori, stimuleaza activitatea pietii religioase iar diversitatea religioasa acopera alternativele asteptate de cererea

religioasa. In contrast, monopolul religios, mentinut prin reglementarile statului (cum ar fi subventionarile sau interdictiile) are ca si consecinta producerea unor bunuri religioase scumpe si inferioare calitativ. Competitia religioasa inlatura antreprenorii religiosi incompetenti, care altfel ar fi mentinuti in functie in cazul unui monopol, si conduce la o promovare activa a bunurilor religioase care vor fi create in functie de dorintele clientilor religiosi si nu a unor elite religioase impuse ierarhic (Sherkat si Ellison 1999). Din aceste cauze, sustin teoreticienii alegerii rationale, in Statele Unite, unde avem pluralism religios, activitatea religioasa este foarte dinamica, in timp ce in Europa, unde avem monopoluri religioase, nivelul participarii este extrem de scazut. Finke ne reaminteste cum, de exemplu, in Japonia, imediat dupa cel de-al doilea razboi mondial, sau in Coreea de Sud, dupa plecarea japonezilor, a avut loc o inlaturare a reglementarilor si interdictiilor. Efectul a fost aparitia, „ca ciupercile dupa ploaie”, a nenumarate religii si organizatii religioase noi. In contrast, Germania de dupa razboi nu a renuntat la reglementarile religioase si, prin urmare, nu a trait aceeaasi efervescenta religioasa. In Suedia, un alt exemplu, 95% dintre toti suedezi sunt membri bisericii Suedeze, dar numai 2% din populatie participa la slujbele de duminica. Conform unui episcop din Stockholm, biserica suedeza „este ca un oficiu postal... oamenii nu se imbulzesc inaintea cand se deschide... Ei sunt doar fericiti ca exista.” (Finke 1997, p.50).

limite ale modelului

Teoria alegerii rationale, în ciuda discursului de o logică impecabilă, are câteva puncte nevralgice. Partea cea mai vulnerabilă criticii este zona presupozitiilor care, conform naturii lor, sunt considerate adevărate prin convenție. Unele presupozitii sunt, la prima vedere, de bun simț și nu cred că cineva dintre noi s-ar îndoi de validitatea lor. Altele, însă, sunt foarte discutabile iar importul acestora din teoriile despre comportamentul economic mi se pare abrupt și nejustificat. De exemplu, Iannaccone consideră că bunurile religioase implică un risc iar una din presupozitiile lui de bază este că prin diversificarea angajamentelor religioase oamenii reduc riscul asociat cu recompensele vizate. Cum ar veni, „duminică te confesezi, luni consulți un medium, și joi mergi la meditația transcendentă” (Iannaccone 1997, p.36). După părerea mea, diversificarea unui portofoliu este un comportament învățat și nu natural, comportament pe care numai anumite categorii de oameni îl practică. În cazul în care avem de-a face cu viziuni religioase despre lume și viață, diversele variante religioase oferă reprezentări diferite și uneori contradictorii și mi se pare improbabil că un om credincios să își poată rezolva disonanțele cognitive doar de dragul diversificării. Ideea însăși de crez devine lipsită de semnificație iar comportamentul religios, cu sau fără existența celorlalte lumi, nu cred că poate fi despartit de presupozitia că o parte dintre credincioși într-adevăr cred în ceea ce religia lor propovăduiește.

Un alt exemplu ar fi presupozitia numărul 12 a aceluiași autor despre reprezentanții bisericii, ea constituind una dintre presupozitiile pe care se bazează modelul economiei religioase. Conform lui Iannaccone, reprezentanții religioși sunt motivați de aceleași interese personale ca și indivizii laici (Iannaccone 1997). Aceasta presupozitie necesită o rafinare sau o explicitare pe care încă nu am găsit-o în lucrarea sa. Despre ce interese sau motivații este vorba? Cu cât ne apropiem mai mult de nivelul biologic și ereditar al ființei umane, cu atât presupozitiile noastre legate de motivațiile umane pot capăta o generalitate mai mare. Dar, oare, instinctele și nevoile noastre sunt cele la care se referă Iannaccone? Putem, pornind de la ele, să deconstruim comportamentul social și modelele culturale pe care le observăm, în special în economia religioasă?

În general, tipul de critică adus de marea majoritate a autorilor pe care i-am consultat nu invalidează teoria alegerii rationale în mod integral ci o consideră corectă, în parte, dar cu importante limite. Principalele corectii ce se aduc sunt legate, în primul rând, de natura umană care este mult mai complexă decât este ea presupusă în modele alegerii rationale, emoția fiind unul din cele mai importante elemente de personalitate ignorate complet. În al doilea rând, valorile, bunurile, și deciziile religioase pot fi și de o altă natură decât cele obișnuite, „lumesti”. În al treilea rând, teoria alegerii rationale gravitează în jurul unei concepții despre om care se potrivește mai curând barbatului decât femeii. Dar să le luăm pe rând.

In primul rand, noile teorii in stiintele sociale incep sa faca din ce in ce mai mult loc emotiei in explicarea comportamentul uman. Noile modele vorbesc despre un tip diferit de inteligenta, o inteligenta emotionala, despre cum emotiile pot fi generate de actiuni rationale, despre cum actiuni rationale pot deriva din emotii, sau despre cum deciziile rationale si emotiile pot fi legate de procese mult mai adanci in fiinta umana. De exemplu, in cazul angajamentelor religioase, emotiile folosesc pentru a oferi credibilitate sau stabilitate acestor angajamente. Emotiile pot bloca actiuni ce par rationale pe termen scurt dar care pot fi in detrimentul nostru pe termen lung.

In al doilea rand, conceptul de utilitate nu este definit si ambiguitatea sa face imposibila observarea si masurarea sa. Utilitatea, in conceptia avocatilor alegerii rationale, se refera la orice actorii sociali aleg ca sa maximizeze. Randall Collins scoate in evidenta faptul ca modul in care preferintele individului se formeaza nu este luat in considerare suficient si sugereaza ca actiunea rationala este generata, din nou, de emotie. Pentru Collins principala utilitate care trebuie maximizata este energia emotionala degajata de legaturile stranse si densitatea de interactiune dintre membrii unui grup. Comportamente ce altfel ar parea irrationale pot fi explicate prin nevoia de maximizare a acestui tip specific de utilitate (Collins 1993). Michael Hechter considera ca exista doua tipuri diferite de bunuri sau valori: cele instrumentale (cum ar fi puterea sau bogatia) care sunt folosite pentru a obtine alte bunuri, si cele imanente care reprezinta bunuri in sine

care sunt dorite pentru ele insele, neavand o valoare de schimb. Luind in considerare aceasta distinctie, Hechter scoate in evidenta faptul ca presupozitia universalista conform careia actorii rationali au aceleasi agende utilitare este corecta numai in cazul bunurilor instrumentale insa ea este eronata in cazul celor imanente. Autorul invocat sustine ca fiecare actor rational are o agenda utilitara diferita si ca anumite bunuri imanente nu se pot obtinute contra unor bunuri instrumentale, iar bunurile religioase intra exact in aceasta categorie. Daca orice bunuri imanente ar putea fi obtinute din bunurile instrumentale, atunci primele nu ar avea nici o consecinta pentru comportamentul uman. Un exemplu de influenta a bunurilor imanente asupra deciziilor este modul in care oamenii fac alegeri atunci cand se confrunta cu dileme: valorile instrumentale devin secundare si decizia finala este luata in concordanta cu ierarhia personala a bunurilor imanente (Hechter 1994).

In al treilea rand, presupozitiile modelor alegerii rationale sufera o critica pertinenta si din partea curentelor de gandire feminista. Paula England scoate in evidenta faptul ca modele economice neoclasice privesc lumea prin ochii barbatilor, punand accentul pe rolurile si caracteristicile ce au fost in mod traditional asociate cu barbatii si ignorandu-le pe acelea ce au fost asociate cu femeile. In plus, aceste modele ignora inegalitatile dintre sexe si sursele lor. O distinctie importanta pe care o ofera literatura feminista se refera la cea dintre un sine separat si autonom, specific barbatului, si un sine conectat si relational, specific

femei. Presupozițiile teoriei alegerii rationale îl iau în considerare doar pe primul și îl ignoră pe cel de-al doilea și, împreună cu el, o întreagă etică a grijii și a răspunderii (*care* – original) față de celălalt care ar fi asociată cu femeia. De asemenea, constrangerile structurale, care apar în unele presupozii ca mai apoi să fie ignorate cu totul, au o influență mult mai mare asupra deciziilor pe care le iau femeile față de cele pe care le iau bărbații (England 1989).

În ciuda tuturor criticilor valide aduse teoriilor alegerii rationale, în general, și a aplicării acestora în explicarea dinamicii religiei, în particular, există câteva aspecte a caror utilitate cred că trebuie recunoscută. În primul rând, spre deosebire de vechea teorie dominantă a secularizării ale caror predicții au fost infirmate, teoria alegerii rationale se bucură de o impresionantă evidență empirică. În al doilea rând, ea reprezintă o desprindere importantă de la abordările centrate pe studiul cererii religioase, și mă refer în special la teoriile din psihologie care pun un accent foarte mare pe experiențele personale ale individului, cum ar fi anomia, disperarea, frustrările, stările modificate ale conștiinței, etc., ca factori esențiali în înțelegerea alegerilor religioase reduse la strategii de a face față unor situații de dezechilibru. În al treilea rând, modelele de alegere ratională aplicate economiilor religioase sunt testabile spre deosebire de modele alternative, cum ar fi cele psihanalitice sau fenomenologice, care nu pot fi falsificate prin raportarea lor la realitate.

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The Reasons of the Tragic Events in Fergana in the Summer Of 1989

(Based On the History of Relations
between the Nations of the Former Soviet
Union)

The relations between peoples, nations, is a complicated social and political problem all over the world. This problem has its own history, perspectives, and phenomena in every country. In the former Soviet Union, the relations between peoples were very difficult. More than 130 nations belonging to various ethnic groups lived in the country. During its history, the Soviet government has practiced colonial, powerfully chauvinist politics. By carrying out its 'betrotal' politics, the state limited the possibilities of nations to experience normal economic, political and spiritual development. Many obstacles were put in the way of the development of national culture and national self-consciousness. The true intentions of this politics were al-

ways hidden from the world community. During these decades the propaganda apparatus of the Soviet State always said that in the USSR the national issue was solved fairly and correctly, based on the principles of equality and equal rights of the nations. Despite the increased propaganda followed by extremely rigid repressive measures, the nations continued their struggle for their own interests, honor, and dignity. This led to a degeneration of the situation year by year. These consequences may be clearly seen in the 80's when they led to conflicts among the nations in the USSR. We mention the youth demonstrations of Yakutiya and Kazakhstan against unfair national politics, clashes between the Armenians and the

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Azerbaijanians in Nagorno Karabakh, bloody clashes in Baku, Sumgait, and Tbilisi in the summer of 1989, the anti-soviet actions in Moldova, and in the republics of the Baltic area. As a result of this unrest hundreds of people have lost their lives.

There was also bloodshed between the Uzbeks and the Meshetin Turks in Fergana valley of Uzbekistan in May, June of 1989. The reasons for the Fergana valley (Uzbekistan) tragedy have to date not been thoroughly studied. In the literature available these events are described as clashes between Uzbek and Turk mafia youth groups. This interpretation of the Fergana tragedy has become very common in most of the research papers on the subject.

In our opinion, the Fergana events of 1989 are not the result of national conflicts between the Uzbeks and the Turks. The arguments of our position on this issue are based upon the following facts. The former Soviet Union politics of the Party and the Power were always directed to create tension between the nations and the nationalities. The Soviet power, operating on the principle “divide and rule”, always pursued a policy aimed at stirring up hatred and mistrust among the nations, thus weakening the possibility of them uniting into a single front of struggle against the Soviet Empire.

It is known that for many centuries, the Meshetin Turks lived in the southern regions of the Adiginsk, Askizinsk, Ahaltsinsk districts of Georgia, which is their motherland. For thousands of years their ancestors lived there. Their motherland was on the border

with Turkey. The Soviet State deported natives from these border regions and colonized Russian speaking populations there. In the summer of 1954 the Meshetin Turks, such as the Tatars from Grimea, and other nations of the northern Caucasus region were accused of high treason and within two hours were forced to leave their motherland and emigrate to Central Asia. People from Russia and Georgia were resettled in their abandoned homes. This was considered genocide of hundreds of thousands of people. They were mostly deported to different regions of Uzbekistan. The Soviet power planned forcibly to assimilate them with the local Turkish speaking population. In the early years of the resettlement the Meshetin Turks lived in difficult conditions. They didn't have political rights, nor the opportunity to develop their language, culture and traditions. Their children were educated in local schools. They were always under the supervision of NKVD workers. They were restricted from moving from one village to another. As a result of difficult economic conditions of life, and because of the lack of medical care, most of the adult population died in the early years of the resettlement.

The Uzbek people always offered support and help. Ties of relationship had established between the Uzbeks and the Turks. These are due to the sameness of religion, similarity of the two languages, cultural traditions and national psychology. From 1994 to 1999 there was not a single conflict between the Uzbeks and the Turks. Most Turks lived in the Fergana valley where the social-economic situation had worsened in

the second half of the 80's. The monoculture of cotton, the difficult ecological situation, the growth of unemployment, and the worsening of the living conditions of the people were reflected in the relations between the nations.

In 1970, approximately 1,698,493 people lived in the Fergana valley, of which 1,138,763 lived in the countryside. The Fergana valley was one of the most populated areas of Uzbekistan. In this republic an average of 34.4 people inhabited 1sq. km of land. As for the Andijan region alone, 1 sq. km of the area was inhabited by 321.3 people. High demographic growth deepened the difficulty of the economic situation.

Beginning with the second half of the 60s, the Meshetin Turks demanded to return to their own motherland. In the second half of the 80s, this movement had extended and had taken a mass character.

The soviet authorities had no intention to allow them to return to their motherland. This caused mistrust and conflicts between the Turks and the Uzbeks. This is why the main cause of the tragic events in Fergana should not be sought in the hatred between the Uzbeks and the Turks, but rather in the national policies of the Soviet power. The policies of the Soviet power were aimed at suppressing the struggle of peoples for human rights. The clashes between the Uzbeks and the Turks started in the city of Kuwasay on May 23rd, 1989, and spread to the towns of Tashlak, Margilan, Fergana, and Kokand. On June 3rd more than 3,000 people participated in the clashes in Tashlak. As a consequence of the tragic events, 103

people died in Fergana. 58 of the victims were Turks and 36 were Uzbeks. 1,011 people were wounded. 757 houses, 27 state buildings, and 255 vehicles were burnt. More than 5000 Meshetin Turks were settled in military camps situated not far from Fergana. The Soviet press of that period blamed the Uzbeks for those bloody clashes, characterizing them as nationalists hostile to other peoples.

False rumors were spread about the Uzbeks, who allegedly wanted to expel Russians, Tatars, Jews, and other nationalities from Fergana valley. As a result of these rumours, the true goals of the Turks to return to their homes, as well as the difficult socio-political, and economic situation in the Fergana valley, was hidden from the international community. Having succeeded in orchestrating the bloody clashes in the Fergana valley, the authorities wanted to use the Meshetin Turks as a cheap labor force in the central regions of Russia. It is well-known that in central regions of Russia the conditions of life are harsh and that this had forced the rural population to move to other towns, including some regions of Central Asia. In the second half of the 80s there were more than 900.000 deserted houses in the rural regions of Central Russia. This situation was clearly seen in the regions of Pskov, Bryansk, Orlovsk, Smolensk, Yaroslavl, Kirov and others. The Meshetin Turks deported from Uzbekistan were resettled in these regions. By June 10th, 1988, there were 2.839 people resettled into the Belgorod region. 16.282 people were resettled into the Smolensk, Orlovsk, and Voronez region. In this way

the Soviet authorities settled Meshetin Turks in this large territory of Russia, isolating them from the others, inflicting a heavy blow to their ability to return to their Motherland. In the unpopulated areas of Russia, the Turks didn't receive any help, or support from the government; they found themselves in difficult conditions. The Meshetin Turks didn't have any opportunities to educate their children nor to develop their culture. Their religious sentiments were in jeopardy. They lived in areas lacking any Muslim spiritual institutions. They were also isolated from other Turkish-speaking peoples of the USSR.

In short, the hard working Meshetin Turks have twice faced a national tragedy over a period of just 50 years.

The Question of Henotheism

(A contribution to the study of the
problem
of the origin of all religions)

“ To; lakwnivzein ejsti; filosofei’n ”.
“Brevity is the soul of wit”.
(Hellenic proverb).

“ Antiquitas sine veritate
vetustas erroris est ”.
(St Cyprien, *Epistula* 74).

The existence of henotheism in ancient religion is a historical fact, the detailed study of which contradicts the accepted scientific position on the question of the origin of religion. Furthermore, it puts the problem into a new perspective and casts doubt upon the “monism of dilemma”: polytheism or monotheism? (1) What, then, is henotheism? (2) Where can it be found? (3) What does it consist of? The three parts of this study are concerned with the examination of these questions.

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1. Henotheism is a neologism, yet it may be defined and described as a form of religion which was ignored until a century ago. For the majority of scientists, henotheism is identified with polytheism. However, it is different from polytheism, though in fact it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between them.

Henotheism was a form of worship of a Supreme God, unique among and above a number of other gods. Superlative adjectives were used to characterize the highest god, such as “Supreme”, “jAnwvtato», “{Uyisto», “Super-God” (hochgott), and “Summus”. This Supreme God is a universal principle, and together with the other inferior Gods can be understood as a whole in the form of the henotheistic religions.

The phenomenon of henotheism can be observed in the Indo-European pantheons; nonetheless, is this phenomenon a “post-polytheistic” or “post-monotheistic” one? In other words, since there are three forms — monotheism, polytheism and henotheism — could we consider the problem of the origin of primitive religion as being actually a trilemma : monotheism (the Bible), polytheism (the majority of scientists of religion) or henotheism (Max Müller) ?

In 1870, Max Müller said that the primitive form of Vedic religion (Hinduism) was henotheism. While the country in which it was born was India, one may find traces in Greece, Italy and Germany. The importance of Müller’s discovery is not fully appreciated to-

day, and has been disregarded for the last century. Only general discussion concerning this subject characterize the critical works devoted to it. L. Philippiadis agrees with him about the form of henotheism, but says only that it was a “transitional stage”.

2. In the history of religion, events show a progressive emergence of “*elementa numina*”. Henotheism originated in this context. A comparative analysis of the religions in Asia (the cradle of religion), Africa, and Europe points out that henotheism was a common religious characteristic for a prolonged historical period.

It was Max Müller, in his “Origin and development of Religion” (London 1870), who discovered for the first time the existence of henotheism in Hinduism in Asia (Rig Veda). This discovery helps us to identify the same structures which can be traced in other religions. In Mesopotamia, for example, different peoples have religions with a supreme god, who represents the most important henotheistic characteristic. In Africa, especially in Egypt, the same basic henotheistic form can be found, yet bearing another typical characteristic: the political element. In other words, there is a monarchical structure in political life paralleled by henotheism in religion. When the Pharaoh or his capital city changed, the supreme god also changed. However, the basic form of religion remained the same. In certain religions in other parts of Africa, henotheism

can be traced (among the Pygmies, Boschimans, Bantous, etc.) because of the easily identifiable concept of a supreme god.

In Europe, henotheism is easier to recognize. It would be a mistake to say that Hellenic religion was polytheistic: it was henotheistic from beginning to end. The most important supreme god is Zeus, who created the other gods of the Hellenic pantheon. Besides the twelve main gods, there are inferior gods and demi-gods. Their chronological existence automatically gives rise to the temporal henotheistic pyramid. Similarly, the Roman religion has the same structure, with a supreme god (*“Summus Deus Superus Juppiter”*). Henotheism was also characteristic of the Roman religion in the beginning; then, during the era of Augustus, a rapid religious evolution took place throughout the Roman empire, the form of which was kathenotheism, which later became a polytheistic religion.

3. This short comparative study of Religion has one purpose : to underline in practice the most important elements which can be identified in henotheism, which is itself an historical event. This being so, the question is posed again: what was the primitive form of Religion? Obviously, the old question “polytheism or monotheism?” provoked a polarization within the science of religion, and therefore independent studies on this subject were undertaken. However, they are

not independent or antithetical positions — there is rather an evolutionary relation between them, and the “vital link” is henotheism. This is why L. Philippidis said that henotheism is a “transitional stage”. Yet, from which form to which? Is it from Ppolytheism to monotheism or from monotheism to polytheism ?

Polytheism is not a creation “ex nihilo”; it is the consequence of an evolution — following human inclination — and a “cancer” in primitive religion. Polytheism is a “non-formal multiplication of cells”! Polytheism came into existence when other gods appeared around the unique God of monotheism, and this “single god” became a “Supreme God”. It was at that moment henotheism was born. It was characterized by a hierarchy of gods, at the top of which was the “Supreme God” (*“Primus inter inferiores”*—one among inferiors). Henotheism was followed by another, limited in time, religious form: kathenotheism. In this form, the “Supreme God” of henotheism is suppressed, because every god is “unus inter pares” (one among equals). This identification of all gods with the “Supreme God” prepared the way for the wider adoration of the equal gods of polytheism. In kathenotheism, there are many “unique gods” — many personal gods; it is a “monotheism in plural”. This form is clearly found in both the Vedic religion and the Roman one. Then, after kathenotheism came polytheism, where all Gods became equals. Therefore, the progression “monotheism-henotheism-kathenotheism-polytheism” is the correct order and expresses the correlation between them.

Polytheism signifies “a plurality of gods,” and henotheism also means “a plurality of gods” but in a different way: it deals with a monotheism which was enriched by the progressive addition of new gods. It betrays and attests an increase in and a multiplication of gods. This increase developed from an arithmetical progression to a geometrical one. In the long run, henotheism is a syncretism.

All the Indo-European religions were more or less characterized by henotheism in a particular period of their history. The archetype of henotheism was found in a human conceptualization which was reflected by the human reality and inclination: there is an alternation between religious and political life.

Henotheism was a “monotheism in principle and a polytheism in fact”, a human inclination, a religious form, a religion, a monarchical polytheism, a “presidential republic” (Max Müller), a “transitional stage” (L. Philippiadis), an inferior form of monotheism and the “dawn” of polytheism.

The aim of this brief essay on religion is that of discovering the direction (*fora*;-*phora*) of the historical evolution of religion. The dominant, yet problematic orientation in the science of religion today is based on a false foundation, because in fact we are dealing with a historical evolution, and henotheism is an interval or a transitional stage between monotheism and polytheism. The science of religion officially ignores this his-

torical religious phase and continues to neglect its existence. However, henotheism contains the key, the “Ariadne’s thread”, regarding the problem of the origin of religion.

It can be said, therefore, that Henotheism brings out the direction (*phora*) of religious evolution. Monotheism was the first form of religion, followed by the human addition of inferior gods and demi-gods, which led to the emergence of henotheism. Then the equalization of gods (kathenotheism) came, and at that moment polytheism — in its particular sense — was born. Of course, this description could be considered a simplistic over-generalization, but it is a genuine conclusion of the foregoing study. This direction (*phora*) of evolution is logical because it is historical.

But henotheism is not only concerned with the origin of religion. In fact, it is a human tendency. That is why within the church, we also have henotheism, which the Quinisextus Ecumenical Council *in Trullo* (691) called “heterotheism” (Canon A) and other ecumenical councils sometimes called “heresy” (cf. Arianism). But this is a topic for another study...

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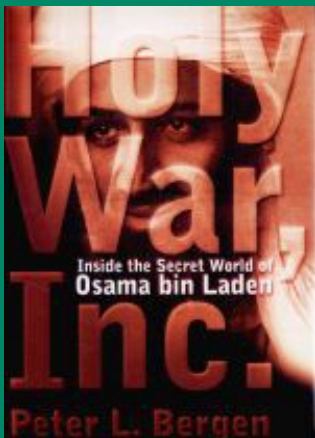
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Horatiu CRISAN

Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden*, The Free Press, New York, 2001, 300 p.

The book of Peter L. Bergen, journalist and analyst of problems of terrorism for CNN, was intended to appear during the summer of this year, but the events of September 11 rushed its publication.

In the book approximately ten chapters we won't find a philosophical or sociological analysis of the international phenomenon called terrorism, but rather an exhaustive narration of the events provoked by terrorists and of actual encounters and interviews with members of different Arab militant organizations. The book is a sort of long news report involving political details, biographies of Islamic militants, and critical analyses of U.S. government decisions concerning the Middle East.

Indeed, one of the book's interesting qualities is its lack of a speculative perspective on terrorism, the departure point being the meeting and the interview that Peter L. Bergen had with Osama bin Laden in 1997 in Afghanistan.

The book's prologue is dedicated to this risky interview which took place several hundred kilometers from Jalalabad in an area controlled by bin Laden which is non-identifiable on the map due to precau-

tions taken by the members of al-Qaeda. It was then that, for the first time, bin Laden declared to Western journalists that American civilians could become targets in the war waged against them in the country of the two Holy places (Mecca and Medina), that is, in Saudi Arabia. The reason for this is that the leader of al-Qaeda was opposed to the American military presence on the Holy land of Arabia, which was a result of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and furthermore because he considered the Saudi monarchy as apostate after accepting the American presence. Bin Laden's purpose being the restoration of the ancient *kehalifate*, beginning from Afghanistan, in which the community of Muslims (*umma*) would live under the rule of the prophet Muhammad like in the seventh century, any foreign presence, civilian or military, especially American, is intolerable, as even the prophet insisted.

The idea sustained by Peter L. Bergen in his analysis of the organization directed by bin Laden is that al-Qaeda can be regarded as a huge international company, a holding founded in 1989 (which marks the moment when terrorism becomes entirely private). This new kind of organization relies only on private funds, being therefore very different from Middle East terrorist movements in the seventies and eighties, which were under the patronage of a state.

In the first chapter, entitled "*While America slept*", we find a brief analysis of the September 11 tragic events, which revealed the fragility of the American defense system.

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The second chapter, “*The Afghan Jihad: The Making of a Holy Warrior*” describes the event that motivated the foundation of al-Qaeda, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, when 25,000 Arabs from different countries came to fight the Soviet infidels. The meaning of the war wasn’t at all political for them, but rather spiritual, and the Muslims saw that the Russian super-power was not invulnerable. The help of Arab volunteers was in fact not so important, the number of the Afghan mujahedeens being between 175.000 and 250.000. It was the financial help that the Saudi Arabia and the United States offered, together amounting to about six billion dollars, which really bolstered the anti-Soviet effort.

It is this covert financing, and the CIA’s initial denial of any implication in the Afghan War, that is studied in the third chapter “*Blowback: The CIA and the Afghan War*”. Although bin Laden never met with the CIA and was never funded by the CIA, the United States did fund the Afghan war indirectly, the CIA using Pakistan’s Inter Services Intelligence Agency which decided what faction should get the money, the training and the weapons. The more Islamic and pro-Pakistan factions received the help, which eventually led the United States to conclude that it wasn’t in its best interest to keep financing anti-American Islamic factions. But the author suggests that the U.S. didn’t do anything about the situation. Like other Islamic organizations, in the early eighties bin Laden declared that his next enemy in his Holy war would be the United States. The American help turned against

America, which is the *blowback* from the chapters title. For example, the Stinger anti-aircraft hand-held missiles were not all used against Russians, and are even now in the hands of various anti-American organizations.

The fourth chapter treats the period which bin Laden spent in Sudan after the end of the Afghan war. He set up an extraordinary range of companies, transforming al-Qaeda into *Holy War, Inc.*, salaries for members ranging from \$ 500 to a top rate of \$1200. It was in Sudan that some members wrote the Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad, which also existed in a CD-ROM version, and which contained 800 pages about weaponry and 200 pages on how to mount terrorist and paramilitary attacks. In May of 1996 the leader of al-Qaeda returned to Afghanistan with his family because of the pressure put by the U.S. and Egyptian governments on the Sudanese authorities. The indirect consequences of this move will prove to be disastrous, especially for the United States.

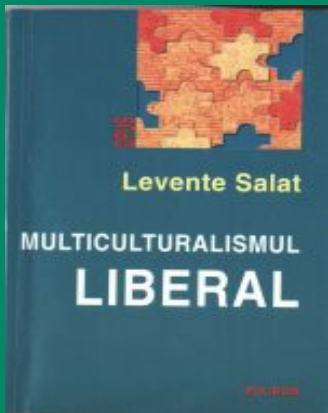
These consequences are explained in the sixth chapter, “*Investigation and Retaliation: The Embassy Bombings*.” The nearly simultaneous suicide truck bombings of the American embassies in Tanzania’s capital Dar es Salaam and Kenya’s Nairobi were a result of the experience bin Laden gained in Sudan. The seventh chapter, “*The American Connection: From Brooklyn to Seattle*” describes one of the proofs of the international power and reach of al-Qaeda, in the person of the Egyptian Ali Mohamed, who managed to infiltrate the special forces of the U.S. army in Fort Bragg, North

Carolina. The U.S. can therefore be regarded as an operational base for al-Qaeda, which recruited, raised funds, and even trained militants on American soil.

In the eight chapter we find an explanation of the survival of al-Qaeda despite the American 1998 Tomahawk missile attacks after the embassy bombings and the U.N. sanctions on Afghanistan: the Taliban. The Taliban sheltered bin Laden and al-Qaeda because of their ancient punkhtunwali code in which unconditioned hospitality and asylum are two base concepts. He in fact needed not only the protection of the Taliban, but also their religious authority in order to legitimize his own attacks, since fatwas could only be delivered by mullah Omar. Even during the Second World War they protected several hundred German soldiers and didn't turn them in. Other terrorist acts committed by the so-called Afghan Arabs in Yemen are described in chapter nine, "*The Holy Warriors of Yemen.*" These were the Afghan Arabs who were brought by the Yemenites into their country after the end of the Afghan war in 1989: Syrians, Jordanians and Egyptians who would have been arrested in their home countries for fighting in Afghanistan. The most known attack and the first ever perpetrated on an American war ship, the U.S.S. Cole, took place in Aden, killing seventeen marines and causing losses totaling about a quarter billion dollars.

The final chapter, "*The Global Network: Around the World in Eighty Jibads*", brings the story to conclusion. Al-Qaeda was growing all the time and is probably still growing by englobing or supporting other organiza-

tions in countries such as Egypt (especially the Egyptian Jihad whose leader was Ayman al-Zawahiri, now a central figure in al-Qaeda), Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kashmir, Philippines, and Cecenia, or by extending its bases even into Western countries. The interest of the book resides in this sequence of facts that traces the history of al-Qaeda from a very small supportive organization for the Arab warriors in the Afghan war to a multi-national "holding" which is one of the most important opponents of American capitalism and world securization since September eleventh.



Salat, Levente, *Multiculturalismul liberal: bazele normative ale existenței minoritare autentice (Liberal Multiculturalism: the Normative Bases for a Genuine Minority Existence)*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2001

“The thesis of this book is Kymlicka’s theory which provides a doctrinal basis that will help solve the “Madison question,” Jefferson’s, Tocqueville’s and Mill’s dilemma, and will enable us to identify the premises for democracy in a multicultural society”.

This is how Mr. L. Salat describes the topic he will deal with in his book. The author asks himself whether democracy is in our days able to insure an equal proportional representation of the citizenship given the fact that there are countries characterized by a great cultural diversity, and in light of specialists conclusion that there is a huge gap between the interests of the communities and their actual representation at the institutional level. Mr. Salat believes that the theory proposed by the Canadian philosopher Will Kymlicka may offer a possible solution.

In the first part of his book, the author analyzes the ethno-political conflicts around the world, which have as background the claims made by various ethno-cultural groups, which come into conflict with the interests of the dominant group or of the nation-

state; thus underlining the actual dimension of the problem. Mr. Salat then draws the readers attention to the theoretical framework employed by important researchers to describe and characterize ethno-political conflicts, as well as to the most frequent ways of managing and resolving these conflicts. In this writer’s opinion, this section of the book is important because it makes one grow aware that ethno-cultural peace and world stability should be founded on the principles of ethno-cultural justice and equity.

Holding such a conviction, in the second section of his book Mr. Salat advances the discussion about Will Kymlicka’s theory on multiculturalism. Kymlicka advocates a change of paradigm in international community orientation. He states that the traditional human rights can fully operate provided that these rights be improved by the addition to them of new community rights. Mr. Salat thinks that Kymlicka’s liberal theory on minority rights is the sole solution able to accommodate the system of minority rights with individual human rights, and thus, able to explore the constraints which have to be imposed in order to enforce minority rights so that these rights will not transgress the principles of individual freedom, of democracy, and that of social justice.

The author goes on presenting the conceptual bases for Kymlicka’s theory. This terminology will enable analysts to grasp the meaning of the problem regarding ethno-cultural equality. Although multiculturalism is a feature of the contemporary world and stands for a reality which more and more

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people have grown aware of and recognize as such, when it comes to defining what multiculturalism *is*, one may encounter some difficulties, since it connotes various things to different people. With Kymlicka, multiculturalism engenders a societal culture (inclusion of the institutions both from the private and public sphere within a predefined territory and a common language); the recognition of the right of minorities to their own societal culture, and realizing that different ethno-cultural communities need different kinds of rights which must be in accordance with their community features.

Mr. Salat underlines that Kymlicka considers his liberal theory of minority rights an attempt in integrating within the framework of traditional liberalism the normative consequences of the forms of a differentiated citizenship which exist in contemporary liberal democracies. This stands for rethinking the liberal principles that are not seen in opposition with the minority rights, or specific group rights. This is viewed as the sole alternative for an effective equality between minorities and the majority.

An important aspect of ethno-cultural inequality and injustice is the fact that the members of the dominant cultures may freely enjoy cultural belonging, whereas the members of the minority cultures have to struggle in order to achieve it. A possible solution would be, to Kymlicka, the acceptance of cultural belonging as primary goods and also the system of differentiated rights. This writer's belief is that the liberal theory of minority rights is able to guarantee equality

among groups, as well as freedom within the groups as it ensures the validity of the individual's principles of autonomy and social equity, corresponds with liberal values and eliminates dominance and oppression of one group over others. Moreover, ethno-cultural equity presupposes differentiated forms of citizenship; that is, the concept of citizenship is defined by its lack of unity in a world characterized by an ever increasing diversity.

However, Kymlicka's theory is submitted to harsh criticisms, which Mr. Salat does not overlook. He discusses them in the third section of his book. It is also in this section that the author discusses the influence and the relevance of Kymlicka's theory in the Romanian cultural context, and mentions several Romanian authors who have also elaborates studies concerning this theory.

The last section of the book deals with the normative consequences of the liberal theory of minority rights in contemporary political philosophy. The conclusion the author comes to is that the conditions for democracy becoming possible in a multicultural society are cultural freedom and a continuous negotiation of differences.

Mr. Salat's "Liberal Multiculturalism: the Normative Bases for a Genuine Minority Existence" is the first book in Romania which attempts to present and explain what liberal multiculturalism is about. By writing this book, Mr. Salat is trying to introduce a topical issue of political philosophy into the Romanian cultural context, and to integrate our culture among the world cultures.

Ioan Chirila, *Fragmentarium exegetic filonian*, Editura Limes, Cluj, 2002, 174 p.,

Filon este unul dintre cele mai fascinante personaje din istoria culturii occidentale. El apartine, cronologic si ideatic, la doua lumi pe care le strabate prin biografia sa: cea dinainte de Hristos si cea a perioadei de început a creștinismului. În filosofia evreiasca, Filon Iudeul sau Filon din Alexandria reprezinta momentul cel mai înalt al devenirii elenistice a spiritului iudaic. Doua sînt dimensiunile care structureaza universul discursiv al lui Filon: traditia religioasa a iudaismului si filosofia greaca. Shlomo Pines arata ca marele merit al lui Filon este, pe de o parte, de a imprima gîndirii evreiesti amprenta culturala si intelectuala a epocii, iar pe de alta parte de a arata ca, în cea mai mare masura, notiunile grecesti erau inaplicabile la spiritul iudaismului si, ca atare, ele trebuiau resemnificate în raport cu profunzimile pe care sensul alegoric al textului biblic le reveleaza.

Acest efort trebuie vazut în cazul lui Filon ca unul de restituire a unei traditii ancestrale. Dan Cohn-Sherbok pune în evidenta faptul ca toate încercările filoniene de a pune în acord traditia biblica cu cea filosofica au ca premisa ideea ca înțelepciunea grecilor, ca si cea a altor popoare, exprima în esenta sa o învatatura evreiasca originara, pierduta în timpul exodului, dar care s-a transmis prin intermediul persilor

si caldeenilor, ajungînd în cele din urma la greci si la romani.

Dupa cum releva si Julius Guttman, Filon era convins ca dezvoltînd sistemul sau filosofic nu face altceva decît sa releve înțelesul cel mai profund al iudaismului.

Cu toate acestea, Shlomo Pines argumenteaza în mod convingator faptul ca, desi Filon este cea mai reprezentativa figura a filosofiei evreiesti antice, gîndirea sa pare sa nu aiba nici o influenta semnificativa asupra filosofiei evreiesti ulterioare. Exegetul arata ca influenta decisiva a lui Filon se manifesta asupra gîndirii crestine fara ca perspectiva filoniana sa marcheze etapele ulterioare ale dezvoltarii gîndirii iudaice si chiar fara a fi prea bine cunoscuta în mediile evreiesti.

Nu este de mirare faptul ca teologii crestini au simtit mereu o profunda fascinatie în fata gîndirii lui Filon. Este destul sa amintim ideile filoniene esentiale pentru a înțelege baza filosofica oferita de acestea gîndirii crestine. Un istoric al gîndirii evreiesti, Jacob B. Agus încearca sa sintetizeze continutul acestei filosofii în trei puncte: “1. Dumnezeu prin el însusi este transcendent universului si tuturor calitatilor pe care le poate concepe spiritul omului; 2. Dumnezeu a creat ideile ca ‘modele’ si ‘puteri’ ale lucrurilor existente si logosul ca instrument ce îmbratiseaza totul, le contine, le modeleaza si le modifica dupa voia sa; 3. prin logos Dumnezeu reglementeaza lumea, schimbînd legile naturii dupa voia sa”. Daca pe acest fond ideatic vom încerca sa ne reamintim locul central pe care îl ocupa

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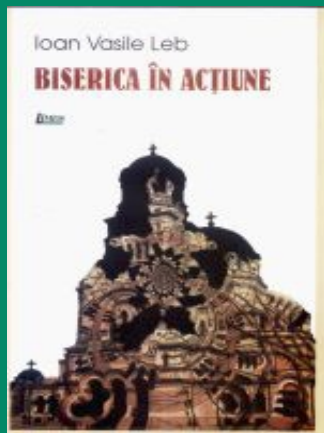
teoria logosului si metoda alegorica de interpretare în hermeneutica biblica si în teologia creștina, ca si importanta metodei contemplative pentru practica unei bune parti din mistica creștinismului, vom înțelege atitudinea circumspecta a exegetilor din câmpul gândirii evreiești în a-l regasi pe Filon ca un element de continuitate în influentarea si modelarea filosofiei iudaice.

O lectura creștina a gândirii filoniene ne este propusa de parintele Ioan Chirila, care, printre altele, predă Vechiul Testament si limba ebraica la Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxa din Cluj. **Fragmentarium exegetic filonian**, aparuta într-o editie foarte eleganta avându-l ca editor pe Mircea Petean, este primul studiu de referinta asupra unei parti semnificative din gândirea lui Filon. Cu acuratete hermeneutica si inspirata practica discursiva, Ioan Chirila ne propune o scriere de sinteza, o radiografie a operei filoniene ce încearca sa evidentieze articulatiile gândului filonian într-un univers de semnificatii eminamente creștin. Rigoarea analitic-exegetica si logic constructiva a discursului permite autorului sa puna în evidenta puntea dintre doua lumi care o reprezinta opera filoniana. Astfel, Filon poate fi asezat în vecinatatea lui Moise, în continuarea gândului patriarhilor si a profetilor, dar, în acelasi timp, este si “un credincios practicant, un om de stiinta care stie sa întrevada dincolo de epistema “logosul” creator a toata înțelepciunea si face ca acesta sa se reverse restaurator în creatie ca întrupare a Logosului Scripturii”. Filon Iudeul este, astfel, “un exeget profund marcat de nadejdea de tip creștin”. De asemenea, Ioan Chirila

poate sa împace faptul ca exegeza filoniana este “o lectie de apologetica iudaica”, dar si “o veritabila sugestie triadologica”. Sugestive în acest sens sînt si unele subtitluri cum ar fi: “De la apa sarata (amara) la apa cea dulce si zamislitoare de viata” sau “Despre lege înainte de Lege”.

Dovedind o cunoastere religioasa si teologica foarte clara, ca si o buna familiarizare cu contextul în care gândirea filoniana se constituie, în ciuda empatiei totale cu subiectul pe care îl trateaza, Ioan Chirila nu face din Filon un gânditor creștin. Ferindu-se de tentatia oricarei lecturi subtextuale sau înrudiri exagerate, teologul ortodox ne spune: “El nu are în discurs o hristologie propriu-zisa, ci are un discurs cu elemente tipic mesianice”.

Este evident ca, în ciuda lecturii pe care o putem face astazi prin prisma a doua milenii de valorizare creștina a învățaturilor filosofice, opera lui Filon Iudeul pare mai degraba ca “are o mergere hristologica, o înaltare spre Logos”, decît sa fie o intuitie precreștina a continuturilor învățaturii eclesiale de mai tîrziu. Gîndirea filoniana ramîne una esential iudaica dar, ca tot ceea ce este iudaic, este susceptibila sa fie asimilabila, în numele unei continuitati revelationale pe care creștinismul o reclama. Asupra acestei continuitati exista, însa, o permanenta stare conflictuala între traditia iudaica pe care o valorifica Filon si traditia creștina careia Filon i-a oferit articulatii importante în structura de rezistenta a teologiei. Dincolo de acest conflict al traditiilor exista un punct de armonizare, reprezentat de climatul alexandrin care da temei atît operei filoniene cît si celei a primilor exegeti creștini.



Ioan Vasile Leb, *Biserica în acțiune*, Ed. Limes, Cluj-Napoca, 2001

“Biserica în acțiune” tratează probleme de interes general bisericesc, ca și o serie de aspecte ale Istoriei Bisericii Ortodoxe Române.

Ioan Vasile Leb evidențiază că istoria termenilor “schisma” și “schismatici” releva că aceștia nu aveau legătură cu ereticul. Ei aveau în vedere despartirea de trunchiul comun al Bisericii din punct de vedere strict administrativ, canonic, organizatoric – rămânând că atunci când condițiile vor fi îndeplinite, să se refacă unitatea credinței. Vina Schismei a fost “plimbata” între latini și greci. Ruptura pare să se datoreze unui proces de dezvoltare istorică diferită a celor două părți ale lumii creștine, precum și ajutorului dat de împărații apuseni papei, ceea ce a dus la creșterea puterii acestuia, permițându-i și oferindu-i posibilități de a se opune bizantinilor. Deosebiri între lumea răsăriteană și cea apuseană se vor accentua tot mai mult atât sub raport cultural-religios, cât și sub aspect politic.

Studiul parintelui profesor Ioan Vasile Leb are menirea, didactică, de a introduce cititorul în lumea zbuciumată a Evului mediu și de a reface firul istoric al concepției privitoare la schisma.

O parte importantă a cărții își propune creionarea portretului uneia dintre personalitățile controversate ale istoriei, respectiv Marcu Eugenicul (1381(2)-1444),

unul dintre cei mai înversunatați combatanți din timpul încercării de refacere a unității creștine din cadrul conciliului de la Ferrara-Florența (1438-1439). Este evidențiat faptul că acest personaj important al bisericii răsăritene, contestat cu vehemență de către catolici, declarat sfânt de partea răsăriteană, a fost de-a lungul veacurilor uneori în primul plan al dezbaterilor, iar alteori într-o uitare aproape totală. Judecând în contextul eforturilor ecumenice de azi, personalitatea acestuia revine în actualitate, iar prin studiul său, Ioan Vasile Leb încearcă să pledeze pentru tratarea lui Marcu Eugenicul la adevarată sa valoare. Prin activitatea sa, Marcu Eugenicul ni se înfățișează ca un om deschis dialogului. Acțiunile sale au vizat binele Bisericii întregi, dorind restabilirea și marturisirea comuniunii de credință cu Biserica apuseană.

Miezul problematicei urmărite de autor se rasfrînge în cea mai mare parte a volumului asupra acțiunii Bisericii Ortodoxe Române de-a lungul timpului. Dintre acestea, putem aminti câteva secvențe. Preotimea ortodoxă română a contribuit la realizarea Unirii de la 1859, prin întărirea și dezvoltarea sentimentelor și atitudinilor unioniste, devenind astfel propagatori activi ai unirii. De asemenea, “Gazeta Transilvaniei”, în contextul anului 1877, în timpul războiului de independență, a relatat evenimentele de pe câmpul de luptă. Această publicație, condusă de Iacob Muresanu, este prezentată ca fiind martora a cuceririi independentei, dar în același timp și o participantă activă la desfășurarea evenimentelor.

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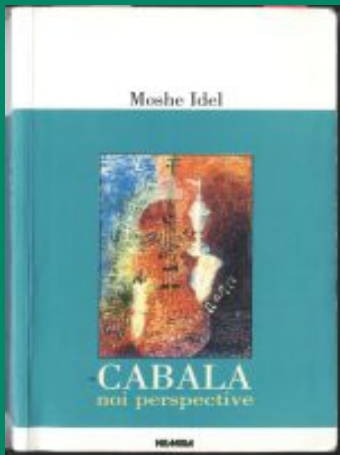
Urmărind ecourile Unirii de la 1918 în presa de limba germană din Transilvania, Ioan Vasile Leb releva modul de angajare al celorlalte naționalități care locuiau pe același pământ românesc. Datorită faptului că suporta aceleași greutăți ca și românii, populația germană a fost determinată să se apropie de români în vederea luptei comune pentru menținerea identității de neam a fiecărui popor, în special în perioada stăpînirii austro-ungare, datorită faptului că politica acesteia de maghiarizare era îndreptată atît împotriva românilor, cît și împotriva populației germane. Prin recunoașterea hotărîrilor de la Alba-Iulia de către Conferința de pace de la Paris, precum și ca urmare a adeziunii populației sasești, s-a constituit fundamentul pe care s-a clădit noua viață a populației germane din România. În mijlocul acelorasi evenimente, preotimea ortodoxă s-a aflat în primele rînduri pentru obținerea de drepturi pentru cei pastoriți. Centrele bisericești au avut o activitate intensă în solicitarea unei atitudini oficiale față de evenimentele premergătoare Unirii de la 1918.

Ioan Vasile Leb prezintă, de asemenea, una din temele fundamentale ale gîndirii părintelui Dumitru Staniloae, respectiv rolul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române în formarea și menținerea neamului. Îmbinarea dintre ortodoxie și românism devine posibilă pentru Dumitru Staniloae deoarece ortodoxismul se definește ca o matrice pentru viața normală și un ajutor dumnezeiesc prin dogma și har. Dogmele s-au întipărit în etnicul românesc în mod profund. Astfel, în viziunea lui Staniloae, etnicul românesc are ortodoxia ca

dimensiune intrinsecă a trăirii religioase, aceasta fiind tipul de religiozitate ce poartă amprenta românismului. Potrivit părintelui Dumitru Staniloae, ortodoxia vorbește despre o unitate în diversitate, în care fiecare neam își adîncește propria contribuție la îmbogățirea patrimoniului spiritual al omenirii.

Pentru distinsul cercetător al istoriei bisericii naționale și universale, într-o Europă unită, Biserica are datoria de a contribui la eliminarea atrocităților cotidiene, printr-o angajare activă în toate domeniile vieții umane. Biserica ortodoxă este prezentată drept o alternativă pentru viitorul omenirii, prin libertatea pe care o conferă organizarea ei sinodala, unde co-responsabilitatea are la bază exprimarea unității creștine autentice.

Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah - New Perspectives*, Nemira Publishing House, Bucuresti, 2000



This book, written by M. Idel stands for, as the title indicates, a new interpretative approach to this little known aspects of Jewish religious experience. The author maintains the hypothesis that Kabbalah appeared at the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century as a reaction against the decline of the ancient mystical traditions. This was determined by the daring re-interpretation of Jewish esoterism provided by Maimonides, as well as by his attempt to replace the mystical traditions with philosophical interpretation. Therefore, historical Kabbalah emerges as a result of the continuous endeavor to systematize the existing elements of theurgy, myth and mystic into a complex answer to the challenge launched by rationalism.

In *Kabbalah-New Perspective*, M. Idel proposes an analysis of the two major orientations of Kabbalah: the theosophic-theurgic orientation and the ecstatic-prophetic one. The author does not provide an historical approach of the two tendencies, but prefers a phenomenological one discussing the significance of the two models and their conditions of emergence, with emphasis on their evolution.

The aim of this work is both to offer some personal comments of some texts which remained inac-

cessible for G. Scholem and to point out “some of the texts the scholar has dealt with hurriedly” (pp. 43). M. Idel employs key-words such as: esoterism/exoterism, innovation/conservatism, theocentrism/anthropocentrism, theurgy/unio mystica, philosophy/Kabbalah, mystical salvation of the individual/national eschatology; these key-words are regarded as of equal importance to the spatial and temporal data which define each Kabbalistic text.

The author examines early Jewish sources in order to underline both the concepts in Kabbalah and the mystical techniques it makes use of.

One may notice that the first major model of Kabbalah, namely the theosophic-theurgic one, is centered on two fundamental topics: theosophy which provides an elaborate theoretical structure of the divine world, and the ritual and concrete methods necessary to entering into union with Divinity.

This union is needed in order to establish a state of harmony. It is in this way that a new form of theocentric religiosity emerges, which tends to conceive religious perfection as an instrument through which the practitioner exerts an effective power over the heavenly things without overlooking the needs of the human being.

The second major model of Kabbalah, the ecstatic one, is utterly anthropocentric as it conceives the practitioner’s mystical experience a *summum bonum* in itself, paying little attention to a possible influence of the mystical state over the inner harmony of the divine. The theurgic act, here, is outlined in the form of

the continuous experience to which the practitioner is summoned to bring his contribution in order to combine the powers of Divinity; yet let's not forget that this is also a theocentric technique. Although the act happens in the practitioner's mind, he has to integrate the ten *sephirot* to their origin as they display in the Tetragrammaton letters.

In his analysis, M. Idel considers that the inner mental processes have the capacity for activating the divine powers by their reflection in the human thoughts, this leading to a manner of interiorization with the divine, a mystical union with *imago dei*.

I have to mention that many of the examples regarding *Devekut* are taken from the early versions of Provençal and Catalan Kabbalah, or from Isaac of Acre. This is a consequence of the decrease of interest in *Devekut*, the Spanish Kabbalah, in the second half of the thirteen century. This trend also appears in *Sefer ha-Zohar*, as well as in the works of Moses of Leon, Joseph Ghikatilla, Joseph of Hamadan, Joseph Angelino, and David ben Iehuda he-Hasid. Idel states that the existence of such elaborate mystical techniques certifies the tokens of Jewish practitioners; an additional argument is the fact that not only did they describe their mystical experiences, but they also presented the techniques they had made use of. Thus, M. Idel analyzes two fundamental techniques that were employed: the *nomik* and the *a-nomic* ones. The *nomik* techniques make reference to the halakhic practices which will be deliberately observed by the Kabbalist. They are also called *Kavana*, one of its aims is *Devekut*. In other

words, *nomik* indicates inner spirituality of a halakhic path which becomes a mystical technique. The *a-nomic* practices are forms of mystical activity which do not imply the halakhic ones, and in the late periods of Jewish mysticism, the *a-nomic* practices have formed the most esoteric part of the Kabbalistic techniques. The scholar discusses four types of mystical techniques: weeping, and the ascent of the soul - which illustrate the perpetuity of the Jewish tradition regardless of the theological doctrines which occurred over the centuries - and the combination of letters and contemplation of colors - which stand for the "the intensive techniques specific to the medieval period.

In theosophic Kabbalah there is also signaled the existence of dynamic and complex structures formed by divine powers called *Sephirot*, explained in *Sefer Yezirah* (the end of the thirteenth century). *Sephirot* designate manifestations which are part of the divine structure or are directly related to its essence, serving as instruments or vessels. There are ten *Sephirot*. M. Idel maintains that this divine anthropomorphic decade which was employed in the creation process was part of the ancient Jewish thought. The analysis of the concepts of *Sephirot* has as its starting point their understanding as both the essence of the Divinity without neglecting their interpretation as vessels in *Sefer ha-Bahir*, and as mode for the divine immanence due to a theory based on the existence of ten inferior *Sephirot* which form "the world of Creation" which is identical to our world or directly connected to it. By further research on the theory according to which a

determined mystical system focuses on inner experiences rather than on theurgic activity, M. Idel comes to the conclusion that the entities which need to be activated are no longer the divine Sephirot, but the spiritual human Sephirot.

Therefore the zoharic and lurianic super-structure is not understood as being integrated in man, but, on what David of Makov asserts, through man. According to Hasidic sources, Kabbalah represents a paradigm of the human psychic and of human activities, rather than a theosophic system. Still, M. Idel points out that the theosophic mystic aims at a clear understanding of the divine entities and the relations between these, by means of fulfilling the ritual deliberately, thus allowing the Kabbalist to transcend the mundane and to experience the Divine. The link between the Divine and the worldly level may be explained by the theory of emanation: the world of human beings is understood as an inferior extension of a super-mundane power. Kabbalistic theosophy emphasizes the transcendence of the major concepts which it dealt with, and the employment of the Kabbalistic ritual as the chief manner to abolish the gap between man and the Divine.

The emphasis laid on human activity is presented as an emotional state and not a complex theosophic-theurgic activity; this led to a change of orientation from an elite-based theurgy, which characterized Luria's Kabbalah, to a popular one specific to Hasidic mysticism. Taking into account this change, M. Idel suggests the hypothesis of a wider dissemination of

Kabbalah. This will allow us to state that instead of a mystical participation of the Kabbalist in the divine life, we are dealing with a mystical participation of the Divine in the human life.

When discussing the Kabbalistic methods of interpretation, M. Idel criticizes the fact that contemporary researchers have neglected and ignored the complex relations between the Kabbalist as interpreter and the divine text, and thus suggesting as alternatives two directions in Kabbalah: there is on one hand its symbolism, which does not refer to mystical union, and on the other hand its mystical union, which operates as a non-symbolic language. When Kabbalah focuses on psychological processes, or when its theology is mostly oriented towards philosophy than theosophy, the role of symbol reduces extremely. In Abraham Abulafia's case, the symbol is completely removed.

Symbolism in Kabbalah may be regarded as a part of a thoroughgoing study for understanding the human activity which is oriented towards the upper world, rather than a revelation of the immovable significance intended on certain words. M. Idel distinguishes three stages of symbolism: the understanding of the theosophic-theurgic significance of the verse, attaining the human status, and establishing the divine harmony by fulfilling the commandments after one has reached human perfection.

This new way of interpreting Kabbalistic symbolism allows the Kabbalistic exegesis to cast relations in the human world on the inner structure of Divinity, thus offering us a representation of the dynamism in



this field. Kabbalah is characterized by the importance shown to theosophy and to the theosophic processes, which is underlined by its symbolism.

M. Idel claims that in order to understand the higher structures and dynamics of Kabbalah, the practitioner is summoned to take his/her stand in the divine mystery by means of an imitation of these dynamics. The major role of symbolism is that of reflecting the theosophic structure.

M. Idel succeeds in this vast work in alternating phenomenology, the science of the text, history and psychology so that their blending should help the reader to consider in full the various aspects of the texts and ideas in Kabbalah.

The outlook of the Romanian reader on Kabbalah, though quite poor as regarding the domain of the mystic, expands substantially by the amount and the novelty of the information put together in this major work of the scholar M. Idel, professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Petru Moldovan

Moshe Idel, *Maimonides and the Jewish Mystic*, Dacia Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2001

By the studies joined in “Maimonides and the Jewish Mystic,” published by Editura Dacia, M. Idel attempts to underline a specific approach to the relation between philosophical and religious meditation, analyzing the standard modes of the major tendencies in Kabbalah versus Maimonides’ philosophy.

These specific and contradictory attitudes make the author assert that some of the first kabbalists had tried to re-emphasize the importance of an older mystical tradition in response to Maimonides’ two important statements by which he considered that authentic Jewish esoterism was lost and suggested an Aristotelean interpretation of the accounts “Genesis” and “the Chariot”. Certain kabbalists who belonged to the major school of Kabbalah relaying on Sefer ha-Zohar, who had embraced the Sephirotic theosophy, having been also influenced by neo-Platonism, had negatively responded towards Maimonides’ philosophy. Nevertheless, the ecstatic school whose main representative was Abraham Abulafia, had employed notions from Maimonides’ philosophy in order to built up concepts which would enable Abulafia to depict the mystical experiences; this is evident in the terminology which Abulafia made use of to speak about the experiences of unio mystica.

The kabbalists did not reject philosophy, on the contrary, they were open to the neo-Platonic ideas; still they were aware of the difference which existed between their traditions and the philosophical interpretation of these traditions. It was Nachmanides that openly attacked Maimonides, deprecating the knowledge which the philosophers detailed about Creation.

When dealing with the same issues, the features of the ancient Jewish esoterism (conveying the secrets to the believers only, and demeaning philosophy) come into opposition with Maimonides' perspective. If one acknowledges that the contents of Jewish tradition cannot be alienated, then this contradicts the opinion of R. Samuel ibn Tibbon which maintains that a Jewish tradition may be preserved in exile; an opinion which is in accordance with the interpretations of an anonymous kabbalist and of Maimonides to "ma'aseh Bereshit" and "ma'aseh Merkavah". To Maimonides, "Sefer ha-Mada" signifies that the Jewish tradition may provide recognition for any kind of speculative nature. This opinion was challenged by the prompt reaction of those who preserved the esoteric traditions which eventually led to the emergence of a literary genre of the ancient Kabbalah. This clash of opinions had a fundamental impact on another important issue: the commandments which are related to the superior entities, that is Sephirot which come into existence as a result of the inner processes of "Bereshit" and "Merkavahk," and on which they depend. This is regarded as a devaluation of the secret significance of

the commandments conceived as instruments in the power of the kabbalists to influence the Divinity, and also connotes theurgic meaning which plays an important role in the major orientation of Kabbalah.

Overlooking this meaning as a consequence of his historic-rationalist outlook, Maimonides was regarded with skepticism; and even his lawyer had to assume that Maimonides was not convinced that he had discovered the true significance of the 613th commandments, but the instruments which would enable the ordinary people to fight against the questions raised by the faithless.

Idel believes that the kabbalist thinkers did not create the doctrine of "the sacrifice" which was provided as an alternative to Maimonides' historic doctrine, but rather they had discovered a preexisting thinking which allowed them a detailed presentation of certain formulae, still maintaining the controversy.

Idel's argument is that "the historic materialization of kabbalistic texts in Provence and Spain partially represented a response given by the Jewish rabbis, who were in possession of an older esoteric tradition, to Maimonides' assertion according to which the Jewish esoterism is constituted by rational truths" (pp. 31). Maimonides considered that through his works he had re-discovered the esoteric Jewish traditions; this generated among the kabbalists a rewording of these traditions of which they had knowledge in a more coherent system. This system represents a theosophic-theurgic interpretation of classical Jewish sources, and is incompatible with theology or

Maimonides' thinking which was seen as an innovation of Aristotelean influence.

However, Idel brings forth a turning point by which Maimonides is brought to the side of the kabbalists. This is considered as a rejection of his philosophical outlook which was regarded as dangerous for the Jewish tradition, and his conversion to Kabbalah as a result of his thorough denial of philosophy. Yet, Idel comes to the conclusion that this was merely an innuendo which Ibn Gabby quoted from an anonymous source.

Analyzing the ecstatic Kabbala, especially the work of A. Abulafia, Idel points out that there is a constant and dominant influence from Maimonides. To Abulafia, the study of the kabbalistic writings appears as a transitory stage from the philosophical stage of his formation to the mystical one. The major reason for his remaining faithful to Maimonides thinking and to the kabbalistic language was his detachment from the centers of theosophic thinking. Idel sees this attempt as a synthesis between the "Guide for the Perplexed" and the Kabbala of language out of which had emerged the ecstatic Kabbalah. In this case, the "Guide" may still stand in opposition to the study of Kabbalah, or may be considered an intermediary stage which includes both speculative and kabbalistic elements. This will cause us consider the "Guide" as a partially kabbalistic work.

In this case, Idel believes that Abulafia suggested a phenomenological approach the "Guide" in accordance with his own method founded on a transitory

stage of the hidden aims of Maimonides, or with the method of his successors who ascribed their own perspectives to him. Abulafia showed a special interest in the secrets in the "Guide". Idel points out that for the theosophic Kabbalah, the "Guide" is viewed as a doubtful work bearing more dangerous inferences than an explicit message, whereas for the ecstatic Kabbalah, the more the "Guide" becomes better understood, the more kabbalistic it becomes. Abulafia assumed two important ideas: Maimonides' metaphysics and the phenomenology of the prophetic phenomenon through which Maimonides marked a path to an effective and up-to-date practice of the central elements of Jewish mysticism.

Dealing with higher secrets, Maimonides had always used esoterism when discussing "ma'aseh Bereshit" and "ma'aseh Merkava" in his works and identifying these with "physics" and "metaphysics". To Maimonides it was the severe restraint of any lust that granted the access to metaphysical knowledge; this allows us to identify an essential characteristic of Maimonides' understanding of the relation between "ma'aseh Bereshit", "ma'aseh Merkava", and "sitre arayot" (the secret of forbidden unions). Idel considers that the major aim of Maimonides' "Guide" is to present in a particular manner the account of Bereshit and Merkava, as well as of the divine Names. Thus he put forward a tradition sunk into oblivion as a consequence of the Exile, and decisively contributed to the re-birth of the interest for this tradition.

Idel traces the itinerary which Spinoza could have read, and which may have been the cause of his statement “Elohim=Nature,» from Maimonides back to the kabbalistic sources. Maimonides referred to the Aristotelean physics as “hokmat ha-teva” (the science of nature), and he used the equation “elohi” (the divine)= “tivi” (the natural) when referring to different topics in the “Guide”. He conceived the divine activity as being of natural origin: the human intellect, body, the inherent objects, both the spiritual levels and the corporeal levels of nature are susceptible to be divine.

Idel notices that in “Ghet ha-Îemot,» Abulafia had used for the first time the gematria combination: Elohim=ha-Teva. To Abulafia, Elohim is the act of Creation, and not its agent, as this name is the same with nature, and the gematria combination should not be understood as a simple linguistic pun, but as a way of considering the identity of nature with the divine, just as Maimonides had suggested it in the “Guide”. The theosophic kabbalist Iosif Gikatila had mentioned for several times Elohim and ha-Teva in “Ghinat Egoz,” and came to the conclusion that Elohim stood for the idea of power which manifests in the perpetual characteristic of the natures inculcated upon the matter during the creation process.

Analyzing the pre-hasidic sources, Idel draws the conclusion that the essence of the hasidic theory is nothing but a synthesis between the theosophic-theurgic occasionalism and the implicit pantheistic orientation of the philosophical texts, as well as of philo-

sophical Kabbalah whose main representative is Abraham Abulafia. Nature is depicted as the contraction of the divine infinite.

According to Idel, the study of the classical literature of Kabbalah which was written by kabbalists of the theosophic-theurgic school shows that this type of mystical thinking is reticent to gematria combinations in general, and to those referring to God and Nature in particular. This reveals the absence of gematria in the latest works of I. Ghikatilla, yet reinforces the existence of a mystical element helpful for a more detailed presentation of the intellectual background of Spinoza.

Discussing a decisive event in the history of Kabbalah, Idel succeeds in performing an exercise of thinking by which he underlines the infinite wisdom of the Jewish thought and the intrinsic links which the various schools of wisdom engender.