

# BRAZIL POLAND

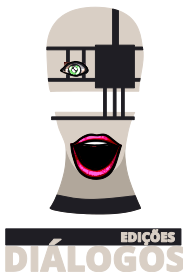
FOCUS  
ON  
RELIGION

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## PREFACE

It is a real pleasure to be able to present to Readers the fourth joint international Polish-Brazilian academic publication of the series *Brazil-Poland. Focus on...* this time dedicated to *Religion* (with the first book dealing with *Economy*, the second - *Environment*, and the third - *Migration*). This volume is a result of an academic partnership between the University of Warsaw (Brazilian Studies Research Group of the American Studies Center) and the State University of Maringá in Brazil.

The phenomenon of religion, though extremely difficult to study due to its otherworldly and unexplainable dimensions, which, up till now, have made it impossible even to come up with its universally accepted definition, is of utmost importance for scientific research in many fields and disciplines. It is not just because religion is nowadays thriving all over the world, succeeding in harnessing the tools of modernity that were supposed to destroy it and using them to propagate its own message, but also because no education is complete unless it has included religion, as it never remains isolated from other aspects of human life. Quite on the contrary - it proliferates into practically all cultural, social, economic, and political sectors, with religious actors and institutions playing an influential role in every region of the world. Religion is, therefore, never confined only to individuals and their private life. It is, actually, impossible to be kept out of the public sphere - even if no religion is privileged and the separation of the church and the state is a legal fact, it does not account for all the complexities and intersections in the relationship of religion with other fields of human activities, constantly challenging our understanding of the world as neatly divided into secular and religious. Religion also migrates with people, constituting one of the very important elements of “cultural baggage” and essential components of human identities. The fact that religion does really matter and it operates in everyday encounters that profoundly shape the way people think and act, suggests that there is, indeed, much potential (and necessity) in its studying – it seems to be critically important for understanding the past, the reality we live in and for helping shape the future.

The volume comprises chapters within a wide thematic range of religious studies written by renown and dedicated specialists - invited guests from both countries' academic world, representing various HEIs and research centers. They

present, in different styles and flavors, various scopes of research and specific interests, of which all have to do with religion, including various forms of religiosities and spiritualities, contributing towards a comprehensive, harmonious, user-friendly and simply interesting collaborative project – a truly team effort. The contents of the book mark many relevant, practical issues related with research on religion, in both historical and contemporary perspectives, having to do not only with the current state of art, but also events, policies and individual attitudes that influence religious markets and transformations, pointing at the relations between theoretical and practical approaches towards examining them in their all multi-angled and complicated dimensions: cultural, social, political, legal and economic.

The objective of the book is to promote Polish-Brazilian academic rapprochement in many different areas and fields of interdisciplinary religious studies, as well as to raise mutual interests and willingness in interinstitutional and interpersonal scientific cooperation between the two countries in order to facilitate academic dialogue and establish common spheres of scientific interests. Our intention is not only to maintain, but also to extend the existing cooperation, broadening both perspective and number of people involved, actively participating and taking advantage of our projects of contemporary research on religious studies. Therefore, the book itself by no means should be regarded as complete or final result of our common endeavor – there are numerous elements, topics and issues that have been left out and omitted, waiting for their deeper exploration in the future. While we obviously regret such deficiencies, we also believe that they could not be avoided in a preliminary project like this one, constituting just a beginning of much closer and much denser cooperation of a, *sui generis*, Polish-Brazilian religious studies research team that we have just managed to build.

We do hope the volume fully meets its objectives, including showing prospective directions and new fields for further networking between Poland and Brazil, facilitating common goals, disseminating expertise and bridging a transatlantic gap between the two countries. We would sincerely like this challenging, but also thrilling and inspiring project to be just the first of a series of much more substantial attempts to confront the difficulty of studying religions, to encourage thinking about it in scientific terms and to ensure that its various perceptions reflect the multi-faceted nature of religion all over the world.

On behalf of the editors, I wish to all a fruitful reading.

*Renata Siuda-Ambroziak*

# POLISH RELIGIOUS INNOVATIONS

Maria Libiszowska-Żółtkowska\*

From the social perspective, confirmed by the value of statistical indicators, Poland is a Catholic country. Affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church is declared by about 95% of Polish society. This seemingly unquestionable obviousness is contradicted by the followers of 176 registered churches and religious associations (Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, 2001; 2002: 13-32; 2014: 289-300; 2014a: 173-196; Doktor, 1999; *Kościoty i związki wyznaniowe...*, s.a.). While in the past religious affiliation used to be more often a result of “granting”, “a twist of fate” or group affiliation, including the ethnic one, contemporarily it is more an individual and conscious choice. In the past collective conversions to a different religion than the native one were performed by means of an arbitrary act of those in power, often against the will of their subjects, according to the rule *cuius regio eius religio*. In our times the market rules, fashion pressures or imitation predominate. Also, under their influence the inventiveness of bringing new religious movements into existence thrives.

Schisms occurred in Poland at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which resulted in the establishment of two Old Catholic Churches independent of Rome: Polish-Catholic (1904) and Mariavite (1906). Polish Catholicism derives its origin from the Polish National Catholic Church in the United States of America, which was established as a result of a schism after a priest from a Polish parish, Franciszek Hodura, was excommunicated. The basis of the schism was the non-adaptation of the Polish emigrants in the USA to their new conditions, as well as the indifference of Catholic parishes, dominated by priests of Irish and German de-

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scent, to their problems. The conflict concerned mainly economic issues, the introduction of the mother tongue to the liturgy and the assignment of a priest from their own ethnic community to the parish. The Polish-Catholics came to Poland along with re-emigrants in the 1920s (Wysoczański, 1977; Piątek and Piątek, 1987; Küry, 1996).

Mariavitism is the first schism which occurred in the territory of Poland and what's more, due to a woman – Sister Maria Franciszka Kozłowska. In her revelations, which were written down in the book *The Work of Great Mercy* (*Dzieło wielkiego Miłosierdzia*) she saw a vision of the Church falling into decline, affected by religious scepticism, the decrease of religiousness and the progressing demoralization of the clergy. The only hope for a world falling into decline was to be the help of the Mother of God and the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Driven by the vision she experienced, Kozłowska established two separate congregations of Mariavite priests and Mariavite nuns, whose aim was to reform Polish Catholicism, and above all raise the morale of the clergy and revive the priesthood in a monastic way. The aims were to be fulfilled by developing and deepening two kinds of worship: the Marian devotion and the worship of the Holy Eucharist. Initially, Mariavites conducted their activity within the Roman Catholic Church. In 1904 under the pressure of the Hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the country, the Roman Curia disbanded the congregation of Mariavites both due to the criticism from the Roman Catholic clergy as well as the spreading worship of the founder. As a result of her excommunication by Pope Pius X, 33 priests, 55 nuns and more than 44 thousand worshippers left the Catholic Church (Mazur, 1991; Rybak, 2011). In the following years splits occurred in both those Old-Catholic denominations. Other autonomic Churches of the Polish Catholicism<sup>1</sup> and Mariavite<sup>2</sup> traditions came into existence.

Pluralism and freedom of choice provoke searching for the most adequate offer of outlook on life on the one hand, but on the other hand they lead to the establishment of new organizational structures. The 1997 Constitution of the Republic of Poland recognizes the equality of churches and religious associations, whereas public authorities, maintaining impartiality in religious matters, ensure the freedom of their expression in public life (The Constitution of the Republic of

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<sup>1</sup> Polish Catholicism: the Polish Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland (since 1951), the Old Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland (since 1996) and the Polish National Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland (since 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Mariavite Church: The Catholic Mariavite Church in the Republic of Poland (since 1912), the Old Catholic Mariavite Church in the Republic of Poland (since 1906).



Poland, Article 25)<sup>3</sup>. Parents have the right to bring up their children according to their own convictions (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 53 Item 3)<sup>4</sup>. All citizens are guaranteed the freedom of conscience and religion:

Freedom of religion shall include the freedom to profess or to accept a religion by personal choice as well as to manifest such religion, either individually or collectively, publicly or privately, by worshipping, praying, participating in ceremonies, performing of rites or teaching. Freedom of religion shall also include the possession of sanctuaries and other places of worship for the satisfaction of the needs of believers as well as the right of individuals, wherever they may be, to benefit from religious services (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 53, Item 2).

Freedom of expressing religion “may be limited only by means of statute and only where this is necessary for the defense of State security, public order, health, morals or the freedoms and rights of others” (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 53, Item 5). Denomination is a private matter of citizens: “No one may be compelled by organs of public authority to disclose his philosophy of life, religious convictions or belief” (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 53, Item 7).

Furthermore, ecclesiastical law in Poland is regulated by: international agreements (inter alia by the Concordat between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland signed on 28 July 1993 and ratified on 25 March 1998) as well as by acts and directives issued by the legally authorized government bodies, especially by the Sejm of the Republic of Poland<sup>5</sup>.

By 1988 there were 30 religious minorities registered in Poland (Tokarczyk, 1987). After the fall of communism, when the curtain prohibiting access to the ideological trends of the Western world parted, suddenly their number grew. In the 1990s came a significant turning point in relations between the State and the Roman Catholic Church. The idea of controlled atheisation was abandoned, religious education was introduced in schools, ministerial service was permitted in hospitals, prisons, religious values could be present in the mass media. The systemic transformation, opening the borders, abolishing censorship, the guarantee

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<sup>3</sup> “Public authorities in the Republic of Poland shall be impartial in matters of personal conviction, whether religious or philosophical or in relation to outlooks on life, and shall ensure their freedom of expression within public life. The relationship between the State and churches and other religious organizations shall be based on the principle of respect for their autonomy and the mutual independence of each in its own sphere, as well as on the principle of cooperation for the individual and the common good” (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 25).

<sup>4</sup> “Parents shall have the right to ensure their children a moral and religious upbringing and teaching in accordance with their convictions” (*The Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 53, Item 3).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ustawa z 17 maja 1989 o gwarancjach wolności sumienia i wyznania (Act of May 17, 1989, on the Guarantees of Freedom of Conscience and Religion), the Polish version retrieved from: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19890290155>.

of the freedom of conscience and religion attracted many missionaries and teachers of numerous offshoots of traditional religions as well as founders of new religious movements to our country.

The 1990s were characterized by a significant revival in spiritual quests, including outside of the Catholic Church. On the streets of larger cities, you could encounter preachers inviting to discussion meetings. In an euphoric state of catching up and in the pursuit of novelties, especially young people seized the opportunity. The access to spatial and virtual communication as well as the receptivity – typical of societies living in isolation for a long time and in the flow of information controlled by the State – developed an appetite for tasting “another world”. Other churches, religious associations and new religious movements also made use of the progressive liberalization. Thanks to American, European and Asian gurus, teachers or missionaries, Eastern religions – Buddhist schools<sup>6</sup> and contemporary strands of Hinduism<sup>7</sup> – found their followers. Various forms of new spirituality (New Age) came into existence as well as the phenomena combining religion, medicine, science, art or ecology, which fall outside the traditional classification of religious studies, although they play a similar role in the life of its members as historical religions. After meeting the requirements of legislation, most of them

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<sup>6</sup> Związek Buddyistów Zen „Bodhidharma” (The “Bodhidharma” Zen Buddhist Association ); Szkoła Zen Kwan Um w Polsce (The Kwan Um School of Zen in Poland); Buddyjski Związek Diamentowej Drogi Linii Karma Kagyu (The Karma Kagyu Diamond Way Buddhism Association); „Kanzeon” Związek Buddyjski (The Kanzeon Buddhist Association); „Wspólnota Bez Bram” Mumon - Kai Związek Buddyjski Zen Rinzaï w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (The Rinzaï Community Mumon-Kai in the Republic of Poland “Community Without Gates”); Buddyjska Wspólnota Zen Kannon (Zen Kannon Buddhist Community); Związek Buddyjski Bencien Karma Kamtsang (Bencien Karma Kamtsang Buddhist Association); Związek Buddyjski Khordong w Polsce (The Khordong Buddhist Association in Poland); Wspólnota Dzogczen w Polsce (Dzoghen Community in Poland); Misja Buddyjska – Trzy Schronienia w Polsce (Buddhist Mission “Three Shelters” in Poland); Związek Garuda w Polsce (The Garuda Association in Poland); Związek Buddyjski Dak Shang Kagyu w Polsce (The Dak Shang Kagyu Buddhist Association in Poland); Związek Buddyistów Czan (The Chan Buddhist Association); Instytut Sardza Ling (The Sardza Ling Institute); Sangha "Dogen Zenji"; Związek Tybetańskiego Bon “Sa Trik Er Sang (The Bon of Tibet Sa Trik Er Sang Association); Związek Buddyjski “Dzogczen Kunzang Cziuling” w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (The Dzogczen Kunzang Cziuling Buddhist Association in the Republic of Poland).

<sup>7</sup> Związek Ajapa Yoga (The Ayapa Yoga Association); Światowy Uniwersytet Duchowy Brahma Kumaris w Polsce (The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University in Poland); Międzynarodowe Towarzystwo Świadomości Kryszny (The International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Ruch Świadomości Babadzi Herakhandi Samadz (The Babaji Herakhandi Samadz Consciousness Movement); Radha Govind Society of Poland; Związek Hatha Jogi "Brama Jogi" (The Yoga Gate Hatha Yoga Association); Związek Wyznaniowy Hindu Bhawan w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (The Hindu Bhawan Religious Organization in the Republic of Poland).

achieved the status of a religious association. Under the influence of contact, especially with Pentecostals, there were occurrences of defections from the Catholic Church by a few groups of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, which were subsequently registered as autonomic religious associations<sup>8</sup>.

In 2016 there were 158 Churches and religious associations outside the Roman Catholic Church entered in the register of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, all of which act on equal terms as well as 15<sup>9</sup> registered on the basis of separate laws. The numbers (176 in total) show the scale of religious pluralism in Poland. The right to establish new religious associations is granted exclusively to Polish citizens. Entry into the register is obtained after the approval of an adequate application submitted to the Department for Denominations and National and Ethnic Minorities of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, signed by at least 100 adult Polish citizens who have the capacity to perform acts in law<sup>10</sup>.

A necessary requirement to be fulfilled is a correctly phrased statute, which should define: 1. The proper name of the church or religious association; 2. The area of activity and the registered address of its authorities; 3. The aims of activity and forms of conducting it; 4. Membership rules; 5. The rights and obligations of members and the procedure and consequences of cessation of membership; 6. Governing bodies – the way of appointing and dismissing them, the scope of competence as well as the procedure of decision-making; 7. Sources of financing; 8. The procedure of introducing changes to the statute; 9. The way of representing the association outside as well as incurring liabilities; 10. The rules of appointing as well as the competence of spiritual persons; 11. The conditions of the termination of a religious association and the form of expending the remaining capital.

When the association is a part of an international organization, the statute should include information on the form of mutual connections and relationship. If establishing minor entities (orders, churches, congregations, etc.) is taken into account, the statute should define forms of establishing those structures, their rules

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<sup>8</sup> Kościół Chrześcijański „Miecz Ducha” (Christian Church “The Sword of the Spirit”), in 1997, Kalisz; Apostolski Kościół Wolnych Chrześcijan „Kanaan” (“Canaan” Apostolic Church of Free Christians), in 1994, Wrocław; Kościół Chrześcijański „Nowe Przymierze” (Christian Church “New Alliance”) in 1991, Gdynia; Chrześcijański Kościół „Dobra Nowina” (Christian Church “the Gospel”), in 1993, Pabianice; Kościół Chrześcijański “Wieczernik” (Christian Church “The Cenacle”), in 1992, Kielce; Wspólnota Chrześcijańska „Pojednanie” (Christian Community “Reconciliation”) in 1991, Lublin.

<sup>9</sup> In the first position there are 4 Catholic Churches of separate rites in the Republic of Poland: Latin, Byzantine-Ukrainian (Ukrainian-Greek), Armenian, Byzantine-Slavic.

<sup>10</sup> Until 1998 you could only gain legal personality on the basis of a list of the names of 15 followers. Since January 1999 this limit has been raised to 100 people pursuant to the resolution of the Sejm.

of functioning, financing and relationship. Since 2005 doctrinal principles must be included in the statute, together with a short history of the religion or the organizational structure to which the association refers or from which it departs as a result of an inner schism or only an organizational split. In the case of an original association, established by its founding group, a description of the history of establishing the religious community is also required.

Outside of official statistics, it is difficult to assess a certain number of religious movements or spiritual communities which gain followers in Poland but do not seek to clarify their legal status. Therefore, it can be assumed that the variety of religious or quasi-religious groups in Poland (some of them have gained legal personality as secular associations and foundations) is much greater. Moreover, we should also take into consideration those religious groups which do not have legal personality and have never applied for registration, despite actively recruiting new members and cultivating their own religious rituals. Most of them – especially groups of foreign origin and only recently present in Poland as well as in the case of native groups with short history – conduct ongoing proselytizing activity in order to gain new followers. The Jehovah's Witnesses have the greatest number of converters – at present it is the denomination in Poland with the third highest number of believers (about 130 000 proclaimers). They are also the most familiar and best-known in Polish society.

The religious mosaic of registered churches and religious associations classified according to the tradition they belong to, or only refer to, is the following (in alphabetical order):

1. Traditions:

- Buddhist – 18
  - Christian – 122
  - Hindu – 9
  - Islamic – 7
  - Judaic – 6
  - Old Slavic (Neopagans/Slavic Neopagans) – 4
2. Not explicitly embedded in traditional religions – 10.

From the perspective of the origins, we can distinguish between two categories: native and imported. The native ones were established by Poles and are of a local nature. Apart from schismatic communities, four of them refer to ancient beliefs of the Slavs. The rest impart a new interpretative and worship formula to the borrowings from the Christian tradition. Imported, of international scope, they

settled in Poland and gained followers. In the majesty of the law they were given the status of official denominations as well as – resulting from this fact – privileges, including economic ones<sup>11</sup>.

It seems that in our times not without reason we should consider individual spiritual quests, but also a specific phenomenon of organizational revival. It is made evident by the popularity of new proselytizing religious communities offering their followers a different lifestyle from their former one. Leaving for a religion which is culturally unfamiliar, demanding a radical redefinition of the former lifestyle (e.g. the acceptance of vegetarianism, meditations lasting long hours, change in daily routines, attire, etc.) as well as abandoning the previous tradition seems easier to interpret in a “justifying” way than in the case of converting to another denomination within the same tradition. In the latter case two factors – it seems – may play a crucial role. The first is the motif of being submissive to the agitating person. The second can be the conviction of the possibility of fulfilling additional needs. The growing attractiveness of Pentecostal movements is justified by their offer, which guarantees healing. Movements of a self-help nature delude with the promise of financial support “here on Earth” rather than with a new image of afterlife in heaven. The founders of these movements are also motivated more by earthly rather than spiritual matters.

New religious movements, after registration classified as religious associations set in the Christian tradition, differ from the Roman Catholic Church by: organizational structure, in general they lack consecrated priests (often in favour of being chosen on a rotational basis); the simplification of liturgy; Biblical studies in the community; the baptism of adults; and the negation of the pontificate and attributes of the Pope; as well as by the doctrinal principles in detail or generally. Religious communities are led by: leaders, presbyters, abbots, bishops, starosts, senior priests, chairpersons, superiors, presidents, shepherds, heads, auditors, assistants, rectors. In some associations, also women serve these functions. Sometimes they are the initiators and founders of new communities.

The term “new religious movement” was introduced in the 1970s by sociologists of religion to denote newly established religious groups, which had earlier been called sects (Barker, 1997; Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, 2001a), in opposition to traditional churches. The initial phase of development of each religious group

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<sup>11</sup> The privileges concern among other things tax exemption due to income from non-business activity as well as keeping tax records and paying customs duties for imported goods – cf. *Ustawa z dn. 17 maja 1989 o gwarancjach wolności sumienia i wyznania*, art. 13 (Act of May 17, 1989, on the Guarantees of Freedom of Conscience and Religion, Article 13).

can be called a sect, that is, a new religious movement. Some researchers reserve the contemporary dividing line of newness for groups which have appeared since World War II, while others put that time back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially with regard to proselytizing religious denominations, whose majority of members are converters and not followers from birth.

New religious movements are – literally – newly established (formed) religious communities (associations). In bureaucratized state systems, it takes place by administrative means, according to legislative rules in effect in a given country. New movements also include communities coming into existence and remaining within mother churches. Characteristic features which allow us to classify those seemingly different religious movements within one semantic category are:

1. The charismatic personality of the spiritual leader.
2. Conversion of an adult person (denoting: spiritual transformation – from lack of faith to faith; converting from one denomination to another; a breakthrough in the life of a believer – spiritual transformation within the same confession).
3. Following the master – in person or his or her teachings, resulting in the change of social standing, the redefinition of identity, the sense of life and lifestyle.
4. Separatism and exclusivism (usually closed groups, giving their followers a sense of identity and existential security – it is not easy to join them and it is difficult to resign from being their member).
5. Doctrinal fundamentalism, the perfectionism of the worship, moral rigorism as well as institutional dependence – obedience and submission to the superiors.
6. Illuminism and elitism (the conviction of members of the movement of their unique relation with variously defined God, regarding yourself as the chosen one as well as orthodox in the sphere of faith and practices).
7. Collectivism of life (organising and spending time together, openness about personal life, public sharing of experiences, mutual control, financial help given to the community as well as regarding it as the basic group of reference and identification).
8. Proselytism, bearing testimony (the followers' ranks grow proportionally to the missionary activity and the number of present members as well as the attractiveness of their teachings. Moreover, the resonance of propagated "truths" is dependent on the extent of their demand and consent to this type of ideological services).
9. Ostracism, rejection, tension, lack of social acceptance.

New religious movements, both those of autonomic structure and embedded within parent organisations, come into existence on the following conditions:

- The migration of systems and religious beliefs;
- The permeation and assimilation of borrowed elements, which can be succinctly called the Westernisation of Eastern religions, Orientalization or Africanization of Christianity. Within Christianity – Protestantization or Pentecostalism of Catholicism and vice versa, the Catholicization of Protestantism;
- The appearance of charismatic leaders, teachers, spiritual guides, gurus who have the power of attraction and the gift of persuasive communication;
- The social and legal consent to religious pluralism;
- The weakening of the lawful function and public role of traditional Churches, which makes faith a matter of private choice. The weakening of the meaning of the “religion of fate” causes not only openness to new ideas, but sometimes also triggers spiritual creativity;
- Longing for new spirituality, for a religion “free from the mistakes of the past”, which would answer basic existential and eschatological questions worthy of the perception of a contemporary human being;
- The virtualization of religious practices via the Internet, television (televangelism) and radio. (Communities of network users come into being no matter their place of residence connected by the idea of transmission and/or the charisma of their preacher. In Poland it is Radio Maryja and the television channel Trwam).
- Poland, with the constitutional regulation on the neutrality of outlook on life, allows for religious pluralism and in principle does not interfere in the establishment of new religious structures – provided that they are not a threat to the sense of security of its citizens. Legally granted permission for the pluralism of outlook on life does not translate into the unconditional acceptance of all religious communities present within the territory of Poland, without exceptions.

The phenomenon of new religious movements, defined by the media as “the invasion of sects”, creates the feeling of a threat. The descriptions of sects in the media serve the function of a bugbear, a peculiar moral panic used also to distract our attention from other matters. In the colloquial and media discourse, more frequently than in scientific and legal, judgements are passed, often unequivocal, stereotypes are referred to more willingly and stigmas are used. The media and authorities performing on their public stage manipulate emotions and legitimize or deprecate reality, including the religious one, by labelling. Recipients often unquestioningly succumb to those suggestions. Propagated ideas need to be made credible in order to achieve social acceptance and gain followers. Popular celebrities and politicians from “front-page news” are perfect for playing such a role.

The Korean Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012), the founder of the Unification Church, successfully used the tried-and-tested rule of arousing interest and convincing “the high and mighty of this world” of him for years. In 1995 the former President of the USA George Bush and his wife held mutual meetings between Mrs Moon and the Women’s Federation in the USA and Japan. In the 1980s in Poland the Unification movement provided financial support to the *Solidarity* movement. The representatives of sponsors were welcomed by Lech Wałęsa, the leader of the Union at the time. The international Professors’ World Peace Academy, affiliated to the Unification Church, organized national studies and international scientific conferences for Polish employees and integration trips abroad for university students. The Moons visited Poland several times, together or separately, they always solemnly welcomed their guests in the crowded halls of fine hotels. Masses of “normal people” as well as important personages of the world of science, politics, media or churches (clergymen of various denominations) provided the best recommendation and ensured resonance for their teachings (Libiszowska-Żótkowska, 2000: 38-58).

New religious movements are established not outside the structures of traditional or official Churches or denominations, but also on their fringes or even within them. Various brotherhoods, communities, movements, sodalities, societies and associations have evolved in the Catholic Church for centuries. After the Second Vatican Council, that is, since the mid-1960s, new Catholic movements have developed rapidly. The coincidence of the dates of the religious revival within the Catholic Church and the activity of new religious movements in opposition to it provokes the question as to the reasons for this characteristic “spiritual ferment”. Leaving the question open, I will confine myself to stating, after John Paul II, that it is “one of the great signs of the times, which needs to be constantly re-interpreted” (Petrowa-Wasilewicz, 2000: 9). The Vatican called this dynamism of new Catholic movements “the springtime of the Church”. This springtime also reached diocesan and parish churches in Poland. Sociologists of religion Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge (2000) divide new religious movements from the perspective of social tension they cause in the environment. According to them, Catholic movements in societies where Catholicism is the dominant religion create slight tension and are more socially approved and accepted than religious movements referring to a tradition different from the Catholic one.

Communities of lay Catholics are often on the fringes of the institutional Church, also from the point of view of their place. Experiencing faith, which they propagate, is not always in accordance with the official teachings of the Vatican.



The form of worship often differs from the one practised in church. There are many borrowings from Protestantism. Part of the parish clergy treats this form of religious activity of the laity with reserve. From time to time tensions arise between lay leaders and spiritual guardians over matters of competence, personality or doctrine. The movements prefer a specific form of non-religious Christianity. Many groups meet outside the church walls, in secular halls rented by the hour, without clergymen. The reasons, which may lead to apostasy, have been enumerated by Bishop Bronisław Dembowski, “the godfather” of the renewal formation and the national priest of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and are as follows: “the difficulties of integrating communities into the life of the congregation, the problem of leaders who display a domineering attitude, strongly emphasize their leadership and establish as if an alternative Church, negligence in maintaining contacts with the bishop of a given diocese, appearance of groups promoting non-religious Christianity, unwittingly propagating the idea “Jesus – yes, Church – no”, finally, the difficulties in the ecumenical field, resulting from insufficient ecclesiastical awareness of the participants of the movements” (Bonowicz, 1997: 167).

In the 1990s four communities abandoned the Church and were registered as autonomic religious associations (confer footnote 15). The direct cause of group abandonments was the escalating conflict between the diocesan bishop and the lay community animator, at the time still within the Church. The bishops of a few dioceses protested against, according to them, an erroneous interpretation of the dogmas and forms of worship. The refusal to obey caused excommunication of the leaders and their followers. Schism occurred, the people gathered around the lay leaders abandoned the primal religious structure and established autonomic religious associations.

The believers of schismatic communities, as well as religious movements, which have settled in Poland since 1989 mostly have Christian origins. Leaving the Catholic Church for other Christian communities reversed *à rebours* the conventional meaning of the term “conversion”<sup>12</sup>. The dynamism of the religious and spiritual market, like the “forbidden fruit”, provokes the desire to acquire knowledge, which may turn into a voluntary membership. The otherness attracts with the mysteriousness of the unknown, while the promises of existential happiness “here and now” as well as eschatological guarantees for “later” draw the attention of the seekers of the truth, sense of life, God, their own place in the world

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<sup>12</sup> “Konwersja – zmiana wyznania w obrębie wyznań chrześcijańskich, zwłaszcza przejście na katolicyzm” (*Słownik języka polskiego*, 1988: 1004).

or new ecstatic or mystical sensations. The openness to “new” values and “other” patterns is the feature of entities who value freedom and autonomous choice. For them religion is first and foremost an inner experience and not a routine repetition of an inherited tradition. New religious movements also draw entities who are not very practical. According to them, a new group will provide them with a more attractive solution to the problem “how to live”. The need to find existential security “under the protective wings” of the accepted authority favours the access to a group which is perceived as more attractive (“this is it”) than the abandoned one.

Polish Native Faith (Rodzima Wiara) is a new religious movement of Slavic origin<sup>13</sup>. They also refer to themselves as: Pre-Polish Faith (Wyznanie Prapolskie), or Lechitic Faith. Their registered office is in Wrocław. The union – according to believers – represents the oldest, primeval faith of the Poles – the religion of Slavic ancestors. “The Lechitic Polish nation and its neighbours belong to the great clan of Aryan people of Europe, together with the other Slavic nations. We wish to revive the unity between our descent and religion, destroyed ages ago, in order to base the nation’s spiritual and material being on it” (*Statute*). The Lechites worship the Sun, the Universe, Mother Earth and all Nature as gods. They consider the birth and death of an entity as necessary to the constant development of the human species and mankind. The nation, potentially immortal in its essence, is constantly reviving. Offspring and creative activities can ensure immortality to human beings. To them knowledge, strength, intellect, health, righteousness, fitness, responsibility, vitality, dignity, reliability and perseverance are values. They pursue greatness, power, beauty, truth and kindness. They fight ignorance, weakness, illness and stupidity. They condemn cowardice, betrayal, addiction, brawling, submissiveness, humbleness, passivity.

Polish Native Faith members gather in holy places which once used to be sacred centres of the Slavs – on Mount Ślęża, Bald Mountain in the Żercowskie Forests, in Biskupin, on hills in Szczecin and on the Island of Wolin, in order to worship the sun and fire in the days of the solstice as well as to revere the memory of the deceased. A sacrifice of honey and beer is made on the altar, combined with worship and meditation. During the ceremony, the members create a circle around the fire, which symbolizes Swarożyc. The aim of the union is to maintain and revive pre-Polish customs as well as initiate the celebration of native holidays: Koliada – the first day of winter; Sobótka – Kupala Night (the shortest night of the year);

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<sup>13</sup> Other neopagan groups: Polski Kościół Słowiański (Polish Slavic Church); Rodzimy Kościół Polski (Native Polish Church).

the Celebration of Reviving Life (Jare Gody) – on the first day of spring; The Harvest Festival – on the first day of autumn, Dziady in November; the winter solstice – Generous Feast (Szczodre Gody). Personal celebrations include: birthday, first haircut, nuptials and funerals. The union is in favour of cremation.

The followers of the Polish Native Faith understand God as cosmic force present in the entire universe (pantheism); they reject the concept of immortality after death (a human being is immortal through his or her achievements and biological continuity – offspring); they derive their own origin from old-Slavic spirituality based on Aryan culture; they propagate nationalistic ideas – they recognize the subjectivity of the nation. The symbols of the Polish Native Faith are a golden sun in the blue sky and the black Greek cross with bent legs (the so-called swastika – an old-Aryan symbol of fire and fertility). Young believers belong to nationalist organizations: the “Niklot” Association for Tradition and Culture, the “Swastika” Patriotic Youth Association, the National Rebirth of Poland, the “Zadruga” Nationalist Association and the All-Polish Youth.

The Polish Native Faith followers from Szczecin publish a magazine entitled “Odala”. According to the manifesto on their website: “other religions are alien, they came from the outside. Christianity was brutally introduced and broke the bond between people and nature. A lot of people then lost their lives, for example, female herbalists and oracles were burned at the stake as witches. We have also lost natural medicine. But *śmigus-dyngus*, *marzanna*, painted Easter eggs – all these are pagan customs adopted by Christianity. We want Poland to return to its past spirituality. We wish to be the voice of our spiritual roots, which oblige us to fight for our Nation and our Race. The fight of a few against a multitude – we are not discouraged by the order of battle, because we fulfil our destiny. We stand in defence of eternal values, inherent in our Slavic and Indo-European blood. It is our deepest conviction that a human being without identity stops being Human. We are Aryans and we carry an Aryan message on our banners – to be noble. This nobility is a dying virtue in the modern world overcome by consecutive mutations of the spiritual cancer. The Greek *arete* or the Roman *virtus* make up the foundations of our civilization and culture of once great Indo-Europe. The threatened land of our ancestors nowadays needs, more than ever, staunch-hearted and fearless warriors. Just like Vedic *Kshatriyas* they will lead through death and ruins to the birth of new Lauds. We want their ethos to direct our life. We want to use the above values first and foremost in the battle of Poland, but also later in the ultimate fight for Slavia and then for the whole Arya. We wish to increase the power of the

Nation, its authority over the forces of destruction and the resistance of matter. The creative activity in a spirit of the above principles was an inspiration for us to publish the magazine *Odala*, which we have already done since 1995. We wish to reach with this magazine also to you; not to ‘convert’ you or to convince you, but to make you use your intellect more efficiently in the fight by our side or against us. *Odala* is: not a forum of national lament, but the voice of the young and strong, trusting in victory; not the suicidal scream of a frustrated person but the loud battle cry of a *berserker*; not the theatre of sick hate, but the healthy reaction of ethnic self-defence.” If you formally join the Polish Native Faith, you reject your former religion (Libiszowska-Żótkowska, 2001: 191-192; Simpson, 2000; Pawluczuk, 1995; Prokopiuk, 1988; Wiench, 1995; Beźnic, 1997: 310-312; rodzimawiar.org.pl; articles from “*Odala*”<sup>14</sup>).

An example of a new religious movement which was established as a result of abandoning the Catholic Church is the “Emmanuel” Charismatic Renewal Community in Kalisz. In January 1998 they registered as an autonomous religious association (the “Sword of the Spirit” Christian Centre in Kalisz; [www.mieczducha.pl](http://www.mieczducha.pl)). They have chosen the name “Sword of the Spirit”, because it denotes the word of God in the Bible. Just like the Pentecostals, they acknowledge the gifts of the Holy Spirit (wisdom, interpretation of tongues, healing, prophecy). Andrzej Stawikowski, the pastor of the Centre, a car mechanic by profession, is the leader of the group, originally a renewal one and at present an ex-Catholic one. The ideological message is a renewal in the Holy Spirit as well as a reconciliation with Jesus Christ. They reject papal infallibility, the doctrine of Purgatory, the Catholic formula of confession, the Marian devotion and the veneration of saints as well as the idea of their intercession. The Holy Bible is regarded by them as the word of God; they live by Biblical rules; following the example of the disciples of Jesus – they heal. They reject the Tradition of the Catholic Church. They pray spontaneously, in tongues, they shout their worship by loudly praising God, they dance. They confess their sins only to God. They pray for healing, conversions, and closing discos, which they consider a source of evil and sin. In their prayers they commend those in power and Israel (as “the chosen nation”) to God, as well as their families and the city of Kalisz. The aim of the Church is to preach the Gospel, teach the Word of God as well as spread Christian ideas. In 1998 *Gazeta Wyborcza* published a report on them:

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<sup>14</sup> Magazine issued by the Polish Native Faith.

For the first two years seven, eight people came. We wanted to disband. But we started praying fervently to the Holy Spirit and suddenly within two months several dozen people joined us – recalls Andrzej. It was a sign from God that we shouldn't quit. With every month we gained followers. With time the group grew to more than 400 believers. Andrzej is 30 years old. Fellow believers hold him in deep respect, many share their secrets with him and tell him about their problems. He prayed to God for conversion and Lord entrusted our group to him – 45-year-old Irena says about Andrzej. What he says is in step with the Bible, simple and clear. Andrzej converted 13 years ago. Back then he experienced a revelation that seven years later he would create a prayer group. In 1995 the Renewal employed him full-time. My religious views have always differed from the Catholic doctrine, but at the beginning neither the members of the Renewal, nor the priests who managed it, knew about it – says Andrzej Stawikowski. – I have never prayed to the Mother of God and saints, but I didn't forbid anyone to do it. Initially, our community also prayed to them. But our aim was and is the renewal in the Holy Spirit as well as the reconciliation with Jesus Christ. The first warning of a split appeared more than a year ago. The community met more often outside the church walls. Groups which gathered in private homes for common prayer and studying the Holy Bible gained more people. (...) Information questioning the orthodoxy of the community started to reach the curia. (...) Soon it turned out that the leaders of the community had doubts about the papal infallibility, the existence of Purgatory and the form of confession adopted by the Catholic Church (...) After another meeting with the bishop we found out that if we didn't change our views, there would be no place for us in the Catholic Church. Bishop Teofil Wilecki also demanded that the present leaders left the congregation and that the members of the Renewal stopped meeting in home groups. The money collected during the meetings were to be given to the Church. The Church was also to take over the land that the members of the community had already bought in order to build a training centre. (...) The community in Kalisz is not the first one in the country to leave the Catholic Church, though it's probably the biggest (Dymarczyk, Turnau, 1998).

The reasons for their defiance of the Catholic Church can be found first of all in the nature of the renewal movement – its structure and rules of functioning (grass-roots movement of the laity forcing partnership relations between the secular animators and the clergy, getting out of the priests' control, going beyond the church grounds) as well as in forms of worship (closer to Pentecostals than to the Catholic canon), Biblical studies (which often call the Catholic interpretation into question) and evangelizing activity. Secondly, in the authoritative personality of a secular leader convinced of the uniqueness of his relation with God and having the charismatic gifts (of healing, prophecy, the gift of tongues – glossolalia). Competence increased by qualities attributed to priests is often a hotbed of issues concerning jurisdiction.

The need to find yourself in a new reality after changes in the political system and mutual financial help were the *expressis verbis* motive behind founding four new religious movements which have gained legal personality: the “I Believe in the Goodness of People” Religious Association (Związek Wyznaniowy “Wierzę w Dobro Człowieka”); the Religious Movement of “Quinarists” (Związek Wyznaniowy “Kwinarystów”); the Polish Church of Dialogue (Polski Kościół Dialogu);

the “Jesus is the Lord” Biblical Centre (Centrum Biblijne “Jezus jest Panem”). The economic motive can be found in their ideological declarations.

The founder and now the perpetual head of the new religious movement registered as the “I Believe in the Goodness of People” Religious Association is Jan Kakarenko. This association is open to people who believe in human goodness, supporting one another, seeking spiritual and material help in overcoming life difficulties with dignity. Poor standards of living make people search for remedial measures. One of them was the registration of a group of friends as a religious association which would not only provide needful people with spiritual but also with financial support. (“Our registration partially results from a protest. Around us we could hear about doing everything for God, while we wanted to do something for a human being”) (Beźnic, 1997: 339). Crucial factors also included “worsening economic conditions, combined with growing social callousness and gradually losing interest in another human being” (Beźnic, 1997: 339). The association set up a company to raise money for charity. A teacher takes care of financial and legal assistance. The aim of the association is the concern for the goodness of a human being and help in assuring mutual kindness between people. The basic doctrinal assumption of the association is to regard a human being as the greatest value and the faith that you can and should inspire enormous goodness in people, often undisclosed. The seat of the association is in Kraków. Although it did not specify the nature of its religious practices, the form of its church services, symbols or ritual texts, it was registered as a religious association in 1992 by the Department for Denominations of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration.

In the same year (1992) on the initiative of Marek J. Bąba (alias Marek J. Trojanowski), who gathered a lot of believers around himself, the Religious Movement of “Quinarists” was registered, with their seat in Łomianki near Warsaw. The believers declare faith in one God who is the driving force of everything. God, by creating the world, gave it the ability to exist independently. The world is developing and changing by itself, without divine intervention, but according to the laws created by God. All laws of nature are divine laws. A human being, by breaking them, acts against God. Acting to the detriment of nature turns against a human being. God is present in everything that exists in the universe, in every kind of energy and matter. He is neither good nor evil, but exists in absolute terms and everything is subject to His laws. If you accept these rules and commit yourself to abide by them, you become a believer deserving friendship, respect and financial help. The association does not criticize its believers for their views and behaviour, nor does it impose on them any forms of religious worship.

The Polish Church of Dialogue, registered in 1997 as a religious association, is also less religious and more pragmatic in nature. Its area of activity and registered office is in Warsaw. The former, unofficial activity was based on holding conversations and finding compromise in contentious issues, helping those in need as well as studying religious texts. The community obliges the believers to look after animals and the planet we live on as well as the whole Galaxy. It allows for a subjective interpretation of the Bible as a form of dialogue with God. The main rules you need to obey (stated in the imperative form) are: 1) Never object to the Ten Commandments; 2) Help the poor and those in need; 3) Read religious texts; 4) Never use a weapon; 5) Shun violence; 6) Show respect to every being; 7) Actively participate in the discussions of the Polish Church of Dialogue; 8) Accumulate your wealth by any legal means (growing rich is the basic duty fulfilled towards God by the believers). In their activity, they aim to help the poor and those in need. When the Parish Council notices signs on Earth and in the heavens given by God, the believers will set off to search for the poor and those in need. Forms of worship: liturgy – a service with the participation of the believers, which is based on studying religious texts led by a priest and saying prayers as well as searching for God through a dialogue between the believers (“dialogue is the only right way of finding God”).

Economic success is imperative also to the people who have chosen membership in the “Jesus is the Lord” Biblical Centre (since 2014 The Church of Glory; [www.kosciolchwaly.pl](http://www.kosciolchwaly.pl)). The group emerged from the Pentecostal Church of God in Jesus Christ (Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, 2001: 56-57) and registered as an autonomous religious association in 1990. The split occurred because the group adopted elements of the so-called “theology of success”. Its essence is allowing not only for the prayers for health, but also for financial well-being, success. God – as they preach – gives everything, if you can ask Him for health, so for preventing poverty as well. In the *Chrześcijanin (Christian)* monthly main theses of the theology of success were formulated: “Because we are God’s children, the King’s children, we should always travel first class, we should own what’s the greatest and the best, since only that brings glory to God” (see Pasek, 1992: 188). This doctrine is based on a few excerpts from the Bible about Christians’ success (3 John 2; 1 Timothy 4:13; John 10:10). The community, which consists of about 50 members, is active in Warsaw, where it meets in rented halls. It does missionary work in penal institutions, runs Biblical courses and publishes texts.

A new religious movement of therapeutic character is the “Pneuma” Pantheistic Church. The idea of registering came up during systematic meetings (began in January 1993) of a group of friends who discussed the understanding of the nature of God, the direction where the world was heading and the role of nature in people’s lives. When they decided to systematize their search and give it a scientific foundation, they discovered that their views coincide with both the reflections of Ionic philosophers of nature as well as – and first of all – with the concepts of Spinoza (pantheistic doctrine). We realized that the system we have created perfectly satisfies our common need for existence on a spiritual level, through which it gains an entirely new dimension – it becomes our Faith. Eight theses were called Dogmas, which became the basis of our system of beliefs”. (In documents submitted to the Department for Denominations of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration there is no information on the content of those theses). The Church was registered in 1996. For practising this religion, the notions of *Uniting* (*Jednoczenie*) and *Consolation* (*Pociecha*) have a crucial meaning. *Uniting* is a form of meetings between the believers, which take place on Friday afternoons, on Saturdays before noon, on Sunday afternoons and whenever possible on public holidays. *Uniting* goes according to set rules: *welcome* – phrased as “welcome to the Unity”; *session* – the believers sit “cross-legged” and in 10-minutes of silence they try to feel as united with nature as they possibly can; *speech* – one of the believers presents a chosen problem from everyday life in the light of one of the dogmas (about 30 minutes); *participation* – the believers share with one another the food they brought (about 40 minutes); *relaxation* – for 15 minutes they think about matters concerning the church in silence; *departure* – they utter the words “remain in the Unity” in chorus. *Uniting* takes place as far outdoors as possible, in close contact with nature. If the meeting takes place inside, an oak leaf carved in wood symbolizes the presence of nature. Another element of the religious practice is *Consolation*. It is a form of individual interactions between two believers. The one who needs *Consolation* turns to another believer with the words “give me Consolation”, which begins a conversation in which the consoled confides his dilemmas and problems to the consoling party. The aim of the *Consolation* is to “lift someone’s spirits” by strengthening their faith. *Consolation* lasts about 30 minutes and ends when the consoled utters the words: “I have been consoled”. *Consolation* is given by believers who emanate the invigorating Pneuma. The registered office of this new religious movement is in Łowicz. The highest authority is the General Assembly of Believers, while the executive body is the Church Council. The Council includes a chairman, a secretary and a treasurer, all on equal terms.



The function of a spiritual person is perpetual: bishop – auditor, bishop – assistant, bishop – rector.

The mechanism of emerging new religious movements is complex. The main role is played by the creator of the new group, or only a group that is eclectic, copying or duplicating former concepts or ideas. A creative mind itself is not enough, though, for the idea to live its own life, become a challenge and call for others. A religious organization is established when the ideas presented by the creator (founder) find followers and are so attractive that they reject their former faith and lifestyle.

To a sociologist of religion this moment is cognitively the most intriguing and unique. How does it happen that ideas often contrary to the ones recognized so far become a guideline to a new life, new faith and sometimes a new concept of God from that moment on? For that situation to happen there should be specific feedback, the clash of two intentional needs: a creative leader and a spiritual seeker. The individuality of the relation is ensured by those who solicit for believers, initially the founders themselves, but with time also specialized services (missionaries, apostles, preachers, teachers, etc.).

The pluralism and freedom of choice on the one hand provoke a search for the most adequate offer of outlook on life, but on the other hand – according to Parkinson's law (Parkinson, 1986) – permanent development of new organizational structures brought to life as a result of splits, which are caused by internal frictions, tensions or insatiable leadership ambitions.

Movements referring to the cult of Satan cause the most controversy and fear. The media inform about their presence and the ravages they create in the material world (desecrations of cemeteries) and in the psyche (aggression, killings, suicides).

The new religious movements established by Poles and directed to them which were presented in this text as examples illustrate the mosaic of needs present in our society. References to pre-Slavic beliefs make us realize that the feeling of national pride of centuries-old identity does not allow a certain group of people to accept a tradition historically alien to the Slavs. A meeting with Protestant churches may lead to rejecting Catholicism and founding – as a sign of protest – your own religious community. The search for the Absolute may lead to finding it by contrast with Christianity. People joining groups which promote such “truths” break their bonds with the Catholic Church, of which they were former members. The contemporary Church should therefore stimulate such activity in its own organizational structures, especially on the level of parishes, that believers could

receive spiritual and financial support, which would eliminate other concepts from their scope of interest. Obviously new religious movements should not be treated in terms of a threat to the Church, only their presence can encourage the activity of the Church, its openness to the intellectual and spiritual needs of the believers.

The signs of the pluralisation of religious life in Poland referred to in this text do not contradict whatsoever the real and statistically documented domination of Catholicism, which in the public consciousness appears as an internally consistent monolith. The stability and continuity of the Catholic faith in Poland, which can be foreseen in the future, is not threatened by secularization processes or the presence of “other believers”.

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# THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE *DHARMA* – PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS ON BUDDHIST PRODUCTS ON BRAZIL’S RELIGIOUS MARKET

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## INTRODUCTION

Until World War II, almost exclusively restricted to Japanese Immigrants – followed by the foundation of traditional Temples in the 1950s and, from the 1960s onwards, by a gradual pluralization of religious institutions mostly of East Asian and Tibetan origin (Usarski, 2017); Buddhism has recently entered a new stage of its evolution in Brazil. Like in other Western countries, it is currently no longer necessary for Brazilians interested in Buddhism to become a member of a well-defined religious community to study the teachings of the Buddha, follow Buddhist ethics, or become familiar with a spiritual practice formerly transmitted within hierarchal lines of submission. That means Buddhism can be “considered a component of the sacred cosmos of our times” marked by a religious practice on the individual, private level, spiritual pragmatism and this-worldliness in the context of a holistic worldview. Those who share these attitudes declare “that Buddhism permits men to experiment and to autonomously construct an ensemble of his own religious motivations” (Soares, 2004: 139; 144). In other words: to a certain degree deprived from the support and protected by organizational structures, Buddhism has been partially absorbed by the so-called consumer culture, is now an integral part of Brazil’s spiritual economy (Gelfer, 2010: 55) or the spiritual marketplace, and is today surrounded by a climate of enhanced consumer choice (Bowman, 1999: 182; 184).

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This development is in tune both with overall empirical trends within modern Western societies and with theoretical sociological tendencies in search of approaches capable of dealing with the respective shifts within society in general and the religious field in particular. Therefore, a growing number of sociologists insist in the reduced analytical value of formerly powerful analytical categories such as “class”, “gender” or “ethnicity” in the face of an increasing “liquidity” of modern society (Bauman, 2000) and their subjective correlates such as “individualization”, “autonomy” or “multi-optionality” (Gross, 1994).

Under these circumstances, researchers of Western Buddhism are well advised to overcome their habitual focus on the institutional manifestations and identifiable forms of membership. This does not mean that the question of “how a variety of traditional *Buddhist schools and movements* have been affected by encountering the myriad forces of modernization” (Heine & Prebish, 2003: 5) has lost its relevance for the academic discussion about related issues. However, from a sociological standpoint, there are good reasons to doubt whether the classical image of Buddhism as a relatively clear identifiable religious system really corresponds to the dynamics and configuration within the contemporary religious field. The shortcomings of the conventional approach to Western Buddhism become even more evident when they are confronted with the hypotheses and insights of sociologists of religion; such as the concept of the systemic “porosity” of contemporary religion and the dislocation of its functions into other segments of modern society (Pollack, 2008). While society becomes liquid, religion becomes “fluid” presenting itself in a diffused manner to subjects characterized by a high degree of mobility (Lüddecke, 2010: 11) and changed spiritual attitudes in the sense of Grave Davie’s renowned motto “believing without belonging” (Davie 1990, 1993). This adoption of religion to the post-industrial society (Knoblauch, 2009: 41) did not leave Buddhism unattached and generated new demands for its research under the heading of “commodified Buddhism”.

All this means that researchers of Western Buddhism including contemporary Buddhism in Brazil are challenged by an expanded empirical and theoretical horizon. The following paragraphs deal with three elements of this spectrum. Firstly, the reader will find a succinct description of the market-niche Buddhism has conquered in Brazil. Next come observations about the process through which religious elements of Buddhist origin are transformed into commodifiable goods and services. The final part gives some answers to the question of what the evolution of a market of Buddhist-connoted products means for institutionalized Buddhism in Brazil.

## THE SPECTRUM OF COMMODIFIED BUDDHISM IN BRAZIL

A systematic approach to “commodified Buddhism” in Brazil starts with an overview of the internal structure of this religious market-niche. The two interrelated key-questions in this context are about a) the social surroundings in which the production of religious goods and services are produced and offered and b) the audiences that are addressed by the suppliers (Stolz, 2006). In order to reduce complexion one can think of a continuum marked by two extreme ends. One side alludes to Buddhist communities that produce religious goods and services for the usage of its members. In this case there is no or only a little distinction between producers and consumers. Both instances are overlapping. On the other side there are “secular” suppliers which produce goods and services for the free “religious market”. In both cases the audience can be mixed: it is possible that goods and services produced and consumed inside a religious community attract clients from outside the religious community. It is also possible that a product or service on the free market makes sense for a member Buddhist community because the significance of and benefit from the acquired good or service is in harmony with his or her faith and the plausibility structure of the religious group this consumer is committed to. One example for the first category is the “Loja Mandala” (Mandala Shop), associated with the Tibetan Buddhist Odsal Ling Temple in the city of Cotia. The shop offers a vast spectrum of religious articles such as books, CDs, Buddha-Statues and Malas that in the first place are relevant for the adherents but – since they can be ordered via the Internet – may also attract clients who has nothing to do with the Temple (Mandala. Arte & Dharma, s.a.). The same is true for the firm, *Dharma Books*. The latter was a virtual library run by DharmaNet, an “ecumenical” portal for the propagation of all Buddhist traditions active in Brazil. One of the means to contribute to the “illumination of all human beings” was the commercialization of Buddhist literature. However, DharmaBooks had no single volume in stock. Rather, the potential client was invited to use the embedded link to the online distributor “Submarino”. The partnership implied a compensation for DharmaBooks and the latter promised that any financial benefit was re-directed to the Buddhist communities associated with Dharmanet (<http://www.dharmanet.com.br/dharmabooks/>). Commercialization initiatives of Brazilian Buddhist entities which primarily but not exclusively address practitioners can also be found in terms of teaching or cultural activities of local Temples open for a general public. This is true for Ikebana-courses offered by the Higashi Honganji Temple in São Paulo ([http://www.aleatorio.com.br/marco/honganji/curso\\_ikebana.htm](http://www.aleatorio.com.br/marco/honganji/curso_ikebana.htm))

or classes of Chinese language, cuisine or painting techniques offered by the Meditation Center associated with the Fo Guang Shan-Temple in Cotia (<http://www.templozulai.org.br/centro.htm>).

A different type of commercialization initiatives of Brazilian Buddhists entities consists of the supply of goods and services primarily designed for a non-Buddhist audience. The following two examples refer to the so-called “Spiritual Management”-sector. The first case is that of the Brazilian convert Wilson Medeiros de Moura who transformed his Mahabodhi-Center in Niteroi into the firm “Fator Zen”. The latter was dedicated to “the formation and capacitation of individuals in the fields of Human Resources, Life Quality and Social responsibility” by organizing “corporative and open educational processes, consultancies and presentations” ([http://www.fatorzen.com/filosofia\\_fz.htm](http://www.fatorzen.com/filosofia_fz.htm)). While the firm “Fator Zen” was relatively short-lived, Moura’s book with the homonymous title is still available (Moura, 2016). The second example is related to Alfredo Aveline, better known as Lama Padma Samten, the founder of the Center for Buddhist Studies Bodhisatva in Porto Alegre. One of his activities is directed to the business sector for which he offers talks on issues such as corporate communication, marketing, entrepreneurship or the labor market. According to Lama Samten’s curriculum vitae, institutions such as the Federation of Industries of the Federal State of Paraná (FIEP) / COFIC – Center for Industrial Support in Camaçari/BA / ABRAS Association of Brazilian Supermarket-Owners have been among the clients (*Sobre o Lama Padma Samten*, s.a.).

Both Wilson Medeiros de Moura and Alfredo Aveline have to compete with enterprises of “secular” suppliers which produce goods and services at least symbolically related to Buddhism for the free “religious market”. One example of the latter is the firm “Dharma Marketing” which did not show any sign of commitment to a specific Buddhist community, movement or “vehicle”, but included “Theravada- and Zen-Meditation” in the lists of techniques offered for “secular” clients who wished to transcend mere discursive communication in order to cultivate pure attention on the level of the collective consciousness of the company (<http://www.dharmamarketing.org/>).

The most important sector, however, in which products and services at least symbolically associated with Buddhism are offered by “secular” suppliers, is the field of alternative health. In some cases, the connection with Buddhism is radically reduced to the enterprises name which means that visitors of institute such as *Companhia Zen* (*Companhia Zen...*, s.a.) or *Nirvana* (*Nirvana*, s.a.) will not



find any farther-reaching association with Buddhism than the auspiciously sounding allusions on the company plaque. In other cases, one recognizes efforts to justify the firm's name through the inclusion of at least one or another more Buddhism-like items in the eclectic program of therapies. The *Spa Daissen*, for example, offers courses on Zen-cuisine for those who are interested in combining the search for relaxation and exotic alimentation (*Cozinha Zen*, 2011), while the Pilates-instructors of the *Bouddha-Spa* enrich their western method through references to Oriental Philosophy and the implementation of Eastern Meditation and martial art-techniques (*Bouddha Spa*, s.a.).

#### THE TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS GOODS/SERVICES INTO A COMMODITY

The following reflections are inspired by studies on the process of commodification of products and services originally embedded in religious context. Two studies are particularly useful in this context: firstly, the essay of Madhulika Banerjee, on Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals in the modern Market (Banerjee, 2002); secondly, an article of Nurit Zaidman, Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni and Iris Nehemya on the process of introduction and packaging of spirituality for the religious market (Zaidman, *et.al.*, 2009).

For analytical reasons one can distinguish seven logically inter-related constituents of the process of transformation of Buddhism into commodities, that is, a) abstraction, b) parceling, c) rearrangement, d) recontextualization, e) packaging, f) curricularization and e) validation. The elements represent conceptual constructions in the sense of ideal-types. Empirically, this means that the elements are not necessarily found, neither in their pure form nor combined to a complete set. Rather, some are more basic and might occur more frequently than others. Finally, the list does not suggest that the elements occur necessarily in a pre-defined sequence, although some of the elements are almost inseparably interconnected.

#### ABSTRACTION

According to Vincent Miller, consumer culture in the field of religion corresponds to “a way of relating to beliefs – a set of habits of interpretation and use – that renders the «content» of beliefs and values less important” (Miller, 2005: 1). In other words, we currently observe a process of “liquidation of cultural traditions

whereby the elements they comprise (beliefs, symbols, practices, and so on) are abstracted from their traditional contexts and engaged as free-floating signifiers” (Miller, 2005: 32). Rephrasing this quotation one can state that the process of commercialization of religious products and services implies an emancipation of determined religious aspect from their original context. In this process, the organic symbiosis between certain doctrines or practices and the embracing symbolic-system that gives the single elements its specific meanings does no longer matter.

Once abstracted from its context, the elements assume an independent plausibility. One expression for this tendency is the following quote from Marc Fine’s *Buddha in a Business Suit*. “Although it draws from the deep well of Eastern spiritual teachings, this book is not about becoming a Buddhist. It offers simple and profound advice that will serve you regardless of your background or spiritual outlook, and shows you how to do whatever it is you’re doing better – while living in a state of contentment and happiness” (Fine, 2008: 12).

The idea that one can benefit from a religious item without taken its original context into account is re-affirmed by Andréa Falchi, an interior designer in Rio de Janeiro, who says: “Everything from the Orient is fashion and the Buddha plays the role of its official representative. However, when an interior designer places a Buddha in a specific environment he or she is not necessarily concerned with the religious side. Rather, the image of Buddha humanizes the space (Fernandes, 2009: 17).

## PARCELING

Parceling means that from the totality of the integrated symbolic universe of Buddhism and its corresponding practices, certain aspects are isolated and commercialized. What specific aspect is isolated depends on the character of the business or service offered on the market. While a shop like the Bazar Kamakura (Bazar Kamakura, s.a.), for example, is full of material items from amulets to Buddha-Statue, an alternative health-center is more interested in methods which can be used for relaxation. This brings us to rearrangement.

## REARRANGEMENT

In a general sense, rearrangement means the combination of Buddhist elements with aspects abstracted from other religious contexts. In a more pejorative sense it can also be defined “as the blending of «serious» esoteric knowledge with

more popular and commodified versions” (Pousani, 2003: 37). One example is the approach of the firm Dharma-Marketing which offered in its program along with Theravada- and Zen-Meditation, Dharma-Marketing “other practices of spiritual refinement” including the art of leadership “Doshu” and methods of Raja Yoga (<http://www.dharmamarketing.org/>).

## RECONTEXTUALIZATION

The principle of “recontextualization” refers to the underlying spirit in which rearrangement takes place. The most obvious issue here is holism. Spirituality in general addresses the human being as a whole, bringing segments together that from a modern point of view are segmented or even contradictory towards each other (Knoblauch, 2009: 127). In opposition, alternative medicine and workplace spirituality defend an integrative perspective in which the dichotomy of body and mind or workplace and private life are overcome.

## PACKAGING AND CURRICULIZATION

The principles of “packaging” and “curriculization” are two intimately related constituents of the process of commercialization of religious services and goods. “Packaging” is related to the integration of Buddhist elements into predefined sets of spiritual commodities. The second principle refers to the arrangements through which these sets are offered on the market. The term “curriculization” implies, that the offered content is organized in logically and functionally interrelated smaller units. One example for “packaging” and “curriculization” is the way the firm Fator Zen presented its services to the public. The offer was dedicated to the philosophy of promoting the success of an economical enterprise and the harmonious coexistence and collaboration of the employees. The whole course was subdivided into a series of modules and it was up to the customers’ free choice to enrol in single units which fitted best to their momentary personal interest. One example is the course on “Meditation and steady mental quietude”. Those who signed up for this module were attracted by the promise that they might learn how to calm the mind according to the following topics: a) Introduction to meditation: vision, objectives, basic techniques and postures; b) Meditative concentration: dispersing influences; objects helpful for focussing; objectives; c) The

mind: its natures; how it functions; universal elements and stages of spiritual evolution; d) initial difficulties of meditation and countermeasures; e) Principal mantras: what they are, how they work and how to utilize them in order to evolve and to concentrate; f) Steady mental quietude: concept and practice; g) How to silence the mind: basics and life-experience; h) respiratory reduction: techniques of respiration which promote spiritual evolution, concentration, and deep relaxation of mind and body. Clients interested in these issues could sign in for the whole course composed of 12 meetings (approximately 700 Brazilian Reais [November 2011]) or for only one specific unit (170 Brazilian Reais).

## VALIDATION

The principle of “validation” becomes visible through efforts of suppliers of Buddhist connoted goods and services to prove the quality of their products. Since the quality of a product reflects aspects such as talent, capacity, faculty and the resources of the producer, the technique of “validation” is also concerned with the reputation of the “fabricator” and “distributor” of the commodity. One of the most evident indicators of the desire to let both product and producer appear in a positive light consists in the attempt to downplay the religious origin of a commodity and to emphasize its secular character. Instead presenting these goods in terms of its original Buddhist context, they are related to non-religious intellectual enterprises such as Transpersonal Psychology and topics such as “collective consciousness”, “synchronicity”, “human intelligence” or “spiritual quotient” (Aberto, 2009). The following quote from the website of the Dharma-Marketing-Agency is one example for the attempt to reduce the importance of the religious nature of Buddhism: “The spiritual dimension of the human being, understood as the highest level of integral prosperity, has been forgotten, because it is frequently mistaken for a religious perspective. This position explains why people in the field of business environment dissociate themselves from the concept of self-awareness” (<http://www.dharmamarketing.org/>). Ronald Z. Carvalho, one of the agency’s consultants, takes a similar line stating: “In Buddhism neither there are commandments nor there is sin. There are only rules of conduct that lead to human satisfaction and to a harmonious affiliation of human beings. In the same way, the rules lead to a correct coexistence if one applies them to marketing” (Carvalho, s.a.).

As for the concern with the producer’s or distributor’s reputation, the curriculum vitae of Wilson Medeiros de Moura, the director of the already extinct firm

“Fator Zen” was revealing. The CV highlighted the following qualities: *researcher* in the field of Human Development; training as meditation and Tibetan Yoga-instructor at the Men-Tsee-Khang-*Institute*, India, the Monastic *University* of Sera Mey, India and Nepal and the Mmulargan-*school*, Chile; training in the field of Tibetan *Medicine* at the Men-Tsee-Khang-Institute, India (<http://www.fatorzen.com/wilsonmoura.htm>). In a similar tone, Wilson Medeiros de Moura is introduced as author of his book “Fator Zen”. According to the resume he is not only a writer, but also an engineer, entrepreneur, lecturer and consultor (Brito, s.a.).

### CONSEQUENCES FOR INSTITUTIONALIZED BUDDHISM IN BRAZIL

Comprehensive and profound analytical reflections about the manifold implications of the incorporation of Buddhist connoted goods and services into Brazil’s “free religious market” would go beyond the scope of this article. In line with deliberate classification of the present reasoning as “preliminary”, the last paragraph is reserved for a few remarks on the consequences of the commodification of Buddhism for institutionalized Buddhism in Brazil. The focus of this succinct comments lies in the ambiguity of effects caused by the process of marketization.

The central point in this context is that the commodification of Buddhist connoted goods and services represent a severe challenge for the Buddhists institutions and authorities active in the respective temples and centers. In a highly diversified religious field such as Brazil, any religious branch can only survive if it submits itself to the dynamics of competition. Kardecism, in terms of statistics the third most relevant religious tradition in the country and due to doctrines, such as reincarnation and karma, is probably the severest rival for institutionalized Buddhism. With the absorption of Buddhist ideas and practices by independent providers, the competition aggravates for two interrelated reasons. Firstly, the spectrum of suppliers of religious products expands aggravating competition by the numerical increase of alternatives. Secondly, different to the Buddhist religion upheld by tradition carriers concerned with the historical authenticity of teachings and techniques, the contextualization of the latter in a hierarchical social and the lay(wo)men’s commitment to a temple’s or center’s authorities, the market does not demand any other prerequisite for the obtainment of a Buddhist connoted product than the power of acquisition in terms of monetary capital. This creates a very different situation compared with the past. In a “classical” setting, only

those who were predisposed to enter a well-defined religious community and to submit themselves to a time-consuming, sometimes strenuous spiritual routine had the privilege to partake in Buddhist wisdom. None of these conditions are constitutive for the market. On the contrary, the client, liberated from a religious authority's "power of definition" is free to pick up a product he/she can afford and is free to go if he/she thinks the purchased good fulfills her/his needs. If she/he feels that the product did not correspond to the standard or the supplier did not keep his promise, the client simply re-orientates her/himself on the market. Traditional Buddhists may not only argue that consumerism runs the risk of banalizing religion (Borup, 2016: 49) but also "that it is primarily through the commodification of Buddhism that the Dharma loses much of its capacity to transform individuals" (Cohen, 2017: 13), since the consumer scratches only on the surface thus avoiding her /his own spiritual evolution. From this perspective, Buddhism is a long-term path that oscillates between moments of sensible progress and phases of supposed stagnation or even frustration which a practitioner only would overcome if she/he is patient and sticks to the idea of "refuge" to the Buddha, his teachings and his community.

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# ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN POLAND

Agata S. Nalborczyk\*

## A SHORT HISTORY OF ISLAM IN POLAND

The documented history of bilateral contacts between Poland and the Islamic world goes back over a thousand years, to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The first written mention of Mieszko's<sup>1</sup> country, the first Polish state known to history, was made in the Arabic language in a chronicle by Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb aṭ-Ṭurṭūšī, a Jewish traveller, probably a merchant sent by the Caliph Al-Ḥakam II to serve as an envoy (960-966) to the Holy Roman Emperor Otto I (Kowalski, 1946). However, until the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the presence of Islam in this part of Europe had been rather random and disorderly.

The history of Islamic presence in Poland and Lithuania dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the first written mention of Muslims in Polish historiography goes back to the year 1397 and was made in *Roczniki, czyli Kroniki Królestwa Polskiego* ("The Annals of Jan Długosz") by Polish chronicler Jan Długosz (1981: 288-289). It was only after the Mongol state of Golden Horde became nominally Islamic in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (its rulers started to profess Islam) that contacts with Muslims intensified. Lithuanian princes fought against the Golden Horde to prevent its invasions of Lithuanian lands, but already in the 14<sup>th</sup> century the first Muslims, i.e., Tatars originating from this state, began to settle in Lithuania (Poland and Lithuania were in a personal union, that is connected through the person of the ruler, since 1385) (Tyszkiewicz, 1989: 89, 110). They left their country and came to live

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<sup>1</sup> Mieszko (960-992) was the first historically known Polish sovereign, the founder of the first Polish state.

in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania for various reasons<sup>2</sup>. Some of them were brought (as mercenaries) to help the Lithuanians defend their territories from enemies. Others were refugees, who fled for fear of disturbances within the Golden Horde, which was engaged in civil wars (Borawski, Dubiński, 1986: 18).

When the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas the Great, had Tatars settled systematically in the Trakai (Pol. Troki) area, it significantly increased the number of Tatars within Lithuanian borders (Tyszkiewicz, 1998: 14ff; Borawski 1986: 6). They were granted land in exchange for military service in the Lithuanian army and for helping sustain contact among the duke's garrisons (Kryczyński, 1938: 4ff). They fought mainly against the Teutonic Order (Borawski, 1986: 31-32, 53-54), e.g. a supplementary Tatar regiment was used in the Battle of Grunwald in 1410 (Borawski, Dubiński, 1986: 27). In addition to land they were also granted the right to practice their religion and erect mosques (Borawski, 1980: 43ff; Tyszkiewicz, 2008: 151ff).

The number of Muslim settlers, both mercenaries and refugees, as well as prisoners of war, kept increasing during the whole of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but it was the two subsequent centuries that saw the most significant influx of Muslims to Polish territories (Tyszkiewicz, 1998: 15ff). Some historical sources assess the number of Muslims in Poland at that time at 40,000 people. Their legal status was defined in the 16<sup>th</sup> (Borawski, Dubiński, 1986: 55ff). The ones who served in Tatar military units were granted fief and gained the status almost equal to the Polish-Lithuanian nobility, just as those who served at royal courts as interpreters and translators from oriental languages (Borawski, 1986: 17). There were also Tatars among city dwellers (tradesmen, cart drivers, gardeners) and servants on lordly estates (Bohdanowicz, Chazbijewicz, Tyszkiewicz, 1997: 25ff). Their settlements centred around Vilnius (Pol. Wilno), Trakai, Hrodna (Pol. Grodno) and Navahradak (Pol. Nowogródek) (Tyszkiewicz, 1998: 14) and existed at least until the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Borawski, 1986: 19ff). On the territories of the Crown of the Polish Kingdom, King John III Sobieski granted land to Tatars in Podlachia in 1679 (Konopacki, 2010: 78; Sobczak, 1987: 51-53)<sup>3</sup>.

Muslim Tatars were the king's subjects, their superiors being military commanders, standard bearers (Pol. *chorąży*) and marshals, appointed by the King,

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<sup>2</sup> It is possible that first war prisoners from the Golden Horde were brought as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century as a result of wars against Lithuania over Smolensk and Chernihiv provinces, but they did not settle for good; for more details see: Tyszkiewicz (1998: 11ff).

<sup>3</sup> In two of the granted villages Bohoniki and Kruszyniany, there are still Muslim communities, mosques and *mizars* (cemeteries). There are also Tatars living in Krynki and Sokółka to this day.

who were also representatives of judicial power authorized to adjudicate in civil cases. Generally, Tatars served as soldiers, in separate units of light cavalry (called in Polish *chorągiew*), which possessed their own military chaplains (field imams) from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Kryczyński, 1938: 118). They fought in all major battles of the time<sup>4</sup>. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Tatar gentry in the Grand Duchy received almost all rights and privileges of the Polish *szlachta* (the noble class in Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) (Borawski, Dubiński, 1986: 85-87), and in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the legal status of their land ownership was changed from fief to hereditary property (Kryczyński, 1938: 31ff). The Constitution of 3 May 1791 finally granted them full political rights (Bohdanowicz, Chazbijewicz, Tyszkiewicz, 1997: 14).

Tatars, as Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi School, enjoyed freedom of worship in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They lived in Muslim religious communities headed by imams (called in Polish *mołna*) elected by all members of the community. At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there could be even about 60 mosques in Poland (Kryczyński, 1937: 17). Sources say nothing about any major Christianization of Muslim Tatars. However, during the Counter-Reformation of 1609 an enraged crowd demolished a mosque in Trakai (Borawski, Dubiński, 1986: 73-74). But the Tatars kept their religion, even though they lost their mother tongue in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and gradually started to speak one of the Polish/Belarusian spoken dialects (Borawski, 1986: 199-202). At the same time, they kept the Arabic alphabet, which they used not only to write down Koran passages or prayers in Arabic<sup>5</sup>, but also for Polish texts, in combination with which it made a very unique kind of writing. They used this script for handwriting *kitab*s (compilations of various texts: *hadith*, prayers, rituals, legends), *tefsirs* (passages of the Koran with a translation into Polish) etc.<sup>6</sup>.

When the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth lost its independence at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the majority of Tatars came under Russian authority. Some fought in uprisings against the Tsarist Russia and fell victim to repression (Tyszkiewicz, 1998: 45ff; Borawski, 1986: 258ff) – some of them were deprived of the *szlachta* status, and were subjected to Russification (Miśkiewicz, 1990: 20-21; Kryczyński, 1938: 35, 38ff) (e.g. they were made to use Russian inscriptions on tombstones) (Borawski, Dubiński, 1986: 135).

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<sup>4</sup> For more details see: Nalborczyk (2013).

<sup>5</sup> For information on hand-written Koran in the culture of Polish-Lithuanian Tatars see: Jord (1994).

<sup>6</sup> For more details see: Tyszkiewicz (1998: 59ff); Borawski (1986: 190ff). Further details on *kitab*s or *tefsirs* in: Łapicz (1986); Drozd, Dziekan, Majda (2000); Kulwicka- Kamińska, Łapicz (2013); Łapicz, Kulwicka-Kamińska (2015).

Around that time, other Muslims started coming to Poland. They were the Crimean Tatars, the Cherkessians, the Chechens, the Azerbaijanis and other Muslims from the Caucasus and Central Asia, who served in the tsarist army (Bohdanowicz, Chazbijewicz, Tyszkiewicz, 1997: 40; Kołodziejczyk, 1987: 22, 39ff). Apart from soldiers there were also merchants, craftsmen (mainly bakers and confectioners) and clerks among the new immigrants (Tyszkiewicz, 1998: 113). It was for them that Muslim cemeteries were founded in Warsaw, one of which is still open. It is situated in Tatarska Street and is itself called the Tatar Cemetery<sup>7</sup>.

World War I thinned the number of Tatars, the majority of whom were resettled deep in Russia. Many mosques, houses and cemeteries were demolished (Kryczyński, 1938: 44).

There were about 5,500 Polish-Lithuanian Tatars living in Poland and 19 Muslim religious communities operating after the World War I until 1939. Polish Muslims enjoyed full freedom of worship but they did not have their all-Polish organization. Before 1918 they were under the authority of the Mufti of Simferopol (Crimea) – head of the Taurida Muslim Spiritual Board (Tyszkiewicz, 1998: 77-78), otherwise closed down after the Soviet army conquered Crimea in 1920. In such circumstances, two organizations: The Union of Muslims in Warsaw (Pol. Związek Muzułmanów m.st. Warszawy) and the Muslim Religious Community in Vilnius (Pol. Muzułmańska Gmina Wyznaniowa z Wilna), made efforts to appoint one superior body for all Polish Muslims – one that would be acknowledged by the Polish government (Miskiewicz, 1990: 35ff). They were successful in their attempts. In 1925, with the consent of the Ministry of Interior and with the financial support from the Ministry of Denominations and Public Enlightenment, an all-Polish Convention of Delegates from Muslim Communities (Pol. Wszechpolski Zjazd Delegatów Gmin Muzułmańskich) took place in Vilnius. Delegates to the convention set up the Muslim Religious Union in the Republic of Poland (Pol. Muzułmański Związek Religijny w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, henceforward MZR) and elected the mufti – an orientalist Jakub Szykiewicz (1884-1966)<sup>8</sup>, with the seat in Vilnius. However, it was only in 1936 that Islam was finally officially recognized by the Polish Parliament in the Act of 21 April 1936, which defined the relationship between the State and the MZR (see below)<sup>9</sup>. The Union was independent of any clerical or secular authorities, it gained legal entity.

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<sup>7</sup> It was opened in 1867, an older one, called Caucasian, founded in 1839, was not in use until recently; for more details see: Kołodziejczyk (1997: 86ff).

<sup>8</sup> For more information about Szykiewicz see: Nalborczyk (2018: 301-302).

<sup>9</sup> For the circumstances of passing the bill see Sobczak (2004: 173ff).

All historical buildings belonging to the communities were taken care of by the state, and *waqfs*, i.e. religious foundations, were exempt from taxation and other payments. In 1928, the Mosque Building Committee was formed in Warsaw, but even though it was given a piece of land in Ochota the mosque was never erected<sup>10</sup>.

Polish-Lithuanian Tatars were also willing to serve in the Polish army in the interwar period. The Tatar Uhlan Regiment was already formed in 1919. Polish Tatars also fought in World War II; in 1939 they served in the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron of the 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Vilnius Uhlans (formed in 1936, all Muslims enlisted in military service served in this regiment) (Miśkiewicz, 1990: 155-159), and then in the underground forces of the Polish underground forces called the Home Army (Pol. *Armia Krajowa*), in the Vilnius Area.

After World War II, 90% of the territories formerly inhabited by Tatars were incorporated into the USSR (Kołodziejczyk, 1997: 29). The only three pre-war religious communities that remained within Polish lands were in Warsaw, Bohoniki and Kruszyniany. Many Tatars had to leave their homes and were subjected to the so-called “repatriation” to Western territories that belonged to Germany before the war (Bohdanowicz, Chazbijewicz, Tyszkiewicz, 1997: 80ff), where they formed two Muslim communities – in Gdańsk and Gorzów Wielkopolski (Miśkiewicz, 1993: 11ff). However, due to postwar migrations, the Islamic population was dispersed. There weren’t enough clergymen, places of worship or religion teachers. The level of religious education wasn’t high either, which was partly a result of the isolation of Poland from other countries, where there existed centres of education in Muslim theology (Borawski, 1986: 307-308).

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MUSLIM MINORITY IN TODAY’S POLAND

The Muslim minority in Poland is not very sizeable, nor had it been very diverse ethnically before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when newcomers from Islamic countries started to join the ranks of Muslims in Poland, side by side with Tatars. They were mostly students from Arab countries, but also from Iran or Afghanistan. During the communist era in Poland many of them kept their faith secret, as it wasn’t approved of; and some were actually communists, e.g. members of the Iranian party *Tudeh*.

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<sup>10</sup> For more details see: Nalborczyk (2011b: 184-186).

Ever since the Polish borders were re-opened in 1989, new waves of Muslim immigrants have made their home in Poland. The majority of them are not migrant workers, but former students, mostly Arabs and their families. Turkish citizens have come rather to open a business, and many of them are adherents of the Hizmet movement (Fethullah Gülen). There are also political refugees among Muslims in Poland. Statistics show that most of them come from Iraq (10% of all the refugees in 1997), other nationalities: from Afghanistan (4%) and from Bosnia and Herzegovina (5%) (Migracje zagraniczne, 1998). Next a sizeable group of refugees arrived from Chechnya, but many of them moved to Germany after receiving refugee status. There are also some recent refugees from Crimea, i.e., Crimean Tatars.

We have no exact data on the number of Muslims living in Poland, as people are not asked about denomination in the national census. Estimated numbers differ depending on the source. The population of Tatars in Poland is estimated at 5-6 thousand, and the number of immigrant Muslims at 20-30 thousand. These two numbers amount to 0.06-0.08% of the total population of Poland.

#### THE LEGAL STATUS OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN POLAND

Religious life of Muslims in Poland is characterized by a peculiar transitional phase between the past, when almost all Muslims living in Poland were Tatars, and the present, with Tatars as a minority when compared to Muslim immigrants. Along with the demographic changes in the Muslim minority in Poland, their organizations also underwent a transformation. Until the late 1980s the MZR was the only Islamic organization in Poland. In the 1980s students from Arab countries were welcomed by its members and allowed to join the religious activities. However, tensioned between these two groups arose and in 1989, the students formed the Muslim Students Association in Poland, the first Islamic organization since the establishment of the MZR, though of course with a different legal status. Since then more Islamic organizations have been established, first as associations and later as denominational organizations.

Muslim denominational organizations in Poland fall into two separate categories: religious organizations acting on the basis of separate legal acts, and the remaining religious communities entered in the register of churches and other denominational organizations, functioning under the Act of 17 May 1989 on the Guarantees of Freedom of Conscience and Religion.

The MZR is one of the latter groups and is the only Islamic religious organization which operates on the basis of a special legal act, because the Polish Parliament has not revoked the Act of 21 April 1936 defining the relationship between the state and the MZR. Art. 1 of the Act states:

Wyznawcy islamu na obszarze Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, pozostając w łączności religijno-moralnej ze związkami religijnymi muzułmańskimi zagranicznymi, tworzą Muzułmański Związek Religijny w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, niezależny od jakichkolwiek obcokrajowych władz duchownych i świeckich<sup>11</sup>.

(Eng.: Muslims in the Republic of Poland, remaining in a religious-ethical contact with foreign religious communities, form Muslim Religious Union in the Republic of Poland, independent of any foreign authorities – neither clerical nor secular.)

According to the Act, which is still legally binding, as the Sejm has never repealed it, the only religious organization for Polish Muslims is MZR, established in 1925<sup>12</sup>.

Apart from delineating the relationship between Muslims represented by MZR and the State, the Act defines the procedure of electing the Mufti, the Highest College of Muslims, imams (leaders of communities) and muezzins. It is stated that candidates should have Polish citizenship and have both passive and active knowledge of Polish, as it is also the official language of MZR. High officials of MZR enjoy special rights that legislature grants to the clergy of all officially recognized denominations. The Act quotes the oath that leaders of MZR are obliged to take on the Koran, in which they pledge to be loyal citizens of Poland, contribute to her wellbeing and obey the Constitution.

The Act regulating the relation between the state and MZR, important as it is for rendering Islam an official denomination in Poland, is rather outdated in certain aspects (e.g. it states that imams are entitled to keep parish registers) and it needs amendment<sup>13</sup>. This issue is being negotiated between MZR authorities and government representatives.

In March 2004, the position of Mufti of Poland was filled for the first time since World War II. At the 15<sup>th</sup> All-Polish Congress of MZR, the imam of Białystok and former President of the Council of Imams – Tomasz Miśkiewicz, was elected the Mufti of the Republic of Poland.

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<sup>11</sup> Original spelling.

<sup>12</sup> After World War II, a new Mufti was not elected, because the post was perpetual and Jakub Szynkiewicz lived abroad (he died in 1966). Then there was no competent candidate. For more details see: Nalborczyk (2018: 304-305).

<sup>13</sup> For more details see: Nalborczyk, Borecki (2011).

Following the democratic breakthrough, a new Act of 17 May 1989 on the Guarantees of Freedom of Conscience and Religion (Pol. Ustawa o gwarancjach wolności sumienia i wyznania) facilitated easy registration of new denominational communities. In present day Poland people can freely establish religious organizations. If they wish to receive legal entity, as well as rights and privileges envisioned by the state law for denominational organizations, they must register the organization in the register of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration (Pol. Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji) based on the Act of 17 May 1989. To register a religious organization in the registry of churches and other denominational organizations there have to be at least 100 petitioners who are Polish citizens<sup>14</sup>. The denominational organizations have the right to make their internal law and be self-governing, and the authorities cannot interfere in these processes.

There are three orthodox organizations among those registered according to the Act of 1989 on the Guarantees of Freedom of Conscience and Religion: one Sunni – the Muslim League in the Republic of Poland (Pol. Liga Muzułmańska w RP – reg. 2004; LM), two Shi’a – the Muslim Unity Society (Pol. Stowarzyszenie Jedności Muzułmańskiej – reg. 1989), the Ahl-ul-Bayt Islamic Assembly (Pol. Islamskie Zgromadzenie Ahl-ul-Bayt – reg. 1990) and one unorthodox – the “Ahmadiyya” Muslim Association (Pol. Stowarzyszenie Muzułmańskie “Ahmadiyya” – reg. 1990).

## POLISH MUSLIM DENOMINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### **Sunni**

- The Muslim Religious Union in the Republic of Poland (MZR)

Established in 1925, this organization was reactivated after WWII in 1947 and has functioned ever since. Until the 1990s, it consisted exclusively of Tatars, who still constitute 95% of all members. Recently, a campaign has been launched aimed at promoting membership among persons of foreign origin, following an amendment to the MZR’s statute. The amended statute extended the right to be associated in the organization to all persons with permanent residency in the country.

The Union’s goals include representing its members’ interests before the state authorities, and representing Polish followers of Islam before Muslim centres abroad, as well as spreading the message of Islam, teaching and preserving principles of the faith, promoting the knowledge of Muslim teaching and culture,

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<sup>14</sup> Their signatures attached to an application for registration have to be certified by a notary public.



looking after mosques, religious centres and cemeteries, constructing new religious buildings and charity. The Union's activities can be subdivided into those that are aimed at organizing the religious life of Polish Muslims, e.g. by arranging prayers and religious instruction, as well as cultural and publishing activity. It also participates in interfaith dialogue initiatives<sup>15</sup>.

The Union acts through six Muslim communities: in Białystok, Bohoniki, Gdańsk, Kruszyniany, Warsaw and Podlódów. The MZR is in possession of only three purpose-built mosques: one in Kruszyniany, dating back to the 18th century, one in Bohoniki from the 19th century, and one in Gdańsk (opened in 1990), as well as a handful of Muslim cemeteries, e.g. in Kruszyniany, Bohoniki, Warsaw, and in the Muslim quarter in Gdańsk. The organization is in charge of religious instruction in state schools and used to have the right to issue halal slaughter certificates for meat products.

The Union is headed by the All-Polish Congress of the MZR, called every five years, and on a daily basis – the Highest Board of the MZR (6 members<sup>16</sup>, with the Mufti<sup>17</sup> as President). The MZR President is Mufti Tomasz Miśkiewicz<sup>18</sup>. The post of the Mufti is a life title. The seat of the Union and Mufti is a local prayer house in Białystok.

The cultural side of the Union's activity includes running educational workshops about Tatars, organizing youth camps, managing the dance and song ensemble "Buńczuk", organizing embroidery and cooking courses and competitions, e.g., Quran recitation. The organization maintains its own website at: <http://www.mzr.pl>, and publishes two journals: "Rocznik Tatarów Polskich" (Yearbook of Polish Tatars) and "Przegląd Tatarski" (Tatar Review).

- The Muslim League in Poland (Liga Muzułmańska w RP or LM).

This Sunni denominational community, established in 2001, is the second largest Muslim religious organization in Poland with a seat in Warsaw. Three years later, it was granted the status of legal personality and was entered into the record of churches and denominational communities. It was founded on the basis of the Muslim Students Association in Poland (website: <http://islam.org.pl/>) and

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<sup>15</sup> The Mufti, as well as other MZR members, including community leaders and members of the Highest Muslim Board, belong to the Common Council of Catholics and Muslims.

<sup>16</sup> Requirements: Polish citizenship, a minimum age of 25, second-level education or higher, no functions in another religious organization in Poland.

<sup>17</sup> Requirements: Polish citizenship, impeccable reputation, a degree in theological studies in Islam, a minimum age of 25.

<sup>18</sup> For more details on Tomasz Miśkiewicz see: Nalborczyk (2018: 307-308).

the Muslim Cultural Formation Muslim Society. Its first president and the person who registered the organization was a Polish woman converted to Islam (Polish law states that a denominational community can only be registered by a Polish citizen). The League is governed by the General Congress, the Governing Board and the Supervisory Board. The organization is now headed by Youssef Chadid. The League has its own Mufti, Nidal Abu Tabaq<sup>19</sup>. The Mufti and imams form the Council of Imams. Among the LM members are Muslims with Polish citizenship as well as those with the right of permanent or temporary residency in Poland.

Apart from the clearly defined duties and functions of the authorities, the League has developed the following divisions to focus on particular areas of activity: The Department for Representing Islam, the Women's Department, the Children's Department and the Department for Education and Culture. The League has local divisions in eight Polish and belongs to the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE). Its official website is: <http://www.islam.info.pl/>.

The League was among the founders of the Institute for Islamic Studies, which is a "research and communication forum" and a platform for exchanging ideas between Islam scholars in Poland and beyond. The Institute's main activities are publishing and organizing academic conferences and discussion panels. The Institute's website can be found at: <http://isni.pl>.

One of the League's major achievements is the construction of the Muslim Culture Centre in Warsaw, which feature a lecture hall and a prayer room for about one hundred people. This initiative has brought publicity to the LM and raised considerable controversy<sup>20</sup>. The main goals of the organization include: spreading the message of Islam, teaching and preserving the principles of the faith (the League provides religion instruction in a state school), performing religious services, building and managing centres of worship and representing its members in Poland and abroad.

The organization promotes integration with Polish society, while preserving Muslim identity at the same time, and seeks to foster interfaith dialogue. The LM can boast extensive publishing activity, an example of which is a socio-cultural quarterly "As-Salam" (<http://www.as-salam.pl>) and a number of books on Muslim theology and law.

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<sup>19</sup> For more details on Nidal Abu Tabaq see: Nalborczyk (2018: 310-311).

<sup>20</sup> For more details see: Nalborczyk (2011b: 189-191).

## **Shi'a**

- The Muslim Unity Society (Stowarzyszenie Jedności Muzułmańskiej)

Although its Polish name contains the word “association”, the Muslim Unity Society is formally a denominational organization. Its beginnings go back to 1937, when Poland was visited by Ayaz Khan, an Islamic missionary from India connected with the Ahmadiyya movement. Khan’s aim was to create an organization for Polish Muslims, but his plan had to be abandoned due to the outbreak of the war. In the mid-1970s, the Society was reactivated by Mahmud Taha Żuk, a Pole without any Tatar background, but serving as imam in one of the MZR’s Muslim communities in Warsaw. The first decade after the reactivation can be described as a period of “identity search”. In that time, the Union maintained contact with many Muslim organizations around the world, including the Ahmadiyya movement. Eventually, it was registered as a Shi’a organization, seated in Warsaw and headed by the Chief Imamate composed of three imams. Today, it has about fifty members.

The Muslim Unity Society recognizes the authority of and follows the example and guidelines set by the Twelve Shi’a Imams. It cooperates with the international Shia organization Ahl-ul-Bayt World Assembly and various Shi’a organizations in the UK, such as the Al-Mahdi Institute. Members of the Society are not only Polish Shiites, but also persons without Polish citizenship. Embracing the latter group is a manifestation of a change which took place in this organization. Its mission is to promote knowledge about Islam and integrate the Polish Muslim community. The Society is open to interreligious dialogue. It has called to life and coordinates the work of the Muslim Institute, which gathers reference literature and documents concerning Islam in Poland. The organization is also an active publisher (“Al-Islam” quarterly, [al-islam.org.pl](http://al-islam.org.pl)). Its official website is: <http://www.shiapoland.com/SJM.html>.

- The Ahl-ul-Bayt Islamic Assembly (*Islamskie Zgromadzenie Ahl-ul-Bayt*)

The Ahl-ul-Bayt Islamic Assembly was founded in 1979 in Pruszków and was registered as a denominational community in 1990. Until 2001, it functioned under the name of “the Association of Muslim Brothers”, which could indicate connections with Hassan al-Banna’s Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. According to Ryszard Ahmed Rusnak, the founder and religious leader of the Assembly, the similarity in names was merely a coincidence. The change of name can be treated as the end of the Assembly’s doctrinal and ideological search.

The religious doctrine of the Assembly is Shi'a Islam, recognizing the Twelve Imams and the Ahl-ul-Bayt school. The Assembly is part of the worldwide Shi'a community and a member of the Ahl-ul-Bayt Assembly in Europe, the Ahl-ul-Bayt World Assembly, and the World Ahl-ul-Bayt Islamic League. It follows these organizations with respect to doctrinal and ideological matters, as well as religious practice<sup>21</sup>. The Assembly gathers Shi'ites in Poland, regardless of their citizenship. It has about fifty active members.

The main mission of the Assembly is to organize religious life as well as to "promote the teachings of the old Islam of the Prophet Muhammad". The Assembly puts emphasis on the integration and activation of Muslim communities in the religious, political, cultural and economic life of the country. It provides religious care to Polish Shi'ites and foreigners, and represents their interests before public administration bodies. It directs its attention to assist foreigners in a "harmonious integration and assimilation" with Polish society. The statutory goals of the Assembly include ecumenical, social, scientific and research, educational and charity activities. As of now, the Assembly does not have an official journal. However, it has plans to publish books. Its official website is: <http://www.abia.pl/>.

### **Unorthodox**

- The "Ahmadiyya" Muslim Association (Stowarzyszenie Muzułmańskie "Ahmadiyya")

Registered as a denominational community in 1990, it is based in Warsaw, where it has a prayer room and a plot of ground where a mosque is to be constructed. Several months ago, the leadership of the "Ahmadiyya" was assumed by Mashhood Ahmad Zafar, who lived and worked in Germany for many years.

The organization belongs to the Qadian group, which recognizes Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet. Hence, the classification of the "Ahmadiyya" as a Muslim organization is a gross simplification. While such categorization is obvious as far as the group's self-identification (as Shia Muslims) is concerned, other Muslim organizations do not see "Ahmadiyya" as one of them (as indicated in interviews with representatives of other Muslim organizations). Although many reference sources still perceive it as one of Muslim religious organizations, it should be treated as an unorthodox religious movement. "Ahmadiyya" undertakes missionary and publishing activity, having prepared a number of leaflets and brochures presenting the movement. Its official website is: <http://www.alislam.pl/>. The organization has about fifty members.

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<sup>21</sup> Source: the statute of the Ahl-ul-Bayt Islamic Assembly.

## MOSQUES, IMAMS AND CEMETERIES

There are three mosques that belong to MZR (in Bohoniki and Kruszyniany in north-eastern Poland dating from the 18-19<sup>th</sup> century, and one in Gdańsk that opened in 1990)<sup>22</sup>. In Poland Muslims distinguish between so-called Islamic centres (places for prayer, plus offices, libraries, meeting halls) and small “prayer houses” (places for prayer), which are almost unnoticeable from the outside. There are Islamic centres in Białystok (Muslim Cultural Centre, ul. Piastowska 13f), Warsaw, Lublin, Wrocław, Poznań, Katowice and Kraków. There are prayer houses in Białystok, Suchowola, Łódź, Katowice and Poznań, but the total number of them is not known. Some of the Islamic centres and prayer houses named on the official websites of the MZR and LM are used by members of both organisations, or used by one but listed by both. A new Centre of Islamic Culture with a mosque was constructed by the LM in Warsaw and opened in 2015. Another new Islamic Centre was opened in Katowice in May 2013. Representatives of the MZR Kruszyniany community in 2015 opened the Education and Muslim Culture Centre of the Polish Tatars.

Almost 95% of people attending Friday prayers and prayers during the week in Warsaw are of foreign origin. A similar situation is in Gdańsk. In Podlachia, the majority of the congregation is of Tatar origin.

Most imams in the Podlachia region are of Tatar origin and so is the Mufti of MZR – Tomasz Miśkiewicz. Other imams serving both biggest organizations are of foreign origin – Turks and Arabs in the case of MZR and Arabs in the case of LM.

Polish Muslims often come to pray on Sundays (it is allowed by the fatwa made by the Mufti of Poland), as only few of them can take a day off on Friday. There haven't been any cases of discrimination against Muslims on the part of the employers, but there is simply no written regulation that could settle this issue.

There are three traditional Muslim cemeteries still open<sup>23</sup>: in Kruszyniany, Bohoniki and in Warsaw (the Tatar Cemetery). Moreover, special sections in communal cemeteries are allotted to Muslims. Unlike in many Western European countries, Muslim burial is not a problem in Poland, mainly because Polish Muslims use coffins. Coffin-less burial would contravene sanitary-epidemiological regulations<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> For more details see: Nalborczyk (2011b).

<sup>23</sup> For more details on historical Muslim cemeteries see: Drozd, Dziekan, Majda (1999); Kołodziejczyk (1998). There are also cemeteries in Studzianki and Lebieziewo, but they are no longer open; for more details see: Kołodziejczyk (1997: 144ff).

<sup>24</sup> E.g. it infringes regulations concerning groundwater.

## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The MZR, as a religious organisation operating under an act of Parliament, has the right to teach religion in public schools and its teachers are paid by the state. The ministerial regulation of 1992 states that a minimum of seven pupils having a particular religious affiliation in the same school is required in order for separate religious education classes to be provided. In 2004, the Ministry of Education approved a school curriculum for Muslim religious instruction prepared by the MZR. In Białystok Islamic religious instruction is provided for Muslim children in a public school in a form of interschool class. In Warsaw, the LM runs an interschool group for Muslim religious instruction at primary school level for pupils from the Mazowsze district (Warsaw area)<sup>25</sup>. In other parts of the country, religious education for Muslim children is provided by the local Muslim communities independently of the school system (weekend classes).

## CONCLUSIONS

Islam is one of Polish traditional religions and is officially recognized by the state, although its followers are not very numerous. MZR, the second oldest Islamic religious organization in Europe is also recognized by the state and had its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015. Muslims have their places of worship, Islam is taught in state schools, and there are Muslim cemeteries. On the other hand, however, due to lack of contact with the outside world there aren't enough Muslim scholars and theologians in Poland.

The Roman Catholic Church, the biggest Christian denomination in Poland, is more and more interested in an interreligious dialogue with Islam. In 1997 the Common Council of Catholics and Muslims (Pol. Rada Wspólna Katolików i Muzułmanów) was established. The Council is lead jointly by a Catholic and a Muslim. It organizes conferences that help increase general knowledge about the Islamic presence in the Mid-Eastern Europe and promote the idea of interreligious dialogue in Poland.

One of the joint initiatives of the Council and the Committee for Dialogue with Non-Christian Religions in Polish Bishop's Conference is an annual Day of Islam in the Catholic Church in Poland, on 26th January. In 2018 the eighteenth Day of Islam was celebrated.

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<sup>25</sup> For more details see: Nalborczyk (2011a: 183-184).

MZR invites people of various denominations to pray together for peace and justice in the world – the last such meeting took place in Bohoniki in May 2015. In 2017 LM organized in Katowice the fourth Day of Christianity among Muslims in Poland.

Therefore, it seems that the prospective influx of Muslims to Poland, especially now with so many refugees from Syria, should not yield any logistic problems and the incomers will be glad to find an existing religious infrastructure. However, we should be aware that the different ethnic origin of the newcomers and their attitude to numerous religious issues different than that of the Tatars may cause and causes misunderstandings between the two groups. Such misunderstandings have already ended up in establishing a separate Sunni religious organization, the LM. However, legislative means allowing and officially recognizing more than one Islamic organization may destroy the positive image and strong position of Muslims, which they have earned for centuries of their presence in Poland. It may lead to a similar confusion that can be observed in numerous Western European countries, where multiplicity of religious organizations (often of different ethnic origin) renders dialogue between the state and Muslims very difficult.

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# **RELIGION AND PSYCHIATRIC DISCOURSE IN BRAZIL IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: THE CONSTRUCTION OF “SPIRITUALISTIC MADNESS”**

Artur Cesar Isaia\*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In mid-19<sup>th</sup> century France, the contact between and the living and the dead by people known as mediums started to gain importance. These practices evoking the dead began to be studied by Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail, who would later adopt the pseudonym Allan Kardec, referring to the belief that he would have been a druid priest in another incarnation. Allan Kardec carries on the codification of Spiritism through five books: *The Book of Spirits*, *The Book of Mediums*, *The Gospel According to Spiritism*, *Heaven and Hell* and *Genesis*. In Brazil, the belief in the contacts between the living and the dead acquired great importance, articulating it to the existing practices of invocation of the dead in certain African traditions. Thus, the Spiritism imported from France soon came to be composed with the beliefs of the enslaved black Africans in Brazil, as well as with some practices of the ancient inhabitants of the land: the Indians. Umbanda was the name of the religion that processed the beliefs of Africans and Indians, adding contributions of the dominant religion: Catholicism.

Studying the Brazilian Catholic discourse on Spiritism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we come across a very important ally of the Catholic hierarchy in their fight against spiritual practices in Brazil: the medical and psychiatric discourse. As a referential discourse, both in medical and in Catholic discourse, Spiritism was associated with a monstrosity and linked to madness, subversion, crime.

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Opposed to good and beauty, Spiritism claimed the primacy of what was the worst in Brazilian society in both discourses. In these discourses, practicing Spiritism was affirming the values of the smallest social groups, gravitating around the lack of culture. At a time when Brazilian psychiatric medicine deepened a willingness to intervene in the social reality, Spiritism was represented as the most serious pathogen.

Madness appeared as one of the morbid consequences of promiscuity between the living and the dead disseminated by Spiritism. Mediumistic practices about an uneducated, sick, weak, suggestible people are painted in the medical discourse of the time as catalysts of mental maladjustment who make a wide part of the population unproductive. Thus, in the name of society's sanitization and national interests, in which doctors become one of the most authoritative spokespeople, psychiatric medicine determined a radical ban on Spiritism. Intervention and interdiction of Spiritism, on the other hand, appeared as fully familiar measures for a church that insisted on disdaining popular organization, persisting on praising the dominance of the elite, who called themselves Catholic. Therefore, in the economy of the forces at stake in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we have two allies (doctors and priests), holders of a symbolic accumulation not negligible and united against Spiritism.

#### MEDICAL SCHOOL OF RIO DE JANEIRO: THE FOUNDATIONS OF CONDEMNATION OF SPIRITISM

To Giumbelli (1997), the Brazilian medical discourse tended to total condemnation of Spiritism. Unlike the legal discourse, able to endorse the divide between "high" and "low" Spiritism<sup>1</sup>, tolerating the first and completely criminalizing the second, the Brazilian medical discourse of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century tended to a widespread condemnation with no restrictions on Spiritism. Spiritual activities appeared as complete deniers of the coherence of the self, of acting rationally oriented. They were seen as practices that required the State repression and combative intervention of science. Regarding the medical and psychiatric discourse of the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro, the fight against Spiritism happened in an institution marked by the influence of organicist psychiatry, brought

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<sup>1</sup> The "high" Spiritism would be the one practiced by the Brazilian literate elite, who had imported it from France. The "low" Spiritism would be invoking the spirits practiced by the lower classes, illiterate and with elements of religions of black Africans and Indians (author's note).

from Germany by the Bahian Juliano Moreira. Although he was not professor at the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro but the director of the National Hospice of the Alienated, Juliano Moreira's influence was enforced on teachers and students. Soon, a group of very significant doctors centered around Juliano Moreira, among them was the head of psychiatric medicine, Henrique Belford Roxo. In this paper, we focus on output of some of these doctors trained in this tradition and their comprehension of Spiritism. Juliano Moreira brought Emil Kraepelin's psychiatric model (1856-1926) from Germany and spread it to this group. The influence of German psychiatry was apparent in Juliano Moreira, especially in his strive for objectivity, seeking, through observation, the - organic - etiology of mental illnesses (Rocha, 1998). It was a model that sought the relationship between mental illness and specific personal injuries. Hence, the interest in studying the relationship between madness and diseases such as syphilis, epilepsy, tuberculosis, leprosy. Hence, also, the interest in enhancing medical knowledge to dictate public policies of social intervention and management of urban space. And, obviously, the interest in discursively building Spiritism as a disease, which, like syphilis and alcoholism, had to be eradicated. Medical intervention was based on the recognition by the professionals of the time of the fact that both hereditary predisposition, and neurological damage and socioenvironmental conditions represented causes of mental disorders. Medical discourse was placed at the disposal of the State, as having the ability to predict the emergence of madness among population, diagnose several infections, poisoning or traumatism that determined neurological damage and propose preventive measures, able to sanitize society (Ponte, 1999). Sanitizing the urban space involved measures able to impose a rational planning, to remove the outbreaks of diseases, to exclude the visibility of beggars, prostitutes, and wonderers, by proposing regulatory and coercive acts. It is within this qualifying effort that Juliano Moreira proposes preventive work to reverse the number of mental patients in the country, aiming at increasing the percentage of productive individuals in the population. The relationship between mental illness and productivity for Juliano Moreira exists because its criterion of "normality" was linked to the interests of the world of capitalist production. Juliano Moreira considered an individual to be free and normal "if they accepted moral and economic imperatives defended by bourgeois society" (Carvalho, 1996: 10). The more urban they were and the more they produced, the more normal the Brazilian citizens would be. To Juliano Moreira, psychiatry had an important job to do in a moment of national life marked by the rise of urban centers and industrialization. Urban growth and the concentration of workers were seen by Juliano Moreira as

the breeding ground for the growth of mental illness rates, and the emergence of asylums and assistance to the alienated as “political imperatives and a demand for «civilization»” (Cunha 1996: 30). To predict and intervene in the urban space, Juliano Moreira and the generation that followed him are contributors to a theory that will coexist with Kraepelin’s organicism: the theory of degeneracy formulated by Benedict-Augustin Morel (1809-1873). This theory identified the origin of madness in degeneration, seen as a morbid deviation of a primitive “ideal” (normal) type, transmitted hereditarily. This concept has brought, among other consequences, the increase in the price of psychiatry as a discipline able to impose on the State partnership, in order to discipline and order urban space. This is because in Pinel and Tuke’s classical alienism, only the existence of healthy people (whose behavior was guided by reason) and crazy people (whose behavior lacked reason) was accepted. The theory of degeneration turned the interpretation of the mental illness much more complex. Believing in a normal person that degenerated hereditarily, this theory started to advocate a range, a scale of pathological states. The degenerated person had an “invisible disease” (Cunha, 1996) that could only be interpreted by the expert. This increasingly asserted himself as someone who interfered in social reality, identifying the manifestations of degeneration in “deviant” behaviors. The “demi-fou”, or the “moral crazy”, as well as all manifestations of degeneration, are seen at the same time as products of the city and attracted to the city, which enables remain anonymity, immorality, multiplicity of life choices. Juliano Moreira is quite a turn for Brazilian psychiatry, a real discontinuity (Portocarrero, 2002), by proposing a look at mental illness, no longer focused solely on madness (as the nosology of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), but now on the concept of abnormality. The service of forensic medicine, the medical discourse accredited as able to predict antisocial behavior, identifying the latent danger of the abnormal.

Although the concept of abnormality has not been clearly formulated from the conceptual point of view, there is a discontinuity that is established mainly after its emergence, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as it belonged to the field of pathology, which extends to all individuals recognized as out of the social order, out of the norm, whether they are degenerates, criminals, idiots, or mentally disabled (Portocarrero, 2002: 141).

## URBAN CONTROL, DEGENERATION AND SPIRITISM

It is in this context that Spiritism gains space as discourse at the School of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro. The invocation of spirits is reported as subject to the same health control of the city done by doctors, able to identify the manifestations

of degeneration. As it was considered a pathology and contagious, against Spiritism a “sanitary isolation” was needed, to prevent it from spreading. According to Antônio Austregésilo, Spiritism was a “psychoneurosis similar to hysteria or near it, contagious and easily spread” (Marques, 1929: 32). Recognizing Spiritism as a danger, doctors will demand from the state repressive measures aimed at legally framing their national heroes and “prophylactic” measures aiming at its eradication. Doctors sought the criminalization of Spiritism, trying to deconstruct both its religious identity (protected by the Brazilian Republican Constitution of 1891) and its scientific identity (advocated by Allan Kardec’s work of Spiritism codification). At this point, doctors opposed to the court decisions in which the exercise of Spiritism was defended with the argument of religious freedom. Leonídio Ribeiro and Murilo de Campos comment those decisions:

Just the opposite<sup>2</sup> is now absolutely demonstrated by doctors and psychiatrists, who demand urgent actions to avoid the dangers that result from it, not only for the individual, who has their health at risk, especially if they are already sick or a psycho, but also to society, which sees Spiritism as a way to facilitate and practice several crimes. In Brazil, Spiritism is not practiced as a religion nor it is used to carry out scientific studies, as in other countries. What can be seen here, everywhere, is an organized industry with this label to exploit public credulity (Ribeiro, Campos, 1931: 85).

Spiritism was seen from the point of view of anti-social manifestations, as a product of this monstrous urban environment, unpredictable and capable of covering up abnormal behaviors. In the European 19<sup>th</sup> century, the city was already associated with monstrous representations, in which the crowd was regarded as an anonymous and brutal threat (Bresciani, 1985). The doctors, making a relationship between city and physical and moral degeneration of the population, intended to intervene in society in order to solve the exhibition of epidemics, among which were epidemics of psychic origin. The doctors linked Spiritism to the danger of these psychic epidemics. A place of looseness of morality, the urban environment was also seen as a place of danger. Interacting with the medical discourse of the time, chronicler Paulo Barreto, known as João do Rio, showed, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a Rio de Janeiro that covered the horrifying practices of the *African Salpêtrière*<sup>3</sup> behind the harmless façades of suburban houses (Rio, 1976). The doctors’ sanitizing perception of Spiritism consisted of the policy “standardization of social practices”, studied by Pesavento (1999) in Rio de Janeiro in the early republic. In this sense, doctors found it unacceptable that Spiritism could count on

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<sup>2</sup> It refers to the harmlessness nature of Spiritism advocated in some court sentences.

<sup>3</sup> Reference to the Hospital of Paris, where Jean Martin Charcot went ahead with his research on hysteria in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

the connivance of the government. In this sense, the content of the minutes of April 19 1927, of the Society of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro, instructive, in which doctor Bonifácio Costa, Surveillance Inspector of the Exercise of Medicine of the National Department of Public Health, complained about the presence of police, helping to organize the line of those who sought homeopathic prescription at the Brazilian Spiritist Federation (Ribeiro, Campos, 1931: 183). As a public health issue, as evidence of abnormality, any lenience towards, or worse, connivance by the state with Spiritism was unacceptable for doctors. Spiritism was associated with the unpredictable behavior of crowds, objects of attention and effort of different discourses aimed at the urban order. The idea of a crowd, as it appeared in the writings of Gustave Le Bon and other authors read by Brazilian psychiatrists at the time, referred to a primarily psychological association in which rationality and judgment disappeared, establishing an impulsive, primitive and contagious behavior. However, wasn't the mediumistic trance seen by the medical discourse at the time as the empire of automatism, of the lower psyche, of a hidden world that bloomed? Le Bon himself was interested in the study of spiritual phenomena. These were telltales of a lower stage of human thought, based on the belief that it should be replaced, at a higher stage, by the knowledge (Le Bon, 1911). To Le Bon, the belief happened from an "unconscious intuition", while knowledge was built for purely rational methods. As opposed to Le Bon, belief in knowledge, Spiritism was framed in the first category. As an enabler of unknown and primitive energies, Spiritism appeared as a danger, capable of causing mass hysteria crisis, turning calm men and women into human beasts. Thus, both Leonídio Ribeiro and Murilo de Campos and Xavier de Oliveira uses an observation by Franco da Rocha<sup>4</sup>, director of Juquery Hospital in São Paulo and graduate from the School of Medicine in Rio de Janeiro, to illustrate a case of "psychic epidemic" that had occurred in a "spiritualist context". It was a case, which had occurred in the city of Taubaté, São Paulo, around 1885. At that time, "slaves, semi-naked children and other sectarians of Spiritism" blindly followed a lawyer, a "leader of the sect", which, on behalf of the spirits, communicated the need to sacrifice one of his followers; everyone had to drink his blood (Ribeiro, Campos, 1931: 59; Xavier de Oliveira, 1930: 261). Concerning the causes, nature and possibility of coping with cases like this, Franco da Rocha states that:

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<sup>4</sup> The report is reproduced in an article by Nina Rodrigues, entitled "La folie des foules", published in *Annales médico-psychologiques*, January-August 1901 and reproduced in the book *Coletividades Anormais*, result of compilation work by Arthur Ramos (see Rodrigues, 1939).

Such epidemics arise during a general emotion, especially in meetings exclusively of women<sup>5</sup> where there are hysterical and degenerate people of all sorts. Right here in São Paulo, we had opportunity to register one of these epidemic explosions, in Taubaté, in 1885, which emerged in a spiritualist session. Produced by similar circumstances, mental disorders vanish if patients are separated. These epidemics have been mostly of a religious nature, or rather – superstitious (Franco da Rocha, 1904: 182).

Another fact of “psychic epidemic” or “collective madness”, associated by Leonídio Ribeiro, Murilo de Campos and Xavier de Oliveira, to Spiritism, had occurred in Paraíba, in the northeast of Brazil, in the city of Campina Grande. The police investigation reports the case of a woman who, after giving birth, began to show symptoms of a mental imbalance. “A «charlatan» was called and he stated that it was a simple manifestation of an evil spirit and declared obligatory a collective fasting”. In addition, the “charlatan” would have declared that the healing would occur after the victim was transformed into a frog that should be clubbed to death. When the right time to exterminate the “frog” came, relatives clubbed the woman to death (Ribeiro, Campos, 1931: 264).

#### SPIRITISM AND DENIAL OF THE REPUBLIC FOR THE MEDICAL DISCOURSE OF MEDICAL SCHOOL IN RIO DE JANEIRO

Building the pathology of Spiritism, the doctors associated it with the subversion of the republican order. This accusatory index was very important if we think that the Republic arrived in Brazil in 1889 and was still consolidating institutionally. On other hand, the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed the emergence of new social actors, such as anarchists and communists, still not articulated to the structure of the Republican power (Carvalho, 1987, 1993). If the Republic was the triumph of reason, it was expected that the citizens had experienced the Republican “virtues”. Nothing more contrary to these “virtues” than behavior considered unhealthy and primitive, whose recognized infection posed a threat to order. In the medical thinking of the time this was nothing

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<sup>5</sup> By highlighting the role of Spiritism in the provocation of these “psychic epidemics” and of women when spreading it, Franco da Rocha reproduced a peculiar position to several observers of that time. Reading the spiritual phenomena as typical hysterical behavior, they stressed women as the main locus of mediumistic phenomena. This position was taken even when hysteria was no longer recognized as a disease of the womb (since the 1880s, Charcot reported cases of male hysteria, which he called “traumatic”). On other hand, this was a common element between Catholic discourse and medical discourse. Both put in evidence the importance of the female psyche for triggering mediumistic trance (Isaia, 2006).

new. Nina Rodrigues, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, had already established a relationship between the mysticism of populations judged to be at a lower evolutionary stage and the adoption of what was called primitive “political sense”. So, country people<sup>6</sup> and black people were judged by Nina Rodrigues as incapable of both experiencing citizenship and of understanding the abstractions of the Republican formula, of Catholicism and of the theological content of Christianity (Rodrigues, 1939). Juliano Moreira, in turn, re-evaluated the arguments of Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, denying the racial determinism contained therein. However, the heir to Kraepelin did not despise the “contagious” character of Spiritism, capable of imposing damage to the psyche of those judged as weak, credulous, ignorant, and superstitious. In this respect, Kraepelin states:

The manifestations of mental disorders found in our time concerning hypnotism and Spiritism have a certain relation with the processes of physical contamination. Excitations transmitted to these, the superstitious explanations, which join the mysterious practices are clearly for sensitive and weak natures, an obvious danger. (...) Undoubtedly, predisposition also plays an essential part. That is why individuals who diligently participate in Spiritism and hypnotism present great suggestibility to such experiences (*Apud* Sampaio, 1926: 68).

If Juliano Moreira denied the racial determinism of Nina Rodrigues, this did not stop his followers to relate the experience of Spiritism to the practice of values, both of blackness and of abnormality, always linked to minor social classes. Thus, Henry Roxo not only weaved the relation between blackness and Spiritism but also saw the black as physically and culturally incapable of matching up with the white elite in the full experience of citizenship. In his “Manual of Psychiatry”, Henrique Roxo clarified the relationship between black universe and Spiritism:

The spiritualist sessions are attended regularly. Many people gather in a small room. The medium is in the middle. The leader is next to the medium. The former persuades the latter and tells him to invoke a known spirit. The medium starts to shiver and gives a loud cry. Very often, we see what is seen in the movie theater, in those African-American dances, with their extravagant dance moves, their contortions and gestures (...). The spiritualist sessions very often finish with a nervous breakdown and a general state of excitement, more or less intense (Roxo, 1946: 469).

The master Juliano Moreira openly disagreed with the explanation of racial degeneration and debated even with Raimundo Nina Rodrigues. Moreira insisted that the enemies to fight against degenerations would be mainly the environment, health and educational conditions, as well as infestations, alcoholism and syphilis. This position did not prevent Henry Roxo from valuing race as a possible factor

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<sup>6</sup> Reference to populations from the Brazilian northeast, coming from what are now the states of Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Paraíba. They are still facing drought and poverty (n/t).



of degeneration. This is clearly seen in Roxo's class about the etiology of mental illness, on June 14, 1905 (Roxo, 1906: 32). Regarding the blacks and mestizos, Roxo did not see them as degenerates, but as "stragglers", who "did not evolve, and did not progress, but clung on to the past". On the other hand, the whites "look with eyes wide open at the horizons of the future" (Roxo, 1904: 160). Roxo linked the black condition both to physical and cultural inferiority. According to him, because the black had inherited an undeveloped brain, they were not able to accredit to the full experience of citizenship, and were tied to atavistic origins, to opportunistic diseases, to a cultural heritage full of superstition. If the race as the explanation of degeneration was not totally abandoned, Roxo put the environment as a determinant factor of both evolution and degeneration:

Suppose, however, that a black man, with this evil hereditary defect, is transported to an advanced center and he and his wife had their offspring. Let us also imagine that the offspring gradually progressed and, from father to child, an increasingly exercised and active brain was inherited. Within a number of descendants, one would come at last with a brain as evolved as a white person's. He/she would be as clever as this. We can see that the environment is the agent par excellence. It gradually improves the race and the individual and can even balance, after slow and laborious growing progression the extremes of the series (Roxo, 1904: 190).

Therefore, in order to reverse the delay that prevented national development, Roxo proposed an intervention directed by medicine for the eradication of the three evils, which he judged decisive for the increase in cases of mental and physical degeneration in the country: syphilis, alcoholism and Spiritism. Once again, Roxo's argument on the racial issue: in his point of view, the black represented the predominantly susceptible contingent to the three "diseases". Especially about Spiritism, Roxo showed the presence of delusions and hallucinations with accent in the world of invisible beings, of ghosts and spirits in the clinical conditions he studied: "Participants of spiritualistic practices, believe (the blacks) in fictions and when hallucinated, there come the ones that have been suggested to them previously. The diabolical ideas are already becoming rare. Blacks do not fear them as before" (Roxo, 1904: 190). According to Henrique Roxo, the fight against Spiritism as a pathology was fully supported in science by proposing a peculiar disease, triggered from the familiarity with the dead: the episodic spiritualist delirium, characterized as:

(...) a mental illness that is characterized by delirium that appears suddenly as a result of an emotional shock, which is based on hallucinations and is short lived, with, however, the ability to repeat itself with relative ease. It commonly develops by the frequency of spiritualistic sessions not the scientific Spiritism, which is studied by many scholars and must be respected. It's very different from this: it is the Spiritism of uneducated people, who easily believe in absurd things. These people suffer from a physical or moral distress and instead of seeking

healing through a doctor or a priest, they seek a spiritualistic session to cure their ailments (Roxo, 1946: 468).

If in this quotation Henry Roxo briefly discusses the “scientific Spiritism”, the contact with the spirits appears in his work, always referring to the social scum<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, although he acknowledges the possibility of a so-called “scientific Spiritism”, Roxo showed that the predominant breeding ground in Brazil favored the “the Spiritism of uneducated people”. In a country like ours, spiritualistic practices would tend to the mysticism of populations deprived of culture, health, contributing to the onset of morbid episodes, composing with the “hereditary taint” of blacks and mestizos. This idea appears clearly in Bueno de Andrade’s testimony, quoted in the thesis of a student of Henry Roxo, João Coelho Marques. According to Bueno de Andrade, even the Spiritism practiced with the scientific label in Brazil consisted of a worrying factor of advancement of mental illness:

In Rio de Janeiro, not only do those groups of individuals who dedicate to the study of psychic forces in demonstrations that escape scientific experimentations are called spiritists, but also this gross practice of people who can barely read and write and who seek to predict the future, improve the fortune, solve complicated cases, etc., truly absurd ideas and practices and without scientific basis or justification to sanction them (Marques, 1929: 34).

Another student of Henry Roxo at the Medical School in Rio de Janeiro, Xavier de Oliveira, also promotes Spiritism as a sign of delay of people in need of medical intervention. However, he denies the existence of a “spiritualist episodic delirium” as an individual pathology, as Roxo wanted. For Xavier de Oliveira what existed was a *espiritopatia* (spiritualist disease) characterized not as an independent disease, but as “delusions of religious or spiritualist nature inserted in certain neuro-psychoses” (Xavier de Oliveira, 1930: 21).

Clearly, Xavier de Oliveira tries to associate Spiritism to a morbid experience of the religious feeling, and from this association, he tries to associate it with subversion of the republican order and to a political behavior linked to the early stages of human society. By doing so, Xavier de Oliveira returned to the association already advocated by Nina Rodrigues among Spiritism, pathological experience of religion and anti-republican trends. It is symptomatic that Nina Rodrigues transcribes, in the same article in which she reports episodes of what she qualifies as a “spiritualist cult” of Taubaté, her observations on the political behavior of country people (Rodrigues, 1939: 125). Xavier de Oliveira, also argued that delusions

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<sup>7</sup> Previously, Henry Roxo, at a conference at the School of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro in 1918, claimed the absence of a “scientific Spiritism” in Rio de Janeiro, “The Spiritism that is practiced here and that often leads to hospice does not have the least scientific nature” (Apud Ribeiro, Campos, 1931: 195).

of mystical nature appeared in morbid religious behaviors, in which he included both Spiritism, as the so-called “mysticopathies” (mystical diseases). Unlike Nina Rodrigues, however, he did not value the race as an explanatory factor but the socio-cultural environment. Thus, if the cases of urban “mysticopathies” studied (mystic patients) as Manoel das Virgens, Teófilo Conceição or the Profeta da Gávea, did not have the same importance as Antonio Conselheiro, it was because their performance was in the city, where their voice was relativized. However, Xavier de Oliveira defended the relationship between religious morbidity, attested by delusions of mystical nature, and the behavior of social segments considered incapable of experiencing citizenship: antisocial and dangerous people, who tended to an anti-republican behavior. It was the case of the so-called “mystical claimers”, who associated with Xavier de Oliveira, to the irrationality of the social sectors not included in the republican coexistence. The pathological interpretation of claiming conduct by medical and psychiatric discourse was explored by Castel (1978) when he showed the relationship created by the French mental medicine between “madness manifestations” and the increasing complexity of the urban environment, with increasing social demands, with misery, with the laxness of customs. Thus, the city becomes a setting where the behaviors considered deviant were most salient, which, for Brazilian psychiatrists of the period, was related to factors such as race, religious fanaticism, political contestation (Engel, 1995). Doctors responded to the spread of Spiritism in urban areas, volunteering to the state to trigger the required hygienic measures. If religious morbidity spread more easily in the countryside, the increasing acceptance of Spiritism in urban centers attested the common origin of evil. In this regard, Xavier de Oliveira evaluates the performance in the city of Rio de Janeiro, of a patient from Teófilo Conceição Institute of Psychopathology, who named himself Lover of God and St. Ignatius Prophet:

In the suburbs of this capital, where he operates now, his sermons certainly always result in no serious consequences to regret. In the countryside where he came from, though, and where the intolerant and bellicose fanaticism readily spreads and develops with the speed, the symptoms and the consequences of a real epidemic, his action could not be fatal (Xavier de Oliveira, 1930: 149).

Xavier de Oliveira begins his work, where he presents his comprehension of Spiritism in Brazil, citing Nina Rodrigues and his diagnosis on Antônio Conselheiro, the country man leader of the War of Canudos (Bahia), oppressed by the republican government as a fanatical movement who were against the republic. Connected to a group of doctors trained by Juliano Moreira, this diagnosis was

challenged regarding the race as an explanatory element of the “pathology”. To Xavier de Oliveira, Antônio Conselheiro was another typical mystic claimer, in which what he called “constitutional evil” found in the countryside fertile ground both to grow as a pathology and to become an “epidemic of religious madness.”<sup>8</sup> Afrânio Peixoto had the same opinion. In the introduction to his novel *Maria Bonita*, he refers to a character, an old man with a long white beard, a *Santão* (great saint) of the hinterland, who with his words, that just like Antônio Conselheiro, affected crowds around Brazil, leading them to the collective fanaticism. To object the diagnosis of Nina Rodrigues on Conselheiro, Afrânio Peixoto reaffirmed the need to combat these manifestations, not by repression but by education and conduct of uneducated people. In this educating and conducting work, medicine was, logically, a key component:

Maybe the diagnosis of madness that Nina Rodrigues pronounced for him, or of crime, which alluded Euclides da Cunha, is improper or unfair unless transposing the terms: fools and criminals will be the representatives of an incapable civilization, who did not know or could not clarify and govern these rude masses, abandoned by ignorance to all the impulses, and at the moment of danger they brutally destroy what they failed to educate and lead when they do not terminate shamefully with their major force. Canudos and Juazeiro are the two solutions, both testify against us (Peixoto, 1944: 44).

The “mystical” appeared to Xavier de Oliveira, among those who claimed that could reach to the most radical and anti-social behaviors, and their fixed ideas of mission, election, contact with the supernatural could transform them into pernicious leaders, spreaders of mental illness. It is then when Xavier de Oliveira shows the anti-republican character, contrary to rationality and citizenship, of the pathological mystical behavior, approaching the reading of Nina Rodrigues about Canudos. Xavier de Oliveira cites, as an example of mystic killers, Aimée-Cecile Renault, accused of conspiring against the life of Robespierre and the monk Jacques Clément, murderer of Henry III. The first, presented as a fanatic, capable of exposing their lives for the return of the monarchy and the second, as a regicide, which nevertheless have revealing night visions of colorful delusions explicitly monarchist. In these visions, an angel showed him a club, promising real attributes in exchange for the king's death: “Think, because in you, will fit you well the crown of martyrdom that it is being prepared...” (Xavier de Oliveira, 1928: 70).

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<sup>8</sup> Faithful to the lessons learned at the School of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro, Xavier de Oliveira, saw the Conselor as a “paranoid ... in Kraepelin’s German concept” (Xavier de Oliveira, 1930: 66). That is, the Conselor was not a complete lunatic. He captured reality, creating delusional ideas, where, according to Kraepelin, clarity and order of thought were kept. These delusional ideas, unlike schizophrenia, are not disconnected without any coherence; there is a relative coordination in them (Kraepelin, 1907).

As with all mystical claimers, Xavier de Oliveira identifies in the acts of Jacques Clément a clearly adverse content to the concept of republican citizenship, “there is always a connection between the mystical and the monarchists” (Xavier de Oliveira, 1928: 66). The pathological and primitive character of these “mystic claimers” was for Xavier de Oliveira, related to Spiritism, seen as “a new epidemic of religious madness, like so many others that have punished us in different periods of our evolution.” The success of Spiritism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is seen as evidence of survival, of “same mentality of the totem and taboo” (Xavier de Oliveira, 1928: 12).

Spiritism, as evidence of the same behavior contrary to the republican order, also appeared in Brazilian literature of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This representation of Spiritism as the opposite of republican civilized living appears in Coelho Neto, for example. This author built a highly symbolic character of this interdiscursive game. It is black Felicia of the novel *Turbilhão* (= “Whirlwind”) (Coelho Neto, 1904). Published at the beginning of the republican period, the book tells the story of a former slave who loses her son and starts to attend spiritualistic sessions to be able to endure her pain. The former slave<sup>9</sup>, appears in the story as evidence of the survival of an uncomfortably pre-republican Brazil, not fully articulated to the rules and experiences of citizenship (Felicia calls her mistress *minh’ama*, as a sign of survival from her former slave labor). The author shows the character losing her mind because of Spiritism and trying to spread this pathological and uncultured experience within an “honest” family. The madness is left for the former slave, who asserts herself and has as an epilogue her withdrawal from society. It is symptomatic the construction of a black character, adept of Spiritism, mentally ill and with a questionable behavior for the moral standards of the time (the former slave is accused by one of the characters of favoring the laxness of customs in the family, taking the daughter of her employer to “prostitution”<sup>10</sup>).

To associate Spiritism to a constellation of imagery of clearly anti-republican values, doctors turned their backs both to the work of spiritualist coding and to the position of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation. In the first case, what is clear is just the opposite. Spiritism tried, in France in the mid-nineteenth century, to become certified as a new value in society, taking the revolutionary heritage. In this sense, it tried to associate with the idea of republic, defending the secularization of educa-

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<sup>9</sup> Slavery ended in Brazil in 1888, a year before the Proclamation of Republic.

<sup>10</sup> About this subject, read: Isaia (2005a).

tion, the separation from the state, civil equality between men and women and universal education (Aubrée, Laplantine, 1990). As I mentioned in another paper, the spiritualist discourse tended to consolidate the bourgeois liberal values:

What draws attention in the work of coding is their attempt to balance the world engendered by the bourgeois revolution, to provide stakeholders a quiet and harmonious view of life and society. Thus, the spiritist discourse tended to the defense of a worker prototype, whose limit of understanding of what is real was limited to bourgeois liberal achievements (Isaia, 2004: 112).

Regarding the Brazilian Spiritist Federation, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Brazil, it had received many members of the republican elite taking positions in its official organ, called “The Reformer”, an imaginary organ in which Spiritism is associated with moral and political progress, against the official religion and monarchy<sup>11</sup>. While the medical discourse related Spiritism with the interaction of pre and anti-republican values, there is a record of important names linked to the consolidation of the republican *status quo*, linked to the Brazilian Spiritist Federation. João do Rio (1976) identifies great republican names such as Quintino Bocaiúva and the generals Girard and Piragibe as participants of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation. Another name mentioned by João do Rio and highly close to the republican government was Marechal Francisco Raimundo Everton Quadros, president of the Military Club during the President Prudente de Moraes’ office. The Commander of the Military School of Praia Vermelha, Everton Quadros, acted in defense of Floriano Peixoto’s government during the war of 1893-1894, having led military operations in Paraná (Wantuil, 2003). Everton Quadros was the first president of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation, founded in 1884, in the effort to centralize the struggle of the different spiritualist societies by institutional declaration of doctrine and against the privileged status of official religion, enjoyed by Catholicism during the monarchic period. On other hand, the Brazilian Spirit Federation undertook a struggle aimed at maintaining moral ascendancy over the followers of Spiritism across the country. In this sense, it was trying to frame the several spiritualist societies to a model, which had an important component of identity in the book culture and in scientific praise. The consolidation of a “psychic field”, which revealed an irreducible plurality to the

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<sup>11</sup> The Republican and abolitionist stance of the official organ of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation, however, did not openly challenged, the monarchical regimen and slavery. Thus: “If several spiritualists endorsed the abolitionist and republican struggle, the attitude of the official organ of the Federation was quite moderate. Instead of explicitly taking the Republican campaign, they preferred to value the law of progress as something able to guarantee the political and social ideas based on reason. The official organ of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation very often assumed a coded, allegorical language, trying to subliminally create an imaginary, where pairs opposed: Monarchy-Catholicism-delay versus Republic-Spiritism-progress” (Isaia, 2005b: 1544).

model prescribed by the Brazilian Spiritist Federation showed the failure of that goal. However, it is undeniable the struggle for affirmation of Spiritism in Brazil, led by the Brazilian Spiritist Federation, which gathered an elite quite familiar with the Republican power and the book culture.

## CONCLUSION

Even considering the dynamics of appropriation and cultural re-creations, able to reveal a “Spiritism in a Brazilian way” (Stoll, 2003), in which the scientific identity attempted by Kardec gave way to a predominantly religious aspect, the book continued to play a leading role as a component of the spiritualist identity. Spiritism, to Lewgoy (2000: 10) is characterized as a “religion of the book, of reading and literacy, in a way that hardly corresponds to other religions”. The medical discourse at the School of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro, however, did not recognize this effort towards literacy and science, also turning its back to the familiarity with the circle of republican power enjoyed by the Brazilian Spiritist Federation. Being totally against Spiritism, disqualifying it, the doctors tried to protect and expand a recognized right to nominate reality. It was a strategic action, according to Certeau (1994). What is fundamental in the internal logic of strategic actions for Certeau is the creation, by powerful people, of identity signs able to assert their power and deny the other. Denying to the spiritualists their intended scientific basis and their constructed identity with the book, doctors established the identity signs that should separate medicine and Spiritism, progress and delay, science and superstition, truth and lie. By rejecting Spiritism, doctors sought to cancel any familiarity claimed by it through science, citizenship and the book, establishing the processes of banning and exclusion, shown by Foucault (1996) when discussing the constitution of the disciplinary society. Thus, it was necessary, above all, to deny any relationship of Spiritism with the book, seen as directly linked to “progress”. Making a connection between modernity, progress and the book, Certeau (1904) emphasizes the value of written production by western modernity, seeking a total opposition to speech. According to Certeau, western modernity has relegated the speech to delays, as something that “does not contribute to progress”. Therefore, doctors not recognizing the literary identity of Spiritism, tried to deny the value of the spiritual book. Thus, the “Mediums Book” by Allan Kardec was seen by Xavier de Oliveira (1930: 211) as the “cocaine of nervous

debilitated people who practice Spiritism”. On other hand, the Library of the Spiritist Federation appeared as “the focus of infectious that is the source of the epidemic that is spreading throughout Rio.” As the focus of infectious, its products should not be related to science, the exactly the source from which it spilled out the “truths” that were able to eradicate the infections and eradicate epidemics. Since it was not religion but mere superstition, Spiritism lacked legitimacy to claim the fulfillment of the constitutional principles of religious freedom. In addition, since it was a superstition, which revealed the earliest stages of life, its anti-social tendency, contrary to republican morality and to the full experience of citizenship, related Spiritism to the experiences of uneducated, crazy and miserable people. These people needed the state and medical intervention. In this sense, Miguel Pereira was the best author to summarize the look of the elite on uneducated and sick people, saying that Brazil was only a “big hospital.”

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# THE THEATRE OF FAITH AND THE CROSS. REPRESENTATIONS OF POWER, FAITH AND THE JEWISH PERIL

Maria Luiza Tucci Carneiro\*

## REPRESENTATION AND MYTH

Under the mantle of the Iberian Inquisition, multiple forms of the representation of Jewish power, faith and peril proliferated. Projected through discourses of the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition and the Iberian Absolutist State, as well as through the work of intellectuals and artists, those representations instigated the repression of groups classified as “infected races”, among those, Jews and New Christians. Today, a rich iconography can be (re)visited in important art museums and a broad literature can be consulted in collections in Portugal and Spain; vestiges of an intolerant culture.

It is the role of researchers to rescue the trajectory of this intolerant thinking that even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century maintains those vestiges, undermining coexistence between people. When revisiting the past of monarchical Spain and Portugal, we find expressive artistic examples that exult the Holy Office of the Inquisition – as an institution that settles religious chaos – and glorify its representatives as “saints”, soul saviours. In general, the inquisitors hired important painters to portray them. Thus, by serving the rulers, those artists contributed to maintain the inquisitor at the centre stage. On the other hand, those same representations were used to justify the violence practised by the Tribunal of the Inquisition whose members chose its perils – either religious, political or social – according to their settling discourse. The emphasis was on alerting Christianity that the heretics of the Catholic faith put at risk the nation’s unity.

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The Jewish and New Christians, classified as heretics for their deviations and stigmatizing marks, were treated as undesirable because of “the blood that flows in their veins”. Speeches praising the Catholic faith and a rich iconography produced between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries – the period in which the Tribunal of the Holy Office was effective in Spain (1478-1834) and Portugal (1536-1821) – are plenty of meanings that, in my opinion, guaranteed the endurance of the political myths (Carneiro, 2014). As stated by historian Raoul Girardet:

political myths, like dreams, organize themselves as in a dynamic succession of images (...) they link themselves, they are born from one another, they call one another, they respond and confound themselves through a complex game of visual associations (Girardet, 1987: 16-17).

The same author emphasizes that, despite their imprecise contours, the myths find themselves tied by a subtle and powerful net of complementarity bonds that “does not cease to seize passages, transitions and interferences between them” (Girardet, 1987: 16-17). However, a political myth is not simply a sporadic phenomenon concentrated on the nucleus that generates it. It is much more than that: it is a *representation* composed of specific phenomena, people or ideas, creating lies that are used and recycled into the form of truths over the centuries. The myth is elaborated, that means, it is moulded with the purpose of “making believe”; it is built to trick certain groups that believe what they hear or “think that they see”. The myth deceives and is able to persevere through repetition and constant *reelaboration* of its narratives, always seductive, exaggerated in the details. Those are the vestiges that we are going to look for in the inquisitorial discourses and works of art, in an attempt to identify and understand how these myths controlled prejudice against Jews and New Christians in the Iberian Peninsula and, at the same time, cement the power of those who spoke in the name of the Catholic faith.

A group of written and visual documents selected for this essay allows us to restore the shapes and substance of myths against Jews and New Christians that over the centuries have interfered in history by altering the established *order*. A pseudo-cognition was built aimed at legitimating a version of those who, due to some vested interest, insisted on the idea that the Jews were an “infected race” and as such, an undesirable social group. Those “marks” have helped to compose a deformed image of the Jewish people delineated by anti-aesthetic, diabolic, terrorizing and anti-social images (Carneiro Tucci, 2005). The Iberian Inquisition’s legacy surpassed the frontiers of Christianity<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> About this subject I cite the important studies by Leon Poliakov, among them: (1991). *A Causalidade Diabólica*, São Paulo: Perspectiva; (1974). *O Mito Ariano. Ensaios sobre as fontes do racismo e do nacionalismo*. São Paulo: Perspectiva.

Symbolic and mythical elements were constantly set in motion by the inquisitors, who co-opted a group of artists and intellectuals whose work served to mobilize the population in favour of the proposal for a unification of the Iberian Peninsula (Touraine, 1997: 255). They incited hatred through visual and mental images that were infused over the centuries as the “truth”. From the Middle Ages, believing “I heard that...” persisted and, by unleashing a succession of false images, helped to instigate collective beliefs, such as the statement that “the Jews killed Jesus Christ” or that “Jews were doomed to be wanderers, with no land, no destiny”. Manipulated by pseudo-truths, the Old Christians by tradition – that means, those who presented themselves as *sangre limpia* (clean blood) – did not show any signs of indignation before the thousands of deaths by burning, the confiscation of goods or the unjust imprisonments. On the contrary, they denounced the heretics, watched the processions and applauded the *Autos-da-Fé*, showing no ethical responsibility whatsoever. They participated with certitude in all the stupidity and blindness organized by the men in charge of the social order, even because they could not question the codes and conventions due to the permanent watch by the censors of the Inquisition.

Complicit with the myths, the Old Christians living in Spain and Portugal became prisoners of “false-truths”, contributing to the purge of heretics and the “hygienization” of the Iberian scientific and literary culture. Even today, Portugal and Spain resent this process that affected important Jewish writers, among them Amatus Lusitanus, the author of the *Curatationum Medicinalium Centuriæ Septem* (Seven Centuries of Medicinal Cures) and the *Dioscorides Medica Materia* (Materia Medica of Dioscorides)<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the phenomenon of purge of heretics is evident in the inquisitorial trials and the works of art that shaped the myth, although it is not

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<sup>2</sup> I cite here as an example of this censorship, the list of books by forbidden authors and the Expurgatory Index that indicated parts of books had to be “cut” such as the work of Amatus Lusitanus and Andrés Laguna *Curatationum Medicinalium Centuriæ Septem* (Seven Centuries of Medicinal Cures) and *Dioscorides Medica Materia* (Materia Medica of Dioscorides); by Gonçalo Cabreira, *Tesouro de Pobres*; another by Andrés Laguna, *Pedacio Dioscorides*; and by Oliva Sabuco, *Nueva Filosofia de la naturaleza del Hombre*. About this subject see the articles by Villalta, L.C. (2002). Censura literária e inventividade dos leitores no Brasil Colonial. In: Carneiro Tucci, M.L. (org.), *Minorias Silenciadas. História da Censura no Brasil*. São Paulo: Edusp, 45-90; Revah, I.S. (1960). *La Censure Inquisitoriale Portugaise au XVI Siècle*. Étude accompagnée de la reproduction en fac-simile des Index, Volume I. Lisboa: I.A.C.; Rodrigues Almeida, G. (1980). *Breve História da Censura Literária em Portugal*. Biblioteca breve, Série Literatura 54, Lisboa: Instituto de Cultura de Língua Portuguesa; Sá Moreira de, A. (1983). *Índices dos Livros Proibidos em Portugal no Século XVI. Apresentação, estudo introdutório e reprodução em fac-simile dos índices*. Lisboa: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica.

always perceptible since the myth is polymorphic, dynamic, flexible, invisible and multifaceted. It adapts itself to fertile grounds excavated by the power or is facilitated by ignorance, conquering new adepts and future advocates of the intolerant discourse. We attested – through the signals or vestiges left by the myths – that there was a narrative plot with the regional traditions that offered elements inspired in the reality and favoured belief in the lie. Such indication demonstrates that during the Iberian monarchies, different practices of violence against the Jews and New Christians remained. Those, since the establishment of the Tribunal in Spain in 1478 and in Portugal in 1536, inspired the construction of “demons” and accelerated the process of dehumanization of groups that were considered dangerous and of infected blood. I remind here that beside the Jews, Muslims, and Protestants were also accused of “crimes of faith”, while bigamists, sodomites and wizards were tried for “crimes against morality”.

In all those cases, heresy emerged as a “crime” because of its capacity to alter the *order* instituted by the power, in other words, the Absolutist State and the Catholic Church. The order and the disorder – taking here George Balandier’s definitions – served as the parameter to define who was or was not a criminal: Who has chosen an opinion contrary to the Church’s dogma? Who has committed the crime of *Lèsa-majesté*? (Balandier, 1995). Once the heretics were identified, society’s purge or purification process started following several stages and signing the pact between Church and State<sup>3</sup> as follows: denunciation act of “heretic hunting”, imprisonment, confiscation of goods, investigation, interrogation followed by torture, trial and application of the sentence. All those elements served as inspiration for important works of art. Dozens of engravings, woodcuts and oil on canvas paintings were produced by artists who, by means of this, left their testimony as a historical legacy.

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to remember that this pact between Church and State has its origins on the decisions of the Fourth Lateran Council, convoked by Pope Innocent III in 1215. At that meeting it was decided that the punishment for those who did not accept to assume the Catholic faith would be imposed by the secular justice, since the Church could not spill blood. At that moment, the focus was on “chasing the Cathars” many of whom had fled France to the kingdom of Aragon, in Spain. It was by burning six heretics in 1314 that the Spanish Medieval Inquisition projected itself as the precursor of mass spectacles which preceded the modern *Autos-da-Fé*. About this subject see: Nazário, L. (2005). *Autos-de-Fé como Espetáculos de Massa*. São Paulo: Associação Editorial Humanitas; Fapesp.

## JEWES AND NEW CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD OF REPRESENTATION

Starting with the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, anti-Semitism was being institutionalized by law: mixed marriages between Jewish and non-Jewish people were forbidden; Jews could neither hold public functions nor cohabit with Christians; they were not allowed to circulate on the streets on Holy Days being restricted exclusively to Jewish neighbourhoods; they were not allowed to dress following the “Christian fashion” and were obliged to wear badges on their clothes, such as the yellow star imposed by Louis IX in France. In 1290, England expelled Jews from its territory, followed by France, which adopted the same conditions in 1306. In 1391, Spain imposed forced conversion, an act that culminated with the killing of approximately 4,000 Jews in Seville. Those who survived the massacres and still chose to follow their Jewish faith tried to leave Spain and fled to several European countries. Others chose baptism and the secret practice of the Jewish religion, which started the phenomenon known as Marranism, a subject broadly analyzed by Anita Novinsky. A third group was then formed: that of the Converts or New Christians. Those, because of their Jewish origins or their practices of Crypto-Judaism, became “guilty of all evil that affected the nation”, expression that dominated the anti-Semitic campaign in Spain and Portugal. We can state that those anti-Semitic acts and images anticipated in several centuries the genocidal undertakings practised by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during the 1930s and 1940s.

In Spain, as in Portugal, the Absolutist State and the Tribunal of the Holy Office (1478-1834) took up the fight against the heretics, especially against the Jews. Following the precepts of the Fourth Lateran Council, they formalized and enforced a group of codes and conventions that served their interests. Using both a prejudicial discourse and institutionalized terror, the authorities tried to keep the society “stable”, a political practice that was rehabilitated by the totalitarian regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, human passions cannot always be controlled: hence the endurance of different forms of resistance that could alter the order; hence the “eulogy to disorder” by Georges Balandier:

(...) every society reserves a place to disorder, even when fearing it; for not having the capacity to eliminate it, which would lead them to kill the movement at its core and to weaken itself up to a state of death shapes, it is necessary, in some way, to make up with it (Balandier, 1995: 121).

Considering that the myth of *pureza de sangre* (purity of blood) was one of the main elements for the radicalization of racist thinking in several countries around the world, it is important to analyze how the *construction* of that discourse

took place, a discourse that instigated hatred against the Jews and New Christians. Considering the dynamics of political myths, we will seek to examine its forms of representation which, most of the time, were produced by several voices. Perhaps it is a predictable diagnosis, because the Inquisition and the State created their rules seeking to impose ideas and behaviours. It is up to us, scholars focused on the study of intolerance, to look for the converging lines that help us to identify the producers and (re)producers, the active subjects of violence and hatred towards the Other.

The use of fire by the secular arm as a way of applying the death penalty to those condemned by the Inquisition was a subtle method of “enforcing” the capital punishment. But there were other forms. Its meaning was basically religious since fire meant purification. It shaped the idea of disobedience to God (sin) and illustrated the representation of Hell. At this moment, the “criminal appropriation” of the discourse is evident, an act that for a long time justified the destruction of books and the condemnation of its authors, editors or readers. Many of those settings and characters served as a theme for paintings of important artists and engravers. As reminded by Chartier: “Written culture is inseparable from the violent gestures that repress it”. By emphasizing the concept of persecution as the reverse of protection, privileges, rewards and pensions granted by the ecclesiastic power and the prince, Chartier reclaims the stages of book burnings which, as public spectacles of punishment, invert the scene of the inscription.

It is this *world of representations* (of the theatricalization of the social and of intolerance) that moves our analysis through the stories of intolerance, the cultural and the political by questioning the work produced by artists and intellectuals who witnessed notorious moments of intolerant practices in monarchical Spain, that means. In other words, by evaluating the way reality was represented according to the Manichean discourse imposed by the Catholic Church and the Absolutist State. Hence the importance of observing the absences and endureances of certain characters on works of art and literary narratives, as well as their attributes. It is presupposed, according to Chartier, that there is a clear distinction “between what represents and what is represented”. Finally, we seek to evaluate how Jews and New Christians, as well as the institutions that discriminated them, were represented in an intelligible or distorted way, through signs and deviations (Chartier, 1991; 1989; Jaus, 1978).



## PORTRAITS OF GOOD AND EVIL

An expressive iconography about New Christians and the Inquisition was produced by important Spanish and Portuguese painters whose works of art, contributed to perpetuate the images of victims and their perpetrators. Among the best known are Eugenio Lucas Velásquez, El Greco, Francisco Goya, Francisco Rizi, Pedro Berruguete, and Quentin Metsys. A significant group of those images was selected to compose the exhibition *Theatre of Faith*, curated by Boris Kossoy and researched by Maria Luiza Tucci Carneiro, exhibited in the I Congresso Internacional sobre Inquisição (First International Congress on the Inquisition), in May 1987 at the University of São Paulo, presided by historian Dr. Anita Novinsky. This documental *corpus* serves here only as a sample for this essay. More details can be consulted in studies by Luiz Nazário and Benair Alcaraz Fernandes Ribeiro (Ribeiro Fernandes, 2007; Nazário, 2005).

That iconography demonstrates that the Tribunal of the Inquisition, both in Spain and Portugal was a source of power, fear, richness and inspiration to the arts for centuries. Through the works produced by famous and anonymous artists we found that in different moments, the Inquisition and the inquisitors “posed” as models for an art that gave them shape and colour. By producing expressive images of a reality, paintings reinforced, at the same time, both myths and symbols that expressed representations of value and grandeur. It is important, however, to evaluate this group of works of art in their specific context of “symbolic exchanges unfolded from a reiterative dialectics between the imaginary and the concrete reality (*milieu*)” (Campos, 2003). In this context, they are shown as legitimate social agents. This art was produced in a controlled fashion supervised by the eyes of censors and moralists of the Church who dictated what was and was not allowed to be painted, written or read, protecting the society from the “heretic” forces, representation of Evil (Campos, 2003). It is opportune to reflect about this iconography, about its paroxysms as the expression of historically determined social groups: the one who *ordered* the work of art and the one who *made* it, if the artist was accessory to the “official” versions or if he used his creation as a form of denunciation. The relativity between the images is the corollarium of the *differences* both at the level of representation and of the segmentary cultural life. It is important to perceive those *codes* constructed through the continuous *adjustments* that such differences demand, and to consider that one representation is not more or less “true” than the other, according to what philosopher Jorge Lúcio de Castro emphasized in his analysis of the thought of Pierre Francastel:

By varying the terms of the imaginary according to a historical typology of cultural subjects, its configurations designed within the space of the *canvas* or the *stage* (not to mention other Western forms of artistic condition of the spatial conception) become casual matrices for the discursivity of gestures and concepts. For Francastel, from the moment when it engages itself in the disclosure of the imaginary, the sociology of the arts makes itself legitimate as authentic knowledge or, in other words, as an instrument capable of interacting with others, very useful in the investigation of human contextuality (Francastel, 1965).

Instigated by religious fanaticism and fed by secular myths, the Catholic Church prevented the free dissemination of the arts imposing regulations for works of art in general and for painting in particular. An officer from the Church was always attentively observing any “artistic deviation” worthy of denouncement to the Tribunal of the Inquisition. Those who exceeded the limits of morals and of the Catholic faith were penalized for their deviations. Bearded angels, virgins with their feet exposed beyond the sacred mantle, madonnas displaying vulgar faces combining the sacred and the profane, figures of Christ totally beardless as well as naked bodies, all hurt the Puritanism which culminated in the control of free aesthetic expression.



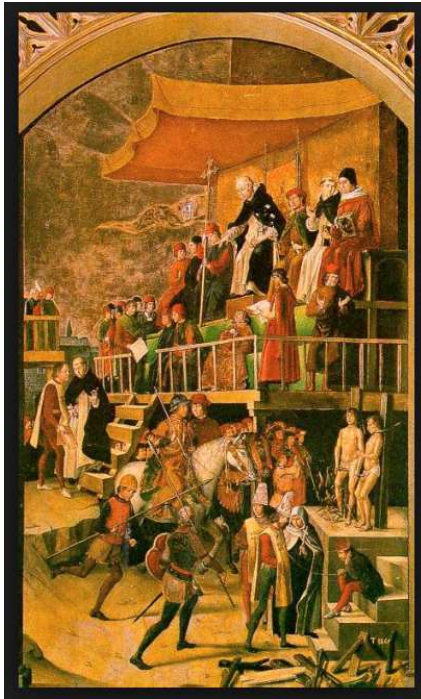
El Greco, *Cardinal Don Fernando Niño de Guevara*, circa 1600, oil on canvas, 171 X 108 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, EUA.

Some works of art aimed at immortalizing the inquisitors who, on their own initiative, hired renowned painters to produce their portraits according to the traditions of the nobility. Among them were El Greco, who portrayed the Inquisitor Don Diego Covarrubias – which inspired Stefan Andres’s novel *El Greco malt den Grossinquisitor* (1936) (El Greco Paints the Great Inquisitor) – Zurbarán who consecrated the Inquisitor Don Diego de Deza, and Eugenio Lucas Velásquez, author of *Monje* (Monk).

One of the portraits that immortalized the ceremony of an *Auto-da-Fé* (c. 1500) and the image of the Dominicans as authorities in charge of the social order, was the *Auto-de-Fé presidido por Santo Domingo de Guzmán* (Saint Dominic Presiding Over an *Auto-da-Fé*), ordered by Torquemada (1420-1498), Inquisitor General of the Kingdom of Aragon and Castile, and confessor of Queen Isabel, the Catholic. Painted by the Castilian artist Pedro Berruguete (1450-1504), this Renaissance portrait was totally “fabricated” in order to compose the retable in the sacristy of the Monastery of Saint Thomas in Avila, today under custody of the Prado Museum in Madrid. The Renaissance style can be identified by the perspective, shapes, light and incorporation of architectonic spaces. The composition of this scene can be analyzed as a chronic of the Kingdom of Castile, according to the version ordered by Torquemada. The imagistic narrative of Pedro Berruguete takes us to the world of the Catholic Kings delineated by the ideal of religious unity where there is no place for deviation. The heretics are identified by their outfit, in this case the *sambenito* (blessed sack or coat of infamy) and the pointed hood. Their outfit carries the stamp of the stigma of “being accused of infamy”. The inscriptions on their *sambenitos* reinforce those condemnations: *condenado erético* (heretic condemned). Standing with a rope around their necks, they walk towards the scaffold where two other condemned men are being executed. Despite the great realism confirmed by the outfit proper of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, some characters assume a caricatural demeanour as can be seen on the example of the character sleeping on a step right below the Saint.

Each character portrayed by Pedro Berruguete was granted a different dimension according to their religious hierarchy following the medieval tradition. For example, Domingo de Guzmán – one of the most important theologians of his time – is displayed in an elegant bearing among six inquisitors (on the upper side of the canvas). He stands out from the Albigensian heretics who are being punished by burning while the others are waiting for their final sentences (lower right side of the canvas). The disposition of the characters – distributed in three different

groups of action – induces the observer to the evidence of two worlds in conflict despite the apparent calm: the world of good (upper side) *versus* the world of evil (lower side). In the middle is the image of the Albigensian Raimundo de Corsi who listens to Saint Dominic’s pardon who “had predicted his conversion”. The ladder gives access to the world of good which will embrace him through the figure of the missionary. According to Pedro Berruguete’s biographer, there is an inventory at the Prado Museum in Spain, in which the original title of this painting would be *Santo Domingo perdona a un herege* (Saint Dominic pardons a heretic), “whose merciful act, more than the punishment of the other dissidents, would be what the painter really wanted to highlight” (Maroto, 1989: 105-119; Ribeiro Fernandes, 2007: 99).



Pedro Berruguete. *Auto-de-Fé presidido por Santo Domingo de Guzmán*, c. 1496, mixed technique over wood, 154cm x 92cm. Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain (since 1867).

Through the figurative registers left by the artists, we recognize the representation of faith alongside with fear, the submission to God next to hypocrisy, inertia and superstition, the struggle of good against evil, the sacred and the profane, all elements that the Catholic Church and the Inquisition in particular knew how to

arouse in the right moments. This iconography served to reinforce the image of the inquisitor as a man in the service of God and the Catholic faith, free from rancour or hatred. Living in different centuries and identified by different artistic styles, a group of artists took as a theme the processions of the *Autos-da-Fe*, the trials, tortures, imprisonments, book burnings, the images of the accused and the inquisitors.

Scenes expressing disputes raised by the defendant or the population are rare. The idea transmitted by the images is that of a passive people, an observant bystander, respectful and to a certain point, supportive and festive, especially regarding the aristocracy. The defendant emerges as a humiliating figure, vexed by the infamy of being a sinner, a heretic; while the inquisitors express their power through their unassailable, imponent bearings, the holders of truth. Rebelliousness and revolt against the men of power are absent expressions on the physiognomies of those who are represented as the accused on the *Autos-da-Fe*. They are depicted as symbols of sin, betrayed by the idea of justice and marked by acts of violence. It was in this manner that the Holy Office assured its presence in the history of Spanish art: it imposed different characters, with different roles and precise masterful sceneries, stressing the antithesis of good *versus* evil.

It is on the monumental *Auto-de-Fe realizado en la Plaza Mayor de Madrid* (*Auto-da-fe* on Plaza Mayor, Madrid) painted in 1680 by Francisco Rizzi, that the drama assumes characteristics of a big scenic and iconographic spectacle. The ambience is festive and luxurious. Singled out by their sins, the condemned are represented bearing the garment of infamy and holding a lit candle (in the case of the *reconciliados*) or an unlit one (if *impenitentes*). Their demeanours show inertia and submission, subdued by the terror imposed on them by the Inquisition which resorted to public acts (processions, trials, burnings of bodies and books) aiming at anaesthetizing the critical spirit. In this great act of faith are also seen the “absent” and the “suicidals” represented on cardboard effigies. Those who died before their punishment had their bones carried inside big arcs. Sin emerges represented on each object and character. Hell also gets shape and colour with the fires that guarantee purification, in other words, a society free of Jews, New Christians, sodomites, blasphemers and so many other undesirables.



Francisco Rizi, *Auto-de-fé* realizado en Plaza Mayor de Madrid, 1683. Oil on canvas, 277 x 438 cm. Prado Museum, Madrid, [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/28/Francisco\\_rizi-auto\\_de\\_fe.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/28/Francisco_rizi-auto_de_fe.jpg).

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828), can be characterized by his denunciation and by his sharp look at the Holy Office, the Church, the nobility and a social reality marked by fear, terror and (un)reason. With his *Caprichos* (*Caprices*, 1799) he saw his creativity being limited, forced to withdraw the drawings that denounced the violence, extravagances and ridicule of the Spanish civil society. According to Jean-François Chabrun, a Goya scholar, those drawings were withdrawn from sale 48 hours after being released due to pressure by the Holy Office. The only way to save the collection was by donating it to King Carlos IV. But Goya, despite the inquisitorial repression, was the artist that best represented the institutional figure of the Spanish Inquisition and the apocalyptic dimension of the *Autos-da-Fe*, as it was very well defined by Luiz Nazário in his study about this subject, which he analyzes as mass spectacles (Nazário, 2005).

Among Goya's main masterpieces on the subject are *El Tribunal de la Inquisición* (The Tribunal of the Inquisition) and *Procesión de Disciplinantes* (Procession of Penitents), *Auto-da-Fe*, *Escena de Inquisición* (Inquisition Scene) or *Paseo del Santo Oficio* (Procession of the Holy Office), all painted after 1792. The sombre realism that marked Goya's compositions is achieved through shades of white, grey and black delineating the images of the condemned heretics. Our feeling, observing the figures of the defendants on *El Tribunal de La Inquisición* (The Tribunal of the Inquisition) is one of a deep sadness inhabiting their souls and an enormous burden over their curved shoulders. The same demeanour is observed in *Aquéllos Polvos* (Those Specks of Dust, 1797-1798), one of his prelimi-

nary studies for his series *Caprichos* (Caprices)<sup>4</sup>. The solitude and public humiliation of the prisoners are present in many of his *Aguafuertes* (Etchings) denouncing the unlimited violence. Referring to the Inquisition, Goya annotated his considerations: *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos* (The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters), *La enfermedad de la razón* (The Sickness of Reason), *Que crueldad* (What a Cruelty)<sup>5</sup>.



Goya, *The Tribunal of the Inquisition*, 1812-1814, San Fernando Royal Academy Museum, Madrid.

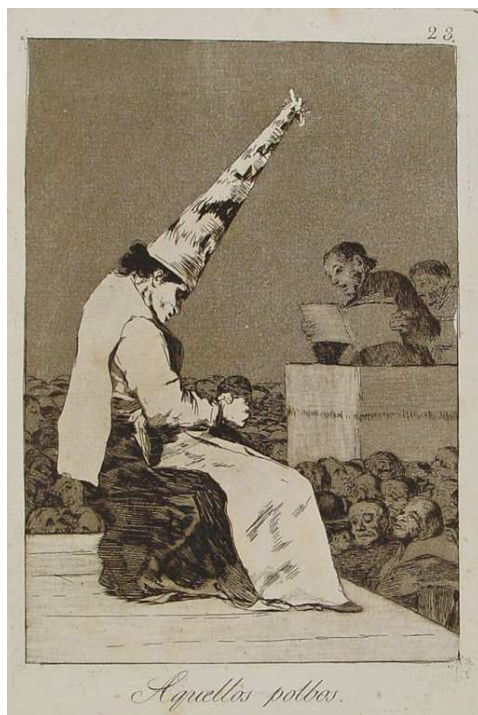
The names given by Goya to his masterpieces call our attention to the inhuman practices. They criticize and complement the images, placing us before the spaces of exclusion through terrifying scenes in which death (a subtle and many times invisible character) appears as a shadow awaiting the moment to enter the scene. That is sensation when observing the images of women in prison, with an inscription by the artist: *Porque fue sensible* (Because She Was Sensible)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Goya, *Aquellos polvos* (Inv. No. 105), 200 X 146, red and sanguine watercolor. Preparation for *El Capricho n. 23* (Pérez Sánchez, 1980).

<sup>5</sup> Goya, *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos* (Inv. No. 34), 200 X 146, red and sanguine watercolor. Preparation for *El Capricho n. 23*; *Que crueldad!* (Inv. No. 334), 205 X 142, nankin brushes. From his album (C), 1814-1824 (Pérez Sánchez, 1980).

<sup>6</sup> Goya, *Porque fue sensible* (Inv. No. 106), 187 X 128, red and sanguine watercolor. Preparation for *El Capricho n. 32*; *Mujer en la cárcel* (Inv. No. 100), 200 X 139, Perhaps a preparation for an unknown engraving, analogous to *Caprichos*, 1797-1798 (Pérez Sánchez, 1980).



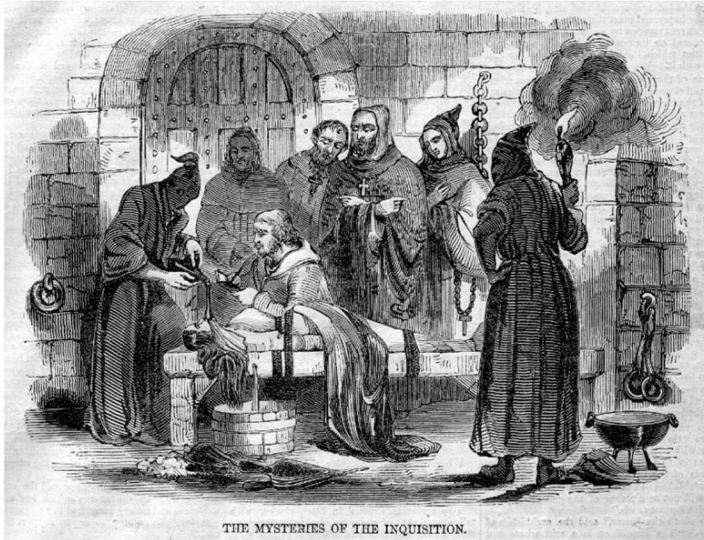
Goya, *Aquellos polvos* (Those Specks of Dust).

Similar in terms of both creation and criticism, are the following paintings by Goya: *El agarrotado* (The Garrotted Man); *Por haber nacido en otra parte* (For Having Been Born Somewhere Else); *Por linaje de hebreos* (For being of Jewish Ancestry); *Por mover la lengua de otro modo* (For Wagging His Tongue in a Different Way); *Por traer cañutos de diablos de Bayona* (For Bringing Diabolical Tracts from Bayonne); *Le pusieron mordaza porque hablaba y le dieron palos en la cara* (They put a gag on her because she talked and hit her about the face); *Por no tener piernas* (For not Having Legs); *No hubo remedio* (There Was No Remedy); *Aquellos polvos* (Those Specks of Dust); *Interior de cárcel* (Prison Interior); *Prisioneros* (Inmates); *La prisionera* (The Female Inmate) or *Muchos han acabado así* (Many Have Ended This Way) (Pérez Sánchez, 1980).

With Goya, the actors of the inquisitorial drama get expression showing a reality which can be mistaken by his delirium. However, the author of the *Garrote vil* (Garrotte) did not invent any of the scenes represented, neither were they a result of the artist's madness. On the contrary, Goya – availing himself the morbidity, the suffering, the shame and the torture of being an infamous condemned by the Inquisition – denounced that reality through sombre and anguished figures.



His drawings, as historical testimonies, are additions to the speeches of the inquisitorial trials, the sermons, the inquisitor's manuals and the regulations of the Holy Office. They broaden the possibilities for reflection about the acts of the Tribunal against the Jews and the New Christians.



*Mystères de L'Inquisition et autres sociétés secrètes d'Espagne*, by Féréal (1845).

In 1845, an important work called *Mystères de L'Inquisition et autres sociétés secrètes d'Espagne*, (*Misteries of the Inquisition and Other Secret Societies in Spain*) by M. V. de Féréal was published in Paris. This work contains historical notes and an introduction by M. Manuel de Cuendías and compiles approximately 200 illustrations drawn by several different artists (Féréal, 1845) which show, step by step, the main stages of action of this important Tribunal defined as a Spanish secret society.

## REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DEICIDE MYTH

Both in the arts and the literature of Catholicism, the image of the Jew and New Christian have in common the accusatory tone that always insists on the idea that the Jews are guilty and/or responsible for a crime, with or without violence. Those values, which have been constantly reorganized over the centuries, keep the Jew as a “scapegoat”, the objective enemy. They appear on canvases by famous painters as unqualified citizens due to their culture or their physical aspect

and reinforce the images appropriated the anti-Semitic discourse. It is evident from Antiquity until now, that somebody had to answer for the “evil that afflicts the nation”, expression used for example, during the proliferation of the Plague, a worldwide pandemic that killed millions of people in Europe during the Lower Middle Ages (14<sup>th</sup> century). The same expression used by the Iberian Inquisition to accuse the New Christians was appropriated by Nazi Germany’s anti-Semitic propaganda, by blaming the Jews for the tragedy that had afflicted Germany since the end of World War I.

The concept of “scapegoat”, however, is in the so-called Day of Expiation found in Leviticus 16:5-28. During that event, the Hebrews organized a series of rituals to purify their nation, using goats that were chosen by lots and would have different destinies. One of those goats would be sacrificed along with a bull and their blood had the mission of carrying the sins of the people of Israel, symbolically transferred to the animal’s head by the hands of a high priest. Then, the scapegoat was abandoned in the desert bearing upon it “all their iniquities unto a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the desert” (Lv 16:21-22).

Following the trajectory of the myths in contemporary societies, we verify that those who produce them appropriate a certain cognition (popular and/erudite) that, adapted to their interests, offers multiple resonances. Those who discriminate assume a nuclear position by masking their interests, manipulating information and acting aggressively. In general, the target-public is unaware of the origin of the allegations and their minds are susceptible to believe in the lies which carry the appearance of the probability of a truth. This situation repeats itself nowadays, especially when the observers are among the public who visit a museum exhibiting those works of art.

Many of those masterpieces maintain secularized versions inherited from medieval superstitions and from the Catholic doctrine. Qualifying adjectives are attributed to the figures in a generalized fashion in order to compose the image and the character of the Jews, accused of being violent, traitors, terrorists, monsters, ungrateful, manipulative and interested in money. The traditional plot “gold/Jew”, averted by traditional anti-Semitism with Catholic foundations, emerges as a symbol of mediocrity, a fertile ground to the proliferation of racism. In the same way, the Jews are accused of not having rights to a land, having to live as “eternal wanderers”, reinforcing the myth of the wanderer Jew.

Important Spanish painters endorsed this lie by creating on their canvases the image of the *exiled* and *fugitive* (deserter) Jew, derogatory terms used as expressions of the undesirable Jew. Nothing but symbolic codes of communication;

nothing but representations loaded with subjectivity. Those canvases and engravings transmit the idea that the character is marked by the stigma of being a Jew or a New Christian and reinforce the attributes of malignancy and demonization. They are representations of the Jew or the Jewish people that use metaphorical visual images pre-existing in the collective imaginary. From mental images they become visual images, vulnerable to manipulation. From these examples it is possible to notice that minds can be lapidated by a cognition oriented by hate-producing centres.

Among those images, we cite the painting “Christ Presented to the People” by Quentin Metsys, an important painter of the Antwerp School whose production peaked during the time of the Spanish Catholic Kings. In the scene, according to the analysis of historian Benair Ribeiro, the artist created “a scene agitated among Christ executioners juxtaposing the nobility of the victim. Next to him stands Pilates exquisitely adorned, resembling a Jew wearing his rich outfit, an elongated beard and his characteristic hooked nose, in a clear stereotyped representation”. Commended by the Court of the Catholic Kings, this scene reinforces the myth of deicide crime. The facial expression of the Jews is part of a group of masks satirizing evil (Ribeiro Fernandes, 2007: 60-61).

These are cognitions rich in stigma (physical and character marks), they are lies disguised as truths that reinforce the anti-aesthetic and anti-social image of the Jew, caricatured as a figure with a hooked nose, flat feet, bearded and filthy. The goal is, most of the time, to identify him as a “stranger”, taking advantage of the mental images that preexisted in the collective imaginary. Through repetition, those images strengthen versions (narratives), they bolster affective symbols and resonances (repulsion, hatred, physical aggression) and feed negative visions about the Other. Many times, for example, the Inquisitors of the Holy Office in Spain and Portugal interpreted the establishment of a *Miniam*<sup>7</sup> (a group of 10 Jews older than thirteen) as a *secret plot* performed in hiding. Its goal would be to attack Christendom. Situations such as those favoured Catholic obsessions with conspiracies, beliefs that over the centuries fed the hysterical passion for Manichean explanations and assigned to the “conspirator” Jew the machination of massacres, plagues, viruses and even the responsibility for earthquakes and other major catastrophes (Poliakov, 1991).

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<sup>7</sup> Some rituals or prayers can only be performed in the presence of a Congregation that, according to the Torah must bear a minimum of 10 adults who form the *Minyan*. There must be a *Minyan* for example to the ceremonies of the *Brit Milah*, the saying of the *Kadish*, the invocation of *Barekuh*, *Kedushah*, Torah readings among others.



Quentin de Metsys, *Christ Presented to the People*, 15<sup>th</sup> century, oil on wood, 160 x 120 Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain.

Several classic Spanish paintings depict details of the secular myth that the Jews “killed Jesus Christ”, one of the traditional accusations that inhabit the breviary of Christian and popular anti-Semitism. This expression has never ceased to manifest in traditionally Catholic countries, including Brazil. The truth is that such accusations served initially to the pioneering purposes of Christendom interested in forging the malignant image of Jews, harbouring fears capable of deforming reality. By transforming the Jews into a “Christ killer”, Christian scholars tried to suppress the Jewish doubts regarding the earthly nature of Jesus, the illusory character of his resurrection and that he was not the long-awaited Messiah (Carneiro Tucci, 2014).

Over time, the myth that “Jews killed Christ” was affirmed and renewed by other myths that, from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, contributed to strengthen the idea of the “Jewish Peril” and to generate prejudicial popular beliefs. Those hostilities peaked right after the Crusades and at the beginning of the Iberian Inquisition, a moment in which the Catholic Church strengthened its discourse of “Christianity Unity” in its fight against heretics. During the Middle Ages, for example, the population believed in the legend of the ritual murder of children (blood libel), the profanation of the communion bread and, in the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the accusation that the Jews poisoned the wells. The attribution of those crimes to Jews has in common the idea that they conspired against Christianity and as such, should be eliminated.

In essence, the myth that “the Jews killed Christ” has its roots in the interpretations of the Gospels by Christian scholars whose sermons instigated hatred and

violence. For centuries, those lies have circulated among Catholic catechisms, sermons, inquisitorial manuals, a rich iconography, encyclopedia entries, textual dramaturgy, journalistic chronicles, Cordel literature, political cartoons and by “useful” knowledge disseminated on illustrated magazines and almanacs. Several manuals (secular, pastoral and clerical), Catholic and Protestant periodicals, helped to affirm the concept of “deicide crime” (killer of G-d and of Jesus Christ in particular), presented here as a myth of long duration. Its origins are rooted in the Judeo-Christian polemics and is constantly revitalized by new mental and visual images.

This subject has already been deeply analyzed by scholars whose work is a reference to understand the construction process of the myth of the deicide Jew and the persistence and interference of this myth in both mentality and social behaviour, from the Middle Ages up to these days. Among those historians are Jules Isaac, Leon Poliakov, Cecil Roth, Robert M. Seltzer, Edward Flannery, Joshua Trachtenberg and Sérgio Alberto Feldman<sup>8</sup>. As a whole, those studies evidence two elements that contributed to the endurance of the deicide crime myth: the growing process of *dejudaization* of Christianity and the construction of an accusatory narrative by Christians interested in blaming someone for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

From this accusatory narrative, repeated in many Christian texts, the Jews underwent a transformation process from “People of the Book” and “People chosen by G-d” into “Murderer People” and “People chosen by Satan”. Sérgio Feldman, in his magnificent article about the subject, analyzes the texts written by the founders of Catholicism that show how the process of demonization of the Jew took place. Among the authors who argue about the malignity of the Jews, the author cites: Eusebius of Caesarea (Bishop of Caesarea), Hilaire de Poitiers, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, Jerome, Augustine of Hippo, Isidore of Seville who lived in Visigothic Spain by the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup>. During the Higher Middle Ages, thanks to the more tolerant practices of Augustin, the Jews from Eastern Europe were able to live in an environment of a certain calm and protection, valued for their administrative, commercial

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<sup>8</sup> About this subject see: Isaac, J. (1966). *Las raíces cristianas del antisemitismo*. Buenos Aires: Paidós; Roth, C. (1963). *Pequena História do Povo Judeu*. São Paulo: Fundação Fritz Pinkuss CIP, vol. 2; Poliakov, L. (1979). *De Cristo aos Judeus da Corte*. Translation Jair Korn e Jacó Guinsburg. São Paulo: Perspectiva; Seltzer, R.M. (1990). *Povo Judeu, Pensamento Judaico*. Rio de Janeiro: A Koogan, 2 volumes; Trachtenberg, J. (1975). *El Diablo y los Judios. La concepción medieval del judío y su relación con el antisemitismo moderno*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Paidós; Feldman, S.A. (s.a.). Deicida e aliado: o judeu na Patrística. In: *Academia.edu*. Retrieved from: [http://www.academia.edu/1375074/Deicida\\_e\\_aliado\\_do\\_demonio\\_o\\_judeu\\_na\\_Patrística](http://www.academia.edu/1375074/Deicida_e_aliado_do_demonio_o_judeu_na_Patrística); Flannery, E. (1968). *A Angústia dos Judeus: História do Anti-semitismo*. Tradução Olga Biar Laino. São Paulo: Ibrasa.

and financial tasks. From the 12<sup>th</sup> century, that landscape was changed through violent anti-Jewish speeches coming from Church priests, among them, John Chrysostom (344-407) Archbishop of Constantinople and Isidore of Seville (340-420). Based on the Scriptures, Chrysostom stated:

...the Synagogue would be a theatre and a “brothel”, a den of robbers and a lodging for wild beasts (Sermon 6:5). A place of shame and ridicule (1:13), a dwelling place of demons (1:6), such as it dwells in the Jewish soul (1:4 e 1:6). The Jews adore the demons; their rites are criminal and impure (3:1). Those denunciations are mingled with quotes from the biblical text, in which there is a rereading. The Jews are described as corrupt and criminal beings. **They are the slayers of Christ** (6:1) (Feldman, s.a.: 9-11. [Grifo nosso]).

In the case of Jerome, despite having lived among rabbis and Jewish sages in Palestine, he did not change the virulent tone of his discourse. In his opinion, the Jews were “snakes, haters of all men; their image is that of Judas and their psalms and prayers are like a “donkey bray””; he asserts that they curse Christians in their synagogues (Fontette, 1989: 32; Flannery, 1968: 66; *apud* Feldman, s.a.). The accusation that Jews killed Christ became more and more rooted in Christianity. It had its origins in the Judeo-Christian polemics that, between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, favoured the dissemination of such slanders. That diffamation process culminated with the demonization of the Jews who were animalized in order to strengthen Christianity (presented as a symbol of Good) in opposition to Judaism (symbol of Evil)<sup>9</sup>.

The violence against Jews during the Plague or Black Death which afflicted several European countries, among them Spain and Portugal, can be explained in that context<sup>10</sup>. By that time, Pope Clement VI issued two papal bulls emphasizing that Jews were not guilty for the Plague, but the initiative was unsuccessful. From the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Jews living in the Iberian Peninsula were also treated as a dangerous minority among Christians although they had been sharing the same space. The solution found by the Absolutist State and the Catholic Church to solve the

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<sup>9</sup> According to Martin Blaser, from New York University, most of the Jews were not contaminated with the disease because they kept their houses hygienized from impurities, as well as their hands during meals, according to the precepts of Judaism. *Apud* MacNeil Jr, Donald G. (2009, setembro 14). As epidemias e os bodes-expiatórios. In: Caderno *The New York Times*, *Folha de S. Paulo*.

<sup>10</sup> In regions such as Basel, members of the Jewish community were accused of poisoning the wells. Children were thus taken from their parents and converted to Christianity. Around 600 Jews were handcuffed, jailed and burned by a mob. A similar situation was experienced by 2,000 Jews in Strasbourg who were burned alive despite the attempts of the Bishop and the City Councilors to protect them. Pogroms also occurred in several cities alongside the Rhine River, as well as in Erfurt in Germany, where 3,000 Jews were killed accused of disseminating the Plague. In Worms, 400 Jews were burned in March 1349 and in Frankfurt, part of the Jewish community chose to commit mass suicide instead of forced conversion. In summary, at the peak of the pandemic between 1348 and 1351, the image of the Jew served as a scapegoat since a big part of the Jewish community had been spared from the disease compared to the other groups.

conflicts between Christians and Jewish merchants was to force the Jews to convert to Catholicism in 1391 in Spain and in 1492 in Portugal, under threat of death penalty. By accusing the New Christians of being members of an “infected race” and heretics as well as by confiscating their goods, both State and Church contributed to prevent the ascension of the Jewish bourgeois middle class – at that moment seen as a competition to Old Christians.

Once the Tribunal of the Holy Office was established in Spain (1478) and Portugal (1536), theologically based anti-Semitism was promoted, thus contributing to a long process of social and physical exclusion of the New Christians. The origins of this prejudice have its roots in Toledo’s *Sentencia-Estatuto* of 1449, that divided the Iberian society into Old Christians, *puros de sangre* (of pure blood) and New Christians, members of a race infected by the Jewish, Moor, Gipsy and Black blood. A new universe opened to the converted Jews from Spain and Portugal who were forbidden of professing their Judaism and had to practice it in hiding. This started a phenomenon known as Marranism<sup>11</sup>.

Artistic representations still instigate hatred against the Jews through traditional paintings such as *The Last Supper*, *Judas’ Kiss*, and the drama of the *Passion of the Christ* (as it is present in paintings on the Stations of the Cross and in popular outdoor representations). The image of Judas has been transformed, over the centuries, into the legendary figure of the “traitor”, a villain or unfaithful person. According to the Gospels, right after his last supper, Jesus left to the Gethsemane Garden to pray with his apostles. There, Judas identified Jesus to the officers by kissing him and calling him Master. In exchange, Judas received thirty gold coins. According to Matthew (27:3-10), Judas repents, gives the money back and hangs himself. This scene became one of the icons of sacred painting and contributed to establish the image of the Jew as a traitor.

Notwithstanding the definition has recently been excluded by the Catholic Church, it is impossible not to consider that for centuries, its doctrine has conveyed by the New Testament, that the Jewish authorities accused Jesus of blasphemy and promoted his execution by taking advantage of Pontius Pilate’s power who, at that time, was the Governor of the Province of Judea. Just the same, even if the veracity of those facts has been contested by historians and theologians, the consequences of such accusations for the Jewish people must not be omitted, silenced or distorted.

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<sup>11</sup> Those stereotyped representations of the Jewish have crossed centuries and strengthened the image of the conspirator Jew disseminated by the Protocols of the Elders of Zion during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Carneiro Tucci (2005); Taguieff, P.A. (1992). *Les Protocoles des Sages de Sion. Introduction à l’Étude des Protocoles un faux et ses usages dans les siècles*. Paris: Berg International.

Given the fact that this is a historical dilemma we must not allow those doubts to proliferate once they are responsible for instigating acts of intolerance. Hence the insistence on the importance of making an inventory of those images from archives, museums and libraries, in order to inform and educate in favour of coexistence.

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# CATHOLIC RELIGIOUSNESS AND ITS SAINTS IN BRAZIL

Solange Ramos de Andrade\*

*A idéia de redenção por meio do sofrimento  
é e continua sendo a maior idéia mágica do mundo moderno<sup>1</sup>*  
Edgar Morin

## INTRODUCTION

A common scene occurs every year on All Soul's Day in Brazil: in several cemeteries spread throughout Brazil, thousands of people visit graves that are not those of their relatives and friends who have died, but of their devotional saints. These saints have become sacred by the religiousness of the devotees, elected as saints capable of performing miracles for those who pay them homage. These are saints who do not appear in the official hagiography, but their cults are an intense manifestation of Brazilian religiousness.

Peter Burke, in his study about cultural hybridism, states that cultural contacts and meetings have reached all peoples since the distant past in a constant and sequential manner.

Devemos ver as formas híbridas como o resultado de encontros múltiplos e não como o resultado de um único encontro, quer encontros sucessivos adicionem novos elementos à mistura, quer reforcem os antigos elementos<sup>2</sup> (Burke, 2003: 31).

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of redemption through suffering is and remains the greatest magical idea of the modern world.

<sup>2</sup> We have to view the hybrid forms as the result of multiple encounters and not as the result of a single encounter, whether successive encounters add new elements to the combination, or reinforce the old elements.

Ever since its formation process, Christianity, and later, Catholicism, has been characterized by being a hybrid religion, that is, composed, contradictory, multiform and built in a specific moment.

At the same time that Catholicism became a structured organization, it also brought with it a structuring aspect (Bourdieu, 2001), defining forms of elaboration and discourses combined with a set of practices, sanctioned by a hierarchy that began to determine what it meant “to be a Catholic” (Certeau, 1994).

In general, expressions of religiousness, as well as other aspects of social life, are part of the life system of a group that, in the religious field, involves, in addition to belief, a set of behavioural practices. In this sense, my analysis appropriates the affirmation of Michel de Certeau, in which he argues that:

(...) não se trata de elaborar um modelo geral para derramar neste molde o conjunto de práticas, mas, ao contrário, de especificar esquemas operacionais e verificar se existem entre eles, categorias comuns e, se em tais categorias, é possível explicar o conjunto de práticas<sup>3</sup> (Certeau, 1994: 20-21).

I denominate as Catholic religiousness all the manifestations that involve beliefs and practices related to Catholicism, which has as its crucial point the worship of the saints that are recognized by the Church or otherwise. Contact with the transcendent, despite its strong connection to the institutional, is, at the same time, the aspect that distances itself from it, in a process of appropriation that often marks a symbolic conflict in the adoption of non-sanctioned beliefs and practices. From the observation that in these manifestations it is difficult to detect the boundary between the institutional and the non-institutional, because they are complex expressions in which the devotee believes he is living his religion without the concern of being sanctioned by the institution, I prefer to adopt a more comprehensive term in the attempt to escape reductionism.

Specifically, my proposal is to point out the saints that populate the cemeteries spread throughout several regions of Brazil and that represent this hybridism in a paradigmatic way. In other words, they are saints that present both millennial aspects of the worship of the saints present in early Christianity and that also translate this memory into beliefs and practices appropriate to the reality in which they live. Such circumstances, in the words of Roger Chartier, mean to decipher “o modo pelo qual em diferentes momentos uma determinada realidade social é construída, pensada, dada a ler”<sup>4</sup> (Chartier, 1990: 16).

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<sup>3</sup> (...) it is not a question of elaborating a general model for pouring the set of practices in this mold, but, on the contrary, of specifying operational schemes and verifying if there are common categories among them and if, in such categories, it is possible to explain the set of practices.

<sup>4</sup> The way in which at different times a given social reality is constructed, thought, read.

## CATHOLICISM AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CATHOLIC RELIGIOUSNESS

The worship of saints has been present since the creation of the Christian hierarchy and its consequent need to establish moral values using exemplary models that would translate their worldview. The emphasis on a particular model of holiness is historical and reveals a series of manifestations, gestures and words, translating collective representations integrated by collective beliefs and practices, connecting the individual to a particular group, which provides us with elements for understanding the current models of holiness.

The lives of the saints are an important means of transmitting the meaning of the Christian faith. Since Christianity exists, people tell and recount the stories of the saints. They have been honoured in icons, paintings and statues. It is impossible to imagine Christianity without sinners and it is impossible to live it without the saints (Woodward, 1992).

## THE WORSHIP OF SAINTS AND ITS SPACES/SITES

In Catholicism, the greatest expression of religiousness is found in the worship of saints, both official and unofficial. Faith, in its intercession with divinity or even in its power to perform miracles, is one of the greatest characteristics of Catholicism.

The lives of the saints are an important means of transmitting the meaning of the Christian faith. Since Christianity exists, people tell and recount the stories of the saints. In Christian tradition, a saint is someone whose holiness is recognized as exceptional by other Christians. The graves of saints became a place of pilgrimage and churches were built in these places to house their relics, ensuring a more institutionalized celebration of the local patron saints.

In Christendom, the first to be worshipped as saints were the martyrs, and the worship directed at them came spontaneously. A martyr was one who gave his/her life as a testimony of his/her adherence to the Christian faith. Before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century of Christendom, the term “saint” was reserved only for martyrs.

Over time, the conception of martyrdom in Catholic religiousness was expanded to the point of characterizing a violent death resulting from either a serious illness or a homicide, even though there was no adopted criterion that death would be due to adherence to the Christian faith.

Vaucher (1987) observes that the concept of sanctity in most religions is found with an ambivalent meaning, but always evoking a rupture of the human condition, as well as a possibility of establishing a relationship with the Divine that is susceptible to purifying effects.

Martyrdom was the symbol of total submission to Christ, therefore, to be holy was to die, not only for Christ, but “as” him, so that holiness and martyrdom basically had the same meaning for the Christian imaginary of that time.

Serge Moscovici (1990) interprets that, as the saints were men like us, with weaknesses, sufferings and imperfections, it is easier to believe in them. The image of God, creator of great things, is excessively far from human reality, hence the incessant search for an intermediary. This seems to be the main reason for the emergence of such an expressive range of saints, whether institutional or not. The first ones, consecrated by the Church, result from a whole rational organization, whereas the latter are the result of a mystical and emotional process that expands, despite the protests and institutional attempts to control it, since, for the followers, the processes of beatification and canonization are unknown and, more than that, totally unnecessary. One who believes, believes in the protective efficacy of the “saint”; he places his hope in it – regardless of the position of the Church – and that is enough for him/her.

By means of the myth, as an original narrative, the religious man seeks identification with the divinity, with the transcendent. The more personified the transcendent, the greater the sense of identification with a project of salvation. In the case of the worship of the saints, over time, the prayer offered to God is also offered to the saint, who has already demonstrated, by the miracles performed, to be a bearer of divine powers.

For Pierre Ansart (1978), there is no social practice reducible only to its physical and material elements. It is necessary that this take place in a network of senses and go beyond the segmentation of the individual gestures. In this perspective, the myth that is constructed or under construction, expresses a daily experience, a collectively lived imaginary, besides emphasizing the way in which social relations are established.

It is when seeking a miracle that people go to shrines. Word spreads about the blessings and the protection, lengthening the line of new followers. Telling of the protection received in such circumstances becomes a way of preaching and propagating the life of the saints.

## THE INNOCENT VICTIM AND THE CRIMINAL

In the case of these saints, I may think according to Edgar Morin (1997), who states that sacrificial death is one of the key elements of Christianity.

(...) o fundamento mágico essencial da salvação é o sacrifício de “morte-renascimento”, o sacrifício-do-deus-que-morre-para-ressuscitar. Os símbolos do deus de salvação, por si sós, são suficientemente eloqüentes: (...) Jesus é também o *Cordeiro pascal*, cujo sacrifício, segundo a lei mosaica, consagra a “passagem”<sup>5</sup> (Morin, 1997: 203).

Characters that are in the liminality are canonized and assume transcendental characteristics, as in the case of prostitute, of the criminal and of the child. Their deaths are symbolic in the way their stories are told. Vauchez emphasizes that in the process of sanctifying the dead, religiousness includes the sacralization of their lives, especially when it comes to “vítimas inocentes das forças do mal, sobretudo crianças e mulheres barbaramente assassinadas”<sup>6</sup> (Vauchez, 1987: 298)<sup>7</sup>.

The folklorist Felix Coluccio (1995), in establishing categories to think of these so-called “popular” devotions, points out as possible saints those who had violent or unjust deaths. In this category, some others could also be found: angels, children who died in early childhood, victims of abandonment or other forms of inattention; innocent victims, teenagers and adults beaten, raped and murdered; and, finally, people of “wrong lives” – bandits and prostitutes whose devotees believe them to have had opportunity to repent and obtain forgiveness of sins “in extremis”.

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<sup>5</sup> (...) the essential magic fundament of salvation is the sacrifice of ‘death-rebirth,’ the sacrifice-of-the-god-that-dies-to-resurrect. The symbols of the god of salvation alone are eloquent enough: (...) Jesus is also the *Paschal Lamb*, whose sacrifice, according to the Mosaic Law, consecrates the “passage”.

<sup>6</sup> Innocent victims of evil forces, especially barbarically murdered children and women.

<sup>7</sup> In the context of popular religiousness, the social imagery has been historically vulnerable to women and, above all, to children, when these were involved in tragic deaths. Here are some of the many examples of this phenomenon: devotion to the *Menina sem Nome* (Girl without Name), a beggar from Praia do Pina, in Recife (PE), named after by police reporters who followed the case, who died after being raped (Sáez, 1995); the girl Izildinha, from Monte Alto (SP), considered a protector of children. Having died very young in Portugal, her coffin was brought to Brazil in 1930 by Commander Antonio Castro Ribeiro, and his brother, who would have stated that when the coffin, still in Portugal, was opened, the body of the girl was intact and the roses deposited during the wake were still alive and perfumed (Santos, 1997); Iracema, the 7-year-old girl who also died after being raped in Marília (SP) (Reis, 1993); or even Antonio Marcelino, the *Santo Menino da Tábua* (Holy Boy of the Wooden Board), who died in 1945 after a few years of intense physical suffering. Having been the son of a very poor family, he had no medical monitoring and reports allege that he did not accept clothes or solid foods. His existence constituted of lying on a wooden board, from which his nickname originated (Ramos de Andrade, Siuda-Ambroziak, 2017).

Here I will present three examples of these stories in order to understand how this process takes place in a space that is also a liminal one, the cemetery. First, I present the devotion to Maria Bueno, the *santinha*<sup>8</sup> of Curitiba, who died in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, analyzed by Vera Irene Jurkevics (2004) and Andréa Alvarenga Lima (2007), whose mythical narrative is conflictive in the construction of her sanctity, being treated at times as a prostitute, at times as a “domesticated woman”. Secondly, I speak of the criminal Jararaca, analyzed by Eliane Tânia Martins de Freitas (2006), who died in 1927 and became a Robin Hood-style avenger for devotees in Mossoró, in the State of Rio Grande do Norte. Thirdly, I present Clodimar Pedrosa Lô, a child/adolescent who died in 1967 in the city of Maringá, in the State of Paraná.

These three saints have a common element in their founding myths, given that it is from the circumstances of their deaths that their holiness springs: their deaths are related to the abuse of authority, whether by the police in the cases of Jararaca and Clodimar, or by the military, in the case of Maria Bueno.

Maria Bueno was a victim of a crime of passion. The first record of Maria Bueno appears in the police chronicle of January 30, 1893, in the *Diário do Comércio*<sup>9</sup> newspaper, reporting that a Mulatto girl had been murdered by her lover, with her head completely separated from the body and her hands marked by razor cuts. The crime flustered the population because of the cruelty traits with which it was carried out (Jurkevics, 2004; Lima, 2007).

João Leite de Santana, known as “Jararaca” is said to have been buried alive by the police in Mossoró on June 19, 1927. The narratives state that he was taken out of prison in the middle of the night and taken to a field, where he was forced to dig his own grave where he was buried alive (Freitas, 2006). He had already been badly wounded during the invasion of the city in alliance with a larger gang led by Virgulino Ferreira da Silva, the “Lampião”.

Clodimar was 15 years old when, in 1967, he was accused of a robbery at the hotel where he worked. He was arrested, tortured by the police and died of injuries. The popular revolt reached its highest when the police officers accused of killing him fled. One of the most significant consequences of the crime occurred in 1970, when the father of Clodimar arrived in Maringá and murdered the hotel manager, justifying that he wanted to relieve his conscience, “to heal the burns caused by tears that rolled down his face tearing a bitter sign of distress and sadness” (Diniz, 1983: 54).

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<sup>8</sup> Little Saint.

<sup>9</sup> Daily Trade.

Both Mircea Eliade (1992) and Karen Armstrong (1999) state that the historicity of a character does not resist the force of the myth. As time goes by, the deeds done by a person clothed with sacredness become heroic or sacred to such an extent that their trajectory is narrated in a way that all their acts begin to prove the inexorability of their power and transcendental character.

The narratives of the devotees produce varieties that at no time undermine devotion. On the contrary, the mismatches of the narratives show the vitality of the permanence of the saints in the imaginary of the people who visit their graves. Oscar Calavia Sáez (1995: 18), in his study of myths and deaths in the Brazilian religious field, states that “it is in the report – rich in misconceptions – that the saint breathes and is created”.

The life stories of these people are based on the story of how their sanctity was manifested. Time causes their ordinary lives to be completely transformed into details that become justifiers of their sacred action. The narratives often contain stories of how death came because of their attempt to *maintain honour*. The elements of their stories are unstable: the condition of a prostitute often appears, but it can be replaced by that of an untouched woman, seduced or raped, which happens on the reports about the life of Maria Bueno.

In the case of the criminal, Freitas (2006) argues that there is an effort to bring him/her closer to the type known in the sociological and historical literature as a *bandido social*<sup>10</sup> (Hobsbawn, 2001). Besides that, the model of virtuous life seems to be out of reach, although attempts from the part of devotees to insert contexts of goodness into his/her posthumous biographies are made. Hence the power of the miracle present in the narratives to those who go to the graveyard to pay them homage.

In both cases one can think of suffering, as in archaic cultures, as a sign given by God to the sufferer for him/her to repent. Through suffering, the prostitute and the criminal can transcend in search of perfection and truth, leaving the pleasures of this world to unite with that which is divine, in a conception that suffering is the gateway to salvation (Vergeley, 2000).

In the case of the innocent victim, the centre of the narration is always the death considered premature and its inexplicable motive, whether due to a disease or a homicide with exquisite cruelty. The child/adolescent appears defenceless in the face of the threat of death and at the same time extremely strong in demonstrating that he or she faced murder or illness with forces that exceed human

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<sup>10</sup> Social bandit.

measure by far. Because they are pure, or as their devotees say, *little angels*, here they enlarge the typology of Coluccio a little more; by suffering intensely and by understanding human suffering, these children have become capable of mediating the relationship between the devotee who suffers and asks for the interruption of suffering, and the divinity, of which he/she is close.

Every saint has a primordial characteristic: they are only holy, if they perform miracles. This way, all the non-official saints have founding miracles, those considered the first, the ones that have encouraged their worship. Difficult to prove, or even unify, with characters that no one knows or knows through the narratives of others, these miracles are always remembered on pilgrimage days, along with the story of their lives as saints.

Another means of preserving the memory of the saint is the local newspapers. Every year, on the eve of the All Souls' Day, stories about the most visited tombs of the cemetery are published and the stories of the saints are re-told, based on previous articles and/or reports of visitors of the grave.

#### THE ATTRIBUTION OF MEANING TO THE CEMETERY AS A SPACE OF CULTIC STRATEGIES – THE CEMETERY AS A SANCTUARY

The shrine of these saints is the cemetery. As a space of liminality, in which the sacred and the profane intersect, the All Souls' Day summarizes this encounter in a paradigmatic way. November 2, despite its religious institution as part of the Catholic calendar, is, for many, a private mundane practice, which consists of honouring the dead acquaintance.

Entering the cemetery is leaving the usual, daily and profane world and approaching the other side. It is introducing oneself to a sacred dimension, alongside the candle vendors, flanelinhas<sup>11</sup> and flower vendors. This "holy field" holds the mysteries of what we want to forget: the fact that one day we will die.

The cemetery is the axis mundi (Eliade, 2001), it is the place in which Earth, Heaven and Hell form a whole that is sort of indistinguishable, as if it were in the cosmogonic origin. The ritual in the cemetery works as a production of a social memory, linked to the perception that the devotee has of their saint.

It is in this space that family and friends receive homage in their memory. Memory that materializes in the care with the grave, in the flowers left there, in

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<sup>11</sup> A polemic car-keeper. Since it is an informal activity, they receive money in the form of a tip and often face and provoke hostility from the owners.



the prayers. In addition to these, there is another character who also receives honours: the popular saint. These saints have mobilized people who, knowing the miracles performed by them, move towards their sanctuaries.

These are the *mortos especiais*<sup>12</sup> (Brown, 1984), the ones who are elevated to mediators because the living, while praying for their salvation, believe that their closeness to the deity would give them special protection. The central space of this devotion, the altar of this sanctuary, is the grave, which receives a multitude of faithful throughout the year. However, it is on the day of the anniversary of their death or on the All Soul's Day that the presence of the faithful becomes especially visible. As a form of devotion, people who visit it light candles, make requests, leave messages of thanks for the miracle received and pray. If the saint has a chapel or a *sala de milagres*<sup>13</sup>, *ex-votos*<sup>14</sup> are left (objects in plaster or wax representing the healed part of the body, photographs, pacifiers and other objects), which represent the miracle, the received grace. This manifestation can also be identified in the official sanctuaries of the Catholic Church, as is the case, for example, of the Santuário de Aparecida<sup>15</sup> and its Sala dos Milagres.

In a ritual communication with the sacred, the gesture materializes the faith, giving it visibility, as it is evidenced in different acts of piety. At times, these are intimate, direct and personal, in prayers done by kneeling, in offering flowers, candles, varied objects, votive plaques; at other times, they are of a more collective character, such as festivals, processions and pilgrimages.

Serge Moscovici (1990) evaluates that devotees of these practices feel that the saints intervene in their favour in daily difficulties: illness, family problems, love affairs, unemployment, debts, among others. Therefore, the believer, without any sacramental or clerical mediation, establishes a contractual relationship with the saint, owing to obtaining a grace or benefit, since the devotees make use of any arguments to justify their faith, even if they have to dodge the eventual control of the Church. For that, sympathies, magical gestures and prayers are worth trying all with the intention of transforming the soul of the dead into intermediaries for the solution of the most diverse problems. The counterpart is recognition and gratitude.

Eliade (2001) argues that, for the religious man, neither space nor time reveal themselves as homogeneous or continuous phenomena. This way, pious worship, devotional celebrations, and pilgrimages, among other manifestations, allow the

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<sup>12</sup> Special dead.

<sup>13</sup> Room of miracles.

<sup>14</sup> Ex-vows.

<sup>15</sup> Aparecida Sanctuary.

re-creation of old practices, often associated with new and personal elements, even more so in reciprocal relationships, especially the payment of vows, the offering of flowers, candles.

In Catholic religiousness, each devotee manifests, with greater autonomy and spontaneity, their feelings, speech, fears, and needs, as well as the payment of their vows or simple acknowledgements. By means of promises, which constitute a system of exchange with popular saints, the believer feels that salvation is possible and, above all, that he/she can also obtain necessary benefits to their life in moments of material or emotional difficulties. Through them, communication with the sacred sphere intensifies in the search for graces and miracles that characterize, in a large part, the utilitarian character of popular Catholic religiousness and the importance occupied by devotional constellations in which sanctities transcend the abstract to incarnate in the image of the one who they represent.

## CONCLUSIONS

The popular saints represent archetypal images (Jung, 2006). These are: the defenceless, cordial, loving child/adolescent, victim of poverty, of disease, of the evils of the world; the woman who lives the paradox between being a prostitute and a saint, and who is both at the same time; and the bandit who redeems himself in the final moment, such is the ordeal he goes through.

These saints endure an intensity of suffering comparable to the mythical sufferings of ancient gods and heroes. For the Catholic Church, the main ingredient to portray its chosen ones lies in the prominence given to their adherence to the Christian faith. The Vatican narratives always reinforce the fear of God that has always been present in their lives. In the case of Catholic religiousness, this factor is discarded because the greatest interest lies in the identification with the suffering and impotence experienced by these popular saints. It is purity, goodness and innocence confronted with a world immersed in dangers, losses and pains, or redeeming themselves at the moment of death, added to the capacity to intercede with the deity that grant the highest attribute of the saint: “saints are holy, if they perform miracles”. According to Pedro Ribeiro de Oliveira:

A concepção popular de santo é muito mais abrangente, pois inclui, além dos santos canonizados pela Igreja, todas as denominações locais e titulares de Maria Santíssima, de Jesus, bem como os santos locais e familiares. Uma criança assassinada com requintes de crueldade, uma

peessoa morta tragicamente, ou um leproso que morre sem se queixar da vida, todos esses passam à categoria de “santos”<sup>16</sup> (Oliveira, 1975: 4).

In this sense, in order to analyze the historical aspects of the worship of the popular saints, in addition to addressing the way the Catholic hierarchy positions itself towards them, it is also necessary to look at all the aspects showing how their devotees, despite having strong institutional ties, reinterpret norms and transcend their practices beyond the institution.

The worship of a specific saint is historical. His representation informs the historian how a particular social group lives its relationship with social reality (Chartier, 2002). Thus, it defines strategies of coexistence based on the need to solve their problems by seeking a contact with the transcendent through the appropriate ritual, in which they invest power into a “group of specialists”, the saints, capable of restoring the order of what is interpreted as chaotic through the miracle. For Catholic religiousness, the only known specialist is the saint.

In creating a space parallel to the institutional one does not, however, detach itself from it, Catholic religiousness undertakes what Chartier (2002) calls *esquemas geradores dos sistemas de classificação e de percepção*<sup>17</sup>, true social institutions, incorporated in the form of collective representations of the divisions of social organization. In other words, collective representations that appropriate the sense-generating schemes of the institution and reinterpret them according to their needs. This is what Orlandi calls the passage from the senseless to the meaningful:

É a memória histórica que não se faz pelo recurso à reflexão e às intenções, mas pela “filiação” (...) aquela na qual, ao significar, nos significamos. Assim, nessas perspectivas, são outros os sentidos do histórico, do cultural, do social (...) mas também se fundam sentidos, onde outros sentidos já se instalaram (...) o sentido anterior é desautorizado. Instala-se outra “tradição” de sentidos que produz os outros sentidos nesse lugar. Instala-se uma nova “filiação”. Esse dizer irrompe no processo significativo de tal modo que pelo seu próprio surgir produz sua “memória”<sup>18</sup> (Orlandi, 1993: 13).

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<sup>16</sup> The popular conception of the saint is much more comprehensive, as it includes, in addition to the canonized by the Church saints, all the local and titled denominations of the Most Holy Mary of Jesus, as well as the local and family saints. A child murdered with cruelty, a person who was tragically killed, or a leper who dies without complaining about life, all of them fall into the category of “saints”.

<sup>17</sup> Schemes that generate systems of classification and perception.

<sup>18</sup> It is the historical memory that is not made by the use of reflection and intentions, but by “affiliation” (...) in which, in signifying, we signify ourselves. Thus, in these perspectives, there are other meanings of the historical, of the cultural, of the social (...) but there are also new meanings founded, where other meanings have already settled (...) the previous meaning is unauthorized. Another “tradition” of meanings, which produces other meanings in this place, is installed. A new “affiliation” takes place. This saying erupts in the meaning process in such a way that its very arising produces its “memory”.

The manifestations of Catholic religiousness can also be seen as a field of forces. In other words, as a systematic set of differences that, by offering an objectified sum of inequalities to a set of agents who are previously predisposed to perceive them in a different way, to show interest towards them differently, and to use them in different ways, seem to be able to generate its own interest (Bourdieu, 2001).

The urgency of getting rid of suffering, of reaching the solution for daily problems or of healing diseases does not allow people who seek help in the services of the saints a distance from immediate needs, and it is in the cemetery that all manifestations of religiousness are possible. The forms of collective representation linked to the services rendered to the dead gain special importance when these dead are considered saints capable of mediating a relation of symbolic reciprocity, explicitly expressed on All Soul's Day.

When referring to three popular saints, the woman, the child/adolescent and the bandit, who go about the margins of society and who personify the sacrificial victim par excellence, I tried to present the ways in which Catholic religiousness presents, on the one hand, aspects that differ from the standards established by the ecclesiastical hierarchy, canonizing characters who would never appear as canonized, and, on the other hand, reproduces the main guidelines of the institution in a language that is culturally appropriate in a given moment, letting the devotees preserve their status of being adepts of Catholicism. Thus, "to be Catholic" may be thought of as creating synthesis of permanencies and ruptures that mark the relations of the man with the sacred space.

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# NON-BELIEVERS IN POLAND

Rafał Boguszewski\*

The repercussions of the need for confrontation with a multitude of social and cultural systems, together with their specific determinants and norms, typical of the contemporary world, is the pluralism of societies in its broadest sense. Increased mobility liberates individuals from their social ties, which also makes them subject to social control to a much lesser degree. Pluralism as well as the individualisation and rationalisation connected with it also have consequences in the sphere of religiousness. It means that contemporary societies – contrary to traditional – do not have to be and most often are not characterised by a homogeneous system of beliefs, tradition, patterns of behaviour or systems of values. In this context we can speak of changes in the contemporary religiousness and more radical concepts even assume that there is a crisis of this dimension of human existence.

First of all, the crisis of religiousness is connected with secularisation and laicisation. On the institutional level it means becoming independent and liberated from the control of religious institutions in all areas of secular life, namely politics, economy, culture, education, upbringing or science – the split between the secular and religious sphere, separating the secular life from the religious diktat. The State and the Church are two mutually independent systems with distinct functions and social expectations (Libiszowska-Żótkowska, 2006: 6). On the other hand, on the level of an individual's awareness the crisis of religiousness means a rejection of the religious interpretation of the world and his or her own life, abandoning the religiousness defined by the Church for the sake of an independently created system of beliefs and meanings concerning the last things or even putting a definitive end to the search for religious interpretations and choosing a non-religious lifestyle (Libiszowska-Żótkowska, 2006: 6-7).

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In Poland, which in comparison to other nations is one of the most homogeneous countries in terms of religious affiliation, the process of transformation of religiousness into secularisation is not as rapid as in places where free market economy and the resulting competitiveness and pluralism have a much longer tradition. However, the socio-cultural transformations which have been taking place for more than twenty years in Poland, as well as intensified economic and technological development, certainly influence the mentality of its inhabitants as well as their system of beliefs and values. Admittedly, according to the empirical data we cannot state explicitly at this stage whether in Poland there is a retreat from religiousness or not. Downward trends in the basic rates with reference to the general public are only emerging. However, a turn towards a more individualised and at the same time less institutionalised religiousness seems unquestionable, where regular Sunday participation in the Holy Mass is not obligatory and the canon of the Catholic faith does not have to be accepted completely (Boguszewski, 2012a: 163-165).

The results of monthly surveys conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS) seem to combine the intensification of changes concerning the faith and religiousness of the Polish people with the death of John Paul II. Since 2005 the number of persons who regard themselves as non-believers has been growing rather systematically, while the percentage of those who admit to regular participation in religious practices is decreasing even more significantly. However, the group of non-believers is still not numerous enough to be able to analyse it on the basis of representative nationwide research conducted on standard samples made up of 1000 people. Therefore, in order to characterise Polish non-believers, I will use an aggregate database, joining the measurements from monthly research conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre from January to June 2016. Hence, it is possible to indicate socio-demographic features which distinguish non-believers from believers as well as *inter alia* to compare the political views of both groups. In turn, the answer to the question of whether and how far the system of values of non-believers differs from the values held by believers, as well as how the views of both groups vary with regard to personal and public morality in a broad sense was possible due to asking non-believers a special set of questions in all four surveys conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre from April to July 2013<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> In the study aggregate data from the research “Aktualne problemy i wydarzenia” (“Current problems and events”) (275, 276, 277, 278) conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre were used, carried out by means of computer-aided (CAPI) face-to-face interviews based on representative random samples of adult inhabitants of Poland in 2013: from 4-10 April, 9-15 May, 6-12 June, 4-11 July. The total number of people who described themselves as non-believers to a certain extent or complete non-believers was 322 persons in these samples.



However, in order to be able to relate in this respect the description of non-believers to persons who call themselves believers – the mentioned set of questions from July 2013<sup>2</sup> was answered by all respondents<sup>3</sup>.

## THE CHANGES IN RELIGIOUSNESS IN POLAND

Theories of secularisation, gaining as many followers as opponents, indicate the emancipation of various spheres of social life from the influence of the Church and religion as a result abandoning faith and religiousness. Has this process also affected Polish society in the last two decades or so of intensively changing reality? It seems to be the case. From among many areas of socio-political life in a broad sense, religiousness is – according to Polish citizens – one of few fields in which unfavourable changes have occurred since the end of the 1980s. In 2014 as many as two thirds of the respondents (67%) were convinced of declining religiousness in the period from the end of the 1980s. At the time only one in ten respondents (10%) observed an increase, while one in nine did not notice any crucial changes in this respect (11%) (Boguszewski, 2014). On the other hand, the Church in Poland has enjoyed a good reputation for many years. Since 1998 positive opinions of its activity have fluctuated between 50% and 70% – depending on various kinds of events connected with the functioning of this institution, while in the last few years these assessments have oscillated around the lower end: in March 2016 the activity of the Catholic Church was appraised highly by 55% of the respondents, while 32% indicated low appraisal (Feliksiak, 2016). What is the view of the Polish faith and religiousness more than a quarter of a century after the Round Table negotiations, which initiated the political transformation in Poland, and later in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe?

Within the global profession of faith usually two self-declarations of respondents are taken into consideration, which define their attitude to faith and religious practices. Self-declarations have a subjective nature, but they allow us to present the structure of views of the whole population of Polish citizens (Piwowarski, 2005: 192).

On the basis of these rates it can be concluded that the universally declared faith in God is a rather permanent characteristic of Polish society. It has remained

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<sup>2</sup> The Public Opinion Research Centre survey “Aktualne problemy i wydarzenia” (“Current problems and events”) (278) was conducted by means of face-to-face computer-aided (CAPI) interviews from 4-11 July 2013 on a representative random sample of 1005 adult inhabitants of Poland.

<sup>3</sup> Detailed data concerning the discussed issues can be found in the Public Opinion Research Centre survey report (Boguszewski, 2013a).

at a similar – exceptionally high level – for the last twenty years<sup>4</sup>. According to research systematically conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS)<sup>5</sup>, since the end of the 1990s invariably more than 90% of respondents regard themselves as believers, from which approximately one in ten and recently one in twelve describe their faith as deep. The percentage of persons who rank among non-believers to a certain extent or complete non-believers, has remained at a relatively low level (from 3% to 8%), while – as already mentioned – since 2005 there has been a rather consistent increase.

The level of Poles' involvement in religious practices, which in the years 1997-2005 remained relatively stable, has also decreased quite significantly since 2005. Since that time within ten years the percentage of respondents who attend church regularly, at least once a week, has fallen (from 58% to 49%), while the number of those who do not attend church whatsoever has increased (from 9% to 13%). More people attend church irregularly (an increase from 33% to about 38%). When we combine the declaration of faith and religious practices, it turns out that from 2005 to 2015 the percentage of believers who attend church regularly decreased from 58% to 49%, while there was a slight increase in believers who attend church irregularly (from 32% to approximately 36%), non-believers who follow religious practices (from 1% to 2%) as well as non-believers who do not follow religious practices (from 3% to 6%). The group which consists of believers who do not attend church remained relatively stable – about 7%.

There have also been certain transformations in analyses of rates concerning faith and religious practices in various social groups of Polish citizens. From 2005 to 2015 the percentage of non-believers and not attending church increased most significantly in the group of inhabitants of the largest urban areas (from 6.3% to 16.2%), young people from 18 to 24 years old (from 4.3% to 11.3%); as well as people who completed higher education (from 5.3% to 9.9%). However, what is important is the fact that also the religiousness of people who to a certain extent constitute the bastion of Catholicism in Poland has been changing, that is among the oldest Poles (the percentage of non-believers and not attending church increased from 1.3% to 3.7%) as well as among villagers (from 0.6% to 2.0%),

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<sup>4</sup> We can assume that the percentage of people declaring their faith in God has not changed significantly in a much longer time than the last twenty years, but there is no comparable empirical data on the subject.

<sup>5</sup> Here I refer to the analysis of aggregate data from the years 1997-2015. For each year 12 datasets were combined – one for each month. All research has been conducted according to the same methodology – on representative random samples of adult Poles – initially in the PAPI system, and since September 2008 – using computers (CAPI). To measure the basic degrees of religiousness, all this research was based on identical rates.

although in recent years less intensively. However, when it comes to the very declarations of atheism, in the last ten years the percentage of non-believers to a certain extent or definite non-believers has increased – from 8.2% to 20.8% – among inhabitants of cities with a population of at least 500 thousand; among persons from 18 to 24 years old – from 6.2% to 15.6%; among respondents who completed higher education – from 7.3% to 13.3%; however, among the eldest inhabitants of Poland (over 65 years old) – from 1.9% to 5.0%, while among villagers – from 1.2% to 3.1%.

#### WHO ARE THEY? A SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NON-BELIEVERS<sup>6</sup>

Aggregate data from six representative all-Poland surveys conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS) from January to June 2016 allow us to characterise persons who define themselves as non-believers<sup>7</sup> as well as relate their social and demographic features to believers and deeply devout persons. When it comes to gender, it turns out that although among believers (including deeply devout persons) women predominate (54% versus 46% men), in the group of non-believers the proportions are opposite (41% women versus 59% men).

In age groups mostly young people regard themselves as non-believers. Almost half of them are persons from 18 to 34 years old (46%), whereas – for the purpose of comparison – almost half of the respondents who are deeply devout are at least 55 years old (48%). Therefore, we are observing a clear trend according to which the more devout faith of the respondents, the higher their average age. For non-believers it is 40 years of age, for believers – 47 years of age, while for the deeply devout – approximately 53 years of age.

Another variable which significantly differentiates believers from non-believers, is their place of residence. More than half of the people who admit to their lack of faith are the inhabitants of the largest cities (with a population of at least 100 thousand) – 54%. It is quite the opposite in the case of respondents who regard themselves as believers or deeply devout persons, the majority of whom are inhabitants of villages or smaller towns (altogether also 54%). When divided into regions, non-believers mostly come from the centre of the country (23%) and from the south (21%), while in the group of deeply devout persons also the inhabitants of the south prevail (24%) as well as of the east (20%).

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<sup>6</sup> On the basis of aggregate data from surveys conducted from January to June 2016.

<sup>7</sup> All in all, persons who in the question about faith described themselves as non-believers to a certain extent or complete non-believers were analysed (N=457).

Level of education is also important when it comes to characterisation. Three quarters of Polish non-believers are people who have completed at least secondary education (74%), including as many as 41% with higher education, whereas about half of believers (47%) and deeply devout persons (44%) completed primary or vocational secondary education. Thus, the occupational structure of non-believers is made up of, first of all, clearly polarised people with regard to faith, representatives of the management and top-class specialists (18%), and secondly, pupils and students (16%), pensioners (16%) as well as office administration employees (8%). In turn, among believers and deeply devout persons pensioners clearly predominate (22% and 35% respectively).

Education and occupational status most frequently translate into the financial situation of the respondents and therefore non-believers are mostly well-off persons. The average net earnings of respondents who describe themselves as non-believers is around 2662 zloty, whereas for deeply devout persons the average net income is 1859 zloty, while 1947 zloty for believers<sup>8</sup>. In connection with the fact that earned income largely translates into subjective assessment of their own living standards, almost three fifths of people who regard themselves as non-believers assess their financial situation as good (58%). The rest are moderately satisfied (35%), and few people regard it as poor (7%). In the case of believers and deeply devout persons (taken as a whole), half of them are satisfied with their financial status (50%), while the rest express their average satisfaction in this respect (41%) or are unsatisfied (9%).

To sum up the above characterisation, a typical atheist Pole, to put it simply, is a well-educated young man living in a large city, in the centre of the country, in a rather high position or studying, well-off and satisfied with his financial situation.

### HOW DO NON-BELIEVERS LIVE?<sup>9</sup>

Of course, non-believers' lifestyle is conditioned on their social status. In connection with the fact that they are mainly young people, well-educated and well-off, usually living in large cities, it is not surprising that more often than persons who regard themselves as believers, they read books for pleasure

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<sup>8</sup> The calculations concern only those persons, who in the survey determined a specific amount of income.

<sup>9</sup> On the basis of aggregate data from surveys conducted from May to July 2013.

(80% versus 57%)<sup>10</sup>, go to the cinema (60% versus 38%), use the Internet (82% versus 60%), do sports (57% versus 40%), go on holiday (49% versus 34%), go to the theatre (26% versus 15%) or participate in strikes and demonstrations (5% versus 2%). However, it turns out that they are involved in charity work as often as believers. Most of them donated money to charity within the twelve months preceding the survey (58%), and more than one fourth carried out unpaid work as volunteers for the sake of others, e.g., the local community or the needy (28%). In the case of believers the proportion was 56% and 27% respectively.

Non-believers do not differ from believers in their declared satisfaction with life (the average level is identical – 3.95 each on a scale from 1–5, where 1 meant very unsatisfied, while 5 – very satisfied). The overwhelming majority of them in this respect are satisfied (85%), including one fourth who are very satisfied (26%). One in eight non-believers feels unsatisfied with his or her existence (13%), whereas few people are very dissatisfied with it (3%).

#### WHAT ARE THEIR VIEWS?<sup>11</sup>

When asked about their political views, non-believers define them as left-wing (37% of responses) or centrist (25%). In this respect they significantly differ from deeply devout persons, the majority of whom define them as right-wing (51%), as well as believers who most often choose the right wing when defining their views (31%), while the centre comes second (26%). However, when it comes to party preferences, non-believers most often sympathise with opposition parties in the current parliament – with *Nowoczesna* (36% of those who would take part in potential elections would vote for the very party) as well as with *Platforma Obywatelska* (Civic Platform; 15% of the respondents' answers), and next they would support *SLD* (Democratic Left Alliance; 9% of the respondents' answers) as well as *Partia Razem* (Together Party; 9% of the respondents' answers). For the sake of comparison, deeply devout persons interested in participating in elections are supporters of *PiS* (Law and Justice) in the vast majority (58% of the respondents' answers). The ruling party is also the first choice for people defining themselves as believers (37%), who only subsequently are in favour of *Nowoczesna* (18%) and *PO* (15%).

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<sup>10</sup> The question concerned the completion of particular activities within the last 12 months before the survey.

<sup>11</sup> On the basis of aggregate data from surveys conducted from January to June 2016.

In consequence of there being a relatively low number of advocates of the main ruling party among non-believers, Beata Szydło's cabinet receives an outstanding lack of support for its actions from them. Among non-believers the opponents of the PiS (Law and Justice) government outnumber supporters fourfold (59% and 14% respectively), whereas in the case of deeply devout persons it is quite the opposite – positive opinions addressed to the cabinet definitely predominate (59% versus 16% critical opinions). A substantial level of satisfaction with the government activity is connected with the fact that non-believers indeed assess the current situation in the country as significantly worse than believers and deeply devout persons (67% of them are unsatisfied with it, while among believers and deeply devout persons the proportion is 47% and 25% respectively), they are clearly less optimistic in this respect about the future (49% of them are afraid of worsening the situation in the country, while among believers the proportions are 27% and 19% respectively).

Non-believers also differ from believers in their attitude to democracy and current assessment of its functioning in Poland. For as many as 80% of non-believers democracy has an advantage over other forms of government, whereas among believers and the deeply devout 68% and 65% of respondents respectively share that view<sup>12</sup>. Satisfaction with the state of democracy in Poland in the first half of 2016<sup>13</sup> was felt by approximately one third of non-believers (31%) as well as 40% of believers and 53% of deeply devout persons.

#### WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE IN?<sup>14</sup>

Does defining yourself as a non-believer mean a complete negation of the existence of any form of transcendence? It turns out that not necessarily. People who explicitly and firmly deny the existence of God constitute only 36% of non-believers. Almost one third of them have doubts, but they do not negate the existence of God (31%), while one fourth of them do not believe in a personal God, but they accept the existence of a certain Higher Power (24%). Finally, there are also those who *de facto* believe in God, but probably due to moments of doubt describe themselves as non-believers to a certain extent (6%). However, it is important that persons who regard themselves as believers are also not always

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<sup>12</sup> On the basis of declarations collected from surveys conducted in January and June 2016 taken as a whole to increase the number of non-believers.

<sup>13</sup> On the basis of declarations collected from surveys conducted in January, March, April and June 2016 taken as a whole to increase the number of non-believers.

<sup>14</sup> On the basis of aggregate data from surveys conducted from May to July 2013.

convinced of their declarations. Two thirds of them declare unwavering faith in God (66%), while the rest have doubts to a greater or lesser degree in this respect.

In the group of non-believers it is not explicit when it comes to eschatological issues. Although the majority think that there is nothing after death (55%), some of them claim that there is a kind of posthumous existence (33% altogether), the nature of which could not be defined by most of them (23%). However, it turns out that convictions of the believers are not explicit either. Most of them expect some sort of life after death, so the belief that death is not the end predominates, but it is not known what comes next. Just under a third of believers are convinced that we either go to heaven or to hell after death (30%).

It can therefore be concluded that defining yourself as a non-believer is not equal to complete nihilism regarding the transcendence and ultimate matters. A lack of faith in a personal God does not mean a defiance of all kinds of religious or quasi-religious beliefs. It indicates the presence of some forms of spirituality among non-believers, which is confirmed by the results of other research. According to the surveys, 26% of non-believers admitted faith in supernatural phenomena (inexplicable by science), 21% – in a different form of supernatural power from a personal God, 20% – in the existence of the human soul, while 18% – in the efficiency of bioenergetics (Tyrała, 2009).

Therefore, while it is difficult to speak of consistent faith in the case of believers in Poland, it is impossible to treat Polish non-believers as an example of the ideal type of atheism – which is characterised by the lack of contradiction in adopted attitudes and views. It turns out that only one in four of those declaring unbelief can be defined as a consistent atheist, who is certain that there is no kind of Higher Power and at the same time is convinced that death is the end of everything (25%). However, only 25% of persons defining themselves as believers have no doubts as to the presence of a personal God, while being convinced of the existence of life after death.

#### WHAT VALUES DO THEY HOLD?<sup>15</sup>

It turns out that a hierarchy of values of non-believers diverges from the one declared by all Poles only to a small extent (Boguszewski, 2013b). Definitely, the most significant value for them is family bliss (73% of responses). Those people also value health – 64% of non-believers ranked it among one of the three most important values in life. To them, decidedly less significant, although also

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<sup>15</sup> On the basis of aggregate data from surveys conducted from May to July 2013.

important, are: peace (28% of responses), friendship (22%) and an honest life (20%). Non-believers also regard the following values as significant in life: respect for other people (15%), career (15%), the freedom of expression (11%), education and (11%), welfare and affluence (9%) as well as life full of adventures and excitement (7%). However, a relatively distant position in their hierarchy of values is occupied by: contact with culture (5%), patriotism (3%), success and fame (1%) as well as participation in the democratic socio-political life (1%). By and large, religious faith has no meaning to them (0.3% of responses).

In what way does the system of values of non-believers diverge from the one declared by believers? Of course, the greatest difference lies in the importance attached to religious faith – it takes the last place among the most significant values of non-believers, whereas in the case of believers it ranks seventh (a difference of 13%). Non-believers emphasise the importance of family bliss and health significantly less frequently than believers (a difference of 11%). They give less weight to career than believers (a difference of 7%), as well as honesty (a difference of 6%) and respect for other people (a difference of 3%). In turn, contact with culture has a greater meaning to them than to believers (5% of responses against 1%), as well as welfare and affluence (9% versus 4%), life full of adventures and excitement (7% versus 2%) and – first of all – peace (28% versus 18%), friendship (22% versus 9%) and freedom of expression (11% versus 3%). We can therefore suppose that although the possibility of expressing one's views as an element of everyday life is perceived as something common (due to everyone) by the vast majority of Polish citizens in a democratic society and is not understood in terms of desired values, non-believers have different feelings in this respect, which can partially result from the negative consequences of their minority status in Poland.

#### WHAT NORMS DO THEY COMPLY WITH?<sup>16</sup>

The view that the Polish society is rather mistrustful is confirmed in declarations concerning trust for other people and for some institutions – especially political (Cybulska, 2012). However, it turns out that although the majority of non-believers also suggest caution in their contact with others, they are much more open in this respect than those who regard themselves as believers. More than one third of them take the view that you can trust people generally (26%),

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<sup>16</sup> On the basis of aggregate data from surveys conducted from May to July 2013.



while among believers this opinion is shared by only 17% of respondents. However, in both groups a cautious approach to other people is the rule.

But when it comes to a general attitude towards norms, non-believers evidently opt for relativism. Almost two thirds of them believe that good and evil depend in large measure on circumstances (61%), which means that there are no clear and absolute rules defining right and wrong conduct. Only every fifth non-believer claims that there are completely clear rules determining what is good and what is bad and they apply to everyone, regardless of the circumstances (21%). Such moral universalism is much more often expressed by believers, although – interestingly – a relativist approach predominates also among them (41% versus 35%).

Also, the attitude towards different kinds of controversial phenomena and behaviours, which are often considered to be reprehensible, but occur more or less commonly in society, reflect the approach to norms. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 meant that the behaviour is always inappropriate and thus should never be justified, while 7 – that there is nothing wrong with it and it can always be justified, persons regarding themselves as non-believers expressed their view on this type of issues<sup>17</sup>.

On the basis of the acquired declarations, it can be concluded that non-believers strongly condemn accepting and offering bribes, employers exploiting employees, and beating children. The vast majority of them consider it to be wrong, while a considerable part of them unequivocally also condemn such behaviours as using your job title for your own benefits, neglecting your duties at work, and being unfaithful to your spouse, as well as making fictitious donations or understating your income to pay lower tax. Non-believers also disapprove of rather than accept, but do not condemn the following: exceeding the speed limit on roads, travelling without a ticket by bus or tram, abortion, cheating in exams, buying counterfeit things intentionally, as well as not participating in elections. In turn, the phenomena which non-believers consent to rather than not accept are: homosexuality, euthanasia, divorce, while the following are almost commonly accepted: premarital sex, contraception and cohabitation.

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<sup>17</sup> We should bear in mind that this type of survey, conducted with the use of a questionnaire, and especially an interview questionnaire, is to a large extent marked by a declarative character. Hence, the answers to questions concerning certain norms of conduct do not always reflect real views or the respondents' conduct. The context of the survey is such that some respondents are not guided by their attitude towards the discussed issues, but what view they should take in a given situation. By assuming this type of mistake, we can nevertheless present a set of generally accepted rules – what can be done or not according to the respondents and what is not within the accepted limits whatsoever.

**Table 1. Attitude towards morally dubious phenomena and behaviours**

Assessed behaviours and phenomena	Average assessment on a scale from 1–7		The difference between average responses	
	For non-believers (N=321)	For believers and deeply devout persons (N=924)		
Living in a relationship without marriage	6.40	4.44	1.96	*
Ending the life of a terminally ill person at his or her request	5.16	3.20	1.96	*
Homosexuality	4.86	2.92	1.94	*
Divorce	5.43	3.82	1.61	*
Abortion	3.48	1.98	1.50	*
Using contraceptives	6.40	4.94	1.46	*
Pre-marital sex	6.34	5.00	1.34	*
Being unfaithful to your spouse	2.51	1.63	0.88	*
Exceeding the speed limit on a road	3.03	2.22	0.81	*
Travelling without a ticket by bus or tram	3.39	2.65	0.74	*
Buying counterfeit things intentionally	3.63	3.03	0.60	*
Using your job title for your own benefits	2.08	1.59	0.49	*
Making fictitious donations or understating your income to pay lower tax	2.53	2.05	0.48	*
Neglecting your duties at work	2.35	1.92	0.42	*
Not participating in elections	3.96	3.63	0.34	*
Cheating in exams	3.54	3.23	0.31	*
Offering bribes	1.65	1.36	0.29	*
Accepting bribes	1.50	1.22	0.27	*
Beating children	1.67	1.43	0.24	*
Exploiting employees by employers	1.47	1.23	0.23	*
“Moral liberalism” rate	3.57	2.73	0.84	

Data concerning believers come from a survey from July 2013, while the results for non-believers are given on the basis of aggregate data from April to July 2013.

\* The average differences statistically significant at the level  $p \leq 0.01$ .

It turns out that no matter the discussed situation, views of non-believers are more liberal than those held by believers (the general rate of moral liberalism is higher in this group of respondents by 0.84 percentage point), while the greatest differences of the averages concern the declared attitude to life in a relationship without marriage (1.96); euthanasia (1.96); homosexuality (1.94); divorces (1.61); abortions (1.50); using contraceptives (1.46) as well as pre-marital sex (1.34 percentage point) – see table 1.

When analysing the morality of non-believers in four general dimensions created on the basis of the declared attitude to the phenomena and behaviours presented above, it can be concluded that although in every dimension attitudes of non-believers are more liberal than believers, the greatest differences in average responses concern the declared attitudes towards bioethical issues (1.74 percentage point) as well as towards behaviours within the so-called marriage and family morality (1.50). In the sphere of social honesty as well as professional morality, the attitudes of believers and non-believers are definitely more similar (see table 2).

**Table 2. The level of consent to behaviours in various dimensions of morality**

Dimensions of morality:	Average consent on a scale from 1–7		The average difference (non-believers – believers)
	For believers (N=924)	For non-believers (N=321)	
Bio-ethical dimension <sup>1</sup>	2.59	4.34	1.74*
Sexual and family dimension <sup>2</sup>	3.86	5.36	1.50*
Social honesty dimension <sup>3</sup>	2.61	3.07	0.45*
Professional dimension <sup>4</sup>	1.49	1.85	0.36*

Data concerning believers come from a survey conducted in July 2013, whereas the results for non-believers are presented on the basis of aggregate data from April to July 2013.

<sup>1</sup> Attitude towards abortion and euthanasia.

<sup>2</sup> Attitude towards premarital sex, concubinage, homosexuality, divorce, contraception and adultery

<sup>3</sup> Attitude towards exceeding the speed limit on roads, tax frauds, travelling without a ticket, offering bribes, cheating in exams, not participating in elections and buying counterfeit things intentionally.

<sup>4</sup> Attitude towards accepting bribes, neglecting your duties at work, mobbing and deriving illegal benefits from your job title.

\*Average differences statistically significant at the level  $p < 0.001$ .

It means that in a dichotomous division into private and public morality, non-believers in comparison with believers display a far-reaching openness and tolerance for controversial behaviours referring to the private sphere of life, while in the case of behaviours which upset the status quo, the attitudes of both groups

of respondents are much more uniform, while the consent of non-believers in this respect is also greater than those who define themselves as believers and deeply devout persons (the average difference 0.41;  $p < 0.001$ ) – see table 3.

**Table 3. The level of consent to behaviours in the sphere of private and public morality**

Spheres of morality:	Average consent on a scale from 1-7		Average differences (non-believers – believers)
	For believers (N=924)	For non-believers (N=321)	
Private morality <sup>1</sup>	3.32	4.72	1.40*
Public morality <sup>2</sup>	2.21	2.62	0.41*

Data concerning believers come from a survey conducted in July 2013, whereas the results for non-believers are based on aggregate data from April to July 2013.

<sup>1</sup> Attitude towards premarital sex, cohabitation, homosexuality, divorce, contraception, adultery, abortion, euthanasia, beating children.

<sup>2</sup> Attitude towards exceeding the speed limit on roads, tax frauds, travelling without a ticket, cheating in exams, buying counterfeit things intentionally, not participating in elections, offering bribes, accepting bribes, neglecting your duties at work, mobbing, deriving illegal benefits from your job title.

\*Average differences statistically significant at the level  $p < 0.001$ .

## CONCLUSIONS

The People’s Church, which in the context of postmodern society is losing its significance, has not ceased to exist in many respects in Poland, although undoubtedly the experiences of the last twenty-five years – the development of free market democracy and social pluralism – are not without influence on the Polish Church as well as the religiousness of Polish citizens. According to Władysław Piwowski: “in Polish society after World War II there was a substantial influence of tradition and at the same time state totalitarianism, which doubly doomed people to a lack of choice. (...) After the transition of Poland from totalitarianism to democracy, the influence of both factors increased, namely spontaneous secularisation and pluralism. An expression of this is the change in the position and role of the Church in society, as well as transformations of religiousness, which were taking place” (Piwowski, 1996: 16) and the roles played by religion.

On the one hand, religiousness in the past filled the whole life of a human being, family, the local and national community, while on the other hand, it gave meaning and identity, so it fulfilled needs and solved problems both in the sphere of individual and public life. However, due to socio-cultural transformations it no

longer serves such multiple functions (Piwowarski, 2005: 191; Boguszewski, 2012b: 15-24). A new socio-cultural context, by bringing about changes in many domains of social, political and economic life, has influenced the sphere of religiousness and attitude towards religion and the Church, which is at the same time connected with a shift in the role and position of the Church in Poland. As Peter L. Berger points out:

just like religious ideas may lead to empirically discernible changes in social structure, so the changes in the social structure influence the level of religious awareness and notions. Religion appears to be a shaping force in one situation and a dependent phenomenon in a different historical situation (Berger, 1984: 378).

The new situation in Poland is connected *inter alia* with: a greater and greater selectivity towards the articles of faith and ethical imperatives; leaving the so-called church religiousness characterised by being deeply rooted in religious practices; a slow, but rather systematic increase in the percentage of people who define themselves as non-believers. In the last years, the social climate, connected with the development of organisations and rationalist, humanist and freethinking movements, has especially favoured these processes, which has not been observed on such a scale after 1989.

In this context we can assume a further increase in atheistic, indifferent attitudes towards religion as well as weakening the connection between the identity of Polish citizens and their religious participation (Mariański, 2004: 112). Another important factor which generates a deepening in religious crisis, indifference and a lack of faith, as well as leaving for non-institutional (privatised) forms of religiousness can turn out to be a weakening trust in the Church and the clergy, which we may expect in connection with underestimating or ineffectual solutions to the current problems of the Church in Poland.

All this makes the area of research and social analyses concerning secularisation and atheisation in Poland increasingly broader. The results of the surveys which I have presented above explore only a small section of this area. On their basis it can be concluded that indeed some social and demographic attributes of respondents favour some declarations of the lack of faith, but its perception and understanding are quite clearly diversified<sup>18</sup>. It turns out that one in four non-believers can be defined as a consistent atheist who negates the existence of all forms of transcendence and at the same time expresses the conviction of the lack of any form of afterlife. Hence, the unbelief in Poland does not mean the lack of the need for spirituality. What is more, in the case of a considerable part of Polish non-believers we can even speak of the connection of unbelief with the need for

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<sup>18</sup> It is also confirmed by the results of other surveys, see Grabowska (2012).

spirituality, which neither a traditional institutionalised religion nor traditionally understood atheism are able to fulfil (Tyrała, 2009: 12).

The system of values of non-believers only to a slight degree digresses from the one held by respondents who define themselves as believers. In turn, their system of norms is in principle more relativised than that of the believers. However, they are much more liberal mainly when assessing behaviours relating to different spheres of 'private morality', while their appraisal of behaviours from the area of the so-called public morality to a lesser extent differ from those expressed by believers.

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# **TIME OF REFORMS: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE SOCIETY OF SALVADOR, BAHIA, DURING THE REPUBLIC (1889-1924)**

Edilece Souza Couto\*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Between the end of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century, Brazil underwent intense reforms in the political, economic, social and religious fields. It was the end of the Empire, of royal patronage and slavery. The Catholic clergy, still in the process of internal reform, needed to adapt to the new times, to seek new political alliances, and, at the same time, to maintain orthodoxy and authority over laypeople, who were persistent in their archaic religious practices.

The time frame of this text begins in 1889, the year in which the political regime in Brazil changed from Empire to Republic, and ends in 1924, with the death of Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva, Archbishop of Bahia and Primate of Brazil, whose archbishopric lasted from 1893 to 1924. In the first three decades of the Republic, significant changes occurred in the area of religion. Catholicism, as an official religion, suffered from competition from other Christian denominations (the different groups of Protestant missionaries proselytizing and organizing churches) and other beliefs, such as Candomblé, Umbanda, and Spiritism. There was a separation between the Church and the State, but the archbishops sought alliances with the new political power to maintain official worship and authority over the laity.

Brazilians were aware of the transformations taking place in the world, especially in Europe, and they wanted to join the technological, scientific and cultural innovations of modernity. Although there was still an attachment to the practices of the imperial period and to the values connected to the monarchy, there was

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a desire for transformation, for progress and civilization triumph, which represented the new century and the Republic. It was necessary to let the light of new times flow in. However, along with the enthusiasm came the contrary reactions and uncertainties about the future. An appropriate question was to what extent would innovations benefit society and religious life?

This chapter deals with the reforms in the Catholic Church, in the lay associations and in the urbanization of Salvador, Bahia, in the early republican context. I denominate a “time of reforms” the period between the end of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth century in Brazil and Bahia, due to the existence of important political, socioeconomic, cultural and religious transformations. In the limits of the chapter, it is not possible to analyze all these areas in depth. It is necessary to take into account the fact that all the reforms were intertwined, nevertheless, I am going to focus on the reforms in Catholicism and in the urbanism of Salvador, and their consequences both in the Salvador society and in the relationship between clergy and laity.

#### POLITICAL REGIME TRANSFORMATION

The act of the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil took place on November 15, 1889, but, in order to understand the political process, it is necessary to go back to the 1870s; after all, some important issues for the new regime, such as the separation of the Church and the State, began to develop during this period. The last decades of the nineteenth century were characterized by political disputes between clergy and lay people, especially those in political and administrative positions. The year 1870 was also marked by the Vatican Council I and the approval of the dogma of papal infallibility. At the See of Rome, reform concerning the modernity and the secularization of Christian societies, which we are going to address, was under way. In Brazil, the Catholic clergy, especially the bishops, actively participated in political activities and were divided between supporting the desired modernization of the country and ensuring the permanence of the privileges of Catholicism as an official religion.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, three parties dominated Brazil’s political scene: the Conservative Party (founded in 1837, it stood for the political centralization of the Empire and of the royal patronage), the Liberal Party (since 1831 it worked as a secret society; with freemasonry influence, it redefined its platform in 1869) and the Republican Party (founded in 1870). In the period that



concerns us here, the Liberal and Republican parties had common interests, including some liberals, who, worried about the delay in implementing the reforms, transferred themselves to the new party. The first defended the independence of the judiciary, the freedom of conscience and education and the emancipation of slaves. In practice, they demanded legislative measures that would determine the civil registration of birth and death, civil marriage, secularization of cemeteries and religious freedom, including external and public worship. The second also campaigned for freedom of conscience, freedom of worship, freedom of the spoken and written word and universal suffrage. Despite the homogeneity of thought, in both parties there were radical and moderate wings (Carvalho, 1990; Santos, 2016).

Brazilian republicans were influenced by three different ideological currents: Liberalism, Jacobinism and Positivism. Liberalism foresaw a society of autonomous individuals with little government interference. Inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution (1789), they longed for freedom in Brazil, especially in the proximity of the centenary of the French movement. However, freedom acquired a different meaning in the nineteenth century. According to Carvalho (1990: 17-22), the Jacobins' ideal came from Greco-Roman inspiration, where participation in the government would be done in a direct and collective way with the citizens in a public square, whereas modern ones (and here we include Brazilian republicans) wanted political participation through representation and individual freedom, property, opinion and religion.

Positivism, on the other hand, presented two divergent groups in relation to how to turn the Republic into a government. The Orthodox did not accept French parliamentarianism and complained about the delay in putting into practice the separation of Church and State from educational policies. In addition to that, basing on Auguste Comte, they supported the idea of a republican dictatorship. Another group, composed of heterodox representatives, according to Carvalho (1993: 20), accepted parliamentarianism and admitted the Church-State close relationship, at least until the right moment to intervene. They even sought an approximation between the figure of Clotilde de Vaux, Comte's wife, and of the Virgin Mary, during a time when the Catholic Church intensified the Marian devotion.

Thus, Brazilian republicans had three model options for the Brazilian Republic. Without abandoning the French revolutionary symbols, such as the *Marseillaise*, they incorporated the American model. It was not atheist, because of the various Protestant denominations that had existed since the colonization process, but it was established as a form of public power without any official religion, a lay, non-

theological State, although they did not include Indigenous and Afro-American religions (Santos, 2016: 27-33).

Two documents in Brazil, namely the decree 119-A, dated January 7, 1890, presented by the Bahian jurist Ruy Barbosa, and the Constitution of 1891, sealed the separation between the Republican State and the Catholic Church. That is, it was the end of the royal patronage. This agreement between the See of Rome and the Catholic kings allowed them to choose bishops, to control the ecclesiastical resources of donations and tithes, to pay conscripts, to manage the establishment of religious orders in the colonies, and to finance the construction of religious buildings. This way, the members of the Church were practically employees of the Crown. This situation brought about dissatisfaction and conflict. However, the Brazilian clergy believed that this was a lesser evil when compared to the possibility of an atheist State.

To oppose to the separation of the State, to criticize the liberal discourses and acts, as well as to defend the permanence of their privileges of official religion, the Catholic Church used the press, mainly the journal *Leituras Religiosas*<sup>1</sup>. In 1899, based on the population census of 1890, the clergy used statistical data and numerical superiority of those who declared themselves Catholic to justify the strength of Catholicism in Brazil and the need to maintain it in the new regime as official creed:

Estatística – Do recenseamento da população do Brasil e efetuada no dia 31 de dezembro de 1890, cuja apuração acaba de ser publicada pela repartição geral de estatística do Rio de Janeiro, verifica-se que a nossa população quanto à crença, consta de:

Católicos .....	15.179.015
Protestantes de várias seitas .....	143.241
Positivistas, ortodoxos ou simplesmente teóricos .....	1.327
Pertencentes a outras seitas .....	1.973
Sem culto .....	7.257

Que vergonha, que miséria! Quinze milhões de homens dominados por uma minoria tão insignificante que equivale a quase zero!

Deus nos dê força para que saíamos de tamanho aviltamento

D'A Estrela (*Leituras...*, 1899: 167)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Religious readings,

<sup>2</sup> Statistics – From the census of the population of Brazil and carried out on December 31, 1890, which has just been published by the general statistical division of Rio de Janeiro, it is verified that our population, as to its belief, consists of:

Catholics .....	15,179,015
Protestants of various sects .....	143,241
Positivists, orthodox or simply theorists .....	1,327
Belonging to other sects .....	1,973
Without worship .....	7,257

What a shame, what misery! Fifteen million men dominated by such insignificant minority which equals to almost zero!

God give us strength so we can free ourselves from such debasement.

The Republic had no popular participation and it was no use waiting for the fifteen million Catholics to protest against the new regime. Even Catholic journals only came into the hands of a small group of literate laymen, so the Catholic Church would have to look for other means, other strategies, to assert itself in the new political regime. The clergy was forbidden by the See of Rome to run for public office. Hence, the political participation should happen through representation, with the support and the vote for the candidacies of Catholics. In Bahia, some moderate politicians and Catholics, such as Inácio Tosta, Aristides César Zama, José Augusto de Freitas, Leovigildo Filgueiras, Virgílio Clímaco Damásio and José Joaquim Seabra received support from the Church. Their position against the pre-eminence of civil marriage, the illegibility of clerics and freedom of worship even gained publicity for their candidacy in Catholic journals such as the *Leituras Religiosas*<sup>3</sup> and *Revista Eclesiástica*<sup>4</sup> magazines (Santos, 2016: 42-56).

Thus, faced with the difficulties of creating a Catholic party or electing representatives committed to ecclesiastical causes, the solution found by the Brazilian clergy was to make or reaffirm alliances with local politicians. In the next section, I discuss the reform of the Catholic Church and its alliances in Bahia in order to carry out urban reforms and to expand Catholicism within the State.

## REFORM IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, Brazilian bishops had endeavoured for reform, also called ultramontanism or romanization, influenced by the debates, the actions of the European Catholic Church and ecclesiastical reactions to the regalism of states and to the secularization of modern societies. The reformer clergy wished, among other things, to strengthen papal power over local Churches and to identify and condemn theories and practices considered incompatible with Christianity, such as liberalism, socialism, Protestantism, freemasonry, civil marriage, etc. (Wernet, 1987; Santirocchi, 2010).

Supporters of the reform understood that it was necessary to start with internal reformulation in Brazil, that is, it should be primarily institutional. Therefore, they aimed at restructuring the ecclesiastical career so that the postulants to religious life would study in seminaries and be prepared to face the challenges of modernity. For the ordained, the observance of certain rules, like celibacy, was

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<sup>3</sup> Religious Readings.

<sup>4</sup> Ecclesiastical Review.

fundamentally urgent. It was believed that after the priests committed to the Church with unquestionable knowledge, discipline and moral were formed, they would be given the task of reformulating the lay religious experience, making the official liturgy and external manifestations of faith prevail.

In Bahia, Bishop Romualdo Antônio de Seixas (1827-1860) was the main reformer, who, in the imperial period, had also been the longest at the head of the archbishopric – for 33 years. Until 1840, he was a deputy in the provincial assembly and, therefore, was absent from his ministerial activities in Bahia for about six months a year (Santos, 2014). His successors, however, despite having shorter periods of activity and without the same influence in national politics, were also reformers. These were: Dom Manuel Joaquim da Silveira (1861-1874), Dom Joaquim Gonçalves de Azevedo (1876-1879), Dom Luís Antônio dos Santos (1879-1890), Dom Antônio de Macedo Costa (1890, but died before taking office) and Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva (1893-1924). They continued the reform, mainly in terms of the fight against other beliefs (Candomblé, Spiritism and Protestantism) and the reformulation of lay religiousness.

The successors of the first reformer were engaged in the task of modifying Catholicism, especially with the attempt of purifying the cult from the influences of other beliefs, mostly African ones, and to preserve the archbishopric from the competition of the religious groups that settled in Bahia, such as the Spiritists and Protestants. In this sense, Dom Manuel Joaquim da Silveira was responsible for the fight against the advances of Spiritism and Protestantism, which, according to him, brought poisonous winds to the core of the Catholic Bahian family. Through ministerial letters, the archbishop condemned the mediumistic practices, the proselytizing of the “separated brothers”, with the distribution of copies of the Protestant Bible and public worship, mostly after the organization of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil in Salvador in the year 1872 (Jesus, 2014; Seixas, 2011).

While Dom Manuel da Silveira dealt with divergent beliefs, Dom Joaquim de Azevedo and Dom Luis dos Santos preferred to invest in strengthening Catholic orthodoxy, mainly to combat internal divergence. They promoted several actions to oversee lay practices. Thus, devotions, confraternities, brotherhoods and third orders were the main target of episcopal interventions. The documentation reveals that, first, the archbishop sought to transfer the management of property and of the main office (called president or judge) from the lay associations to the control of the parson, which always brought about discontent, complaints and conflicts. To legitimize this act, a new formulation of the commitment was necessary, as it was a document that regulated the administration and the cult. In the Book of

Correspondence of the Archbishopric of 1894 there is a series of official letters from the parish of Macaúbas about a conflict concerning the elections of the administrative board of the Brotherhood of Senhor Bom Jesus da Lapa in 1879. Copies of these official letters are part of the book of the first year of Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva as the archbishop, which demonstrates that the information about the brotherhoods was very important.

Luís Antônio dos Santos (1879-1890), for his part, only accompanied the first six months of the Republic, since he left the archbishopric in May 1890 to assume a bishopric in Turkey. However, he is known in the history of the Church of Bahia as the archbishop who forbade the *Lavagem do Bonfim* (Bonfim washing/cleaning). At the end of his administration, between December 1889 and January 1890, he issued decrees prohibiting the washing ritual of temples on the Thursday preceding the feast of the patron saint. Until then, the faithful had transformed the simple act of washing the church into drumming and dancing inside and outside the temple, as well as in the streets alongside; it was an anticipation of the celebrations of the Sunday that would close the novena. According to the archbishop, it was an occasion of “serious misbehaviour”. This was happening in several churches of the capital, and, therefore, it was not exclusive to the churchgoers of the Senhor do Bonfim, although this devotion has been the most spectacular since the eighteenth century and has attracted the most pilgrims and devotees from Bahia (Couto, 2015: 149 -151).

Dom Antônio de Macedo Costa was one of the most important bishops of the Brazilian imperial period. Born in Maragogipe, Bahia, he was mentored in his ecclesiastical career by Dom Romualdo Seixas. He was transferred to the archdiocese of Salvador on June 26, 1890, but did not get to be sworn in, since he died in Barbacena, Minas Gerais, on March 20, 1891.

The episcopal See was vacant for about three years. Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva took over the archdiocese on September 12, 1893 and remained there for thirty years and five months, until February 19, 1924, the date of his death. Although the end of the patronage and the monarchical regime meant the separation between Church and State, as well as lack of official support from the government to the clergy, the new archbishop sought to establish good relations with the Bahian Catholic elite, not only from the capital, but also from the countryside. This way, he could seek collaboration from the influential families in the local and regional authorities' spheres.

In the year of 1908, during the archbishopric of Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva, the Catholic journal named *Revista Eclesiástica*<sup>5</sup> supervised by Monsignor Samuel Elpidio de Almeida and published by the Brotherhood of *São Pedro dos Clérigos* (Saint Peter of the Cleric) started being published. From 1912 onwards, it changed to *Revista Eclesiástica do Arcebispado da Bahia* (Ecclesiastical Review of the Archbishopric of Bahia) and its publication became the responsibility of the archdiocese of Bahia. The magazine usually posted their issues divided into a few sessions. The first ones had articles, decrees and documents from the Vatican and the last ones information on the diocesan government. The articles were mostly reproductions of Catholic weekly journals and journals from other states, such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. However, these texts were related to some matter or diffusion of ideas and rules that mainly concerned the archbishop or that should be implemented in the archbishop of Bahia; after all, the magazine was written by two priests, under the supervision and approval of the archbishop.

In 1914, when the archbishopric of Bahia criticized the secular democratic State and tried to articulate local alliances, *Revista Eclesiástica* reproduced an article published in *Gazeta do Povo* (The People's Gazette), a Catholic newspaper of São Paulo. The article entitled *Relações do Clero com os fiéis e dos fiéis com o Clero nos tempos presentes* presents two issues, one related to the participation of the priests in the political representations and another one concerning the relation between the religious and the worshippers.

The author of this article is not identified, but it is certainly an ecclesiastical authority. He uses terms such as *incredulidade*<sup>6</sup> and *impiedade*<sup>7</sup> to refer to people opposed to the political participation of the clergy. In the first lines, he affirms that the *teorias e máximas da incredulidade*<sup>8</sup> reached the *arraiais do catolicismo*<sup>9</sup> and were embraced by the worshippers and also by the priests themselves. They did not realize that in criticizing the presence of the clergy in public offices and functions, the purpose of *incredulidade*<sup>10</sup> was to relegate priests to the sacred space of the sacristy, and to take away from the Church all its social influence. The author sought to distinguish politics from personal interests and favours. He stated that the priest should not engage in *politicagem de aldeia*<sup>11</sup>, where only

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<sup>5</sup> Ecclesiastical Review.

<sup>6</sup> Incredulity.

<sup>7</sup> Profanity.

<sup>8</sup> Theories and maxims of unbelief.

<sup>9</sup> Camps of Catholicism.

<sup>10</sup> Unbelief.

<sup>11</sup> Personal interest, politics of villages.

individual and earthly interests were at stake. However, it was the duty of the priest to participate in *política elevada*<sup>12</sup>, which took into account *os direitos da consciência cristã, a constituição e a estabilidade da família*<sup>13</sup>, values that guided the Christian States (*Revista...*, 1914: 125).

According to the author of the article, the hindrance of the political action of the clergy led to the separation between the clergy and the faithful. “Impiedade”<sup>14</sup> endeavoured to make the priest a stranger to his flock. According to him, this was a characteristic of Catholicism in Latin America. From this passage of the article, the author reports his conversation with a German Benedictine and draws comparisons about the relations between the clergy and the laity in Europe, the United States and Brazil. He argues that European and American priests and believers maintained harmony, unity, closeness and mutual support, including at times of anti-Catholic campaigns, such as Bismarck’s in Germany. He regretted that this was not the case in Brazil, where the followers did not become “faithful soldiers” in the State’s struggle against the Church.

In Bahia, Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva made efforts to form “soldados”<sup>15</sup> for the struggle in favour of the Church. In addition to his proximity to politicians, such as Governor José Joaquim Seabra, the archbishop provided three new dioceses in 1913 in different territories of the state: Ilhéus (Southern region), Caetitê (Chapada Diamantina, sertão) and Barra (on the banks of São Francisco River). Economically, these were promising regions, especially Ilhéus with cocoa production, where there were local political leaders willing to finance the construction of churches, convents and buildings necessary for the installation of new bishops. Most of the time these leaders were members and/or allies of the families of the local aristocracy.

This way, it is possible to identify in the documentation of the *Cúria Diocesana de Salvador* (Catholic periodicals and correspondences between Dom Jerônimo and the ecclesiastical and civil authorities and with the administration of the lay societies) that, mainly after the second decade of the twentieth century, the archbishop was inserted in the public institutions and in the political field, with attitudes that favoured Church and State reciprocally.

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<sup>12</sup> High politics.

<sup>13</sup> The rights of the Christian conscience, the constitution and stability of the family.

<sup>14</sup> Profanity.

<sup>15</sup> Soldiers.

## URBAN REFORM

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the inhabitants of Brazilian cities, such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador sought to transform not only the political regime, but also the urban environment. After the declaration of the end of slavery (May 13, 1888, by the *Lei Áurea*<sup>16</sup>) and the Proclamation of the Republic (November 15, 1889), it was believed that Brazil could finally adhere to modernity. Thus, it took a collective effort to remove from the country any characteristic that represented the barbarism of slavery and monarchical backwardness. It was considered necessary to modify the national symbols, such as the anthem and the flag, as well as the physical aspects of the cities. If, as we have seen earlier, the ideals of the French Revolution influenced political reform, urban transformations were also inspired by the modernization of Paris in the late nineteenth century.

Rio de Janeiro, the capital of the country, should be the symbol of modernization in Brazil. For that, President Rodrigues Alves, between the years 1902 to 1906, did not limit efforts. He formed a team of engineers, doctors and hygienists, whose projects and works would be emulated by politicians from other regions of the country. The transformation would start at the port, under the responsibility of the engineer Mauro Müller. The sanitary doctor Oswaldo Cruz was to take care of the sanitation, in order to exterminate infectious epidemics. Last, the architectural reform would be carried out by the engineer Pereira Passos, who knew Baron de Haussmann's urban works in Paris, which were a model of a modern and civilized city to be followed (Costa & Schwarcz, 2000).

In Rio de Janeiro, the new Central Avenue, currently Rio Branco Avenue, became the main attraction. The buildings, built of marble and crystal, had *art nouveau* façades and sheltered shops of imported products. The electric lighting was provided with modern lamps. The new avenue could no longer be attended by the poor and black population, associated with *atabaques*<sup>17</sup>, dances, festivals and processions with African influences.

The capital of Bahia could not be left out of modernization. Researchers of the Bahian economy, such as Kátia Mattoso (1978), Ana Fernandes and Marco Aurélio Gomes (1992), identified a period of stability and economic growth between the years of 1890 and 1928, despite the difficulty of exporting sugar to Europe in the early years of the Republic. This was due to the high prices of agricultural products and the consolidation of cocoa, rubber and carbonates as export

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<sup>16</sup> Golden Law.

<sup>17</sup> A specific Afro-Brazilian rhythm performed with drums.



products. The economic progress, an ally of the modernizing politicians, made the creation of projects for the urban reforms possible.

However, the changes did not happen at the speed desired by their idealizers. Mário Augusto Santos (1992: 257-262) argues that the slow pace of the implementation of the modernization project was caused by demographic and industrial stagnation. The low population density did not favour the formation of the workforce for the domestic market and industrial development. Thus, the only branch of activities that developed was the primary sector. Salvador remained with vast areas of forest, uninhabited valleys and urban districts occupied by stables, vegetable gardens, farms, ranches or separated by vast empty spaces. The town mainly created handicrafts, which supplied stores with clothing accessories.

This way, the modernization project was practically restricted to reordering public space and to improving transportation services. Politicians, health physicians, hygienists and chroniclers identified the main urban problems in Salvador. There were deficiencies in basic sanitation, water supply, sewage services and garbage collection. Due to poor hygienic conditions, the health of the population was precarious.

Newspaper editorials presented stories about urban life and the need for interventions that would bring improvements to the inhabitants of the capital of Bahia. On June 25, 1912, the *Diário de Notícias* newspaper highlighted the main drawbacks of Salvador: “vida cara, desde os aluguéis das habitações, até as exigências do vestuário; população densa; casas aglomeradas, mal arejadas”<sup>18</sup>. The paper stated that, in addition to these difficulties, the population remained in a “espírito atribulado”<sup>19</sup>, always concerned with “males epidêmicos”<sup>20</sup>, such as yellow fever, smallpox, tuberculosis and other diseases (Em torno..., 1912: 1).

Often in these newspaper articles, the problems of the infrastructure of the city were identified and interventions in architecture were defended. An example is the text published by the *Diário de Notícias* newspaper on October 12, 1912, in which the journalist states that the “velha capital da antiga metropole”<sup>21</sup>, of “aspecto colonial”<sup>22</sup>, had “edificações seculares, de altas casas roídas, de paredes esboroadas, com grossos toros de pau servindo-lhes de amparo, de número considerável de muros fendidos”<sup>23</sup> that threatened to fall and cause disasters (Os desmoramentos ..., 1912: 1).

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<sup>18</sup> Expensive living, from the rents of the residences to the demands of clothing; dense population; crowded houses, poorly ventilated houses.

<sup>19</sup> Troubled spirit.

<sup>20</sup> Epidemic diseases.

<sup>21</sup> Old capital of the old metropolis.

<sup>22</sup> Colonial appearance.

<sup>23</sup> Old buildings with tall, corroded houses with crumbling walls with thick wooden logs serving as structure and with a considerable number of cracked walls.

The interventions sought by press professionals were part of the urban reform project of José Joaquim Seabra, governor of Bahia in two terms: from 1912 to 1916 and from 1920 to 1924. Seabra had experience in the public administration and, as minister of aviation and public works under the government of President Hermes da Fonseca (1910-1914), followed the remodelling of Rio de Janeiro under the government of Pereira Passos. His intentions were to make a great urban intervention in Salvador that would widen the streets, restore public buildings and open the avenues in order to facilitate the circulation of means of transportation. The main work of Seabra would be an avenue that would run through the city, its extension being from the Cathedral to the Rio Vermelho<sup>24</sup>. Plumbing for sewage from rainwater, electric light and afforestation were planned. However, in order to make the project feasible, the following old buildings had to be demolished: the Hygiene Institute, the Official Press, the first quarters of the State Police Village, the garage of the old Public Hall, the entrance of the department of the Cavalry Quarters, the Ondina Pavilion, the Kroepelin Pavilion, the Tuberculosis Pavilion, the director's residence, the Asylum S. João de Deus, the façades of the Rosary, the Chapel and the Mercês Convent, the Palace of Progress.

As fires often reached religious buildings, the authorities took advantage of these "accidents" to justify the use of the land of those partially demolished. On January 7, 1902, the report of Intendant José Eduardo Freire de Carvalho Filho affirmed the need of "uma artéria ligando o Largo das Princesas à rua de Santa Bárbara"<sup>25</sup> in the lower city, in the commercial zone near the port. As Carvalho Filho states:

Causas diversas retardaram esse consentimento, não sendo de menos alcance a necessidade de um grande corte em parte da Igreja do Corpo Santo, ponto inicial de uma das ruas (...). O pavoroso incêndio de 1º de dezembro de 1899 simplificou em parte o projeto que me animou (...). Para removê-la, porém, confiava nos intuítos progressistas e patrióticos do eminente pastor da Igreja Baiana, o Exmo. Revmo. Sr. D. Jerônimo Tomé da Silva, em que encontrou esta administração precioso auxílio, pois, graças ao prestígio de sua Excia. Revma., concedeu a Cúria Romana a indispensável permissão (*Apud* Barbosa, 1970: 147)<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Red River.

<sup>25</sup> An arterial street linking Largo das Princesas to Rua de Santa Bárbara.

<sup>26</sup> Diverse causes retarded this consent, being important the need of a great cut through part of the Corpo Santo Church, initial point of one of the streets (...). The frightful fire on December first, 1899, simplified in part the project that animated me (...). To remove it (the church), however, I trusted in the progressive intents of the great pastor of the Bahian Church, the Most Reverend Jerônimo Tomé da Silva, who gave this administration great aid, as, due to the prestige of His Excellency, he granted the Roman Curia the indispensable permission.

The alliance between the archbishopric and the government of the city of Salvador is evident in this text, after all, the intendant relied on the “intuitos progressistas e patrióticos” of Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva to obtain permission from the Roman Curia for the destruction of the temple. This was not the only mediation of the archbishop for the urban reforms of Salvador. The modernization project of José Joaquim Seabra received the support of the Bahian clergy, including new requests for church demolitions. It is worth remembering that when the separation of Church and State became official, Seabra, deputy and moderator at the time, proclaimed himself Catholic and defended the interests of Catholicism. Archbishop Jerônimo, a reformer, despite criticizing the advances of liberalism and secularization, but firm in the strategy of allying himself with local powers, supported urban interventions in the capital of Bahia.

In order to make the construction of the electric tramline and Sete de Setembro Avenue possible, the project indicated the need to demolish the Cathedral, the Monastery of São Bento and the Monastery of São Pedro Velho. The state and city governments and the Catholic Church, in common agreement, planned the destruction of the Cathedral. Dom Jerônimo sent documents to the Vatican, among them an official letter on August 10, 1916, with the request for a demolition permit, because it was necessary to make a “cut of five metres of the Cathedral, or its total demolition”. The authorization did not come and, on November 26, 1919, he sent a new request justifying the expropriation:

O Governo do Estado da Bahia deseja adquirir uma igreja na cidade da Bahia, com o fim de demolir para o trânsito público se tornar mais fácil. A sobredita Igreja não tem valor artístico nem é necessária para o culto porque perto dela há seis outras igrejas<sup>27</sup> (after Santos, 1933: 14).

While the archbishop justified the demolition with the claim that the Cathedral had no “valor artístico”, the Bahians, especially members of the temple-based brotherhoods and associates of the Historical and Geographical Institute of Bahia (Portuguese acronym: IGHB), recognized its historical, cultural and religious value. They engaged in the preservation of the Cathedral through manifestations in the streets, publication of texts in the newspapers and distribution of pamphlets throughout the city. The archbishop’s request was not answered by the Roman Curia, but the victory of the laity was not permanent and the Cathedral was demolished in 1933, when Juracy Magalhães (1931-1937) ruled the state of Bahia

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<sup>27</sup> The government of the State of Bahia wishes to acquire a church in the city of Bahia, with the intention of demolition of the current one in order to make public transportation easier. The aforementioned church does not have artistic value neither is it necessary for worship, for close to it are six other churches.

as an intervenor, and the archbishopric was directed by Dom Álvaro Augusto da Silva (1924-1968).

Although part of the Bahian population, especially those belonging to the white and literate elite, wanted the modernization of the capital, there were also those who opposed the project when it came to the demolition of the historical and religious patrimony of the city. The greatest rejection occurred when the population became aware of the possible destruction of the Mosteiro de São Bento (Monastery of St. Benedict). A great mobilization also occurred to save the Mosteiro de São Bento. Abbot Majolo de Caigny published articles in the local newspapers, wrote and distributed pamphlets, and organized a special issue of a magazine for women called *A Paladina do Lar*<sup>28</sup> with texts dedicated to discussing the demolition project containing original building plans and what it would look like after what he called “mutilação da igreja abacial”<sup>29</sup> (Caigny, 1912). The Benedictines won the battle and the monastery only lost its side porch.

However, the efforts of the laity were not sufficient for the preservation of the Igreja de São Pedro Velho (São Pedro Velho Church). It was totally destroyed in 1913. The space was used for the construction of the Praça Barão do Rio Branco (Barão do Rio Branco Square) and to open to Avenida Sete de Setembro (Sete de Setembro Avenue). The only reaction on the part of Dom Jerônimo was to demand the construction of a new temple in a new localization - on the corner of Praça da Piedade (Piedade Square) and Av. Sete de Setembro, opened in 1917.

## REFORM OF LAY ASSOCIATIONS

Reform projects targeting modernity and civilization were not restricted to urban infrastructure. The phenomenon assumed social, cultural and religious dimensions. Civilizing meant regulating the use of space, but it involved changing habits of the population and the moralizing of customs. Attempts were made to prevent begging, African and indigenous cults and various forms of popular religiosity manifestations.

Cults of African and indigenous origin were constantly criticized. It was believed that it was necessary to go back to the values and dogmas of Catholicism, because, despite the efforts of the first religious ones, “a religião no Brasil não se

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<sup>28</sup> Home Paladine.

<sup>29</sup> Abbatial church mutilation.

definiu, não se integralizou”<sup>30</sup>, as the *Diário de Notícias* newspaper editorial said on December 9, 1912, when dealing with the theme “A nossa educação religiosa”<sup>31</sup>. For such an undertaking, it would be necessary for the press to make a tenacious campaign against the “má orientação cívica e religiosa”<sup>32</sup> of the Bahian people. He identified the origin of the problem in colonization, when the Portuguese, of “sangue impuro com mescla de sangue mouro”<sup>33</sup> joined “os caboclos de vida errante, dados à prática de fetichismo, indolentes, inadaptáveis à civilização”<sup>34</sup>. Other religions, such as Protestantism, Spiritism and Islam were also considered to be harmful to Bahian society. However, for the Catholic press, the recurrence to African slavery had caused the greater evil.

In such a manner, reforming the religious experience of the inhabitants of Salvador was the objective not only of the ecclesiastical authorities, but also of politicians, doctors, sanitarians and newspaper editors. That is, reformulating behaviour and beliefs was the desire of the white and literate elite. Thus, religious and civil authorities united to combat against religious manifestations, especially those in which the Africans and their descendants took part. The archbishopric, by means of ordinances and texts published in religious periodicals, dictated the rules of behaviour and religious life. The public authorities edited the *Posturas Municipais* (City Postures), prohibiting the *Entrudo* (predecessor of the Carnival, of Portuguese origin), fires, games, masks and amusement in the streets, squares and remodeled avenues. It was up to the police to discipline and punish the offenders.

To the civilizers, the time had come to promote a racial whitening of Bahian society and to “deaffricanize” the streets. That is, to extinguish *batuques*, religious rites and public celebrations of blacks, or any other referential of African cultures. The beginning of this process is noticeable in attempts to expel sellers from squares and avenues that had been remodeled or newly created, and in prohibitions on religious festivals. One of the first measures of the public authorities was to modify the small commerce developed by black people, mostly black women. The sale of food on the streets and black women’s clothing (loose blouses, round skirts and guides and *balangandãs*<sup>35</sup>) were prohibited. Moreover, it was a religious problem, since the sale of Afro-Bahian food was encouraged by Candomblé, as

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<sup>30</sup> Religion in Brazil has not been defined, it has not been consolidated.

<sup>31</sup> Our religious education.

<sup>32</sup> Poor civic and religious orientation.

<sup>33</sup> Impure blood mixed with Moorish blood.

<sup>34</sup> The *caboclos* of errant life, given to the practice of fetishism, indolent, unadaptable to civilization.

<sup>35</sup> “Balangandã” is a metal ornament used in a kind of amulet bracelet, the amulets used are of animals, fruit and *fija* (an amulet in the shape of a fist with a crossed thumb and forefinger).

a means of the *Filhas-de-Santo*, initiated in the Candomblés, to obtain money for the fulfilment of their ritual obligations.

In the newspaper's editorials, the female street vendors were called "mulher de saião"<sup>36</sup> (Peixoto, 1980). The expression disqualified the poor black woman whose clothes reminded of Africa and slavery. In addition, doctors, sanitarians and hygienists had an obsessive preoccupation with the quality of food sold on the streets of Salvador. They considered the dishes of Afro-Bahian cuisine (almost always prepared on the streets and exposed in trays and wooden bowls) greasy, spicy foods, impregnated with sweat and, therefore, disease provoking.

A campaign against the habit of lighting bonfires and low fires in general during religious festivals was also carried out through the newspapers. They released a lot of smoke and sparks and thus they were considered dangerous and prohibited. On June 22, 1912, during the feasts of São João, the newspaper *Diário de Notícias* called these practices "vestígio da barbaria, da selvageria, da brutalidade, das eras coloniais, quando aqui ainda era, quase, tudo mata brava, quando aqui ainda era povoado de indígenas ferozes e de colonos também ferozes"<sup>37</sup>. With the urban reforms the "barbaric" habits would be extinguished. The newspaper said that in Rio de Janeiro no one had the audacity to "de acender uma fogueira, de atirar um buscapé"<sup>38</sup> na avenida Rio Branco"<sup>39</sup>, symbol of the modernization of that city, but in Salvador, the postures had no execution. It is true that the Code of City Postures banned lighting fires and recommended fireworks, seen as sophisticated, manufactured and used by pyrotechnics experts, but the rules were constantly transgressed (Fogos soltos, 1912: 1).

We have seen various forms of prohibitions and attempts to change Bahian culture and customs above. However, there was no unanimity as to the form of civilization that should be implemented in Bahia. From time to time, in these same newspapers, editorials defending the traditions appear. On January 5, 1912, *Diário de Notícias* criticized the politicians who let the population spend the whole year "sem lar higiênico, sem pão, sem conforto, sem alegrias salutareas, sem expansões ruidosas e comunicativas"<sup>40</sup> and, at the time of the main religious parties, they

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<sup>36</sup> Woman in round embroidered skirt; but *saião* in Portuguese is used in a pejorative manner.

<sup>37</sup> A reminder of barbarism, savagery, brutality, colonial times, when here it was, still, mostly all wild, when here it was still populated by fierce natives and also by fierce settlers.

<sup>38</sup> *Buscapé* is a piece of low fire that zigzags, usually around the legs and feet of people. The term *buscapé* in Portuguese means "seek foot".

<sup>39</sup> Light a fire, to shoot a *buscapé* on Rio Branco avenue.

<sup>40</sup> With no hygienic housing, no bread, no comfort, no healthy enjoyment, no noisy and communicative demonstrations.

wanted to replace them with European and American habits and manifestations. The editorial also stated that the people who forget their religious and patriotic festivals and their street festivities, replacing them with what they bring from foreign lands, “é um povo cujas características, se não estão mortas, ao menos estão prestes a morrer”<sup>41</sup>. The author added:

Que desapareça, cedendo lugar, o que existe de inconveniente, de triste, de mau, de atrasado, de antiprogredista, todos concordam. Porém, que se substituam os inocentes folguedos de origem indígena, por outros de igual jaez, vindos de fora, que os nossos hábitos de gente limpa e asseada, quer física, quer moralmente, venham abater os hábitos europeus e americanos, tudo sem melhor vantagem comum, sem melhor utilidade prática, isto não, não podemos, não devemos consentir<sup>42</sup> (Alegrias populares, 1912: 1).

There was no unanimity as to the limits of the reforms, not even by its defenders. As it has been stated, there were reactions against modernization, especially when it affected the interests of the laity. There was consent on the need to carry out urban interventions to improve the movement of transport; however, a large part of the population was against the demolitions of their churches, which were sacred spaces for worship and for feast days to the saints, and also for identity formation and development of bonds of sociability and mutual aid.

And what bothered the faithful most was realizing that the clergy, who were supposed to defend religious buildings, often supported the demolition causes. How was it possible to support the religious representatives who, like the Archbishop Dom Jerônimo Tomé da Silva, asked for permission to destroy centenary churches such as Corpo Santo, São Pedro Velho and the Cathedral? These churches housed innumerable brotherhoods. The cuts in part of the buildings and the demolitions displaced the associations and forced their members to seek shelter in other temples, which was not always possible.

The second part of the article *Relações do Clero com os fiéis e dos fiéis com o Clero nos tempos presentes* published in *Gazeta do Povo*, reproduced by *Revista Eclesiástica*, and mentioned before, deals, as the title indicates, with the relations between clergy and lay people. This relationship was shaken because the religious were very involved with the internal reform of the Catholic Church and with issues related to the separation of the institution from the State. Still, the laity was not

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<sup>41</sup> Are a people whose characteristics, if they are not dead yet, are at least about to die.

<sup>42</sup> That all that is inconvenient, sad, bad, delayed and antiprogredista should disappear, we all agree. However, to replace the innocent celebrations of indigenous origin, by others of equal nature, coming from outside; that our habits of clean people, whether physically or morally, come to be reduced by the European and American habits, all without better common advantage, without better practical utility, to this, we cannot, we should not consent.

free from pressures for the fulfilment of old and new rules. Also, all points to the fact that the loss of financial aid from the government had increased the pressure on the faithful to contribute with tithe, offers, donations, rents and assets controlled by the lay associations.

Furthermore, the article brings about a discussion on the wealth of the clergy. According to the writer, “impiedade”<sup>43</sup> convinced the laity that there was no need to support the priests and to finance the works of the Catholic Church, since the institution and its members were rich. Asking parishioners for the construction or remodelling of a church, for example, often turned into conflict. The author gave the example of the United States, where the priests spoke with “franqueza e Liberdade”<sup>44</sup> to the parishioners about the needs of the parish and immediately organized ways to raise funds for the works. The author ended the article with a question: “Quando veremos geralmente tais exemplos em nosso Brasil?”<sup>45</sup> (*Revista ...*, 1914: 126).

In this period of modernization, the archbishopric of Bahia intensified control over the lay associations with the aim of regulating and purifying the devotions, but it was also an attempt to pass the control of the gains over to the hands of the priests. The brotherhoods and third orders were closely watched over and strictly charged with management reports, accountability and inventories of goods. The conflicts between clergymen and laymen were motivated by expropriations and destruction of places of worship, administrative interference and by the harshness of financial collections.

The archbishop increasingly demanded the presence of the priests in the elections of the administrative board and in the management of the lay activities. It all started by insisting on recasting the commitments or regulations, which standardized the associations. A good example is what took place in the Brotherhood of Santa Cecília. A recast of the commitment was made in 1890, when the See was vacant due to the resignation of Dom Luís Antônio dos Santos. The auxiliary bishop was D. Manoel dos Santos Pereira (1890-1893). A document dated June 17, 1891, requests the approval of the Commitment. However, the brothers received an answer only one year and four months later, whereby the bishop demanded modifications mainly in the election of the administrative board, which should be presided over by a superior of the Franciscan order as the delegate of the Diocesan Prelate. A clause on the inauguration of elected members should also

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<sup>43</sup> Ungodliness.

<sup>44</sup> Frankness and freedom.

<sup>45</sup> When will we regularly see such examples in Brazil?



be added. Such inauguration should be presided over by the Provincial, who should receive the oath of the new elected members. After thirty days, the new board should report to the diocesan authority “(...) acenando-se que nenhuma Mesa poderá alienar bens ou fazer qualquer transação para a Irmandade sem prévia autorização do Prelado Diocesano, que depois de ouvir a Mesa, resolverá, como lhe parecer mais útil e conveniente à Irmandade”<sup>46</sup> (Parecer..., 1892).

There are countless cases of clerical intervention on the administration of the lay associations. The recasting of the commitment meant the authorization for the archbishopric to have the priests supervising the elections, the inauguration of the members of the administrative boards as well as the management of the goods and financial income. This frequently generated tension and conflicts between the priest and the lay brothers. The associations filed complaints through official letters, and, then, they were sent to the archbishop and rarely answered, which, at times, motivated the filing of civil suits. All these worsened relations between the clergy and the laypeople and consequently distanced the Church from its followers.

## CONCLUSIONS

The first three decades of the Republic in Brazil and Bahia were marked by political, administrative, socioeconomic, cultural and religious reforms. Even if the motives for the various groups involved were different, which brought forth ideological conflicts, there were many common interests. The politicians, doctors, military and clerics, defenders of modernization and civilization who considered those essential to the progress of the country at the turn of the twentieth century, were members of a literate elite, eager to get rid of the colonial and monarchist past.

The liberals were favourable to the implementation of the republican regime. They differed on how to make that change. Some, regarded as radicals, defended the Lay State, free from religious interference, which would take individual rights into consideration. Others, the moderates, sought to ease the losses of the Catholic Church, especially the direct participation of clerics in politics and the receiving of governmental funds, with state alliances and financial support for their works.

The Catholic Church, in turn, increased its spaces of apostolic action and its influence among the local leaderships with the creation of new dioceses. On the

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<sup>46</sup> It is stressed that no Board can dispose of goods or make any transaction to the Fellowship without prior authorization from the Diocesan Prelate, who, after hearing the Board, will decide according to what seems most useful and convenient to the Brotherhood.

other hand, the Church supported candidacy from Catholic politicians as well as their modernization projects. Thus, the most significant losses can be observed among the laity, especially those gathered in confraternities, brotherhoods and third orders. These had no decision-making power and no matter how much they opposed the church demolitions, compulsory transfers of headquarters and frequent inspections of their activities, they saw the appropriation of their sacred and immovable property. This led to the decay and dissolution of many of these groups, which, by sponsoring feasts and saint worship, had been, until the end of the Empire, the main agents of Catholicism in Brazil.

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# PLÍNIO CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA: A SCHOLAR OF REACTION, ACTIVIST OF CONSERVATISM AND CRUSADER OF COUNTERREVOLUTION

Gizele Zanotto\*

## INTRODUCTION

“I’m conscious of having fulfilled my duty because I have founded and run my glorious and dearest TFP (Tradition, Family and Property)” (Oliveira, 1996). With these words, Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira (1908-1995) showed a very calm state of mind in his will. His “glorious and dearest TFP” was founded in São Paulo, firstly as the Brazilian Society for Defending Tradition, Family and Property (later, TFP) in 1960. The entity aimed to defend Christian values, which were considered crucial for the social, political and cultural organization of Brazil and which, from its members’ point of view, had been gradually undermined for decades, creating instability and proliferation of exotic values and ideologies (mostly communists).

(The) non-profit and extra-partisan civil association of cultural, civic, philanthropic and beneficent nature”, sought to “more broadly defend and stimulate Tradition, Family and Private Property, cornerstones of Christian civilization in Brazil. Also, on the whole, it seeks to promote and animate the temporal order according to the principles of the Gospel, interpreted by the traditional Magisterium of the Church (Sociedade Brasileira de Defesa..., 1960: 1).

Plinio C. de Oliveira’s intellectual and activist action was, undoubtedly, mostly performed within TFP. However, his thought goes way beyond the limits of this entity, which was important for Brazilian society, mainly in the 1960s and 1970s. This is when they promoted several campaigns defending private property and unbreakable marriage, and also campaigns against Catholic progressivism, communism, abortion, etc. (Sociedade Brasileira de Defesa..., 1980). Plinio’s

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thought has since then inspired and guided several institutions and social movements in Brazil and other countries in the world, chiefly TFPs and sister entities that defend the traditionalist Catholic proposal which the author has systematized and given a new meaning to<sup>1</sup>. The goal of this paper is to analyze Plínio C. de Oliveira's, an activist of conservatism and a counter-revolutionary crusader, life and work. Our considerations are related to Arno Mayer's theory, which states that conservatives long to quench their thirst for power; reactionaries yearn to force back the hands of history; and counter-revolutionaries want to control the state and the government (Mayer, 1977: 76). Plínio C. de Oliveira moved among these three classifications during his life and public actions. His image, thoughts and ventures are, even nowadays, considered icons of Catholic traditionalist thinking, especially TFP, founded and directed by Plínio until his death, which represents the Catholic conservative and counter-revolutionary eagerness.

#### CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL REACTION

The first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were understood by the Catholic hierarchy as a time of regaining influence in order to increase Catholicism in all social, political and cultural environments. The main institutional boosters of the creation and fostering of ecclesial movements in reaction to positivism, liberalism, materialism, communism and atheism were the magazine *A Ordem* (The Order – 1921) and Centro Dom Vital (Dom Vital Centre – 1922), which worked for the agglutination and formation of “Catholic armies”, ready to actively participate in the apostleship of laymen guided by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. It would be by the proselytizing action of educated Catholic militants, formed in the confessional institutions of education, that the message was, later, supposed to spread. Plínio C. de Oliveira studied during this time in Colégio São Luís (1918-1925), after which he became a leader of the Catholic Youth in São Paulo, Federal Deputy for the Catholic Electoral League in the Constituent Assembly (1934-1937), president of the Archdiocesan board of Catholic Action from São Paulo (1940-1943) and director of the newspaper *O Legionário*, from Archdiocese of São Paulo (1933-1947).

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<sup>1</sup> TFP has gone through a process of international expansion, with its representation or sister entities in more than 20 countries in the world: South Africa, German, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Spain, United States of America, Ecuador, Philippines, France, India, Italy, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Uruguay.

The motto of the process of regaining the world for Catholicism was the formation of Catholic intellectual elites able to act in all social environments. In this way, a good intellectual formation was perceived as necessary, urgent and paramount. Prominent Catholic intellectuals of the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were fostered by the Catholic reactionary movement, which supported confessional social mobilization in defence of religion as an input for social, political and cultural improvements in the country. Being a Catholic intellectual – in that context – meant to be able to produce and spread culture, but also to be politically engaged in causes directly led by Catholic hierarchy or indirectly by the lay institutions that supported them.

Conceptually, the understanding of the word “intellectual” used here is derived from Sirinelli’s studies. It shows two postures that define what we call intellectual: a sociological and cultural one that comprises cultural creators and mediators (journalists, writers, teachers, scholars, etc.) and a political one, founded on the notion of direct and indirect engagement in the public life (Sirinelli, 1986: 99). For the author, both concepts are complementary and may be applied together. The understanding of the word “intellectual” as an agent and mediator gets close to the perspective of the Catholic hierarchy which fostered a Christian reaction. In this way, there is a correspondence between the necessities of the Catholic movement and the formation of the intellectuals as its legitimate and subordinate transmitters and militants – Plínio C. de Oliveira was not here any exemption to the rule, as already pointed out.

More evident doctrinal bases, in the context of Catholic intellectual reaction, were “ultramontanism” and “integralism”. Both doctrines praised the “true” faith, the expansion of the Catholic proposal of understanding the world, active performance of believers and their total obedience to hierarchy. The most evident difference between both concepts of Catholicism derive from the more critical, political, active and fierce position that defenders of integralism take and that, many times, results even in a severe criticism of their own Church, when they are considered to have deviated from the “right” understanding of Catholicism defended by traditionalists. Integralism was systematized around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as a result of a conflict inside Catholicism itself, called “uncompromising” or “ultramontane”, along with the attempts of reconciliation between the Church and modern society. After Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) published the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), the rupture of the uncompromising

group was consolidated. Around the interpretation of this text, there was an internal schism between those called “social Catholics” and the ones who the former called “integralists”. The so-called “integralism” was formed precisely from this internal rupture of the uncompromising Catholic group and its popularity rose at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, during the pontificate of Pius X (1903-1914), when this doctrine became the basic reference for pontifical policy (Pierucci, 1999: 188-189; Poulat, 1985; Rémond, 1989).

The main elements that characterize the integralist doctrine show its absolute adoption of tradition and papacy. Integralism stems from the conviction that sacred authority, literal inerrant, is the papal text and not so much the Holy Bible. The activists defend values which are threatened by decomposition due to the damaging effects of modernity contaminated by secularizing syndromes, with the Catholic Church seen as the only legitimate vector for improvement and reorganization. Thus, in order to effectively restore Christian civilization (considered as permeated and ruled by Catholic symbolism in all its instances and institutions), it is necessary to make an effort for the worshippers to regain or manipulate political power, that is, to aim at perpetuation of a tradition which is declared “unchangeable” and totalizing; the integralists stimulate – directly or indirectly – recovery of political power for religious purposes (Pierucci, 1999: 189-190). They defend the restoration of a Christian social and political order using as a model the medieval Christianity from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which had been progressively degenerated by revolutionary forces.

The ultramontane and integralist systematization of history evaluate the ascendance, peak and decline of Christianity, predicting that the evils of the present situation foreshadow the end of times and the expected Final Judgement, that will benefit worshippers and condemn the ungodly ones. Following this proposal, Plínio C. de Oliveira organized the interpretative basis of this process in a work that would become the milestone of his intellectual production, as well as the main doctrinal instrument that guide TFP and sister entities’ action: *Revolução e Contra-Revolução* (1959 – Revolution and Counter-revolution). The book was originally published in the 100<sup>th</sup> edition of the magazine *Catolicismo* (1951), an organ that agglutinated Catholic conservatives close to Plínio C. de Oliveira. Starting from the analysis that the society is corrupted by the stains of pride and sensuality, encouraging hatred for all superiority and the fall of barriers (egalitarian and liberal aspects), the author defends a necessary return to the Christian social order as the only proper solution for contemporary world (Oliveira, 1993: 13-14).



The analysis of the historical process of the rise and fall of Christianity in Plinian thought is articulated by the understanding of Revolution (with capital R) as: “a movement that aims to destroy legitimate power or order and put in its place a state of things (...) or an illegitimate power” (Oliveira, 1993: 55). The revolutionary process is considered universal, unique (the many Revolutions are part of a bigger process), total, dominant and procedural, therefore, affecting everyone, although not with the same intensity. Revolution is presented as an uprising against religion and its hierarchy (the Protestant Reformation), as a triumph of political equality (the French Revolution), as movement against social and economic inequalities (the Russian Revolution) and against moral and cultural values (the Revolutions of 1968 – the analysis of this step of Revolution was added to the original text in 1976 and was submitted to some corrections in 1992). In his considerations, Plínio C. de Oliveira asserts that the Revolution:

continues to conduct the whole society to destruction, to complete subversion of moral order, to denying God. The great target of Revolution is, therefore, the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, unfailing Master of truth, tutor of natural Law and, thus, last foundation of the very order (Oliveira, 1993: 135).

In a study of Catholic integralism, René Rémond highlights that the system of thought on which this intellectual current was based is marked by a rejection of change – according to integralists the Church, thought as the perfect society, does not have to learn with the world. Instead, it is the world that must accept the truth professed by the Church. Thus, integralism defends atemporal truths, paradigmatic moments that are idealized as models to which one wants to return to. Integralism makes the history sacred, it wants to see it restored and projected forever (Rémond, 1989: 98-100). In *Revolução e Contra-revolução* (Revolution and Counter-revolution) “Order means the peace of Christ in his realm. In other words, a Christian civilization is hierarchic, sacral, inequality and anti-liberal” (Oliveira, 1993: 93). As a process, counter-revolution must be promoted by specific agents, members of an elite properly prepared. Counter-revolution must extinguish Revolution and build a new Christianity, inspired by the Catholic Church, which is considered the soul of the counter-revolutionary process (Oliveira, 1993: 138). As some TFP’s founders emphasize:

According to Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira, the Church needed exactly to gather lay Catholic people willing to act on general society, providing them with the conscience that society was a victim of an action that forced it – sort of surreptitiously and gradually – to not be Christian anymore regarding their way of life, behaviour, thinking. An action that aimed to change traditions, laws and harm institutions. With such regimentation, he strove to help to create an opposite mentality, encouraging those who intended to react.

Therefore, the point was undertaking a crusade that pointed out the mistakes of the huge Revolution which undermined temporal society foundations and, consequently, the very own Church. At the same time, he aimed to work for a Christian culture and civilization, which Catholics must wish for (Associação dos Fundadores da TFP..., 2015: 19).

Such proposals correspond to Plínio's – essentially reactionary and restoring – understanding, as well as to Arno Mayer's descriptions of the reactionary posture that criticizes nowadays society as decadent and corrupt. By the same token, reactionaries distrust innovations, often being hostile to them but at the same time wishing for radical changes, related to going back to a romantic and mystic past. Because they defend a return to this past, they are eager to restore institutions that are considered the basis for an ideal hierarchic order with privileges: monarchy, church, property, communities (Mayer, 1977: 57-58).

The work *Revolução e Contra-revolução* (Revolution and Counterrevolution) is still nowadays regarded as a symbol of Brazilian integralist thought and also as doctrinal and the operative basis of TFPs and sister entities. Thus, Plínio's intellectual production, marked by such an understanding of time, history and acting, still serves as an important input for institutional groups or specific individuals that share this Christian, metaphysical philosophy.

## CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL ACTIVIST

According to Arno Mayer, during times of normality reactionaries seek isolation. However, in more troubled times they tend to gather with conservatives and counter-revolutionaries due to the belief that the present is better than an uncertain future. This observation seems to be extremely relevant for studies of Plínio C. de Oliveira's life and work because both his and TFP actions are coherent, reactionary, conservative and counterrevolutionary.

We consider conservatism as a conscious and functional political doctrine, acting on behalf of maintaining prerogatives and privileges. Nevertheless, conservatism also must be thought as a “particular way of experience and thinking”, as “an understanding structure of the world”, following the perspective of Karl Mannheim (1981: 108); or as a “global conception of society and a way of sociability” (Pierucci, 1999: 17). In this way, this doctrine circulates between the metapolitical field and daily relations, shaping individual or collective thoughts and actions.

Arno Mayer, while characterizing conservatives, emphasizes that their behaviour and goals are generally associated with maturity, temperamental or psychological balance, or the combination of all these factors. Conservative thinking has the nature of an articulate refusal, not a creative innovation, since it “intends to give coherence to the defence of traditional social, economic and political institutions” (Mayer, 1977: 59). During normal times, conservatives identify with the *status quo*; in times of crisis they are divided in three main groups (those who care more about their position, the ones who take advantage of the opportunity to improve their position and those who try to minimize and reduce its deterioration) and get close to those who defend an aggressive anti-revolutionary “preventive action” (Mayer, 1977: 58-60).

In their public life, both Plínio C. de Oliveira and TFP had to withdraw the great project of restoring Christianity as it was in the Middle Ages on behalf of the defence of values, laws and concepts that were being eroded by contemporary revolutionary stains. Thus, from the naïve participation in the Catholic Electoral League and the Catholic Action of São Paulo to the noisy TFP propaganda against agrarian reform, divorce, civil disarmament, TV immorality, Catholic progressiveness, communism, etc., we can see them defend some assumptions taken as fundamental for conservative thinking. For decades, TFP and Plínio’s *modus operandi* was mainly to maintain a hierarchic social structure based on fair non-egalitarian legislation, sustained by intermediate groups (unions, associations, parties, among others), led by elites that, besides being based on Christian values and moral, were supposed to be able to command, to be in charge in order not to incur in changes that destabilise the “order” based on tradition. The perspective of preserving all that was considered healthy and good was the focus of the work *Revolução e Contra-revolução* (Revolution and Counterrevolution), when the author defended:

If it is about conserving, from the present, something that is good and deserves to live, the Counterrevolution is conservative. However, if it is about perpetuating the hybrid situation we are in, suspending the revolutionary process in this phase, keeping us still as statues of salt regardless the path of History and Time, attached to what is good and bad in our century, then, Counterrevolution is not conservative (Oliveira, 1993: 97).

Similarly to the considerations published in *Revolução e Contra-revolução* (Revolution and Counterrevolution), Plínio C. de Oliveira reinforced the conservative impetus, necessary to TFP acting, during an interview to Kerry Frases, reporter at Associated Press. The topic of the conversation was the situation in Brazil in the context of political opening in the early 1980s. The founder of TFP

seized the moment to emphasize the nonpartisan position of the entity and to highlight its characteristics and *modus operandi* as follows:

TFP is an organization which is considered reactionary, but, indeed, it is conservative. It does not do anything without conserving the existing things. Lately we have published a book called “Meio século de epopéia anticomunista” (Half century of anticommunist epic). You will see what TFP has been fighting for, it has been exclusively for conserving. Conservation is the least sensational of attitudes, because changes cause sensation. Things that conserve may cause boredom (Oliveira, 1980).

Conservatives believe that every existing thing has a meaning because it shows an equal fundamental impulse of mental and spiritual growth; that there is a natural and organic development that creates and improves all human creations, be it material or not (Mannheim, 1981: 122-124). Thus, the conservative system of thought has been anchored in its sympathy for tradition, although its members are not keen to defend every idea or thing that comes from the past. “The philosophy of tradition is selective, as every philosophy is. From the past may come a healthy tradition that also may be desirable in itself” (Nisbet, 1987: 52). Such a philosophy, systematizing human actions and religious concepts, effectively becomes the theology of history, a theme directly connected to the work of many Catholic intellectuals, like Plínio C. de Oliveira himself.

Theology dedicates itself to the study of God, its nature, attributes and relationships with man and universe. The term can also refer to a system of beliefs around God or the Supreme Being. As a consequence, theology of history applies the knowledge of the divine to the explanation of meta-historical process. In the case of Christianity, such process begins with the Creation and will come to an end with the Final Judgement and the eternal salvation and/or condemnation. Historically speaking, it begins with the “fall” (original sin) and the inclusion of man in time and it will finish with the judgement and return to “no time” (Zanotto, V.05, 2009: 49-67). During man’s passing in time, his linear and irreversible course and his end are defined: remote or near. This path is considered as redemptive, full of sense, necessary for progressive sanctification of humanity, which has been corrupted since the original sin. According to Manoel, “for religious doctrines and theories, history is the condition of existence of the divine redemptive project and the existence of the very own religions” (Manoel, 2006: 61). As a result, theology of Christian history – and Plinian – is characterized by being simultaneously theological (history of divine creation), scatological (directed towards a specific end) and soteriological (aiming at salvation).

Thus, the understanding of present as something corrupted, more and more detached from God's redemptive plans for humanity, shows the discrepancies between the soteriological project (which they want to apply quickly) and the historical context experienced in modern times. As Nisbet highlighted:

The conservatives were prophets of the medieval past (...), but also guerillas of the past in almost constant attacks to – economic, political and, not less important, cultural – the modern ages. The liberals and socialists could look at their foresight of future in search of inspiration. Conservatives, knowing well the appeal of tradition, the depth of nostalgia in the human soul and men's universal fear of the torture of change, the challenge of novelty, frankly and openly based their accusation of the present in the models provided directly by the past (Nisbet, 1987: 153).

In addition to fighting on behalf of getting close to the “sacred plans” of humanity sanctification, conservatives choose to defend what they already know as able in this corrupted and corruptive present, and act towards their desire for conservation.

#### CRUSADER OF COUNTERREVOLUTION

Plínio C. de Oliveira was an exponent of counterrevolution in the country, not only as a Catholic counterrevolutionary, considering the meaning that the intellectual himself gave to the term. Plinian action – mainly through TFP - was counterrevolutionary regarding its *modus operandi*, objectives, methods and perspectives. We can see in TFP an entity that represents counterrevolution, but it is also conservative and reactionary due to specific situations of each context in which it acts. Explicitly, TFP is counterrevolutionary when in campaign against the agrarian reform in order to stop constitutional changes or against pro-agrarian reform law enforcement, considered socialist and confiscatory, acting by means of sending legislative proposals to congress or acting with a pressure group.

Considering the present as corrupting and degenerate results in the evaluation that a “purifying” action is urgently needed. During politically and socially troubled periods, such voices echo more proactively and have a broadened possibility of reception, identification and consequent mobilization of supporters. These are the most favourable moments for counterrevolutionary action. As an essential result of reactionary and conservative doctrinal heritage, these counterrevolutionary forces build and form their base of power by instigating a counter-elite. Its recruitment is based on some needs that arise at the moment, increasing fear in middle and lower classes, but, mainly, exaggerating fears and practising active mobilization on behalf of redemptive renovation (Mayer, 1977: 68-70).

Members of TFP – especially its founder – intermittently advocate for changes of attitude, mentality, perspectives, values, etc., as a way of bringing men closer to the divine plans of salvation. In this sense, the interior change is taken as crucial so that actions resulting from beliefs and values of each individual are a consequence of the relationship with soteriological Catholic doctrine. Before structural changes in politics and society, they defend individual change. It is worth saying that if a mark of counterrevolutionary action, for Arno Mayer, is exactly the conquest of power, we should have in mind that TFP seeks to conquer not precisely power itself. Through the action of Catholic counterrevolutionaries, who were imbued with the “true doctrine”, the conquest of power would take place indirectly, through the action of an elite which is lay in their means of action. The entity would be an agent, a support, an environment of formation. Political action itself would happen due to the influence of the Plinian conception of the world, by lobbying with politicians who are close to some of TFP’s ideas, by the support for projects in campaigns and publications. This perspective of individual change and positive influence on others is increased when the entity engages in public activities for promoting its ideas, signature collection for petitions, parades, caravans and other activities through which the TFP member is exposed beyond the walls of the entity, in front of the society in general.

The attitude of differentiation (posture, haircut, clothes, habits, etc.) is a mark of TFP, which, by expressing a denial of the world and the adaptation of the Church to this very world, aims to get away from any direct contact with “enemies” and with “neutral ones”. The idea disclosed inside its walls is that the members are the *chosen ones* (Pedrialli, 1985: 37,45), they form a religious elite, therefore, they are on a more sanctified level than the others. Fedeli (2000) recalls that TFP members, when in contact with the rest of the society, for example in a religious celebration, always try to differ from the others because they really believe they are different, better, more pure:

at churches, they are always isolated. They never pray with the others: they pray before, or louder, or faster. Never with the others. Regarding public actuation, it never happens along with other movements. They will only accept it if they appear as organizers and leaders of the action. The good that is done by others, TFP will not support. Only TFP, isolated, alone, is able to do perfect good (Fedeli, 2000).

During public campaigns, when the isolation was meant to be softened just in order to regiment new supporters, admirers or collaborators, the initial acting was centred on the fight against the agrarian reform, identified as the entrance door for communism in the country. Soon, anti-communist motivation was named

as a “scapegoat” for all other issues; the very own identification of the entity became something related to a society that fights against communism. Inducement of new members (especially youngsters) continuously emphasized TFP members “mission” on the struggle in defence of the West, so that the enemy – enslaving and atheist communism – would not spread and draw more countries into wretchedness (Pedriali, 1985: 19-20). Such anti-communism was exaggerated. The definition of identities was established only in two ways: free world (Good) vs. oppressive world (Evil), Light vs. Darkness, because, as Plínio C. de Oliveira emphasizes, “In the face of Revolution and Counterrevolution there are no neutrals. There may be non-combatants” (Oliveira, 1993: 103).

Mayer argues that counterrevolution gets close to revolution when they praise individual passions, collective paranoia and aggressiveness. When discussing counterrevolution the author points out that “its representatives denounce, tenaciously and angrily, all aspects of contemporary life, institutions and culture. They are very proud of having the solutions that will provide a millennium of permanent stability and safety” (Mayer, 1977: 71). In such rhetoric there is a combination of elements that emphasize the glorification of traditional actions and the accusation of those who were corrupted, subverted or even desecrated by evil, revolutionary, conspiratory actions and influences. Therefore, they end up becoming specialists in street politics (agitation or propaganda). Sometimes they engage in paramilitary activities, defending order, hierarchy, discipline, fight, they are fond of practice and organization<sup>2</sup>.

The initiatives of the entity were little promoted by press, therefore, TFP reached people through megaphones, banners, slogans, leaflets, doctrinal and didactic books, seminars and songs (Mattei, 1997: 210). Marcio Moreira Alves points out that in the street campaigns, especially during the military period, “decorous” members of TFP took part in conflicts with passers-by who opposed their point of view by adopting a critical or denying posture towards propositions presented by TFP members as the truth<sup>3</sup>. For Pedriali, former member of the entity, the attitude of TFP shows “blind, arrogant, violent and tenacious fanaticism” (Pedriali, 1985: 13). By defending the re-

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<sup>2</sup> Although TFP has had experience with military organization, its fight bypasses the paramilitary issue. Anyway, Krischke provides us with interesting signs on this matter when he states that TFP was authorized to act as a paramilitary group in the context of dictatorship regime, making repression more dynamic and broader. According to the author, “this context was favourable so that reactionary groups like «Tradition, Family and Property» were authorized to be organized in a paramilitary way and get involved in ostensive political campaign, on behalf of «Christian tradition»” (Krischke, 1979: 89).

<sup>3</sup> According to the author “due to their technical knowledge on judo, their weapons and police protection, they frequently get involved in fights that, later, will be put in the list of achievements of the movement as many other victories against the devil” (Alves, 1979: 230).

construction of Christian civilization – resulting from the Plinian reactionary perspective about its conservative and counterrevolutionary performance and about Catholic integralist doctrine – TFP members based their actions on re-conquering spaces that were lost by the monopolist pre-republican Church, often speaking of the increasing influence of evil inside the Church itself (Oliveira, 1993: 168).

Pierucci reinforces this point when he emphasizes that since the consolidation of integralism, during Pope Pius X's pontificate, those actions were based on continuous surveillance against the one considered internal and external enemies of Catholicism. According to the author, integralism has become a structure that welcomed traditionalists, ultraconservatives, orthodoxes and all those against the modern age. They often ended up creating secret organizations and conspiratorial little convents. Integralists were willing to intensify the offensive against "internal enemies" by urgently denouncing, chasing and slandering those who "deviate from the path" by attempting to stop any change that would be considered a threat to Catholicism's integrity<sup>4</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, Arno Mayer's classification contemplates differences in purposes and actuation for the three groups we tackled above, but also presents their convergences, indicating that reactionaries, conservatives and counterrevolutionaries, due to the cultural relation presented, many times mingle and blend. We also understand that Mayer values fluidity and variation of the limits that separate the three groups. We reinforce that both Plínio C. de Oliveira and TFP have traces that are present in more than one of the classifications, which is a sign that this typology becomes an interpretative, non-rigid tool that helps understanding of reality, without exhausting it<sup>5</sup>.

We note that the political and cultural proposal defended by TFP is essentially reactionary – Plinian – and it aims at restoring the aristocratic political power and prevalence of Catholic doctrine. However, its actions in Brazilian society are very close to conservatism. Such a situation, which seems contradictory at first

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<sup>4</sup> "The battle becomes obsessively internal, self-referred; the surveillance happens first inwards, even if the price to pay for that is internal exclusion, or excommunication (as in the case of French archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and former bishop from Campos, RJ, Dom Castro Mayer, who was excommunicated in 1988, as the leader of TFP and the self-called «traditionalist clergy» in Brazil)" (Pierucci, 1999: 190).

<sup>5</sup> We emphasize that besides the quality of Mayer's work, theoretical and methodological advances available nowadays have broadened much further substantially the research area and perspectives. It does not mean, however, that we do not value it. an.



sight, perfectly matches with Mayer's analysis and with the very ideology elaborated by Plínio, who continuously defended the need for conservative/counterrevolutionary action against Revolution<sup>6</sup>. In practice it meant endorsing doctrinal orientation as well as conservative mobilization that enabled keeping important pillars of the state and the society defended by integralist, especially: order, hierarchy, property, tradition, and Catholic religion.

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<sup>6</sup> According to the author: "The modern age of Counterrevolution is not about closing one's eyes nor making pacts with the Revolution. On the contrary, it is about knowing the Revolution in its invariable essence and, acutely fighting it here and there, with intelligence and planning, using all the licit means and all the sons of the Light" (Oliveira, 1993: 92).

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# THE RELIGIOUS MARKET IN POLAND – CHOSEN ASPECTS. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

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The relationship between religion and the market or more broadly, the economy and economic processes, is the sphere of analyses within social sciences, which has a well-established tradition, set in two interpretative trends, emphasising the dialectical nature of this relation (Stachowska, 2004: 104). The first one is connected with M. Weber's concept, who indicated the role of religion in economic development, whereas this influence was especially visible in the ascetic Protestantism. The doctrinal assumptions of Protestantism, by affirming certain norms of work and life, such as frugality, methodicalness, and consumer restraint, being above all a form of undertaken efforts aimed at achieving salvation, contributed not only to shaping a specific form of work ethic, but also to capital accumulation, resulting in initiating specific economic processes. In other words, religion creates – according to this perspective – grounds for the emergence of given attitudes and pro-economic behaviours, which involve changes on a macrosocial scale. Weber's vantage point reveals that religion can determine economic behaviours, leading to the emergence of certain norms, favouring the development of capitalism (Weber, 1994).

However, the second dimension of the analyses is set in reverse dependence, emphasising the influence of market mechanisms on the religious sphere, namely the adaptation of economic rules and using mercenary criteria by religious organizations in their activity. We can view the sources of such a perspective in A. Smith's concept, who framed the scope of the "economics of religion" quite accurately, at the same time emphasising the universality of the market rules of supply and demand, determining strategies and forms of action not only of secular,

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but also religious organisations. It is because they implement programmes guaranteeing the achievement of a profitable position on the market, according to the conditions they operate in, that is either in a pluralistic or a monopolistic situation. Therefore, the assessment of orientation determines models of activity of these specific organisations, which are oriented towards eschatological aims, but at the same time they are driven by a maximisation of benefits and care for their own interests, implementing strategic solutions, ensuring them optimal functioning conditions (Smith, 2013: 454-476).

Elements of this interpretative perspective appeared in a theoretical trend, developing dynamically since the 1980s within American sociology due to R. Stark and W.S. Bainbridge<sup>1</sup>. The spectrum of religious life, encompassing *inter alia* various forms of religiousness and commitment, as well as the circumstances of conversion and affiliation with religious organisations, together with their activity in the conditions of competition or monopoly, or quasi-monopoly was compared by them to the economic sphere, thus indicating analogy and coherence of the strategies employed by believers or religious organisations with those emerging in the commercial spectrum (Stark, Bainbridge, 1980; 1985; 1987; 2000). This “innovative”<sup>2</sup> and a bit provocative approach appeared as a characteristic “interpretative *panacea*” (Stachowska, 2004: 104), allowing for the consumption of the complexity of the phenomena and processes in the religious sphere heuristically, towards which traditional theoretical patterns, and especially the secularization one, seemed explicatively incompetent. At the same time this perspective provoked a wave of criticism, generally connected, *inter alia*, with the difficulty or rather inaccuracy concerning the association of the assumptions of the economic model with behaviours and activities undertaken in the sacred sphere (Hadden, 1995; Wallis, Bruce, 1984; Chaves, Cann 1992; Gorski, Chaves, 2001; Bruce, 2011).

However, this interpretative vantage point identified as a “new paradigm” (Warner 2005: 18-62) is defined as a “theory of religious economy” or a “theory of the religious market”, which in its most general perspective assumes that the religious sphere is subject to – similarly to other, secular dimensions – economic

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<sup>1</sup> The trend of analyses connected with this interpretative perspective has been omitted in this place. It was developed on the economic level, where the first work in this cycle was an article by C. Azzi, R. Ehrenberg entitled *Household Allocation of Time and Church Attendance* (1975).

<sup>2</sup> This concept is in the interparadigmatic nature, and due to this fact, it seems somewhat eclectic, since it combines *inter alia* elements of the theory of social exchange and the teaching theory (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000: 25).

laws of supply and demand, as well as the supremacy of rational choice and maximisation of benefits. As a result of its implementation in the sacred sphere and referring to economic terminology, believers are identified as consumers, who in peregrinations in the religious spectrum and various choices are guided by rationality, optimisation, searching for satisfying propositions or offers. However, religious organisations are treated as companies or enterprises, which offer their customers specific “religious goods”, aiming at achieving or maintaining the same consumer potential as before, and thus gaining market advantage. Clergymen, in turn, are perceived in the managerial categories, or even as a specific “sales network”, which by referring to varied marketing and advertising techniques, stimulates, encourages and acquires consumers (Stark, Finke, 2000a: 17). In other words, the economic rules allow for explication of the processes occurring in the religious sphere, as well as activities of religious organisations and believers’ behaviours, where both mentioned segments are driven by the maximisation of profits and striving for achieving a “beneficial factor of exchange” (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000: 79). The network of exchange and transactions between believers and “religious companies” forms the area of the religious market, which can have – analogically, similarly to its secular counterpart – an unregulated nature with a different level of pluralisation and orientation towards the competition, or a regulated character, favouring the monopolisation of this sphere.

The first of the aforementioned forms of the market, referring to its unregulated form, is connected with a multitude of “religious companies” competing against each other. They offer consumers a diverse palette of “goods” and “services”, from which believers choose “religious producers” and their offers, according to their preferences, governed by a calculation, ensuring the optimal result of the profit and loss statement. Peregrinations and choices made by believers revive the religious sphere, since the differentiation of their needs and expectations induces “religious companies” to promote and advertise religious messages as well as implement elaborate techniques to attract believers, which becomes a factor dynamising the appearing activity and participation in the religious sphere. In other words, the pluralism of religious organisations, which compete against each other for customers, stimulates the religious revival or: the mechanism of competition in the pluralised sacred sphere is becoming the “driving force” for religious participation (Stark, Finke, 2000: 200-201). However, the pluralism of religious organisations without competition does not contribute to the motivation of religious activity, as R. Stark and R. Finke emphasise, since the structure of such

a market assumes the existence of a relatively stable division of consumer segments, referring, *inter alia*, to tradition, which legitimises a certain pattern of affiliation and reproduction of religion, limiting the believers' predilection for changes and making choices stimulating the functioning of the religious market (Stark, Finke, 2000: 202).

However, a monopoly position in the "market of spiritual goods" is difficult to maintain due to diversified needs of consumers, which create a favourable context for the competition to appear on the fringes of the dominating religious organisation. It induces the monopolist to undertake various "safeguarding" activities or rather such that strengthen its current position in the market. Hence religious entities form an "alliance with the state" (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000: 123), which by having "cultural coercive measures" at their disposal, are able to provide a privileged market position for a given religious institution (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000: 123, Stark, Finke, 2000: 199, 228-230).

The covenant established between the state and a religious organization or rather a denomination is of a dialectic character and offers benefits to both parties. The doctrine-based norms instilled by religious specialists, promote pro-social attitudes, constituting social order, which contributes to the prosperity and wellbeing of citizens and is obviously in the best interest of the state and the specific that is "favoured" religious entity as it leads to obtaining additional prizes (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000: 128-130). A religious entity "legitimizes" the measures taken by the state that responds by enhancing its privileged position, which lets them obtain specific benefits and profits. While this formula of "co-operation" appears – at least potentially – effective, it is still subject to some risk related to the possibility of instrumentalization and abusing such a religious entity by the state. The government maintaining control over cultural coercive measures, enhancing its sphere of influence, may tend to take over all benefits and restrict the role of a given religious organization, which safeguards itself by promoting and instilling to its believers such norms and values which may stop this potential repressiveness from the state (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000:130). Hence, the monopolist implements such a solution which results in a beneficial rate of exchange.

The covenant established with the state though profitable for a religious organization, yet it is still unable – according to this approach – to fully protect or entirely safeguard the market of spiritual goods from the emergence of additional suppliers of religious goods and services (Stark, Finke, 2002: 37) and thus establish autonomous functioning of the monopoly. The source of the emergence of

pluralism on the edges of a dominating religious entity involves, as signalled before, various needs of the believers frequently unmet by the main supplier, but also lower quality services he provides, decreased interest in the recipients and imposing prices (Stark, 1992: 262:263, Iannaccone, 1991: 159-160). Besides, this approach involves conflicts and disputes related with a struggle for power and benefits, which emerge in the sphere of the dominating producer of religious goods, and precisely among religious specialists, aiming at a specific level of control over the network of distribution, which may lead to potential divisions, fractures and even schisms of various levels of innovation (Stark, Bainbridge, 2000: 163-167). The forming sphere of alternative or rather competitive companies utilizes consumer segments that remain unsatisfied, discouraged and seeking attractive spiritual and life proposals relatively adequate to the preferences, thus making the religious sphere more diversified due to the elements of emerging pluralism, which poses no threat to the monopolist in the dimension of potential competition, but still creates potential possibilities of choice for religious customers susceptible to changes and new investments, assumed to guarantee expected prizes and benefits.

Briefly outlined factors and determinants of the “religious economy”, referring to the activity of religious organisations both in the conditions of a regulated and an unregulated market indicate – from an outside perspective – a certain similarity of undergoing processes and ways of functioning of the organisation in the religious and commercial sphere. It is because religion, faith, religious commitment and conversions are interpreted – from this viewpoint – from the angle of consumer choices, which condition forms of activity and strategies of “religious companies”, which according to market challenges implement various programmes and solutions, making it possible to achieve a competitive advantage in the market. Hence, religious revival – according to this perspective – is stimulated by a range of various measures aimed at obtaining and maintaining the potential of customers, the potential which will only approve of the experiments and risk involved as along the result of the transactions with the new supplier outweighs the costs incurred. The chance for increased religious involvement and revival is the level of pluralism and competition between religious entities encouraging organizations to innovate and improve their offer, which is perfectly exemplified *inter alia* by the US religious market (Stark, 1992: 263). A different character is presented by a market with a dominating religious entity supported by the government and thus restricting the emergence of competition. Nevertheless, the scale and differentiation of spiritual needs of individuals and the contemporary socio-

cultural diversity, stimulate the emergence of axiological offers and proposals at least partially coherent with consumers' preferences, hence contributing to weakening the supremacy of a privileged religious organization, which due to its position, on many occasions neglects the needs of customers. This results in the fall of their involvement which is particularly noticeable in Scandinavian countries. This approach particularly highlights the negative consequences of the predilections of monopolistic religious companies and state interventionism in this field, both of which enhance the stagnation of its outer symptoms rather than develop and maintain religiosity. The level of religious needs is not declining, it only offers a chance for managing it, which may be utilized either by new religious movements or sects or by attempts to modify the strategy by a dominating religious organization.

An exemplification of the adaptational strategies implemented by religious organisations with monopolistic aspirations – at the same time being a form of reaction to the challenges appearing in our times – can be the religious sphere in Poland. It is distinguished by the dominating position of the Catholic Church, which since the political transformation in 1989 has been gaining cooperation with the state in many dimensions. This should – in accordance with the presented perspective – weaken its influence and the effectiveness of evangelising and pastoral initiatives, thus resulting in a decrease in the activity and religious involvement of the believers, although the religious sphere still emanates a significant religious liveliness and openness as well as a specific susceptibility to innovations and projects of sacred provenance.

## THE RELIGIOUSNESS OF POLISH SOCIETY

The Polish religious sphere in the context of an economic model of religion seems to be unique, since despite the functioning of the dominating religious organisation, oriented monopolistically with a slightly outlined segment of other denominations on the fringes, still emanates a significant liveliness of faith and religiousness. These determinants should – according to the previously presented assumptions – favour passivity and a decline in religious dynamism and not the observed vitality, which could indicate a certain incoherence of the economic perspective with tendencies appearing in the religious market in contemporary Po-



land. However, the specificity of native religious liveliness seems to be set in historically determined factors, shaping the position of the Catholic Church<sup>3</sup>, but also appears as an implication of its present-day, relatively effective, adaptation to the market requirements and searching for strategic solutions, referring to marketing techniques, favouring the stimulation of activity of consumer potential. Hence, the picture of religious economics in Polish conditions will be outlined by resorting to three dimensions: firstly the religious structure, secondly selected aspects of religious involvement and thirdly undertaken initiatives and innovations indicating a clear specialisation trend aimed at specific niches, emerging within the dominating religious organisation, which at least partially explain the observed vitality of religion with the symptoms of the “consumer” approach among its religious customers.

The denominational structure in Poland is – as it has already been emphasised – clearly monopolised by the Catholic Church, although at the same time the manifestations of functioning of slightly outlined pluralism are noticeable, which are not competitive with the dominating religious organisation. The data from the census conducted in 2011 highlight the mentioned shape of the “religious market” and indicate that 87.58% of the Polish society belongs to the Catholic Church. The following denominational identifications were subsequent: The Orthodox Church – 0.41%; Jehovah’s Witnesses – 0.36%; Evangelical – Augsburg Church – 0.18%, Greek Catholic Church – 0.09%; Pentecostal Church – 0.07%; Old – Catholic Mariavite Church – 0.03%; Polish Catholic Church – 0.02%; Christian Baptist Church – 0.02% and other religious organisations – 0.12%. At the same time 2.41% of the Polish population did not belong to any denomination, while 7.1% did not reveal their religious affiliation. This data indicates a significant denominational homogeneity in Poland, since 87.7% of the Polish society is connected with Catholicism, while a slight proportion of the population identifies itself with Eastern Christianity (0.4%) and Protestantism (0.3%) (GUS, 2015: 93-95)

An analogical configuration of the “religious market” with the leading share of the Catholic Church is shown in church data from 2015, according to which there were 92% of Catholics at the time and 91.9% a year earlier (*Annuarium*

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<sup>3</sup> The Catholic Church before 1989, in the socialist period, was in opposition to the authority of the time, thereby forming a quite tense, not to say, conflicting relationship between the state and the Church, which had a motivating effect on the involvement of the believers. It is because the conflict situation might substitute mechanisms characteristic of the competitive pluralism, favouring an increase in religious involvement (Stark, Finke, 2000: 202, 239-240).

*Statisticum Ecclesiae in Polonia. AD 2017*, 2017: 4; *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae in Polonia. AD 2015*, 2015: 4). To compare, in 2010 this figure amounted to 96.21%, 95.84% in 2000 and 95.5% in 1995 (*Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae 2010*, 2012: 72; *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae 2000*, 2002: 71, *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae 1995*, 1997: 66). Although the quoted juxtaposition indicates a slight decrease in the proportion of Catholics at the turn of two decades, it does not change the previous denominational structure of the Polish society, and therefore the position of the Church, which seems to be rather stable, not only in the mentioned dimension, but also in the context of the organisational potential. The data concerning administrative units and staff resources or rather apostolic resources can be an exemplification of this. According to the data of *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* from 2015, there were 10,248 parishes of the Latin rite in Poland, 9,551 of which were diocesan and 649 monastic. For comparison, a year earlier the total number of parishes of the Latin rite was 10,058, including 9,383 diocesan parishes, and 627 monastic. However, the apostolic potential in 2015 included *inter alia* 162 bishops, 27,978 incardinated priests, and 5,684 monastic priests, 1,014 monks and 20,008 nuns (*Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae in Polonia. AD 2017*, 2017: 5, 9). The year before these resources were the following: 148 bishops, 24,724 incardinated priests, 5,773 monastic priests, 9,222 monks and 20,355 nuns (*Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae in Polonia. AD 2015*, 2015: 9). The potential for 2010 was as follows: 133 bishops, 23, 224 diocesan priests, 6,513 monastic priests, 1,075 monks and 21,892 nuns (*Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae 2010*, 2012: 99). The year 2000 figures were the following: 121 bishops, 21,280 diocesan priests, 6,178 monastic priests, 1,297 monks and 23,945 nuns (*Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae 2000*, 2002: 96). The presented data emphasise the organisational potential of the Church in Poland, profoundly influenced by the pontificate of John Paul II, which is reflected by the increased number of clerical students in diocesan and monastic seminaries in the 1980s. For example, in 1972 the total number of seminarians stood at 3,987, including 3,012 diocesan and 975 monastic seminarians. The number of seminarians for 1980 already amounted to 6,101 including 4,410 diocesan and 1,691 monastic ones. Four years later, in 1984, the total number was as follows – 7,730 including 5,355 diocesan and 2,375 monastic seminarians. In 1988 this number reached 8,457, including 5,771 diocesan and 2,686 monastic seminarians (*Kościół katolicki w Polsce 1918-1990*, 1991: 33). The first years of the next decade are also marked by the popularity of this professional specialization, as in 1992 the number of seminarians in Poland amounted to 8,112, including 5,367 diocesan and 2,754 monastic ones. However,

since 1994 the number of vocations has been slowly but gradually declining, as that year saw 7,356 seminarians including 4,607 diocesan and 2,749 monastic seminarians (Kościół katolicki w Polsce 1991-2011, 2014: 144). The subsequent period i.e., 1996 to 2010 saw between 6,954 and 4,662 seminarians to finally reach a level lower than in early 1970s, as that year was marked by as few as 4,607 seminarians.

In this context, the contemporary significant organizational potential of the Catholic Church appears as the effect of previous vocations influenced by the pontificate of JP II and at least partially as an emanation of dislike towards the ideological conditions of the era of socialism, in a certain extent covering its unkind policy towards the sacral sphere (Baniak, 2009: 149)<sup>4</sup>. However, the loss of interest in this religious profession dating from the early 1990s signals a likely future weakening of the resources and the position of the dominating religious organization, both of which may modify the shape of the religious sphere in local conditions. The factor that enhances this process is the system transformation which through political system changes resulted in a number of modifications in socio-cultural sphere, including the dimension of religion increasingly affected by liberalism, democratisation, pluralism and consumption, promoting relativisation of values and consequently the confrontation of traditional axiological structures with the postmodern ideological offer, promoting the styles of life affirming individualism and hedonism<sup>5</sup>.

The market and consumption started to slowly affect the sphere of *sacrum*, where consumers perform analogical peregrinations and choices similar to the secular sphere of commerce, which makes religious institutions seek and apply effective tools for influencing, activating and stimulating the involvement of the faithful. Religious customers are then lured by a number of more or less attractive proposals coming from the sphere of commerce, which through its marketing narrations permanently forecasts some form of rehabilitation or metamorphosis and promises unusual experiences and feelings, frequently imitating heavenly visions of happiness, available immediately without any major restrictions. Hence, in Poland the Church must compete not so much with other religious organizations, though their number has increased since the systemic transformation and the es-

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<sup>4</sup> J. Baniak emphasises that “decreased number of the candidates for priests admitted to Higher Theological Seminary” has been recorded since 1988 (Baniak, 2009: 149; Baniak, 1997, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> See more about the influence of transformation on the religious dimension among the others: J. Mariański 1991, 2011; Borowik, Doktor, 2001.

establishment of the market of ideas, as 2015 saw 196 registered churches and religious associations with 178 operating ones compared to the period 1980 – 1989 with 23 registered and 22 operating entities (*Wyznania religijne...*, 2016: 10)<sup>6</sup>, but rather with secular proposals, encouraging and tempting with attractiveness and a seductive aura. Though the socio-cultural significance of the Church, its role in the history of Poland and the present pastoral and evangelistic efforts are behind the fact that religion has become a stable element of Polish tradition and identity, still the pressure of present culture stimulating aspirations mainly aimed at satisfying desires at once, succumbing to ephemeral temptations, pursuit of success, pleasure, comfort, affirmation of “I” and “me” are the reasons why religious proposals covering the orders, renunciations, sacrifices and self-control and the postponed future “reward” appear to be if not less appealing but perhaps not fully satisfying for all and therefore more attractive.

Consequently, Polish religiosity is characterised by dialectics. On the one hand, it is clear to see the socio-cultural bonds of Poles with tradition and specific religious patterns, including the rites of passage, in particular the sacrament of baptism<sup>7</sup>. In 2014 the percentage of administered baptisms compared to the birth rate amounted to 93.64%, in 2010 – 94.18%, in 2000 – 99.23%<sup>8</sup>. The increasing prevalence of this rite of passage is then clear, with a slight downward trend that though does not diminish the massive character of the sacrament, yet may still signal upcoming possible transformations of the religious structure in our country (Mariański, 2011: 21; also *ibidem* Baniak, 2013). On the other hand, there are visual symptoms of distancing from the institutional form of religion, signalling the changes in the religious preferences of consumers. It could be exemplified by the figures from the Institute of Statistics of the Catholic Church concerning the attendance in Sunday services, as in 2015 the *dominantes* ratio amounted to 39.8%. The figure for 2014 stood at 39.1% similarly to the 2013 year data but in 2012 the number of regular Sunday service participants was 40%. To compare, a decade before, in 2005, this figure amounted to 45% and in 2000 – 47.5%. The

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<sup>6</sup> The religious division of religious organisation existing in 2015 was as follows: the number of Catholic entities – 10; Orthodox – 3; Protestant – 66; Islamic – 5, Jewish – 5; oriental – 17, others – 20 as well as various and unclassified denominations – 52.

<sup>7</sup> Though the assessment of the importance of particular sacraments indicates a slightly higher importance attributed by Poles to the religious funeral ceremony compared to baptism or church wedding, still it is the baptism that highlights not only the wish to reproduce the faith, but also designates a religion’s role in the indigenous identity. According to the CBOS survey in 2015 the religious frame for funerals was found significant by 85% of the surveyed. The rate of declarations for baptism amounted to 83%, 81% for church wedding (Kowalczyk, 2015: 9).

<sup>8</sup> Own calculations based on ISKK figures, *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae* 2010 i 2000 and GUS data.

1990s saw this figure between 43.1% and 50.3%<sup>9</sup>. So over two decades the rate of religious practices decreased by 10.5 pp.

A similar tendency is presented in a survey by the CBOS opinion polling centre according to which 50% of the surveyed participated in regular religious practices. Irregular activity was declared by 38% of respondents, while the number of non-participants was 12% (Boguszewski, 2017: 3). Analogous percentage of declarations indicating at least a weekly participation in liturgy is presented by the CBOS surveys of 2014 and 2013 where the level of responds concerning irregular attendance amounted to 37% and 38% accordingly and the responds concerning non – attendance stood at: 13% and 12%. In previous years regular attendance in church rituals was slightly higher and was as follows: 2012 – 51%; 2011-52%; 2010 – 53%; 2009 - 54%; 2008 – 55%; 2007 – 57%; 2006 – 56%; 2005 – 58% (Boguszewski, 2015b: 4). The period of 11 years saw the number of regular church goers decreased by 8pp, with an increased number of irregular practitioners and also non-practitioners. These figures demonstrate a distancing of religious consumers from the dominating religious institution, which may be interpreted dialectically. On the one hand, it may be treated as the implications of the functioning of a monopoly which, conscious of its position and above all its substantial durability and prevalence of faith reproduction patterns, related to reception of the sacrament of baptism prefers the formula of pastoral care based on rituals and sacraments (de Farias, 1993: 140), *eo ipso* acquiescently approaches its consumers and implements solutions which incompletely stimulate their religious involvement. On the other hand, the scale and the range of the diversification of preferences and the aspiration of customers are so extensive that one entity seems to have difficulty in meeting such needs effectively. Moreover, the competition emerging from the entities offering numerous proposals not necessarily of sacral background gives rise to an alternative market luring and taking over the emerging unmet expectations. At the same time, the element enhancing this tradition is found in the contemporary culture promoting the attitudes of pleasure and unrestrained hedonism, which externally appear more appealing and attractive than the apologetics of renunciations and self-control promoted by the religious doctrine.

The religious preferences of Poles correspond with this trend, in which their faith is emphasised, yet it is becoming more and more oriented to individualisation and some sort of selectivity. According to a survey conducted by the Centre for

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<sup>9</sup> Data of the Institute of Statistics of the Catholic Church, source: [www.iskk.pl](http://www.iskk.pl).

Public Opinion Research (CBOS) in 2016, 93% of respondents declare themselves to be believers, including 8% who are deeply religious, and only – or as many as – 8% who identify themselves as non-believers. Two years earlier the percentage was similar, as both believers and deeply religious people amounted to 92%, where the second group constituted 8%, while the proportion of non-believers was 8%. By comparison, in 2010 the diversification of answers was as follows: believers – 84%; deeply religious – 10%; non-believers – 6%. However, in 2005 the level of declarations representing faith reached 96%, including 12% of deeply religious people, while 4% were non-believers. This data indicates a slight decrease in the percentage of believers, which is especially evident with reference to the group of deeply religious people, at the same time the percentage of non-believers is noticeably increasing. Despite these minor changes in the dimension of the self-declaration of faith throughout the decade, there has been a significant fall in the attitudes expressing faith and following the Church instructions, after all in 2014 the percentage of respondents demonstrating such a form of commitment amounted to 39%, while in 2005 – 66%. At the same time there has been an increase in declarations indicating faith perceived individually, since in 2014 there were 52% of such answers, while in 2005 – 32% (Boguszewski, 2015b: 6)<sup>10</sup>. Additionally, selectivity in the believers' approach to doctrinal contents is noticeable. For instance, in 2015 the faith in: prayers being heard by God was declared by 82% of the respondents; heaven and Judgement Day – 70%; immortality of the soul – 69%; afterlife – 66%; the Resurrection – 62%; being marked by original sin – 59% and hell – 56%. Alongside the ideas of Christian provenance, extra-religious elements appear, since Poles also believe in: destiny (66%), the idea that animals have souls (36%) as well as reincarnation (30%) (Boguszewski, 2015: 10).

A dimension partially complementing the image of the Polish religious dimension mentioned here, reflecting somewhat symptomatically the level of interest among the faithful in the sacred offer, can be their involvement in religious movements and associations, to which only 4% of Poles belonged in 2016, while 96% were not connected with them (Boguszewski, 2017: 4). By comparison, in 2014 the percentage of people who belonged to the aforementioned associations and movements amounted to 9% CBOS (Boguszewski, 2014: 5). Three years earlier, that is in 2011, the percentage of the members was 7%, similarly to 2008. Such participation characterises first of all people attending church a few times a week (35%) and the deeply religious (19%). Those who are interested in this

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<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the percentage of non-believers increased by 4%.

offer choose participation in: rosary groups (52%); the Light-Life Movement, Oasis and Domestic Church (11%); Catholic Charismatic Renewal (6%); Neocatechumenal Way and the church choir (3% each). However, the groups which are mentioned less often are lectors and altar servers, Caritas, the evangelising community, Catholic Action (2% each), Bible study groups and academic pastoral care (1% each), as well as other communities, such as the Knights of the Immaculata, the Association of Catholic Families, with which 23% of those involved in Church movements and associations are connected altogether (Boguszewski, 2017: 4-6, 8)<sup>11</sup>. The affiliation with movements and associations indicates a relatively moderate interest in this particular offer, especially in the context of the widespread nature of Catholicism in Poland, thereby indicating a rather exclusive than mass form of this sacred proposition. Not very significant popularity of this kind of initiatives may be conditioned *inter alia* by a certain lack of coherence between the needs and expectations of the faithful as well as ineptitude in the field of *public relations*, which means popularising information on such forms of activity in the religious sphere (Mariański, 2013: 231). However, these undertakings can be treated as an attempt to “meet the need for new forms of religiousness and spirituality”, as J. Mariański emphasises (Mariański, 2011: 253), thereby winning over the laity and developing in it – according to J. Mariański (2013: 224) – a new type of Catholic and a feeling of community.

The briefly presented specificity of the religiousness of the Polish society or, more broadly, the functioning of the religious market exposes a significant denominational homogeneity of the Polish religious sphere, set in the affiliative dimension, which is culturally reproduced and strengthened by the native tradition, cultivating rites and rituals, such as for instance the baptism ceremony, which have the form of a mass phenomenon (Mariański, 2011: 20). Despite those external manifestations of monolithic nature, as I. Borowik emphasises, the internal diversification of Catholics is becoming noticeable, indicating inter-confessional pluralism (Borowik, 2008: 23; Borowik, Dyczewska, Litak, 2010: 130), where different consumer segments or rather groups of Catholics emerge, presenting specific types of religiousness (Borowik, 2008: 24). Therefore, in this sphere we can encounter *inter alia* the Church and consequential orientation connected with a regular participation in liturgy as well as the coherence of faith and ethical

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<sup>11</sup> According to the data collected by the Institute for Catholic Church Statistics in 2006 there were 337 movements and communities in dioceses, in which more than 2.5 million members were involved (*Wykaz parafii...*, 2006: 19).

convictions (Borowik, 2008: 24); “catechismal” or folk (Borowik, 2008: 24), referring to the cultural and traditionalistic aspect, where faith is reproduced in the form of a ritualised cultural pattern, devoid of deeper thought (Borowik, 2008: 25; Borowik, Dyczewska, Litak, 2010: 131); and the last one, an indifferent attitude, defined also as “nominal”, characterised by distancing yourself from the sacred sphere, manifesting itself most generally by selectivity in the approach to the dogmas of faith, festive participation in liturgy, indifference or even criticism towards the Church and its teachings (Borowik, Dyczewska, Litak, 2010: 131; Borowik, 2008: 24).

Another typology indicating the establishment of particular trends within Catholicism is the division proposed by M. Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, which first of all indicates the presence of the “ideological religiousness”, focused on the messages of Father T. Rydzyk and Radio Maryja (Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, 2004: 94); secondly, the trend of the so-called open Catholicism, integrating the environment of the Catholic intelligentsia, inspired by the intellectual tradition of J. Tischner; thirdly, the segment of “committed Catholics”, formed by members of movements, communities and associations functioning in the Church, which revive the religious sphere; and fourthly, the pillar of “Sunday Catholics”, identified with cultivating traditional religiousness, which is in the character of cultural convention, thus assuming the “lukewarm”, unreflective and rather superficial form (Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, 2004: 94). As M. Libiszowska-Żółtkowska points out, the last group is the most numerous among the mentioned ones and at the same time the most susceptible to the emergence of agnostic and atheistic attitudes, thus requiring specific pastoral and evangelizing initiatives, delaying possible changes in preferences or outlooks on life (Libiszowska-Żółtkowska, 2004: 94).

The quoted typologies emphasise – referring to J. Mariański’s expression – the “stratification of Catholicism” (Mariański, 2013: 275) in Polish conditions, which reflects – at least partially – the scale of changes occurring in the religious sphere under the influence of postmodern trends, where *inter alia* the market and economy determine lifestyles to a large degree, including their influence on the shape and form of contact with the sacred. As a result, the emerging variety of attitudes, *eo ipso* the level of religious commitment, refers to the division of consumers into segments, gathering potential clients who have specific habits, tastes and preferences, which derives from the area of commerce. Applying the economic terminology and market mechanisms to the sacred sphere might raise doubts, or even controversy connected above all with the deprecating significance of such associations, which reduce the contact with God or, more broadly, transcendence as well as religious involvement and activeness of the believers, to the



structure of rational (mercenary) choices and transactions. However, this perspective indicates – at least partially – the scale of preference and the believers’ interest in religious sacred offers, together with framing the effectiveness of the evangelising forms and activities undertaken so far. These, in turn, are fundamentally set in the formula of mass pastoral work (Mariański, 2011: 254; Piwowarski, 2000: 12), although innovative undertakings are implemented, such as for instance: the annually organised “Night of Confessionals”<sup>12</sup> (Stachowska, 2012: 50-51), the following religious events: “The Station: Jesus”<sup>13</sup>, meetings in Lednica (Góra, Grzegorzczak, 2001), or initiatives, such as: a confession arranged on the phone (*Spowiedź na telefon...*, 2016), an online chat with a priest, spiritual support for almost 24 hours a day<sup>14</sup>, an online retreat<sup>15</sup>, or Masses for singles<sup>16</sup>, which are to influence the religious revival. However, in the context of the data presented earlier, the results of such initiatives seem rather restrained, which shows the scale of challenges for the Church, permanently searching for strategies, relatively effective and adequate to contemporary requirements. Even so, among numerous pastoral and evangelizing initiatives, which are introduced, there are undertakings indicating not only a significant degree of market specialisation, but also coherence with the needs and expectations of the faithful.

#### “POLISH TELEVANGELISM”

Media initiatives, undertaken and developed – directly or indirectly – by the Redemptorists, and associated with the image of Father T. Rydzik may serve as an example of a successful implementation of projects addressed to a given consumer segment, which are both a sign of rather efficient adjustment to market

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. [nockonfesjonalow.pl](http://nockonfesjonalow.pl).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. [www.przystanekjesus.pl](http://www.przystanekjesus.pl).

<sup>14</sup> An example of this initiative might be “Pogotowie duchowe” (Spiritual emergency), where priests offer help and support to people in need for 18 hours a day for the whole week. Cf. the following website for details: <http://www.pogotowieduchowe.pl/>.

<sup>15</sup> The offer of an online retreat is quite significant and varied, the exemplification of which can be proposals of *inter alia* the Franciscans, the Barefoot Carmelites, the Salesian Order, or the Jesuits, running the “Internetowy Dom Rekolekcyjny” (Internet Retreat House). Cf. *inter alia*. Retrieved from: <http://franciszkanie.tv/tag/rekolekcje/>; <https://karmelicibosi.pl/aktualnosci-prowincji/adwentowe-rekolekcje-on-line-2017-ze-swietym-jozefem/>; <http://e-rekolekcje.pl/>, <http://e-dr.jezuici.pl/>.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *inter alia* *Częstochowa: poznali się na Mszy dla singli, powiedzieli sobie „tak”* (2016, January 3). *Spowiedź na telefon w Dolinie Miłosierdzia* (2016); <https://ekai.pl/czestochowa-poznali-sie-na-mszy-dla-singli-powiedzieli-sobie-tak/>; *Lubcz w archidiecezji gnieźnieńskiej zaprasza na Msze św. dla szukających żony/męża* (2013, August 23). *eKAI*. Retrieved from: <https://ekai.pl/lubcz-w-archidiecezji-gnieznieńskiej-zaprasza-na-msze-sw-dla-szukajacych-zony-meza/>.

mechanisms and requirements, appearing in the religious sphere, as well as the manifestation of adaptation of technology and the media in the evangelising activity. These undertakings include, *inter alia*, two main media: first of all, Radio Maryja and secondly, Trwam TV (“I Persist”), forming the foundation of a relatively thriving religious “media consortium”. Furthermore, the following press titles are connected with this “media group”: a Polish national newspaper “Nasz Dziennik” (“Our Daily”)<sup>17</sup> as well as a monthly “W Naszej Rodzinie” (“In Our Family”)<sup>18</sup>, which due to the lack of data concerning the size of circulation as well as the level of readership will not be included in the analysis<sup>19</sup>.

The first of the aforementioned initiatives, that is Radio Maryja, needs to be regarded as the most characteristic, and at the same time widely recognizable undertaking, which has become the leading “brand” in the activity of the Redemptorists. The radio station was established in December 1991, initially with the status of a local station, and currently nationwide, where the first concession allowing for disseminating programmes in the whole Poland was granted in 1994<sup>20</sup>. The broadcasting station manages 126 stations, thus having the largest territorial coverage among socio-religious radio stations, which is approximately – 72.08%, as well as a significant population coverage, at the level of 80.77% (KRRiT, The National Broadcasting Council), 2017: 67-68). We can compare the quoted data with the results of a programme with an analogical, that is socio-religious profile, except that of a local range, namely: Radio Plus, which has 29 stations at its disposal, with territorial coverage at the level of 21.94%, while population coverage –

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<sup>17</sup> “Nasz Dziennik” (“Our Daily”) is a newspaper present in the Polish market since 1998, the publisher of which is the “Spes” company, and the initiator was T. Rydzik. E. Konopka is the chief editor of the newspaper, who is also the chairman of the “Spes” partnership. Cf. *O nas*, retrieved from: <http://www.naszdziennik.pl/o-nas-pl>; *Wydawca „Naszego Dziennika” ze wzrostem wpływów i zysku, Fundacja Lux Veritatis z 29,8 mln zł zysku*, 11 IX 2017 r., [www.wirtualnemedial.pl/artykul/nasz-dziennik-i-fundacja-lux-veritatis-otadeusza-rydzika-wplywy-i-zysk-w-2016-roku](http://www.wirtualnemedial.pl/artykul/nasz-dziennik-i-fundacja-lux-veritatis-otadeusza-rydzika-wplywy-i-zysk-w-2016-roku); On the basis of an excerpt from the National Court Register (KRS), where the partnership is entered under no. 0000070894, source: [ems.ms.gov.pl](http://ems.ms.gov.pl).

<sup>18</sup> The monthly “W Naszej Rodzinie” (“In Our Family”) is an undertaking implemented by the “Nasza Przyszłość” Foundation (“Our Future”), which was established by T. Rydzik. On the basis of an excerpt from the National Court Register (KRS), where the Foundation is entered under no. 0000091141, [ems.ms.gov.pl](http://ems.ms.gov.pl), as well as *Statut Fundacji „Nasza Przyszłość” z siedzibą w Warszawie (The Statute of the “Nasza Przyszłość” Foundation with its registered office in Warsaw)* as of 6.10.2010 (article 1), [www.fnp.pl](http://www.fnp.pl).

<sup>19</sup> Neither of the mentioned titles is associated in the “Związek Kontroli Dystrybucji Prasy” (Association of Press Distribution Control), which verifies the data concerning the size of the circulation of press titles as well as their distribution. [www.zkdp.pl](http://www.zkdp.pl).

<sup>20</sup> Concession no. 6 as of 23.06.1994. The content of the concession was obtained from e-mail correspondence with the National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT) on 27.09.2017.

31.90%. This data generally emphasise the technological potential of the Redemptorists' radio, allowing for the propagation of their messages on a large scale. Radio Maryja market share in 2016 within listenership was – according to Radio Track research conducted by Millward Brown – 1.8%, ranking it eleventh in the radio market<sup>21</sup> and fifth among all-Poland broadcasting stations. By comparison, in the same year, the share of the aforementioned Radio Plus was – 2.1%, while that of the leader in the Polish radio market – RMF FM – 24.5%. In the next places in the ranking of all-Poland broadcasting stations before Radio Maryja there were, *inter alia*: Radio Zet (13.6%), Program 1 PR SA (8.8%), Program 3 PR SA (7.9%) (KRRiT, 2017a: 4-5).

The basic ideological direction of the activity of Radio Maryja is – according to the concession from 2008 – propagating Christian values and the teachings of the Church, religious education, as well as presenting issues and information from the Church life. Moreover, the religious viewpoint accompanies presenting the social subject matter in its broad sense, thus fulfilling the fundamental aim of the broadcasting station, namely evangelisation and formative orientation (Concession, 2008: 1-2). Although the programme policy of the radio is above all orientated towards the propagation of the faith and the teachings of the Church, which have the following guiding ideas: “prayer, religious education and contact with listeners” (Concession, 1994: 15; Lebioda, 1995: 9), it also includes content concerning political and social issues, clearly oriented towards nationalism and antiliberalism, many times presented in a radicalised form, thus being debatable or even controversial by nature (Krzemiński, 2009: 20-21). This special programme policy is present on the air, although the station insists that it is “the negation of evil, hatred, envy and conceit”, whereas “on the air (of the station – *E.S.*) (...) there is as if a feast, as if a never-ending Christmas” (Lebioda, 1995: 6).

According to Radio Track research conducted by Millward Brown in the period from December 2012 to February 2013, mainly women (53.9%) listen to the station; as well as people aged between 40 and 56 years old (42.4%), but the proportion of listeners above 60 years old is also significant (38.8%). At the same time, among the listeners there are mainly people who completed secondary education (34.5%) and vocational secondary education (24.3%)<sup>22</sup>. The results of research conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) in 2011 reveals

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<sup>21</sup> In the enumeration two categories were omitted: the broadcasting stations of the Polish public radio, with the share of 5.2% as well as “local non-network” stations with the share of 11.1%.

<sup>22</sup> Radio Track Millward Brown (2013); Kto słucha Radia Maryja? (s.a.).

a similar trend, according to which the following listeners choose this radio station: people above the age of 65 (29%); who completed primary education only (19%); deeply devout (32%) and attending church a few times a week (38%) (CBOS, 2011: 4). Therefore, in the community of listeners predominate people over the age of 65 (49%); living in the countryside (49%); who completed primary education (45%); and have retired (48%); believers (75%) and deeply devout (25%) as well as attending church regularly, including once a week (63%) or more often (18) (CBOS, 2011: 4). Moreover, the listeners of Radio Maryja have clearly profiled ideological, political and voting preferences, since almost half of them (49%) identify their political views as right-wing, while more than half of the listeners (58%) planned to vote in the upcoming parliamentary elections at the time for the representatives of the political party “Prawo i Sprawiedliwość” (“Law and Justice”) (CBOS, 2011: 4, 10, 16-17).

In this context, Radio Maryja seems to be a rather specific undertaking, which is oriented towards the particular “target group” with clearly defined ideological views and preferred values, affirming traditionalistic beliefs. A successful integration of the listeners around the narration based on religion and conservative approach results in regarding the radio station – according to M. Sroczyńska’s definition – as an “innovative (...) socio-religious project” (Sroczyńska, 2012: 339), which “emerged” on the tide of political changes connected with the system transformation and at the same time skilfully integrated into the Polish socio-cultural reality, consolidating the expectation for changes under the aegis of moral restitution (Sroczyńska, 2012: 339; Mazurkiewicz, 2000: 40). The ideological trend propagated on the air negates not only the ideological assumptions of the former system, but also exudes a clear aversion to other, contemporary proposals even superficially associated with liberalism, which seem to be infiltrated with a potential threat to the Christian vision of social order propagated by the broadcasting station.

The postulancy and ideas promoted by Radio Maryja and addressed to the specific type of listeners contributed to the fact that it assumed the form of a spectacular power, integrating and initiating the listeners’ activity. Successively developed structures of grass-roots mobilisation in the form of the “movement” of Families of Radio Maryja can exemplify this, since they manifest their potential and involvement *inter alia* during pilgrimages to Jasna Góra or jubilee celebrations of setting up the radio station. Moreover, the listeners quite spontaneously commit themselves to the undertakings announced on the air and campaigns connected with defending various normative “postulancies”, concerning either the necessity to toughen the previously binding anti-abortion legal regulations, or being

a manifestation of opposition to the decisions made by administrative bodies, which were unfavourable to the broadcasting station<sup>23</sup>. The involvement and a certain availability of the listeners, as well as constituted structures have caused this environment to be viewed as having a specific political potential, some political parties are trying to refer to, such as for example the aforementioned “Law and Justice”, treating this community as a potential electorate, while the broadcasting station as an instrument in the election campaign. As it can be assumed, this interest is determined by clear political preferences of the listeners, signalled before, as well as the quite specific profile of the “Law and Justice” electorate. According to the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) surveys from 2017, its voters are first of all people who attend church regularly (66%), including a few times a week (11%); living in the countryside (47%), who completed primary or lower secondary education only (25%) as well as vocational secondary education (26%), and over the age of 65 (28%) (Pankowski, 2017: 8-10). It favours the consolidation of the interests of politicians and potential aspirations, including those specific, that is the political ones of the leader of the broadcasting station (Piskała, Potkaj, 2007: 120-149). Although the appearing alliance between the radio station and politics raises objections and controversy, thus creating space for criticism, it does not limit the scope of this cooperation. As a result, the broadcasting station has become not only a tool in the formula of new evangelisation (Rydzik, 1995: 13), on the basis of which – as one of the Redemptorists defined it – the “environment of religious and moral revival” is established (Jasiak, 1995: 41), but has also assumed the form of a social movement, many times instrumentalised for pragmatic, that is political aims.

Another element of the religious “media group” is Trwam TV, which is explicitly identified with the Redemptorists, but formally it belongs to the “Lux Veritatis” Foundation, established in 1998, the chairman and founder of which is Father T. Rydzik. The motto of the station, which has been broadcast since 13 March 2003, is – analogically to the aforementioned radio – the popularisation of Christian ideas and contents, oriented to shaping certain attitudes, thus their formation (Concession, 2003). The programmes of this broadcaster are to “serve

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<sup>23</sup> A wave of protest and activation of the listeners were caused *inter alia* in 2014 by a fine imposed by the National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT) on Radio Maryja, and precisely on the founder, that is the Warsaw Province of Redemptorists for broadcasting on the air “contents with a hidden commercial message”. The fine was 13 thousand zlotys. Decision no. 11/2014 as of 26 September 2014, retrieved from: <http://www.krrit.gov.pl/krrit/aktualnosci/news,1613,radio-maryja-ukrylo-przekaz-handlowy.html>.

– in accordance with the granted concession – (...) a complete and authentic development of human beings through making them sensitive in a spirit of Christian values to the role of the State and family as well as socio-economic and civic matters” (Concession, 2012: 1), as well as should propagate the knowledge concerning “the history and modernity of Christianity”, present the heritage of “culture as well as sacred and secular art” and also provide “information from the Church life in Poland and around the world” (Concession, 2012: 1). In this context we can see a clear coherence of programme policies of both Catholic media under discussion that rather do not arouse spectacular interest, which is illustrated by the data concerning the share in television market as well as the size of the viewership.

The TV Trwam market share in the sector of terrestrial digital TV was 1.48% in 2016, with the average audience of slightly over 47 thousand (KRRiT<sup>24</sup>, 2017b: 7, 10). A year earlier, in 2015, its market share in the discussed segment of digital terrestrial television was 1.52%, whereas in the television market – 0.76%, thus achieving an average viewership of almost 50 thousand people (KRRiT, 2016: 6, 10). For comparison, the leader of the television market in 2016 had a market share of 11.45% and an average viewership of 741.4 thousand. The following programmes took the next places in the quoted juxtaposition: the first public television channel (TVP1), the market share of which was 11.1%, while the viewership – 718.4 thousand, as well as the TVN television with the share and the viewership running at: 10.37% and almost 671 thousand respectively (KRRiT, 2017b: 10). This comparison emphasises a rather specialised orientation of Trwam TV, which significantly differs in popularity from the two key players in the media market, and with regard to its attractiveness takes a place in the “group” of speciality channels such as: TVP ABC, aimed at children from 4 to 12 years of age and their guardians or the “educational and cognitive” Fokus TV (Concession 2013: 2; Concession, 2013a: 2), the market share of which was: 0.92% and 0.81% respectively in 2016, with the following viewership: TVP ABC – 59.3 thousand; Fokus TV – 52.6 thousand (KRRiT, 2017b: 10).

However, the station is able to arouse special interest among the audience and attract specific potential viewers. The ratings from the period of January to November 2015 can confirm that, according to which this television had significant viewership on 12 July, that is on the day when the Radio Maryja listeners’ pilgrimage to Jasna Góra was broadcast, since then it attracted – on average 132.3 thousand viewers. Moreover, it especially enjoyed popularity *inter alia* on

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<sup>24</sup> KRRiT The National Broadcasting Council.

5 November and 15 August, with the viewership: 106.3 thousand and 93.2 thousand respectively. At the same time the demographic structure of Trwam TV viewers is similar to that of the listeners of Radio Maryja, since according to the data collected by Nielsen Audience Measurement in the second quarter of 2015, it is watched first of all by women (61.1%), as well as people over the age of 65 (70.4%), who completed primary education only (58.3%) as well as secondary education (33.45%), the unemployed (73.7%), country dwellers (49.1%) as well as inhabitants of towns with a population of up to 50 thousand (22.1%)<sup>25</sup>.

The presented juxtapositions show that the “media group” associated with Father T. Rydzik and the Redemptorists is oriented towards a specific segment of audience and what is more, it is difficult to regard it as being part of mainstream, since the media which belong to it clearly represent a niche. However, their listeners and viewers are characterised by loyalty, commitment, full identification and acceptance of the conservative policy popularised on the air, together with the suggested vision of changes and revival. This in turn becomes an inspiration or a basis for other undertakings to be formed, with a varied specialised orientation, which is exemplified by: first of all, educational projects, such as the College of Social and Media Culture in Torun<sup>26</sup>; secondly, telecommunications undertakings in the form of a network of mobile communications “W naszej Rodzinie” (“In Our Family”); thirdly, energy projects, which is illustrated by the initiative “Geotermia Torun” (“Torun Geothermal Energy”); fourthly, tourist and recreation undertakings in the form of plans of building a health resort “Termy Torunskie” (Torun Thermal Springs) (Krawiec, 2017; Co składa się na imperium..., 2017), and fifthly, cultural and religious initiatives such as the construction of the Sanctuary of Our Lady Star of the New Evangelization (Świątynia pw. Maryi Gwiazdy Nowej Ewangelizacji), which has a chance of becoming another pilgrimage centre in Poland. A. Ryczek designed it, creating a two-level facility, including *inter alia* a chancel which is the copy of St. Pope John Paul II Chapel in Vatican, as well as the Chapel of Remembrance and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. When pilgrims enter the area surrounding the chapel, they cross the Gate of Mercy and go past a sculpture of John Paul II, whereas when they leave, they meet St. Peter. In a multidimensional way the Sanctuary evokes the symbolism clearly exposing the multi-contextual interference of Christianity in the history of Poland, thus taking

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<sup>25</sup> Data obtained by Nielsen Audience Measurement *apud* Kozielski (2016).

<sup>26</sup> The college was entered into the register of non-public vocational colleges pursuant to the decision no. DSW-3-0145-218/TT/2001 as of 14.08.2001. Its founder is Tadeusz Rydzik. The anonymised decision was granted by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MNiSW) on 10.10.2017.

the form of a special pilgrimage centre, which is first and foremost a sanctuary affirming sacredness, but at the same time it is becoming a pinacotheca of the past and remembrance of the Polish nation (*Wotum. Sanktuarium...*, 2016: 149-151).

These initiatives first of all reveal T. Rydzyk's organisational skills as well as an efficient adjustment to market requirements, where the axis of this activity are – at least originally – religious ideas and evangelising. However, these numerous forms of resourcefulness set in the aforementioned “media group” resemble ways of functioning of television evangelists in the American market, for which the media are a platform for popularising religious messages, but at the same time become the basis for creating successful “religious enterprises”, perfectly using the sales and marketing techniques, where the whole relies on the believers' potential, who do not only receive religious contents, but also are the main audience of additional proposals (Peck, 2005). Therefore, the consumer potential attracted to religious ideas is not only a community focused around certain sacred messages, but also – or rather first of all – the potential purchasing power of products and possibly services offered by television evangelists. However, the phenomenon of televangelism is not restricted only to the USA, since in our times it has a global level, and even exists beyond religion. What is more, television evangelists do not only refer to television as the basic means of conveying religious contents, but are also using new media in their activity, thus contributing to an increase in the scope of the presence of the sacred in the sphere of the public discourse (Thomas, Lee, 2012: 1-2), which can be treated as the mediatisation of religion.

Therefore, using the media in evangelisation is common practice, which essentially expands the range of the presence of religious ideas and contents in contemporary societies, independently from the level of coherence with fundamental assumptions of traditional religious systems and the emerging trend of eclecticism as well as often superficial collages of meanings and symbols. However, the development of this sector emphasises the scale of spiritual needs and quests for satisfying proposals pursued by individuals. In this context the activity of the Catholic “media group” in Poland corresponds with the more and more visible trend of the mediatisation of religion, but at the same time it reveals most generally a certain difficulty in the native religious market, where the demand for this kind of offers, even if presented in modern and attractive formula, is rather limited, not to say, slight. The termination of the activity of the religious channel TV Religia in 2015, which belonged to ITI group and offered religious programmes based on the style and arrangement of contemporary programmes, at the same time referring to trends in popular culture, is an example of this (Stachowska, 2012a: 360).



Currently, public television is broadcasting a new programme aimed at young people entitled “Studio raban” (“Ruckus Studio”), which probably has not captivated viewers in any special way, since the first episode presented on 16 September 2017 attracted – according to data collected by Nielsen Audience Measurement – just over 182 thousand people, with a market share – 2.95%. Other September episodes drew the attention of a smaller television audience, since the second episode was watched by nearly 156 thousand viewers, while the third one – almost 146.7 thousand<sup>27</sup>.

The average popularity of religious programmes, as well as the religious media with reference to the prevalence of the declaration of faith, religious uniformity and the dominant position of the Church not so much astonishes and amazes as it indicates the illusory nature of the emblems presented in a brief “Pole-Catholic” formula, which except for the identification with a given tradition, hide an extremely varied palette of religious attitudes and preferences, where conservative as well as traditionalistic trends and orientations are most likely not predominant. However, the functioning of the media associated with T. Rydzyk should be regarded as a success after all, which is based – as it seems – on a skilful integration in the demands of a given consumer segment, which is a group of viewers and listeners more oriented towards reflection than entertainment only and thus unappreciated by other players. Hence the “religious company” established by the Redemptorist meets the demand of a specific group of clients by offering them ultra-Catholic or fundamentalist contents, together with narratives affirming a dualistic view of the world, in which the recipients are identified almost as a special and elite community, where antagonisms and prejudices are cultivated and fuelled, still present in the Polish society, although hidden on a day-to-day basis. While it is true that the demand for this type of rhetoric does not have a common nature, it highlights a rather obvious presence of diverse worldview preferences, which T. Rydzyk’s company effectively satisfies, while seizing the chances which religious economy provides in monopolised conditions.

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The briefly outlined picture of the Polish religious sphere and sacred entities acting within it indicates a certain analogy in the functioning of the religious market with its secular counterpart. Although the economic perspective might appear to deprecate the sacred, since it reduces the activity and evangelising missions of

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<sup>27</sup> Data obtained by Nielsen Audience Measurement *apud* Kto słucha Radia Maryja (2013); Kurdupski (s.a.).

religious organisations to mercenary forms, while the spiritual quests of believers are compared almost with shop peregrinations, it emphasises the parallelism of implemented strategies of adaptation by entities of various provenance with present-day market requirements, which in the religious context expose the chances and threats connected with the fact that economy penetrates the sacred sphere.

An attempt to see the Polish religious sphere from the angle of market interpretations first of all reveals the implication of the functioning of the dominant religious subject, which has a package of “obtained” privileges at its disposal in the conditions almost devoid of competition. The Catholic Church in Poland has the unquestioned position of the market “leader”, which is created and maintained by the attachment of the Polish people to tradition, in which religion, and especially certain rituals such as baptism play a significant role, at the same time constituting an effective mechanism of a cultural reproduction of the denominational affiliation. The effect is the observed homogeneity or a significant religious uniformity, which does not fully reflect the actual forms of involvement and shaping the relationship with the sacred. These seem to be extremely varied, starting with attitudes identified as traditionalistic, or even orthodox, through numerous forms of individualisation with selective or syncretic orientations, ending with a certain restraint, sometimes taking the form of lack of understanding towards the Church and its teachings. This pluralisation of attitudes so to speak demands – referring to the economic terminology – a differentiation of strategies according to the preferences and expectations of individual consumer segments and creating almost unique offers for them. However, the dominant position of the Catholic Church in the market contributes to its certain helplessness with regard to the effective management of the consumer potential, thus lack of suitable and innovative projects, which would dynamise the activity of believers. It does not mean that this religious organisation is completely passive, after all, attempts of influencing “religious customers” are noticeable, but they do not seem to be fully adequate, which is indicated in – the aforementioned – annual research on the participation in Sunday Mass conducted by the Institute for Catholic Church Statistics (ISKK), the result of which in 2017 was the lowest in history, namely – 36.7%. This emphasises the level of difficulty and challenges for the Church that are present in the Polish religious sphere in our times.

Initiatives in the form of the analysed “business concern” of T. Rydzyk might be treated as an innovation in the pastoral and evangelising activity with the reservation that its success is based on a specific historic context and conditions created

by the systemic transformation in 1989, which prevented it from possible recurrence or replication. Still, the currently observed development of this undertaking indicates the effectiveness of addressing a given offer to the specific consumer segment, and at the same time skilfully seizing the opportunities created by the religious market in Poland, although the recounted solutions belong – so far – to one of the few. However, the entire efficient mechanism relies on a charismatic leader and the older generations, which raises a rhetorical question about the future of this project.

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# THE HANDS OF THE THEOLOGIAN: THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL (1962-1965) IN THE ARTICLES BY ALBERTO ANTONIAZZI IN THE MAGAZINE *ATUALIZAÇÃO*<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1962, under the papacy of John XXIII, the Second Vatican Council had its beginning, a moment of communion in which the Catholic Church thought the paths that must be traced in order to guarantee its plausibility in the contemporary world. The religious institution then seeks its *aggiornamento* (update).

The audacious announcement of Vatican Council II by Pope Roncalli in January 1959 has as its social context a world marked by political, social and economic ambivalence. There were democratic developments in parts of the globe, while in others the emergence of new forms of authoritarianism, both in the spectrum of the right and the political left. In the ecclesial context, it is noted that the Church was still more clearly linked to a tradition of conflict with modernity. One of the consequences of this tendency was its closure in relation to a world that is organized less

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and less with Christian references and which leads to the emergence of a new type of subject, which is now directed mainly by the ideal of subjective freedom.

In this perspective, the clergy, gathered in assembly, divided themselves between hopefuls and those more apprehensive about the future of the Church from the conciliar event and its unfoldings (Libanio, 2005: 60) even though the most diverse expectations regarding the council and its proposal to *aggiornare* the Church in a world of great transformations still remain.

It is the post-conciliar period, when the Church went through various stages and types of reception of Vatican II, the historical context in which the present study is inserted, which presents a fundamental question, that show the reception happened, the challenges and the open possibilities. According to Ratzinger, in an interview with Vittorio Messori (1985), the period from 1970 to 1980 would have been a period of disillusionment of the Church in relation to the Second Vatican Council. Thinking about the case of Brazil, particularly that of the Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte, one of the most important in the country, one can ask whether this disillusionment with the conciliar event has actually taken place. And this inquiry was based on the fact that a theological journal was formed within the archdiocese in the year 1969 with the intention of reflecting on the council, deepening its reflections and setting in motion its determinations. The magazine *Atualização: Revista de Divulgação Teológica para o Cristão de Hoje*, was directed by Fr. Alberto Antoniazzi and Fr. Paschoal Rangel, priests who acted in this archdiocese.

The problem raised in this chapter revolves around the post-conciliar history of the Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte and the reception of Vatican II in this particular church, focusing on the production of Fr. Alberto Antoniazzi in the magazine *Atualização*. It is noted that the priest's texts published in the magazine reaffirm the conciliar proposals, and do not seem to show any kind of disappointment around the council. The title of the magazine itself is in complete consonance with the council's project of updating the Church.

In the first issue of the magazine, its directors affirm in the opening text of the publication:

Our goals are simple and straightforward: first of all, to update. And update, informing. Informing not so much about facts simply, but about ideas, movement of ideas that are shaking the Church, in theology, in biblical exegesis, in moral, in pastoral (...). Ideas that are reflections on the life and events of today and can modify our behaviour (Antoniazzi, Rangel, 1969: 2).

In this way, the main goal of this study is to understand the reception of the Second Vatican Council in the context of the Church of Belo Horizonte, in order to understand how this process unfolded from the perspective of a priest and theologian,



who expounds his reflections on contemporary Christianity in a theological magazine. The time segment adopted for the analysis of the articles was from 1969 to 1975. The delimitation of Alberto Antoniazzi's history is necessary to understand what's "behind" his writing, the explicit and implicit in the articles published by him in the magazine *Atualização*. It is not a question of making a biography, but of addressing some aspects of his life and work, based on cultural history and the analyzes of the biographical genre.

#### THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL AND ITS RECEPTION: REFLECTION ON SOME THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL ASPECTS

The reception therefore belongs to the life of the Church and is in fact a constitutive process. It is at the heart of the relationship between God and his people, at the heart of relations between local Churches and "Churches" of various Christian denominations. Finally, this process also sends back links between the Church, culture and society (Routhier *apud* Caldeira, Pereira, Vidal, 2013: 28)<sup>1</sup>.

The concept of reception in its classic sense for the Church means "acceptance and assimilation by the Church of doctrines or decisions which have authority, such as ecumenical councils, synods or popes" (Rusch *apud* Root, 2004: 1499). With the Second Vatican Council, the meaning given to the concept comes into agreement with its proposals for the Church's updating, that is, of dialogue and rapprochement with the contemporary world, in a perspective of listening and understanding (Routhier, 2015).

The process of receiving the Second Vatican Council did not happen unilaterally, and the body of Christendom entered into dialogue its results in different ways. The process of acceptance, reflection and practice of the conciliar teachings is permeated by material and mental aspects of absorption, and they are passed over a long period. The reception is not egalitarian in all parts of the Catholic world, not even in a micro-region; its premises are analyzed and incorporated according to the context of a group or institution. The important thing is to understand the process as a whole, to what extent it happened and in what way.

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<sup>1</sup> "La réception appartient donc à la vie de l'Église et elle en est en somme un processus constitutif. Elle est au cœur de la relation entre Dieu et son peuple, au cœur des relations entre les Églises locales et les "Églises" des diverses confessions chrétiennes. Finalement, ce processus renvoie aussi aux rapports entre l'Église, la culture et la société".

## Historical aspects of the reception of Vatican II in Brazil

The Latin American Church, especially the Brazilian Church, presented a pre-council history that greatly influenced its participation in the event. In the case of Brazil in particular, some progress has been made since the mid-1950s, especially in the idea of what the responsibility of the bishops was for the Church, which was gradually leaving the dimension of diocesan limits to think of the church as a whole.

The Church in Brazil, with the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), created in 1952, sought a pastoral unity before a country quite different in its regions, and through a joint thinking of the bishops, each diocese could become a fundamental piece of a set that sought an effective participation. According to Beozzo, the “unity of the CNBB and the capacity of the Church of Brazil to act as a whole, in spite of the differences and contrasts of people and ideas, find their roots in this fertile period of conciliar coexistence” (Beozzo, 1993: 10-11).

Under the leadership of Dom Helder Câmara, the Brazilian Catholic Action in the mid-1960s also represents one of the main points of reference for a more global understanding of the Brazilian Church in the pre-conciliar period. In specialized Catholic Action, social issues were discussed and studied in order for Catholics to make a clear commitment to combating poverty, misery and social inequality (Beozzo, 1993).

The active activity of the Brazilian bishops during the conciliar event was highlighted. According to Beozzo (1993), even in the preparatory events the clergy was already attentive and present. As an example, the creation of the *REB – Brazilian Ecclesiastical Magazine* in the 1950s, in which during the conciliar period the chronicles of each session were published by Frei Boaventura Kloppenburg, editor-in-chief of the magazine, consultant of the Theological Commission of the council and expert of the assembly.

The immediate call for action arising from conciliar determinations, based on the formulated Joint Pastoral Plan (1966-1970), caused various reactions between the laity and the clergy in the Church of Brazil. While on the one hand the members of Catholic Action and those who were more involved in matters related to the Conciliar event were enthusiastic about change, the simplest group of the population, which had a faith based on piety and popular traditions, was especially frightened by the proposed liturgical reform<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> But Beozzo affirms that: “Only the later more real incarnation of the Church among the poor, the sense of listening and commitment to their causes on the part of the pastors, the popular resistance led to a revision of these first attitudes and a reunion between popular piety and the spirit of the Council” (Beozzo, 1993: 13).

The Church's proposals for renewal and a closer look at its insertion in the social configuration face a complex Brazilian social and economic context. We must not forget, however, that a whole social, political, economic and cultural panorama influenced them. The 1960s and 1970s, as Delgado and Passos (2003) elucidate, were years of popular mobilization, but also of authoritarianism and repression, including human rights. The movements of support and attack against communism grew in the world due to the bipolarity of the Cold War, which contributed to fervent debates in politics and religious circles. This generalized fear can be seen in some documents, such as the *Emergency Plan for the Church of Brazil* (1963):

We want to promote in Brazil a vital presence of the Church, which will save the souls and save the nation from all the threats against it, such as atheistic communism and the breaker of the most authentic values of man; the destructive conceptions of the dignity of the family and the repeated divorce attempts with which the conscience of Christian voters can never be reconciled; the secular mentality that insists on returning to the scenario of the Country (Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte, 1963: 6).

The same document further emphasizes that the field of apostolic action in Brazil is being worked by adverse forces:

What the Holy Priest said about four deadly dangers to Latin America applies to Brazil: the naturalism that leads Christians to often lack the Christian view of life; the Protestantism that tries among us its maximum effort of expansion and is, in fact, in tide amount; the spiritism whose diffusion, in the great cities, in the means of misery, has an air of endemic; the Marxism that excites the Higher Schools and controls the Workers' Unions (Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte, 1963: 8).

The years between 1950 and 1980 are marked by intense political, economic, social and religious debates<sup>3</sup>. In Latin America, this miscellany of feelings and conflicts is later shaped in the form of civilian-military dictatorships, supported by the National Security Doctrine, which in its beginning gained support from the faithful and members of the Catholic hierarchy. As Delgado and Passos (2003: 99) pointed out: "At various times of crisis and conflict, the State and the Church were together in favour of order and security of the nation." However, this support weakened as allegations of human rights abuses against civilians and priests were arising.

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<sup>3</sup> The Brazilian Church has gradually become more involved with social issues, and some initiatives have helped: four examples are the Pastoral Letter of the Brazilian Episcopate of 1950, the Rural Week in Campaign, Minas Gerais, the creation of the National Conference of the Bishops of Brazil - CNBB in 1952 and the Conference of Religious - CRB in 1955 (Neves, Steps, 2003).

## The Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte: Pre-post-Council

The works involving the name of Dom João Resende Costa – bishop of the capital of Minas Gerais between 1957 and 1986 – during his years at the head of the Archdiocese and as the second holder, had a considerable impact on this particular Church. According to Torres (1972), 52 parishes were created and 75 temples were opened, 25 new priests were appointed, Catholic University officiated in 1958, the construction of its headquarters and campus, and the founding of the Central Institute of Philosophy and Theology, in addition to the creation of 18 male and 60 female religious communities.

During the conciliar event, constantly Dom João brought news to the ecclesial community, being published in the newspaper *O Diário*<sup>4</sup>. In 1965, the bishop reveals his animation before the council:

How far have you walked in these fruitful three years! Only the beauty of the spectacle of liturgical renewal (...). But many more things are coming and will come to make the Church the fullness of her vitality and her effectiveness in the world today. However, it will never be too much to emphasize (sic) two observations that must be made of this (sic) conciliar renewal. The first – that no one should be alarmed by this kind of instability and uncertainty that seem to characterize the present time. A little is because it is time for change, there are studies in progress, decisions on the way, resolutions about to mature, that must be taken but cannot be precipitated (Costa, 1965: 4).

According to Antoniazzi, the following practical and immediate measures were implemented by the Archdiocese in its conciliar reception:

(...) use of the altar versus *populum*; encouraging the participation of the people and the use of pastoral songs at Mass; positions of the faithful in the Mass (from the knees, from the beginning of the Canon to the Consecration, from Agnus Dei to Communion and even to the final Blessing); homily in the Sunday and festive Masses, based on Scripture and Tradition, which does not exceed 15 minutes; communion of the sacraments where possible; reduction of the number of images (except in historical churches); prohibition of selling candles in churches; abolition of “class” differences and equal treatment of all people in liturgical celebrations (Antoniazzi, 2002: 109).

The first official movement of lay apostolate in Belo Horizonte was the *Moços Católicos*, with important participation of the entities São Vicente de Paulo and the Catholic Action. The first developed by seeking practical solutions to the problems of the poor, and the second, of a more intellectual nature, was concerned with the study and dissemination of the Church’s doctrine in workplaces and studies, bringing social, biblical, and liturgical renewal (Torres, 1972).

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<sup>4</sup> Other texts, from various authors, related what was once again discussed and decided at the event. For example, see: For Application... (1964) and Bergerre (1964).

## **The capital of Minas Gerais and its ecclesia: the reception of the council at the hands of the theologian**

Our time is a time of crisis, of change. From rapid changes (...) Today's man, in order not to be 'buried alive' needs to be 'contemporary of the future', facing forward, permanently attentive in updating and educating himself (Antoniuzzi *apud* Pinheiro, 2013: 55).

A person, a theologian: what change would you make alone? This question pervades the inquiries of many readers, but also of those who are engaged in researching the subject of the reception of a council.

Theologian and priest Alberto Antoniuzzi, born in Milan on June 17, 1937 and deceased in Belo Horizonte on December 25, 2004, is an example of a life history that can help us to look at a social, religious and political panorama, namely, the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the new millennium under the influence of the Second Vatican Council.

The importance of Antoniuzzi in the Italian Catholic scene, and mainly in Brazil, is due to his engagement, very early on several Catholic fronts: in the Catholic Action of Milan; in the writing and coordination of the newspaper *Azione Giovanile*; as an advisor to the Brazilian episcopate, 35 years of which was participation in the preparation of most of the documents of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB); in addition to its fundamental participation in the elaboration of the General Directives of Pastoral Action (DGAP). The Italian theologian did not confine his analyzes to the field of theories but emphasized the importance of analyzing the social, cultural and political conjuncture for the understanding of religious practices and changes within the Church. As emphasized by Libanio (2004),

Fr. Alberto, however no matter how much he valued the contacts and knowledge of reality through concrete experience, he was suspicious of a certain pastoral primitivism. For this reason, he assiduously visited research on the religious and civil life of the Brazilian people, on the spiritual and social radiographs of cities (...). His works express constant concern for a double movement (...). Referring to the IBGE 2000 Census, it is strange how theologians and Churchmen did not dwell on it to learn lessons from the numbers (Libanio, 2004: 41).

Several testimonies relate the untiring work of Antoniuzzi for understanding the Church of his time, his history and how to make it more active and faithful to the Gospel. That is why we emphasize the relevance of the study of life, of its trajectory, since we can see the panorama of the context in which it was also inserted. Pinheiro (2013) gives a brief analysis of the post-conciliar context and the role of Antoniuzzi in the period:

The guidelines of the Emergency Plan (1962-1965) and the Joint Pastoral Plan (1966-1970) were echoed in the Church of Belo Horizonte (...) (it) became a field of rehearsal, initiatives and achievements in the wake of the Council and the guidelines of the CNBB. This is due, on the one hand, to the great margin of freedom that Dom João Resende Costa gave to the pastoral work of the priests and the laity (...) and on the other, by the competent work (...) of one of the greatest pastoralists of the Post-conciliar Brazil, Fr. Alberto Antoniazzi (Pinheiro, 2013: 52-53)<sup>5</sup>.

As we can see, the theologian was a great collaborator in several documents, books and coordination of several projects, as well as pro-dean of graduation from the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais in 1987<sup>6</sup>. That said, we can glimpse, through his life and work, one of the facets of the reception of Vatican II in Brazil, since reception is not a “homogeneous whole”, but manifests itself in various ways, be it in the theory or practice of the leaders and the body of the Church<sup>7</sup>.

Alberto Antoniazzi was known for his commitment to the *aggiornamento* of the Brazilian Church, and this was reflected in the very name of the magazine in which he and Priest Paschoal Rangel founded in 1969, the magazine *Atualização*. According to Lorscheider (2006: 40): “(...) *aggiornamento* is to listen, to meet, to open up to the fair (legitimate) demands of the world today, in its profound changes of structures, ways of being (cultures) (...)” It is on the foundation of the much-desired *aggiornamento* of the Church by John XXIII that Vatican II is constituted as a compass for the Church of the new millennium and the aim of the magazine.

The brief delimitation of the life story of Alberto Antoniazzi is necessary to understand the behind of his writing, the explicit and implicit in the articles he published in the magazine *Atualização*. It is not a question of making a biography, but of understanding some aspects of his life and work, taking as a methodological basis the cultural history and the analysis of the biographical genre<sup>8</sup>. Thus, the life

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<sup>5</sup> Fr. Cleto Caliman and Mauro Passos affirm: “As a theological-pastoral adviser, Antoniazzi was constantly consulted on the main themes of the CNBB. Of the documents of the blue collection of the last 25 years, if not more, it is difficult to have some that did not have his opinion” (Caliman *apud* Pinheiro, 2013: 71).

<sup>6</sup> “Biography about Priest Alberto Antoniazzi” – Final Report, 2013, financed by PUC Minas. This biography is part of a larger project (FIP Edital Research Project no. 054/2011), headed by the Center for Memory and Historical Research, under the coordination of Prof. Dr. Heloisa Guaracy Machado, together with the Fr. Alberto Antoniazzi. A collection of books and articles by Antoniazzi, named “Padre Antoniazzi Collection”, and personal documents were organized. They are sources of research for the next works about his biography, pastoral planning, among other activities performed by the theologian.

<sup>7</sup> Important research on post-Council transformations and Antoniazzi’s life, it is the master’s dissertation of Massimo Bonato (2009).

<sup>8</sup> Remembered by Bonato (2009), the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu employs the idea of “life trajectory”, which is a “series of positions successively occupied by the same agent (or group) in a space that is itself a becoming subject to incessant relationships.” (Bourdieu *apud* Bonato, 2009: 31).

trajectories of groups and people begin to have a greater appreciation, taking into account the fact that the macro analysis of the context and the social issues which surround a life can not be forgotten.

An important contribution in the theoretical field is Jean-François Sirinelli, who defined the category of “intellectual”. Bonato, Coppe Caldeira and Tosta (2013) explain that the author proposes two differentiations for the analysis of the intellectual: a more comprehensive (sociocultural), in which the creators and the “cultural mediators”, such as teachers, writers, journalists and some students are inserted; and the second group, more restricted, characterized by “engagement.” (Sirinelli *apud* Bonato, Coppe Caldeira, Tosta, 2013). Taking into account Antoniazzi’s trajectory, (...) these two meanings of intellectual constitute two dimensions that overlap and intertwine with one another (...)” (Bonato, Coppe Caldeira, Tosta, 2013: 276), given his work as a researcher, trainer and professor at the Archdiocesan Seminary of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, manager of the Institute of Philosophy and Theology, pro-rector and vice-rector, both of PUC Minas.

Alberto Antoniazzi was the son of Antonio Antoniazzi and Rina Vertova. According to Bonato (2009), Antonio worked in a small Catholic publishing house, having participated in the founding of the *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) party of Milan, just after the end of World War II. Already, in the family of Antoniazzi, a Catholicism committed by the relation with the politics, and not of devotional type was expressed<sup>9</sup>.

*Democrazia Cristiana* set up a structure to deal with the threat of communism and secularization, recruiting young people and people engaged in the Catholic cause. According to Bonato (2009), the following associations emerged: the movement of *Azione Cattolica* (AC) and the *Comitati Civici* founded by the president of the Catholic Action, Luigi Gedda. Alberto Antoniazzi attended the Parish Milanese world and from very early he came in contact with the active life of the Italian Catholics of the region<sup>10</sup>. As Antoniazzi himself says:

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<sup>9</sup> Several parties have emerged (Liberals, Catholics, Socialists, Communists) to fight fascism, or try to fight bad memories of the wartime. Now, in the Cold War, political unity broke up after the 1946 referendum proclaiming the Republic of the New Italian State. According to Machado (2013) “The Church is inserted in this political conflict (...) feeling threatened, on the one hand, with the advance of communism and, on the other, with the advancement of a process of secularization in society”. Garelli *apud* Machado, 2013: 10-11).

<sup>10</sup> Bonato (2009) and Machado (2013) remind us that the participation of the laity in the Catholic life of the region may have corroborated Antoniazzi’s vision of the laity and their importance in ecclesial life.

What led me to choose, for my 25 years, the presbyteral ministry in the Catholic Church, and even before, in philosophy studies, was the fact of having grown up in a rather religious environment. The Italian parishes – especially in Milan where I lived – took great care of the youth (...) <sup>11</sup>.

Catholic Action was a very strong movement of lay people, both socially, politically, educationally and religiously. I was the Diocesan President of the Youth and editor of *the Journal of the Archdiocese of Milan*. I visited more than 900 parishes. During this period, I worked with Mons. Montini, future Pope Paul VI. The parish in Milan was a welcome space. Place of fun, sport and catechesis (...) The decision to become a priest was a continuation of my work in Catholic Action. I accepted celibacy because I had no choice but to become a priest. (Antoniazzi, 2005: 155-172).

Moreover, according to Alberto Antoniazzi (2005: 156), “I already began, under the influence of my colleagues in Catholic Action, to have sympathy for the so-called center-left” <sup>12</sup>. He contacted the ecclesiastical assistants, as Don Luigi Giussani, priest, theologian, Italian philosopher and founder of the *Comunione e Liberazione* (CL) movement (Machado, 2013: 19). In 1957 <sup>13</sup> Alberto Antoniazzi assumed the position of editor of *L’Azione Giovanile*, a newspaper of young people of the Catholic Action characterized by opening to new themes, such as ecumenism.

It was Fr. Giussani who enabled Antoniazzi’s first contacts with Brazil through a visit made in 1960, where he met several engaged Catholics. In 1961, three girls and three boys from GS and GIAC <sup>14</sup> from Milan took part in the meeting of the Union of Catholic Students (UEC) in Belo Horizonte, one of them Alberto Antoniazzi, as president of the newspaper *L’Azione Giovanile* (Machado, 2013) <sup>15</sup>. In an interview, the Italian theologian states that at a meeting in Belo Horizonte with Bishop Serafim Fernandes de Araújo and Bishop Dom João Resende Costa, he noticed the lack of a priestly vocation in the capital of Minas Gerais, which certainly influenced his coming together with the support received

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<sup>11</sup> In an interview with Luiz Fonte Boa for the “Memory and Power” project of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Minas Gerais, Alberto Antoniazzi reports on aspects of his youth, militancy, priesthood and the decision to come to Brazil (Antoniazzi, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> In 1956, Alberto Antoniazzi joined the lay movement of Catholic Action, and was already studying philosophy at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart of Milan, which grew, thanks also to the presence of influential intellectuals in Italian party politics, such as Giuseppe Lazzati, who helped to spread the discussion of ideas arising from the philosophical thought of, for example, Emanuel Mounier and Jacques Maritain. (Machado, 2013: 14).

<sup>13</sup> The idea of mission had received strong support after the proclamation of the encyclical *Fidei Donum*, on April 21, 1957 by Pope Pius XII.

<sup>14</sup> GS (Gioventù Studenti); GIAC (Gioventù Italiana di Azione Cattolica). From 1961 to 1963 Alberto Antoniazzi assumed the position of diocesan presidency of the GIAC youth group.

<sup>15</sup> He also participated in another meeting, now in Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, at the International Congress of Catholic Youth Workers. He was not a member of the JOC but had helped his brother Sandro Antoniazzi in a movement in the 1950s.



from Catholic Action on the importance of the missions<sup>16</sup>: “(...) both made it clear that they would accept seminarians from any part of the world, because at the time, unless mistaken, the archdiocese had only ten seminarians, including a Dutchman” (Antoniuzzi, 2005: 159).

Alberto Antoniuzzi arrives in Brazil at a time of complete political upheaval, with the establishment of the civil-military dictatorship in 1964. Transformations also operated in the Catholic medium in a more vertical way. On September 4, 1965 Antoniuzzi was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte and on September 14, Paul VI began the last period of the activities of the Second Vatican Council. In the collection of the DOPS / MG (Department of Social Policy Order of Minas Gerais), some correspondence was found about priests who could be involved with left movements or who were against the military regime. In the middle of the names is that of Priest Alberto Antoniuzzi<sup>17</sup>, integrating the so-called “Milan Group” (Arquivo Público Mineiro, 1969): “The following elements are part of the «Milan Group», of a leftist nature, and reportedly came to work in the ecclesiastical area of Minas Gerais, on different dates” (Arquivo Público Mineiro, 1969: 1).

Antoniuzzi participated in the Milanese Catholic Action, which in Latin American countries was considered a threat to the current order. In letter number 741<sup>18</sup>, the criminal records of several suspects were urgently requested, among them was Antoniuzzi<sup>19</sup> again. During the year 1971 some correspondence still dealt with the theme concerning priests and teachers, as possible “uprising” and

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<sup>16</sup> In an article written by Alberto Antoniuzzi in the newspaper in which he participated, he wrote: “I am going only to Belo Horizonte ... It has, on the contrary, fewer priests than here (in Italy) and Catholic Action has a younger experience, and the educational and social problems are greater. In short, it has more possibilities of work (Antoniuzzi *apud* Machado, 2013: 29).

<sup>17</sup> In his interview published in 2005 he recounts life in the period: “In 1964, the military dictatorship was not welcomed with enthusiasm in the Eucharistic Heart Seminary. There was a group of well-politicized seminarians. The military coup helped to remove (from) Dom Hélder the leadership of the CNBB. Other facts have happened. The bishops were withdrawing support for Catholic Action. Many militants left the Church and made a more radical resistance. Various Military Police Inquiries were made against the JOC (...)” (Antoniuzzi *apud* Passos, 2004: 63).

<sup>18</sup> Dated July 12, 1971, sent to the head of department of DOPS / MG by the substitute judge of the 4th Audit of the Military Judicial District (C.J.M.) of Juiz de Fora Military Court, Dr. Hippolyto Joaquim Teixeira.

<sup>19</sup> Some of them were: Brother Elizeu de Lucena Lopes; Brother André Muniz Rezende; Arnaldo Ribeiro; Felipe Soares Aranha; Brother Carlos Mesters; Brother Nilário Meeks (or Frei Hilário Meeks); Brother Cláudio Van Balen (or Brother Van Valen), and some professors from the Catholic University, such as Reginaldo Dutra Pessanha and Willian Silva (Faculty of Medical Sciences and ICFT). Document: folder 0056, roll 005.

“leftists”<sup>20</sup>, members of the so-called “Milan Group” (Arquivo Público Mineiro, 1972-1974).

At the end of the 1960s there was a crisis in the seminaries, and in an effort to prevent the diminution or death of the priestly force in Minas Gerais lands, the Central Institute of Philosophy and Theology was created in Belo Horizonte, and it was linked to the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais. Cleto Caliman (2006) informs us that, under the direction of Priest Antônio Sérgio Palombo, Antoniazzi was a “fighter as study coordinator (1966-1969), then deputy director (1970-1971). From 1977 to 1987, he was head of the Department of Philosophy and Theology, that is, Director of ICFT, at PUC Minas” (Caliman, 2006: 59), having participated in the founding of the Society of Theology and Religious Sciences (SOTER) in 1985, of which he was secretary and Caliman treasurer. Starting in the 1990s, the “Build Hope Project”<sup>21</sup> gained strength with the tireless work of Antoniazzi, one of its creators, who helped the Cura d’Ars parish in the Prado neighbourhood of Belo Horizonte on weekends. He participated in the Catholic Action in Milan, witnessed political discussions from a very early age and was in touch with the debates on renewal of Catholicism, the participation of the laity, attention to the poor and the Ecclesial Base Communities (CEBs), which in a way, influenced their positions<sup>22</sup>.

According to Libanio (2004), Antoniazzi contributed in the preparation of several documents and subsidies, directly or indirectly, because it was frequently consulted. He contributed, for example, to the preparation of the Assemblies of the People of God (APDs) in the Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte and the National Pastoral Institute of the CNBB, and “(...) with the exception of the Guidelines for Evangelizing Action of 1975, Alberto participated in the essays of all the others produced in these last decades” (Libanio, 2004: 44).

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<sup>20</sup> Other correspondence indicates the name of Alberto Antoniazzi as a member of the “Milan Group”, and some information about his residence, work and day of arrival in Brazil was collected. See correspondences of 07/30/1971 and 06/08/1971, folder 0056, roll 005; pasta 4030, roll 051 respectively.

<sup>21</sup> In the collection with its documents in the Center of Memory and Historical Research there are many documents related to the preparation of the project, as well as several texts of meetings that Antoniazzi participated in.

<sup>22</sup> As he clarifies in an interview to the project “Memory and Power” of the Legislative Assembly: “The Second Vatican Council took up the place of the laity in the Church. The meaning is in the conception of the Church as ‘People of God’. It values the dignity of all by Baptism.” And he continues: “However, there are still priests who do not accept Vatican II (...) who think they have a good relationship with the laity, but do not care to listen. They are afraid of criticism.” (Antoniazzi *apud* Passos, 2004: 63).

In a statement to Cleto Caliman, Frater Henrique Cristiano José Matos, he added: “He was a competent Church historian ... he analyzed the current cultural and ecclesial moment with its implications for the evangelizing mission of the Church today” (Matos *apud* Caliman, 2006: 63). We can contemplate this point in the following statement by Antoniazzi:

At the same time, society’s pressure on individuals has increased. Our society promises freedom, but then it does not give effective conditions to achieve it (...) It is changing, for example, the conception of time and space. The new generation tends to live only in the present, because it has no memory of the past and can not see its future, which has become too uncertain. (...). Today space also tends to become homogeneous, undifferentiated. The church, the school, the house, the place of amusement are placed in the same plane. The TV makes everything the same, everything accessible in the same way, everything “image” (Antoniazzi *apud* Passos, 2004: 58 – italics of the author).

Caliman (2006) indicates the works and participation of Antoniazzi in projects of great strength<sup>23</sup>, as for example, some studies of the CNBB on the theological-pastoral area: *Comunidades: Igreja na Base*, Studies of CNBB 3 (1974); *Conselhos presbiterais diocesanos*, Studies of CNBB 16 (1977); *Pistas para uma pastoral urbana*, Studies of CNBB 22 (1979); *Situação e Vida dos Seminaristas maiores no Brasil*, CNBB Studies 40 (1984); *Leigos e Participação na Igreja*, CNBB Studies 45 (1986); *Para onde vai a Cultura Brasileira*, Studies of CNBB 58 (1990), among others<sup>24</sup>.

Antoniazzi was a man of his time, who experienced a Church in transition and innovated by proposing explanations and alternatives to the modern world, and to the new Catholicism that was emerging. According to Bonato, Coppe Caldeira and Tosta (2013), the theologian occupied the function of mediator through his writings:

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<sup>23</sup> The project “Biography about Priest Alberto Antoniazzi” (2013) brings a chronology about the theologian and his publications.

<sup>24</sup> In the area of pastoral guidelines and directives, Cleto Caliman affirms that Antoniazzi participated in the Guidelines since 1979, and as for the production area of the CNBB - blue collection documents, the Italian priest was constantly consulted, participating in the: *Vida e Ministério do Presbítero – Pastoral vocacional*, CNBB Document 20 (1981); *Catequese renovada. Orientações e Conteúdo*, CNBB Document 26 (1983); *Igreja: Comunhão e Missão*, CNBB Document 40 (1988); *Ética: Pessoa e Sociedade*, Documento da CNBB 50 (1993), e *Brasil – 500 Anos: Diálogo e Esperança*, CNBB Document 65 (2000); among others. About the area of pastoral projects, which Antoniazzi was very knowledgeable about there is *Rumo ao novo Milênio – Projeto de Evangelização da Igreja no Brasil em Preparação ao grande Jubileu do Ano 2000*, CNBB Document 56 (1996), with the contribution of several advisors, among them Fr. Manoel J. de Godoy. This project was responsible for producing 60 grants for communities, parishes and dioceses. Soon after there is *Ser Igreja no Novo Milênio: olhando para a frente*, CNBB Document 66 (2001), with the presentation by Alberto Antoniazzi.

(...) of those who seek to make the Church's challenges to modernity more intelligible in the eyes of all who participate in ecclesial life, being they priests, religious or lay people. These are postures that can be considered advanced for a Catholic intellectual of the Church in moments of crisis and tension of contemporary society (Bonato, Caldeira, Tosta, 2013: 299).

The priest wrote several articles in theological journals, but this work includes those published by the magazine *Atualização*, of which he was editor along with Paschoal Rangel, professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Central Institute of Theology and Philosophy (ICFT) of the Catholic University of Minas Gerais (UCMG). Through the articles, several professors of the Institute<sup>25</sup> collaborated with the magazine. Antoniazzi and these intellectuals formed a true “conciliar culture”, that was developed in the local church and in the academic environment of which Bonato, Caldeira and Tosta (2013)<sup>26</sup> were part. According to Beozzo (2001), the Second Vatican Council provided an increase in theological production, leading to the emergence of several specialized journals within institutes, colleges and universities of theology.

In the editorial of the journal, written by Rangel and Antoniazzi, the goals of *aggiornamento*, the target public and the mission are made clear: “(...) first of all, to update. And update reporting. Informing not so much about facts simply, but about ideas, about the movement of ideas that are shaking the Church (...)” (Antoniazzi, Rangel, 1969: 2). The publication is intended to:

“Priests, religious and laity” through texts in a language not very deep, written by people who are “in a line of openness for the people, the present, without fear of opening paths but without adventurism, without worship the new for the new; who knows how to recognize, with the tact of those who live the Church, what is an *update* in terms of the gospel (Antoniazzi, Rangel, 1969: 2).

The priest, as observed in his texts, is commonly attentive to cultural and historical factors, causing an area – theology – to dialogue with others, such as anthropology and history. Renewing without departing from the essence of the Gospel, and seeing new possibilities for Catholicism.

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<sup>25</sup> In the magazine's editorial: *Atualização Revista de Divulgação Teológica para o Cristão de Hoje*, number 1 it becomes clear the majority of the collaborators, almost all professors of the Institute of Philosophy and Theology of the Catholic University of Minas Gerais.

<sup>26</sup> In the same text, in a footnote, the authors showed that the curricular basis of the ICFT for 6 years (counting from 1966), used several conciliar documents and theologians who influenced the final result of the council. Antoniazzi was responsible for the synthesis of the result elaborated by the founders of the institute (Bonato, Caldeira, Tosta, 2013: 292).

UPDATE TO GET CLOSER: THE ARTICLES OF FR. ALBERTO ANTONIAZZI  
IN THE MAGAZINE UPDATE AS A FACET OF THE CONCILIAR RECEPTION

One of the first actions of Dom Joao Resende Costa when he returned from the council was to create a commission of some priests, including Fr. Antoniazzi, to be responsible for structuring and leveraging the reception and applicability of the council decrees at the Archdiocese's Major Seminary (Bonato; Tosta, 2013).

The priest was one of the most important members of the private church in Belo Horizonte who became directly involved in the process of conciliar reception. We can consider him as the representative of a "conciliar culture" in an emergency – an understanding of the council marked by reading those signs of the times that were expressed in Latin American reality and which had one of its highlights in the Second General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate held in Medellín in the year 1968.

This yearning to inform and update the Church of Belo Horizonte was one of the main triggers of the partnership between Fr. Alberto Antoniazzi and Fr. Paschoal Rangel, responsible for the publication of the magazine *Atualização*, which would be monthly starting in December 1969. Fr. Antoniazzi, through the texts published in the magazine, endeavoured to translate to the local Church the new directions that the Second Vatican Council pointed to Catholicism.

The magazine *Atualização* opens its publications in December 1969, whose name already had in it its fundamental aim, which was to update, through the information of the facts and movement of ideas, the various aspects of the Church. The opening editorial gives a speech that illustrates the configuration of the ideas of the Church in the post-Council period, in which the eagerness to carry forward the proposals and reforms pointed out in the event was carried by a certain disorientation, in which euphoria and optimism walked together with some disappointment about the appreciation of some traditionalist tendencies (Bonato, Coppe Caldeira, Tosta, 2013). Antoniazzi and Rangel, in this same editorial, make a brief analysis of the forces in combat in the period:

(...) struggle between those who want to defend the Church by defending a transitory historical form, of the Church taking place against those who have already understood that the Church is only defended by freeing her from the inadequate ways of expressing Christianity in every age or place (Antoniazzi, Rangel, 1969: 4).

Both authors had a clear notion of the process by which the Church passed in the late 1960s when the idea at first was of a Church that had shaken its own

structures. However, as faithful followers of the conciliar proposals, in the editorial they bring once again the position on the new configuration, which they call the “psycho-social” of the contemporary Church:

Events and new social, technical or scientific realities, the new situation created, are not destroying the Church of Christ. They are – yes – demolishing “forms of expression” of this Church, now inadequate. They are forcing us to go back to the sources, to reorganize, to update the Church, and to express it in suitable ways (Antoniuzzi, Rangel, 1969: 3).

Following the editorial, the first text is by Fr. Alberto Antoniuzzi and presents as a theme the “crisis of the Church”, which allows us to understand the theological scenario of the period in which it was written as to which were the works of reference for Antoniuzzi in what concerns the pursuit of the applicability of Vatican II.

Starting from a critical analysis of Louis Bouyer’s *The Decomposition of Catholicism*, Antoniuzzi works on key concepts such as “integristism”<sup>27</sup> and “progressivism” which express the extremes of conceptions about the situation of the Church, extremes that Antoniuzzi considers one of the main problems of the Church:

Progressivism would generate fundamentalism and vice versa; the arbitrary novelties would reinforce the resistances against the authentic renewal, and on the other hand, the traditionalism and the nostalgic attachment of the past would provoke revolutionary ruptures (Antoniuzzi, Rangel, 1969: 39).

Thus, Antoniuzzi makes it clear that for a true renewal of the Church there is a need to put aside dichotomies. He continues his text quoting several works which he presents as necessary pillars for the understanding of the historical period in which the Church lived. Some of them, such as that of the theologian Yves Congar, who according to Antoniuzzi refuses the dichotomies, leaving for an effective search for the renewal of the Church always in continuity<sup>28</sup>. Another clear example can be perceived in a series of texts that begins in the year 1969, the first year of the magazine. The series of texts is called “Theology of the Twentieth Century”, in which Antoniuzzi demonstrates his extensive knowledge of the course and development of Christian theology throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the middle of 1971, when the series ends. The opening of the series of texts makes clear what the goals of those publications were, and it should be pointed out that his position in favour of the Council becomes evident there too, since it presents

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<sup>27</sup> On the one hand, the pessimists, who believe in a crisis of the institution of the Church due to the proposals of renewal from Vatican II, and on the other, the progressives, who consider the renewal of the Church necessary, being able to transform it by themselves.

<sup>28</sup> Antoniuzzi, in his text, presents a series of authors and works including, for example, Jean Daniélou, George Morel, Michel de Certeau, Raymond Vancourt, Hans urs Von Balthasar, Henrich Fries, Albert Mirgeler, W. H. Van Pol among others.

a panorama of theology not only Catholic but also Protestant and Orthodox, starting from an ecumenical perspective, deepened and set in motion by the Council. According to Antoniazzi:

The renewal of the current Christian theology has deep roots and for many hidden (...). One can not, however, understand the theological currents of today, much less evaluate them and orient themselves in the midst of them, if not by raising the current to the sources (...). From an ecumenical perspective (without which 20<sup>th</sup> century theology would be inconceivable), we will present the leading Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox theologians (Antoniazzi, 1970: 3).

In the first years of the publication of *Atualização*, Antoniazzi's intellectual deepening became very visible, since the published reviews were constant in which the priest analyzed several works published in the period. As an example, the text written on the book *Myths and realities of the secularization* by Fr. José Comblin, which clearly presents a pertinent theme with regard to the insertion and recognition of the Church in the modern world. Through the presentation of the work, Antoniazzi points out the need for the Church to assimilate terms in its reflection which were previously considered negative, in order to contribute to the renewal of the Church.

Priest Alberto Antoniazzi's mission to inform readers about the ways the Church had taken in the renewal process was essential, so he sought to demonstrate some successful experiences in different private churches. In October 1970, Antoniazzi presented comments and a summary of a study done in dioceses in Italy where the conciliar proposal of church structure based on pastoral councils and a greater participation of the lay and the grass roots of the Church was already being applied:

In the beginning, it is perceived that the initiative is almost exclusively on the side of the Bishop and the perspective is almost solely to fulfil a norm of the Council. In the end, the participation of the base is much greater and it became aware of the scope and significance of the new institutions in an integrally renewed vision of the Church (Antoniazzi, 1970: 29)<sup>29</sup>.

On the formation of Pastoral Councils, Priest Alberto Antoniazzi writes some texts for *Atualização*. Worthy of mention is the one published in 1971. From the studies of the Pastoral Council conducted by the Eastern Regional of the CNBB, the text presents an overview of the clues of Vatican II for a definition of a Pastoral Council and how it should proceed:

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<sup>29</sup> In the course of the text the problems and difficulties still found in the implementation and implementation of the pastoral councils are presented which shows Antoniazzi's sober stance in recognizing the difficulty that existed in the constant attempt to update the Church after the conciliar event.

The subject deserves greater publicity, because it is an institution unprecedented in the Church and destined to have great reach. According to the conception which seems more faithful to the spirit of the Council, C.P. is not purely a democratic or specialized organ, but an expression of the co-responsibility of all people of God in pastoral action. That is why we judge this subject of interest and pleasure for all our readers: Bishops, priests, religious and laity (Antoniazzi, 1971: 51).

Always bearing in mind the fact that many of his writings emphasized the need for lay people to participate in the new configuration of the Church, in order to reflect on the need to not break with the process of renewal of the Church in the manner of Vatican II, through pastoral councils or through ministries developed for lay people. Thus, the priest develops a reflection on what would be a Theology of the People of God:

Being a process, a movement, it is not so important here to describe its stages and its script in all the details, but to try to understand the direction in which it proceeds or its main lines of development. Concrete situations will gradually be required to “check” these lines. In fact, in this exposition we intend to do not a deductive and theoretical theology, but to consider those consequences of the ecclesiology of the Council that have proved fruitful in our pastoral situation (Antoniazzi, 1972: 96)<sup>30</sup>.

A Church of God, in which the responsibility of evangelizing and proclaiming the Kingdom is not only in the hands of the clergy, but in all Christians, including the laity. As Antoniazzi explains,

The mission of the Church is entrusted, above all, to the Christian people as a whole. The prophetic, priestly and royal mission of Christ continues in and through all the faithful. The “Lumen Gentium” has broadly developed this perspective (...), rediscovering the doctrine of the universal priesthood of the faithful (LG 10), insisting on the fundamental equality of the faithful and the dignity of the laity (LG 12) on participation and co-responsibility of all (...) (Antoniazzi, 1972: 98-99).

The theologian makes clear that the Theology of the People of God proposes the recognition of the Church as a community of men inserted in history, a very present aspect in the thought of the theologian priest: the historicity of the people of God and their responsibility in updating the Church in order to collaborate, in announcing the Gospel, in the construction of more fair and fraternal societies.

Between 1974 and 1975 Fr. Antoniazzi’s writings gained a greater pastoral dimension and began to embrace broader themes, such as the configuration and function of Catholic universities in society. Two articles stand out. The first of

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<sup>30</sup> In 1972, a text from Fr. Antoniazzi was published in the magazine, which was based on one of the most important documents originating from the Second Vatican Council, the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* in which the configuration of the Church as God’s People is emphasized not for the purpose of to erase the other pastoral denominations, such as the idea of “Body of Christ”, but rather to value the participation of the lay foundation in the process of modernization and renewal of the Catholic Church.



1974, entitled “The goals of the Catholic University in a time of change of the University and the Church”, and the second published in the following year entitled “Current Trends of Catholic Universities in Brazil”. Both of them bring the main idea that the universities, mainly the Catholic ones, walked in a process of change of perspective and insertion in the modern world in the same step that the Church, as a whole, underwent a process of transformation coming from the proposals of the Vatican II Council.

From the pastoral point of view, Antoniazzi presents themes for his articles that value the needs of the particular Church and its social configuration, which is clear in its last three articles of the year 1975. The first one is entitled “Perspectives of Planning and Pastoral Action for the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte”, the second “For a critical vision of our pastoral action” and the last “The basic ecclesial Community”. The three of them bring as a theme the effective pastoral action of the Church of Belo Horizonte, regarding the need for renewal.

The maturity and sobriety of the publications of the theological priest translate well the spirit of dialogue and understanding before the process of renewal of the Church which, by its eyes, should be considered as a long process in which the obstacles could not be denied, quite the contrary, welcomed as moments of a journey in which the institution would do in order to become more faithful to the Gospel of Christ.

## CONCLUSION

History is made of permanences and ruptures on several levels. The changes do not occur linearly and not always abruptly. We are actors of our own history and we can operate transformations, but not alone. A conciliar event, in order not to be applied in an intransigent and authoritarian way, must attend to the participation of the Christian community as a whole, so the role of the local churches and the intellectuals involved must be taken into account, as was the case with Priest Alberto Antoniazzi.

The Second Vatican Council represented a great transformation within the Church and society. Dialogue with the modern world, ecumenism, greater participation of the laity, attention to the poor: the *aggiornamento*, expressed in the conciliar documents and well discussed in the meetings in the Vatican, the conferences of Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979) and the national and regional, is still keen on current debates. Thus, in order to think of a periodization of the reception of the Council at

a given locus, it is necessary to know the economic, political and social aspects of the place where this church, this religious body, is inserted.

The second consideration is that when the Council is convened, the participation of lay people played a prominent role within the Church of Belo Horizonte. The laity themselves could read about what was happening, through notes and reports from the Catholic journal *O Diário*. The reception of an event is a process in which a community receives a determination that it has not given itself, and it is necessary to adopt it as a practice, reformulating it and applying it to the local reality. Antoniazzi is an individual example that mirrors the process of conciliar reception in a specific environment. Through his performance and writings, the priest sought to translate the conciliar documents to a wider audience, being his critical reader, interpreting them for the contemporary moment. He offered to the local community, among lay people, clergy and religious, an understanding of the history of the Church in motion.

Minas Gerais from an early age, which dates back to colonial times with lay associations – for example the brotherhoods – stands out in relation to the laity participating in Catholic life. Minas merged tradition and modernization, since its capital was one of the first planned cities of Brazil. The participation of the Church in other movements such as the “Catholic Work Association” of 1919 in Belo Horizonte, as well as priests involved with associations such as JOC and JUC, brings out a broader action scenario for communion between church and society. Even though it was known for a strong tradition in the Catholic religious field, Minas Gerais, and more specifically the Belorizontine hierarchy, were open to what was once again the council, trying, early on, to be in tune with its proposals. Encouragement of people’s participation in masses and the use of pastoral chants, the communal celebration of the sacraments, the abolition of class differences, the active participation of the whole People of God in the councils demonstrates a facet of the conciliar reception in the local church.

Alberto Antoniazzi, D. João Resende Costa and D. Serafim Fernandes; the popes John XXIII and Paul VI, stood out for an opening to the modern world and its challenges. They are the faces of the planning of the council and its reception, men of their time who also carried with them the perceptions of the new world and the renewed church that was there.

It is known that the conciliar determinations needed to be applied in institutions subordinate to the Holy See, as pointed out in the Gravissimum Educationis Declaration and the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. Antoniazzi, who was connected to the educational branch since his arrival in Brazil, played a fundamental

role in the reality of local education, especially in the Seminary of Belo Horizonte and in the Institute of Theology of the Catholic University.

In the magazine *Atualização* he printed his ideas on the new ways of the Church of God, aiming to translate Vatican II to a wider audience. We can say that his articles and reviews are marked by trust and hope for the conciliar decisions and the *aggiornamento* proposed, but never without the mark of reflection and problematization. The essence of being a church could not be camouflaged by innovations by default, which also seemed to worry the body of the Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte.

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# RELIGION AND THE HEALTH-ILLNESS-ATTENTION PROCESS: A HAITIAN CASE STUDY

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## INTRODUCTION

Surviving in Haiti is a daily struggle for almost the entire population, which is subject to dynamics and situations that go well beyond what is understood as “life difficulties” in other societies. With one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world (46.8%, *Index Mundi*, 2018), one of the lowest life expectancies (63.8 years, *Index Mundi*, 2016) and 80% of the population living below the poverty line (*CIA World Factbook*, 2012), the daily struggle for survival and health maintenance begins with the search for the food needed to cheat hunger and “pass” through another day. With one of the world’s most alarming levels of malnutrition, citizens find themselves in situations vulnerable to disease directly correlated with malnutrition (Farmer, 2008). The effects of poverty on health extend painfully in face of the many consequences of the lack of public services, especially the lack of drinking water, basic sanitation, energy (83% and 70% according to UNDP, 2009) and decent housing for the majority of the population, Haiti being the last among the 147 countries evaluated by the Water Poverty Index (Farmer, 2010). Added to this scenario is the precariousness of the health system itself: with an average annual investment of no more than US\$ 83 per person (*MRE*, 2012), which gives it the last position in the Western Hemisphere, presenting an availability of only 25 physicians (0.25) and 11 nurses for each 10,000 inhabitants (*CIA World Factbook*, 2012), while the WHO recommends 1 physician per thousand

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inhabitants, and in their daily practices they have extremely limited resources and no diagnosis and treatment technologies. In addition, the gratuity of government public assistance is questionable since patients must pay for the medicines and materials used. In this context, what do most Haitian citizens (who live on less than a dollar per day) do in an attempt to pursue cures for or improvement of their illnesses?

When analyzing this problem, initially with the support of scientific articles, reports and informs from international organizations, we hypothesized that because of the low availability of resources and the cost of biomedical care, local healers would be the accessible and economically viable alternative for most of the population. Biomedical treatment would enter as a second option, used only when extremely necessary, at an astonishing cost and with a complex and limited-access logistics.

However, when experiencing the search for health care in Haiti and investigating it in a determined social group, an extremely complex scenario emerged, capable of dismantling the initial hypothesis; a scenario in which several cure and religion systems are mixed, and where the correlation between the therapeutic itinerary and the concept of structural violence<sup>1</sup> is identified. Based on the articulation of knowledge, agents and practices, this paper therefore analyzes the construction of therapeutic itineraries (focusing on religious cures) of a community in rural Haiti.

## RELIGIOUS CURES: A NETWORK OF ACTORS IN THE HEALTH-ILLNESS PROCESS

Understanding the health/illness/attention process<sup>2</sup> (h/i/a) of a social group is only possible if mediated by culture and group historicity. The interpretation of a disease encompasses meanings that transcend the biological universe and finds meaning only through the association of local and global socio-economic, political and environmental phenomena articulated in the light of their cultural dynamics. The correlation of these variables allows a diversity of representations in health, observed in the multiple ways of interpreting the causes of a disease, its forms of

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<sup>1</sup> The theory on structural violence was proposed by the Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung and is currently reinforced by the physician and anthropologist Paul Farmer to discuss the reality of the Haitian society. "It is the cause of the difference between the potential and the real, between what could have been and what it is" (Galtung, 1969: 172).

<sup>2</sup> Health/illness/attention – a term used by anthropologist Eduardo Menéndez.



expression, the construction of its meanings and the therapeutic possibilities, thus rendering ineffective the idea of a single etiology or an interpretative universality (Hernández, 2008). In the Haitian community, the Cartesian dualism between body and spirit does not exist and the reductionist view of health and disease phenomena give place to a multidimensional interpretation, where it is possible to perceive the interrelationship of its practices with historical and current socio-political and economic issues.

Supernatural forces as a source of knowledge and as a guiding element to healing practices represent a frequent approach in the analysis of the h/i/a processes affecting people in the community investigated. Religiousness plays a significant role in the life of these research informants, where conflicts will also occur due to the differences between the doctrines that underlie them. In this scenario, we emphasize voodoo, a religion brought from Africa by the first slaves, which appears as a popular guideline, characterizing a way of life, including in this perspective a system of interpretation, care and prevention in health.

The heart of voodoo culture has its nature based on order, and disorder is derived from individual attitudes set in the context of human and nonhuman relations. The moral values of voodoo, reproduced from generation to generation, take the form of basic principles that guide the behaviour of the group: “Evil is always of a physical and ethical order” (Hurbon, 1987: 167). Considering that, in general lines, the traditional concept of health in Haiti relates to balance between physical, emotional, social and spiritual factors, and good health requires some basic behavioural requirements in these four spheres. Thus, the coexistence between these two worlds (human and invisible) brings conceptions that can justify the fact that, at certain moments, only physical, traditional or biomedical therapies are not enough to achieve the desired result in treatment and cure processes, although the practices appear to be influenced by biomedicine when the patient map outs his therapeutic path.

Although voodoo is not the only religion, its principles are respected by most of the community. It seems that Haitians are connected to the voodoo religion in four different ways: there are those who participate in voodoo practices, those who are faithful to the *lwas*, but do not openly engage with practices, those who participate only in cults especially at times of crisis, and those who, adepts of other religions (mainly non-Catholics), are, in some way, being guided by their principles, reproducing customs and dogmas, and voodoo rationality (Michel, 2002). In

Haiti, “85% are Catholics, 15% are Protestants and 100% are voodoo practitioners” (Michel, 2002), which also show the relevance and complexity of religious conflicts.

Catholicism, in the country ever since the beginning of the slavery era, was the first official religion of Haiti. Protestants were introduced in the country through African-American immigrants that arrived from the USA around 1861, with the Episcopal Protestant Church, that soon expanded to the Adventist (Handerson, 2010). Although the Catholic congregation still has the highest number of declared adepts (Weil *et al.*, 1985), there is a proliferation of other churches, with their expansion starting in the middle of the century, with a more than 200% increase from 1949 to 1964 (Saint Louis, 2000), and with an even bigger expansion happening in the present day<sup>3</sup>.

Catholic, Protestant, and Salvationist religions have managed to solidify themselves in Haitian society by spreading the idea that the *lwas* are demonic. The difference between these Christian religions is that despite the formal opposition of Catholicism to voodoo, there is a syncretic process where both voodoo signs and rituals went into the Catholic Church as well as books, images, prayers, commemorative dates... Catholics entered the voodoo universe and, within the adjustments of doctrines and morality of both, have a more peaceful coexistence. However, other Christian churches reject voodooism (and even Catholicism, because of its approach), condemning any practice related to the *lwas* as demonic, fostering an extremely corrosive rivalry in the community.

It is interesting to consider, however, how, especially in the Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal (Salvationist) churches, they transform the same entities worshipped by African religions into expressions of evil, demanding from those who converted a rupture with the convictions that sustain their culture of origin, without, however, getting rid of them; on the contrary, reinforcing them in an inverse manner. The entities formerly invoked for protection and cure of diseases are now treated in the sense of being expelled “on behalf of healing and salving the person possessed”, where their leaders take advantage of the “lexicon and symbolic elements” of these religions to prove their power and superiority (Silva, 2007, page 226). Thus, just as voodoo entities can interfere in any sphere of social relations by influencing everyday misfortunes, the Salvationist churches also correspond to

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<sup>3</sup> *Lwa* are the deities of voodoo.

common problems and conflicts in people's lives, such as those related to money, love affairs, relatives, etc., as well as illness and death<sup>4</sup>.

In the field work performed in a rural Haitian community called *Kaydesa*, located on the north-west of Port-au-Prince, new and comprehensive perspectives were opened to understand the actions of the subjects in face of an illness process. Despite the difficulties in accessing biomedical services faced by the vast majority of Haitians, and especially the peasants, the *Kaydesa* region can be considered an oasis in rural Haiti as it provides easy access to hospital services. This community has the *Gwo Lopital Jeneral* hospital (GLJ), considered a reference in "official" therapy and a "modern" hospital for about 350 thousand people. Additionally, *Kaydesa* was a perfect field for the research because it is part of a region referenced nationally by the highest concentration of religious and traditional therapists, which allows easy interaction and movement of patients and families between different models of health care. Thus, in view of this new scenario, the initial hypothesis had to be reformulated. Bearing in mind that the search for traditional healers would occur in particular because of the absence of biomedicine and considering a supporting literature that reinforces the therapeutic choices and behaviours of rural Haitians fostered predominantly by the culture, *Kaydesa's* reality was set in a perfect scenario, since the choice of healers would not be challenged by geographical inaccessibility. Faced with this reality, the study was restructured, helping to fully know and understand the importance of the different models of health care and of the agents involved in the process of interpretation, diagnosis and cure of diseases, seeking to identify how subjects' therapeutic courses are built and the reasoning behind their choices

Culturally, the Haitian community intervenes with diseases according to their etiological interpretation, in an often narrow, complex and subjective distinction. According to the causative agent, diseases can be classified as having a natural or supernatural origin. Natural diseases, known as *maladian Bondye*, have as their ultimate cause divine intervention, being out of the control of the individual. These illnesses are mostly explained based on a framework widely shared by the Haitian community, with its grounding in the humoral theory. From this point, hot/cold and wet/dry imbalances can originate either from inappropriate food intake (which has hot/cold, light/heavy properties) or exposure to certain environmental elements (such as sun, rain, lightning, wind, etc.), or as a result of the influence of

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<sup>4</sup> In order to maintain anonymity, all places, institutions and names of persons referred to in the text are fictitious.

strong emotions (anger, sadness, fear...) (Nicolas, 2006; Foster 1976; Minn 2001; Freeman, 1998; Thomas-Stevenson, 1991; Colin, Paperwaslla, 2003). In this group, there are also diseases caused by pathogenic agents in general, such as viruses, bacteria and fungi<sup>5</sup>.

The diseases of supernatural causes are caused by the actions of spirits in earthly life, and this action can be motivated, in general lines, by two different reasons: by human intention towards the mystical world, from where a malice is sent, *maladi voye*<sup>6</sup>, or produced from the will of the *lwias* themselves or spirits of ancestors who, for some reason, are dissatisfied with their servant (Sterlin, 2006; Freeman, 1998; Brodwin, 1996; Métraux, 1958). The manifestation of mystical illnesses can include a simple injury in some part of the body, the involvement of organs and systems, mental problems or even a person's inability to act in their daily world (their microcosm) and in society. External human forces, which include the ancestors, *lwias* and other entities, help to provide guidance regarding logics, ethics, morals and codes of conduct, based on the customs and traditions of society. This serves as a reference to individual and group behaviour, interfering in the probability of suffering or not from these physical, mental and social misfortunes.

Three different groups of healers were formed in this scenario of illness process interpretation in the *Kaydesa* region: 1) Knowledge and forms of biomedical care – doctors, nurses, nursing technicians, physical therapy technicians, physiotherapists, laboratorians, nutritionists, pharmacy clerks and drug peddlers; 2) Knowledge and forms of “traditional” attention – *mèdsyn fèy* (MF) and *fanmsaj*; and 3) Knowledge and forms of spiritual care – voodoo priests (SV) – *mambo*, *houngan* and *bòkor*; priests and pastors.

As a rule, the etiology characterized as *maladi Bondje* directs patients to biomedical services and/or *mèdsyn fèy*. *Mèdsyn fèy* is a professional who uses generational past experiences as reference in humoral theory and herbs expertise, his main resource and the source of his name (*Doktè Fèy*, *Mèdsyn Fèy* – leaf doctors). In addition to the use of herbs, the use of laxatives and enemas, massages and joint “trust” techniques is part of their practices, as well as treatments based on the appropriation of biomedical knowledge. Although they are not recognized as mystical therapists, it was pretty evident that they work on both pragmatic and spiritual levels. The mystical connection appears as an object of relevance, initially, when one considers that being part of the profession is a consequence of a call from the invisible world, and it is even more

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<sup>5</sup> Also referred to as *maladi peyi*, *maladi doktè*.

<sup>6</sup> Also known as *voye mo*, *mo maladi*, *maladi majik*, *maladi moun*, *maladi sotan*.

important in the process of diagnosis, treatment and cure of patients, at which point mystical intervention can occur during the service or in a later stage through dreams, without disregarding the importance of prayers that accompany all rituals of healing as a source of power to achieve effectiveness in the treatment, since God is referred to as a sovereign being and intervener in therapeutic practices<sup>7</sup>.

As for the MF, the supernatural world has a significant weight for *fanmsajis*, professionals who work with pregnancy and childbirth. The entire process, from being part of the profession to rituals of accompaniment and childbirth, is permeated by religiosity. Although the help of spirits was present in several moments of their practice, the discourses pointed to knowledge from observation of other midwives, added to biomedical expertise acquired in improvement courses (promoted by the local hospital), as responsible for improved therapist agency and greater self-confidence. The professionals participating in these courses were considered by the community as more prepared for their practice, being the most sought after to follow pregnancy.

As for the spiritual therapists found in the *Kaydesa* region, *houngans*, *mambos* and *bòkors* are part of the culturally recognized professionals as well as health therapists. Under the view of these experts, supernatural forces are strongly involved in social events that sometimes end up manifesting in the form of illnesses<sup>8</sup>.

Becoming a voodoo priest (SV) and acting as a therapist of the h/i/a process, like what happens with traditional therapists, is also generally influenced by spirits and mostly by dreams. The manifestation of the spiritual entities in the choice of the priest, however, is motivated by different events that are part of the daily life of the subject and of his socio-cultural constructions, which are articulated and impelled to the priesthood. The competences attributed to the SV, unlike the MF, encompass the resolution of the most diverse conflicts that, regardless of their order, may reveal the existence (or not) of connections between misfortunes and diseases with behavioural ethics and social relations, which will give subsidies for the creation of illness interpretation networks. The dynamics of a priest work consists of two parts: the first one refers to the contact between the priest and the client, the consultation,

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<sup>7</sup> It is worth remembering that these groups are analytical constructions that serve to reflect on the data, to elaborate and to write the discussion.

<sup>8</sup> Some articles found bring other professionals with different assignments, such as *dokté zo*, (bone cleaners), *Pikiris* (injectors), as well as technicians associated with biomedicine, such as *Monitrices*, *Enqueteurs*, *Animatrices* (community workers) which, in this study, were either not found or had such practices associated with one of the professionals already identified.

under a ritual of evocation of the spirit that will enable the formulation of a diagnosis. With a diagnosis established, the priest, under the command of the *lwas*, propose a treatment (work), which may include a series of rituals, medicines and products (the “voodoo pharmacy” – *mezon kenkayri*), with the client choosing or not to send the work back or simply neutralize it. Although it is possible for anyone to interact with the mystical world, the priest is an indispensable ally to the interpretation of daily events and to possible action on these events. In this manner, the health practices will end up passing, according to some predisposing situations, through this healer and will always be involved in a network of moral evaluations. These evaluations include not only the interpretation of the moral causes of illnesses, but also the morality imbricated in the choice of therapists as guiding and executing practices. Public awareness in finding a priest, regardless of the purpose, damages the person’s reputation, and group’s constructs often revolve around basic questions: why would you be suffering from an illness? Why would someone send you an illness? Or still, would you be sending someone a disease? In any case, the responses suggest socially reprehensible behaviours. Surely, anyone may be afflicted by a sent misfortune, but those who did not do anything immoral would be less prone to being victimized by a *malady voye*. Therefore, the relationship established between the illness, the victim and the client when it is subjected to the intervention of *houngan*, *mambo* and *bokò*, can be judged from the ethical point of view of the client who seeks them.

The interposition of the Christian religions further reinforces evaluation of the character of those who resorts to a Voodoo priest as a therapeutic resource. A person’s behaviour is interpreted and a person’s guilt or entitlement to God’s protection is determined based on the warnings of the doctrine, especially of the Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches. The necessity of worshipping the biblical God and the complete abandonment of the *lwas* nourish a daily conflict in the community, which attempts to understand the events of life under such different dogmas. Approaching to the Christian God and intending to follow him seeks to reinforce a person’s moral condition, and his estrangement from Satan. For no other reason, only four of the community’s 52 interlocutors were publicly assumed to be *vodouwizan*. In denying the world of the *lwas*, it is implied that no pacts are made with entities capable, like the incarnated, of beneficent or evil actions. The religious option, and especially the public exposure of being Catholic, Protestant or Salvationist (these in particular), points out to a broadly rationalized construction of a prevention practice for the diseases sent, as important as any other therapeutic measure to prevent natural diseases. Being a Christian is a way of saying to society

that one is not adept, among other things, of sending diseases, misfortunes and death, while being said not to be worthy of moral evaluations and, therefore, of the ravages of the counter-magic.

In the face of such conflicts and a struggle for healing power, there is a permanent flow of believers between the different religions, reinforcing the need for other spiritual therapists capable of explaining and treating the mystical causality of the illness processes.

The clergy as a spiritual therapeutic option is sought by those Christians who, believing in supernatural strength, admit to performing miracles or a divine intervention capable of solving the difficulties or illnesses they are going through. In this group, religious leaders have some peculiarities, where a more incisive performance of pastors in the process is evident when compared to Catholic leaders. The position of Salvationist church leaders reinforces the differentiation between natural and unnatural diseases, and the sickness process conception is deeply immersed into the mystical universe, and it is also solved within this universe, showing innumerable similarities with voodoo principles. Priests' reports reinforce the fact that their churches perform works directed toward the healing of supernatural diseases, where they intervene through prayers, songs, and rituals that, under the evocation of a greater deity, the Christian God, seek to expel the demons causing such misfortunes.

The correlation between the guiding principles of these religions with voodoo is so close that it replicates one of the most adverse consequences of their practice: the animosities of relationships. The explanatory model used by voodoo to interpret everyday illnesses and misfortunes is largely responsible for hostility and enmity within a small relational group, showing the fragility of relations, including family relations, as deeply reinforced by informants' reports and already identified by other researchers. In this perspective, Protestant and Salvationist churches assume a similar agency, not only when they link suffering occasioned by the action of Satan with the immorality and bad intention of a person, but, more seriously, when they impel the converted group against the unconverted one.

Influenced by the need for conversion, the local religious panorama shows a constant migration of people from one religious to the other, a fact also motivated by the low effectiveness of disease cure in the public health system. According to reports, conversions happen frequently during periods of convalescence, when they are seen as another possibility of treatment (not yet tried): "I quit because I was sick and did not improve at all with voodoo, so I quit" (Mirella Vontz),

a condition agreed upon by Brodwin (1996: 172), based on Conway (1978: 253), when he emphasizes that “conversion in response to a disease is the fundamental basis for the growing Pentecostal movement in Haiti”. The quest for mystical therapy in disease treatment is so representative in the local community that, in addition to a shared symbolic manifestation between patients and therapists, it opens space for considerations about the role of biomedicine in this representation.

And concerning the official model of care, *Kaydesa* has an illustrative scenario of biomedicine at country level. Although the community has a “modern hospital”, there is no favourable therapeutic panorama in terms of medical therapy, since the struggle of patients when trying to cure their illnesses requires its achievement, among other things, avoiding the precariousness of diagnosis and treatment equipment, the lack of medications and materials for procedures, the lack of facilities and the limited number of professionals available to provide proper care.

As a brief report that seeks to portray the local reality, it is worth to note one of the most harmful problems that can be found in a hospital environment and that can be easily identified: poor asepsis, disinfection and hygiene. The rationing of potable water and the lack of appropriate places force users to share the same spaces to sanitize nursing materials of general use and contaminated materials. The proximity of this sanitation space with the tank where patients’ relatives collect water to bathe their patients, wash their bath bowls, dishes and cutlery, in addition to dirty cloths used for the most diverse purposes, create an environment extremely inadequate and conducive to one of the most important causes of disease transmission, worsening of illnesses and, not infrequently, death. The general cleaning of the rooms, corridors and bathrooms, due to the very few general service providers, is frequently assigned to patients’ family members, which is also of very low quality, where one can observe cockroaches, rats and the most diverse insects sharing space with patients.

When water is available, family members bathe their patients and clean their beds dirtied with urine and faeces without using any specific product, and when they can (and have), they change dirty sheets, as well as pillows, pillowcases and towels, as they are not provided by the hospital. In blistering heat, without any cooling, disadvantaged patients lay down on cloth mattresses covered with stains (including blood stains), which have not been disinfected in any way for a new user. Other patients lay down on mattresses brought from their own homes, which are placed on the floor, next to shoes, clothes, urine pots, dishes and many insects, a scenario highly conducive to pathogen transmission and retransmission.

Without potable water, patients receive hydration, when they can afford it, with water bought in bottles or in plastic bags of 100 ml. Food, which is not offered by



the hospital, is another patient responsibility, a time when the struggle for survival (which goes beyond the cure of the disease) is exacerbated. They are seen lying side by side, affected by the most diverse types of diseases, and in different degrees of weakness, exposed to situations where some of them are fed while others are not. If family members are unable to bring food, the patient does not eat.

A multitude of easily identified deficiencies could be listed, but precarious health is common knowledge. However, this condition is not attributed solely to this hospital institution. As verified by the origin of the informants of this research, the GLJ is sought by people from different regions of the country, being one of the most respected institutions in rural Haiti, despite not offering services of high complexity, opening space for the imagination of scenarios in official therapy that are even worse.

#### THERAPY COSTS IN THE KAYDESA AREA

It is not possible to speak of health treatment in a capitalist society without considering all the costs necessary for therapeutic alternatives to be made possible<sup>9</sup>. Especially in poorer societies, in addition to treatment costs, logistical costs determine, in countless cases, who will live longer and with better quality of life. Given the availability of different models of health care in the community, the costs of therapies could be evaluated as a pragmatic factor, through which it was possible to investigate their influence in choosing the first professional to be consulted in the processes of illness, and from where also emerged its relevance within the logic of the etiological construction of diseases. To understand the local financial environment, an explanation of the costs practised in each of the care models will be made, based on the opinion of therapists and health system users.

Within the official system, in general, the cost of an outpatient visit is around 40 gourdes; medications are not offered free of charge and hospitalizations are charged per day for higher costs. The value of 40 gourdes is the equivalent to US\$1. Although it may seem little, it is worth mentioning that in the local reality it is a significant amount, since hunger is a daily torment and this resource is always expressive when one thinks of providing food to the family. The medications prescribed as part of the treatment appear as a second financial obstacle to biomedical therapy, although costs change according to the pathology. The amounts

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<sup>9</sup> Refers to the first option, because in case of chronicity or aggravation of a disease, in any society, usually other alternatives or more expensive than the initials are used.

reported by the informants regarding their outpatient experiences were between 100 and 500 gourdes<sup>10</sup> (\$2.5 and \$12), and they already expressed a frequent reason for abandoning treatment, especially patients with chronic diseases. The performance of tests, when necessary, is another factor that compromises therapeutic effectiveness since it makes the intervention more expensive. As an aggravating factor, many of the requested tests are not performed at *Kaydesa* and require the patient to travel to Port-au-Prince. The difficulty faced by a patient when traveling on a *tap-tap*<sup>11</sup>, often standing and exposed to open air for more than four hours, adds to the high cost of the trip, where it is observed that this community, not rarely, ends up facing the same problems of residents of other rural areas where there are no hospitals available, and concerns are mainly focused on how to get the amount of money needed to complete treatment.

The financial situation of the interlocutors of this research was in fact very precarious, and it reproduced the reality found in every group. Most of the community survives from subsistence farming, where small amounts obtained as a result of product trading (when it occurred) were used to buy other products to feed the family. Of the entire group, only seven informants were able to quantify an approximate value for their sales or informal jobs, which ranged from 250 to 10,000 gourdes (\$6, \$25 and \$250, respectively) with an average below 2000 gourdes/month.

In the traditional model of care, *mèdsyn fèy* charged values between 50 and 2500 gourdes, including an average of three patient return visits, in addition to the remedies (based on natural products). The most cited cost range, both by therapists and users, was between 250 and 600 gourdes, and this difference was linked to a series of variables, among them illness complexity and the economic conditions of the patient, where, in order not to lose the patient, it would be possible to adjust the fees. The lack of resources was also cited as a factor for abandoning traditional therapy under the assistance of the MF, and the use of the expertise of the small group of relationships ended up being used as a possible option for the patient's attention practices.

Regarding the work performed by *fanmsajs*, costs ranged from 500 to 2000 gourdes, an amount charged for the entire follow-up process, including pre-natal visits (usually three visits, as informed) and childbirth. Similarly, fees can change according to the conditions of the family assisted.

If you consider the fees charged for mystical therapies under the leadership of an SV, this was done in two parts, each with a specific value: the first referring

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<sup>10</sup> At the local pharmacy, most of the drugs were in the range of \$1 to \$ 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Tap-tap* is a name used for vans, trucks (rarely buses) that function as public transportation.

to the costs requested by the priest as payment for the work of establishing a diagnosis; the second regarding the values requested by the spirit itself for its therapeutic intervention, and for the purchase of medicines and products needed for the healing work. Among all therapists, priests' prices were the most expensive ones found within the *Kaydesa* health system, varying from 250 to 1,550 gourdes (\$6.25 and \$38.75) for diagnosis, and 2000 to 20,000 Haitian dollars (\$153 to \$1538) for the work of spirits and medicines.

The awareness of how expensive treatment is in the mystical model of attention is part of a discourse common to every community. In addition to the costs of the consultation being already too high, the choice of this therapeutic modality is, like biomedicine, a cause of worry, because the total treatment costs are not known previously, since no one knows how much the spirit will charge to complete the work. Even though patients know that after diagnosis they do not necessarily need to perform the healing work, this "economy" does not seem to be an alternative considered when evaluating the need to seek help in this model of care. As it happens with MF, the type of disease to be treated, its complexity, and investments already made in other professionals or therapeutic models, influence the cost of treatment. However, the values are also negotiable, and the priest can, after a detailed analysis, adjust the cost, but the values referring to the second part of the fees, being the responsibility of the spirits, require the endorsement of the entity that is working to enable a negotiation, which, when it happens, is more commonly restricted to accepting payment through instalments, stipulated with extremely strict deadlines.

In practical terms, for citizens of the *Kaydesa* community, any access to healing alternatives is blocked because of financial issues, since the absolute majority of the population is living on a day-to-day basis for subsistence. However, the mystical approach is a significantly more expensive model, even when considering the costs of allopathic medications or periods of brief hospitalizations proposed by biomedicine. It is further exacerbated by the fact that, often, the resolution of the suffering may require, either due to its characteristics or due to non-resolution, a curative approach that includes more than one therapeutic model of care, which may end up making treatment more expensive.

Regarding the intervention of Christian Church leaders in treatment, it did not occur by means of specific payments, although there are moments within the cults, both in the Catholic Church and in other Christian congregations, where the faithful, rather than invited, are "persuaded" to collaborate financially with the entity. During the religious ritual, guests are invited to form a line and go to the altar where, before

each group, they must deposit their offering in cash, an extremely embarrassing situation for those who do not do it, also giving rise to judgements about their level of faith.

The assumption that the shortage of biomedical services, added to high costs, led people to seek local specialists for treatment, showed another aspect in *Kaydesa* health scenario, where it is possible to observe a relationship between financial issues, precariousness of the official health system and construction of the therapeutic path, a discussion that follows below.

#### THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PATIENT'S THERAPEUTIC ITINERARY

In practical terms, when they get sick, the subjects involved in this research do not take action based on the health professionals available locally. The therapeutic course is designed based on how the illness has been previously experienced, where previous experiences of previous illness are rescued, initially in view of a diagnosis that, as a rule, tries to be solved in the domestic scope. The inclusion of specialized healers happens when the complaints presented are not effectively solved, when the person chooses which model of care will be used. In this way, it is possible that more than one type of healer is consulted, if the results of the first intervention are not satisfactory, and it is not uncommon, according to the etiological interpretation of the disease, that healers with different expertise are concomitantly part of the therapeutic trajectory.

From this initial scenario, the question that followed was how, faced with the plurality of legitimated models of attention and with relative ease of access, the subjects of the *Kaydesa* community choose the specialized therapist who will initially treat the illness and how the therapeutic pathway is traced until its resolution, whether desired or not. To answer these questions, disease characteristics that could answer this question were initially sought, which was a difficult and complex work, since diseases have, most of the times, unspecific signs and symptoms. However, this search found a common rationality in the interpretation of typical disease manifestations, which directed to a healer in particular:

In diseases of natural causes, the search for *Medsyn Fèy*, according to illness reports by informants, was common, especially among those diseases recognized in the academic environment as “syndromes linked to culture”, in addition to diseases that involved skeletal muscle impairment.

The diseases referred to as “hospital diseases”, terminology commonly heard in the local community, initially directed patients to medical care: diagnoses such

as influenza, diabetes, inguinal hernia, tuberculosis, and signs and symptoms such as fever, headache, and stomach ache appeared as descriptions agreed upon by the group for the official system. However, regarding the signs and symptoms mentioned, these were also observed in assisted illnesses in other models of attention, which eventually brought controversy among the speeches. Thus, to understand the symbolic field of “hospital diseases”, this research paper investigated the illness explanatory models of the patients admitted to the GLJ and the therapeutic path established until the search for official medicine. By this approach, it was possible to identify in some diseases a bias clearly responsible for directing the itinerary of these patients, opening the way for greater reflections about subjects’ behaviour in relation to new knowledge and the weight exerted by therapeutic quality in this path<sup>12</sup>.

In one of the wards, Mr. Emils, pointed out the elements that support his illness as a “hospital illness”. Emils was hospitalized seven days ago due to “shortness of breath”, a symptom he attributed to a long-time smoking habit:

I know very well what cigarettes do it ... because sometimes when I smoke I experience short of breath ... but now I feel good ... I can eat, sleep well ... this is the third time I have this and when I had this, the doctor told me I must come quickly when I experience this.

Emils reveals that he did not do any home treatment or other model of care before this hospitalization, a practice that seems to be related to his previous experiences: “I came straight to the hospital ... I believe in the hospital, I’m better here.” When asked about the etiology of the disease, he laughs out loud and says, *maladi bondje... maladi cigarret....* Patient Quezia Dieu, 90 years old, also hospitalized due to “breathlessness”, has the same perception about the signs and symptoms of cigarettes:

I believe it is a disease of God (...) the problem is that I used to smoke a lot, a lot (...) since I was 10 years old, since my childhood (...) I quit smoking 2 years ago (...) this means (she calculates the years with the help of her son) 78 years of smoking, but today I feel better.

The choice for the official care model by both informants seems to be based on two different factors: the incorporation of scientific knowledge that relates the signs and symptoms presented with the use of smoking, and the satisfactory results of the biomedical treatment, within the framework of the illness. This construction is supported by Menéndez’s (2009) statements that indicates that the technical

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<sup>12</sup> The term “culture-linked syndrome” was first used by Chinese psychiatrist P.M. Yap in 1965 and is now widely used in medical anthropology to refer to a condition that affects a particular society or culture.

information patients have access to can change their behaviour towards disease and treatment, especially when they know about “their own experience with illness and attention” (Menéndez, 2009: 63).

Similarly, inguinal hernia<sup>13</sup>, one of the most frequent causes of GLJ surgery, does not require speculation regarding its etiological interpretation or the model of attention indicated, according to the informants of this research, since the association between physical strength necessary for the work in the field and the appearance of the hernia is accepted as a causal relation within the group:

I was operated on for a hernia (...) when I was a young man, I worked very hard and it provoked my illness (...) I am a rural producer, and I used to work with no food in my stomach and that is what produced this illness (...) I did not use to eat anything when preparing the land to plant (...) I was weak. (Noel Desrée).

The high solubility index of biomedical therapy reinforces medical indication as an ideal alternative for disease resolution.

Not only in these, but in other constructions surrounding illnesses, they showed that a causal nexus between symptomatology, the scientific explanation for the condition, and the good results of biomedicine led patients to speak with full conviction that their diseases would be “a disease of God” and the search for other therapists or the analysis of social relations as causing the illness seemed to be unnecessary. On the other hand, the ineffectiveness of biomedical procedures for many diseases, influenced by the limited competence of some professionals and the precariousness of the official system, creates a panorama that reinforces the need to search for another model of care:

I had a problem, I went to the hospital and the doctor told me that I had a cyst in the womb. Then I went to another hospital, and another doctor said I had nothing. When my husband brought me here, I had a son who was giving me trouble and he did a massage for me and gave me a leaf medicine and I was fine (Yvonne Venchs).

The pregnancy discovered by the MF after the attempts in official medicine makes one think about the quality of the medical consultations and the inaccessibility to exams and complementary investigations.

Apart from the diseases mentioned above, which initially require the intervention of biomedicine or traditional medicine, the following reflections seek to understand which constructions foster the need for mystical therapy. In this field, by the involvement of the moral issues influenced by the different religious currents, the emerging

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<sup>13</sup> An abdominal hernia is characterized by an abnormal bulging or protuberance of the wall (already weakened) due to some effort that increases intra-abdominal pressure, such as coughing, bowel movements, physical exertion, etc. It can be located more specifically in the inguinal, epigastric, inguinal-scrotal and umbilical areas (Brazilian Society of Hernia and Abdominal Wall, <http://www.sbhernia.com.br/esclarecimentos.asp>).

elements were not always very precise, and, at the beginning, they allow neither the identification of a profile for the mystical illnesses nor the identification of a rationality about the reasons that directed the initial search for the SV as healer. Thus, the interpretation of a mystical suffering seemed first to be preceded by the moral evaluations of social relations, which, for some reason, led the victim to be identified (by him/herself and or his/her convivial group) as deserving of harm<sup>14</sup>.

However, after deepening the investigations in this field, new elements appeared and were reproduced, through which disease signs and symptoms, and specific situations of the disease process that fomented the diagnosis of *maladi voye* and the need to resort to the mystical model of attention, even before such behavioural analyzes had been performed. More frequently, and as a symptomatology more indicative of mystical diseases, the sufferers were referred to those ailments that manifested themselves through pain and discomfort that frequently migrated from one place to another in the body, those that appeared in different regions at the same time or even those with intense itching and scaling. Besides these, mental disorders and diseases of sudden and serious onset and of delayed resolution were typified as *maladi voye*. Unlike the intention of biomedicine, the objective of the voodoo approach to the treatment of diseases would not be focused on a patient's immediate physical healing, but on rebalancing the protective energies that sustain their reciprocal relation with nature, with humans and with the spirits. The therapeutic course of these illnesses was either started with this healer (more rarely) or occurred concurrently with biomedicine when a family member intercedes in the quest for the mystical response while the patient focuses on the biological sphere of the disease.

On this dynamic widely diffused in the local community, it is necessary to mention the findings in the available biomedical literature. We did not find any evidence in the reports of this research that the search for SV delayed the search for medical care, both based on the reports of users and therapists. The understanding of the limitation of mystical therapy to the biological issues of the disease is seen as a justification for the association of these models of attention, especially in function of infectious diseases. Priests can treat all manifestations of spiritual breakdowns, often using *fèys* medicines, but not all signs and symptoms of biological characteristics are within his competence. The combination of spiritual and

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<sup>14</sup> The receptivity of the group to new therapeutic alternatives, regardless of the cultural constructions of the diseases, appeared at several moments in the speeches of the interlocutors and was very evident within the field of physiotherapy. Although it was a completely unknown resource in the community, in a period of one year, it ended up generating a demand greater than the capacity of the service made available. The often-widespread idea that Haitians are not adept of biomedical treatment alternatives needs to be rethought from the point of view of availability and access to services.

medical practices has been reinforced numerous times and explained, among other voices, by *houngan* Pierristyl Renold, who puts this interdisciplinary approach as a condition for good results:

you have to take the medicines prescribed at the hospital because if a *houngan* treats a person and does not send them to the hospital their work is not effective. People can sometimes have an infection and it is of great importance that the doctor sees them so that they can get better.

Some authors have also argued that germs and bacteria are not recognized, especially in rural areas, as agents that cause diseases, linking such diseases to mystical causes, or energy imbalances. However, in this research the local healers made their referral to the official model precisely under the justification of not being able to fight against bacteria and germs that were associated with the spiritual disease, a concept recognized by all interlocutors of this research.

#### WHO TO SEARCH FOR IN CASES OF DISEASES

The delimitation of what would be diseases of natural or unnatural causes is confused, at a time when a set of symptoms is sometimes treated by an MF or biomedicine and sometimes under the eyes of the SV. And it is this very same scenario of uncertainties that will help to understand the influence of the elements in the network composing the h/i/a process and the weight each of these elements has in therapeutic path construction. There are three questions that guide reflections and that seek to improve understanding about construction of the patient's therapeutic itinerary. What elements in "nonspecific" ailments are considered by the patient when defining the first model of care? Why do the same symptoms appear to be assisted in the hospital or the traditional and mystical model? What would specifically be the basis for the differences in the therapeutic trajectory?

As opposed to the literature and to reports of international organizations that provide a justification based on the lower costs of local therapists and on the multifactorial culture of the diseases, a specialized therapeutic path that starts with local therapists, for voodoo therapists and, finally, for biomedical therapists, the findings of this research point out a totally different version both in the choice of the first therapist and in the justifications for such choice. Countless were the statements and the reports of patients that revealed a consensual construction that in addition to pointing out, provided subsidies to define an operational profile of conduct in the episodes of illness of the group that, as a rule, start in biomedicine and, when necessary, are expanded from it, as exemplified by Mrs. Onelia Piercy, companion of a patient hospitalized in GLJ:



P – What illness is an illness that should be treated in the hospital only?

O – Headache, stomach ache, fever, you have to go straight to the hospital.

P – You do not treat, headache, stomach ache, fever in *bòkor* or MF.

O – Yes, it's possible. But you must come to the hospital first.

P – Why?

O – To take the medications prescribed by the doctor, and if the pain does not go away, then you go to the house of a *houngan*.

In addition to illnesses understood as “hospital diseases”, biomedicine was the first specialized option of treatment referred to by the group when, based on the analysis of the signs and symptoms presented by the patient, establishing a “home” diagnosis and assertively choosing the most indicated healer based on such diagnosis was permeated with “uncertainties”. Such uncertainties would boost the initial search for the official health system since it is seen by the group as a system with credibility to formulate a differential diagnosis between a natural and unnatural disease. The construction of the therapeutic pathway, starting at the hospital and having the expected effectiveness in it, tends to rule out other constructions regarding the illness and to put an end to the search for other therapists. Its limitation and ineffectiveness, however, expands the search for other models of attention, which also fosters its mystical chance. In this situation, the understanding of a disease changes from natural causes to supernatural causes, orienting not only the modification of therapeutic behaviours, but all the symbolism that will be part of the explanatory model of the disease.

Collaborating to biomedicine as the first model of care are the financial costs of the treatment, an argument emphasized countless times and that I emphasize from the speech of Louis, a young resident of the region, who reports his construction of the therapeutic itinerary based on the prices charged in each model of care. Suggesting that a *bòkor's* fees can reach up to “five thousand US dollars, depending on the work done”, he reinforces options, which as an apparent convention, tend to initially use the less expensive model of care: “if you are sick, go to the hospital and does not get better, you go to the *bòkor's* house and he will give a price for the treatment which is more expensive”. The interpretation of the disease directed to natural causes, *maladi bondje*, besides allowing reduced treatment expenses, once it is solved with the intervention of a single specialist, also withdraws the moral and social weight of being suffering from an illness that was sent by someone, preventing the person from facing the judgements of their group

or choosing different religions that fight among themselves for the recognition of the healing power.

Although in the *Kaydesa* community extending the search to other therapists may occur within biomedicine itself, due to the existence of another hospital in the immediate vicinity, delayed illness resolution or its aggravation usually expand the search to other models of attention.

The traditional model of cures also emerges as a therapeutic resource for diseases that have not had the expected results with biomedical intervention, even though they are not in line with the explanatory model of traditional diseases. The search for the cure of diseases through the incorporation of different models of attention was a clear fact in the voice of the interlocutors, and clearly expressed by Pedro Jentz:

when you have a problem, you have to go to the hospital because when you go to the hospital the doctor gives you medicine, but if the problem is not solved, you have to look for another solution, you go to *mèdsyn fèy*, but not because you know he can solve the problem, but because you must make another attempt.

In any society, the attempt to resolve a condition often ends up using all existing resources, and there is no inconsistency in the association of therapies, since, as Menendèz explains (2009: 23), “this patient is concerned with improving his health, controlling his illness in a more effective manner (...)”.

Although this is an amenable behaviour, based on the subjects’ speeches, patients moving from the field of biomedicine to the mystical field have been more frequently observed since both the traditional and the biomedical models deal with the same etiology based on natural causes. The following constructions are influenced by the relation between the social and the spiritual of Voodoo culture (or Salvationist religions) as articulators of the disequilibrium, since health, being part of the natural order, could be re-established by biomedicine if it were a disease of *bondje*. Thus, the explanatory model of a supernatural disease seems to be supported, in many cases, by the quality of biomedicine and its ineffectiveness in resolving the disease.

Even the signs and symptoms recognized in the group as “hospital diseases” or “cultural diseases” end up being re-examined from the etiological point of view when they persist for a long time after medical and traditional interventions. According to *bokò* Jean-Claude Mitchell: “Firstly, if someone is sick with a fever which has been going on for 3 to 4 weeks, it is not a natural fever, it is a fever sent by someone” (...), reinforcing in his speaking the limitations of the other models of attention for the treatment of ailments of delayed resolution.

According to Kleinman and Good (1985), in different social groups, the incorporation or substitution of treatment strategies is frequent based on new information added during the course of the illness process or when the practices used are considered ineffective. In a miserable reality such as the one found in Haiti, where illnesses and premature deaths that can be prevented by biomedicine are, due to the precariousness of the health system, witnessed frequently and inexplicable from the point of view of a natural disease, there is an intense and frequent part of the subjects who do not discard any of the available resources, as explained also by *bokò* Jean-Claude Mitchell when he reveals why he is sought after to work in healing processes: “you know when a person has an illness, when that disease can kill, so you have to look for a solution to this problem everywhere”. These elements are also reinforced by Luck Zanit, who justifies the course and incorporation of mystical therapeutic conducts in the healing process:

sometimes when you have an illness it is because a person has done a bad thing behind you, and it is there with you, it stays there with you and you get ill, and if you do not do anything, it will be bad all the time ... it's something done for you to be sick all the time (...) but if it was not a person who sent it to you, that is bad for you, then when you go to the hospital, you get better.

Findings relating to the inefficiency of biomedicine in diagnosing *maladi voye* were also described by Paul Brodwin (1996: 23): “You go to the dispensary, and if the nurses or the doctors cannot do anything for you, then it's probably a *Maladi Satan*”; likewise, the cure of a disease through biomedicine “usually means that it was caused by natural processes (a «sickness of God»)”.

Based on the above, the similarity found in the strategic profile of the subjects' attention in the studied community occurs not only in relation to a disease or to a group of diseases with specific characteristics, but mainly because of the non-resolution of the disease under medical care, reflecting the quality of the biomedical services offered.

According to Dr. William Hodges quoted by Freeman (1998) “Most of the deaths in Haiti are attributed to external forces of evil”. In this study, it was possible to verify that, without considering the variables already presented, the diseases were more easily identified as *maladi voye*, especially when they affected younger age groups, a group biologically less likely to die, and when they manifested as severe, sudden diseases or diseases of delayed resolution, conditions that more deeply require diagnosis and treatment from biomedicine, which without the necessary resources cannot cure illnesses, giving subsidies for mystical interpretation (among hospitalized patients that were part of this research, two of them were 84 and 90 years old, and their illnesses were seen in both cases as *maladi*

*bondje*, even leading to death). The ineffectiveness of biomedicine in these cases is not seen by the community as a “and indication of weakness” for this therapeutic model, but as a sign that the disease is not of *bondje*, a meaning supported by two basic assumptions: if, on one hand, the Haitian community is not aware in practical terms of the scope of biomedicine in the present day and how much it would be able to alleviate or avoid suffering and unnecessary deaths; on the other hand, the mystical explanatory model maintains the feeling of having certain control and hope in the possibility of cure. Otherwise, if all illnesses were accepted as illness of *bondje* nature, but the resources to treat them would only be available to those who could afford it, the feeling of impotence and vulnerability would be even more devastating because the only possibility of cure would not be linked to of the interference of spiritual entities for disease resolution, and would become dependent exclusively on a miserable biomedical model. The world outside of the sphere of spirits would be even more insecure than the reality of the community today. The mystical conception as an explanation of many disease etiologies in this context would not be a disassociated alternative to the influence of structural violence under biomedical practices. It is much easier to accept death for a disease that biomedicine is not capable of treating than to accept the violence of a medicine that allows the perpetuation of life for some, but not for everyone.

#### THINKING ABOUT DEATH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Finding a correlation between structural violence, the illness process and suffering in the rural community of Kaydesa is not a difficult task. Although, as sustained by Farmer (2009), human beings are originally capable of enduring suffering, it is something, in an extreme way, generally experienced by those in poverty conditions, where diseases and premature deaths are their main determinants. There are innumerable routine situations where “pain” is experienced as something inherent to the context in the Haitian community. However, the deaths during pregnancy and childbirth, and their consequences for the small group, are among the most striking causes of suffering experienced by the community.

“Poverty”, according to the OMS, “exerts its destructive influence on all stages of human life from conception to the grave, and conspires with the most deadly and painful diseases to bring a miserable existence to all those who suffer this” (Farmer, 2009: 25). Poverty as responsible for the violation of the most fundamental human rights, the right to life, was observed in the death of Juliene,

a death that in another reality would probably have been avoided and therefore it is shown as a bias of structural violence. For this event, it was also possible to identify the cascade of suffering that broke out in the family of Juliene, beginning with the mourning caused by the loss, continuing with the animosities of family relations and expanding to the difficulties in the rearrangement of an impoverished family nucleus.

Juliene was a 40-year-old woman with nine children who died of a generalized infection one week after a hospital delivery. The despair and disbelief of the family because of the premature death did not permit any other elaboration than finding the person responsible for doing this work. At no point did anyone in the group of their acquaintances reported such event as an illness of *Bondye* or related to the precariousness of biomedicine, since if it were a *maladi Bondye* the hospital would have been able to save her: “The hospital did all it could to save her...” and “*Bondye* does not want five children and a newborn to be orphaned”. Involved in a climate of extreme suspicion, the family chooses to consult with a SV to find out what had led her to death, which eventually indicated Juliene’s older sister, Odetta, as a initiator of the work, motivated by the sum of money the three eldest children sent sporadically to Juliene. Because of the constructions and symbolism involved in the death, the family collapsed, considering the social and moral burden that the sending of the death causes to the person who sent it and to the relatives. The mother of Juliene and Odetta ended up in intense suffering and the family, despite maintaining the conviviality, reinforced ruthless judgements that put Odetta as the villain of the process of illness and death.

There are several factors that lead to death from the concept of structural violence: wars, attacks, murders. However, in its pathophysiological dimension, it ends up victimizing a much larger number of people, using stupid forms, when, for example, it restricts the treatment of curable diseases to ineffective procedures, just at a time when scientific advances are at the peak of their evolution.

Among these diseases are infections, which, as happened with Juliene, make countless premature victims every year, especially in miserable countries, the main victims of structural violence (Farmer, 2007). The fact that Juliene had the opportunity to be treated in a hospital unit (which does not happen with 64% of women in childbirth), does not erase the selectivity of biomedicine as a therapeutic possibility. Hospital infection remains an epidemiological challenge even in leading hospitals, but in a scenario of deficiency, where Juliene treatment was performed, as already described, the evolution from a delivery to an infectious condition, sepsis and death is within a progressive panorama, known and even expected according to scientific knowledge.

In addition to structural violence being seen as an influential factor in Juliene's death, its relevance appears in several other circumstances of this event. If we expand our vision, we could conceive it as an important agent for perpetuating the social relations of emerging animosities from the etiology of *maladi voye*, and it is possible to identify it in this context through the conflictual relations established within Juliene's family after her death. And to add to the extension of such violence, it would not be surprising in a case like this if the reading of the event resulted in the intentional and pejorative dissemination of the facts, where the historical search for the voodoo priest would be linked only to voodoo beliefs, never in response to the vulnerability of the subjects faced with the precariousness of the available health services. In this regard, Castro and Farmer (2005) point out that stigma is a constituent part of social inequalities and the most apparent part of structural violence, perpetuating the ineffectiveness of the treatments offered to the population.

## CHOLERA

Constructing an illness explanatory model includes in its analysis elements already known and manipulated in other representations. Based on previous experiences, signs, symptoms and therapeutic responses are articulated in a multifaceted way to explain illness in order to make sense within a broader context of the h/i/a process. To reflect on these issues, it is pertinent to address the cholera epidemics initiated in Haiti in mid-2010.

The bacterium *Vibrio cholerae* was introduced to Haiti by the soldiers of the UN's peace forces from Nepal. Residues of septic tanks contaminated the largest and most important river in the country, the Artibonite River (Morsbach Greg: ONGS fazem..., 2010; Ivers, 2013), and it quickly spread bacteria to various regions and communities in Haiti. Cholera is a contagious infectious disease that causes severe dehydration resulting from diarrhea and intense vomiting, which can lead to death of the patient, sometimes within hours. Due to the extreme difficulty of access to drinking water and without any experience and knowledge about the disease, after a period of approximately three weeks, there were more than 14,600 hospitalizations and 917 deaths, the first cases being identified in the region where GLJ was located (Frerichs, 2013).

Despite the alarming number of victims, which in less than 6 months resulted in the death of 4,672 people (Sontag, 2012), the estimates of reality could have

been even worse if it had not been for the emergency action of some local institutions and health care agencies, which worked on cholera awareness campaigns and provided care to patients with relative precocity (for the local reality). The mobilization observed in the region covered by GLJ also happened in other parts of the country. Turning to education, the work involved the biomedical team in conjunction with influential members of the community, traditional and spiritual therapists, teachers and religious leaders. The emphasis was placed on the clarification of the signs and symptoms and prevention of the disease, addressing issues of hygiene, use and treatment of water, as well as the distribution of products to suit consumption. Encouraging the search for immediate medical attention was also the focus of the approach, reinforced through the media, radio, television, sound trucks, T-shirts, posters, banners ... However, before the campaigns were implemented and treatment feasible to the population, sufficient time elapsed for epidemics to break out, a period in which an individual and collective process of construction of its explanatory model began.

The new disease was full of characteristics that, as the way it reached the group, ended up leaving them completely disoriented. Although it had a well-known symptomatology, it was not possible to determine the causative agent. Identifying the first signs and symptoms of “new disease” followed the verification of the ineffectiveness of the proposed treatments and the high mortality rates; there was a rapid proliferation in the community in general and in people of the same social group; whole families, neighbours, friends were affected at the same time and had the same fate. And it was during processes of vulnerability, impotence, and suffering, where children or elders were not spared from the contagion and where both the strongest and the malnourished died, that the initial reading that grounded the explanatory model of cholera was built on the social group.

The construction of an explanatory model for the disease, at the moment, as Menéndez (2009: 268) maintains, appears as a social event of extreme relevance, since it tries to re-establish the order shaken in that great group:

data that the sufferings constitute daily and recurrent facts, and that a part of them may appear to the subjects and social groups as permanent or circumstantial threats in the real and/or imaginary planes, social groups need to construct collective social signifiers about such ailments in order to explain them, to solve them or to live with them.

Because of the violent way in which it affected the population and the ineffectiveness of the treatments experienced by the group, cholera was quickly associated with witchcraft, whereby the voodoo priest became a central figure in his

explanatory model, fundamental for the healing process and responsible for dissemination of the disease. The lack of solubility with traditional and spiritual therapy and with biomedical intervention, which, because it was late, did not prevent frequent deaths, reinforced the mystical character of the disease and, in the face of the results, increased the feeling of impotence of the population. Faced with the rapid expansion and morbimortality, explained by its supernatural representation, the population rebelled against the group of mystical healers, appointed as guilty by the scene of so many uncontrollable deaths.

In a desperate attempt to stop the dissemination of the disease, the population beat and murdered several voodoo priests in some regions of the country: “in houses whose roofs show a kind of scarecrow with red rags, at least 40 priests were murdered (...) Some of the population attributed to them responsibility for the deaths of more than 3,300 cholera victims” (Borges, 2011).

One year after the outbreak of the epidemics, the voodoo priesthood murders still reverberated among the *Kaydesa* community, although they did not happen in the region and the mystical component of the disease was no longer in question. The reformulation of the explanatory model of cholera was seen in a short period of time.

Efforts to disseminate disease awareness programmes have disseminated and introduced scientific knowledge about their contagion, their care and treatment, completely undoing their initial conception and making any reflections on their mystical causation unnecessary. Even the residents of the most distant places had comprehensive information on cholera and used it as a preventive and therapeutic measure: “I have a remedy to clean the water, a remedy to avoid cholera”, explains Ms. Susanna Pulkki, showing a small bag of chlorine and explaining how to make use of it. The importance of the educational programme as a way to contain the epidemics and mortality can, likewise, be shown in reports such as that of Mrs. Rachelle Dorlus, a mountain dweller more than two hours distant from the nearest dispensary, and it's translated as unanimity while a current therapeutic consensus in the community, not hesitating to indicate the model of care that she considered ideal for treatment: “it causes vomiting and diarrhea and you have to run to the hospital, otherwise you can die”. There was no more space in the construction of cholera in the mystical causal dimension in the *Kaydesa* community, according to informants: “In my house, no one got cholera, but I know a lot of people did, so the person has to go to the hospital. It is not a disease of MF and bokòr. It is a hospital illness” (Celano Relar). The perception of the need for biomedical treatment for cholera was also present in the voice of the local healers,



SV and MF who, in a collective way, affirmed that they immediately referred patients to the hospital.

In this experience with cholera, the modification of the initial model of interpretation occurred as a direct response to the interrelation between two approaches used to control the epidemics. Initially, health education efforts pointed out to the importance of socialization of knowledge as a decisive factor in saving lives and spoke highly of the receptivity of the community to new knowledge. However, the diffusion of scientific knowledge could only contribute to a new conception of the disease, and modify the actions before it, because they were supported by the accessibility to biomedical resources, a situation favoured by the reality of health in the *Kaydesa* region. The existence of a local hospital with great care capacity added to the structuring of services in an emergency situation and the provision of effective treatment, including for the population of the most distant regions (through “dispensaries”), allowed biomedical therapy of the greatest effectiveness compared to other healing models, helping to recreate the initial understanding of the disease.

Under this perspective, assertions that have long been expressed by anthropologists as Kleinman et al (1995) and Lévi-Strauss (1958) emphasize effective therapies as experiences capable of altering the social interpretations of the disease, an argument also supported by Sontag (1978) when he reinforces that lack of etiology definition and lack of a more efficient treatment aggravate and perpetuate their stigmatizing social conceptions.

Although in the case of cholera this change occurred rapidly, in the diseases of slower proliferation and lethality these changes tend to happen over a longer period of time, as shown by the AIDS experience in the country. The explanatory model of AIDS, followed in rural Haiti by physician and anthropologist Paul Farmer since the 1980s, has undergone changes in its initial mystical conception based on the therapeutic offer of greater effectiveness, which has occurred more slowly, mainly due to the programmes offered to the population being made available according to their cost-effectiveness: “the social experience of AIDS” was and continues to be “deeply affected by the advent of effective therapy” (Castro, Farmer, 2005: s/p.).

Thus, imagining that there had been no socialization of knowledge and “rapid” quality assistance to the *Kaydesa* community in the face of the cholera epidemics, what could be expected from residents? The answer was probably in the perpetuation of the constructions and actions taken by the group in the face of

the initial process of the epidemics, when there was neither the capacity nor the readiness to treat it.

Expanding the optics to understand the complexity of the events involved in the representation of cholera quickly reveals the structural violence involved not only in the process of establishment and proliferation of the epidemics, but also (no longer based only on conjectures such as those proposed in the case of Juliene), in the irresponsible, simplistic and convenient way that the initial information on the therapeutic path of the patients was disseminated internationally, where the culture was suggested as a contributing factor in the aggravation and rapid proliferation of the epidemics.

#### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The coexistence and reciprocal influence between the human and invisible world appear as a pillar in health foundation among the *Kaydesa* community and have a close relationship with biomedicine. In view of a therapeutic path that most of the time starts in the official model, and from which it defines the etiology of the disease, the reasons that foment the fact that so many ailments are associated with mystical causality are vitally important in the understanding of this trajectory. If, on the one hand, the mystical questions, regardless of the religious option, appear to override the hegemony of the official system in the healing processes; on the other hand, biomedicine, since it presents itself as an insufficient resource for the resolution of ailments, seems to reinforce the mystical intervention as an indispensable alternative for healing, while endorsing, as a further therapeutic possibility, migrations between different religions.

The dynamics of the h/i/a process as an expression of a group identity is a difficult behaviour to be modified (Menéndez, 2009) and it is clear that, in order to truly change this scenario, a broad relation between the cognitive and pragmatic aspects is necessary, where the importance of the quality of the therapeutic services available to the population is included. And by broadening the analysis of illness processes beyond culture, it is possible to establish a relationship between social and political forces and the consequent poverty under the aegis of structural violence, as factors influencing the risk of perpetuating the stigma of some diseases as mandated or as “death sentences”. Unfortunately, yet another form of structural violence, many agencies involved in public health globally, without a contextual analysis, make a biased interpretation of therapeutic practices and

“choices”, often using them to justify different health investments in each group and low adherence to biomedical programmes and therapies. In fact, such cultural arguments only blur the gaze of events, organisms, and the history which are truly responsible. According to Farmer (2009), “cultural justification is one of several forms of essentialism used to explain assaults on dignity and suffering in general”. Analyzes based on cultural inequalities should be less considered when studying the miserable context of a society, extending the interpretation to a macro-social view. The response of the *Kaydesa* community to the cholera epidemics should be used as a reflection and to challenge such constructions, as well as to emphasize the importance and feasibility of health actions even in such adverse realities, determining the lack of global political will and structural violence as factors responsible for an infinity of avoidable suffering and death.

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# CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICES AND THE SACRED SPHERE. FROM ATHEISTIC ANTI-RELIGIOUS CRUSADES TO AGNOSTIC HERESIES OF DIALOGUE

Jacek Zydorowicz\*

The sacred sphere does not seem to be dominant in today's visual culture. However, this culture occasionally generates images with such great performative power that the state of affairs caused by these images can easily get out of control. Needless to say, the religious factor present in visual images plays a vital role. This is evidenced by numerous examples, for instance the recent assassination of Christopher J. Stevens, the US Ambassador in Benghazi. Bloody riots in Libya and other Islamic countries were triggered by a film, *Innocence of Muslims*, which was released on YouTube. According to initial information circulated in the media, the director of the film was an American Jew, Sam Bacile. It was also announced that the author had to live in hiding in fear of retribution from the followers of Muhammad. In the comments section below the film one of the Internet users wrote that if he had made an equally bad film, he would probably go into hiding, too, but his motivation would be shame rather than fear. On this occasion it is difficult to support the freedom of artistic expression, since the film is embarrassingly mediocre, with an amateur cast, and desert scenes depicting Muhammad's life shot in green-screen technology. The content of the film is a low-standard provocation directed at Muslims, because it not only shows Prophet Muhammad on screen (which is forbidden) but it also presents him as a bastard child, a crook, and as a sexual deviant. Tension and unrest settled in only after the film was released on YouTube in an Arabic language version. It was not the only feedback, as this scandal created a number of conspiracy theories suggesting that it was Muslims

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who controlled the production of the film. As a result of an investigation it was revealed that Sam Bacile is a false identity and the person responsible for the film is Nakuola Basseley Nakuola, a Coptic Christian from Egypt, which was confirmed concordantly by *Los Angeles Times* and *Al-Jazeera*<sup>1</sup>.

This incident clearly demonstrates that the absence of the sacred in today's visual sphere should not lead us to hasty conclusions concerning the processes of global secularization. But valid conclusions can be drawn when it comes to the ease with which religious issues are instrumentalized by various subjects: politicians, religious leaders, terrorists, journalists, and other groups. The label "other groups" most certainly includes artists.

But let's come back to the matter in question – let me just add that for the sake of this article I am using the idea of the so-called "institutional concept of art" (see Dickie, 1985; see also Dziemidok, 1980) to narrow down the scope of the topic. Following this definition, art is understood as what the world of art exposes to public view, namely what is exhibited in art galleries and displayed by curators and artists, and what is commented on by critics acting on behalf of the art world. In this way, religious art as such is somehow excluded from the text of this article. There are, naturally, exceptions to the rule, but the world of contemporary art and the world of religious art are two separate spheres in terms of their circulation and aesthetic reflection. "Secular" artists, however, did not give up on touching upon the sacred sphere, thus verging more than once on blasphemy and the insulting of religious feelings. Many such incidents led us to perceive the worlds of secular and religious art as unenthusiastic or even hostile towards each other. It was not always like this, though a discussion about whether art owes more to religion or religion more to art does not really make sense these days – it is enough to examine art history course books. The very same course books point out the fact that both of these cultural practices were drifting further and further apart. The causes were many – but it is neither the time nor the place to identify them here.

It is worth remembering that the rapprochement of art and religion took place in the heyday and dominance of religious discourse, which is an obvious fact. The symbiosis of art and religion was also evident in times of censorship. Nonconformist and engaged art sided with the excluded groups – let it suffice to mention

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<sup>1</sup> The classification of Stevens' death in the media coverage was unclear from the very beginning; there were increasing speculations about how he died, ranging from lynching by the outraged mob of Muhammad's followers to a planned assassination. It is interesting to note that journalists in their reports did not overstate the fact that the ambassador's death happened on September 11, 2012 – the anniversary of the attack on the WTC and the Pentagon (Nakoula Basseley Nakoula's..., 2012).

religious murals in Belfast and their role in shaping local identities, or Polish engaged art, whose works of art were exhibited in Polish churches in the 1980s. Jerzy Kalina's installation of a nativity scene in the trunk of the Fiat 125p would be classified today as an insult to religious feelings; however, in the specific, and tragic context of the death of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko, this work became an icon carrying political meaning. Artists and Catholic priests turned out to be effective catalysts of social resistance at the time.



Photo 1. Jerzy Kalina, *Pojazd betlejemski (Bethlehem vehicle)*, 1984, Warsaw, The Church of St. Stanislaus Kostka.

The times of the social and economic transformation after 1989 brought about significant changes – artists either lost interest in religious topics or concentrated on criticising the new discourse around the politicised sacred sphere. The atmosphere of the 90s in Polish religious art was charged with scandals, accusations of blasphemy, the closing of the exhibitions, preventive censorship, etc. Nevertheless, from the perspective of time it turns out that there was relatively little religion present in the art of that decade. Robert Rumas deserves to be mentioned in this context with his explorations of the sacred as the most consistent and well-thought tactics of critically diagnosing Polish religiousness. The title of one of his installations was an ironic interpretation of a literal Polish slogan God-Honour-Homeland, values that seemed to be ominously getting closer to their overdue date. So, the artist good-naturedly decided to extend their “shelf-life” and to save other “sanctities” by conserving them in canning jars. In this way, we can watch figurines of the Virgin Mary, badges with Pope John Paul II and with logos of

Solidarity pickled in the jars, together with coins, sausages, communion wafers and other devotional objects. Such subtle balancing on the edge of the sacred and the profane has become a hallmark of Rumas's art for a long time.



Photo 2. Robert Rumas, *BÓG w mojej OJCZYŹNIE jest HONOROWY* (GOD in my HOMELAND is HONOURABLE), 1994 (120x40x12 cm, electric installation, canning jars with the Polish flag, figurines of Virgin Mary, roses, communion wafers, coin, and sausage). The work of art is part of The National Art Gallery Zachęta in Warsaw.

At the beginning of the first decade of the 2000s Dorota Nieznalska initiated discussions in Polish art with her installation *Passion*, which faced charges of offending religious feelings, and whose author was convicted without precedent and, eventually, acquitted following numerous court appeals. The installation *Passion* consists of a lightbox in the shape of the cross which is filled by an image of male genitals and is accompanied by a video projecting a man working out in the gym. From the perspective of time, this situation seems to have been really unfortunate: a young female artist starts to circulate in the media and in the artistic world by means of a fairly poor work, turning public opinion against herself. Although these were not the artistic means of expression that were subject to the law suit, it behoved art critics and art people to side with the repressed artist, to which they, actually, committed themselves. The atmosphere of censorship prevented many from levelling substantive criticism about this work, because it seemed inappropriate at the time. Nobody wished to be associated with the “inquisition” or wanted to provide further incriminating arguments for the prosecution. Artists were also sparing in their reactions – noteworthy is the fact that in solidarity with Nieznalska there was no escalation or multiplication of blasphemous works by other authors. Other artists did not follow in her footsteps not really because the



world of art, together with its curators, lives in fear, but probably because it was helpless against the question: How to do religious art after Nieznalska? (to paraphrase the question by Theodor Adorno on art after Auschwitz). The only meaningful comment on the matter was given by Grzegorz Klaman in his video titled *196 kk* (2002)<sup>2</sup>. The whole video frame is filled by Nieznalska's face, and personal attacks taken from the Internet portals are read out to her. Every now and then some unknown hand painfully slaps her in the cheek. Thus, Klaman shifted the focus of attention on how the beleaguered author of *Passion* was victimised, the meta-artistic issues encoded in his work were only of secondary importance. This work refers to a forgotten video "Was ist Kunst", in which a Serbian performer Raša Todosijević in an identical video frame is molesting a woman's face, and the voiceover with a Gestapo-like zeal repeats the phrase "Was ist Kunst?"



Photo 3. Grzegorz Klaman, *196 kk* (*Article 196, Penal Code*), 2002.



Photo 4. Raša Todosijević, *Was ist Kunst*, 1976.

Going beyond the vicious circle of our local conditions, it is vital to ask the question what the relations between artists and religion abroad are. Generally speaking, in today's discussions on the sacred in art at a global level, the same names are being recalled, for example, Andres Serrano, Robert Mapplethorpe, Maurizio Cattelan, Chris Ofili; and, moreover, it is their older works that are remembered and discussed. From their examples it is evident that it is very easy to raise resonance by touching upon the sacred in art, but it is difficult not to strike

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<sup>2</sup> The title of this work refers to Article 196 of the Polish Penal Code, which says: "Whoever offends the religious feelings of other persons by outraging in public an object of religious worship or a place dedicated to the public celebration of religious rites, shall be subject to a fine, the penalty of restriction of liberty or the penalty of deprivation of liberty for up to 2 years". The whole trial was reported meticulously and with eagerness by Łukasz Guzek at [spam.art.pl](http://spam.art.pl).

“false chords” at the same time – and these would be easy and primitive solutions. Mixing religion and art is always accompanied by scandals, accusations of blasphemy, the closing of the exhibitions, the presence of preventive censorship, etc. Does it mean that the potential of the sacred in art has been exhausted? On the one hand, we have intimidated curators who avoid discussing sensitive religious topics, on the other, it seems that blasphemous and transgressive strategies have already been “used up” by most artists.

Of course, art is going to penetrate the sphere of the sacred as long as religion remains a matter of social significance. Reality continues to provide us with still new situations and discourses on the sacred in art, so there are many critical artistic stances on the topic and the artists clearly have not abandoned their strategies of provocation via religious iconography. Therefore, I would like to present a handful of examples of art from the 2000s, selected in a fairly tendentious manner<sup>3</sup>, to clarify two types of artistic tactics for dealing with the sacred themes: atheistic anti-religious crusades and agnostic heresies of dialogue.

This typology is rather daring and made *ad hoc*, but I do not strive to make any presumptions about the real philosophical beliefs of the artists. How arbitrary and blurry my typology can get is evidenced by the fact that the works of the same author can end up in both categories<sup>4</sup>.

## TACTICS I – ATHEISTIC CRUSADES

To characterise these tactics, I would like to begin with the works of Anthony Padgett<sup>5</sup>, who is based in the UK. As an author who is conscious of the power of tabloid journalism in the mass media, he made scandal the axis of his self-promotional artistic strategies, scandal being unfailingly stirred up by religious themes in art. A literal application of postmodernism in the sphere of religion brings desirable effects, which results in a parody of ecumenism. Padgett describes his method precisely as *Pick and Mix Religious Art*. He is famous for accusing the London Tate Modern of religious discrimination, when he was denied space in the Turbin Hall to exhibit his works (2005). Pursuing this direction, he made a

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<sup>3</sup> This tendentious approach is visible in my examples of critical or engaged art, so I am not mentioning affirmative artistic stances.

<sup>4</sup> My idea behind distinguishing these two approaches was not to evaluate them; however, in this case it is hard not to make certain value judgements.

<sup>5</sup> He is a graduate of Wimbledon School of Art (Theory of Contemporary Art and Performance), also a finalist of International Jewish Artist of the Year Awards (2004), and an author of a collection of essays *Religion & Contemporary Art*, published by Auditors of God (2010).

performance praying for the successful outcome of his endeavour in front of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, at the Wailing Wall, in front of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, and in front of a McDonald's. He had had similar campaigns earlier in Poland, when he had photographed himself at the main entrance gate at Auschwitz, wearing only trousers decorated with religious symbols and a Wehrmacht Army helmet painted white (*Jew Art Jedi Auschwitz*, 2004). At another occasion, during his performance he sawed a figure of Christ wearing a hijab, Jewish trousers and a Christian chasuble (*Racovian Heresy Sawing*, Bielsko-Biała, 2004). Thus, he referred to the local history and the doctrinal conflict between the Unitarians and the Trinitarians. Another work by Padgett worthy of mentioning is *Updating Pascal Wager. Interreligious Monopoly Gambling*, which earned him the title of the finalist of International Jewish Artist of the Year Award (Ben Uri Gallery, London, 2004). It is a sort of a game similar to Monopoly, whose board is covered with symbols of the major universalistic religions. By recalling Pascal's Wager the author signals that religion in the postmodern times is an even greater gamble. His codes and premises are too clear, Padgett would like to argue with all denominations at once to test who is going to be provoked first. In spite of my kind-hearted approach to artistic interpretation and my sympathy for critical stances in art, I must call these works talentless hack.

In 2009 in Nod Roxy Gallery in Prague in the Czech Republic, 30 minutes after the start of the *ACHTUNG* exhibition, Israeli activists destroyed the exposition. The exhibition presented the works of a Polish street artist hiding under the pseudonym Peter Fuss. His activities around different spheres of the sacred embrace both tactics proposed by me in this article. The *ACHTUNG* exhibition can be classified in different ways, depending on the scale of interpretation we adopt. The artist displayed large raster black and white prints depicting Wehrmacht Army soldiers, who are wearing armbands with the Star of David on their shoulders, cleverly made by himself. The exhibition was destroyed, which was to be expected, since Fuss tinkered with Photoshop to depict the dark sacred sphere of the twentieth century, the Holocaust. It is a cheap provocation on the one hand and a certain "trap-within-a-trap" on the other. In fact, the artist did not use archival photographs but stills from such films like Roman Polański's *The Pianist* or Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. So, we can say that his works were based on mere representations, that is, on the pop culture which preys on the memory of the Shoah.

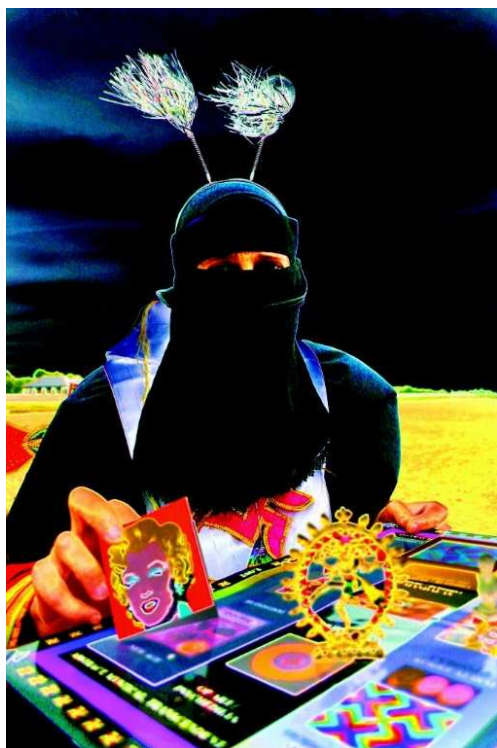


Photo 5, 6, 7. Anthony Padgett Updating Pascal Wager, 2004.

While working with the representations of the sacred, Fuss also created a project called *Santo Subito*, which was shown in Galeria Studio BWA in Wrocław (2007). Actually, it was a collection of kitschy gadgets with the image of John Paul II, gathered from various Polish sanctuaries and places of religious cult (from wall clocks through figurines of the Pope, thimbles, to cigarette lighters). Unfortunately, there was no hidden agenda in this case – the sophisticated urban audience in the gallery was presented with trashy fair-like objects to be laughed at. Something was missing here, most probably it was the time for a deeper reflection. What entitles the representatives of the so-called high culture to criticise such (low) forms of identification with religious cult? The truth is that the very same refined audience is ready to pay 60 dollars for a snobbish designer pen-drive in the shape of the Virgin Mary, a must-have gadget<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> A product designed by Louis Eslava; the Maria USB stick is a small transparent figure of the Virgin Mary with a red led beating heart while transferring data; her golden aureole is decorated with the words: *Oh Maria, keep my data safe*.

During the festival of visual arts inSPIRACJE (Szczecin 2012) Peter Fuss proposed an installation in the spirit of Damien Hirst<sup>7</sup>: a large crucifix made of transparent plastic, impressively highlighted, which only on closer inspection turns out to be a collection of hundreds of mini-aquariums containing live worms. Given the very recent inclinations manifested by Poles to defend the cross as a religious symbol, we may say that this work of art is another deliberate provocation. This is a work of little subtlety, but still. In *Dialogues on Metaphysics and Religion* by Nicolas Malebranche, Aristes (one of the speakers) maintains that “it is obvious that God wanted to symbolize Jesus by the changes insects go through”, and he compares the worm to the despised Jesus Christ who is “charged with our infirmities and weaknesses”. At the next stage “a worm encloses itself in *its tomb* and is *resurrected* later without being corrupted”. “The worm resurrects to a body that is, so to speak, wholly spiritual. It does not crawl. It flies. It no longer feeds on putrefaction, it drinks from the flowers” (Złowrogi znak moty, s.a.).



Photo 8, 9. Peter Fuss, *Cross 2*, 2012.

## TACTICS II – AGNOSTIC HERESIES OF DIALOGUE

The other stance represented by contemporary artists toward the sacred would be (though not without some reservations) closer to irreligion presented by Kazimierz Piotrowski in his Brussels exhibition under the same title (*Irreligion*, Atelier 340, Brussels 2001). For the sake of his project, the curator decided to

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<sup>7</sup> Damien Hirst – a representative of Young British Artists, once a provocateur, and today one of the highest paid artists in the world; in his installations he also used the larvae of flies cultivated on a rotting cow’s head (*A Thousand Years*, 1990). By way of digression, it is worth noting that this is not the only reference to Hirst in Fuss’s art – the Pole decided to make a fake copy of Hirst’s famous skull encrusted with diamonds (with the starting price of one hundred million dollars); the original is titled *For the Love of God* (2007), the title of its pastiche being *For the Laugh of God* (2007).

rework the idea of irreligion by Colin Campbell (1971: 31). Piotrowski claims: “Irreligion, or to be more precise irreligious attitude, is an attitude to religion which asks questions about the fundamentals of religious doctrine, which are an individual’s cultural ties, rather than denies the existence of the objects of faith” (Szyłak, s.a.). My intention in this article is not to strike at religion but to analyse its social dimension.

A similar way of thinking resulted in a monumental sculpture by David Mach titled *Golgotha*. The work was displayed in Edinburgh to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of King James’s Bible (2011). The sculpture depicts life-size figures crucified on irregular beams. Hundreds of coat hanger hooks stick out from each crucified body thus forming an aggressive “negative” of the wounds. This seemingly simple strategy of extruding the hooks outward allows us to look at the cross from a different perspective – through the prism of religious conflicts in history, which changed the meaning of the crucifix from the symbol of sacrifice and redemption to the tool of violence. In the context of this work, Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin poses the question of whether undisturbed aesthetic communication between the unbelieving artist, the religious work and the unbelieving recipient is at all possible. She explains that for David Mach the Bible is not the foundation for doctrines, but is rather the source of universal archetypes and stories about human love, ecstasy, suffering, violence, etc. Therefore, he does not expect religion to make us experience spirituality or some divine beauty, but to provide some narrative context for our life stories, for human dramas and suffering in the twenty first century (Dengerink Chaplin, 2011).

So, the theme of Christ’s Passion may not always lead to insulting religious feelings in contemporary art, as evidenced by Peter Fuss’s billboards showing the Way of the Cross. I am talking about large-format prints, which were illegally put on billboards along the platforms of Gdynia Chylonia railway station. Particular stations (how fortunately named) of the Cross were presented in the purist poetics, in a street art fashion and stereotypically, and the face of Christ the convict is every time covered with a black strip – just like in the media coverage of criminals’ trials. This is then another simple and successful artistic attempt to re-contextualise the New Testament narration; moreover, the narration which avoids blasphemous aftertaste<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> The more well-known and scandalous work was a billboard with a slogan “Jews out of the Catholic country” (“Żydzi won z katolickiego kraju”). Apart from the slogan, Fuss put several dozens of images of the faces of well-known politicians, journalists, actors and celebrities. The billboard poster was located in the direct vicinity of one of Catholic churches in Koszalin, so this guerrilla-semiotic



Photo 10. Peter Fuss, z cyklu Billboards, The Way of the Cross.

Speaking of public art, Piotr Ukleński's huge billboard deserves a few words. This photo was staged as part of Biennale of Art in Sao Paulo in 2004. The artist arranged the bodies of 3.5 thousand soldiers in such a way that, like pixels, they formed a portrait of John Paul II. The Pope died a year after, exactly at the time when the billboard was being displayed in Warsaw. The bereaved Poles spontaneously started laying flowers and placing candles at the billboard. Although this work had not been created for religious reasons, and neither was it addressed at this sort of "audience", it became an object of religious worship by chance; passers-by would kneel down and pray.

Because the figure of Pope John Paul II arouses powerful emotions in Poland, art does not remain socially indifferent to this fact. It is also rather obvious that pop culture will join art in this endeavour to benefit from the involvement in such lofty narratives. After the Pope died, filmmakers rushed to shoot films based on Karol Wojtyła's life, which resulted in many hasty productions, for example *Karol, A Man Who Became Pope*, directed by Giacomo Battiato in 2005. Such rich material for a great plot was wasted and used in the scripts for poor and kitschy adaptations. This production would not have been worthy of mentioning had it not been for the fact that, quite unexpectedly, it started to circulate in the art world. It

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artistic campaign could not really be classified as a dialogic tactics. By analysing hate speech propagated by the ultra-right and national-Catholic portals, the author decided in his brutal and literal poetics to quote the list of names of Polish Jews he found on the Internet. The Jews and their names were "unmasked" by [www.polonica.net](http://www.polonica.net), but soon after the removal of the billboard by the police, the very list vanished from the portal as well. Locating the billboard close to the church was an ostentatious act of pointing at the source of such and similar anti-Semitic discourses.

turned out that the members of the Azorro Group took part in the casting for the film. Lukasz Skapski, Igor Krenz, Wojciech Niedzielko and Oskar Dawicki were hired as extras, and they played a series of episodic or anonymous roles in group scenes (e.g. Jews displaced from the ghetto, Polish priests, professors of Jagiellonian University, the Nazis). They were barely recognizable on screen, so they did not exert any influence on the message of the film; however, they managed to somehow “infect” this production. Thanks to Azorro’s performer-like initiative, Battiato’s production was watched in art galleries by many people who would not have bothered to watch it in different circumstances. The screening of the film in art galleries led to several discussions on the pontificate and on matters of a more general nature, for example the relationship between art and Christianity (see Ronduda, 2005).



Photo 11. AZORRO Group.



Photo 12. Artur Żmijewski, *Pilgrimage*, 2003 [screenshot from a film on DVD].

Talking of art which comments on the social functioning of religion, we cannot forget about visual artist Artur Żmijewski. During his visits to Israel in 2003 he made a series of short videos which illustrate the state of tension in the region. The real advantage of his videos is its variety of perspectives, which are still different from those presented in the news in the media, the aesthetics we are used to. When we watch *Pilgrimage*, produced in collaboration with Paweł Althamer, we become partakers of a Polish pilgrimage to the Holy Land, whose guide does not shy away from preaching anti-Semitic tirades and manipulating history. In another video called *Our Songbook* Żmijewski perfectly puts himself in the shoes of an anthropologist, trying to make aged and ailing Jews of Polish origin recall songs from their childhood. The Jews sing eagerly, though noticeably struggling



they are humming the Polish national anthem and patriotic songs. In his film *Itzik*, the artist turns from an anthropologist into a reporter who listens to a torrent of words of hatred directed at Palestinians by an ordinary Israeli citizen.

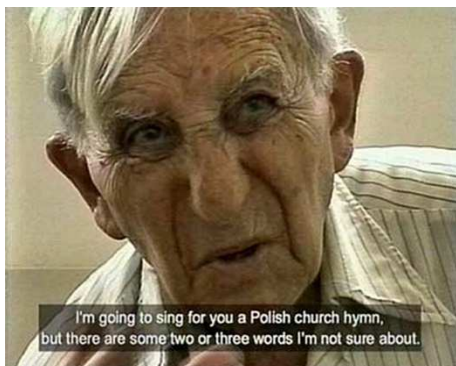


Photo 13. Artur Żmijewski, *Our Songbook*, 2003 (screenshot from a film on DVD).



Photo 14. Artur Żmijewski, *Itzik*, 2003 (screenshot from a film on DVD).

Can left-wing intellectuals explore Christian values (and how can they do it)? Artur Żmijewski, this time in the role of a curator of the 7<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennale (2012), invited Mirosław Patecki, the author of a gigantic statue of Christ in Świebodzin, to participate in the exhibition. During the Biennale, Patecki made a replica of Jesus Christ's head in one of the halls of the Kunstwerke building. At first sight, it must have seemed to be some kind of artistic tomfoolery or even a trap: a left-wing atheist and a general editor of *Krytyka Polityczna* (a Polish leftist magazine) invites a church sculptor and a simple artisan to display his work at one of the most prestigious exhibitions in Europe. But, judging from the BB7 coverage, it was not a trap, and Patecki felt great in this company. From very few interviews with the sculptor we can learn about his conflicts with the local parson, which involved not only a limited budget (which forced the sculptor to use lower quality materials) but also disagreements about some artistic solutions adopted by the sculptor, for instance the proportion of Christ's hands, face, etc. Why did the curator invite the sculptor to this great exhibition? Was his aim to free the religious artist from his sponsor, the parson, and offer him absolute freedom of artistic expression? Or maybe to manifest the solidarity of socially engaged art with the class of simple craftsmen? The curator's decision of inviting Patecki for the Biennale is striking up a dialogue to emphasise the "leftist" aspects of Christianity on the one hand, and "winking" at the

audience on the other, by proving the authors of the exhibition to be ideologically open-minded people<sup>9</sup>.



Photo 15. Mirosław Patecki's work in the 7<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennale.

In recent years the citizens of Poznań have been arguing about the presence of Islamic symbols in the urban iconosphere. The pretext for the discussion was given by Joanna Rajkowska's unfinished work called *Project Minaret* (2009-2011). It is impossible to briefly summarise the controversies, negative attitudes and discussions which broke out (un)expectedly around this project. Initially (that is before the "scandal" erupted), in spite of my sympathy for the artist and my admiration for her works, I was a bit sceptical myself. My scepticism was not a result of Islamophobia or any similar motifs, but it was caused by my doubts concerning the validity of this empty sign (a factory chimney stylised as a minaret) being located between the cathedral and the former synagogue. I expected protests from the Muslim communities, I expected accusations of de-sacralising Muslim religious symbols in a carefree manner by an "infidel"<sup>10</sup>. This would have been a truly unfortunate coincidence regarding Rajkowska's involvement in the Palestinian cause (in 2008 she organised a series of pseudo-theatrical workshops for refugees in the West Bank; on this very occasion she shot the film *Camping Jenin*). Messikh Mohamed Salah, Chairman of the Muslim League in Poznań, however,

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<sup>9</sup> It is a shame, really, that the Biennale curators failed to invite to Berlin the supporters of Falubaz, a speedway club, who as a result of a reckless action (2011) decorated Christ's statue from Świebodzin with a 40-metre-long Falubaz club scarf. The wrongdoers later explained that their aim was not to offend religious feelings, but that they simply wanted to have Jesus Christ on their side on the eve of a competition with Unia Leszno. They would even send one another text messages of this kind: "Let the Lord lead us to victory on this very day". Read more at [http://wyborcza.pl/1,75248,10393304,Chrystus\\_z\\_gigantycznym\\_szalikiem\\_Falubazu\\_\\_WIDEO\\_.html#ixzz2EYcnw5DW](http://wyborcza.pl/1,75248,10393304,Chrystus_z_gigantycznym_szalikiem_Falubazu__WIDEO_.html#ixzz2EYcnw5DW).

<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the Jewish community in Poznań had every right to react antagonistically to the project, as the synagogue was first de-sacralised and turned into a swimming pool by the Nazis (by the way, it stopped being used as a swimming pool a relatively short time ago), and now it was to be found in the neighbourhood of a factory chimney converted to a minaret (the sacred building turned into a public facility building with an industrial building being made sacred would exist side by side).

said: “A minaret is only a building, and it has no religious significance” (Wybieralski, 2009). His stance did not in any way relieve the tension over this project. Ewa Rewers astutely commented on the whole situation using these words:

It is worth noting (...) that it is normally the Islamic diaspora which stands up for its religious symbols in the public space, and it needs sacred buildings, cultural centres, etc. close-by and not just in its country of origin to preserve Islamic culture. In Poznań, it was an artist who requested the minaret in the city space, and by experimenting with the conservative (according to the stereotype) mentality of its citizens, she wanted to check the readiness of Poznanians for accepting something that is “culturally alien”, she wanted to test their openness to “the other”. This and other differences contribute to the fact that the Poznań Minaret is still a matter of discussion and argument rather than a real architectonic part of the urban space. The argument is being stirred by three factors: first, the Western civilization’s attitude toward the Islam, second, the negative attitude of the Poznań city dwellers to spatial innovations, thirdly, artists’ attitude to the public zone. The context for this argument serves as a context for interpretations, but it is also a temptation to intercept symbols, overmaster them, weaken or use them for one’s own purposes (Rewers, s.a.).

The history of most recent art shows that, paradoxically, some unrealised projects owe their fame, power of expression and social resonance to censorship or to the fact that they were banned. Rajkowska’s project worked even in its purely conceptual phase, and it resulted in the disclosure of some local phobias. Hypothetically speaking, Rajkowska is in a far better position than those artists whose projects were completed but are socially indifferent, and are treated by many as eclectic decorations of the city landscape – the Yenidze building in Dresden with its orientalising mosque-like design is a good example (from a former cigarette factory it has now been turned into a commercial and cultural centre).



Photo 16. Joanna Rajkowska, *Project Minaret*, unrealised in Poznań, 2011.

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The differences between the two artistic tactics presented above boil down to their rhetoric and the degree of radicalism of expression. The tactics from the first group, which I metaphorically called atheistic anti-religious crusades, presuppose the element of provocation, usually of a blasphemous nature, frequently by using religious symbols to attract attention to the very idea of provocation rather than to criticise the problem. It is not even a paradox but a rule of thumb in art and the visual arts that the more committed the author becomes, the more explicit and unequivocal (and thus poor and pretentious) their work is. Such actions can be compared to one memory by James Elkins, which is about his work with students. In order to obtain a credit for his course, a young art student came to the class carrying a huge photograph of Elvis Presley on the cross. Despite the author's high expectations, his project did not arouse any emotions, only a feeling of embarrassment on the side of the professor and fellow students, who in their discussion on the project politely decided to focus on the good technical quality of the equipment used and on the high-budget printing technique (see: Elkins, 2004: 33).

The second group of tactics, which I called agnostic heresies of dialogue, has the same sacrilegious potential; however, provocation is not their main aim (although, sometimes, provocation is their unintended side effect). In opposition to the former group, these tactics not only raise objections and antagonise, but also (intelligently) stimulate discussions and point out the problems. So, in the division of tactics proposed above I do not want to label artists as atheists or agnostics, I simply wish to build up typologies saturated with metaphors to characterise various critical stances.

Much as I am not an eager follower of the late Professor Jerzy Kmita, I would still like to use *ad hoc* his typology of artistic stances, that is, his ideas on active and passive anti-fundamentalism (Kmita, 1995). What, undeniably, unites the artists from the two groups discussed in this study is their deep reluctance to the ultra-conservative, fanatical and fundamentalist attitudes of the followers of different religious systems. The difference between both approaches is to be found using Kmita's division. The first approach is represented by the self-assured anti-fundamentalists, very certain of the righteousness of their mission, though still pretty fundamentalist-minded. The second approach is represented by anti-fundamentalists with a greater distance to religion, who are at the same time better equipped with tools for diagnosing social attitudes. They are ready to undertake a difficult dialogue, they are sceptical, but not antagonistic. They are doubters in good faith.

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# “FEED THE SAINT”: AFRICAN-BRAZILIAN RELIGIOUS FESTIVITIES THROUGH NINA RODRIGUES’ PERSPECTIVE

Vanda Fortuna Serafim\*

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose that guided the development of the reflection to be presented herein consisted in thinking about Afro-Brazilian beliefs and devotions through the eyes of Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (1862-1906), a physician from Maranhão with a professional trajectory in the State of Bahia, who created reference works for the study of Afro-Brazilian culture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. My intention was to ponder on the concept of “a festa” (“a party”, “a feast”, “a festivity” or “a festival”) by mapping and historicizing how this category is treated in the work of the author.

There are two possible sources that could be used and both would lead to different findings. The first one is *O animismo fetichista dos negros bahianos*<sup>1</sup> (1900), a work that presents the initial discussions of Nina Rodrigues about religions in Salvador, as well as the party perspective associated with the devotional practices through a study carried out between 1895 and 1900. The second source is *Os africanos no Brasil*<sup>2</sup> (1932), the result of fifteen years of research with an anthropological approach, where the discussion is taken to a more theoretical scope seeking to understand the notion of a party, based on the concept of Totemism.

For this study, I chose to work with the first source, in order to bring more direct interfaces between devotions, parties and socializing. Another reason for this choice is its historical cut: the city of Salvador, Bahia, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,

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<sup>1</sup> *The Animist Fetishism of Bahian Blacks*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Africans in Brazil*.

and more specifically, a celebration that is important to this day, *Festa do Nosso Senhor Bonfim* (The Party/Festival of Our Lord of Bonfim) and the washing/cleaning of the church.

To think about the Afro-Brazilian religious beliefs in Salvador at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the work *O animismo fetichista dos negros bahianos*, it is necessary to establish the theoretical and methodological guidelines for the analysis. In order to show how the parties were presented by Nina Rodrigues, the concept of “party” by Ruggiero Romano (1994) and the notions of “representation” and “world view” by Roger Chartier (1990, 2002) will be discussed. For the purpose of the historical understanding of the discourse of Nina Rodrigues on Afro-Brazilian religious festivals/parties in consonance with the Bahian sociocultural context, the notion of “formality of practices” by Michel de Certeau (1982) will be fundamental.

### THINKING ABOUT THE “PARTY”

In relation to the parties, the Italian historian Ruggiero Romano begins with a challenging thought. He states that:

as nossas festas estão reduzidas a uma sombra do que foram: *cocktails*, recepções – fechadas como doenças contagiosas nos férreos limites de um tempo e de um espaço medidos com avareza – reenviam a sua imagem empobrecida, ressudam o enfado da excitação bem calculada, a que segue o cálculo angustiado dos sucessos e dos falsos passos<sup>3</sup> (Romano, 1994: 402).

That being said, these seem to assume the opposite of the parties, without distending or dilating the hearts, they make us more arid and shrivelled.

The rationalization of work, and of religion itself, announced the perception we now have of parties. Work conquers free time and festivities become of lesser value. Thus “para a mentalidade racionalista, a festa é uma atividade e uma forma de associação não motivada pela utilidade e, por isso, intrinsecamente subversiva”<sup>4</sup> (Romano, 1994: 402-403). This way, the party seems to sum up in itself all that is to be fought: laziness, wastefulness, superstition, vice, ignorance, fanaticism and enthusiasm.

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<sup>3</sup> “Our feasts are reduced to a shadow of what they were: cocktails, receptions – closed as contagious diseases in the iron boundaries of a time and space measured with avarice – resent their impoverished image, they perspire the annoyance of the well-calculated excitement, which follows the anguished calculation of successes and false steps”.

<sup>4</sup> “For the rationalist mentality, the party is an activity and form of association not motivated by utility and, therefore, intrinsically subversive”.



On the other hand, pure utilitarian rationality carries a paradox, insofar as it denies the social bond of the party as the promoter of labour. Referring to Rousseau, Romano (1994) indicates that withdrawing the parties would imply withdrawing from people their own will to live and it would eliminate the motivation for the work.

The theories on partying have tended to think of it at times as a transgression, at times as a spontaneous production of society. In the first case, Romano (1994) returns to Freud and to the idea that the party is an excess and is permitted, or rather offered; it is the solemn infraction of an interdict. In this way, humans do not give themselves over to being happy by an order received; the excess would be in the very nature of every party, and the festive mood would be the liberty to do what is otherwise forbidden. Thus, the party is thought of as a legitimate transgression of rules.

This transgressive character of the parties is seen by Romano (1994) as unilateral, since the freedom to violate the rules of common behaviour would not always be bound to a festive joy. The author gives an example of the celebrations of the death of a king in Africa, which is followed by excesses and violations of customary norms; but without the accompaniment of joy or festivities. In addition, the festivals are not necessarily transgressive, and may consist in the representation of hierarchy and social values, reaffirming them solemnly (Romano, 1994).

In considering the party as a spontaneous production of society, Romano (1994) addresses Durkheim and Mauss and their perception of partying as a periodic restoration of the sources that underlie the social structure. The party would be a state of effervescence in which a group becomes visible to itself as such. The festive celebration is effective because it would be a reproduction of the real, not only symbolic, of the social order's genesis. "A festa deve ser definida como o «paroxismo da sociedade» que purifica e ao mesmo tempo renova<sup>5</sup>" (Romano, 1994: 406).

Although both theories provide enlightening aspects of the party, they do not offer definitions that include all forms. The parties are neither purely transgressive nor a re-creation of a single state of undifferentiation. Parties require organization, work and complex guidance. Far from being the chaos assumed by some theorists – with a tendency to squander and destroy – they are often the culmination of organized activity in many societies, "e justificam a perpetuação de confrarias, corporações, associações de bairros e outras formas de agrupamento que tem uma duração permanente e uma influência constante na sociedade global<sup>6</sup>" (Romano, 1994: 406).

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<sup>5</sup> "The party should be defined as the «paroxysm of society» that purifies and at the same time renews".

<sup>6</sup> "And justify the perpetuation of confraternities, corporations, neighbourhood associations, and other forms of grouping that have a permanent duration and a constant influence in the global society".

The decision to reflect on these two theoretical modalities to think about the party, offered by Romano (1994), privilege the perspective of the author, aimed at the contemplative thinkers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and, therefore, close to the cultural and intellectual universe of Nina Rodrigues. This being said, let us look at the way the party appears as an object of interest in *O animismo fetichista dos negros*.

## MAPPING THE PARTIES

*O animismo fetichista dos negros bahianos* discusses the religious belief or option of African blacks and their descendants. From a medical and ethnographic point of view, it problematizes why African blacks and their mestizos adhered to Fetishist Animism and not to the predominant religion in Brazil, Catholicism. The explanation suggested by Nina Rodrigues is that, since mental conditions influence the adoption of religious belief and blacks would be a psychically inferior race, they could not understand the high monotheistic abstractions.

When referring to the theme of parties in particular, it was possible to map seven moments in which Nina Rodrigues refers to them. The first deals with the concern of the masters, still in the time of the Empire, with vagrancy and work.

Rodrigues (1935) indicates that, in Brazil, the conviction that religious conversion was a simple matter of good will was shared for a long time, as well as that nothing would be easier than removing the beliefs of the Negro by force, through punishment, and replacing them with the beliefs of the white. These convictions sought to satisfy the interests of the slave owner, justifying all violence employed against the slaves to convert them to the Christian faith. It was not the ardour of catechesis that instigated the violence of the slave owners against the so-called fetishistic practices of black slaves, even when licenses were granted for the performance of the *batuques*<sup>7</sup>. First came the fear of incantations as a reprisal for the ill-treatment and punishment inflicted, a superstitious fear of kabbalistic practices of a mysterious and unknown kind. Second was the fear that religious practices and parties/festivals would disrupt the regularity of work and justify vagrancy; and, finally, there came the arrogant restraint of the master, who did not admit to the black any will other than his own. In this process, Africans were forced to conceal their faith and their religious practices throughout their entire lives. As a result, Nina Rodrigues pointed out that the remembrance of the persecutions of which their beliefs were victims, remained and would remain for a long

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<sup>7</sup> “A generic way of denominating African-Brazilian religions”.

time in the memory of the blacks, closely associated in their spirit to the fear of confessing and explaining them.

The second moment in which Nina Rodrigues referred to the religious celebrations was when dealing with the hybridism between the African and Islamic beliefs, demonstrating how the festivities defied the premises of the latter. One of the motivations for Nina Rodrigues was that the belief of the *malês*, Islamized African people, tended not to be followed, for it consisted in imposing a severe life, intolerant of parties or drunkenness:

Os *malês* ou *mulsumis* bahianos que professam um islamismo mais ou menos impregnados de práticas fetichistas, constituem hoje uma pequena minoria dos Africanos do Estado e não têm conseguido transmitir suas crenças aos creoulos seus descendentes. Um velho africano, pequeno negociante e sacerdote da sua confissão religiosa, me explicava que a religião do negro de santo e mesmo a dos catholicos são muito mais fáceis, divertidas e attraentes do que a dos musulmis, que se impõem uma vida severa, adstricta á observância de princípios eligiosos que não toleram festas e bebedeiras. Por isso, dizia-me elle, mesmo os filhos dos malês têm pouca tendência a seguir as crenças dos seus maiores e uma vez emancipados abraçam facilmente ou a religião jorubana ou o catholicismo<sup>8</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 28-29).

The third reference to the parties is associated with the concept of liturgy, seeking to establish the ritualistic aspects of worship. With a “fetishist” aspect, liturgical organization was very important because it influenced the inner and outer life of its supporters, constantly conquering new followers. Marked by dances and music, it attracted much more the mestizo public than the Islamic precepts. The Bahian Catholic festivity likewise turned into a preferable and easier to assimilate religion for mestizos. Regarding where, how and when fetish cults and/or parties occurred, Nina Rodrigues explains that:

O culto fetichista jorubano dos negros e mestiços tem na Bahia uma fôrma exterior complexa, brilhante e ruidosa. Possuem nas cidades, situados nos arrebaldes, templos especiaes (terreiros) para as grandes festaannuaes, e pequenos oratórios e capellas, para as festas ordinárias e as orações durante o anno. Na capital existe um número crescido de terreiros que, num mínimo exagerado, calcúlo de quinze a vinte entre grandes e pequenos<sup>9</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 61).

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<sup>8</sup> “Bahian *malês* or *mulsumis* who profess an Islamism more or less impregnated with fetishistic practices, now constitute a small minority of Africans in the state and have failed to convey their beliefs to their creole descendants. An old African, a small businessman and priest of this religious confession, explained to me that the religion of the *negro de santo* [a practitioner of African religions] and even of the Catholics is much easier, more amusing, and more compelling than that of the Muslims, who impose a severe life, principles that do not tolerate parties and drunkenness. That is why, he told me, even the children of the *malês* have little tendency to follow the beliefs of their elders and once emancipated easily embrace either the *Yorubá* religion or Catholicism”.

<sup>9</sup> “The Bahian fetishist cult of blacks and mestizos has a complex, brilliant, and noisy outer form in Bahia. They have in the cities, situated in the neighbourhoods, special temples (*terreiros*) for the great annual festivals, and small oratories and chapels, for the ordinary celebrations and the prayers during the year. In the capital, there is a large number of *terreiros*, between large and small”.

In respect to the organization of the *terreiro* (temple) and the role of the *ogã*<sup>10</sup> and the *pais de santo*, we notice the concept of party being emphasized for the fourth time in the work of Nina Rodrigues, when he explains that “A palavra terreiro tem evidentemente duas significações distintas: nomêa o sitio, lugar ou casa onde reside o chefe e celebram as festas religiosas, e qualifica a jurisdição de um pontífice fetichista que della toma o titulo de pai ou mãe de terreiro”<sup>11</sup> (1935: 69). Soon after, he elucidates that one of the roles of the *ogã* would be, in addition to providing protection, to bring his saint presents and animals for the parties and for the sacrifices. The *pai* (father) or *mai* (mother) of *terreiro*, in turn, as a priest would have to preside and direct the “festas do culto exterior”<sup>12</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 71-72).

The fifth reference to the feasts occurs in describing an “initiation feast”, that of Olympia, where he explains that the initiation of the confraternities is long and complicated. The making of the saint comprises two different and complementary operations: the preparation of the fetish and the initiation of its possessor. In the first, the *pai de terreiro* (father of the *terreiro*) uses his experience and skill to prepare the fetish of the saint, then the initiate prepares the trousseau of the saint and reserves his savings for the great feast of initiation. Since the festival/party involves material costs, Rodrigues (1935) indicates that some blacks got old and could not obtain money for the initiation of their saint.

When talking about *Padê de Exú*, the term “parties” appears again, since, as Nina Rodrigues interprets, the first step of the party is to dispatch *Exú* so that it does not become a nuisance:

Este sacrifício propiciatório precede todas as festas de santo, pois sua preterição traria consequência infalível a perturbação da festa. A noite, a inicianda tem de tomar um banho mysthico, a verdadeira purificação lustral, em que troca por vestes novas as que trazia, as quaes são abandonadas, em simbolo, supponho eu, de completa renuncia á vida anterior<sup>13</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 77).

Finally, the last mention, also the deepest and most delayed regarding the term party, comes from talking about *candomblés*, treated as synonyms of parties,

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<sup>10</sup> “A title and position assigned to those capable of assisting and protecting the house of worship and those who provided relevant services to the religious community”.

<sup>11</sup> “The word *terreiro* evidently has two different meanings: it designates the site, place or house where the chief lives and the religious parties are celebrated, and it qualifies the jurisdiction of a fetishist pontiff that takes from it the title of father or mother of the *terreiro*”.

<sup>12</sup> “Outer worship parties”.

<sup>13</sup> “This expiatory sacrifice precedes all *festas de santo* (festivals/parties of the saint), for its deprivation would bring about a nuisance to the party as infallible consequence. At night, the initiate must take a mystical bath, the true lustral purification, in which she exchanges for new robes the ones she had, which are abandoned, symbolically, as complete renunciation of the previous life”.

being the ceremonies of the so-called fetishist cults. Nina Rodrigues explains that *candomblé* is the denomination given to the great public parties of the Yorubanian cult. Every initiate should celebrate the making of his saint annually, these feasts are called *dar de comer ao santo* (feed the saint):

Quando a festa é de algum pai ou mãe de terreiro, o candomblé toma grandes proporções, já porque o pai de terreiro em geral tem ou festeja muitos santos, já porque, sendo estas épocas as datas preferidas para estas iniciações, acontece que diversos aniversários acabam por coincidir com aqueles dias e num mesmo candomblé se fundem muitas festas distintas, para concorrerem outros tantos iniciados ou crentes<sup>14</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 141-142).

These parties consist of the practice of sacrifices. Blood as an essential element of life is of great esteem for the black saints:

Entre os negros bahianos, como entre os ascendentes de Guiné, o sacrifício chegou a essa phase do seu aperfeiçoamento ou evolução em que, instigado pelo desejo de fazer economias, o crente substitui o todo pela parte. Isto é, destina-se ao santo o sangue ou uma parte das vísceras dos animaes, sendo o corpo servido aos donos da festa e seus convidados. Nos candomblés bahianos, o sacrifício varia segundo os recursos do crente e as exigências do ritual, desde um boi, uma cabra, um carneiro até uma gallinha ou pombo. Como em todos os sacrificios, o sangue, na sua qualidade de vehiculo ou elemento essencial da vida, tem para os santos negros particular estima e preferência<sup>15</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 142-143).

To show the assimilation among the beliefs of blacks and whites, Nina Rodrigues presents how the festivities are part of their daily lives. On the day of Festival of *Nosso Senhor do Bonfim* (Our Lord of Bonfim), for example, there was a great flow of blacks into the cities:

Ora, já vimos que a sexta-feira é o dia da semana consagrado á Obatalá, aquelle em que os iniciados deste orisá são obrigados a andar de branco, trazer contas brancas, lavar as quartinhas e mudar a água de santo. E para provar que não é o sentimento da adoração christan que ali leva a grande massa da população todas as sextas-feiras, basta saber que quer na ida quer na volta, mesmo dentro dos bondes, as negras entoam samba, esboçam dansas que destoam

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<sup>14</sup> “When the party is of some *pai* or *mãe de* (father or mother of) *terreiro*, *candomblé* assumes large proportions, either because the *pai de terreiro* has or celebrates many saints, or because, being these times the favourite dates for these initiations, it just so happens that many anniversaries coincide with those days and in the same *candomblé* many distinct parties merge, so that many other initiated or believers may participate”.

<sup>15</sup> “Among Bahian blacks, as among their Guinean ancestors, the sacrifice has reached a stage of its perfection or evolution in which, instigated by the desire to make savings, the believer replaces the whole by the part. That is, the blood or a part of the viscera of animals is offered to the saint, and the body is served to the owners of the feast and their guests. In Bahian *candomblés*, the sacrifice varies according to the resources of the believer and the requirements of the ritual, from an ox, a goat, or a lamb to a chicken or pigeon. As in all sacrifices, blood, in its capacity as a vehicle or essential element of life, has for the black saints a particular esteem and preference”.

completamente das práticas chistans. As coisas chegam ao ponto de a imprensa diária reclamar providências da polícia em termos duros e por demais severos<sup>16</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 179).

In addition, there is also the washing/cleaning of the *Igreja de Nosso Senhor do Bonfim* (Church of Our Lord of Bonfim), which occurs on the Thursday of the week of the feast and “é uma pratica copiada das lavagens de santo do culto fetichista e executada de accordo com os preceitos desse culto”<sup>17</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 180). With the seven moments in which there is mention of the feast in *O animismo fetichista dos negros bahianos* mapped, it is now possible to proceed to the analysis of how this practice was represented in the work of Nina Rodrigues.

### INTERPRETING THE PARTIES

On the one hand, the seven moments in which the parties appear in the writings of Nina Rodrigues represent integrative ritual practices. Some examples are the meetings of Africans and mestizos in moments of rest to worship their ancestral deities, or the ways that different African ethnic groups organize their forms of cult in Brazil, whether it be the Malês or the Yorubás. In addition to these, there is also the importance of certain functions for the maintenance of the celebrations (as the *pai de santo* and the *ogã*) and for the very renewal of the party (as is the case of new initiates). Finally, we have the symbolism of the party itself as a connector of worlds, Brazil and Africa, Ayé and Orún through Eshu, culminating in the Candomblés, understood by Nina Rodrigues as a reading key for understanding African practices, customs and beliefs.

On the other hand, the view of Nina Rodrigues denounces other degrading representations of the party, shared by the world views of the historical context in which he is inserted. The first is the fear that festivities would disrupt work and production. More than this, that the slaves themselves used these spaces to threaten the integrity of their masters by means of incantation, a fear that remained

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<sup>16</sup> “Now, we have seen that Friday is the day of the week consecrated to Obatala, the one in which the initiates of this *orisha* are forced to walk in white, to bring white beads, to wash the quarters and to change the water of the saint. And to prove that it is not the feeling of Christian worship that takes the great mass of the population there every Friday, it is enough to know that both on the way there and on the return, even inside the trams, the black women sing samba, they try dances that are completely different from Christian practices. Things get to the point of the daily press demanding police provisions in harsh and overly severe terms”.

<sup>17</sup> “A practice copied from the saint washes of the fetishist cult and executed according to the precepts of this cult”.

until the Republic. The fear of the *malês* in Brazil also deserves attention, in addition to the insurrections, as Nina Rodrigues indicated them to be known as great sorcerers. Hence the controversy of Nina Rodrigues’ interest in the parties. They were the greatest indicator of the form that religion had assumed in Brazil. If during much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Catholicism was thought of as an agent of civilization, Nina Rodrigues observed that through the festivals/parties, instead of civilizing, it was uncivilized by what he called the “ilusão da catequese”<sup>18</sup>, with Catholic beliefs mixed and hybridized.

In this sense, Romano (1994) warns that between the norms of the party and the norms of daily life there is always a difference -the party may oppose “normal” society or represent it in a more synthetic and ideal way, in which it becomes easily perceived as a whole – of which effects may extend in a “normal” society. The transgressive aspect of the party is seen as a reflection of its fundamental characteristic, which is the creation of a transparent totality of relationships. The party integrates what in everyday life is rejected as disorder. The party unifies the representations that are usually kept separate. Thus, the party has a cognitive, and not just transgressive, dimension.

This cognitive dimension is very interesting as Nina Rodrigues, according to his world view, wanted it as a transgression, that is, the party as an obstacle to the ideal of republican civilization. In another perspective, it allows at the same time a better understanding of social reality, by showing the hybrid culture in the gestures, in the dances, in the beliefs, in people. It is precisely at this point that the “formality of practices” discussed by Michel de Certeau (1982) becomes relevant, since it refers to the re-employment of certain structures in function of an order that they no longer determine.

It is interesting to think how the Afro-Brazilian celebrations are represented by Nina Rodrigues as opposed to a civilizing Catholic ideal, in which the formality is in agreement with the official or theoretical discourses. One of the tasks of history consists in measuring the distance, or the relations, between the formality of practices and of representations; this way, the tensions at work in the depth of society and the nature and forms of its mobility can be analyzed (Certeau, 1982).

Let us consider the transgressive character that the parties assume in the discourse of Nina Rodrigues. When approaching the worship of *Senhor do Bonfim*, he uses the description of newspaper articles in order to express, in his understanding, in an “unsuspected” way, the vision that Bahian society had

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<sup>18</sup> “Illusion of catechesis”.

of this celebration, practised especially by the lower classes and impregnated with fetishistic practices (Rodrigues, 1935: 17).

He starts with a report from *A Renascença* from January 24, 1895, which brings the following news:

O mais milagroso e festejado dos santos que temos nesta cidade é sem contestação o senhor do Bonfim, cuja rica igreja está colocada no aprazível arrabalde que tem o seu nome. Toda sexta-feira, dia que lhe é consagrado, uma romaria de povo a bonde, a carro ou a pé descalço dirige-se logo pela madrugada á igreja do miraculoso santo para ouvir pomposas missas que são ditas neste dia, levando garrafas de azeite, velas ou milagres que consistem em quadros e peças de cêras representando moléstias e desgraças sucedidas aos seus portadores e dos quaes se livraram com vida graças á milagrosa intervenção do bondoso Senhor<sup>19</sup> (*apud* Rodrigues, 1935: 178-179).

In the face of this report, Nina Rodrigues explains that Friday is the day of *Obatalá* and that the initiates in this *orixá* must wear white, bring the beads, wash the rooms and change the water of the saint. Nina Rodrigues denounces that this feast should not represent in any way a feeling of Christian worship. Proof of this would be the streetcars loaded with blacks that sang sambas and improvised dances that completely disregarded Christian practices. Moreover, this testified against Bahian society. In another section of the article, we have the following description:

A lavagem na quinta-feira era uma verdadeira bacchanal um templo christão! Negros aguadeiros e mulheres com potes d'agua e vassouras em grande alarido de sambas e vivas entravam pela igreja com o fim de lavai-a e os cantos obscenos, os *lundús* e a bebedeira reinavam sem respeito ao lugar, sendo toda a scena representada por homens e mulheres semi-fluas e embriagadas! Terminavam sempre com disturbios, pancadaria, ciumadas, ferimentos e até, quando esquentavam-se os animos, davam-se casos de morte. Felizmente o poder competente tem prohibido similhante festa<sup>20</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 181).

On the one hand, we notice the vision of Rodrigues regarding the transgressive character of the party when the ideals of civility that are intending to be established are considered. On the other hand, however, reflection leads him to the realization that prohibition was limited to the feast of *Bonfim* and did not reach

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<sup>19</sup> “The most miraculous and celebrated of the saints we have in this city is without dispute the Lord of *Bonfim*, whose rich church is placed in the pleasant suburb that has his name. Every Friday, the day that is consecrated to him, a pilgrimage of people by tram, car or on foot barefoot, go at dawn to the church of the miraculous saint to hear pompous masses that are said on this day, carrying bottles of olive oil, candles or miracles which consist of pictures and pieces of wax representing malaises and misfortunes succeeded to their bearers, and from which they were delivered with life thanks to the miraculous intervention of the good Lord”.

<sup>20</sup> “The washing on Thursday was a real orgy in a Christian temple! Black water bearers and women with pots of water and brooms in a great shout of sambas and cheers entered the church with the purpose of washing it, and the obscene songs, the *lundús* and the drunkenness reigned without respect for the place, being the whole scene represented by men and half-naked and drunk women! They always ended in riots, beatings, jealousies, wounds, and, when the spirits were burning, there were even cases of death. Luckily, the competent power has banned such a party”.



the 2<sup>nd</sup> February *Santo Amaro*, at the Festival of *Nossa Senhora das Candeias*, where the African simile remains unchanged. His view also warns that the equivalences of the various invocations of the Virgin Mary are less constant and clear. Some *mães de terreiro* said that the Virgin corresponded to *Oxum* and others associated her with *Yemanjá*. Rodrigues also indicated that he had not identified the reason for the correspondence between *Ogun* and *Santo Antônio*.

Therefore, Nina Rodrigues begins to outline a picture of the religious formation in Brazil, of a hybrid character, noticeable in the equivalence of the gods, by means of the saints and *orixás*:

Mas o ponto capital deste estudo é que a esta equivalencia das divindades corresponde a mais completa harmonia de sentimentos religiosos, na adoração prestada aos deuses dos dois cultos. E é precisamente este facto que dá a illusão da conversão catholica dos negros. Sem renunciar aos seus deuses ou Orisás, o negro bahiano tem, pelos santos catholicos, profunda devoção levada até ao sacrificio e ao fanatismo. Mas esse sacrificio e esse fanatismo não podem ser sinão essencialmente fetichistas; os santos catholicos e até mesmo as invocações do filho de Deus constituem para os negros outras tantos orixás<sup>21</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935:182).

Nina Rodrigues frequently reports having found Christian and fetishist symbols mixed:

Juntamente com os outros *gris-gris* ou talismans fetichistas se encontram por toda a parte pequenas cruces de madeira, que ao lado das figas<sup>22</sup>, búzios, etc., figuram nas cestas das compradeiras, nos taboleiros das vendedeiras ambulantes, nas vendas, etc., há mesmo uma figa muito curiosa que se encontra em toda a parte e em que esta associação é ainda mais completa. O index da mão fechada prolonga-se bastante para terminar em uma pequena cruz<sup>23</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 185).

The key element of the understanding of Nina Rodrigues is perhaps to realize that such practices are not limited only to “rude and ignorant blacks”, but they were shared with Bahia society as a whole.

O numero de brancos, mulatos e indivíduos de todas as cores e matizes que vão consultar os negros feiticeiros nas suas aflições, nas suas desgraças, nos que crêem publicamente no poder sobrenatural dos talismans e feitiços, dos que em muito maior numero, zombam deles em publico, mas occultamente os ouvem, os consultam, esse numero seria incalculável se não fosse mais simples dizer de um modo geral que é a população em massa, a excepção de uma pequena minoria de espíritos superiores e esclarecidos que tem a noção verdadeira do valor exacto

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<sup>21</sup> “But the point of this study is that such equivalence of the deities corresponds the most harmonious of religious sentiments, in the worship of the gods of both cults. And it is precisely this fact that gives the illusion of the Catholic conversion of the blacks. Without renouncing their gods or Orishas, the Bahian black has a deep devotion for the Catholic saints, to the point of sacrifice and fanaticism. But this sacrifice and fanaticism can only be essentially fetishistic; the Catholic saints and even the invocations of the son of God constitute for the blacks many others orishas”.

<sup>22</sup> “Popular in Brazil to this day, it is an amulet in the shape of a fist with a crossed thumb and forefinger”.

<sup>23</sup> “Along with the other *gris-gris* (African amulet that is used for protection) or fetishistic talismans, there are small wooden crosses everywhere, which, next to *figas*, cowrie shells, etc., are found in the baskets of the shopkeepers, on the tables of the travelling vendors, in the shops, etc. There is even a very curious *figa* that is found everywhere and in which the association is even more complete. The index of the closed hand is long enough to end up as a small cross”.

dessas manifestações psicologicas. E' que no Brazil o mestiçamento não é só physico e intellectual, é ainda affectivo ou dos sentimentos, religioso igualmente portanto<sup>24</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 186).

Rodrigues explains that it is not just Catholicism that receives fetishist influences, referring to Spiritist practices and cartomancy:

Existe nesta cidade, no Bom Gosto da Calçada do Bomfim, uma mulher que dirige sessões espiritas muito afamadas e concorridas. Em acompanhados distintos collegas, Drs. Alfredo Britto, Aurelio Vianna e Juliano Moreira que ali iam em comissão da Sociedade de Medicina Legal da Bahia, tive occasião de assistir uma destas sessões onde devia colher notas curiosas para o presente estudo. A directora da casa, mulher mestiça, quasi branca, que se diz cabocla (mestiça de indio) é ao mesmo tempo directora da troupe espirita e mãe de terreiro, alternando de tempos a tempos as sessões espiritas com os candomblés. A historia da revelação da sua vocação espirita ou medianimica não é pouco curiosa e expressiva. Vivia em serias dificuldades financeiras com o amante que é um italiano, antigo mercador ambulante de livros velhos, quando, tendo ido um dia assistir um candomblé africano, caiu de repente em estado de santo e toda vestida e calçada como se achava lançou-se a dansar por muitas horas até tombar extenuada. Aquella visita foi uma revelação, a sua fortuna estava feita, era só abrir uma casa de consultas espiritas. Aberta a casa, a fortuna fez-se rapidamente com lucrativa clientela. Ainda não me foi possivel ir assistir o candomblé para que aliás já estou convidado, mas não tem pequeno alcance a sessão espirita de que fui testemunha. Na casa de um só pavimento, em que funciona a troupe além da sala de espera para os consultantes e de alguns aposentos particulares da familia, existem duas peças capitaes. A sala das sessões, installada onde devia ter sido a sala de jantar e a capella armada num quarto vizinho<sup>25</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 194-197).

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<sup>24</sup> “The number of whites, Mulattoes, and individuals of all colours and shades who will consult the black sorcerers in their afflictions, in their misfortunes, those who publicly believe in the supernatural power of talismans and spells, those that when there is a greater number of people mock them [the sorcerers], but secretly listen to them, consult them; that number would be incalculable if it were not simpler to say that, in general, it is the population massively, except for a small minority of higher and enlightened spirits who have the true notion of the exact value of these psychological manifestations. In Brazil, the miscegenation is not only physical and intellectual, it is affective or of feelings, therefore, equally religious”.

<sup>25</sup> “In this city, in *Bom Gosto da Calçada do Bomfim*, there is a woman who directs very famous and popular Spiritist sessions. In the company of the distinguished colleagues Drs. Alfredo Britto, Aurelio Vianna and Juliano Moreira, who went there on behalf of the Bahian Society of Legal Medicine, I had the opportunity to watch one of these sessions, in which I was supposed to take interesting notes for the present study. The director of the house, an almost white mestiza who claims to be *cabocla* (Indian mestiza), is at the same time director of the Spiritist troupe and *mãe de terreiro*, alternating from time to time between the Spiritist sessions and the *candomblés*. The story of the revelation of her spiritual or psychic calling is curious and meaningful. She lived in serious financial distress with her lover, who is Italian, a former travelling merchant of old books, when, one day, when she attended an African *Candomblé*, she suddenly fell into a state of sainthood, and all dressed as she was she threw herself dancing for many hours until she fell over exhausted. That visit was a revelation, her fate was disclosed, it was only a matter of opening a Spiritist consultation house. Being the house opened, fortune was made quickly with rich clients. I have not yet been able to attend her *candomblé*, for which I have been already invited, nevertheless the Spiritist session that I have been a witness to has great influence. In the one-story house, where the troupe operates and where there is also a waiting room for the consultants as well as some private family rooms, and there are still two main rooms. The room for the sessions was set up where the dining room must have been, and the chapel was in a neighbouring room”.

This reflection, elaborated by means of the Candomblés as “parties to feed the saints”, results in a publication in the *Revista Brasileira*, which later becomes the final chapter of *O animismo fetichista dos negros bahianos*, entitled *A conversão dos áfrico-bahianos ao catolicismo* (The Conversion of the African-Bahians to Catholicism). Rodrigues had previously called it *Ilusões da catequese no Brasil* (Illusions of catechesis in Brazil). He justified that with the following argument:

Continuar a afirmar em face de todos os documentos, que os negros bahianos são catholicos e que tem êxito no Brazil a tentativa de conversão é portanto, alimentar uma illusão que póde ser cara aos bons intuitos de quem tinha interesse de que as coisas tivessem passado assim, mas que certamente não está conforme a realidade dos factos<sup>26</sup> (Rodrigues, 1935: 199).

It was becoming increasingly evident, urgent and necessary for Nina Rodrigues to think of Brazil in its own terms, those that constituted its genuine social reality, hybrid in all aspects of its formation, including beliefs, of which the parties and festivities were the best example.

## CONCLUSIONS

For Romano (1994), there were two distinctive features of the parties/feasts. First, the party/feast is any ritual activity that correlates to the social organization of the time. Secondly, it is a pleasant social activity. Both characteristics are interdependent; being pleasant, the party/feast is remembered and anticipated in the imagination: it tends to repeat itself in time. Therefore, cyclical and irreversible time, structure and history find their balance at the party/feast, which reduces order to chaos, the contradictory and meaningless world of events.

The nuisance narrated by Nina Rodrigues in relation to the party/feast is understandable from the point of view of a first imperial and then republican government that sought to create a national identity within the framework of European civilization. Looking at the *Festa do Senhor do Bonfim* (Feast of the Lord of *Bonfim*), the foreign gaze of those who came here in the 19<sup>th</sup> century did not corroborate the image that was intended to be created. On the contrary, as the reports of the Austrian traveller Maximilian of Habsburg demonstrate,

Pelo vestibulo emanava uma atmosfera alegre e festiva. Em longa fila, estavam sentadas, junto a uma das paredes, moças negras, alegres - sua graça bronzeada não estava escondida, mas envolta em gazes transparentes e lenços de cores berrantes - em meio a uma falatório

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<sup>26</sup> “To continue to affirm, in the face of all documents, that Bahian blacks are Catholics, and that the attempt of conversion is successful in Brazil is, therefore, to feed an illusion that could be costly to the good intentions of those who had interest in things happening that way, but that certainly would not be consonant with the facts”.

estridente, nas posições mais confortáveis, sensuais e desleixadas, vendendo, parte em cestos, parte em caixas de vidro, toda espécie de bugigangas religiosas, amuletos, velas e comestíveis. Para um católico respeitável, todo esse alvoroço deve parecer blasfêmia, pois nessa festa popular dos negros, misturavam-se, mais do que o permitido, resquícios do paganismo na assim chamada romaria<sup>27</sup> (1982 [1860]: 129).

Catholic ecclesiastical authorities shared the same dissatisfaction, since the Celebration was entrusted to the Brotherhood of *Nosso Senhor do Bonfim* (Our Lord *Bonfim*), a lay movement. Dom Antônio Luís dos Santos was in charge of reforming Bahian religious life. He was the one who, with the support of the police, forbade the *Bonfim* washing/cleaning in 1889 by publishing a decree prohibiting church and chapel washing, and calling for support from civil society. The determinations of the ordinance were to be obeyed in all churches, but, as Nina Rodrigues pointed out, the greatest concern was with the washing of the *Bonfim* Church (IPHAN, s.a.).

That being said, it is salutary to indicate that there is no doubt that the party in whatever form it assumes is linked to the enjoyment of a certain pleasure. Nevertheless, whoever claims that this pleasure derives from the transgression of normal rules of behaviour arbitrarily isolates an aspect of the party that can never be entirely dominant. A totally transgressive celebration, in which the only law is the suspension of all laws, would not be associated with pleasure, but with anguish. It is tragic, not festive, because it implies the suspension of the entire system of social bonds, implying, thus, in the absence of all the predictability of the behaviour of the other, and, therefore, presenting a strong tension. The party, on the other hand, is characterized by the predictability of the behaviour of the other, by intense social solidarity, manifested in regulated activities, which a simple emotional state cannot account for (Romano, 1994). It is so evident, that the prohibitions and criticisms to the Washing of *Bonfim*, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were not enough for the faithful to stop fulfilling this act of faith. If, in 1889, the doors were closed, the Bahian women continued washing the churchyard until 2009, the year in which, for the first time ever since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the doors of the church were opened during the washing of the stairs. In 1938, the Church of *Nosso Senhor do Bonfim* had already been listed by the Historical Artistic and Cultural Patrimony Institute (IPHAN) and, in the beginning of this year, the festivity received the title of intangible heritage of Salvador.

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<sup>27</sup> “Through the entrance hall there was a lively and festive atmosphere. In a long row, happy black girls were sitting by one of the walls, their tanned grace not hidden, but wrapped in transparent gauzes and scarves of garish colors – amidst a loud jabber in the most comfortable, sensual and careless positions; selling, partly in baskets, partly in glass boxes, all sorts of religious trinkets, amulets, candles and edibles. For a respectable Catholic, all this uproar must seem blasphemous, for in this popular feast of the black, more than allowed remnants of paganism were mingled in the so-called pilgrimage”.

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# RUINS, RELIGIOSITY AND PATRIMONY IN THE CITY OF RIO DE JANEIRO: THE *FESTA DE IEMANJÁ*

Joana Bahia\*

## INTRODUCTION: IEMANJÁ AND THE GLÓRIA FESTIVAL

The first time that I witnessed the *Festa da Glória* (Glória Celebration, Bahia 1994) was when I began to study it. On the first day I attended, I saw that there was a *despacho*<sup>1</sup> containing a wax head decorated with corn, set against a door which opened upon the central area of the Glória church. The members of the church brotherhood, who moved in and out and around the door, seemed ill at ease with the offering, and many of them ostentatiously ignored it. In *candomblé*<sup>2</sup>, the head is one of the most important parts of the body and Iemanjá dominates all heads. As Iemanjá controls the *ori*, nothing can be done to or for the head without songs being sung to her. The date of my first visit to the Glória Celebration was August 15, 1994, a moment of time when the *Festa da Glória* was relatively popular and many *umbandistas* or *candomblecistas* attended the festivities alongside the Catholics.

There were many *umbandistas* in trance in the Outeiro gardens and also many *candomblecista* devotees of Iemanjá. There were also those who commemorated their faith in the goddess but who also sought the Catholic priests' blessings, back in the days when the *iaô* mass was an initiatory practice in *candomblé* (Bahia 1994). Traffic in the Glória neighborhood stopped during these events. No car could pass through during the procession days. Precisely 20 years later, however, on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2014, even the *Baiana*<sup>3</sup> selling *acarajé*<sup>4</sup> can now enter into the church, given that this saints' food has been declared an element of national cultural patrimony, becoming an expensive object commercialized in the church's

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<sup>1</sup> An African-Brazilian religious offering or sacrifice, usually presented in a public space.

<sup>2</sup> An African-Brazilian religion.

<sup>3</sup> Black women, typically from the state of Bahia, who dress in colonial clothes and sell traditional saints' food.

<sup>4</sup> A traditional African-Brazilian food.

bake sale tents. The festival, however, no longer attracts the large public which might buy and eat the *acarajé*.

Catholicism – limping, fragile, staggering – belatedly opens the door to Bahia. A Baiana with turban is present at a party to which no one was invited or even cares to gate crash, put on by a Catholicism that is at the mercy of an architectural and tourist heritage industry that still supports the Glória Church, because, after all, the view from the hill is spectacular and the brotherhood is still imperial. The celebration is sad every day, however, and the Saturday afternoon samba at Russel Square draws the biggest audience in the region. The path of the procession is still the same. There has been a small renovation of the brotherhood's cadre, which now includes a less imperial public, made up of a more conservative middle class with a modest desire for social ascension and a few residents of Glória. Maybe it includes some who do not support the parish priests of Benjamin Constant, maybe some who are "too communist or too charismatic". Perhaps an artist priest, who helps set up the Christmas nativity scene in Glória Square, which certainly has a larger public than any mass in the Outeiro. The great majority of the festival's attendees, however, are still imperial, either through Portuguese birth or through proximity to the old group of families who make up the brotherhood. I still recognized many of these people 20 years after my first visit.

#### THE CITY, MEMORIES OF OFFERINGS, BEACHES AS RUINS, BLACK PATRIMONY

Ever since 2000's Decree nº 3.351, an increasing number of African-Brazilian cultural elements have been systematically declared to be national cultural patrimony, including religious temples, *caipoeira*<sup>5</sup>, and several African-Brazilian foods (Capone and Morais, 2015). These proclamations have not been carried out in a simple or linear way, however, as the case analyzed here – the *Festa de Iemanjá* – shows. In the city of Rio de Janeiro, we have recently seen several of the cultural goods associated with this festival recognized by the State in this fashion<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> An African-Brazilian martial art.

<sup>6</sup> On the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, there is a parade organized by the store owners of the Madureira Market, called the "Rio Copa Fest" up to 2013, and from 2014 on the "Festa de Iemanjá do Mercado de Madureira". It should be recalled that, in 2012, the Madureira market was declared to be part of carioca cultural patrimony. This recognized the space a preserving Afro-Brazilian religious and cultural traditions. In 2015, the Market's herb pavilion was likewise declared to be part of the city's cultural patrimony. None of these patrimonial declarations, however, were documented by IPHAN or any other public organ.



In 2011, in fact, Mayor Eduardo Paes declared the celebration itself to be patrimony of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

If, on the one hand, this patrimony was decreed by the mayor, recognizing the importance of December 29, on the other hand, we cannot look up the patrimonialization process of the feast at the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN), because we'll find no document regarding it. Patrimonialization exists only because of the Mayor's decree, which makes it fragile, since it does not guarantee the various groups involved any possible policies to meet their real demands. It should also be noted that, in the people's mind, December 31 is considered to be the more important religious event, not the 29. Furthermore, the *candomblecistas* main festival is held on February 2 (an allusion to Our Lady of the Navigators) while the *umbandistas* hold theirs on August 15 (an allusion to the Assumption of Our Lady). Thus, our first take on this situation is that, for the mayor, the 29 of December is a good date because it meets the needs of the Madureira Market *candomblé* and *umbanda* groups while not cutting into the tourist events that take place on December 31st along the beaches of Rio.

We can also see that the act of declaring something to be patrimony does not automatically safeguard it. There have been several depredations of Iemanjá statues throughout the city (downtown and in Barra da Tijuca). Such a declaration does not even guarantee the use of public space for religious celebration: many organizers complain of the intolerance that they face from city authorities. As an example, the Sepetiba Festival, which takes place on February 2nd, must be approved by and sent to various organs of the State. It finds difficulty in being approved in many of these because there is clearly a veiled intolerance in the multiple bureaucratic maneuvers that the authorities require the event's organizers to perform. Many patrimonializations occur on paper, but do not gain documentary status and their effectiveness is thus less in terms of public policy. Even if they are institutionalized, limitations in the spaces of social struggle and several conflicts of interest are often reflected in these events and cultural elements.

The present article deals with how the Iemanjá Celebration has passed from being a ruin, a disappearance, a non-memory into a ritual inserted in the urban spaces of Rio de Janeiro by Afro-Brazilian religions, who give it visibility and take it as a diacritical sign of, giving the ritual importance in the formation of black identity. Iemanjá exists so that many may gain visibility and religious/cultural identity. Whether it is simply declared to be heritage or defined as such by a document, for many the Iemanjá Celebration is much more: it is a celebration

that occupies beaches, waterfalls and the city itself. It is a polysemic sign. From 19<sup>th</sup> century ruins and remnants of memories, it grew into an effective tradition in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Iemanjá Celebration is a celebration of the different forms of black culture, a multi-axis construction of a common heritage shared among the African diasporas in the Americas, which circulates creatively throughout the so-called Black Atlantic (Gilroy, 2001; Capone, Morais, 2015: 17).

In the interviews I conducted with several fathers and mothers of saints from the oldest *terreiros*<sup>7</sup> of Rio, the great majority remember the 1970s as a time of growth for Afro-Brazilian religions in various parts of the country and, especially, of their expansion to other parts of Latin America and then further abroad. This period is remembered as the apex of these religions and also as the moment when offerings began appearing on the city's beaches, especially in Copacabana. In order to verify the memory these fathers and mothers of saints had of the 1970s as a moment of greater popularity for African-Brazilian religions, I undertook research in the newspaper archives National Library of Rio de Janeiro, looking at the period stretching from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until the 1990s.

At first, I found that the memory of the fathers and mothers of saints was quite selective and was directly related to what they called the apex of the religion and its expansion throughout the country and abroad from the 1970s onwards (Frigério, 1999; Segato, 1991, 1994, 1997; Oro, 1998; Pordeus Jr., 2000, 2009; Capone, Teisenhoffer, 2002; Bahia, 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2014b). It was also related to the city's tourism calendar, as if the official Rio de Janeiro New Year's celebration in Copacabana had somehow ended the religion's charm. Many of my informants claimed that tourism has curtailed the offerings, especially on and around Copacabana. No one attributed this decline to the growth of other competing religions, especially Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Christianity. They did, however, call attention to the intolerance of Neo-Pentecostals and Pentecostals with regards to Afro-Brazilian religions in general. This began to appear in my informants' memories with regards to the celebrations from the 1990s onward. In the newspapers, despite the various cases of public intolerance which have occurred, the theme of religious intolerance only began to gain strength over the last ten years. This has not achieved much media visibility, however, because there is a preference in newspaper articles for dealing with these religions from a cultural point of view. "Intolerance" only appears with clarity when in cases such as that of the child who was hit in the head with a stone when they left a celebration of the Orixá or, more recently, in articles regarding the depredation of the city's Iemanjá statues, the

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<sup>7</sup> African-Brazilian religious temples.

struggles around organizing the Iemanjá Celebration in Sepetiba, and Mayor Bishop Crivella's refusal to fund the afoxé Sons of Gandhi.

Although many authors deal with urban reorganization in Rio, almost no one deals with the ruin of the beaches and the burial of the memories of the offerings to the sea, nor of the new forms of use of waterfalls and rivers of the less noble areas of the city. Ruin creates the present form of past life (Simmel, 1959 [1911]). In this sense, we are faced with a city, which, under the sign of modernity, constantly moves things from place to place, but which, in the form of fragments of memory, guarantees the permanence of a relationship with the past. This is a relationship with those things that exist under the sign of disappearance that marks out what Simmel calls "ruin". This is of fundamental importance when we think of the beaches that have disappeared, covered by landfills and, along with these, the disappearance of rituals devoted to the Queen of the Sea. The city of Rio de Janeiro is also thought about in terms of its ruins and how these contrast with today's projects of modernity. If, for Simmel, the seduction of the ruin is the paradox of the moment when a human work can be conceived as a product of nature, in this article we rehabilitate ruins as a way of thinking of the city and its vestiges.

The reordering of urban space in the city's history, which led to population displacement to the peripheries, is not mentioned as a possible interpretive key for the reconstruction of the memory of the offerings of flowers for Iemanjá. A history is recounted of the reordering of the city and of its occupation by elites in the areas which became Copacabana, Leme, Ipanema and Leblon (Abreu, 1996; O'Donnell, 2013; Rodrigues, 2009). The city's ruins are left out of this history, along with its vacancies and the new areas occupied by the poor. The recognition and inclusion of these things could lead, in future studies, to a new social history of the carioca suburbs.

If some authors treat the reordering of Rio's urban space as, fundamentally, the work of the wealthiest classes, the memory of other classes also tends to only appear in the contradictions of this reordering (Rodrigues 2009). But what happened to what João do Rio (the pseudonym of writer Paulo Barreto) called *the city of enchantment* (1904)? In other words, what did the popular strata of Rio de Janeiro do during these reorderings? Does the history of urban reorganization reveal, at least in part, the memory of those who have moved to the city's peripheries?

If, on the one hand, some fathers and mothers of saints remember only Copacabana and the South Zone in the 1970s, others recall that they used the rivers, waterfalls, and beaches of the North and West zones of the city for ritual purposes during the same period. It is important to understand the occupation of these new

spaces of the city from the 1930s and 1940s on (Conduru, 2010; Barros, 2000). Few people of the saints remember their childhood memories, because they also remember the prejudices to which they were subjected at the time, although they admit that many of their colleagues already had a certain measure of social prestige during this period, due to having political support for their *terreiros*. Other beaches than Copacabana also appear in the childhood memories that are related by my interlocutors.

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and up to the 1950s, some of the beaches in Rio de Janeiro were buried in landfill, particularly those stretching along the port area and the city center. These included the old Santa Luzia beach and the Glória region, which remained intact until the 1950s, up until construction of the Flamengo landfill. One of the interviewed fathers of saints, a contemporary of Joãozinho da Gomeia, remembers that most of the offerings were made there and that the Maracanã River was used in the ritual of Oxalá's waters.

The great majority of the fathers and mothers of saints I have interviewed initially say that *umbanda* is more public in its ceremonies, and therefore responsible for the flowers at the end of the year on the beach. *Candomblé* is supposedly more private, more secret, and less public, so it does not put flowers on the beaches or send boats to sea, but performs *balaios* instead. It is evident that these groups see themselves as different and construct their identities in different ways. But if this is so, then why did everyone used to go to the beach? And why did they go to supposedly "just see what the *umbandistas* were doing"? Another interesting fact were the dates cited by my informants: All pointed to the flower offerings as originating in the 1960s and 1970s. Reading the newspapers in the National Library from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century on, however, one can see that the memory of the rise of religion and its expansion during this time period is correct, but not necessarily the origin and popularity of flower offerings.

Research in newspapers from the 1940s and 1950s shows that everything has changed a great deal. The memories of the houses and *terreiros* are important for us to think about many other issues, but these memories have lapsed that sometimes span many decades (Conduru, 2010; Barros, 2000). In these lapses, lie the years in which Rio's *candomblé roças* and *umbanda terreiros* are founded and in which the popularity of the flower offerings was established.

The founding of the *terreiros* along the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro provided an important organizational framework that has been maintained by their successors. Mobility in the various spaces of the city is created by groups consolidated around the succession of a given family of saints, within a space in which the

principal religious rites can be undertaken. Organization in associations and within its own spaces also allowed *umbanda* to grow and better organize their public and private celebration made, even while the religion maintained significant internal diversity.

The 1940s were fundamental in this sense, but it is also worth looking at the period stretching from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century until the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in order to better understand this process.

#### THE MIGRATION OF *TERREIROS* TO THE CITY OF RIO DE JANEIRO

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, conditions of life in the capital of the state of Bahia worsened, causing a systematic migration of Sudanese-descended blacks to Rio de Janeiro. For free blacks, labor market disputes became increasingly intense and housing conditions more precarious during this period. Ties to African nations were fundamental to the maintenance of black identities, and this would only begin to change after Abolition, with the radical restructuring of the new Brazilian “popular classes” (Moura 1995: 42). Black Brazilians lived in two worlds, gaining space in the subaltern life of small service providers and street and market salespeople and in the exuberance of the feasts and the strength of the saints. Free black Bahians, mainly Sudanese, arrived in Rio de Janeiro in search of work, traveling in the holds of ships that made their way from the port of Salvador. The first to achieve a living situation in the capital, a place to live and worship the *orixás*, and work did not hesitate to provide food and housing to those who followed them. This allowed the establishment of a regular migratory flow which continued until the turn of the century, ensuring a strong Bahian presence in Rio de Janeiro.

Alongside the Africans (usually Bantus) brought by the slave traffic to Rio, there were slave blacks of other ethnic groups, sold in the Northeast during the gold and coffee exploitation cycles of the Brazilian economy, and which ended up in the city. These formed miscegenated populations in the poorer neighborhoods of Rio. There, the free Bahian migrants constituted an elite of sorts in the popular milieu. Going by information provided by their descendants, it may be presumed that this population was predominantly Nagô (Yoruba). It was in *candomblé* and in the collective housing of Salvador, in the liberation juntas, in the brotherhoods and in the spaces of music and religiosity that many black Brazilians in the 19<sup>th</sup>

century sought to celebrate the idea of African heritage (Gilroy, 2001). This heritage migrates with Bahians to the city of Rio de Janeiro.

Urban-industrial growth and the internal migrations caused by Abolition led to accelerated population growth in Rio de Janeiro. The black population of the city would also grow again in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the decline of coffee culture in the Paraíba valley and the steady arrivals of the Bahians who came to try their luck in Rio de Janeiro.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many arrests occurred due to police raids on Afro-Brazilian religious temples. Accused of witchcraft, some of the black religious leaders ended up in the city's house of detention (established in 1856). Towards the end of the century, the numbers of imprisoned street vendors grew. Many police raids took place in the parish of Sacramento, located in the densely inhabited center of the city. Others took place in São José, Santa Rita, Glória and Espírito Santo parishes (Souza, 2010).

The voyages of Mother Aninha between Bahia and Rio de Janeiro at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were of fundamental importance for the entrance of *candomblé* into the city of Rio de Janeiro. Mother Aninha was a dissident member of the *terreiro* created by Iyá Nassô<sup>8</sup>. The succession of Iyá Nassô (Terreiro do Engenho Velho) generated a new split in the group and, consequently, the foundation of another *candomblé* in Rio Vermelho. This became known under the name of the former owner of the land where the temple was founded: Gantois. Many dissidents of Iyá Nassô, led by Aninha, daughter of the famous Bambochê<sup>9</sup>, came together to give rise to a new house: Axé Opô Afonjá. In 1886, Mãe Aninha de Xangô came to Rio with Bamboxê and Obá Saniá, founding a house in the neighborhood of Saúde. The first time she

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<sup>8</sup> In the documents analyzed by Verger (1987), Reis (1986) and Parrés (2007), there is a possible identification of Iyá Nassô as Francisca da Silva. She was a free Nagô woman, together with her husband, José Pedro Autran, their sons and their ex-slaves, blacks who had been freed by the couple, such as the daughters of saints Marcelina da Silva and Maria Magdalena da Silva (daughter of Marcelina), returned to the Coast of Africa in October 1837, spending seven years in the city of Ketu. Francisca was both the mistress and *ialorixá* of Marcelina. I believe that some of her slaves, who provided domestic services or worked in the streets, were also her children of saints. Iyá Nassô returned to Bahia, settling definitively on Vasco da Gama Avenue in the neighborhood of the Engenho Velho. This would become a central institution in the religious life of Salvador and later in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Moura, 1995: 24; 1994: 28-29). Two terreiros spring up from "Engenho Velho": Gantois and Axé Opô Afonjá (Rocha, 1994: 28-29).

<sup>9</sup> *Bamboxê* comes from the Yoruba *bangbose*, "help me to gain the oxê". It is applied to the initiates of the *orixá*, Xangô (Lima, 1987: 71).

came to the city, she was already a “botou iaô”, that is, a person initiated into the religion<sup>10</sup>.

The deaths of João Alabá in 1926, of Cipriano Abedé in 1933, of Mãe Aninha in 1938, and of Benzinho Bamboxé (see note 3) in 1940, lead to their *axês* taking over their temples, consolidating the religion in terms of its spatial organization and the geographical expansion of the *terreiros* into the more peripheral areas of Rio. The deaths of these religious leaders coincided with changes in the laws, most particularly the promulgation of Decree No. 1202 of April 8, 1939, a federal law that stopped the persecution and the repression of Afro-Brazilian religious practices. This was a fundamental moment in ritual organization, in the consolidation of religion, and in the circulation of African-Brazilian religious practices in new urban spaces.

These *terreiros* were of fundamental importance for the formation of a new religious structure, incorporating in a single *terreiro* the cults of the main Yorubá cities, unlike in Africa, where they occupied separate temples. The *terreiro* takes the symbolic form of the African continent itself, the *orixás* of the cities occupy space as settlements in the *terreiro*, while the entities of the open sky are worshiped in the forest. The term *candomblé* itself only takes on the meaning of religious worship, or religious house in this context and time (Moura, 1995: 25), as the finished forms of Ilê Iyá Nassô, Gantois, Ilê Axé Apô Afonjá and the other traditional *terreiros* become the central structures of black religious organizations in Brazil.

Returning to the flower offerings, we have reports of these in Sepetiba and Gloria from the 19<sup>th</sup> century on. The chronicles of João do Rio mention these and they also figure in the memories of some fathers of saints (those that refer to the 1950s) who were contemporaries of Joãozinho da Gomeia and who would go to Gloria and downtown Rio to make offerings. The ritual of the waters of Oxalá was undertaken along the Maracanã River during the same period (the 1940s and 1950s) by the communities of Estacio and Maracanã. It should be remembered, however, that there Ajuda beach still existed in this period, in front of what is now Cinelândia, as well as Santa Luzia beach in front of the Church of Santa Luzia. These were slowly filled in during the 1940s.

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<sup>10</sup> Many would rally around her name: Aunt Joana Obasse, Aunt Sanan de Oxóssi, Aunt Oxum Toqui, Aunt Liberata, Oloyá de Iansã, Aunt Josefa Rica de Oxum, Aunt Bombala de Iansã, Aunt Paulina de Oxum Queré, Aunt Amelia and Aunt Bambala, both from Oman Oxaguiã, and Mother Oyá Bomin, who was *ialorixá* of axé located at Rua João Caetano, 69 (Rocha 1994: 49, and Rio 1951: 30 and 35; Vianna 1999). The houses where she lived were the meeting places of old Bahian acquaintances who settled in Rio de Janeiro.

Reading between the lines of the book *As Religiões do Rio* of João do Rio<sup>11</sup>, (The Religions of Rio de Janeiro, first published in 1904), one can find evidence of activities on the beaches of Russel and Santa Luzia, Ilha do Governador, and Tijuca (Fábrica das Chitas), where offerings to the goddess of the sea (called the Mother of Waters) and Oxum were made. There are mentions of the Iemanjá Celebration, when the author quotes Auntie Ciata. He also mentions offerings to Iemanjá and the cult of the rainbow, both involving the fishermen of Sepetiba beach (Rio, 1976: 70-71).

Despite the concentration of *candomblé* in these areas of the city, what we can see in the reports of João do Rio at the turn of the century are movements between these spaces and other areas of the city. Depending on the ritual or spell, forests, beaches, and/or waterfalls needed to be used.

This led to an intense exchange of knowledge among the *babalaos* regarding the natural spaces of the metropolis, because aside from carrying out religious functions, many of these people also worked in itinerant trades and circulated all around Rio de Janeiro. The sale of sweets and other foods on the street, sewing and preparation of parties by Bahian aunts, and the consequent participation of the Bahian community in the creation of Carnival groups, Catholic festivals, and brotherhoods took worshippers presence far beyond the center of Rio, attracting other social groups and enabling the formation of networks that traveled both within and without of the religious field. These networks penetrated not only into the political and intellectual fields, but also and especially into the artistic and musical fields.

In the 1930s, Mãe Aninha made and varied connections in the political and intellectual circles by bringing people from these circles into her *terreiros* in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. Another source that is useful for looking at this phenomenon are the accusations of witchcraft that were brought before the State, as Moura (1995) and Augras and Santos (1985) document. These exchanges and linkages can also be observed in the life trajectories of many Bahian aunts who moved about in artistic, samba, and carnival circles, with their religion serving also to inspire the nascent record industry during the First Republic (Vieira, 2010; Bahia, Vieira, 2017).

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<sup>11</sup> The book gathers together a series of newspaper reports published between January and March, 1904 in the *Gazeta de Notícias* of Rio de Janeiro.



THE INFLUENCE OF THE AFRO-BRAZILIAN CULTS AND THEIR IMPACT  
ON THE EARLY RECORD INDUSTRY

In the early days of the carioca music market, many artists gained space, recognition, and professional prestige, as well as communication channels for their identity, through the expression of their religious, political, and social views. They dialogued with the then-emerging record market, using ironic and satirical language to express their conflicts, loves, *malandragem*, nationality, and religiosity. The Afro-Brazilian religious universe was often used as inspiration for popular songs from the beginning of the phonographic recording process in Rio de Janeiro in 1902. This demonstrates “to what degree Afro-Brazilian cults were not separate from society in general, but rather interacted with it”. Additionally, recording possibly contributed to the dissemination of Afro-Brazilian ritual practices, its spiritual entities, and its beliefs in general, since it extended the reach of these to other spaces and publics within the city (Vieira, 2010: 7).

In the chronicles of João do Rio and in Luis Edmundo, one can see the presence of Afro-Brazilian religions in urban space. Here we find the flower offerings on the beaches of Santa Luzia and Russel, already mentioned above, and see these offerings expanding to other beaches as the black population of Rio moved to other areas of the city. This fact began to gain prominence in newspapers from the 1940s on, when the first mention of the presence of people on Copacabana beach on the last days of the end of the year and the first day of January appeared. In this initial moment, the practitioners are not clearly named, being described as “fetishists”, a term that would be replaced in the 1950s by the terms of the religions themselves, especially *umbandista* terms (mediums, *camponos*, sons, etc.).

It should be noted that the work of the anthropologists of the Afro-Brazilian Congresses held in Recife and Salvador in 1934 and 1937 was also important for the recognition of religion as a cultural element, and for the formation of alliances between *candomblé* and *umbanda* priests and privileged people and influential circles of the time. This also somewhat eased repression on the Afro-Brazilian religions. This gain in legitimacy is mentioned in the 1940s in the works of Marisa Lyra, Câmara Cascudo and Basílio Magalhães, when they relate Iemanjá to what they call studies of Brazilian folklore.

Many of these intellectuals saw the syncretic aspects of the religions as something Brazilian and positive. Others were more interested in the African roots of the religions. These two positions were not polarized, however, and they produced ambiguities. If Iemanjá, on the one hand, is more Africanized by situating her as

an *orixá*, on the other, her image as a white goddess identifies her as something like a saint in the eyes of the Catholic middle class. We see this blend in Manuel Bandeira's description of the image of Iemanjá when he calls her a “Yoruba mermaid” (in a reference to the Iara myth), being worshipped “by a well-dressed blonde”. Several images are mixed in this description, but they all converge on a Catholic bias when the author says that the image is part of the altar is Our Lady of the Conception. In other words, Iemanjá is acceptable to the white middle class as long as she becomes Our Lady.

Between 1940 and 1959, there was a significant increase in the mention of Afro-Brazilian religions in Rio's newspapers. The 1940s saw not only the growth of the *umbanda terreiros* – a movement already begun in the previous decade – but also the consolidation of several successions in the *candomblé* temples. There was also increased dissemination and institutionalization of *umbanda* by its allied intellectuals, which contributed to increased legitimacy of the religion in national society (Ortiz, 1951).

In the newspaper *A Noite* (its supplement), in 1940 to 1949, Iemanjá was related to the artistic environment of the radio in the form of music. She also showed up connected to artists with affinities with Afro-Brazilian religion, and to beautiful women like Luz del Fuego, whose beauty was compared to that of the goddess in the pages of the newspaper. In the 1950s, *A Noite* presented themes related to *candomblé* in the work of the Bahian painter Genaro de Carvalho (March 13, 1951), in the reports of Walda Menezes regarding *candomblé* in Salvador in 1952 which, besides showing the Bahia as the Mecca of Afro-Brazilian religions, also reminded readers of the celebrations that were taking place in Rio, such as the procession of Our Lord of the Navigators, the feasts of Saints Cosme and Damian, and the studies of the religion in the works of Nina Rodrigues, Artur Ramos and João do Rio.

In “Nos domínios de Iemanjá” (In the Domains of Iemanjá), published in *Beira-Mar* (a newspaper) in April of 1945, Mariza Lira talked about the *orixá*, relating their mythology and the several names under which they appeared in European and African imaginations. This is one of the few articles published in the 1940s that clearly dealt with some of the religion's material aspects in greater detail. Lira described the objects, clothing, food and animals offered up to *orixá*, as well as the regularity of the nautical procession put on by the fishermen and other followers of Iemanjá. In the *Jornal das Moças* of September 11<sup>th</sup> 1947,

a story appears by Glycia Arroxellas Galvão<sup>12</sup> in which the reader is presented with Iemanjá's mythological universe via an encounter between a girl and the mermaid woman.

There are many stories in this period that relate Iemanjá to the universe of artistic production. She was celebrated in music and literature in general. As an example, in 1947 the celebration of the 6th Concert of the Afro-Brazilian Orchestra by the black conductor Abigail Moura in the Alcindo Guanabara auditorium took place commemorating the abolition of slavery. In the newspaper reports about the musical program, one finds Gentil Puget's<sup>13</sup> invocation and lamentation, entitled "Iemanjá". On December 8, 1949, there is an article containing a photo of the *umbanda terreiro* of Didi de Freitas in Vilar do Teles, where the faithful had been celebrating the feast to Iemanjá and Iansã since the previous Saturday (December 3). In the same text, the success of *babalao* Joãozinho da Gomeia is mentioned, and some of the writings of Ogosse Naboji, called *umbanda* catechisms, are mentioned as being in press.

Also in 1941, we find in the newspaper *Cultura Política* an article by Basílio de Magalhães<sup>14</sup> incorporating the *orixá* as part of Brazilian folklore, associated with the Catholic Virgin Mary. In another text entitled "Elemento religioso afro-brasileiro" (Afro-Brazilian religious element), the same author uses the works of anthropologists Nina Rodrigues and Artur Ramos to talk about the religious mythology of the "African Olympus", relating this to the Cuban studies conducted by Fernando Ortiz<sup>15</sup>.

In 1947, Renato Almeida (1895-1981) created the National Folklore Commission, within the Brazilian Institute of Education, Science, and Culture (IBECC – Unesco National Commission). The work of the Commission's members the periodicals I have analyzed shows how much visibility they gave both to the offerings to Iemanjá as part of the popular culture and as part of the discussion of the African matrix religions as fundamental for thinking about Brazilian culture.

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<sup>12</sup> Glycia Modesta de Arroxellas Galvão used for years the pseudonym Chiang Sing, under which she became known to the Brazilian press. She was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1924 as the daughter of a famous journalist couple and the great-granddaughter of the Baron of the Rio Apa.

<sup>13</sup> Gentil Puget, born in the state of Pará, was a member of the generation of classically trained musicians who, inspired by modernist ideas, incorporated popular and regional themes into their artistic production, seeking to construct musical forms that expressed regional and national identity.

<sup>14</sup> Professor of education and a member of the Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro (Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, IHGB).

<sup>15</sup> A Cuban ethnomusician who wrote several works about Afro-Cuban religion, seeking to openly recognize the meaning of the African in Cuba.

We see here a certain exchange of ideas between Brazilian and Cuban intellectuals, where folklore studies employ the idea of the Negro as an element of the national origins of both countries. We can also see the different ways in which the diasporas dialogue and exchange experiences, showing new ways of thinking the about the celebration of different black cultures (Gilroy, 2001, Feldman, 2005).

In the *Revista da Semana* in 1943, the writer Renato de Alencar, talks about the new year celebrations, noticing the number of *umbandistas* on the Pedra da Onça at the top of Bananal hill, on Ilha do Governador.

In the 1950s, offerings to Iemanjá appear as part of carioca habits on almost all the beaches along the seaboard, and there are also the reports about the procession of the devotees in boats between Rio and Niterói.

On January 12, 1954, in the newspaper *A Noite* (supplement), there is an article by Adam Carrazonni regarding cariocas' habit of going to the beaches to invoke the protection of Iemanjá for the coming year. In an article published on January 19th, 1954, written by L.A. Leal de Souza, religion's origins are explained as African. The article describes cariocas on the beaches stretching from Ramos to Leblon, and also mediums and *cambonos* scratching the boats that go between Rio and Niterói with their *pembas* and transforming them into an altar of flowers on the last day of the year.

The *umbanda* federations sought aid from their associated intellectuals in order to peacefully mediate with the *estado-novista* framework and achieve a better integration into society. There is also at the time the idea of federation that adapts to the language of the State, adhering to an institutionalized form of national unity that departs from the religion's Afro-indigenous origins and which, at the same time, engages with spiritualism. Simultaneously, however, another tendency within the religion increasingly sought to create a more Africanized *umbanda*.

In the 1950s, other *umbanda* federations are formed, and these show the broad and diverse spectrum of ideas and tendencies present in religion. Some of these advocated a "pure" *umbanda*, while others were more "African" in their orientation (Brown, 1985). Tancredo da Silva Pinto, known as "Tata de Umbanda", a spokesman for the most Africanized federation, which emerged in 1952, defended the interests of the lower social classes, represented by blacks and mulattoes.

In the interviews I conducted with some leaders of the current federations, some refuse to associate *umbanda omolokô* with the very idea of *umbanda* and many relate it to *candomblé*. However, some of the interviewees blame Tatá da Umbanda for the end-of-year ritual on the beach as a practice that became fixed to the city's tourism calendar, but which does not necessarily represent Iemanjá.

In the documents of the Umbandista Spiritist Confederation of Brazil (Ceub), there is a plan of organization of the Afro-Brazilian new year ritual to be held on the beach. This document is dated 1972 and was written by Tancredo da Silva Pinto and sent to the Secretary of Tourism of the State of Guanabara. According to Tancredo, one of the reasons for organizing the party is that Rio is a tourist and cultural Mecca and that the celebration would be a great attraction for tourists, spotlighting the city. The plan was to celebrate the passage of the year on December 31 and regency of the year, which would pass from Oxalá to Iemanjá. For Tatá de Umbanda, only the exchange of regency was to be celebrated on December 31, and Iemanjá's celebration would continue as normal on August 15, as it currently appears in the *umbandista* calendar.

In the interviews that I conducted with the Umbanda federations, many cite Tatá as the person who created the flower offerings on Copacabana, while others deny this or omit his name entirely. These claim that *umbandistas* always went to the beach on the new year carrying offerings of all sorts for the goddess.

#### THE EXPANSION OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN RELIGIONS IN THE MID-20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Beginning in 1945, the religions grew larger and spread to other states. The *Jornal de Umbanda* was created in 1949 by CEUB leaders and the radio program "Melodias de terreiros", directed by Átila Nunes, was aired between 1947 and 1969 (Brown, 1985).

In addition to the complex changes taking place in the legal sphere, the 1930s saw a gradual reorganization of the Black Movement, with the consolidation of the *Frente Negra*. In 1944, its leadership founded the Experimental Theater of the Negro (TEN) in the city of Rio de Janeiro. The TEN remained active until the end of the 1960s, being destroyed by the military dictatorship. It attempted to increase blacks' status in Brazil through education, culture, and art.

Moura (1989) states that a "black renaissance" began in 1949. Brazil saw the emergence of discussion groups, actions against racial discrimination and racism, and the organization of social clubs and civic associations. In addition to the organization of black leaders in the artistic and political sphere, their research by anthropologists such as Nina Rodrigues was disseminated, both in folklore studies and in the Rio press. These intellectuals discuss an idea of nationality based on religion, whether this be Catholic or syncretic. There were other authors who took

their cues from the ideas of Gilberto Freyre and who saw in Catholicism an element of national unity, and also others who risked affirming that syncretism was the necessary starting point for any discussion of national identity.

Between 1940 and 1970, the various *axés* expanded and formalized their role in civil society, with statutes and children of saints who occupy political appointments and mediate obtaining licenses from the police in order to perform rituals. In this period, we also see the expansion of the religion throughout the Southeast region of Brazil, particularly in the states of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

The growth of the end of year offerings on the beaches – especially those in Rio’s south zone – which began in the 1940s according to the newspapers, will be attributed to *umbandistas*, both by the newspapers I analyzed and in the identification of identities between *umbandistas* and *candomblecistas*, with *candomblé* supporters continuing to evoke the 2nd of February as an exclusively *candomblé* ceremony. This contrast can be perceived in the testimony of adepts as an identity marker, demarking who is a follower of *umbanda* and who follows *candomblé*. The latter religion claims to follow the Bahian tradition, which has always set aside February 2 as the day dedicated to Iemanjá.

In practice, however, when we observe the celebrations, we see that both are mixed, especially in recent years, in which intolerance has been reported as a common occurrence at some celebrations, especially those of the Madureira Market Celebration, the Feast of Sepetiba and the Festa da Barra. This has involved changes in the rituals in order to avoid conflicts with Pentecostal churches (Mercadão), rejection and delays in the bureaucracy related to the celebrations because of veiled bias among the authorities that charged with street safety during the celebrations (Sepetiba), and the depredation of images of Iemanjá on the beaches (reported in the case of Barra).

In the 1940s, there were references to the Festa de Iemanja, but these increased significantly in the 1950s. In 1957, there were offerings to the goddess on Boa Viagem beach in Niterói at the beginning of the year, described by J. Frazão, who describes most of the attendees as working and lower middle class. What calls our attention here is the description of the use of gourds, cigars, and cachaça, as well as the various types of drinks consumed by the spirits, a characteristic of the *umbanda* trance. The author complains about the number of offerings to Exú in evidence at the city’s crossroads, showing the growth of offerings in other parts of the urban environment.

It should also be noted that in the 1940s and 1950s, the *Jornal do Brasil* shows changes in sociability in the Copacabana neighborhood. The clubs along

the beach become annoyed with having to compete with Iemanjá, which attracted thousands of “curious people” to the New Year's Eve rituals in Rio. The clubs looked down upon the members of the public who preferred to see the boats being sent out to the goddess and the faithful who came to the beach to put out flowers. The word “curious people” is constantly mentioned in the plural as a way of disqualifying the devotion of the people attending the celebration and minimizing the impact of the masses who came to the beaches. Many of the people who came to these celebrations were indeed faithful: even though they might not directly worship in *umbanda* temples, they still offered flowers to the goddess. In the mid-1960s, during the New Year period, traffic jams were already a constant presence in carioca life, especially on Copacabana.

#### UMBANDA AND ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS

In the 1960s, the descriptions in the newspapers were even more precise and referred directly to *umbanda* rituals, with the offerings of flowers on New Year's Eve being mentioned as part of the calendar of New Year festivities. Terms like “devout”, “faithful”, “feast of the spirits” and others begin to show up in press accounts and others like “fetishism” and similar disqualifying terms begin to disappear.

The growth of Afro-Brazilian religions and especially *umbanda* can be seen, for example, in a *Jornal do Brasil* article of December 30, 1966, which cites that some 400 thousand *umbandistas* and 18 thousand tents took part in the rituals, which included the beaches of Ilha do Governador, Paquetá and Sepetiba; areas that had become traditionally occupied by both *umbanda* and *candomblé* (although the article deals only with *umbanda*). Although many *candomblé* fathers of saints claim to have made offerings on these beaches beginning in the 1950s and 1960s, they also state that their presence then was more hidden and always occurred *en masse* on February 2nd. Most claimed they went to the beach just to honor to the *umbandistas*. Their offerings were generally made at waterfalls and beaches in the Baixada Fluminense and in the areas of the city mentioned above, and obeyed the temples' calendars (revolving around saints' holy days, *iabá* celebrations, etc.).

The 1960s and 1970s not only saw the growth of the religion in the Southeast, but in the case of *candomblé*, these years saw the loss of the founders of the Carioca temples, the rise of new leaders, and also the rediscovery of Africa and the

so-called “reafricanization of *candomblé*” (Vianna, 1999: 122; Sansone and Capone, 2009). Some of the intellectual production of the 1950s recognizes the international concerns arising from the decolonization of Africa, but it generally emphasizes local racial issues without referring to the construction of emerging nationalisms in that continent (Vianna, 1999: 123).

In the 1970s, there was a movement by the Brazilian government to disseminate *candomblé* as a symbol of national culture as part of an economic approach to Africa, as well as a tool for the intensification of tourism, especially in Bahia, as Santos (2005) points out.

Also beginning in the 1970s, a new African bibliography began to emerge, still little known in Brazil, raising new arguments about the African presence in the Americas and providing a basis for discussion regarding a possible dialogue between Central and Western Africans in Afro-Brazilian religions. This differed from earlier studies that defended the hegemony of West Africa in the formation of *candomblé* (Mendes, 2012). Additionally, in this decade, Cuban and African priests began reintroduce the *Ifa*. This movement occurred in the United States and involved the intellectual production of African-American devotees who sought teachings from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Haiti, or who went to Africa to be initiated in the mysteries of *Ifa* and the *Orixá*. Between the 1970s and 1990s, there was a rise of leaders who produced knowledge about the religions and who founded federations, acted as consultants, and introduced the concept of preserving and patrimonializing the places and documents that can tell the story of Afro-Brazilian religions (Vianna, 1999: 55).

Although the Afro-Brazilian religions opened themselves to new practitioners, the stigma of “black magic” remained, causing them to continue to bear the mark of secrecy, which was translated in the popular imagination into fear and danger, elements that were continually reproduced in the carioca press. Many newspapers continued to attribute the beach celebrations to the *umbandistas* and, in the scope of their articles, they confused the beliefs and the lines of the two religions, often mixing gods with spirits.

During this period, many leaders of the Black Movement become part of the cadres of the religions. I do not wish to limit the Movement’s involvement to only this type of insertion, however, calling attention to its complex formation, which involved many different actors and a set of organizations that fought against racism with educational practices and political strategies. Brazil’s Black Movement is absolutely plural (Pereira, 2010). I wish to point out, however, the extent to which there was an intersection between the Movement and the Afro-Brazilian religious



field. To a certain extent, the Movement encompassed all the places occupied by blacks, *Candomblé terreiros* and among these.

In recent years in the city of Rio de Janeiro, we have the celebrations of Sepetiba (1994), Mercadão (2003), Ilha do Governador and, more recently, Barra. On the beaches of Urca, several offerings and many boats are launched and *balaio*s and acts of devotion are carried out. One of the stories I collected during this celebration concerns enchantments and the *tambor de minas do Maranhão*. The interviewee was a devotee of *candomblé*, but established a *terreiro* in Caxias with her people of the “line of the enchantment of water”. She also runs the *Casa do Maranhão*, receives several enchanted spirits (Lajedo, Sete Mares, Crispina and Joan of Arc), and works with healing (diseases) with her master guide, the *caboclo* Juruna (*pajé*).

What was initially in the memory of many of the people of the saints an *umbanda* or New Year’s Eve party celebrating the regency of a new *orixá*, now has imprecise borders due to the exchanges between religions. There are many religions in the Afro-Brazilian universe that are also part of the scene, as is the case of the “enchantments” I mentioned above. I cannot say if these intersections pre-date the 1990s. What I notice in the interviews of *umbanda* and *candomblé* temple leaders is that, up until the 1980s, there was a clear separation between the two religions. Everyone went to the beach, but the groups only claimed their *umbanda* and *candomblé* parties at the end of the year and on August 15 and February 2, respectively.

Following the interviews, I have conducted with the celebrations’ organizers and in observing these events, it is difficult to say that these represent only *umbanda* or just *candomblé*. These differences are used to demarcate identities in which people recognize themselves, but in practice they blend. And many own and appropriate these religion’s celebrations.

## CONCLUSION

A mother goddess whose worship, in the eyes of the popular strata, is very much about talking about affections, family losses, caring for mother-child relationships, family devotion (saint or blood families), the portrayal of the subtleties that move the feminine universe (from the work of women on the beach to aesthetics), but who also speaks to the representations of intellectuals, be these folklorists or those related to the political and cultural universe of the representatives of the Afro-Brazilian religious matrixes. Iemanjá is plural and many, and each of

her deals with different nuances of Brazilian society and the movements of its religious field.

Janaína, Iemanjá, the enchanted, Sete Mares... whatever Gypsy, Spiritist or Afro-Brazilian name or designation is employed, with or without strong indigenous, northern, and northeastern influence, there are many representations at stake. Her worship and contemplation expose to us the plurality of the Afro-religious field in Brazil, which also influences other social and religious groups. She recalls the spirits who migrated to the city of Rio de Janeiro, and is present in the acts of her devotees, in their offerings of with flowers, boats, processions, *carreates*, or *balaios*. In their different representations, the multiple Iemanjás differentiate themselves for *umbandistas*, *candomblecistas*, enchantments, *catimbós*, gypsies and other groups that, inadvertently, surprised me with their diversity. If, at first, I started my research thinking that everything began with *umbanda*, in practice I saw that Iemanjá opened up an entire field of questions and possibilities.

Lévi-Strauss (1989) very clearly demonstrated the richness of magical thinking and its complexity. He showed how it opens us to infinite interpretations and questions that make anthropologists circular in the construction of their objects when they seek in history a fundamental tool which will allow them to understand how interviewees' memories are constructed in lapses, ruins, lies, and subjectivities, and in which the times of their narratives lead us to the ways in which the history of beliefs and devotions, identities and representations illustrate the dynamics of religious phenomena in which the analysis of actors' actions is fundamental for the construction of better understanding (Geertz, 1989).

Offering flowers to the sea has become one of the most popular habits of Brazilians and other nationalities, and which has expanded beyond the borders of all order. For many, these offerings mean the celebration of a black, multiple, and diverse heritage, practiced in original, complex, and contradictory ways by different social segments in various black diasporas. The rites for Iemanjá are part of this long history, which also reminds us of those storytellers who, like the *caroço do dendê*, keep the secrets of the world, recreating in orality the beauty of magical thought.

Mother Beata of Iemanjá died before I could complete this article. Her poetry taught us that in order to understand this patrimony, we must remember that the word lives at the crossroads of Time.

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# CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT BRAZILIAN EVANGELICAL TRANSNATIONALIZATION TO EUROPE

Ari Pedro Oro\*

## INTRODUCTION

This text concerns the transnationalization of Brazilian evangelical churches to Europe. However, before directly addressing this issue, it is necessary to highlight that the exponential growth of evangelicals in Brazil, combined with the decrease in the percentage of Catholics, is one of the most significant and statistically proven changes in recent years in the Brazilian religious field. While in 1900 99% of Brazilians were Catholics and 1% evangelicals, a century later, in 2000, the percentage of Catholics fell to 73% while evangelicals rose to 15%. But in 2010, when the last official census was taken,<sup>1</sup> the percentage of Catholics fell to 64% of the population while evangelicals rose to 22%. Today, it is estimated that 27% of the population are evangelicals. Two-thirds of Brazilian evangelicals belong to the Pentecostal and Neopentecostal movement.<sup>2</sup>

This important evangelical presence in Brazil is not only restricted to the number of worshippers or to the growth of churches in the country. It is a phenomenon that is not limited to the religious field, because the most expressive

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<sup>1</sup> In Brazil the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística conducts an official census every ten years, and collects information about various aspects of Brazilian society.

<sup>2</sup> Pentecostalism arose in the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is characterized by the formation of a community of believers who join in the communion of speaking in tongues and believe in the eminent return of Christ. Over the decades, the movement has been modified, giving rise to different tendencies, both in terms of behavior and liturgically and theologically. The most recent wave of Pentecostalism is known as Neopentecostalism in Brazil and is characterized by an insertion in the public sphere through the use of media, particularly television, and participation in institutional politics, in countries where this is possible. Neopentecostals have also introduced greater flexibility of customs – in relation to puritan norms found in traditional Pentecostalism – and emphasize theologies of prosperity and spiritual war.

evangelical denominations also act directly on other social sectors such as institutional politics and the media. Thus, in politics, in both the federal capital in Brasilia, and in legislative assemblies in the states, Evangelicals have established the so-called “evangelical caucuses”, which have considerable political power. For example, in the federal chamber of deputies in Brasilia there are 87 evangelical deputies, which represents 17% of all deputies. This percentage is equal to that of the largest political parties in the country. The “evangelical caucuses” constitute a supra-partisan block, given that their members are spread in different political parties, which come together only when projects of a moral order are under discussion, such as abortion and homosexual marriage. In these situations, the evangelicals usually ally with conservative Catholics, thus forming an important political pressure group that can stop the advance of proposed legislation.

In terms of the evangelical media in Brazil, it is worth recognizing that there are more than 30 evangelical television channels in Brazil today that offer hundreds of religious programs and live services every day. The TV Record network stands out, which belongs to the largest Brazilian Neopentecostal church, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. This television network was purchased by the church founder Edir Macedo, in 1989, for US\$ 45 million, and is now the second largest television network in the country, with an estimated value of US\$ 2 billion.

It is obvious that the evangelical presence in non-religious domains, such as politics and the media, on one hand have encouraged other religious expressions that compose the nation’s religious pluralism, even the Catholic church, which has also increased its presence in these non-religious spaces, and on the other hand, has strengthened the presence of the religious in Brazilian public space.

But, there is another dimension of Brazilian evangelical activism that has been gaining attention in recent years and which is the focus of this paper. It is the international opening, that is its transnationalization, which has helped place Brazil in a prominent place “in the new global religious cartography” (Rocha, Vasquez, 2016: 7).<sup>3</sup>

Thus, until just a few decades ago Brazil was a country that received missionaries and pastors from various evangelical denominations from various European countries and the United States. In recent decades there has been an inverse phenomenon, known as the “inverted mission” (Freston, 2004; 2010), “reverse evangelization” (Mary, 2008) or even “return evangelization” (Trombetta, 2013).

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<sup>3</sup> For these authors, countries such as Brazil, Nigeria and Ghana, despite their subaltern position in the global capitalist system, “began to perform a leadership role in the religious globalization” (Rocha and Vasquez, 2016: 19).



This concept expresses the idea that “those who one day were the object of mission, catechized in the colonies, invert the historic flow, sending missionaries to the metropolises to convert their citizens” (Carranza, Mariz, 2013: 29).

Freston (2010: 155) calls attention to the fact that the “inverted mission” does not consist only in a geographic inversion from South to North. It is also social, in the sense that it comes “from below”, inverting the positions on a global map, similar to the expansion of Christianity in early times. It would be, as Ruiz and Michel (2012: 135) affirm, “a form of historic revenge of the colonized over the colonizer”.

Analysts have called attention to the fact that not only Brazilian evangelical churches conduct “inverted missions”. The same phenomenon also takes place in Latin American and African evangelical environments (Argyriadis *et al*, 2012; Oro, Steil & Rickli, 2012). Moreover, the “inverted mission” to Europe is also found in the charismatic portion of the Catholic church of Brazil<sup>4</sup> (Carranza, Mariz, 2016; Gabriel, 2010).

As mentioned above, this text addresses the transnationalization of Brazilian evangelical churches to the European continent. This phenomenon is relatively recent. This is because historically the missionary focus of evangelical churches was on Latin American and African countries, particularly those where Portuguese is spoken. It is only in the past four decades that the interest of Brazilian evangelical missionaries has turned to European countries, notably Portugal, Italy, Spain and England. The option for the first three countries is due to the colonial ties of Brazil and Latin America and the facility of linguistic communication, given that they share neo-Latin idioms. Meanwhile, the option for England is also related to historic reasons, but associated with relations maintained by the churches of that country with Brazilian evangelical churches. Incursions or relations by Brazilian evangelical churches or their agents in Eastern European countries are still rare.

I have been conducting field research since 2014 in the four countries mentioned above, interviewing devotees, pastors and missionaries, both Brazilians and natives to those countries, and accompanying services and meetings. However,

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<sup>4</sup> The Catholic Charismatic Renovation, also known as Catholic Pentecostalism, began in 1967 at Duquesne University, in Pittsburgh, Pa. in the United States and rapidly spread throughout the world. Similarly to evangelical Pentecostalism, the Catholic Charismatic Renovation emphasizes the strength of the Holy Spirit and its gifts and the importance of a personal experience with God. In Brazil, the most important charismatic Catholic community is called the Canção Nova [New Song], founded in 1978 and located in the city of Cachoeira Paulista, in São Paulo state. Canção Nova has a radio and television system that covers nearly the entire country and also has a presence in Portugal, Italy, Israel and France.

I will not present statistics about the scope of this phenomenon. This is because there are no reliable scientific surveys about the number of Brazilian evangelical churches and missionaries in Europe or about the number of worshippers who attend services and temples in European countries.

The objective of this paper is to clarify three issues: the motivations of the Brazilian evangelical churches to proceed to the transnationalization to Europe; the forms by which the churches execute this process; and finally the main problems that the Brazilian missionaries face in Europe due to cultural differences between Brazil and European countries and that influence their religious practice.

### BRAZILIAN EVANGELICAL TRANSNATIONALIZATION TO EUROPE: MOTIVATIONS

I begin by clarifying that the concept of transnationalization is used here considering its two main characteristics. First, as Alves (2011: 32) affirms, transnationalization takes place through a flow of people that are joined in “networks of relations (...) with variable levels of institutionalization, crossing different social spaces”. Secondly, as emphasized by Badie and Smouths (1995), the networks of relations have a weak (or no) relationship with state apparatus, although this depends on the legal, political and economic situation of each country.<sup>5</sup>

In the ethnographic context addressed here, we see that the networks of relations are woven through the formation of partnerships between churches that had previously benefitted from the alliances nurtured by interpersonal affinities, which does not mean, as we see, that relations between people are always harmonious and peaceful. Moreover, this mostly involves informal partnerships, which occur at the margin of state entities, with this being a conscious guideline of the actors to not be involved with the state bureaucracies. They turn to official entities only to satisfy the legal requirements for their missionaries to enter and remain in the countries in mission: passports and visas, if they want to stay longer than tourists are permitted.

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<sup>5</sup> Transnationalization and globalization are not exclusive concepts. They have an hierarchical relationship. Globalization offers a horizon of direction, or landscape, within which the “international”, “transnational”, “diasporic” or “global” movements make sense to the actors. For this reason “globalization” embraces all the other concepts. The term transnationalization, however, has a particularity. On one hand, it emphasizes less the North-South flows than the concept of “globalization” and on the other, as Hannerz (1996) remembers, it emphasizes the flow of individuals and groups, and not only companies, in the global arena. This means, for Capone and Mary (2012: 30) that the concept of transnationalization carries a political dimension, given that it points to a “contra-hegemonic political space” which shifts the interplay of discriminations imposed “from above”, constituting a complement or the reverse of economic and technological globalization.

It is also important to clarify that in Brazil the evangelical churches that adopt a transnationalization policy towards Europe are not those considered as historic and derived from the Protestant reform, such as Lutherans, Anglicans, Calvinists, or Methodists, but those that are part of the broad Pentecostal segment, like the Assembly of God, and the Neopentecostal, like the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, and others that will be mentioned later.

What moves these churches to send missionaries to Europe? The narrative most often used by the religious agents focuses on the idea of “reChristianizing Europe”. That is, they begin with a diagnosis, according to which the continent is undergoing a “spiritual chilling” caused by an attachment to materialism, hedonism and individualism. Given the situation, they believe that they cannot remain passive. On the contrary, it is necessary to make an effort to “spiritually reconquer Europe”, before other religions, such as Islam, do. Thus, they assume the mission of “returning to the home of their parents”, with this currently being a moral obligation.

Nevertheless, beyond this motivation that is widely verbalized, there are others – that are less often expressed - for conducting the inverted mission to Europe, although they affect the churches and missionaries to different degrees. They involve both the appropriation of a utilitarian logic that seeks economic benefits by acting religiously in Europe, as a function of the valorization of the Euro. There is also an interest in leaving the country, traveling abroad and feeling connected to countries considered to be in the First World.

Moreover, from an anthropological perspective there is another important evangelical motivation associated to the “inverted mission” to Europe. This involves a symbolic resource for reinforcing legitimacy in the competitive “local” religious context. That is, knowing that the relations among the evangelical churches, regardless of their size, are openly or surreptitiously competitive in the conquest of worshippers, those that are able to invest in international circulation to European countries nourish a sense of elevated status, observable in the emphasis given to these flows in the worship services, especially in the newspapers and online spaces of the churches. In this context, churches and pastors are persuaded to earn points in their symbolic disputes with other local pastors and churches without global partnerships, above all with European countries.

It is thus noted that the churches that participate in the transnational circuits turn to the “global” to reinforce their standing in the “local”, to earn points “here”, in relation to the “local” competition. Thus, as I mentioned in another article (Oro, 2014), in addition to the articulation between the “local” and the “global” a certain

instrumentalization of the “global” by the “local” is noted. If this analysis is correct, the native expression “spiritually conquer Europe” can be translated “conquer local legitimacy”.<sup>6</sup>

#### A TYPOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS TRANSNATIONALIZATIONS

The transnationalization of the Brazilian evangelical churches to Europe does not take place in the same manner. Precisely for this reason, I suggest a typology composed of four different models of religious transnationalization.<sup>7</sup>

The first model comes from the way that some large Brazilian Neopentecostal churches<sup>8</sup> are transnationalized to other countries and Europe. They are implanted abroad under their own initiative and once installed act as autonomous churches, that is, they do not interact with other Christian churches, nor do they participate in the religious conventions or organizations existing in their new countries. It thus involves isolated churches, which maintain the principle of religious exclusivity. Ecumenical relations in these churches can occur at an individual level, but rarely an institutional one.

The second model of transnationalization is constituted by Brazilian evangelical churches considered mid-size (up to 30,000 worshippers) or small (up to 2,000 worshippers) and that have as a triggering element of transnationalization a partnership, which is generally informal, established with European religious agents or churches. With the passage of years, however, there is a break in the partnership, usually due to cultural differences or political disputes, and the Brazilian churches establish themselves institutionally in Europe, although this does not figure at first as an ecclesial project. In this case, however, and differently from the churches in the first model, the churches in this second model do not remain isolated from the other evangelical churches, whether Brazilian or national, and value the inter-institutional and interpersonal relationships. In sum, they cultivate ecumenical relations with other missionaries and churches, whether Brazilian or not.

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<sup>6</sup> More information about these considerations can be found in Oro and Alves (2015).

<sup>7</sup> Obviously other more in depth studies can reveal other possibilities for transnationalization, thus expanding the typology that I present.

<sup>8</sup> I refer particularly to the Universal Church of the kingdom of God, founded in 1977, by Edir Macedo and that now has some 3 million followers in Brazil and is present in 124 countries; the Igreja Mundial do Poder de Deus [World Church of the Power of God], founded in 1998 by Valdemiro Santiago, which has some 500,000 worshippers and is found in 25 countries; and the Igreja Internacional da Graça de Deus, [International Church of the Grace of God] founded by Romildo Soares, in 1980, and has more than 1 million worshippers in Brazil and is found in 20 countries.

The third model of religious transnationalization is also represented by middle or small Brazilian evangelical churches that reach Europe through invitations and partnerships. With the passage of years, however, their Brazilian representatives also establish a break, but this time, with both the European and Brazilian churches, and in this case, establish new churches in Europe. As in the previous model, the tendency is not to be isolated. To the contrary, they cultivate broad social relations with other churches to better integrate into the local contexts.

Finally, the fourth model of religious transnationalization is composed by Brazilian evangelical churches that arrive in Europe after signing partnerships with local churches, and are thus more solid partnerships, which are maintained for more time. They thus jointly conduct collaborative work based on the notion of alliance and of mutual support that imply flows that generally occur in both senses: from Brazil to Europe and vice versa.

Therefore, responding to the question raised at the beginning of this text, it is clear that the Brazilian evangelical environment is predominated by a strategy of entering partnerships to conduct this religious transnationalization. This takes place in the three past models presented. Only the churches in the first model execute the transnationalization in Europe-based on projects constructed within the churches themselves, thus seeking to conquer the faithful in the global religious market.

Therefore, an overview allows affirming that the Brazilian evangelical churches undertake different modes of transnationalization to Europe. Nevertheless, as we will see, their representatives converge in terms of the idea of adopting practices and narratives that facilitate their integration to European cultures.

## ACCOMMODATIONS TO EUROPEAN CULTURES

The Brazilian pastors unanimously affirm that the cultural differences between Brazil and European countries constitute an important problem that they face in their missionary work. But they are also aware of the need to adapt to local cultures if they want to attain some missionary success. Among the topics that provoke more cultural confrontations and require negotiations and other efforts, are the issues of offerings and emotions stand out, as well as the punctuality of worship.

For instance, in Brazil, the pastors of the large Pentecostal movement require financial offerings diurnally from their worshipers, and the resolution of their afflictions is conditioned on these offerings. They generally insert the offering in

the logic of *do ut des*, that is, reciprocity, also inscribing it in the Theology of Prosperity, which approximates the religious and the economic, thus sacralizing in a certain way, the market and material goods, especially money. In this context, a relationship is established between commitment of faith and financial detachment. Nevertheless, this associative logic combines offering and blessings, producing a symmetric equivalence between the size of the offer and the size of faith, and does not make sense to a European mentality that tends to separate religion and economy, and religion and politics. For this reason, the Brazilian pastors feel a strong resistance in Europe due to financial offerings. The consequence of this resides in the need for self-policing by the Brazilian missionaries in relation to requiring offerings, which for many of them requires a quite complicated change of liturgical behavior.

Another important aspect in the Brazilian Pentecostal cults are the moments of praise, which are always accompanied by the expression of emotions, whether of joy or sadness, frustration or realization, pain or joy. This is one of the most problematic issues encountered by the Brazilian missionaries in Europe. They reveal that the resistance to public expression of emotions, even inside the temples, is such that it requires them to exercise control both over their own performance as preachers and the incentive to corporal expression by the worshippers. This is different than what is found in Brazil, where the verbal praise and praise singing are grandioses and emotions, whatever they may be, flow naturally.

Finally, another issue that establishes a conflict with the common practices of Brazilian missionaries and requires them to accommodate to the local cultures is the need to maintain punctual worship services. While in Brazil there is no rigidity in the time of the services, either in terms of the time to begin or to end, in Europe this is mandatory, thus requiring a great effort by the missionaries to accept the preeminence of worldly temporality over religious temporality.

It is needless to say that there is a relationship between the ruptures of the partnerships mentioned above between the Brazilian and European religious agents and the cultural shocks provoked by the cultural differences mentioned and that have repercussions on the religious practices.

## CONCLUSION

This text addressed three topics. The first explored the motivations and the policy of meanings aggregated by the missionaries and the Brazilian evangelical churches to transnationalize to Europe, thus conducting a “reverse mission”.

A broadly announced version stood out, that is: the moral requirement of the Brazilian “children” to contribute to the “reChristianization” of their European “parents”, given that a religious indifference predominates in Europe today. But other motivations appear, which are less promoted by the Brazilian religious agents in Europe, like the possibility to obtain economic benefits, an opening up to the world, and above all, a rise in status and the strengthening of legitimation in a competitive “local” religious context. This is achieved by establishing partnerships, even if informal ones, organizing in networks and sending missionaries to churches of a continent as important as Europe.

The second topic showed that the transnational flows moved by the Brazilian churches to Europe allowed constructing a typology of religious transnationalizations that obey four different models. The first model is based on the mode of action of the mega Neopentecostal churches that undertake transnationalization under their own initiative, after a prior study of the religious market abroad. Once established there, they adopt the principle of religious exclusivity, and isolated and autonomous action in the dispute for worshippers, following the logic of the supply of religious services. The second model is characterized by churches that transnationalize through partnerships with European religious agents, but that after some months or years, undo the partnership, generating a situation initially not foreseen by the missionary churches, which is that of institutionally installing themselves in the countries in which they were invited. The third model involves Brazilian churches that also transnationalize through an initial partnership but that after a time of mutual cooperation, the Brazilian pastors make a dual break, that is, with the Brazilian missionary church and with the foreign receiving church, creating a new denomination on their own. Finally, the fourth model consists in an initial partnership that becomes strong and long lasting.

The three latter models count on partnerships, mostly informal ones, among local and European churches and agents, as strategic resources for undertaking the religious transnationalization. Even after their development, which can lead to breaks and separations, religious organizations open to religious ecumenism are revealed, with this also being a strategy to remain in the European religious market.

The third topic concerned the liturgical adaptations undertaken by the transnationalized Brazilian missionaries and churches due to tensions attributed to differences between so-called “Brazilian culture” codes and “European culture” codes, which influence the religious field. In this sense, given a European tendency to separate religion and money, the Brazilian missionaries are led to reduce

the emphasis on the mediating symbolism of money in the resolution of afflictions of the faithful and consequently on the Theology of Prosperity. Similarly, cultural resistance in Europe about public expression of emotions led Brazilian evangelical missionaries to give less emphasis in Europe to praise than in Brazil. Finally, they recognize that maintaining the punctuality of services is important in Europe, unlike in Brazil, and therefore they must, even if they do not want to, also accommodate to this issue if they want to be successful in their missionary work in Europe.

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# PROSPERITY GOSPEL ON THE RISE – DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF NEO-PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN BRAZIL

Renata Siuda-Ambroziak\*

From the fieldwork diary:

Here I am, in front of the huge Temple of Solomon, in the Brás district of São Paulo – the biggest cathedral of the Brazil's most famous homegrown Neo-Pentecostal group, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (IURD)<sup>1</sup>, started in 1977 by Edir Macedo. Bishop Macedo is said to be a billionaire and owns more than a dozen broadcasting stations, including one of the biggest on the continent: TV Record. The Temple of Solomon is modelled on the original, in ancient Jerusalem. Opened in 2014, with the presence of the highest Brazilian political authorities, it houses 10,000 worshippers. There are flags of 200 countries where IURD claims a presence in its stadium-sized forecourt, swarmed with elegantly dressed ushers. Keeping order are members of the church's youth. Hostesses welcome the worshippers with a smile at the doors. The faithful are very generous – when the pastor asks for donations, there is a long, long line. They can donate cash or use credit cards – the credit card machine is available on the spot. And, as Elisa, a black domestic servant explains to me, they also readily offer their time and skills – all for the sake of their church's unstoppable growth. She is proud to be able to come and clean the building every week, with a group of other female volunteers. On Sundays, her younger sister, who works during the weekdays as a nanny, comes, also as a volunteer, to take care of children at the church's Biblical School, so that parents can assist the service in peace of mind, unbothered. The internal church organization seems to be smooth, well managed, perfectly planned.

## INTRODUCTION

Religion is one of the main cultural phenomena, strongly integrated with the context in which it exists, accompanying its multi-faceted transformations, while itself suffering important changes. Such processes also occur in contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> Original name: IURD – Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus. In the paper the acronym IURD will be further used.

Brazil – undoubtedly one of the most interesting Latin American fieldworks for contemporary research on religious transformations. In spite of the fact that the majority of Brazilians still declare the same religious affiliation, to the Catholic Church<sup>2</sup>, statistical data have shown for decades already that, firstly, Brazilian Catholicism keeps shrinking, and, secondly, that Brazilians are open and tolerant towards religious mobility, and they eagerly experiment combining with creativity ingredients of many cults in a seemingly “risky” way<sup>3</sup>. What statistics also show is that, in the last few decades, Brazil has become one of the most Pentecostal countries in the world<sup>4</sup>, having absorbed and nationalized Pentecostal movement, which reached Brazil in 1910, giving it idiosyncratic Brazilian flavor and creating its own Neo-Pentecostal offers, which are of our major interest in this article.

One such church was registered in 1977 as Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (IURD) by Edir Macedo (initially together with his brother-in-law), a Brazilian lottery accountant, who decided to quit his clerk’s job and start a new life as a pastor. The IURD’s success, at least initially, was facilitated by the Catholic Church itself, which, unintentionally, opened in the times of liberation theology and military dictatorship niches for the new, innovative religious offers: with the clergy

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<sup>2</sup> According to National Surveys of IBGE ([www.ibge.gov.br](http://www.ibge.gov.br)) the percentage of Catholics in Brazil is steadily falling (1970 – 91,8%; 1980 – 89%; 1991 – 83%; 2000 – 73,6%; 2010 – 64,6%), in numbers in the first decade of the 21st century – from 125 million to 123 million – the decrease not so sharp due to the population growth. In 2016, a survey by DataFolha showed that it keeps decreasing with 55% of Catholic population in 2016: 44% do evangélicos são ex-católicos (2016, Dec. 28), In: *DataFolha*. Retrieved from: <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2016/12/1845231-44-dos-evangelicos-sao-ex-catolicos.shtml>.

<sup>3</sup> The fact that a Brazilian declares himself/herself Catholic doesn’t mean forgetting about traditional sacrifices for Indian and African gods, practicing magic, or believing in the supernatural powers of “protective objects”. Many Brazilians are followers of more than one cult (the rule of “double affiliation” is characteristic especially of Catholicism and syncretic Afro-Brazilian religions – two different, but in the eyes of the believers, perfectly complementary religious systems). In spite of the colonial Brazil being the land of Catholic monopolistic missionary efforts, early clash of European, Indian and African cultures triggered formation of syncretic popular religiosity, allowing parallel co-existence of many religions and cults, which influenced one another, determining religious needs and expectations.

<sup>4</sup> Pentecostal movement is a strongly proselytizing religious movement, derived from Evangelical Protestantism, referring to historical events of the Pentecost. It appeared in USA at the beginning of the 20th century, mostly connected with the Azusa Street community in Los Angeles (Robeck, 2006). The latest current in Pentecostal movement, benefitting fully from new technologies and preaching so-called “theology of success and prosperity” is called in Brazil Neo-Pentecostalism – it’s characteristic of urban communities and puts emphasis on prosperity gospel, exorcisms and miraculous healings through faith. According to National Surveys of IBGE ([www.ibge.gov.pl](http://www.ibge.gov.pl)) the percentage of Pentecostals in Brazil is steadily growing (including the Neo-Pentecostal offer): 1970 – 5,2%; 1980 – 6,6%; 1991 – 9%; 2000 – 15,4%; 2010 – 22,2% – in numbers an increase from 26,2 million to 42,3 million.

supporting political opposition, the relations between the Church and the military regime became quickly radicalized, and, although Brazilian Church evolved into the most democratic and the laity-oriented church in the world (a process named by Boff, 1986, the new “ecclesiogenesis”), it lost in the most hectic times of the liberation theology about 20% of its, scarce anyway, clergy as a result of “social immersion”, but more often due to their imprisonment or “disciplinary” expulsion from the country (Casanova, 2005: 221). The Brazilian Church, institutionally, also paid high price for its leftist ideological involvement – the election of conservative John Paul II, the pope “from behind the Iron Curtain”, led to conflicts of supporters of liberation theology with Vatican, which criticized Marxist interpretations of social and economic situation in Latin America, acknowledging the risk of serious doctrinal “deviation”. As Casanova explains (2005), the Brazilian Church was forced to adopt a new strategy – retreating from political stage (religious “privatization”), restraining liberation theology, curbing the influence of radically progressive laity and increasing competition against (Neo)Pentecostal churches. It was especially in urban slums that these churches started replacing Catholic Basic Communities (CEBs), following closely their affiliates’ search for “here and now” (paradoxically facilitated by liberation theology itself, which stressed the necessity of radical improvement in the life of the faithful, not so much in the eschatological, but rather in the worldly context), and creating a “custom-made” religious proposal.

Neo-Pentecostal churches started gaining more and more popularity during the difficult democratic transition after 1985, with the implementation of tough reforms according to the neoliberal Washington Consensus’ recipes<sup>5</sup>. Neo-Pentecostals, due to their cult of pragmatic business management techniques, positive thinking, and the spirit of entrepreneurship, started soon being called “the third horseman of neoliberalism”, for having adapted themselves so well to economic and political transformations and taking advantage of them to the benefit of their own expansion.

The article constitutes a modest attempt to show, while concentrating on the case of IURD, determinants and ways of the Neo-Pentecostals effective, though often disputable implementation of their founding fathers own preaching – building “health and wealth” religious corporations, real “empires of faith”, recognized worldwide as one of the most interesting export products of Brazilian culture.

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<sup>5</sup> Washington Consensus rules applied at the end of the 80s to almost all Latin American economies in deep crisis, were about a stringent control of social spending and curbing inflation, privatizing public sector, and international trade liberalization with total opening to foreign investments (Gore, 2000).

Such expansion of Neo-Pentecostal churches, genuine “religious enterprises”, family-owned but professionally managed, eclectic in doctrine, cult and organizational structure, has also brought along their increasing political and economic influence.

I’ve concentrated on the recent period in Brazilian history (since the decadence of military dictatorship, through Brazilian re-democratization, a double presidential term of Inácio Lula da Silva, and finishing with the abrupt end of the second term of the impeached in 2016 Dilma Rousseff), presenting the process of expansion of the IURD in the context of growing social demand for innovative religious “empires of faith”. My thesis is based on the following statement: applying business rules and growth strategies to the religious sphere, Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal churches constitute a perfect example of faith-selling “innovative religious enterprises”, with economic and political crises, additionally reinforced by social disparities, boosting the demand for their offer, especially among the most vulnerable Brazilians.

To prove that, two theories will be applied to the contemporary Brazilian situation – the rational choice theory of religious markets by Stark and Bainbridge (2007), and the existential security compensation theory by Norris and Inglehart (2006). On their basis, both the process of religion adaptation to the logics of the neoliberal market economy and the reasons for the high demand for religion in general and the Neo-Pentecostal offer in particular will be searched for and analyzed, using the case of IURD as an exemplification.

## EXISTENTIAL SECURITY THEORY

Norris and Inglehart (2006) base their theory of contemporary religious transformations on the dependence between the demand for religion and the existence of social discrepancies, their level and causes; the degree of development of a given society; and the level of security of its members. In relation with the hierarchy of needs by Maslow (1954, 1962), Norris and Inglehart put stress in their theory on showing religion as an important psychological factor mitigating risk and thus increasing the level of existential security. They explain that religious demand grows always when people start suffering from some kind of deprivation, stress, or direct threat to their lives and health, with religious solutions appearing in the situation of the lack of possibilities to undertake actions that would change such a situation or eliminate its causes. They also prove that because rich and poor

countries differ in their levels of development and the conditions of living of their citizens, which greatly influences their feeling of security, the level of participation in religious practices and the meaning of religious values are twice as high in poorer societies than in rich ones. It means that on the basis of the level of economic development of a given country we can predict the demand for religion there on the condition that we balance it adversely with any social and economic discrepancies (illustrated quantitatively by the Gini Index), which are sometimes worsened by rapid development.

That means that religious needs are first of all determined by the size of the gap between the richest and the poorest groups of a given society, with the poorest constituting usually the most religious element in every social structure. As Brazil is, unfortunately, still in the forefront of the social discrepancies category, the phenomena of poverty and marginalization affecting the most numerous social group in Brazil should considerably intensify, especially in the context of pluralistic and innovative market, the Brazilians' demand for new religious offers, including Neo-Pentecostal churches.

Summing up, Norris and Inglehart (2006) state that religion is always strongest where factors interpreted as life and security threatening occur, while religious practices along with ecclesiastical institutions tend to disappear in wealthy and egalitarian societies, living in prosperity, under protective state's wings ensuring predictable help in case of difficulties. The biggest demand for participation in religious practices is characteristic of poor and unsafe countries, where people reveal a strong tendency to attach importance to religious values. Bad collective experiences also leave a permanent religious "mark" on a given generation, which means that only generations born and raised in conditions where feeling of security is an undisputed fact, feel a reduced need for religion. Decrease of interest in religious offers is a feature of those societies that have experienced long-lasting, multi-generational periods of regular economic growth and physical safety.

Therefore, economy, society and religion are by no means separate fields and it can be assumed that any occurrence of social, economic and political crises in Brazil must have had an impact on the growing demand for religion in general and appearance and further expansion of new, innovative religious enterprises, just like IURD in particular.

## MARKET THEORY OF RELIGION

Market theories of religion, based on the economic rules of supply and demand with the rational choices of consumers linked to individual preferences and desire to maximize gains while minimizing losses, say that pluralistic religious markets with their high dynamics of religious creativity lead to the increase in religious innovation and creating offers perfectly compliant with the cultural, social, and economic needs of their potential followers.

The trend of mixing economy and religion is by no means a new one and goes back to the classic Weberian concepts (1994), later picked up, developed or commented on by many scholars, among whom some suggest that religion has been used to smooth down functioning of the modern economy (Bauman, 2007), and that it is one of the many goods on sale advertised with skill by professionals (Moore, 1994). Berger (2005) claims that religious traditions, earlier passed on from generation to generation or forcefully imposed, nowadays must be “sold” to very “picky” clients, which changes religious institutions into enterprises. Casanova (2005) argues that the “sector of soul-saving” has become one of the most diversified and prosperous in the whole mass culture industry. Such an approach is also characteristic of Stark and Bainbridge (2007), who stress the importance of new and innovative religious enterprises that weaken the authority and influence of traditional religious institutions, thus opening the religious market for new proposals. Their theory analyzes human behavior in categories of conducting a profitable exchange of rewards (understood as anything people desire and are ready to sacrifice for) and costs. Sometimes, when rewards are unavailable, people are prepared to accept in their place some kind of compensation, which is really a promise of a reward. According to Stark and Bainbridge, all religious institutions must offer their members rewards and compensations – sometimes very practical and visible (like status and prestige), sometimes only promissory (saving, being “the chosen one”). That means that even behavior apparently irrational, with an adverse balance of present “gains and losses”, may, in the religious context, mean something completely different. For example, those paying real tithes, as is the case of Neo-Pentecostal churches adherents, may still feel rewarded, since costs, though heavy, are balanced by a “special blessing” or expected gains from participation in collective forms of religious life and a whole system of advantageous exchanges and interactions, forming social capital of individuals.

A gradual loss of power by acknowledged religious organizations, their fall, decrease in significance and social, cultural, political or even economic influence



always create a vacuum space in the religious market, rapidly filled by some other religious entrepreneurs, much more innovative, promising more attractive rewards and more convincingly explaining the necessity of paying costs of affiliation. On such a market, a strategic role is played by charismatic religious leaders, in need of intensive promotion in order to enter the market. Apparently, a very good example of such an innovative enterprise in Brazil is precisely the IURD with its business-like strategies of growth and development and its charismatic leader and founder – Edir Macedo.

#### APPLICATION OF THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES TO THE BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

After the fall of the dictatorship (1985), it was the dynamic growth of Neo- - Pentecostalism that became perceptible not only in statistics, but also in the Brazilian urban landscape, both in the *favelas* poverty-stricken areas and in the rich business centers of ostentatious wealth, where new “empires of faith” started building their headquarters. The new religious enterprises quickly applied the rules taken directly from consumer markets to trading religion – they worked out advertising strategies, mastered new leadership standards and proposed attractive and flexible doctrines, formed by means of experimental syncretization of culturally accepted in Brazil religious offers. IURD – the biggest and the best-known Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal church, nowadays claims to possess branches almost all over the world. In name and in principle universal, precisely in the times of re-democratization it started its great expansion in the country and abroad.

However, when in 1985 there took place first after 20 years of dictatorship free elections, they seemed to be a formal step towards the improvement of economic situation and lessening of the gravity of social problems, which, as stated by Norris and Inglehart (2006), to a great extent could have potentially curbed high demand for new religious offers, and – tame Neo-Pentecostal expansion. It didn't happen, though.

In fact, the beginnings of the promising transformation in Brazil weren't lucky at all: the undisputed winner of the first presidential elections, a candidate of democratic opposition, Tancredo Neves, died before the inauguration and the unexpected tenure of his deputy, José Sarney, a politician connected with the falling military regime, turned out to be a lost battle of the government against inflation and deep economic crisis. In 1986, Sarney issued the first plan of reforms, the

*Plan Cruzado*, which consisted in, among other things, replacement of currency with a new one, and artificially freezing the prices of products and services. In the initial phase of its implementation, enthusiastic Brazilians got high-spirited and, supported by the sudden popularization of television and mass advertising, started shopping. That was exactly when television satellite-dishes appeared even on the roofs of the barracks in *favelas*, treated almost as “articles of utmost necessity”. Bishop Macedo must have noticed this trend. He had also been familiar with North American televangelism by that time. Even when the whirl of consumption, together with economic weakness, caused rapid growth of the black market, a quick return of inflation, mass protests and strikes, the satellite dishes were still there, reaching already millions.

And it was exactly when IURD registered the first sudden growths of popularity. After eight years of its activity, it already boasted of 195 temples in all Brazilian states, opening about 24 additional sites each year (Tavolaro, 2007). The tenth anniversary of the church was celebrated at the famous Maracanã stadium full of affiliates. The first foreign branches in the United States also became quite successful (holding back bishop Macedo in the United States for good), and IURD started its expansion across the border of the American continent by sending first pastors to Africa and Southern Europe.

Yet simultaneously the Brazilian government struggled with catastrophic economic situation and growing social frustration. Reaction to the next “sanative” economic plan (the Bresser’s Plan in 1987) with a tax increase, were riots in big cities and clashes with military police forces. In 1989 there occurred the first, publicized slaughter of landless peasants of MST<sup>6</sup> – as a result of regular army attacks, supported by local landowners, 19 people died and 400 were injured (Görgen, 2002). At the same time the authority of the government was discredited with reports of widespread corruption among its members, uncontrolled violence broke out in the streets and the inflation level soared to almost 3.000%<sup>7</sup>. That must have again influenced an increase in the number of Pentecostal (including Neo-Pentecostal) churches affiliations (from 5,2% to 9,1%) and substantially decreased the Catholic Church’s affiliation (from 93,5% to 83,8%).

It seemed, with new presidential elections won in 1989 by a young politician Fernando Collor de Mello, officially supported by bishop Macedo (and other Neo-

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<sup>6</sup> *Movimento dos Sem-Terra* (Landless Peasant Movement) constitutes an important socio-political power in Brazil, demanding a wide agricultural reform. More information about MST: <http://www.mst.org.br>.

<sup>7</sup> Inflation, consumer prices for Brazil (s.a.), *Quando*. Retrieved from: <http://www.quandl.com/-data/FRED/FPCPITOTLZGBRA-Inflation-consumer-prices-for-Brazil>.

and Pentecostal leaders) who postulated the “clean hands” policy and the reduction of oligarchs influences, that things might at last start changing for better. This was also the time when IURD started to invest in politics, supporting its own church members in elections. Bishop Macedo quickly noticed the importance and necessity of getting involving in politics, especially in relation to their biggest competitor, Catholic Church, withdrawal. But at that time, in spite of gradually increasing influences, the IURD still didn’t have sufficient political base to be able to effectively shape domestic policy or take any responsibility for the governmental action – and, paradoxically, that worked to its advantage. When Collor took a controversial decision of freezing the Brazilian citizens’ bank accounts with the aim of preventing the capital escaping across the border, bishop Macedo allowed himself to publicly criticize president’s steps and to withdraw his support from the electoral campaign. Especially that such a government’s move, which led to a sudden bankruptcy of many local companies and widened the scale of poverty, for him personally turned out to be a blessing: at that time, in the Brazilian media market there started negotiations on the purchase of falling television channel – Record. The so-called “media deal of the century” was soon closed – bishop Macedo was able to beat the price of other tender participants, thus becoming owner of the second largest television channel in Brazil, one of the biggest in the whole Latin American continent.<sup>8</sup> Some more unsuccessful attempts of economic reforms that followed further worsened the state of Brazilian economy, but helped expansion of already impressive IURD religious empire – more and more people were attracted to the successful church.

In the context of the IURD’s growing influence, in 1992, bishop Macedo, continuing other media takeovers, was arrested under the accusation of charlatanism and tax evasion.<sup>9</sup> With respect to the lack of evidence, numerous protests and IURD affiliates’ demonstrations in his defense, he was released after a few days, but the religious leader’s imprisonment must have led to another, sudden growth of his own and his church’s popularity. According to Campos (1999), the number of IURD members was growing practically overnight at that time: church opened an average of 9,32 temples per month in the country and 1,96 abroad. In the first half of the 90s, IURD opened 2014 branches in Brazil and 236 in 65 other countries in total. At the same time, in *favelas* drug dealing and gangs flourished, dividing their zones of influence, even inside overcrowded prisons. In 1992, the

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<sup>8</sup> For further info, see the Record TV website: <http://recordtv.r7.com/>.

<sup>9</sup> Information on the arrest can be found on official site of the Church: <https://blogs.universal.org/bispomacedo/en/timeline-of-bishop/11-days-in-jail/> and in the national and international media coverage, for example, Antunes, 2013.

biggest rebellion in the most crowded penitentiary center in Latin America (Carandirú in São Paulo) left more than a hundred prisoners slaughtered (Borges, 2017).<sup>10</sup> Those who survived the massacre created the biggest criminal organization in Brazil – PCC (*Primeiro Comando da Capital*)<sup>11</sup>. Police and army intervention in urban slums also resulted in victims, for example in Vigário Geral, a group of armed police officers opened fire in the street causing death of 21 random inhabitants, including a few children<sup>12</sup>.

Soon president Collor, denounced by his own brother as a person involved in serious corruption affair, was unseated by the first in Brazil's history impeachment procedure – earlier, millions of Brazilians in protest against corruption and impunity took to the streets in mourning clothes, demanding the immediate president's resignation (Martins, 2008). Their demands were supported by IURD and some Pentecostal pastors. Results appeared quickly in the religious statistics: in 2000 there was another great decrease of Catholic affiliation among Brazilians: from 83,8% in 1991 to 73,8%; at the same time (Neo-)Pentecostal churches were enjoying success and popularity – statistics concerning affiliation grew from 9,1% in 1991 to 15,5% in 2000.

After disgraced Collor (who, before his impeachment, signed concession for the new owner of Record television), the presidential office was taken by his vice-president – Itamar Franco. Not much changed, though, especially in terms of public security – with the aim of private property protection, higher urban classes started to organize armed raiding parties patrolling neighborhood, which often ended up with street shootings and “street children” roundups. In 1993 there took place famous massacre in front of the church Candelaria in the center of Rio de Janeiro, where many homeless children, sleeping on the stairs, were shot to death<sup>13</sup>. It was when bishop Macedo started to criticize the lack of the government's children and youth social policy and expressed his official support for contraception and a controversial project of voluntary pastors' vasectomy in order to

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<sup>10</sup> The famous Carandiru massacre became a theme of a book by Drauzio Varella and of a film by Héctor Babenco (Carandiru) de 2003, based on the book. Some media coverage of the event: O vergonhoso massacre do Carandiru (1992, October 2), *Memorial da Democracia*. Retrieved from: <http://memorialdademocracia.com.br/card/o-vergonhoso-massacre-do-carandiru>.

<sup>11</sup> The gang has its own webpages: <https://faccapcc1533primeirocomandodacapital.org/>; <http://www.aconteceuemitu.org/>.

<sup>12</sup> Information, detailed descriptions and data on the major tragic events in Brazil in the 90s can be retrieved from the sites of NGOs working with human rights protection, for example: <http://www.redecontraviolencia.org/Casos/1993/240.html>.

<sup>13</sup> See some media coverage: Nota Pública: 20 anos da chacina da Candelária – Não vamos esquecer! (2013, July 18). *Anistia Internacional. Brasil*. Retrieved from: <https://anistia.org.br/noticias/nota-publica-20-anos-da-chacina-da-candelaria-nao-vamos-esquecer/>.

popularize among them the idea of adoption (bishop-founder himself, apart from raising his two daughters, adopted a son; Macedo daughters, both married to “vasectomized” IURD pastors, started raising adoptive children as well)<sup>14</sup>.

Critical conditions of millions of the Brazilians didn’t change when the economic situation started to improve slowly in the second half of the 90s, after Fernando Henrique Cardoso introduced the seventh stabilizing, economic program – *Plano Real*, consisting, among other things, in the (fourth in a row) currency change (this time from *cruzeiro* to *real*) and quick, controversial public sector privatization, which provoked strong social resistance movements expressed in demonstrations. However, this time the plan succeeded in decreasing raging inflation (from 2975% in 1994 to 6,9% in 1997) and his author became president for the two following tenures marked by neoliberal shock reforms, social expenses cuts and further deterioration of Brazilian rural situation (especially due to droughts, escalating land conflicts and the cases of “modern slavery”)<sup>15</sup>.

However, the Edir Macedo religious empire was still, against all odds, developing fast: after a rented building’s roof collapse in Osasco (São Paulo) in 1998, during which 25 people died and 465 were injured<sup>16</sup>, IURD started to invest in its own properties, buying grounds for the construction of huge, luxurious temples in the country and abroad. Rio de Janeiro became the most (Neo)Pentecostal among all Brazilian cities – between 1992 and 1994, 21% of all its inhabitants were converted (Fernandes, 1998). IURD popularity, apart from few serious publicity mistakes which caused a temporary slump in an otherwise upward trend (e.g. the fa-

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<sup>14</sup> The vasectomy and adoption policies applied by IURD sometimes raised ethical questions, see, for example: Motsepe, 2009; Universal Church ‘ruined our lives’ (2009, April 17), *Sowetan. Live*. Retrieved from: <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2009-04-17-universal-church-ruined-our-lives/>; Universal Church of the Kingdom of God investigated in illegal adoption scheme, *Algarve Daily News* (2017, Dec. 20). Retrieved from: <https://www.algarvedailynews.com/news/13253-universal-church-of-the-kingdom-of-god-cited-in-1990s-illegal-adoption-scheme>; Media billionaire accused of involvement in alleged illegal adoption network that “stole dozens of Portuguese children”, *Resident. Portugal*, (2017, Dec.11). Retrieved from: <https://www.portugalresident.com/2017/12/11/media-billionaire-accused-of-involvement-in-alleged-illegal-adoption-network-that-stole-dozens-of-portuguese-children/>.

<sup>15</sup> In 1995 in the clashes in São Félix do Xingú, Pará 6 people died; in 1995 in Corumbiará, Rondônia – 11; in 1996 during the landless peasants’ invasion in Eldorado dos Carajás – 19, and 77 were seriously injured. Massacre in Eldorado dos Carajás had wide repercussions in the media all around the world (Braga, 2011, or at the official MST: [www.mst.org.br](http://www.mst.org.br)).

<sup>16</sup> See media coverage: Tragédia. Teto desabou durante culto com cerca de 1.300 pessoas. Pânico causou correria e algumas pessoas foram pisoteadas. Desabamento mata pelo menos 23 e fere 467 em templo da Universal em Osasco (1998, Sept. 6), *Folha de São Paulo*. Retrieved from: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/brasil/fc06099813.htm>.

mous “kick aimed at Maria from Aparecida” in 1995 by pastor Sergio von Helder)<sup>17</sup>, was growing systematically. It soon became unrivalled, with its twentieth anniversary celebrated by religious meetings held at all the major football stadiums in Brazil. At the end of the 90s, there started a construction of the biggest at that time among all IURD temples – the Cathedral Del Castilho (72 000 m<sup>2</sup> big, including 10 thousand seats, sports halls, restaurants, libraries, kindergarten, broadcasting stations, huge parking and helicopter airfield), built from the scratch exactly at the place where the first IURD “church bungalow” was situated<sup>18</sup>; later, already in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there started a construction of the Temple of Salomon in São Paulo, one of the biggest Christian temples of all times in the world<sup>19</sup>. In the meantime, the Record Television, owned by bishop Macedo, was quickly coming to the fore of most influential television stations on the continent (it launched new thematic channels and broadcasting in both English and Spanish – *Record International*), which made the biggest television network as far (*TV Globo*) start uncompromising attacks against the growing competitor – the so-called “dirty media war” continued in the public space for years. It didn’t prevent bishop Macedo from expanding in the media sector – since purchasing the first radio broadcasting station, Radio Copacabana in 1984, he bought 61 more, grouping them all under the religious holding “Rede Alleluia-Rede da Família”<sup>20</sup>. Publishing houses owned by the bishop also systematically developed with the bishop’s books selling millions of copies and the church newspapers becoming popular titles (Siuda-Ambroziak, Stachowska, 2017).

The neoliberal reforms of transformation period were characterized in Brazil by exceptionally high social costs – it was surely the time of spreading poverty and marginalization, as well as the policy of continuing historical inequalities and reinforcing the capital concentration. All those increasing social and economic problems and inequalities worked in IURD’s favor, though – as Pew research showed in 2006, only 38% of Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal affiliates were actually born into the movement, with the vast majority converting at some time of their adult life, including 45% of new converts leaving the Catholic Church<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, the recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QiNJ8mQU6g8>.

<sup>18</sup> See the website of the Cathedral for more information: <https://sites.universal.org/universal40anos/artigo/32-a-primeira-sede-mundial-da-universal>.

<sup>19</sup> See the website of the Cathedral for more information: <https://sites.universal.org/templodesaloma/>.

<sup>20</sup> Information on the radio and its history: <http://www.radiocopacabanaam.com/>.

<sup>21</sup> Spirit and Power: a 10-Country Survey on Pentecostals, (2006, Oct.5), *The Pew Research Center. Religion and Public Life*. Retrieved from: <https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/spirit-and-power/>.

The first presidential elections in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2002) were won by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula), the leader of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT*, supported officially by IURD and its media. Lula, seen as a genuine illustration of a Brazilian “rags to riches story” – a drought fugitive from the poor Northeastern region, unqualified worker in metallurgical company, then a trade union leader during the military regime, finally took office for the two subsequent terms, finishing with the highest in history social support indexes<sup>22</sup>. However, his three earlier presidential campaigns had always provoked a political turmoil and accusations of postulating dangerous populism put forward also by Macedo, in spite of Lula’s attempts to win Neo-Pentecostals favors (Trevisan, 1994; Alves, 1998). In 2002, during the victorious campaign, Lula declared a willingness to form an “expert government”, and, himself a Catholic, he appointed a Pentecostal as his vice-president, receiving the Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches’ support (Santos, da Escóssia, 2002).

In the meantime, IURD itself started to introduce a strategy of increasing the number of its representatives at various political levels. There were groups of church volunteers working for campaigns, not mentioning the possibility of using by the candidates television channels and radio stations. In 2002, Macedo bought a super-modern broadcasting station in São Paulo (99,3 FM), equipped with the highest standard studios broadcasting via satellite.<sup>23</sup> Earlier, he made one of his bishops – Carlos Alberto Rodrigues Pinto – a person responsible for political alliances and, subsequently, helped (in 2002) his nephew – Marcelo Crivella, also a bishop of IURD, become a congressman (since 2016 – also the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro)<sup>24</sup>.

Two Lula’s presidential terms constituted a breakthrough in the recent Brazilian history because of the exceptionally good performance of the Brazilian economy and the first, noticeable improvements in all social development indexes. During the first term, government was successful in substantially decreasing unemployment level, implementing conditioned social support programs aiming at eliminating poverty and famine areas, lowering illiteracy rate, and promoting education through scholarship programs (Tavares de Almeida, 2004; Chojnowska, Siuda-

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<sup>22</sup> According to the Brazilian public opinion poll center DataFolha, at the end of the second office the level of popularity was 83%, for details on the research see: *Acima das expectativas, Lula encerra o mandato com a melhor avaliação da história* (2010, Dez. 20), *Avaliação Lula*, 17-18.12.2010, *DataFolha. Instituto de Pesquisas*. Retrieved from: [http://media.folha.uol.com.br/datafolha/2013/05/02/aval\\_pres\\_20122010.pdf](http://media.folha.uol.com.br/datafolha/2013/05/02/aval_pres_20122010.pdf); <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2010/12/1211078-acima-das-expectativas-lula-encerra-mandato-com-melhor-avaliacao-da-historia.shtml>.

<sup>23</sup> Information provided by the network „Rede Alleluia”: <http://www.redealeluia.com.br/emissoras-2/> and <http://www.redealeluia.com.br/sobre-a-rede-3/>.

<sup>24</sup> The official site of the bishop-mayor: <https://marcelocrivella.com.br/>.

Ambroziak, 2016). Thus, Lula won the re-election easily, supported again, among others, by bishop Macedo – the cooperation between the two leaders was visible on all fronts: for example, Macedo, his family and closest collaborators received diplomatic passports<sup>25</sup>, Lula supported Macedo in his warfare against the TVGlobo<sup>26</sup>, eagerly learning from him as well about the successful fundraising techniques for the sake of his political party (Weis, 2008).

Apparently, such positive outcomes of the two Lula's presidencies might have, theoretically, endangered the IURD popularity, triggering, with the substantial improvement of living conditions, an adverse movement: of its affiliates leaving their church, feeling safe and secure enough under the protection of the state. The trend was clear in successive, optimistic public opinion polls, in which Brazilians showed their full trust in their socio-economic standing betterment in the future (57% of respondents) or, at least, becoming stable, at the safe level (31%)<sup>27</sup>. The decrease in the IURD membership, however, didn't happen.

One should remember that even during Lula's second presidential term, poverty, social marginalization and inequality indexes, in spite of their systematic improvement, were still problematic, which is clearly seen in the available statistics – for example the Gini index, although with a falling trend, was still very high – in 2009 of 0,54 (Mendes, 2013). These data, together with high indices of violence (Weber, 2010), illustrate the scope of social problems, although, undoubtedly, improving life conditions of the majority of the Brazilian population still enabled president Lula to successfully support in the election campaign his close co-worker Dilma Rousseff – the first Brazilian female president, owing her electoral success directly to her predecessor's popularity and, due to the loss of the Catholic church support caused by her apparently “pro-abortion views” – also to a strong backing by the (Neo-)Pentecostal churches (Siuda-Ambroziak, 2017). Bishop Macedo appeared among honorary guests at Dilma Rousseff's presidential inauguration, and, having expressed his unconditional support from the very beginning of her campaign, he was given special treatment, which was visible in the televised

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<sup>25</sup> Governo Lula concede a braço direito de Edir Macedo polêmico passaporte especial que impede revistas e burocracias. Retrieved from: <http://ministeriodareconciliacao.net/noticias/ultimas-noticias/1005-governo-lula-concede-a-braco-direito-de-edir-macedo-polemico-passaporte-especial-que-impede-revistas-e-burocracias>.

<sup>26</sup> Ao lado de Lula, Edir Macedo ataca Globo em lançamento de tv. Retrieved from: <http://politica.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,ao-lado-de-lula-edir-macedo-ataca-globo-em-lancamento-de-tv,57599>.

<sup>27</sup> Brasileiro segue otimista com economia (2013, Jan. 1), *DataFolha*. Retrieved from: <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2013/01/1209566-brasileiro-segue-otimista-com-economia.shtml>.



transmissions<sup>28</sup>. No wonder – Neo-Pentecostal adherents constituted a solid political force (surely difficult to ignore also in the near future), demanding, by means of their votes, appropriate measures, social services, and programs initiated by president Lula in order to further improve their conditions of living and chances for social ascension. Their expectations had risen: ascending to the lower strata of the middle class, they wanted the same access to education and healthcare, among others. Unemployment and hunger were not a problem anymore – it was to provide higher quality public infrastructure and services, including safety.

However, such hopes were impossible to meet, which soon provoked eruptions of frustration and feelings of strong deprivation – with the country's economy entering during Dilma's presidency in deep recession and the level of security diminishing, the prospects for the further development of the Neo-Pentecostal share of the religious market in Brazil became as bright as ever.

The year 2013 already seemed eventful, from the very beginning: in spite of still high approval ratings of the Rousseff's government (62%)<sup>29</sup>, massive and unprecedented street protests of Brazilians, triggered directly by a slight increase in urban transportation fares of 6.7%, but generally directed against the high cost of organizing all the sports mega events (the football Confederation Cup, World Cup, planned for 2016 Olympic Games) and abundant corruption affairs, took place practically on a regular basis. Often initially peaceful protests would turn into unrest, with significant damages to property (Watts, 2013;<sup>30</sup>). As 2013 wore on, the notorious fire at the Santa Maria disco left 231 students dead due to the authorities failure to enforce building codes (Darlington, Carter, 2013), and the famous *mensalão* corruption scheme involving also Rousseff's party members developed into a televised trial, raising public unrest about graft and fraud at the highest political levels (Moreira Leite, 2013; Villa, 2012).

Nevertheless, it was but the beginning of the trouble and social unrest in Brazil, which quickly began to escalate with repeated media insight regarding the cost of the football World Cup, borne from public expenses, largely overblown when compared to the initial estimates. Both serious corruption allegations among the

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<sup>28</sup> Bispo Macedo cumprimenta Dilma Rousseff em sua cerimônia de posse (2012, Dec, 3) <https://gloria.tv/video/4kAuvnAtzKRBDcVrWCU9joEtR>; do blog do Bispo Macedo: <https://blogs.universal.org/bispomacedo/2011/01/01/bispo-macedo-no-planalto/>.

<sup>29</sup> Dilma mantém aprovação dos 63% dos brasileiros. Saúde e segurança pública são áreas de pior desempenho no governo da petista (2012, Dec. 14), *DataFolha*. Retrieved from: <http://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2012/12/1203094-dilma-mantem-aprovacao-de-62-dos-brasileiros.shtml>.

<sup>30</sup> See also, for example: Protests in Brazil. The streets erupt (2013, June 18), *The Economist*. Retrieved from: <https://www.economist.com/blogs/americasview/2013/06/protests-brazil>.

top politicians and very high budget expenditure related to the World Cup organization led to new, regular discontent outbreaks (Watts, 2014; Philips, 2014). In the meantime, in mood of the federal government promoting the “Brazilian magnitude” (*a grandeza brasileira*), as well as in the context of the forthcoming presidential elections, on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, in São Paulo, in the presence of the president herself, Edir Macedo officially inaugurated the monumental Temple of Salomon. It is worth noting that on the occasion, just as in the 2010 elections, he demonstrated his ostentatious support for Dilma Rousseff, wishing Mrs. President a smooth re-election (Romero, 2014; Bloomberg, 2014).

The World Cup, whose organizational problems had been reported by the media for many months, became another *Pesadelo Nacional* (the National Trauma), after the famous defeat to Uruguay in the finals in 1950 at the Maracanã stadium – the Brazilian team suffered through the worst defeat in the history of the country’s football, losing 7:1 to Germany in the semifinals and leaving most of the nation in shock. The Brazilian national team’s defeat undoubtedly also took its toll on Dilma Rousseff’s election outcome with the campaign itself dubbed by political experts as the most brutal, destructive and tragic – with the death of Eduardo Campos (13.08.2014), one of the president’s opponents – in the republic’s history, since the memorable 1985 elections, closing the era of military dictatorship.

In addition, the presidential campaign unfolded in the shadow of another large-scale corruption affair of the PT government, linked to Petrobras oil giant, the so-called “petrolão”. This time, the corruption allegations tackled at PT members’ direct involvement in gaining illegal sources of income for themselves and of financing the party’s operations (including the campaign objectives) by creating a huge bribe-based system of contracts, not just in the oil industry. The actions from courts and prosecution had taken under scrutiny a number of prominent politicians and business people so big that the wave of arrests seriously affected the campaign results with Dilma Rousseff elected with a minimal advantage<sup>31</sup>. In 2016, president Rousseff was impeached on the charges of budget manipulation (Edir Macedo did not react to Rousseff’s pleas for help in her impeachment) and the vice-president, Michel Temer took over, with a “mission impossible” to put things in Brazil in order with the prospects of any quick recovery dire, proverbial tightening of the social expenditure belt, including cuts (or maybe even halts) in the social programs, which were a trademark of Brazil for more than a decade. In July

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<sup>31</sup> According to the information provided by the Electoral Commission, Dilma Rousseff won the elections with 3.4 million votes, earning 54,501,118 votes, which accounts for 51.64%. Her main opponent, Aécio Neves, earned 51,041,155 of votes (48.36%).

2017, the ex-president Lula da Silva was found guilty of money laundering and passive corruption charges and imprisoned in April 2018 for 9 years and 6 months.

All these events and processes kept influencing not only the overall social, political and economic situation of Brazil, but also the everyday life of average Brazilians, still fighting for equality on many fronts, which is visible, for example, in the successive United Nations Development Report.<sup>32</sup>

To sum up, we might notice that IURD development and expansion clearly show strong interdependence between the country's economic, political, and social situation and the demand for its offer – it's exactly in difficult and uncertain times that the sudden growth of innovative religious cults and Neo-Pentecostal churches is registered and rises. Demand for these proposals (although of course to a certain extent facilitated by other factors, such as adaptation of deeply rooted, Brazilian cultural traditions, and disappearing of important Catholic alternatives related to liberation theology), needed also another stimuli, such as offering by religious organizations crisis “solutions” in substitution of protective, welfare state and thus reducing stress and fear.

Therefore, in accordance with Norris and Inglehart (2006) theory, we can explain the popularity of Macedo's religious proposal by means of the unquestioned social security need in its various dimensions: physical (violence, famine), financial (inflation, unemployment, poverty), and emotional (family life, community respect), as well as deprivation feelings coming out of huge social disparities – still today high enough to place Brazil on the top of the most unjust and socially divided countries of the world. This is why religious statistics still show growth of Neo-Pentecostal faithful, above all in the urban slums, where “prosperity gospel” promises them a chance to achieve a state of happiness and material well-being in spite of their current low social status. Such needs are always biggest in the most exposed groups – and it is exactly the part of Brazilian, mostly urban slums population which keeps falling out of the Catholic influence orbit under Neo-Pentecostals' wings. The key to understanding it, as suggested by Norris and Inglehart, is the Brazilian social inequality, difficult to reduce – Brazil remains still one of the leaders in social, socio-economic and regional contrasts and gaps, which often leads to discrimination, aggression and violence. For the time being, according to Norris and Inglehart theory, religious demand, as well as the popularity of innovative cults (such as Neo-Pentecostalism) have no prospects of declining.

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<sup>32</sup> Access to UN Development reports: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>.

## IURD – AN INNOVATIVE RELIGIOUS ENTERPRISE?

IURD is, as I assume, a perfect example of an innovative religious enterprise according to Stark and Bainbridge's (2006) theory, running flexible and adjusted to mass culture needs policies of growth, highly dependent on modern market strategies. Making use of important ingredients of the Brazilian society cultural heritage, IURD sustains high demand for its religious products and assures stable inflow of funds for its further development. To prove that, we need to look closer at that organization, observe its techniques of church management, get acquainted with its doctrine, especially related to the prosperity gospel and the "holy war" theology, and reflect on the reasons for its success and expansion in the area between economy and religion, money and faith, wealth and salvation.

Stark and Bainbridge (2007) observe that in the modern world, religious innovation often achieves a "high productivity rate", expressed in the number of new cults and the appearance of strong, innovative religious organizations (although usually based on specifics, in particular cultures religious traditions), which can successfully adapt to new market conditions. Undoubtedly, IURD appeared with its innovative proposal at the perfect historical moment of transitions and crises and quickly and skillfully turned them into its great success, both in Brazil and abroad (especially in places connected with Brazilian migration and culturally similar Africa).

Additionally, as a perfect example of an "innovative cult", IURD has been effectively organized and managed like a commercial venture, with its activity based on attractive religious product delivery, collection of payment (in case of IURD it is a real tithe and additional donations) and generation of profit, reinvested in further organizational expansion. The entrepreneur – bishop Macedo, possessing indispensable assets such as: inborn charisma and acquired talents (economy and accounting knowledge due to his education and professional life), produces and sells religious compensators with full awareness of benefits coming from such an activity acquired by him in a similar cult organization. Macedo was a member of the first in Brazil Neo-Pentecostal church (*Nova Vida*), where he was hoping to start his pastor career, but didn't manage to do it due to his personal conflict with the church's powerful leader and founder – McAlister. It's also worth reminding that, as Ferrari (2007) mentions, before the foundation of IURD Macedo, together with his partners, had already established another church – *Cruzada do Caminho Eterno*, which didn't prove to be successful, though. IURD, also initially founded as a partnership, was actually the third attempt of Macedo's pas-

tor career initiation – at that time, however, a new hybrid church, after the partners' separation, became very quickly a profitable investment<sup>33</sup>. Bishop Macedo, slowly transforming his church into an effective and efficient, centrally managed corporate structure, simultaneously worked out its marketing strategy (supported by professional consultants) as a “supermarket of spiritual goods”, set on religious compensators delivery to the most numerous (and the poorest) Brazilian social strata. Assuming that his offer would be successful only when he finds the group interested in its uphold, Macedo focused, above all, on poor urban *favela* inhabitants, whose life, mentality, and needs he knew best, coming himself from a similar background. Macedo's choice couldn't be more accurate – it was the poorest urban dwellers who incurred the costs first of the “Brazilian military miracle”, then, exceptionally difficult democratic transformation, and nowadays – the process of social policies dismantling in the context of political and economic turmoil.

Bishop Macedo, making use of his personal skills, knowledge, professional experience and competency, had observed other churches as their member and learned. He set a vertical hierarchy in his institution just like the one he knew from the Catholic church (which was his first affiliation), becoming not only the founder, but also the owner, the managing director and the infallible “pope”. IURD characteristic was from the beginning a strong power concentration in charismatic leader, re-introducing deeply rooted in Brazilian culture rules of obedience to authority and religious *caudillismo*. Furthermore, IURD has never been against interventions in public life and building influences in both financial market and politics.

IURD, just like any innovative enterprise, was set to generate profit, and seems to have pragmatic goals: Edir Macedo created, with business development specialists' help, a church that connects in a symbolical way magical world of traditional Brazilian religiosity with the latest marketing and advertising techniques, investing in mass media and publishing houses, but also financial and IT markets, and building an international religious holding: the Record International with popular, live interactive shows and a call center open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week<sup>34</sup>, its own brand *telenovelas*, news channels (since 2007), sport channel, and entertainment and lifestyle programs, and, also since 2007, a record studio.

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<sup>33</sup> “The process of creating new religious culture is easier if its creator can take advantage of ingredients and subsystems borrowed from already existing religious systems” (Stark, Bainbridge 2007: 409).

<sup>34</sup> The program appeared live for the first time on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb, 1998 and has been on ever since with very high popularity among the viewers: <https://noticias.r7.com/tecnologia-e-ciencia/videos/conheca-o-novo-site-do-fala-que-eu-te-escuto-21102015>.

The Record Group has been also developing its own financial services sector started with a purchase of majority shares of the Renner Bank<sup>35</sup>. The mass media and, at the same time, the “faith empire” of Edir Macedo, is a family religious business, co-run by his wife, two daughters, and two sons-in-law (both pastors). Their blogs, put on the websites of the radio stations side-by-side with Macedo’s, are very popular<sup>36</sup>. This prepares ground for the closest family members to take over the empire (Castro, 2017).

IURD, according to Stark and Bainbridge’s theory, sells religious compensators, which, although seem to be new, are in fact, like in the case of other successful, innovative cults, only a syncretic set of the most attractive ingredients, tried out in a particular market – as Tavalaro (2007) notices, bishop Edir Macedo was first a Catholic, then a Spiritist cults adherent, including *Umbanda*, finally a follower of a Neo-Pentecostal church. This type of personal experimenting is, according to Stark and Bainbridge, the easiest and most effective way to generate best-selling compensators by skillfully combining ingredients of the existent system in new configurations and including them in the offer after making sure that the market will react to them enthusiastically. Therefore, maintaining a well verified, emotional Pentecostal form of cult, facilitating collective *katharsis* and free expression in words and gestures, IURD took over and pragmatically adapted to its needs: magical thinking deeply rooted in Brazilian syncretic religiosity; traditional “reciprocity rule” based on the “exchange with gods”; common belief in spirits, manifested usually as Afro-Brazilian deities (Macedo, 2002); importance of purification therapies, miraculous healings and exorcisms led by IURD pastors with the help of the Holy Spirit (Macedo, 2003); and the “holy war” concept, based on the eternal fight of the good and the evil for bodies and souls and the necessity to show a constant vigilance towards the evil (personified during public exorcisms) and readiness to fight against its forces.

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<sup>35</sup> Record TV is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest media company in Latin America, employing over 10.000 people only in Brazil, investing also in the banking sector: Grupo Record adquire 40% do banco Renner (2009, Oct. 23), In: *Valor. Econômico*. Retrieved from: <http://www.valor.com.br/arquivo/636911/grupo-record-adquire-40-do-banco-renner>; Grupo Record, do Bispo Macedo, compra 40% do banco Renner (2009, Oct. 23), In: *O Globo. Economia*. Retrieved from: <https://oglobo.globo.com/economia/grupo-record-do-bispo-edir-macedo-compra-40-do-banco-renner-3137883>.

<sup>36</sup> On the official website of the Universal Church there are six blogs, all belonging to the bishop-founder and the closest members of his family, working with him: Edir Macedo’s (<https://blogs.universal.org/bispomacedo/>), his wife’s (<https://blogs.universal.org/fonteajorrar/>), his two daughters’ and their husbands’ – pastors of the IURD (<https://blogs.universal.org/cristianecardoso/>; <https://blogs.universal.org/renatocardoso/blog/>; <https://vivianefreitas.com/>, <https://juliofreitas.com>.

The necessity of exorcisms means performing by pastors traditional, shamanic function of healers and mediators between the earthly world and the invisible one, joining religion with magic or, in other words, re-“enchanted” religion, making it more attractive through dramatic public performances and Durkheimian “mass anxiety”. Such a feature of innovative religious enterprises is also underlined in the theory of Stark and Bainbridge (2007), who observe that people consider fun, joy and entertainment as rewards and therefore all effective cults shall possess also these in their offer in order to be able to control as many as possible aspects of their members’ life, including leisure activities. IURD, in the constant development phase, boasts also of still “empty structure” – the church offers new positions, opens new branches, businesses and temples.

An interesting aspect of the IURD’s prosperity gospel is the church’s attitude towards money and material possessions in general – donated by the believers to the church as a way of fulfilling the traditional “reciprocity rule”, symbolically purified and blessed, they become to the church a prove of the effectiveness of its own teaching, providing even more fuel for its further expansion (including politics and economy). In bishop Macedo’s discourse there is practically no possibility to be saved “for free” – merchandised *sacrum* is changing religion into a valuable product, bringing real profits related to the growth of the church’s influence in politics and the media investment, and thus strengthening its social influence and recognition, making it not only an influential religious offer, but also an influential financial sector player, showing desire for further accumulation of capital. Thus, the prosperity gospel is becoming itself one of the most important and effective tools for the market expansion of its prophets and their institutions.

Brazilian prosperity gospel, in the process of adaptation to the new conditions and the needs of a consumer society, adopted a strategy of excessive consumption, treated as a foretaste of paradise on earth, allowing worshippers to feel the pleasures of life in eternity, and thus combining the divine plan of salvation with the satisfaction of buying and possessing. In this way, the “ethics of prosperity” focusing primarily on the poorest and the excluded, is paradoxically adapted to the needs, lifestyle, and values of the Brazilian middle class (to which the followers of IURD aspire), and consists in stimulating the desire for goods (including products sold by the church itself, such as objects endowed with magical powers to protect against evil and ensure good luck, success, financial prosperity). Thus, IURD not only justifies the rules of the market “game”, but implements them, just

as described by the Stark and Bainbridge (2007), to the realm of “religion trade”, creating religious products that are attractive to the followers. And that sell well.

IURD, promoting a vision of wealth as a visible sign of God’s blessing (which is shown in the lavish lifestyle of the bishops in luxurious “havens for millionaires”)<sup>37</sup>, encourages its followers to develop the entrepreneurship spirit and enrich, donating the tenth part of the income to the church. The conversion to the IURD can also be a way to raise, even though sometimes subjectively, one’s social status and community prestige (a phenomenon known as “empowerment”) – as Stark and Bainbridge (2007) explain, people strive to get respect, appreciation and trust, although financial participation in the development of the church itself might be a real burden on their fragile budgets. However, most converts do invest money in their church, demanding even bigger exchanges – a common behavior, as a person investing in a given cult will usually continue doing it until it reaches a desired reward or up to the point where constantly incurred costs significantly exceed the price that he or she is willing to pay for it. Then you may find followers leave the innovative religious enterprise, but even that, paradoxically, can work to the cult’s advantage, as the process of the members “evaporation” results in disappearing of people who could otherwise express negative opinions about the group.

IURD seems to be a very pragmatic church, perfectly tailored to the current needs of the majority of Brazilians. Presenting the testimonies of those who have succeeded, the church raises hope of the masses of the prospective converts, but at the same time does not give anyone a guarantee of success, knowing well but ignoring the marginalization and exclusion mechanisms underlying Brazilian society. Undoubtedly, what it can provide their members with is the atmosphere of success itself, allowing them to breath it and identify vicariously with the successful expansion of their church.

IURD inadvertently raises associations with a big mall with crowds of consumers looking for an instant “religious transaction”. The biggest temples of the church are usually centrally located, with good communication, providing, apart from attractive religious services, shops, day-care centers, etc., so that the buildings are rarely empty, which gives the impression that the church is simply “condemned” to success. It is worth remembering that the Brazilian religious market itself continues to feature a great potential for its steady growth: a high level of

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<sup>37</sup> Antunes (2013) stresses that Macedo is “the richest pastor in Brazil”, with his fortune estimated at 950 million USD, and main assets including Rede Record, newspaper *Folha Universal* with a circulation over 2,5 million daily, a News Channel, state-of-art properties and a 45 million USD Bombardier Private jet.



acceptance of religious innovation, numerous population, society heavily diversified in terms of income, level of education and opportunities for social advancement, “overproduction” of religious leaders, who fill in the institutional structure. Therefore, it seems that such a hybrid, eclectic and syncretic proposal like IURD, combining ingredients of traditional cults with modern methods of management and marketing and using latest technology can be indeed regarded as an innovative religious enterprise – a church-company perfectly suited to the social, cultural, and even political and economic context in which it operates, with a bold vision of creating the universal structure, covering all continents.

## CONCLUSIONS

While reflecting on the issues raised in the introduction, two of the theories of religion (by Norris and Inglehart and Stark and Bainbridge) were applied to the Brazilian situation in an endeavor to find an explanation for high demand for Neo-Pentecostal religious offer and the success of the IURD, looked upon as a perfect example of an “innovative religious enterprise”. The chosen theories, of course, do not in any way exhaust the scientific debate on the success of the Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal offer, which needs a much more profound analysis of all the phenomena and processes specific to Brazilian religious sphere, including the importance of charismatic leaders... What can be definitely confirmed here, however, is that, taking full advantage of important Brazilian cultural heritage coming from the Indigenous, African, and Christian religious traditions, IURD offers a syncretic product, but also, different from other proposals in the market (which is a good and safe strategy in view of the strong competition) – it fights against Afro-Brazilian cults; it negates Catholic post-Vaticanum II ecumenism; it goes against strong, fundamentalist, moral revivalist movements; it allows for benefitting hedonistically and immediately from one’s wealth with unlimited consumption becoming an end in itself, and the affiliation – equivalent to an access to its “magical world” (Ritzer, 2001).

I confirmed that Neo-Pentecostal religious organizations function like business companies focused on results, using specific marketing techniques, and fighting for their share through continuous adaptation to consumers’ demands. Religion is viewed as a commodity that should be sold with profit, and churches – as “supermarkets of spiritual goods”. IURD has been taking full advantage of difficult, crisis situations, applying solutions with patterns of consumer culture,

advertising and marketing, promoting attractive and spectacular prosperity gospel and investing in the media and financial sector to the benefit of its own growth.

Basing on the assumptions of Norris' and Inglehart's theory, which explains the success of a given religion in the society by the low level of existential security of its members, I demonstrated, on the basis of an outline of social, economic and political situation, that high levels of poverty, marginalization, crime, social disparities, and economic and political turmoil have made Brazil intensely religious and open to new religious proposals.

As was shown with the example of IURD, the emphasis on achieving good "sale results" necessary for further expansion means constant improvement of the institutional structures in order to provide efficient management, based on the model of international corporations. Because religious marketing requires capital, hence the "taxation" of its members and theologically justified emphasis on regular tithes and "risk and return on investment" analysis. Such enterprises as IURD require also the right type of charismatic leadership and recruiting the right type of staff, with an emphasis on charismatic religious leadership, which must be of quasi-shamanic nature, able to deal with demons and provide instant healing.

The last issue, not mentioned before, is the question how long such a religious demand for Neo-Pentecostal offer, skillfully built and strengthened, will continue high. As the Brazilian case is similar to the North American one, at least in terms of social inequalities, it means that Brazil, like the United States, might likely remain a "religious superpower", with many Brazilians always in need for a strong "religious protection". After all, if religion is, as Marx already pointed out, a kind of "opium" and "a cure for the evil" of this world, it is primarily a remedy for the marginalized, vulnerable and insecure, a remedy for those in need of a healing.

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