

**UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ - BOLYAI CLUJ - NAPOCA
FACULTATEA DE ISTORIE ȘI FILOSOFIE
CATEDRA DE ISTORIA FILOSOFIEI ANTICE ȘI MEDIEVALE
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POLITICAL REFLEX OF THE CHRISTIAN VALUES

SUMMERY

**Scientific coordinator
Prof. univ. dr. LIVIU - PETRU ZĂPĂRȚAN**

**PhD,
LAZĂR I. IULIAN RADU**

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Table of contents

Cap. I. The relation between religion and politics.....	pg. 4
a) What are religions?.....	pg. 4
b) Religious diversity	pg. 13
c) Religion, politics and conflict.....	pg. 24
d) Ecumenism.....	pg. 36
e) Fundamentalism.....	pg. 39
f) Secularization.....	pg. 40
g) The role of religious beliefs in liberal democracies.....	pg. 46
Cap. II. Which are the political values with Christian character?.....	pg.79
a) The historical dimension of the problem	pg.79
b) Cardinal virtues	pg.117
c) The principal values at the interference of politic and religious.....	pg.145
Cap. III. Contemporaneous discussions concerning religious values in politic.....	pg.156
a) Philosophic approaches	pg.158
b) Christian democracy.....	pg. 165
CONCLUSIONS.....	pg.
Bibliography.....	pg. 217

SUMMERY

The literature of specialty talks very much about the relation between religion and politics, about the nature of both fields, about their role in society.

European culture is based on the mixture of those two fields in human life because religion was not only preoccupied by the spiritual nature of human life, but also about it's the social organization. In this sense, N. Tenzer believes that, according to the historical evolution, the passage from the heathen religions to Christianity has determined human being's development in importance and value due to herself becoming and to her relation with God and to the reconsideration of the values she trusted.

Some philosophers, from Antiquity and contemporaneous ones, have sustained the idea that religion must imply itself in the political space, considering that the implication of religious values in the political field represents a necessity (Socrates, Platon, Cicero and Seneca in Antiquity, Augustine, Averroes and Toma de Aquino in Middle Age). Other philosophers had an indifferent or even against attitude towards the implication of religion in the government of the state because they consider the religious phenomenon tied to the human fear. Among those, we recall Epicure, Aristotle, Democrit, etc.¹.

The presence of religion in the political space has had and still has different influence, from one continent to another and from one culture to another. Their relations have been either of cooperation or of conflict.

The different religious conflicts have been generated by the different geographic positions, from local level (see Belfast – the conflict between Catholics and Protestants) to regional level in the areas where Islamism and Christianity dispute their supremacy and to the national level (the creation of the Israel state, 1948).

The biblical geography has an important role in the understanding of religious conflicts because it reveals religions responsibility and their role in politic. In the XXth

¹ Eugenio Romero Pose, *Le radici cristiane d Europe*, Casa Editrice Marietti, Genova – Milano, 2007, pg. 18;

century the research over the impact of the religion over the everyday social and economic life has intensified, and in the second half of the century it stimulated ecumenism.

Ecumenism tries the conciliation of religions and of confessions within Christianity (if not a theological reconciliation, at least a social or political one). If in Antiquity the concept made reference to the culture of the civilized world, from that time, or of the imperial world, in Christianity, the concept has received significance, of universality of the apostolic fate given by Christ. Through the Church and the apostolic mission, Christianity (in its original form) it entered in the entire world, and the Christianity proclaims the equality of all men. In the first Christian millennium, the concept refers to the seventh synods and Ecumenical Councils. In our time, the term has significance, meaning a movement of dialogue and even a unification of Christian confessions, which is going to be realized as a consequence of the interconfessional dialogues and of the reciprocal knowledge of the three major Christian confessions. In this sense, in Europe activated The Ecumenical Council of the Churches which has as members national Orthodox Churches and 340 groups and/or protestant denominations; in this commission, Roman-Catholic Church is just an observer².

As a consequence of the ecumenical tendencies today appeared the religious fundamentalism. It is opposite to relativity brought by ecumenism, insisting on the religious identity. In fact, each faith, religion and confession of Christianity has its fundamentalist side. Fundamentalism³ fights against modernity and post modernity and against the secularization of our times, through the rigorous application of the religious morale in the contemporaneous social life. This current promotes, in our globalized and englobing society the religious identity, fundamentalism basing especially on an interpretation as literary as possible of the sacred religious texts (Koran, Bible). This current has a moderate side which represents the level of ideas and a fanatic one which represents the extreme and generates conflicts. From the first category we can recall the evangelist movements in U.S.A. which believe that by accepting Jesus as a personal

² M. Reisenbrodt, Religion in Global Perspective, in Mark Juergensmayer (edit.), Global Religions, An Introduction, Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 2003, pp.95-109;

³ William H. Mott, Globalization: People, Perspectives and Progress, Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2004, p. 189;

Savior we can also solve all social problems, and his rejection leads to disaster or to orthodox fundamentalism sustained especially by the monastic environment from the Orthodox Churches which fight for the maintenance of the Christian – moral values of the Evangel in the society. From the second category we can recall the Islamic fundamentalism which also engaged in bloody conflicts.

Even if religion still plays in our times an important role in society and influences the values and peoples' attitudes, it wins over secularization and quasi-religions of the XXth century. By secularization one can understand the failure in intensity of the religious belief, either by indifference or by the partial or total rejection of the religious ideas. It was marked by the dessacralization of thought and of the contemporaneous human behavior, by religion's decline or by the detachment of the society from the religion⁴. Some authors see in this phenomenon the expression of the weakness of the religious institution to adapt to the actual trend of the society. Historians date the birth of secularization at the end of the XVIIIth century, marked in Occidental Europe by the French Revolution, and in U.S.A by the independence war. Bullok and Stah observe three senses of the secularization: the formal gap between State and Church, the fact that religious traditions and their senses lose their interest in the eyes of their adepts, transforming them in ignorant and careless, but also the end of the interest for the religion and its values. Those three aspects can very well be seen in the European space by the fact that some states are more secularized than the others.

We agree with the opinion expressed by Nicolas Tenzer⁵ who believes that religion accomplishes four functions in the contemporaneous world: the intellectual and philosophical function which is being realized through the effort of explaining the world's origins and the relation of the contemporary man with God, the moral function which refers to the behavior in society of the contemporary man, to the knowledge of good and bad in society, the social and political life which refers to the condition of the world and to the social and political order of the world, the psychological function by which religion gives force to man to overpass the fear for the unknown and for death.

⁴ D. B. Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia; a Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World, AD 1900-2000*, Oxford University Press, Nairobi, 1982;

⁵ Nicolas Tenzer, *Philosophie politique*, P.F., Paris, 1994, pp. 491-515;

According to Tenzer the functions of religion lose their universality character in the contemporary world and restrict only to the private environment, and only for those who believe. The first two functions are capital and contribute to the fundamental Christianity. The third function is the result of the first two ones, and the fourth one gives life, resistance and historical endurance to the religion. As a consequence, because the decision making process in a democracy must submit to the *political reason*, the impact of religion over the government is different. The plurireligious citizenship forces religion to modify its perspective *vs.* state and society, *vs.* the principles which must stand to the bases of religion's implication in society and government.

In the contemporaneous period, Churches' institutions must adapt to the new political challenges and to the demands of the governments.

In the actual context of the globalization and mondialization, of the *dehumanizing process* of the human being, Anthony Rogers⁶ proposes the return of the contemporaneous man to his origins and so, the reevaluation of the Christian values. If the apex of government is represented by the conscience of the human being and the fact that any government must start from the human person, the political authority must ensure its community a life well ordered, based on solid principles. This was the conviction of Toma de Aquino who, in his reference work, *De regno ad regnum Cypri* sais that *good and welfare are for a unified groups as long as it keeps its unity, which is called peace*. Toma de Aquino starts from the concept *one* (*unitas*) because without unity, peace and harmony lose their sense. In his work *Suma Teologica* he takes over the idea of the relation between peace and concord, from Saint Augustine, for whom, peace between people is the result of a well ordered concord. He is the one who develops the idea that the reflection of peace and social unity is made within the monarchy, as a symbol of unity.

Marsilio de Padova, in his work *Defensor pacis*, starting from the same supreme government by one, introduces a functional sense for it, and not a substantial as Toma does. In politic and in governing, the second must be one, not as a number, but as a function. Starting from Aristotle's *Politica*, work that has also influenced Toma, he

⁶ Antony Rogers, Religion and Governance: The Christian perspective, in Chandra Muzaffar (edit.), Religion and Governance, Arah Publication, Shah, 2009, pp. 85-86;

critiques the platonician manner of substantialisation the one and of the identification of the good. If Toma de Aquino in his work *De civitate Dei*⁷, said that the two forces, the state and the church, are called to cooperate with each other in the education of people for the accomplishment of the common good, Popes Inocențiu the III^d and Bonifaciu the III^d propose a mode undemocratic formula in the relation between state and church, that of the state which must be totally subordinate to the church because it received the swords of temporal and spiritual power. Because in the accomplishment of the common good there is a hierarchy of values which must be taken into consideration, and among which the first is the permanent relation with God to Whom everything its subordinated, then the finality of the politic is a transcendental and theological one.

The Christianity has brought, as a base of the social life, love, in a period when people were politically oppressed by the Roman Empire. This is how it is explained the fact that from an oppressed religion, through the Edict from Milano, from 313, the Christianity is officially recognized by the Roman Empire, becoming then a state religion and influencing for many centuries to go the political, economic and cultural life, especially in the European space. In this context, political felt its presence in the spiritual life of the Church, creating many conflicts between Bazileu and the Pope from Rome. The secular reached in the spiritual life of the Church, so the concrete report between religion and church has permanently evolved.

It is clear that after the Vth century, when the fall of the Roman Empire takes place due to the emigrant peoples, the European feudal states have formed, and they were based on the Christian culture and were leads both spiritually and politically from Rome. Christianity has conquered European spirit and sustained it especially in the medieval period, as Mario D'Adamo observes. This way developed the passing from the government based on polis to the one based on cosmopolis.

Christianity has imposed through what we call *metanoya*, meaning a radical transformation of man, best reflected especially in the well known *Sermon on the Mountain*. God's Kingdom represents the regeneration of man, awakens of his conscience and of his spirituality; the divine law occupies the main place in man's heart. Due to this aspect, the Christianity gives man a new spectrum of values, values with

⁷ *De civitate Dei*, XIV, 28 Einaudi – Gallimard, 1992;

eternal character which characterize man and everything that surrounds him. For him there are two different realities: the one of God, eternal and spiritual, and the one the Cesar, temporal and material, but on earth, man is a citizen of both kingdoms. This aspect is clearly shown by *Letter for Diognet* which talks about Christians from a social perspective from which they do not distinguish in any way from the others, neither politically, nor economically, and they have the same appearance as the others, they eat the same thing, they live in the same cities, and they are different from the others only by their exceptional moral life.

Christian theses have known a permanent enrichment in the Middle Age. Saint Joan Chrysostom, starting from these ideas, considers that people (Christians) must help each other, doing each their duty for which they were sent, in order to accomplish common good, spiritually and socially, politically and economically.

According to Eusebiu of Caesarea there is a real politic theology. The Kingdom corresponds to the divine plans: the political unity of the world accomplished by the Empire, leads to the spread of the Evangel all over this geographical space⁸.

Basing on the ideas expressed by Pope Leo the Great, Pope Gelasius (492-496), through a Letter addressed to Anastasie emperor, formulates, in terms that are going to be rephrased all along Middle Age, *the theory of the reports between Church and Empire*. The connection between religion and politics is going to be showed, all along the history, by the values that they mutually have imposed, starting from the inheritance of the ancient culture.

Cardinal virtues have been named so for the first time by Saint Ambrozie of Milano, expression used subsequently in all Christian theological thinking. They are extracted from the antique Greek philosophical thinking, and firstly from Platon, from his work „*Republica*”⁹, and they are virtues which stand at the basis of the government of the human society, of the polis, and at the basis of moral improvement of man. Platon ties those virtues to the human nature, prudence to reason, strength to irascibility and prudence to concupiscence, and justice is controlling the functions of the human soul, tying all other three virtues. In this sense, Toma de Aquino undertakes the platonic

⁸ Palibio, *La Storie*, trad. C. Schick, Verona, 1955, p. 6 si p. 95-96;

⁹ Platon, *Republica*, IV, 427bc;

division of the cardinal virtues, tying justice to will and making it the supreme principle of the moral order in man and outside him. Leaving from the moral-Christian life of the four virtues to the political life, we must show that prudence plays an essential role in man's life making him inapt to make quick decisions and to control himself. Justice imposes the leader to be fair with him and with his own who are being governed by him, the character of the politician must be strong, vertical and prudent¹⁰.

The value of prudence is virtue which within Christianity indicated the things that must be done at a certain moment or, contrary, which must not be done, meaning *recta ratio agendorum* (which indicated the right reason of things)¹¹. This value is tied to the human intellect and coordinates the other ethic, social or religious virtues-values. On the schema of this virtue man must build his character, both internally and in relation with the others. For politicians and governors this value is capital, because it puts them in relation with themselves and with the ones governed by them. The material object of the prudence is formed by all correct acts of man, sometimes in order to do good, and sometime in order to reject evil. From a political point of view, prudence refers to acts of state security, and to the good relations between govern end the governed. This is why, it is said that prudence or vigilance, from all points of view, is the rein of all other virtues – values (*auria et moderatrix omnium virtutum*).

In this sense, charity or mercy tells us to help our own who are in difficulty, but vigilance tells mind how much, how, in what circumstances, where, in what way to give and to help the others so that our charity act to be fair.

Prudence has three main functions: consulting, judgment and action command. She is the cardinal value which directs analyze of honest means of an action in order to reach the objective proposed. In this sense, Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan said that prudence is the good moral character given by the structure's specific and constant unity of our being obtained through the permanent orientation of our will toward good.

The value of justice implies the notion of law, understanding by it the right to life, the right to poses goods, the right to anything that is right and equitable¹². According to

¹⁰ Mitr. N. Mladin, *Teologie Morala Ortodoxa*, ed. IBM al BOR, vol I, cap. Morala generala, Bucuresti 1979, p. 22;

¹¹ Alosie L Tautu, *Comentariu la teologia morala*, vol., ed. Cosmos si Victoria, Oradea 1931, p. 206;

¹² Selma Santos Ferraz, *Philosofie du Dorit et context historique de Toma de Aquino*, p. 6;

Aristotle and Toma de Aquino¹³ by justice we must understand the general justice, the ethical and moral perfection. The notion is well kept by Roman law and by the Hellenic culture. Being the mother of all virtues, prudence directs to justice any action that transcends the conscience will in order to accomplish the desired purpose. According to the thinking of Toma de Aquino, justice means diversity, because we are never equal with our selves, but to the others, justice existing only in the relations of one person to the other. Toma de Aquino considers that there is no humanity without political life because human nature is formed in and by the society. Toma establishes the link between politics and ethique so that the exercise of the citizenship represents the full development of the virtue practice. The choice that we must make between the evil order and the fortress helps us to reach happiness together, stopping the transformation of power in tyranny.

We can make the connection with Aristotle's ethics and with his meditations over happiness and over the manner to reach it by friendship and virtue. Aristotle defines friendship as a community based on the wish to do good for the other. In turns, Toma de Aquino sees friendship as a community of goods and actions, where friends develop political and professional activities together. The essence of friendship, according to Aristotle, is given by the fact that friendship needs the same attitude towards things that deserve supreme sacrifice, attitude which is difficult to follow by humans with different ideals or by those without ideals. Man cannot reach happiness by himself, he needs the others, and Society needs them in order to live, this is the reason why politics and morale are tied together.

So, politic is the accomplishment of morale, with the condition that it is considered the art to lead the fortress on the principle of friendship between people. The virtue of justice for a people, expresses through the legislation which represents all acts permitted or prohibited to people in order to advance on the path of virtue.

Aristotle distinguishes three typed of social organizations according to three types of friendship. The friendship of the father towards his children is represented by monarchy, with the friendship between the people and the one who is its founder, the monarch who has a single purpose, the one of improving the life of its people. The friendship between spouses, equal beings, even if they are different and superior to their

¹³ Toma de Aquino, *Summa Theologiae*, II/II, 118, 4 ad 2;

children, is represented by the aristocracy, meaning the political friendship between equals who form the elite of the society. The friendship between brothers or colleagues represents the republic founded on the equality between citizens, where the community is born within a common context of culture and civilization with many affective and spiritual connections.

In the present paper we have also presented *the value of strength or manhood*. By strength we can understand, in a large sense, the permanent search of good by man and its realization. From this point of view, strength does not exist by itself, but it is the result of another virtue, indicating, at the same time, the fact that a virtue achieved by man needs to be kept and man must persevere within it. This way, strength is an ethic virtue – value which strengthens the virtues achieved by man, especially in difficult periods of his life. The object of this virtue is to dare to make good permanently even in moments of danger and suffering, which reflects the character of every single person. The political man who desires to be moral and close to his companions must prove strength of character. Strength refrains the irascible appetite from the behavior of the political man indicating, at the same time, the moral norm of a healthy mind. Strength reflects man himself and not the others. It is proven by the political man in danger and in extreme cases as for example wars, political crises, diseases, etc. In opposition with this value are the following vices: the defects, the absence of fear, when it must be taken into consideration, and in excess, carelessness and cowardice. Undervalues included within strength are: goodness, magnificence, patience, perseverance, etc. From the Christian point of view, martirs are the ones who have proven their strength, as they suffered and were killed for confessing Christ and the Saints who have passed demon's and men's temptations¹⁴.

The value of moderation is in relation with two functions of the soul: the irascibility which is tamed by the appetite, lust, desire that annihilates it. As an object, this virtue – value tries to accaparate the irrational affects that come into human soul. Moderation is also connected with the conservation of the individual, of the specie, of man's propagation by the respect of the behavior laws left by God so that man can be healthy at individual level. From the political point of view, to the one who governs and

¹⁴ Ad. Franck, *La morale pour tous*, Paris, 1884, pp. 505-508;

leads the country, this value is essential. Opposite vices of moderation are the insensibility by defect and the immoderation by excess. Among the undervalues of moderation we recall the shame or shyness, the honesty, the sobriety, the abstinence, taken sometimes till chastity¹⁵.

Along with cardinal virtues, we also recall the following values: the value of good or the morality, the value of truth, the value of liberty.

About the value of good, Socrates said that *it is what is saint because it is approved by gods because they approve something only because that something is saint*¹⁶. This means that an action is good or bad only because God commands it or prohibits it, or is good or bad by its nature and so God rejects it. This thing is good or bad if it is commanded or prohibited by God and is tied to the divine will. An action is good if it serves for the accomplishment of the human society, and contrary it is bad. Human nature has many inclinations and desires, but healthy reason orders them. Many philosophers and theologians from Middle Age saw God and His commands as the first cause of the morale. They also saw good and bad as dependent on the human nature, but the love for the near and the mutual respect are not in the human nature, but those are divine commands. An important role in Christianity was occupied by the biblical Decalogue. In the axiology, good and bad have had an important role as categories of ethic, and were contradiction and in permanent fight. In Christianity, good is represented by Good, heaven, angels, saints, and bad by hell, devil and his angels. This antinomy also shows up in Islamism, in the fight between Allah and Sheytan. In oriental religions, the antinomy is not distinguishable, those characteristics being complementary (beautiful – ugly, masculine – feminine, good – bad, big – small).

Politicians¹⁷ must be, in the worst case, moral people, if not Christians, and must follow the realization of common good. Serving the country and common good must be superior to the personal interests, and reaching of the superior political spheres must not be made from personal ambition, but for the development of the state. They must follow the accomplishment of all national and international good purposes.

¹⁵ Aloisie L. Tautu, 1931, op. Cit., p.222;

¹⁶ Janine Marie Idziak, In Search of * Good Pozitive Reasons* dor an Ethics of Divine Commands: A Catalogue of Arguments, Faith and Philosophy, nr. 6, 1989, pp. 48-57;

¹⁷ P. Andrei, Filosofia valorii, Fundatia Regele Mihai I, Bucuresti, 1945,p. 37;

The end of the XIXth century is evident especially in Western Europe by the rethinking of the social Christian doctrine. After Augustine and Toma de Aquino, Pope Leo the XIIIth, through *Aeterni Patris* Encyclique inaugurates neothomism and the doctrine of the Christian democracy. This way Catholic Church, through neothomism, accepts the socio-political life of its Christians and imposes itself to promote its own vision over the social life of people in labor, family, state, etc.

Pope Leo the XIIIth, through multiple Encycliques, saw Christian democracy as a benefic Christian action of the Church in the middle of its people, in the conditions that characterized the XIXth century, as the triumph of liberalism, the industrialization, the interest for science and the participation of humanity to the democratic process. In this context, Fr. Chatelet considers the neothomist doctrine as being a rational type of doctrine which wishes the maintenance of the existent social and political values, where we have a mixture of elements which have their origin in the monarchy, aristocracy and democracy and which overcome the totalitarian ideas.

The first part of the XXth century is marked by two world wars and by totalitarian regimes which brought a change of situations on cultural, social and political plan, with new challenges addressed to the theology of that time. Different studies and theological opinions appeared related to the social and political life of the European and especially the Occidental space. Between the Catholic theology and the Protestant one appeared ideological conflicts, because the Catholic theology was more radical and was insisting on the superiority of the Church over the State, being more interested in its political purposes than on the redemption of its own believers, and the protestant theology was more positive and more opened to the social contemporaneous problems and was trying to understand what was happening in the world. The protestant theology tried conciliation with the new intellectual challenges and with the new culture, giving birth to the new liberal theology. Theological personalities who put the bases of the liberal theology are Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1899), Ernest Troethsch (1856-1923).

A special figure of that time was Karl Barth who edited in 1919 *The Letter to Romans* and also a study about it. His conception has as a starting point the knowledge of the social problems of Germany of that time and his pastoral experiences tied to the preaching of the Evangel. He has a rational approach of God, as being impossible to find

and to know directly, so that man's thinking and speaking about God pass through a purifying fire, as a unique premise of the conviction that God is God Who speaks today through Scriptures, in the same manner as He did in the time of Pavel, without any human mediation.

Liberty and sovereignty of God are the departure point of the Protestant Theology of Paul Tillich who develops a new theology, the dialectic one in 1928, contributing to the development of the barthian ideas, , and starting from the fundament of universalism intensively crypto centric which represents Christ. He tries to overpass the theological conflict between the dialectic theology of Barth – the distancing of God from the world and the liberal theology – which makes a legitimate synthesis between God and the world. His thinking is an original one and starts from the relation between God and man and the mutual dependence between them. He also introduces a new notion about religion, which refers to the importance of each human being, notion which has been named Christian realism.

Another theologian who has continue the barthian thinking was Rudolf Bultman who put the accent on the study of relevance, starting from the idea of the relevant divine word, and not from the man and his religiousness towards God. In his conception, faith is not the effect of the human mind, but man's answer to God's gift.

Dietrich Bonhoefer is a representative of the liberal current which reflects the changes that took place beginning with the XVIIIth century, period marked by reform and enlightenment, which make actual Christian pray and practice an unreligious Christianity.

Beginning with the XXth century, marked by the thinking of El. Lavelle, J. Lacroix, and J. Maritain and especially of M. Mounier, this current is relevant for the fight against individualism and totalitarianism, and its special concern about social Catholicism, decentralized pluralist democracy, and state's oppression towards men. In this sense, M. Mounier has proposed a democracy based on the evangelic message, on liberty and on the equality of all sons of God in society, where they must act as persons.

Christian democracy has influenced the European society and also the political organization of the founding states of the European Union, by the accent put on the

development of the human person and on her progress in social life by family, professional associations, local communities and nations.

According to the Christian democratic percepts, the politics of states must guarantee the liberty of person and the development of the national community; it must support the accomplishment of the civil and political liberties. A special attention was directed toward the political structures of the states, to the influences of the Christian democratic parties, seeing that especially in Italy, Germany and Benelux, by the formation of a system based on pillars (*pillarisation*), there was a division of the society on compartments, according to two criteria: a philosophical one and a religious one.

The democrat Christians has protected politics against decentralization, but not always with the same vehemence and implication. They also wanted the formation of the European Union that we have seen as being the third factor as geopolitical importance, after U.S.A and Russia.

Especially the European integration has represented a political project of the Christian democracy. The great majority of the founders of the European project (Schuman, de Gasperi, K. Adenauer, and J. Monnet) have belonged to Christian democratic parties¹⁸, tied to the limitation of conflicts, to peace keeping and accomplishing prosperity.

Today Christianity is divided in three branches: the roman-Catholics which dominate in Italy, Polonia, Central and South Europe Ireland and Latin America; Protestantism in Germany and Northern Countries; orthodoxy in Greece, in Slav states and Russia, which comprises Churches from Albania, Georgia, Romania and which self govern themselves.

It is significant that the theological movement has known an ample cultural dialogue in the XXth century. The main preoccupation is to change the way of understanding the mystical concept by its essential interpretation. Bultmann had analyzed the mystical concept by showing its different significations, but he believed that man assumes his own being and is responsible of him. Bonhoeffer signaled the difference between religion and Christian faith showing the fact that the Church must actively participate to the worldly actions of the community, by preaching the will of Christ.

¹⁸ Scott M. Thomas, op. cit. p. 168§

In this sense, P. Teilhard De Chardin signals the fact that the progress, in general, is not in competition with God. Human progress, human unity conscience and master on its own forces bring a plus of beauty to the creation.

Karl Rahner proposed a new theological conception, named *the transcendental anthropology or the antropocentrique theology* and considered that anthropocentrism must be the hermeneutic principle by which the entire theology must structure itself. He brings in first plan the idea that Christian churches should recognize the common origin of the creation – the Saint Scripture and the apostolic symbols – and the report between this identity and the differences appeared after, must be treated according to the principle of gnoseological existence tolerance.

The entire revelation is presented in relation with the hermeneutic principle of beauty in the theological work of von Balthazar, according to whom, the understanding of truth and of good is not possible outside the knowledge of beauty which knows the double state of beauty and good.

In the period of political and cultural transformation of the 60, Metz's political theology is relevant through his thinking also based on anthropocentrism (man is a being who is in dialogue with God) asking a fair lecture of the tradition of the Bible referring to peace and life, to the historical future, which have communitarian and social significance. In Metz vision, faith is reduced to the interior decision of the individual, and this aspect does not influence world and history.

Christian democracy considers that work inspirited by religion in modern Europe (and not only) are a menace to stability and peace. The state of peace leads to the democratic organization of the society and – as French popular democrats sustained for the promotion of family's interests, and of the economic and social interests, because political order must be based on the sovereignty of God and on the fact that the wiseness of the Christian politic must bring the political life a system of Christian values.

The position of Hans Kung is also very expressive because he considers necessary the over passing of the politics' critical position toward religion in a descriptive and comparative approach, by which the theological progress can tie itself to the adoption of a new interpretative point of view. Peace between religions is the premise for peace

between nations, which means the identification of some ethic, universal criteria, related to man.

Christianism is considered today, in the spirit of Apostle Pavel's theses, a moral revolution, due to the exchanges prorogued by it: love towards human being, towards the near, to the equality of men in front of God, to the man – as the supreme creation; to the fact that God has sacrificed Himself for our salvation which makes our Christian God universal.

The philosophical virtues have received in Christianity a certain sense so that they have an individual and an individualist character, and the Christian ones mean the presence of the divine gift, implying love for the near.

Supreme theological virtues, as faith, hope and love are not only Christian, which explains the fact that they have been analyzed in philosophy, in accordance with convictions that the dynamic of human relations is based on love and trust in the divine mercy.

The competence of the Church is that of preaching Christ as the redemptory of our souls, but it cannot be indifferent to social problems of man. Social doctrine of the Church represents a precise formulation of a reflection over the existence of man in society, in the international context, in the light of the ecclesiastic tradition. It presents, in any era, its eternal, actual principles adapted to the new era. It is also considered universal for all men called to form the people of God.

According to Irving , Christian democracy is a doctrine which is based on the values of the democracy in the functioning of the society. Along with Catholicism, an important role in the development of the Christian democrat ideology was the one of Protestantism (Scandinavia, Germany and Olanda), orthodoxy and greco-Catholicism (Greece and Romania). Fundamental values on which Christian social parties are based are: liberty, equality, solidarity, the participation to *the hierarchy of the values*. The fundamental themes of the Christian democrat doctrine (G. Lavroff, Ph. Braud, and J. L. Chabot) are: the problem of the human person, the humanism the base of the social and political life, and the political life as a result of men's power to build the community with the purpose of common good¹⁹.

¹⁹ L. P. Zăpârțan, *Doctrine politice*, Ed. Chemarea, Iași, 1994, p. 303;

The doctrine of the Church is based on ten fundamental principles: the dignity of the human person, the respect for the human life, the association principle, the participation principle, the principle of the preferential option for poor and vulnerable persons, the solidarity, the subsidiary principles, the human equality, the common good and the principle of the universal destination of goods. The ideas of the Christian democracy have been transposed in the practices referred to the European integration, so that it exists an effective coordination to the level of decision making both in the interior of political parties and at governmental level.

Thomas Albert, K. Selman and Joseph A. Buttigieg analyze the important role of the Christian democracy at the level of the politics foreseen in European states. They also analyze the relation between politics and religion, between Church and State²⁰.

Nowadays it is presented the need for a *civil religion*, starting from Durkheim's theory, who believes that social integration depends on a certain number of religious convictions: belief in God, belief in the afterlife and the belief that virtue will be repaired, and the sin punished. A healthy society must practice religious tolerance and cultivate those values in the everyday life.

Renblah takes over this concept and he sustains that civil religion is a religious aspect of the American political life which is independent of the Church, and to which all citizens participate. American citizens keep, this way, their religious liberty in the private life and so, civil religion belongs to the public sphere.

We considered that the best look over the valuable relation between religion and politics is offered by K. Löwith because he considers that the history of Europe cannot be understood without its Christian dimension, and that European spirit is tied and defined by the belief in redemption which gives history a sense and a significance. He analyzes remarkable philosophical personalities for the European spirituality, who have illustrates this appreciation: J. Burckhardt, Marx, Hegel, Proudhon, Comte, Condorcet, Voltaire, Vico, Bousset, Joachim de Fiore, Augustin, Orosius.

The Christian interpretation of history depends on the acceptance of Jesus as Christ. Theologians and historians have tried to explain history in a religious manner,

²⁰ Thomas Albert Keselman, Joseph A. Buttigieg, *European Christian Democracy: historical legacies and comparative perspectives*, University of Notre Dame Press, 2003;

without reducing any of them. From this point of view, Christianity is important to history only by the revelation of God into a historical man. The Christian does not cover history as a progress, it represents for him a place of the sin and death, and this is why the Christian needs redemption. Christians are not a historical people; the history of redemption is an individualized one and does not depend of the social, politic, cultural or racial statute. This way we can explain the fact that Christian axiology has given identity to the European culture, and was a defining component of our manner of reproaching life and of building it, including from the political and social perspective.

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