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TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL RELIGIOSITY

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New Religiosity, Posmodern Age and Post-Materialistic Values

Abstract

This paper examines one of the most significant structural changes brought about by post-modern age compared with classical modernism. This structural change can be identified in the eruption of so-called post materialistic values that are evident in the very core ideology of post-modernity; the need for belonging and identity. What results is the creation of new post-modern identities as combinations of traditional forms of identities and emerging forms which were being discovered at the time. The eruption of post materialistic values is witnessed also by the accord between civil (democratic) society and conventional religions after World War II, which gives a new post-modern identity to the epoch. Apart from social movements, research results of so-called positive, or natural sciences, contributed greatly to the promotion of post materialistic values. This new, concrete reality of science in practice is manifested in two new modern paradigms- general relativity and quantum mechanics. This paper will finally reach the conclusion that the era of new post-modern «enchantment» is reflected in the phenomenon of post materialistic values and is opposite to Weber's modernistic «un enchantment» (Entzauberung) of reality.

Keywords: postmodern age, post-materialistic values, identity, new devotion, new scientific paradigms, the time of new enchantment

■ We are living at a time when religion has made a great comeback in the lives of ordinary people and in the basic flows of social and political life of societies all over the world, thus constituting an inevitable social power of our time. One hundred or two hundred years ago it seemed that forces of enlightening social emancipa-

tion would consign religion to the antiques cabinet together with other social phenomena obsoleted by the modern era.

However, religion proved itself as a resilient social phenomenon which survived all attempts of “emancipation” and “modernisation”. Therefore, from the perspective of the first decades of the twentieth century, we could say a paradox occurred when religion replaced modernity and not vice versa, as was expected by “prophets of the new age”, from the French Enlighteners to Nietzsche. Modernity was replaced by postmodernity, during which religion regained its vitality and strength compared to the classical modern era of the 18th and 19th century; previously confined to triggering “pure” religious movements, religion in postmodernity transcended the religious sphere and went on to inspire social and political movements also.

During the 20th century, religion retired modernity, helping the epoch to enter the postmodernity era due to “material fatigue” of enlightenment values. What led to the eventual rejection of these values was that the Enlightenment progress had throughout the World Wars, economic and political crises and violent revolution, showed its other, aggressive and dark side, to which Hegel dialectically indicated in his work “The History of Philosophy”.¹ Additionally, Horkheimer and Adorno fully developed this theory in their text “Dialectic of Enlightenment”.²

The aim of this paper is to examine the shift from modernity to postmodern age and from materialist values of Enlightenment to postmodern *post materialist values* that gradually returned religion to the public sphere and restored its social significance. Although enlightenment marches from the end of the 18th century presented an image which foretold the downfall of religion, the 20th and 21st century revealed that religion in fact had never lost its importance.

The weakening and fading of the classical Enlightenment paradigm with its materialism and mechanism can be associated with one of the most significant structural changes of the post-

¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, Batoche Books, 2001.

² M. Horkheimer, T. W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press, 2002.

modern age when compared with the beginning of modernism and its zenith – the advent of *post-materialistic values*.

In the 19th century, Alexis de Tocqueville prophetically announced the fall of post materialist values due to materialisation of modern society. When describing the society of the United States, Tocqueville explained « why the Americans display more readiness and more taste for general ideas than their forefathers, the English, 'while noticing that' if the human mind were to attempt to examine and pass a judgment on all the individual cases before it, the immensity of detail would soon lead it astray and bewilder its discernment: in this strait, man has recourse to an imperfect but necessary expedient, which at once assists and demonstrates his weakness. Having superficially considered a certain number of objects, and remarked their resemblance, he assigns to them a common name, sets them apart, and proceeds onwards ».³ Tocqueville was undoubtedly correct because it wasn't long before a spiritual reaction to enlightening mechanistic materialism initiated.

The first signs of weakening of post materialist values surfaced during the interwar period in the 20th century, when an irrational shift appeared, contrasting the rationality of the enlightenment model. Besides conventional religiosity, new spiritual and sometimes even occult cults began to form. For instance, National Socialists were frequently involved in the occult and paganism, while the renewal of conventional religiosity appeared in the German Catholic centre and British conservatives, who in order to upgrade its pragmatism, sought to strengthen the principles of Anglican Protestantism's investigation of structuralism⁴ had a great impact on the return of religion, cults and mythical thought among intellectuals. His research concluded that myth is not primitive irrationality (thought), as was thought during the modern era by Bacon. On the contrary, myth by its structure is not only identical to logos, but also mythic structures are logically even more precise than structures of modern "scientific" statements. Cassirer's research concludes that religions and myths present the coherent Weltanschauung which fulfils: firstly, people's necessity to irration-

³ A. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2002, pp. 497-498.

⁴ E. Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, Courier Corporation, 1946.

ally believe and; secondly, their desire to interpret the world meaningfully, i.e. satisfying their intellectual need. Consequently, religion and myths cannot be understood as simple mysticism, but as epistemological and practical orientation of an individual in order to provide meanings to their world. Hence, beliefs can navigate in practical orientation according to the individual. One step remains only from religion and myth as an individual's a priori structure to true religiosity, which had once again placed the Truth into the area of transcendental. This step was easy to take after structuralistic re-legitimation of religious and mythical opinion.

Liotard's postmodern attitudes had a significant impact on the return to religion, especially his famous saying – « point out to the invisible ».⁵ Although Lyotard himself rejects religious implications of his opinion, i.e. his delegitimization of modernist rationality, it wouldn't be wrong to assume that religion would spontaneously and coercively attempt to replace the shaken world of modernist meanings after previously mentioned postmodern delegitimization. Thus, Lyotard, although indirectly, has influenced the return of religion in modern life. In a way, he succeeded in fulfilling his childhood dream of becoming a Dominican monk (according to his biographies) after he had he given it up to study philosophy.

Nevertheless, as legacy of the 1968 student demonstrations and the hippie movement that antedated it, new cults and Eastern religions start to spread in the social life of Europe. Finally, the last phase of this spiritualization precipitated after the fall of the Berlin wall, in, until that moment, still materialistic and real-socialistic Eastern Europe, while suddenly conventional and traditional religions gain popularity as well as some new, alternative, religious forms. In light of these major events and changes, it can be deduced that this epoch, contrary to early modern Bacon's and Carthusians rationalisation and technisation, was characterised by a search for new directions, which although might not have directly opposed the technical civilization existing at the time, questioned its significance and boundaries.

The post-modern civil society in its prime, in the second half of the 20th century, became "the dissatisfied society", according to

⁵ J. F. Lyotard, *Šta je postmoderna*, KIZ Art Press, Beograd, 1995., pp. 24, 34.

Ágnes Heller. Therefore, by analysing Heller's stance, Vukasin Pavlovic pointed that « the separation from traditional behavioural norms and the establishment of universal values (that is, the wish of owning something transforms into the wish of owning itself; the wish of becoming famous for something transforms into the wish of becoming famous regardless of cause and at any cost etc.) has made needs in essence unsatisfiable, while an identity and an integrity of the personality have been in essence removed from an obtainable and particular frame of reference, and instead they are thrust into an endless orbit of universal integration in which the reaching of something does not lead to fulfilment, because what follows always is the emergence of a new desire (so-called consumer psychology is one of the most prominent examples of this metamorphosis) ».⁶

With the domination of consumerist mentality as one of the by-products of the modern democratic "emancipations", the foundation of civil society began to degenerate. After banishing social theology from the political sphere, which the democratic development had spread among the entire society, people, states and civil society became disorientated. They tried to compensate for the absence with hedonistic indulgence in consumer hysteria that allowed them to briefly overcome fear and insignificance. Regarding the crisis of political and philosophical modernism, Mihajlo Djuric wrote: « The modern movement is not reaching an aim by which it could be tranquilized and finalized. Newer and greater successes of modern production are revealing a frightening fact that the modern movement are futile in its core. Hence, where is no goal, there is no meaningful movement ».⁷

Contrary to this superficial consumerist "modernist" dissemination, during postmodernity, the main need became the necessity for uniting and *identity* which consumer society was unable to handle. Herein precisely lies the cause of the re-popularisation of conventional and alternative religions and cults as well as the phenomenon of new social movements which united around new "ultimate

⁶ V. Pavlović, *Emancipatorska energija društvenih pokreta*, u zborniku *Obnova utopijskih energija*, Istraživačko-izdavački centar SSO Srbije, Beograd, 1987., pp. 10/11.

⁷ M. Đurić, *Utopija izmene sveta*, IDN, Beograd, 1979., p. 9.

purposes”, i.e. eschatological goals, such as the ecological project of environmental protection.⁸ Opportunely, consumer post-civil society that slowly formed after the Second World War, allowed space for the creation of various groups which in their self-organization could defend themselves from the identity crisis. The concept of civil society was subjected to a variety of spiritual and religious upgrades, both conventional and alternative. In fact, Tocqueville considered that the stability of modern democratic and liberal society was impossible without these upgrades which should present the counterpoise of all possible individualistic-economic deviations.⁹ Tocqueville’s voice remained in the background for a long time, and only after the Second World War certain aspects of Tocqueville’s “controlling” demands to the liberal democratic order were affirmed, and have become particularly important in our time, when the Bretton Woods model of liberal capitalism is experiencing a crisis, and we face a real torrent of “identity” populist movements across Europe and the world that form an open partnership with various new-old religious patterns.

Namely, since the period of the French Revolution, democracy and civil society on the one hand, and conventional churches and religions on the other, positioned themselves as irreconcilable enemies, that is, as two completely different orders.¹⁰ But after the

⁸ This statement also concludes V. Pavlovic by saying « in all of this lies at least partially the explanation to the re-emergence of many religious cults today, both in the West and in the East; secondly, why they are greater in number and type; thirdly, why groups and therapies for psychological support are gaining popularity; and finally, the popularity of movements for ethnical and national emancipation, racial equality and cultural autonomy ». V. Pavlović, *Emancipatorska energija društvenih pokreta*, in *Obnova utopijskih energija*, Istraživačko-izdavački centar SSO Srbije, Beograd, 1987., pp. 10/11. V. Stanovčić additionally recognized an effort of the epoch, thus he points out that the optimism of industrial society replaced the pessimism of post-industrial society, which after the break of rationalism during the First World War, starting with the existential philosophy, shift into the seeking of new meanings, which finds in the sphere of the irrational, by religion being a part of it. V. Stanovčić, *Političke ideje i religija*, Čigoja Štampa, Beograd, 1999, tom II, pp. 121. – 124.

⁹ A. Tokvil, *O demokratiji u Americi*, Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci, CID, Podgorica, 199 0., pp. 252, 255, 492-499.

¹⁰ This demonstrates papal encyclicals *Quanta cura* and *Syllabus* written in 1864 by Pope Pius IX by which he condemned liberalism and democracy

Second World War, a great reconciliation occurred between post-civil society and already mature democracy and conventional religious institutions that fit into post-civil order, which allowed them full autonomy in religious rituals, the autonomy of internal jurisdiction and provided them with security guarantees. Even the Catholic Church has accepted some of the French Revolution heritage, as can be seen from the encyclical of Pope John XXIII entitled *Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth)* published on April 11, 1963. In this encyclical, not only the heritage of democratic-liberal development is recognized, but many contemporary problems are addressed, such as: the rights of workers, the humanization of the modern economy, human rights in general, the critique of colonialism and neo-colonialism, the determination for the increasing social engagement of women, the commitment to nuclear disarmament, the concerns over global equality, etc.

The reason why the churches after the Second World War are reconciled with democracy and liberalism should become apparent in the fact that during the whirlwind of war, the greatest danger to Christian understanding of freedom did not originate from that side, but from the side of national socialist paganism, that is, from the communist atheism.¹¹

An additional impulse for the attitude change, not only of Christian, but of all conventional religions according to modern trends, was the content of the *Universal Declaration of human rights* adopted by the United Nations in 1948, which departs from the rigid enlightenment of the *Declaration of 1789*, with similar content at first glance, while in essence, visible changes were made. Perhaps the most important change is the concession to monotheistic religions in the “metaphysical” and postulative defining of «inherent

as opposite to the Catholic doctrine. However, in 19th century certain liberal Catholics as Félicité Lamennais disputed these tendencies.

¹¹ After the Great Patriotic War, the Russian Orthodox Church turned again to the careful criticism of communism. Additionally, after the death of Stalin when a title of General Secretary of the communist party was given to persons, such as Khrushchev and Brezhnev, who did not own Stalin’s “theological” feeling, criticism of communism became even more obvious. However, Communism was different than Nazism, which was characterized by anti-Christian ideas and paganism; hence in the Soviet Union where was established the communist society, the Church survived and preserved its infrastructure.

dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family»¹², where its origin is no longer sought in the enlightenment theory of a social contract. Instead *dignity* is simply postulated without remarks on its origin. This greatly pleased churches and other religious organizations. With pure conscience, they could have found the origin of the above-mentioned human “dignity” in God. The possibility of latent “metaphysical” connotations of the *Universal Declaration* was the reason for the representatives of the Marxist countries to abstain during the final vote on it in the UN General Assembly. Noting on this occasion that this declaration has no revolutionary implications, while it can serve the popularization of the “opium for the masses”, as orthodox Marxists referred to religion since their great founder.

In general, the reconciliation between the civil society and conventional religions after the Second World War was testified by a number of circumstances, from which we can conclude that the antagonisms cultivated at the time of the French Revolution between the enlightenment and conventional religious organizations were overcome. Now we have a blend of the principles contained in the *Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights* from year 1789, as a proclamation of a (liberal) revolution, with some of the Holy Alliance principles as a kind of restoration declaration. This is evident, for example, in the following documents of Catholic councils, such as *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae*, which relate to the *Pacem in Terris* encyclical, which equally count on democracy, liberalism and human rights, but stating the necessity of recognizing the church and churches as a stable spiritual order that will be one of the global balance savers.¹³ However, it will not be disputed that within the churches, and especially within the Catholic, some circles remain hostile to democratic novelties, but churches make their voices heard only within ecclesiastical organizations in order to prevent possible attacks due to inflexible conservatism.

¹² Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Preamble: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf - Pointed out by N. C.

¹³ For encyclicals *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis humanae*, and their contributions to the modern and “democratic” Catholicism, see: *Osnove socijalnog učenja katoličke crkve*, Fondacija Konrad Adenauer i Beogradska nadbiskupija, Beograd, 2006., pp. 6, 36, 66, 78, 80, 89, 104, 155, 164, 216, 220-222

Churches and other religious organizations in Europe after the Second World War generally accept democracy and some of the civil society segments, representing in that way one of the ethical controllers of any possible political self-will, while not being its sources any longer – such as in Tocqueville's or, even more, in de Mestre's time. The more balanced relations between religious organizations and civil society¹⁴ testify to the new signs of the epoch brought by postmodern time, and the visible contours of the so-called *post materialistic values*. Therefore, it is not surprising that some very interesting sociological researches show that voters in contemporary Western democracies are being less polarized according to social class and classical ideologies, and increasingly according to principle - for or against materialist, that is, post-materialist values.¹⁵ This further suggests that old ideological divisions have been overcome, and new differences and value orientations are being introduced into the political field. This will have consequences when it comes to the more noticeable disappearance of the classical division of the political field into left and right, in their currently recognizable ideological forms. We have its full expression today, when the populist movements of our time, while fighting against liberal democracy, blend the left and right-wing segments.¹⁶

¹⁴ The question whether the Church and religious organizations are parts of civil society is topic too broad to discuss it now. Therefore, according to Pantic, it can only be concluded that a post-modern religiosity is not always an obstacle to civil society. Pantic also stated that the relationship between civil society and religiosity is ambiguous, hence occasionally religiosity became an ally of civil society and sometimes even its opponent. Dragomir J. Pantić, *Dominantne vrednosne orijentacije u Srbiji i mogućnosti nastanka civilnog društva*, u zborniku *Potisnuto civilno društvo* ur. V.Pavlović, EKO CENTAR, Beograd, 1995, pp. 84.-87. Additionally, it's worth mentioning that, according to V. Pavlovic « it is difficult to refute the fact that the church does not represent civil society (especially in the development sphere of ethical principles which presents the base of civil society) », *Ibid.*, p. 249.

¹⁵ R. Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*, Princeton University Press, Princeton – New Jersey, 1990., pp. 280-286.

¹⁶ For the announcement of the time that commence "on the other side of left and right-wing" by mixing its narratives and the official confirmation of this announcement, see: Neven Cvetičanin, *Epoha s one strane leveice i desnice*, Službeni Glasnik-Institut društvenih nauka, Beograd, 2008, Neven Cvetičanin, *Državništvo modernog doba*, Arhipelag-Institut društvenih nauka, Beograd, 2016.

The focus is on entering the era of a new post-modern (post-industrial, post-civil) “enchantment¹⁷” that will be contrary to the Weberian modernistic “un enchantment” (Entzauberung)¹⁸, which represents the general place of modernist vocabulary, the initial capsule and the inner core of modernist development. As opposed to that, we will have a postmodern (post-industrial, post-civil) world that will no longer be strictly rational, and which will not be subject only to rational interpretations. Rationality here will constitute only one of the offered legitimate choices, while all irrationalities will also receive new-old legitimacy, introducing the strengthening of different religious fundamentalisms, that are already growing stronger, not only at some remote points of the world, but in Europe itself.

Apart from social movements, such an atmosphere is also the result of some studies of so-called positive and natural sciences, which are not able to indirectly reflect on the social movements themselves. Unlike the beginnings of modern science where “people are giving up of meaning”¹⁹ inaugurating bare scientific positivism, at the beginning of the postmodern era, in the era between the world wars and, especially after the Second World War, sense has been re-returned to science. But its sense was not restored by fitting it within the frames of some dogmatic metaphysics, as was the case in the pre-modern era, but *by restating again the question of its meaning*, which was long absent, and to which, now in the postmodern era, multiple answers are possible.

Lyotard raises this question and offers a multifaceted answer to it, and thus re-introduces the question of the body of scientific research ‘through the back door’, even though he refuses to accept that body in a logocentric manner like traditional metaphysics.²⁰ If Lyotard is correct, to use one of Jaspers expressions - “the

¹⁷ For this aspect of so-called post-modern era, see: Françoise Gaillard, *Novo začaravanje sveta*, in: *Postmoderna – nova epoha ili zabluda*, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1988, pp. 119–134.

¹⁸ M. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, Tübingen, 1920/21.

¹⁹ M. Horkheimer, T. Adorno, *Dijalektika prosvetiteljstva*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo, 1989., p. 19.

²⁰ J. F. Lyotard, *Šta je postmoderna*, KIZ Art Press, Beograd, 1995., pp. 61. – 64.

spiritual situation of time²¹" - that is, the spiritual situation of modern science that is desperately seeking for a body, then the new concrete reality of science will in practice be embodied into two new contemporary scientific paradigms - general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics.

Namely, the general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics will not be represented as metaphysics in the traditional meaning of the word, but both of these scientific paradigms will imply some metaphysical conclusions that surpass simplistic scientific positivism.

Therefore, it is not surprising that quantum mechanics are often used by theists of all confessions, while the general relativity theory is used by certain neo-Spinosists. All this unambiguously states that the epoch shows signs of overcoming the narrow optics of modern mechanistic positivism²², replacing it with what we can call "partial metaphysics".²³ The philosophic equivalent to the physics of quantum mechanics is Jean Baudrillard, with his *Fatal Strategies*²⁴ in which the modernistic, omniscient, tireless and mechanistically-pragmatic Odyssey is replaced by a post-modern Odyssey, who is amazed by the new-old secrets of the once again "enchanted" world.²⁵

²¹ K. Jaspers, *Duhovna situacija vremena*, Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1987.

²² If there is no significant antagonism between "general relativity" and Newton's "classical mechanics", GR is not denying it, but improving it. Therefore, "quantum mechanics" is changing its basic principles of investigation while switching the rationalistic relation of cause and consequence to half-metaphysical entities such as "quark" or "antimatter" - which are allowing for the possibility of category of probabilities, that is coincidences. The difference between classical and quantum mechanics are indicated in the same manner as the distinction between modern and post-modern age, although belonging to the same epoch. Since researchers of "quantum mechanics" exceeded, but not abolished the principles of classical mechanics, they are, therefore, as well as researchers of "classical mechanics", offspring of the same period and the same flow thinking.

²³ What we have named the "partial metaphysics", Lyotard called the "micrology". Jean François Lyotard, *Šta je postmoderna*, KIZ Art Press, Beograd, 1995., p. 64.

²⁴ J. Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies*, Pluto Press, 1999.

²⁵ Gaillard points out that Baudrillard in the aforementioned work « is suggesting a reverse Odyssey, this time in the opposite direction; however, she is not inviting us to repeat the journey of Odysseus, but to free the

This world of “new enchantment” is not only the world of the return of old religious and literary myths, but also new media or virtual myths are possible, which also produce irrational behaviour, but, unlike those old myths, represent the real “implosion of meaning”, as expressed by Baudrillard.²⁶

The postmodern era thus, with its *post-materialist values* and the accompanying return of religion and religiousness as a relevant social force, offers its paradise, as well as its hell, but will, however, leave people the choice of which side to choose.

path, to unwind the destiny of mankind which has been integrated into delicate threads of the mind ». Gaillard by analysing Baudrillard are precisising the sin of prudent Odysseus because of which « the shifty deceptions, invented in order to resist the enchanting voices of the world full of meaning, stayed tied up to the mast of the mind, so we do not, seduced by fear, cross over to the side of the mermaids ». Françoise Gaillard, *Novo začaravanje sveta*, in: *Postmoderna – nova epoha ili zabluda*, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1988., pp. 132-133.

²⁶ Ž. Bodrijar, *Simulakrumi i simulacija*, Svetovi, Novi Sad, 1991, pp. 83–90.

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