# The Nation-State And Multicultural Policies

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It is highly important to follow up the possible models of coexistence of majority and minority groups in Romania, in a context where we have a majority Church as a national Church and several confessional and religious minorities. On the grounds of individual rights, religious minorities invoke religious pluralism as the basis of certain rights of the group. These are claimed in view of a better conservation of identity in the context of coexistence.

Thus, the theory of minority rights not only militates and argues for the necessity to ensure the conditions of equality of the groups, but also, in Levente Salat's opinion, presents arguments for the statement that "with regard to the members of minority ethno-cultural communities, the authentic effects of individual and universal human rights are only achieved with the condition to guarantee the equality of communities"[1].

For an analysis of majority–minority relations we need to make the clearest distinction between ideology and theology, so that we may observe the ways they influence the relation between the two types of "imaginary communities": traditional communities and religious minorities.

Despite the tangencies between religion and ideology that we can recall, we have to maintain a clear distinction between theology and ideology, and not consider theology as an all-inclusive category, but as the most dogmatically elaborate form of reflection within a constituted religion.

When we speak about religious minorities in Romania, we have in mind a very large area of religious identities that manifest themselves both inside and outside Christianity. For instance, according to the census in 2002, out of the entire population of Romania of 21,698,181 [22,820,035 in 1992], 86.7% (18,806,428) [19,802,389 in 1992] were registered as Orthodox; 4,7% (1,028,401) [1,161,942 in 1992] Roman Catholic; 0,9% (195,481) [223,357 in 1992] Greek Catholic; 3,2%

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[1] Levente Salat, *Multiculturalismul liberal. Bazele normative ale existenţei minoritare autentice* (Liberal Multiculturalism. The Normative Basis of Authentic Minority Existence), Iaşi: Polirom, 2001, 138.

(698,550) [802,454 in 1992] Calvinists; 0,1% (11,203) [39,119 in 1992] Lutherans of the Augustinian Confession; 0,1% (26,194) [21,221] in 1992] Presbyterian Lutherans; 0,3% (66,846) [76,708 in 1992] Anti-Trinitarian; below 0,1% (775) Armenian ; 0,2% (39,485) [28,141 in 1992] Old Rite Christians; 0,6% (129,937) [109,462 in 1992] Baptists; 1,5% (330,486) [220,824 in 1992] Pentecostals; 0,4% (97,041) [77,546 in 1992] Seventh Day Adventists; 0,2% (46,029) [49,963 in 1992] Christians of the Gospel; 0,1% (18,758) Evangelicals; 0,3% (67,566) [55,928 in 1992] Muslims; below 0,1% (6,179) [9,670 in 1992] Mosaics; 0,4% (87,225) [56,329 in 1992] other religion; 0,1% (13,834) [24,314 in 1992] no religion; below 0,1% (9,271) [10,331 in 1992] atheists; 0,1% (18,492) [8,139 in 1992] undeclared religion[1]. In some cases communities declare slightly increased numbers; what we have here is the official statistics. For those who wish to have at hand the statistics of the census of 1992, we have given the numbers in square brackets.

The criterion of differentiating between the majority and the minority, within a given cultural area, seems to be a numerical one. However, as Camil Mureşanu points out, the term 'minority' does not have a strictly statistical connotation, but it refers to a social-political category. This explains the fact that in certain circumstances one can speak about a minority even in a situation when statistically speaking it is a group of numeric superiority, but which finds itself in a state of devaluation and discrimination.[2] Thus, minority can be "an ethnic or racial group, but also any other group characterized by a state of inferiority, discrimination, persecution, based on various criteria".[3]

For a better understanding, it is useful to mention the fact that, according to Vincent Lemieux's definition, minority is characterized by several traits: disadvantage felt on account of the numerical minus; social-cultural disadvantage; reduced power derived from the small number that reduces the force of penetration into society; as a result, an

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[1] The source: the data of the 2002 census are published on the web page www.recensamant.ro. The data of the 1992 census are taken from the *Recensământul populaţiei şi locuinţelor din 7 ianuarie 1992.* (The Census of the Population and Dwellings from January 7, 1992), In *Populaţie - Structură demografică* (Population – Demographic Structure), 1994, 766.

[2] Camil Mureşanu, *Naţiune, naţionalism. Evoluţie a naţionalităţilor* (Nation, Nationalism. The Evolution of Nationalities), Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Fundaţia Culturală Română (The Center for Transylvanian Studies, Romanian Cultural Foundation), 1996, 37.

[3] ibid, 36.

inferior position in society, not compensated by the political system or the intervention of the state[1]. In order to understand minority status, we must keep in mind the way minority groups are situated in society. Michael Argyle proposes therefore to accept that minority religious groups can be divided into three categories: 1) those who passively accept their status of discrimination and try to focus on drawing attention to the importance of religious values; 2) those who withdraw from society and from this position criticize the social system without proposing an attack to overthrow it; 3) those who appeal to religious support to protest aggressively against society. The majority of minority religious groups tend to be more emphatically militant, and tend to manifest an aggressive attitude in the criticism of the existing social order.[2] That is how fundamentalist tendencies are pre-eminently found in the line of movements connected to minority religious groups. It is paradoxical that in Romanian society fundamentalist attitudes are perceived to be a characteristic of the majority group, and the tendencies of democratization of society, affirmation of tolerance, pluralism, and religious freedom seem to be the privilege of religious minorities.

Thus, whenever I speak about religious minorities, I have in mind, besides the numeric aspect, which carries with it a series of possible discriminations related to the majority or dominant groups, a slightly different tendency in the construction of identity structure.

Communities imagine themselves in terms of an exemplary model, which gives consistence, reality, and unity to the pluralist structure that it subsumes. Each community imagines itself as the carrier of a meaning of existence that it proposes as a modeling factor of human condition. It is the imaginative investment that gives cohesion, considered indestructible, to a community.

Traditional communities resort to the assignment of meaning by the appeal to a revelation. Over this revelation an entire religious tradition is founded, which also regulates a community's relations with other communities. Besides the element of revelation, tradition may bring secondary elements with an ideological strain, like, for instance, the ones connected to national ideology. Religious minorities, as a later formation,

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[1] Péter Erdő, "Locul Bisericii Romano-Catolice în societatea maghiară şi raportul său cu Statul" (The Place of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungarian Society and Its Relations with the State), In Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda (eds.) *Cultele şi Statul în România* (Religions and the State in Romania), Cluj-Napoca: Ed Renaşterea, 2003, 79.

[2] Michael Argyle, *Religious Behaviour*, London: Routledge, 2000, 134.

are closer to the influence of the process of modernization and secularization. The sources of meaning, as well as those of legitimation, are marked by the processes instituted by modernity, which, besides the claim of return to an original context of revelation, brings a new element in the field of discourse and relation with others, that of a more accentuate use of ideology as a factor of persuasion and public manifestation.

The evolution of contemporary events shows a new mutation in the field of relations between religion and ideology, between religion and politics, between the Church and the State, understood as a sum of institutions. The existence of a transfer of the religious over the political, sensed by Ricoeur and other thinkers in several contemporary societies, attracts an inevitable intrusion of symbolic forms that we may associate with a sort of lay religion. "Any community needs a certain civic sacredness, marked by ceremony, feasts, flag marches, and the whole reverent zeal that accompanies these phenomena"[1]. National ideology, which is born together with the formation of modern states, seems to answer most adequately to this community need.

A special relation between religion, state, and nation installs parallel with the modern state that defines itself as a nation-state. The way in which religious nationalism imagines a new type of community, based on a previous construction of a religious community, has an important role in installing this type of relation. Peter van der Veer points out in this respect the constituting dimension of religious practice and discourse in the change of social identity. Far from being mere ideological curtains of smoke that should hide the conflict of material interests and social classes, they play a major role in changing identities in the context of the birth of nationalism. The author shows that, on the one hand, religious identity is constructed within the ritual discourse and in practice, and on the other hand, that this identity is not just an attachment of an unchanged tradition. The dynamics of tradition permits religious nationalism to articulate both the discourse about the religious community, and the one about the nation[2].

An approach to the relation between religious nationalism and religious modes of communication brings out the fact that religious nationalism identifies the religious community with the nation, which in

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[1] Paul Ricoeur, *Eseuri de hermeneutică* (Essays on Hermeneutics), Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995, 294.
[2] Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, p. X.

fact enables it to build upon the previously consolidated religious identity. Van der Veer convincingly argues that insofar as the development of a religious community is crucial for the nation's imaginary construction, the ritual communication of identity is a decisive factor. The author operates with the definition of ritual proposed by Stanley Tambiah: "The ritual is a constructed cultural system of symbolic communication. The cultural content of the ritual is rooted in particular ideological and cosmological constructs."[1] Using "symbolic violence", the groups control the ritual discourse in order to communicate their ideology. In the ideology of religious nationalism, "nation is presented as an extension of the self, and nationalism as part of the religion". Gradually, the ritualization moves from the sphere of the religious to that of lay community practices and to the sphere of politics. This way, the ritual fulfills a communicative function, whereby the persons forming a community discover their identity and the significance of their actions. It also helps in the definition of the "self" and the "other", and the subsuming of the "other" through symbolic violence.[2].

The theoreticians of nationalism, as Anderson observes, emphasize the existence of three paradoxes: 1) while historians consider that a nation is an objective phenomenon that we can perceive together with modernity, nationalists assign to it an age that they subjectively define; 2) nationality has a formal universality as a socio-cultural concept, but at the same time it can only exist by its concrete manifestations; 3) in spite of the fact that they prove to be really shallow and incoherent philosophically, nationalisms exert an impressive political power[3].

In the attempt to surpass these paradoxes, Anderson proposes an anthropological definition according to which the nation is an "imaginary political community", imagined as being intrinsically limited and sovereign.[4] In the author's view, the imaginary character consists of the fact that the members of the community imagine a real communion with the others, despite the fact that they have never met them, and would never meet them in the future. The perception of this communion with the others, presupposed by the identification with the community has at

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[1] ibid., 80.
[2] ibid., 84.
[3] Benedict Anderson, *Comunități imaginate. Reflecții asupra originii și răspândirii naționalismului* (Original Title: *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*), Bucharest: Integral, 2000, 10.
[4] ibid., 11.

its basis a creative extrapolation of imagination that integrates the totality of individuals participating in the given community identity. It is inevitable that the nation imagined itself as limited, since it has to fix its borders, outside which there are other nations. It has to imagine itself as sovereign in order to respond to its aspiration for freedom. The nation is imagined as a community because, even in a situation of obvious inequalities, it always assumes a "profound horizontal comradeship". In Anderson's opinion, it is this imagined fraternity that compels hundreds of millions of people "to willingly die for such limited products of imagination"[1].

It is not at all by chance that the cenotaphs and tombs of the Unknown Soldier seem emblematic to Anderson of the modern culture of nationalism. It is obvious that the ceremonious attitude towards the empty tomb is based on the fact that nationalist imagination has strong affinities with the community types of the religious imaginary. If we accept that nationalism is a gift of Christendom offered to the modern world, then we may imagine that situating it within the symbolism of the revelation, nationalism may be understood symbolically as a return to the "empty tomb", that is, to that moment when the imaginary game passes the experience of the sacrifice, but fails to make the next step towards the fascination of restoration and resurrection. But, if we look at it from a historical perspective, then the "empty tomb" of the Unknown Soldier corresponds to an act of foundation that lacks religious certainty. We must not think that for Anderson nationalism is the result of the erosion of religion, or that it might replace religion. He only argues for the fact that nationalism corresponds to a modern necessity of a "lay transformation of fatality into continuity, of contingency into meaning", so that the "magic of nationalism is to transform the hazardous into destiny"[2].

Anderson understands nationalism in connection with the two cultural systems preceding it – religious community and dynastic monarchy – complemented with a specific mode of time perception. The first cultural system was based on the fact that the sacred language offered the privilege to access ontological truth, since it was an integral part of that truth. The second cultural system had at its basis the belief that society was naturally organized around a hierarchy, at the top of which there was the monarch, considered as a being completely unlike any other human beings, and who led the destinies of the world through

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[1] ibid., 11-12.
[2] ibid., 16.

287

some kind of divine authority. To this was added a vision over time in which cosmology and history were closely interconnected, so that man and the world would meet in a common origin.

Since we are interested in the first place in the role religious communities play, we must emphasize that for Anderson these differ from imaginary communities of modern nations especially in the trust that religious communities have for the unique sacredness of their language. Yet, there is a specific dynamics according to which "sacred communities linked together by old sacred languages gradually became fragmented, pluralized, and territorialized".[1] National communities were to develop on the basis of these communities, by a process in which the three above-mentioned cultural elements had lost their influence on collective and individual mentality. Imaginary communities of the nations and national ideologies are shaped during the search of a new way to find a rational relation between power, fraternity, and time.[2]

The process of successive rationalization of communities imaginarily instituted through the inclusion of the idea of transcendence attracts a process of secularization of a traditionally imagined community. To this contributes the horizontal transfer of axiological structures of the sacred towards symbolic constructions of community interaction and the political modeling of society. In this context, if not overlapping, religion and ideology become interchangeable.

Bearing in mind that the nation is a social formation of the 19th century, and that modern state is defined in terms of the nation-state, the question asked by scholars about the relations between the state and the nation appears as legitimate.

Giddens shows that in every-day language 'state' has two meanings: one that points out the significance of the state as an apparatus of government or power, and another that signifies the state as the totality of the social system subject to that government or power. Giddens urges us to a distinction between *state apparatus* and *society*. He talks about *state apparatus* when he means the administrative organ of government. When he means the entire content of the social system, he uses the term *society* or *culture*. Society has a set of distinct traits easily identifiable, which allows us to understand it as a system clearly delimited from the state apparatus[3]. The state can be emphasized as being separate from

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[1] ibid., 22.

[2] ibid., 22.

[3] Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence. Volume Two of a Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Berkeley: University of

society, as well as from other types of organization on account of the three elements that Weber considers as constituents of the state: 1) the existence of a specialized administrative staff; 2) the support of the pretense for exclusive monopoly to control the legitimate means of violence; 3) the support of this monopoly on a given territory[1].

The anthropological discourse on nationalism sets forth a relevant aspect that sheds light on the particular dynamics of religious development in Europe. Thus, van der Veer sustains that the appearance of the modern state is strongly connected with three processes of centralization: 1) the appearance of the state with its institutions of authority and power in the public sphere; 2) the appearance of the nation constituted in the form of identities and cultures beyond local interest; 3) economic development determined by the appearance of particular ways to organize production and consumption.[2]

Voicing an anthropological explanation of the relation between the state and the nation, van der Veer agrees with Marcel Mauss who says that the idea of nation implies a collective spirit, which comprises the ideas of homeland and citizen. As a result, one cannot make a clear distinction between state and society. Each individual is born into a political life, and society in its entirety becomes a State. The sovereign political body is the totality of the citizens. For van der Veer, nation presumes a collective faith in a certain kind of homogeneity: it believes in its race, its own language and civilization, and in its national character.[3]

In modernity, the modern nation-state is produced as a unitary reality, the state and the nation form a unitary whole. Unlike the theories that see the state as an entity that can be conceived as existing outside civil society and can be criticized by a civil society meant to limit the powers of the state, van der Veer considers that modern state is not an entity, but a relation of projections and accords through which society is organized. The exteriority of the state is nothing else but the effect of these projections. Even if one can sense in the case of Mauss a certain repulse of the distinction between citizenship and the idea of ethnicity,

California Press, 1987, 17.
[1] ibid., 18.
[2] Van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism*, 13.
[3] Van der Veer, Peter, *The Moral State: Religion, Nation, and Empire in Victorian Britain and British India*, In Peter van der Veer, and Harmut Lehmann (eds.), *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, 18.

race, language, religion, all these converge into a complex transformation of society into a nation-state.[1]

Despite the fact that in Mauss' thinking, just as in Durkheim's, there are constant allusions to the idea that nationalism is the religion of modern society, just as the totemism of the clan is the religion of primitive society, van der Veer considers it too simple to say that just as Christianity, Hinduism, the Islam, etc. are pre-modern religions, nationalism would be the secular religion of modern society. It is more suitable to say that religion becomes too important a feature in the definition of nation to believe that national ideology may replace religion. Religion simply receives a national character.[2]

Peter van der Veer does not give credit to sociological theories according to which the transition from pre-modern to modern, from traditional community to the modern, industrialized and urbanized one would mark a decline of the religion understood as a moral expression of society. He highlights the existence of a large variety of ways in which secularization happens in Western societies. This plurality makes the thesis of secularization hardly sustainable in Western Christianity, and seems impossible to be applied to the Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other religions.[3] Thus, even if he accepts, together with T.N. Madan, that secularization is a gift of Christianity to mankind and an intrinsic component of European history, van der Veer disagrees about the perspective, widespread in religion-analysis, that the West would be mostly secular, and the East religious. The author regards the idea that secularization is a distinct feature of modernity as completely false, because religion proves its importance as much in modeling individual consciousness as in the creation of the public sphere.[4] It is evident for van der Veer that the Churches and religious organizations lose some of their importance in the organization of the nation-state in the 20th century. But the state must organize and solve the real problems of the citizens. And to the extent that the state distributes the power and services that imply religious organizations, we may discuss the existence of certain indices of religiousness or secularity of a given society.[5]

In van der Veer's opinion, the stereotypes regarding secularization originate in the liberal theories that the modern state

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[1] ibid., 39.
[2] ibid., 19.
[3] ibid., 17.
[4] Ibid., 20.
[5] Ibid., 39.

depends on the formation of a civil society, consisting of free subjects, and on the formation of a public sphere necessary for rational debates. In these theories the notions of liberty and rationality are defined in terms of secularity. Opposed to these theories, the anthropologist considers that religion remains a permanent major source of the moral and rational subject, and a major organizational aspect of the public sphere that it creates.[1] Religious movements and the problems they articulate are considered to be crucial in the formation of the public sphere. The debates they create imply rational and critical discussions of history and geography, as well as attacks towards symbols of other communities. In the author's opinion the problems raised by religious movements can be just as important as those raised by other essential elements of the transformation of the public sphere, such as mass education, mass media, or mass politics, etc. At the same time, trans-national migration is considered as a decisive element both in what concerns new religious movements and in the birth of a trans-national public sphere. The technologies of communication, printing, and the Internet create not only a new sense of community and public sphere, but at the same time of the self, as well.[2]

The importance of virtual interactions was well emphasized by Mircea Miclea, on foreseeing a new context where the main actors of the social scene will be communities, and not necessarily states, in the condition that virtual reality would take up a place more and more important. This would happen because, while the state controls the physical space, communities would mostly control the virtual space. It is obvious that religious communities take this space into account, and use it to promote human welfare.[3] Thus they participate in an essential part of trans-national public sphere. If we accept with van der Veer that the trans-national public sphere is the successor of public sphere,[4] then there

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[1] Ibid., 39.
[2] Peter Van der Veer, "Secrecy and Publicity in the South Asian Public Arena", in Dale Eickelman and Armando Salvatore (eds.), *Public Islam and the Common Good*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, 62.
[3] Mircea Miclea, "Ecumenismul universitar" (Academic Ecumenism), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, *Cultele și statul în România. Colocviul internațional desfășurat la Cluj-Napoca în zilele de 10-11 mai 2002* (The Religions and the State in Romania. An International Colloquium Organized in Cluj-Napoca, in May 10-11, 2002.), Cluj-Napoca: Renașterea, 2003, 10.
[4] Van der Veer, "Secrecy and Publicity...", 61.

is no doubt that the states and the Churches will be important actors of the trans-national public sphere.

To what extent can the nation-state ensure the conditions for practicing religious identity and freedom, both for the majority group and for religious minorities? Michael Walzer showed that nation-states could create a medium of assertion for minorities, even if this type of organization supposes that a majority group is the one that organizes common life. In the process of tolerance, the nation-state views not so much the groups, but the individuals forming them, and who are first of all conceived of as citizens, and only afterwards as members of a minority. Walzer observes that in this framework minorities are most often not encouraged to organize themselves autonomously, being asked to positively engage with the culture of the majority. The religion and culture of a minority are considered problems that keep with the "private collective", in relation to which the "public collective", an attribute of the nation-state tends to react suspiciously to any of the "private collective's" attempts to publicly manifest its own culture.[1] Yet, the author brings out a very important fact, that, even if less tolerant with minority groups, the nation-state is efficient in determining the groups to be tolerant with their own members. It is known that often the minorities, who claim a tolerant attitude toward themselves, are intolerant towards their own members in certain aspects that they most often consecrate on account of the traditions that create group identity. Encouraging the transformation of groups into voluntary associations, the state acts with a view to free association, and the creation of the framework in which the pertinence to a group would be conditioned by the free participation of individuals, based on the fulfillment of necessities that lead to the option of association into a group. Michael Walzer points out that in liberal and democratic nation-states the pressure is exerted by the encouragement of an individualist model of toleration of the faithful. It is the association of individuals that has to give the power of minority groups. Walzer is convinced that the more intense the internal life of minority associations, the more differentiated their culture is as compared with that of the majority. Thus their presence in public life will be something that comes naturally, next to the action through which "the majority tolerates cultural differences ... by the establishment of a regime of civil rights and liberties and of an independent legal body to guarantee their efficiency."[2]

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[1] Walzer, Michael, *Despre tolerare* (On Tolerance), Iași: Ed. Institutului European (Press of the European Institute), 2002, 24.

[2] Ibid., 49.

However, he cannot disregard the fact that even in democratic societies "this regime of tolerance is subject to pressures from Christian majority groups who fear losing social control. Extreme members of the majority wish to control everybody's behavior in the name of a supposed common tradition, the values of the family, of their own convictions."[1] Generally though this model does not exclude reciprocity between the individuals.

We must agree with Paul Ricoeur: the state should be looked at from two perspectives. The state has a reasonable side – one which accentuates the independence of the public function, the practice of the functions of an integral bureaucracy, parliamentary control, independence of judges, and education in the spirit of freedom through dialogue.[2] Yet it also has another side that seems negative, as it refers to the "monopoly of legitimate violence" that it possesses. We speak about the intervention of a government of laws, that is, "a state that institutes the reasonable conditions and the guarantees of everybody's equality before the law."[3] This is a guarantee of the state's intervention in the conditions of multiculturalism.

A question that lends itself to our discussion regarding majority/minority relations is whether in Romania the nation-state could respond to the need of cultural minorities in general, and religious minorities in particular to assert themselves by dialogue.

A good premise thereof is Romania's multicultural character in its entirety. Therefore we completely disagree with Romania's geo-political mapping proposed by Huntington. We consider that it is a merely imaginative theoretical construction to draw the borderline that marks the Eastern limits of Western civilization on the curve of the Carpathians. It traces an artificial border that separates the territory of Transylvania from the other Romanian provinces on the account that this frontier corresponds to a separation of an area of Catholic cultural influence from one of Orthodox influence. Actually Romania, although having important religious minorities, remains a country of an Orthodox majority, even in the areas that Huntington places on the side of Western Christianity. We do not wish to elude Transylvania's cultural specificity; it is first of all more emphatically multicultural than other areas of Romania. We discuss multiculturalism not from its ethnic aspect, but from a cultural one, and from this aspect religion occupies a central place. Transylvania is a special case, if we discuss it in a multi-ethnic

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[1] Ibid., 62.
[2] Paul Ricoeur, op. cit., 293.
[3] Ibid., 293.

perspective, or, if we bring up problems connected to local or regional identity.

Still, multiculturalism is a feature of Romanian civilization in general. We might say that Romanian Orthodox mentality, especially in its form as a popular religion, predisposes the impregnation of the religious imaginary with a large variety of cultural and religious forms surrounding it, or even strange to it. It is suffice to mention the influences that the practices of the local Orthodox communities suffer from other Christian religions that they live with, or also from magical, archaic practices.

In Orthodoxy, the parish church is the central structure, alive and dynamic. It bears a strong local mark on the whole territory of Romania. This can be mainly observed in rural communities with an Orthodox majority, but also in urbane communities that are theologically more standardized. Theoretically, in virtue of the principle of community personalism promoted by Orthodoxy, parish communities integrate as a person with an identity of his/her own into larger structures, the ultimate horizon of which is the one traced by the dogmatic principles of theology, and the mystical imaginary of Orthodox ecclesiology.

Thus, the local and the global element harmonize in an undefined (yet personalized) horizon of the sacred. Consequently, the rupture that marks the religious limits of the Romanian provinces seems to me as something pertaining more to the imaginary, than to the real world.[1] Tracing a rigid borderline as the one proposed by Huntington entails a model of behavior and the cultivation of a profound affinity. This should make us think that in the international context following September 11, 2001, the supposed civilization conflict between the West and the Islam should contaminate the relations of the West with Orthodoxy, separated from the West by an imaginary borderline that makes it solidary with the Islam in terms of civilization. From such an angle we might conclude that Romania, in its relations with the West, could be the territory of intolerance and "terrorism as a means of war", rather than that of aspiration to democracy.

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[1] Huntington himself admits the fact that the limits drawn by him are merely constructed: "Europe ends where Western Christianity ends, and Islam and Orthodoxy begins. This is the answer Western Europeans wish to hear" (Samuel P. Huntington, *Ciocnirea civilizațiilor și refacerea ordinii mondiale* (Original Title: *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*), Bucharest Antet, 1998, 232.) Supposing the existence of such a horizon of expectations, Huntington tries very hard to offer it in his ideological construct.

As certain scanty references of Robert van de Weyer to Huntington's theory reveal, civilizations clash for two reasons: either due to divergences about the rule over certain territories, or because of topics related to mentality – more precisely, based on the assumption that the one has an ill-fated influence on the lifestyle proposed by the other.[1] Neither of the two conflicting states can describe the relations of Romania with the West. With regard to the first problem, Romania tries to promote political and cultural solutions in front of a historical nostalgia connected to territorial issues in order to quiet down any possible divergences. As for mentality problems, we may talk about the inadequacy with the Western spirit. But this is due first of all to economic and political factors that struck Romania in the period of the Communist dictatorship. It is not due to the option for Orthodoxy of over 18,806,428 out of the 21,698,181 Romanians. The analyses of Nicu Gavriluţă are telling in this respect; he concludes: "I do not think that Orthodoxy would make impossible that capitalism and the structures of the modern world might live in Romania ... similarly to physics, mathematics, or a government of laws, capitalism may function anywhere, on condition that its *universal basis of existence* were accepted. It can be Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Orthodox, or religiously indifferent."[2]

On the other hand, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi who consistently criticizes Romanian Orthodoxy, points out nevertheless, that "there is no significant correlation between ethnicity and religion, on the one hand, and democratic orientation, on the other."[3] Statistical analysis proves that there is no direct correlation between the option for a certain religion, and the option for democracy. Just as we cannot say that there is a strong correlation between ethnicity and religion on the one hand, and democratic orientation on the other, we also cannot state that religion represents a significant factor for supporting democracy.

According to the author, there is nothing that can justify our belief that someone in Eastern Europe would be more democratic if

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[1] Robert Van de Weyer, *Islamul şi occidentul. O nouă ordine politică şi religioasă după 11 septembrie* (Original Title: *Islam and the West: A New Political and Religious Order Post September 11*), Bucharest: ALLFA, 2001, 96.
[2] Nicu Gavriluţă, *Mentalităţi şi ritualuri magico-religioase. Studii şi eseuri de sociologie a sacrului* (Magical and Religious Mentalities and Rituals: Studies and Essays in the Sociology of the Sacred), Iaşi: Polirom, 1998, 16.
[3] Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, *Politica după comunism. Structură, cultură şi psihologie politică* (Politics After Communism: Structure, Culture, and Political Psychology), Bucureşti: Humanitas, 2002, 68.

belonging to a religion more widespread in the West, than if belonging to one over the borderline between the civilizations traced by Huntington. Alina Mungiu-Pippidi points out that, were the civilization theory functional, then Slovenia, which is Catholic, should have a political culture much more democratic than Romania and Bulgaria, which are Orthodox. Yet, the indicators of democratic-type political culture do not vary spectacularly in the case of these three countries. Were there arguments for the viability of Weber's theory regarding the relations between Protestantism and capitalism, it would be the consequence of the fact that in the case argued by Weber the correlation has its meanings in the field of economy, and not of politics. On both sides of the line of demarcation established by Huntington the propensity for democracy seems very slightly modeled by the religious option of individuals, says Alina Mungiu-Pippidi.

Nevertheless, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi considers that there are plenty of tools by which the Church and a person's religious attitude may influence the person's political psychology or even the political culture of a society. Commenting on Ronald Inglehart, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi observes that, through certain cultural norms and habits, a religion or denomination that identifies itself with a state for a longer period of time will end up to create certain informal institutions, which have an important role to play in the life of the individuals even if they stop practicing their religion, or even if the relation between certain denominations would change. This explains, for instance, the option to subordinate the Church to the state.[1]

Otherwise, one of the questions the *Politica după comunism* (Politics after Communism) tries to answer is: what kind of political culture is generated by the Orthodox religion? The answer is situated close to the opinion of Western analysts, who tend to criticize the absence of civil society and dependence from the state, which in Romania's case are reckoned as a consequence of a long tradition of the Church's subordination to the state. It is obvious that whenever we sustain an intervention of the state to develop special policies for the religious minorities, we do not consider such a relation of subordination of religious institutions to the state, but the creation of a background for coexistence and dialogue in the great diversity of communities and individuals. The criticism of Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, as well as of other authors, allow us to conclude that there is a lack of coherence in the actions of the state and the majority Church, connected to problems like

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[1] Ibid., 173.

296

the relations of the majority with religious minorities, the setup of a framework for their cognition and recognition as equal identities, the correlation between the principle of proportion and subsidiarity and the granting of special rights for religious minorities, and so on. But all these are about the degree of democratization of a society in general, and not about a denominational or ecclesial modeling.

In order to respond to the question on the kind of political culture generated by Orthodoxy, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi analyzes the contemporary situation of the relations between the state and the Church, on the one hand, and the relations between religious and political attitudes, on the other. She finds that the ecclesiastical authority cultivates an attitude which continues the compromise that the Church used to make towards the communist state. She argues, amongst others, with the fact that the Orthodox Church (ROC) tries to revive an ecclesiastical policy marked by "the two historical deviations of the ROC": the transformation of the Church into an annex of secular power, and the use of its spiritual influence for political purposes on the one hand, and nationalism on the other.

As to the first problem, it is evident that the situation of compromise towards secular power is more specific for the communist period when the Church, just as all the other centers of alternative power were either subordinated, or abolished by the dictatorial power. Other periods from the history of the Church seem to rather emphasize collaboration with the state.

The relation between the Church and the state, as the problem of religious freedom, is still ambiguous. Thus, Radu Preda shows that "The relation between the majority Church and the state is one of collaboration between two social partners equal in their attributes, even if they differ completely in their ultimate, theological quality."[1] This opinion seems to be sustained by Viorel Dima as well, a representative of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, who considers that even if a law of religious cults or religious freedom has not been adopted, the regulations that were adopted "inscribe on the line of the Romanian state's efforts to harmonize internal rights with the exigencies of a government of laws, of a democratic society, and European community legislation".[2] István Péter puts forward

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[1] Radu Preda, *Biserica în stat. O invitație la dezbatere* (The Church in the State: An Invitation to Debate), Bucharest: Scripta, 1999, 126.
[2] Viorel Dima, "Raportul între Biserici și Statul român – o perspectivă adventistă" (The Relations between the Churches and the Romanian State – An Adventist Perspective), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 119.

a negative perception of the present context, saying that in real terms one cannot speak about the collaboration of the state with religious minorities, that "there is no relation between the state and the Calvinist Church", and that the present situation "is characterized by the mere tolerance of the Calvinist Church".[1] It is well known that the problems in this case are especially of a patrimonial nature, but on this ground the author still claims: "We want a country that treats us as equal citizens, without discrimination, and we want authorities that exercise their power on the basis of a lay ethic, which mirrors our values and which defends us and our values as Christians and humans."[2]

Regarding the relation of the state with the Churches, it is obvious that the ambiguity maintained by not adopting a clear law of religious cults and religious freedom gives birth to frustration and divergent positions. To this adds the neglect of certain problems that the religious minorities are confronted with, and a rigid system regarding the recognition from the state. As for the ways discrimination is perceived, I will invoke a regional situation that seems to me as suggestive for Romania as a whole. According to data from a sociological survey, completed between June 25-July 5, 2000, on a representative sample in the counties of *Covasna* and *Harghita*, it seems that neither before 1989, nor after 1990 did the majority of the Romanians and Hungarians from the *Sekler* region feel discriminated in religious matters. Thus, for the question "Did you happen to have troubles because of any of the following reasons before 1989?" for the option "because of religious convictions" the answer of 88.9% Romanians and 90.4% Hungarians was "never". For the question "What about after 1990?" 94.1% Romanians and 97.7% Hungarians answered "never".[3]

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[1] István Péter, "Relaţia dintre stat şi Biserică – o perspectivă reformată" (The Relation between the State and the Church – A Calvinist Perspective), in Ioan Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 119.

[2] Ibid., 120.

[3] *Răspunsuri la chestionarul anchetei sociologice "Populaţia judeţelor Covasna şi Harghita. Aspecte ale convieţuirii interetnice", 25 iunie-5 iulie 2000* (Answers to the Questionnaire of the Sociological Survey "The Population of Covasna and Harghita counties: Aspects of Inter-Ethnic Coexistence", June 25-July 5, 2000 ) in Nastasă, Lucian and Levente Salat (eds.), *Relaţiile interetnice în România postcomunistă. Documentele conferinţei "Modelul românesc de relaţii interetnice. Ultimii zece ani, următorii zece ani"* (Inter-ethnic Relations in Post-Communist Romania. The Documents of the Conference "The Romanian Model of Inter-Ethnic Relations. The Last Ten Years, The Next Ten Years"), Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Resurse pentru Diversitate Etnoculturală (The Center for

It is hard to tell which of the situations practiced today in the state–Church relations in the democratic societies would fit Romania.[1] Even more so, as the Orthodox Church has no clearly expressed doctrine about the relation of the state and the Church in the post-communist period. This lack is born first of all out of the incapability of the post-Revolution Orthodoxy to critically analyze all that happened in ecclesiastical life in the communist era. A meditation or a gaze in the mirror would have been necessary for the reconstruction of the Church's attitude structure towards secular power.

In the case of nationalism, it is obvious that the influence of national ideology is quite late in Romanian theology. Yet, it is indisputable that culturally speaking, this doctrine already has a full coherence, though with difficulty sustained. It also has a theological grounding that I think could hardly be disclaimed by shedding light on its doctrinal roots. However, beyond the recognized cultural and theological legitimacy of the Orthodox Church as the national Church, it still remains a future problem for theologians to prove the necessity of the recognition of the national character by a legal text, as the Law of the Cults. The arguments are either of a cultural, or a theological nature, and the two levels can only be confronted within an ideological perspective.

Some authors consider that Orthodoxy prefigures an undemocratic structure of Romanian mentality. A proof thereof is considered to be the high level of trust in the army and in the Church, expressed as a statistical option of the population. However, I do not think that the trust in the army and the Church should be seen in the fundamentalist perspective of connecting the army and the ecclesiastical body into a utopian aspiration to sacred violence. It is clear that this double confidence has to be understood in the context of the crisis of a

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Resources of Ethno-Cultural Diversity), 2000, 380.

[1] It is hard to think that the Romanian society is a strictly secular one, taking into account that we cannot talk about a real separation of the state from the Church. To be able to find a possible model, we might invoke the meditations of Jean Claude Perriset who, wondering about the type of laicism that the European Union would promote, remarks, on the one hand, the possibility of application of a laicism of exclusion, a laicism that ignores the religious fact and its specificity in society, and on the other hand a laicism of distinction, by which the state recognizes the particular character of the religious fact, insures its distinct place in the legal order, and situates it in a special place within its relation with the elements of society. Jean Claude Perisset, "Identitatea eclesială și construcția europeană" (Ecclesial Identity and the European Construct), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 21-22.

society in transition, wherein these two institutions are the symbols of stability.

The two institutions also represent parts of the process of self-identification. The population identifies with the army because the system of compulsory military service one way or another makes them participants (affective, physical, or imagined) in this structure of community security. Thus, it is not a war-waging orientation, but a pacifist option to create stability that makes Romanians invest confidence in the army. To this the traditional view of Romanians is added that guarding the frontiers is a sign of the unity of the state. We certainly do not exclude the possibility to associate these sentiments of trust with national ideology.

As for the Church, we must keep in mind that, according to the Orthodox doctrine, the Church is not an institutional structure, but the community of the faithful. This way in fact the investment of trust in the Church is a symbolic one, and must be understood as self-investment, self-confidence, self-assertion, that the community expresses in the symbolic language of the Church. If we disregard this symbolic dimension of identification and valuation, we can only superficially approach Romanian mentality.

I think we may agree with Alina Mungiu-Pippidi's conclusions that the declaration of trust in the army and the Church is an indicator of the traditionalism of Romanian society in general. Alina Mungiu-Pippidi considers that the opinion of the majority of the faithful shows that they do not share fundamentalist ideas.[1] Still, she thinks that, statistically speaking, we may qualify as fundamentalists around 12.77% of Romania's inhabitants. This is the portrait that Alina Mungiu-Pippidi proposes for this category: "they are not the most religious people, as we might expect. On the contrary: they seldom go to church, and they largely agree that communism was a good idea. They most probably live in towns with under 30,000 inhabitants (the most recent ones – practically large villages that communism transformed into incomplete towns), and in Moldavia, and are "Collectivists". They are nationalists of the most paranoid kind, that is, they fear in good faith that there are groups that destabilize us. When we use this group as a dependent variable in a model of regression, it is also associated with the preference for a military regime. In short, our Christian fundamentalists are our professional anti democrats: be it the communist regime, the rule of the army, or the rule

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[1] Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, op. cit. 179.

300

of the Church, any variant looks better to them than the present civil democracy."[1]

Alina Mungiu-Pippidi offers an excellent distinction between the portraits of the adepts of fundamentalist and traditional mentalities. Unlike fundamentalists, traditionalists represent a statistical proportion of 9.05%. They form a group of "people with an average income, who often go to church, who think that Christianity should be more seriously taught in schools, and that more of a Christian spirit would be welcome in everyday life. These are the peasants from the wealthiest areas, who have more confidence in political personalities of a central-right orientation.[2]

Otherwise, sociological surveys are quite telling as to the secular character of Romanian society. It is true that confidence in the Church is expressed by an almost constant percentage of the population: 83% in October 1996; 85% in March 1997; 85% in June 1997; 86% in September 1997; 76% in December 1997; 85% in June 1998; 86% in November 1998; 88% in May 1999; 83% in November 1999; 85% in May 2000; 86% in November 2000; 89% in May 2001; 88% in November 2001; 88% in June 2002; 88% in October 2002; 88% in May 2003. With all this, a paradoxical situation can be noted in relating the claim of trust in the Church to the actual religious practice. Thus, when questioned how often they went to church lately, the answers on the survey in May 2003 were: 1% daily; 4% several times a week; 19% once a week; 18% two or three times a month; 37% on Christmas, Easter, and other holidays; 13% once a year or less; 8% never.[3] It should be noticed that most answers are those of occasional churchgoers.

The same paradoxical situation is observed in relating the claim of religiousness to religious practice. Thus, according to the data offered by the World Values Survey, 67% of Romanians consider that God is important in their lives, but only 31% of these attend the holy mass monthly or more often, and only 0.5% are members of religious organizations. Alina Mungiu-Pippidi also refers to a SAR-CURS survey (a survey of the Romanian Academic Society), which shows that only 9.3% attend mass daily or weekly.[4]

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[1] ibid., 181. "The Orthodox are significantly more fundamentalists and traditionalists than the other denominations", underlines Alina Mungiu-Pippidi. (ibid., 183.)

[2] ibid., 182.

[3] *Barometrul de opinie publică* (The Barometer of Public Opinion), published by the Gallup Organization, Romania, Open Society Foundation, May 2003, 53, 59.

[4] Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, op. cit., 179.

Interesting are also the data published by the *Etnobarometru* (Ethno-Barometer) with regard to cultural identification. In the process of self-identification, the religious dimension revealed by the idea of "being baptized in a Romanian (Hungarian) church" is important for 30.1% of Romanians about Romanians; 23.55% of Hungarians about Hungarians. In the process of hetero-identification, it is important for 23.8% of Romanians about Hungarians; 20.6% of Hungarians about Romanians.

As concerns the stereotypes of Romanians, for the question "which of the enumerated traits best describe Romanians (Hungarians)?" the answers are: "religious" 6.7% of Romanians; 14.5% of Hungarians. As for the stereotypes of Hungarians, the answers are "religious" for 3% of Romanians; 3.9% of Hungarians.[1]

The data that suggest the ways relational identities are created by the juxtaposition of regional identities are also interesting. Thus, for the questionnaire of the sociological survey *Populația județelor Covasna și Harghita. Aspecte ale conviețuirii interetnice* (The Population of Covasna and Harghita Counties: Aspects of Inter-Ethnic Coexistence) for the question "How often do you go to church?" answer: "several times a week" 3.6% Romanians, 3.6 % Hungarians; "once a week" 18.7% Romanians, 23.1% Hungarians; "two or three times a month" 12.2% Romanians, 14.9% Hungarians; "once a month" 17.1% Romanians, 13.5% Hungarians; "two or three times a year" 26.6% Romanians, 24.6% Hungarians; "once a year or less" 16.8% Romanians, 14.9% Hungarians; "never" 4.4% Romanians, 4.2% Hungarians; refuse to answer 0.6% Romanians, 1.1% Hungarians.[2]

Although we have here a low level of religious practice, the high level of constant confidence in the Church is a significant impetus for the legal regulation of the status of the ROC as a National Church. However, the criticism of several authors, and of the religious minority in general, shows that there is a lack of coherence and argumentation in the plan of legal support for the syntagm "national Church".

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[1] Irina Culic, István Horváth, Cristina Raț, "Modelul românesc al relațiilor interetnice reflectat în *Etnobarometru*"(The Romanian Model of Inter-Ethnic Relations as Reflected in the *Ethno-Barometer*), and Marius Lazăr, "Percepții identitare și relații interetnice în secuime. Elemente pentru o 'deconstrucție' și o 'reconstrucție' " (Perceptions of Identity and Inter-Ethnic Relations among the Seklers: Elements for a 'Deconstruction' and a 'Reconstruction'), in Lucian Nastasă, and Levente Salat, op. cit., 256-261; 384.

[2] *Răspunsuri la chestionarul anchetei sociologice "Populația județelor Covasna și Harghita. Aspecte ale conviețuirii interetnice"*, op. cit., 384.

Why is the "national Church" syntagm so disputed? Firstly, because it suggests that the state and the Church are not separated. Secondly, however, because the legitimation of such a status of the ROC is seen by religious minorities as a violation of constitutional regulations, which implies the violation of the principle of religious freedom.

Articles 4-5 of the draft for the Law regarding the general regime of religious cults state that "The forms of organization of religious life in Romania are the religious cults. Associations and foundations of a religious character also function in Romania. In Romania, recognized religious cults are autonomous. The Romanian state recognizes, respects, and guarantees this autonomy." Article 7 shows that "Religious cults are equal in front of the law and public authorities." This article concerning equality has a major importance in the context of the dispute connected to the request of the ROC to be the denominated national Church. On the one hand, religious minorities think that such an ordinance would bring about discrimination among the cults. On the other hand, Orthodox theologians, among whom Ioan-Vasile Leb, claim that they do not allow for any discrimination or intolerance, that they do not pretend any privileges, and that it is only the specificity of Romanian society, its traditions and historical past that bind the country to give the ROC the status of "national Church".[1]

At the same time, Radu Preda considers that the recognition of the ROC in the status of the national Church would mean "to place the relations between the majority and the minority on the grounds of subsidiarity and proportion, on the real balance of interests, to the detriment of the false spiral of demands propagandistically induced and maintained."[2] In his turn, Irimie Marga considers that the idea of equality

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[1] Ioan-Vasile Leb, "Biserica Ortodoxă Română într-o epocă istorică nouă" (The Romanian Orthodox Church in a New Historical Age), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 47. "The national Church is the Church of a nation which, through historical continuity, represents the historical axis of the formation of the nation-state. Saying national Church is therefore equivalent with saying the majority Church of the Romanians, a fact that does not assume privileges or the discrimination of others", says Radu Preda in the *Biserica în stat...*, op. cit., 54. In his turn, Ștefan Ioniță considers that "The historical role of the ROC does not entitle it to extra rights as compared to the other cults, and does not mean to be a discriminative factor for these." "Particularități ale vieții religioase în România – o perspectivă administrativă" (Particularities of Religious Life in Romania – An Administrative Perspective), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 141.

[2] Radu Preda, *Biserica în stat...*, 53. The author chooses a rather unfortunate way to argue in favor of the legal recognition of the ROC as a national Church when

and proportion must find its proper place in the relations between the majority and the minority, avoiding all exclusivist elements that might accompany it.[1]

The polemics concerning the synchronization or separation of equality and proportion might find a solution only if the Law of Cults carefully mentioned two other principles: the laicism of the state and the autonomy of the Church. Such a qualification would largely respond to the reproaches against the state on account of its oscillation between interventionism, punctual assistance, and tergiversation in its relations with the Church. The state's attitude is ambiguous due to the lack of a clear principle of separation of the Church from the state, meant to establish the clear terms of the Church's autonomy and the limited support that the secular state offers to the Churches treated as equals.

On analyzing the hostile attitude against the legal recognition of the ROC as a national Church, Radu Preda considers that the religious minorities hinder the freedom of Orthodoxy for propitious construction, installing some sort of dictatorship of the minority over the majority. The theologian is convinced that as long as minority religions are identified in terms of nationality or ethnicity, it is unnatural that Orthodoxy as a majority should be refused to appeal to its own national element.[2]

Two aspects should be pointed out here. First, religious nationalism must be regarded in the context of global phenomena that show that modernity gradually deepens the secularization of society. More than that, it determines a cultural metamorphosis within the communities in virtue of which religion is seconded, if not outclassed by national ideology. The synthesis proposed by Romanian Orthodoxy as a unity between the Orthodox religion and national ideology, with all its

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he states that the title of national Church "means a recognition of its historical role and a moral compensation for the decades of suffering in the communism" "O perspectivă ortodoxă asupra relației Biserică-stat. 9 teze" (An Orthodox Perspective over the Church-state Relation. 9 Theses), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 71. If we regard the requests for moral compensation, they would probably be multiple and justified in certain degrees. When voicing arguments as vague as the suffering under communism (hard to quantify in absence of a true process of communism in Romania), Radu Preda does nothing else but feed the interminable debate regarding the delicate situation of the ROC between martyrdom-compromise-collaborationism.

[1] Irimie Marga, "Biserica majoritară și provocarea coabitării în societatea românească" (The Majority Church and the Provocation of Cohabitation in Romanian Society), in Ioan-Vasile Leb, Radu Preda, op. cit., 59.

[2] Radu Preda, *Biserica in stat*, 56.

pre-modern elements we may recall, is a clear product of modernity. With the end of modernity, the unity between national ideology and religion receives the forms of an ideology that we may perceive as a secular religion. Otherwise, statistics show that not in all cases do religious minorities give a central importance to the ethnic element. Moreover, new religious movements are generally not concerned about it.

Second, as regards the dictatorship of the minority over the majority (which is obviously simply a figure of speech) the theologian does not reveal the kind of discriminations that the national Church has to suffer if its status is not recorded in legal scripts, or the ways the religious freedom of those who belong to the majority group is restricted, or the consequences it might have over the Romanians' freedom of consciousness and affirmation of their nationality. These are problems that the supporters of the necessity of legal acknowledgement of the syntagm "national Church" will have to bear in mind.

The claim of the theologians also leans upon the recognition of the ROC's character as the dominant Church in the Constitution of Romania. This recognition came as an answer to such an identification of the Romanians' imagined community. To this element there are additions that should not be neglected, such as: the traditionalist character of Romanian society, the monarchic regime, and the outstandingly influential presence of the clergy in public life. Historical data shows that collective mentality designated the unique role that Orthodoxy played as a national Church primarily due to the fact that the only cultivated elite was the clergy itself. The religious practice connected to the cultivation of language, or of religious and national sentiments had a decisive contribution to fix, from the 18th century on, the privileged place of Orthodoxy within popular mentality.[1]

We can point out together with Simona Nicoară the fact that the European Christian nations identified themselves from case to case with Orthodoxy, Catholicism, or Protestantism. The transfer of imaginary power from religion to politics translates the problem of unity as a unity of political faith by the generally accepted idea that nations have a religious vocation. It is not accidental therefore that all nations invoke predestination and divine protection, messianic vocation, the religious sentiment of pertinence to a national community. Thus, an indissoluble unity is installed between religion and nation.[2] Camil Mureşanu

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[1] Simona Nicoară, *Naţiunea modernă. Mituri, simboluri, ideologii* (The Modern Nation: Myths, Symbols, Ideologies), Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2002, 241.
[2] Ibid., 239.

underlines the utopian messianic character of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe. This is determined by the fact that, while in the West the nation, "as a fact of consciousness, was the final stage, the mental reflection and crystallization of certain complex economical, social, political, and cultural processes", in Central and Eastern Europe "the national sentiment and idea preceded these processes, hoping and pretending their accomplishment in the future, putting in the first place the aspiration for an independent nation-state, which should unite on a homogenous territory all the members of a common ethnicity."[1] The analysis of Simona Nicoară reveals that for Romanians the relation between religion and nation materializes in the passage from the contents of Orthodox consciousness to that of national consciousness. In this process, Orthodoxy evolves less as a dogmatic patrimony, and more as "an authority of "reproduction" of community relations, a major element of the ethnic and cultural identity of the Romanians."[2]

Beyond this historical and cultural recognition, Simona Nicoară points out the legal implications of identifying the ROC with the nation and Orthodoxy with the "Romanian Law". Making reference to the analyses of Daniel Barbu, the author reveals the fact that, to give an ethnic character to Orthodoxy results in the normalization of collective existence according to the "Romanian law's" own criteria. The consequences seem negative not so much on the level of legal order which was subordinated to lay legal order anyway – but in the symbolic structure of the relations with communities of other denominations or religions. In this respect the discussion seems relevant. Simona Nicoară points out, for instance, the attitude of exclusiveness and intolerance towards other denominations with a different ethnic pertinence, but also towards the Greek-Catholic Church, which is also a Romanian Church that had an important role in the development of national ideology and even in the formation of the Romanian nation and state.

A part of the representatives of religious minorities think that to grant the special status of the ROC would mean the violation of the principle of equality of the religious cults. Silviu Rogobete claims that, besides other aspects, which he considers anti-constitutional, the special status of the ROC would deepen the discriminative medium and practices that the other religious groups are subject to.[3] In this respect it is

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[1] Camil Mureşanu, op. cit., 42.

[2] Simona Nicoară, op. cit., 32.

[3] Silviu E. Rogobete, *The Unfinished Odyssey of a New 'Law for the General Regime of Religion' in a South East European Country: the Romanian Case*,

necessary that a democratic solution should be found, by which the state would not hinder the freedom of traditional religious minorities, and especially that of new religious movements to undertake an activity that corresponds both to the requirements of the believers' manifestation of religious freedom and to the norms of a government of laws.

Non-governmental organizations that deal with the protection of human rights also have the same kind of objections to add to the project of the Law of religious cults. Thus, APADOR – CH (the Association for the Protection of Human Rights in Romania – Helsinki Committee) reveals the fact that the bill regarding the general regime of religious cults refers not only to the cults but also to the establishment of a general framework for the expression of the freedom of consciousness, of opinion, and of faith of individuals or members of religious communities. Therefore, it proposes that the title of the law should also make reference to the religious freedom of individuals, not only to the religious cults. As for the special status of the ROC, the APADOR – CH report considers that an organic law, as the one discussed, should not aim for the legalization of the status that certain communities have gained in time, but to focus on religious freedom in connection with the various forms of organization of religious communities. The report considers that in the formula proposed at present, "the project has in mind to transform the ROC into an institution that has special relations with the authority system of the Romanian state, with an important word to say in matters regarding the religious and political life of Romania".[1]

The neuter intervention of a government of laws in the regulation of the relations among diverse religious groups is vital in such a context. If European specificity presupposes a sort of partnership between the state and the Church, as Ştefan Ioniţă points out[2], it is also essential to understand that "the politics of identities has become the central feature of the European political context in the 21st century", in a moment when "the European Union itself has become a source for identity or identities".[3]

Probably the best starting point for a new relationship between the majority Church and the minority religious diversion is the dialogue that all Christian communities are called for. I think it is suitable to recall

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www.areopagus.ro/noutati.html
[1] www.apador.org/rapoarte/anuale/1990ro.htm
[2] Ştefan Ioniţă, op. cit., 141.
[3] George Schopflin, "Pe căi diferite spre multiculturalitate" (On Different Ways towards Multiculturalism), in Lucian Năstasă, Levente Salat (eds.), op. cit., 127.

here the thoughts of Ioan Chirilă, according to whom: "Christianity transcends the national aspect, and in the symphonic unity of national Christianities, especially in its ecumenical manifestations, it appears as a crucible of a continuous doxology in unitary and multicultural forms".[1]

If we accept the compatibility of the predominantly Orthodox religious option and the cultivation of relations of stability and dialogue with Western mentality and the lifestyle of the Western democracies, then the politics of identities must unfold towards a harmonious affirmation of these. Huntington is right when saying: "values, culture, and institutions have an in-depth influence over the ways that states define their interests."[2] In this respect, Romania's culturally modeled attitude in the last years is one of continuous affirmation of the pertinence to European civilization and of the desire of integration into the economical and political structures of a reconstructed Europe. Otherwise, although of great importance for the understanding of the world we live in, the theory of civilizations formulated by Huntington has some disputable points. One of the major weak points – besides the purely imaginative nature of the conflict of civilizations – is the one referring to the borderlines that culturally limit Romania. The affirmation of Romania's civilizational consciousness as a unitary, and evidently multicultural state is present in all the stereotypes that accompany the constant and permanently enlarged actions of integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, as also into the recent political attitudes that wish to emphasize a pro-American position. The multicultural premises of the Romanian context may make us optimistic about the application of certain policies for the cultivation of diversity, pluralism, and religious freedom.

The practice of inter-human and community relations reveals that mutual recognition cannot be instituted by any majority Church, by any representative institution of various religious communities, or by the nation-state restrained by traditional ideologies. A neuter intervention is needed. Only a government of laws, capable of proposing alternative multicultural policies, can create a frame of dialogue between majority groups and religious minorities, as well as between minorities.

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[1] Ioan Chirilă, "Exegeza biblică vechitestamentară – disciplina ce conservă și afirmă multiculturalitatea" (Biblical Old Testament Exegesis: The Discipline that Preserves and Affirms Multiculturalism), in Ioan Vasile Leb (ed.), *Biserică și multiculturalitate în Europa sfârșitului de mileniu* (Church and Multiculturalism in Europe at the End of the Millenium), Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană (University Press), 2001, 135.

[2] Samuel P. Huntington, op. cit., 46.

When we speak about multiculturalism, we first of all have to bear in mind the problem of cultural diversity. Bhikhu Parekh speaks about three forms of cultural diversity: 1) sub-cultural diversity, which keeps in mind the fact that the members of the society participate in a common culture, but at the same time they share a series of particular beliefs and practices in certain aspects of their lives; 2) community diversity, which assumes the existence of relatively organized and self-conscious communities that promote a series of different beliefs and practices; 3) perspective diversity, where, among others, Parekh includes religious communities. It assumes the existence of certain members of the society who criticize the values and principles of the dominant culture and try to reconstruct it according to other values.[1]

In his turn, Adrian Marino identifies the term of multiculturalism with at least three preoccupations: that of the recognition of the minorities' cultural identity, that of rejection of assimilative tendencies, and that of the contestation of any attempt to affirm the superiority of the national identity of the majority over the cultural identity of the minority. Marino draws attention to the fact that if multiculturalism becomes a purpose in itself, it may end up as isolationism, intolerance, or even chauvinism, that is, it may come to identify itself with the very attitudes that it tries to eliminate from the mentality of the majority.

Therefore, to Marino it seems much more appropriate to propose the promotion of interculturalism instead of multiculturalism, which at least in Transylvania appears as a matter of fact. This would mean the improvement of dialogue and communication between different cultures, the transgression of any isolationism by a process of inter-dependence, of mutual influence and enrichment, of recognition of each party's own values, and real respect for differences.[2]

Whether we plead for multiculturalism, or we consider interculturalism to be more complex and beneficial in terms of relations and normative exigencies, it is evident that the ideological horizon of the cultivation of diversity is meant to promote plurality as a paradigm shift of minority/majority relations. "The central issue in any multicultural context is the fact that each group has its self-consciousness and asserts

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[1] Bhikhu Parekh, "Religion and Public Life", in *Church, State, and Religious Minorities*, op. cit., 27.
[2] Adrian Marino, "Multiculturalitatea, lumini și umbre" (Multiculturalism, Lights and Shadows), in *Altera* 13 (2000): 166-172.

its rights to power, status, and recognition as a cultural community"[1], says G. Schopflin.

The analyses of Radu Neculau are eloquent in this respect, and show that multicultural mentality is born on the grounds of certain attempts to transform and influence the collective representations of the majority group in order to create a medium of tolerance and respect for difference. Accordingly, a redefinition of the traditional field of the political is taking place, by the reconstruction of the standard values that integrate cultural difference.[2]

Parekh intends to overstep the mere statement of multiculturalism as a matter of fact when considering that a clear distinction is needed between multiculturality, the fact of cultural plurality, and multiculturalism, which is the normative response given to this fact of diversity.[3] The theoretician of multiculturalism points out that a society facing diversity may have a monoculturalist behavior, trying to assimilate the different tendencies and the diverse cultures, or may have a multiculturalist behavior, accepting cultural plurality. Evidently, multiculturalism starts out from a series of premises: 1) democracy is the most efficient system to solve multicultural conflicts; 2) all competitors must accept that the others act in good faith; 3) the acceptance and respect of the norms of the state where the communities live must be a basic premise of any discussion regarding cultural differences; 4) multiculturalism means the best solution to solve the problems regarding cultural differences.[4]

In order that a normative answer to the problem of diversity is adopted in a Central and Eastern European context, Schopflin considers that we must adapt to local realities the standard model of multiculturalism, inspired from the American reality. He agrees with the fact that relations of equality must be installed among the different cultures that coexist within the frontiers of a state; that the norms of the majority culture should not be imposed on the minorities; and that these cultures must come out from isolation, and share their achievements and values. However, Schopflin considers that both the majority and the minority "need guarantees to promote their own cultures, as well as to

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[1] George Schopflin, op. cit., 123.

[2] Radu Neculau, "Multiculturalism, anticomunism, naţionalism" (Multicultura lism, Anticommunism, Nationalism), in *Altera* 13 (2000): 50.

[3] Bhikhu Parekh, op. cit., 27.

[4] George Schopflin, op. cit., 124.

define the ways of interaction with other cultures".[1] From this viewpoint the intervention of a government of laws that should elaborate multicultural policies is vital. It must create the necessary framework for the different communities to be able to "produce and reproduce their own frontiers and mechanisms of delimitation, their own mythical and symbolic worlds, their own matrices of cultural reproduction".[2] Even if the growth in importance of transnational phenomena or other processes connected to globalization have the tendency to erode the power of the traditional state to regulate society, we must not forget that one of the major premises of European integration is that "those existing collectives that define themselves as communities of solidarity, respect, and moral values will continue the process of cultural reproduction and will not abandon their identity."[3]

[1] Ibid., 125.
[2] Ibid., 130
[3] Ibid., 129.