

UNIVERSITY “OVIDIUS” OF CONSTANȚA
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
DOCTORAL SCHOOL

PhD THESIS SUMMARY

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GLOBALIZATION AND ECUMENISM TODAY

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GLOBALIZATION AND ECUMENISM TODAY

The present thesis aims for a careful analysis and exhaustive as possible of the globalization and its impact upon religion in general, and Christianity especially.

Founded on the sacrifice of the cross and Christ's Resurrection, by Christ Himself, the Church enters in history as a seen communion, at the Pentecost, when the Apostles, strengthened with the power of the Holy Spirit, descended upon them in personal image (Acts 2, 1-4), after their sermon, were added about three thousands souls which were baptized, and then urged in the teachings of the apostles and Eucharist, in the breaking of bread and into prayers. (Acts 2, 38, 41-42).

Since its foundation, the Church has identified with God defined as love with Jesus Christ, Him, being sent in the world for the salvation of humanity. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him"* (John 3, 16-17). In His turn, according to the Economy of our salvation, Christ sends His Apostles and through them, the Church itself: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"* (Matthew 28, 18-20).

The Church has the mission of humanizing, consecration and salvation of people, but in the same time the preservation and sanctification of the creation as space in which the human lives, engaging therefore into a vertically complex dialog with God, and horizontally with the whole humanity and creation. Thus, it leads to the dialog between God and man, and also to the dialog between men, in God, in the interpersonal communion of our society¹. *“The road towards God, passes through our humanization. And in this humanization you can only advance through the human communion. It consists in the realization of a deep interpersonal communion. That’s why things are not given to us only to practice a singular dialog with God, but also to practice a dialog between us humans, in common with God, or a dialog between them and consciousness that things are given to them by God, for their use as gifts between them, in His name, command and wealth, as signs of His love so that this love can extend between us also”*².

Mankind lives today a new period of its history, in which profound and rapid changes extend, gradually, to the entire globe. Caused by the intelligence and creative activity of the human, they reflect on the man himself, upon the judgements and his own and collective wishes, upon his way of thinking and acting, both towards the things and towards the men. Thus, we can talk about a real social and cultural transformation which even reflects in the religious life. *“As it happens in any growing crisis, this transformation brings with itself also difficulties that are not negligible. Therefore, while man is extending so much his power, does not always manage to put it in his service. Striving to penetrate more the depths of his own soul, he seems often more unsure of himself. Revealing more clearly the laws of the social life, it remains in hesitation on the direction that has to impart”*³.

Never the people had such an intense feeling of freedom as today, but, in the same time, appear new forms of social and physical servitude. While the world has the consciousness so powerful of its unity and the interdependence of everyone in a necessary solidarity, yet it is violently ripped by the forces that fight each other: still persist bitter political, social, economic, racial and ideological dimensions, and it is not removed the danger of an all destructive war. By the time there is the exchange of ideas, the words themselves through which are expressed concepts

¹ Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Radu, *Misiunea Bisericii astăzi și exigențele ei*, în „Analele Universității Valahia”, Facultatea de Teologie, Târgoviște, 2001, p. 18.

² Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, vol. I, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1978, p. 328.

³ †IPS Nicolae Corneanu, Mitropolitul Banatului, *Quo Vadis, Studii, note si comentarii*, Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, Timișoara, 1990, p.165.

of great importance, acquire very different meanings in the various ideologies. In the end, are earnestly seeking a more perfect earthly order, without having to be accompanied by a spiritual progress. Therefore, oscillating between hope and anguish, questioning upon the way things work today, they are pressed by restlessness. This way of how things work challenges the humans, and even constrains them to give an answer.

The new conditions influence also the religious life. On the one hand, a more intense critical sense purifies it of a more ideational conception about the world and the superstition elements that still persist and claim an increasingly more personal and active adhesion to faith, which results in more reaching to a more live sense of God. On the other hand, however, large crowds are practically estranging from religion. *“Despite the old times, the denial of God or religion, or even the indifference, aren’t anymore something unusual and individual: not rarely today such attitudes are presented as an exigency of the scientific progress or of some new humanism”*⁴. In many countries all these are not only expressed at a philosophical level, but largely affect the literature, arts, the interpretation of the humanist science and history and even civil laws, fact that leads to the disorientation of many.

Today, the Church can reconsider a lot from the practice the missionary methods of the Apostolic fathers and apologists. Thus, it must: *“use with a lot of courage and power the social-cultural language of the time we live in, according to the geo-political and ethnical space, so the evangelical message can be proclaimed with a lot of power”*⁵.

The Church must promote the dignity of man by all means necessary, regardless of any discriminations of any kind, like the Apostolic fathers did in the dialog with the pagans. Then, starting from this belief, the Church: *“can protect the dignity of the human nature of all the opinion fluctuations that, for example, either they despise the human body, or they exalts him without measure”*⁶.

No human law can assure so well the personal dignity and freedom of the human as the Gospel of Christ entrusted to the Church. As the apostolic fathers, we must consider in the contemporary missionary speech that the Gospel spreads and proclaims the freedom of God’s sons,

⁴ Olivier Clément, *Cultură și Credință*, Service de Presses Orthodoxe, Paris, 1996, p. 56.

⁵ Pr. Prof. Dr. Gheorghe Petraru, *Aspecte misionare în scrierile creștine de început*, în „Dialog Teologic”, nr. 5, Editura Presa Bună, Iași, 1999, p. 103.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 104.

rejects any easement that derives ultimately from sin, respects with holiness the dignity of consciousness and its free determination.

Also, he urges ceaselessly to the exploitation of all human talents in the service of God and humans and, finally, entrusts the human with the love of everyone. The Church must promote in their missionary strategies the human liberty, to protect and cultivate it, after the model of the apologists who overthrew the slavery and isolationist views about the man and world. For a modern mission, *“The Church needs the promotion of the evangelical values in the true and authentic values of today”*⁷.

All these correspond to the fundamental law of Christian economy. For, although the God the Savior is the Same with the God the Creator, Lord in the same time of the human history and the history of salvation, yet, in this divine disposition, it is not suppressed in any kind the liberty of the creature, and especially of the human's, but, on the contrary, it is reestablished and confirmed in its dignity.

All that is true, good and right in the most diverse institutions that mankind has created and continues to create must be seen by the Church with great respect, as the apologists did, appreciating what was best from the ancient culture. The Church must help and promote all institutions of this kind to the extent that it depends of it and is in harmony with its mission.

It must have no greater desire than to server the greater good, being able to develop freely under any regime that recognizes the fundamental rights of the person and family (as in the apostolic period, Rom. 13, 1) and the exigencies of the common good.

In the middle of these antinomies, today the culture must develop so that it can cultivate the human person integrally and harmoniously and to help the people in fulfilling the duties they are called to, but especially the Christians, some fraternally united in one human family.

Between the message of salvation and human culture it exists and must be encouraged multiple bonds⁸. Because God, revealing Himself to His people till his full Self manifestation in the incarnated Son, spoke according to the cultures of various eras.

Also, the Church, living over the years in various conditions, used the resources of different cultures to spread and explain the message of Christ in its preaching to all people, to search and

⁷ Pr. Prof. Dr. Alois Bisoc, *Introducere în teologia pastorală*, Editura Sapienția, Iași, 2002, p. 101.

⁸ Paul Evdochimov, *Iubirea nebună a lui Dumnezeu*, Ed. Anastasia, București, 1993, p. 178.

study it, to better explain it in the liturgical celebration also in the multiform life of the believer's community.

However, in the same time, the Church, being sent to all people from all ages and places, is not related exclusively and indissoluble to any race or nation, to any way of life, to any old or new custom. Always faithful to its own tradition and in the same time aware of its universal mission, it can enter in communion with the different culture forms, which enriches both these and itself, after the example of the apostolic fathers or apologists.

The good news of Christ, renews unceasing the life and culture of the fallen man; it fights and removes the errors and bad things arising from the always ominous seduction of sin. This thing have fully shown the apologists. The Church with the Gospel purifies and lifts ceaselessly the morals of the nations. Through the richness from Heaven, it gives fruitfulness from the inside to the spiritual qualities and endowments to each nation and each age, strengthens them, completes them and recreates them in Christ⁹.

Thus, the Church, fulfilling its own mission, through this fact itself contributes to culture and civilization and stimulates them, and through its action, even liturgical, educates the man for the interior freedom. In the contemporary world, characterized through various manifestations of the havoc, dissolution, relativism and fragmentation, supported by a manipulation realized through images and symbols, the value, moral, existential and disorder mix, the pleasure of the immediate are raised as new standards, denying the fixism and universalization of the old ones. Postmodernism, in the context of globalization, is defined, as a movement of deconstruction, as the crushing of the hierarchy values, of paradigms or of the available universal models¹⁰.

Today, the globalization that treats the earth as unity, has become an obligatory reality, therefore the explosive development of the financial and informatics globalization happens right in front of our eyes, the economic globalization knowing an acceleration without a precedent.

The globalization, as an objective process, owed to the technical, technological and informational development (internet, satellites, mobile phones, personal computer etc.), is the result of the human action and, therefore, can be modeled through an economic policy oriented towards the economic growth and employment. Also, there are needed international agreements

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Constantin Cuciș, *Dimensiuni culturale si interculturale*, Editura Polirom, Iasi, 2000, p.74.

to prevent fierce competition, with destructive consequences upon the welfare, social security and environment¹¹.

This realist vision, offering solutions, unfortunately is not yet shared by the economic policy and public opinion, the one that due to the lack of understanding, of the group's interests, or resignation, treats the globalization theme as a natural phenomenon, independent of the man's will.

The globalization, also can be used as an excuse for the failure of the reform, for the exaggerate extension of the transition period, for the profound moral crisis, being a suitable theme to deviate the discussions from the real problems.

In the conception of D. C. Korten¹², the founder and president of the development Forum centered on the human's problems, the global economic system is a self-destructive system, guided by the market's tyranny and characterized by the continuous growth of the social tensions, by the degradation of the values related to the life of family and community.

Traditional institutions, like the parental home and the church loose more and more the role of value mediators, their place being taken by the public opinion modelled by the media, which propagates as exclusive values the money, success and power.

More and more authors ask themselves if the one that has success and is powerful in today's world, doesn't he increasingly imposes through immorality, selfishness, "*elbows wagging*" and brutality, without regard for anything or anyone. In the same time, for those who the honor, goodness, compassion, the human dignity respect, integrity, common good and maybe even the love of his neighbor are still important, constituting authentic values, don't they really feel fooled by the society?

This "*new world*" of global dimensions exchange, many times causes furious, anger reactions, destructive behaviors, even actions of vandalism after the accentuated rise of the inferiority feelings, of uncertainty and identity crisis, fact that denotes that many still aren't prepared for the huge changes which take place in the contemporary world. From year to year, the anti-globalization movements with more and more destructive accents gains momentum (Seattle, Prague, and Genoa).

¹¹ Colin Hay, Ben Rosamond, *Globalization, European Integration and the Discursive Construction of Economic Imperatives*, <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ssfc0041/globalisation.pdf>

¹² D. C. Korten, *When corporations rules the world*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1995.

The essential problem which arises today is related to the way how globalization produces, how can be prevented and countered the damaging effects, how is made the management of this process, if we will manage to humanize the globalization.

For treating the problems caused objectively and subjectively by the globalization process, it is imposed the elaboration of some alternative solutions, with the participation of all interested parts (the world economy leaders, governments, NGOs, citizens communities, the Church etc.). Also, a global task is that, through education and instruction, the citizens should become capable to face great challenges of the world which is finding herself in global dimension changes.

The evolution of the world towards globalization is in the same time a chance to grow the welfare of every participants to the world economy, relying on a bearable growth for the environment and having as an ethical foundation the human dignity. Thus, everyone has the obligation to treat each other humanly, in the spirit of solidarity and responsibility towards any human being, towards families and communities.

This rapid change of the world, in the conditions of the globalization and informational society, imposes the radical reevaluation and introduction of some new concepts as, for example, the community, integration, cooperation, cohabitation, identity, reciprocity, complementarity, solidarity, citizenship etc. The Europe citizens are conceived as a community of the citizens, regional, cultural and local communities. In this context the formation of the European identity, of some conscious citizens of the united Europe is an educational priority.

The globalization doesn't necessarily mean the cultural uniformity, but also the creation of some favorable contexts for respecting the differences, the values plurality, the solidarity, and the partnership ethics. In the conditions of the economic globalization and the inevitable growth of individualism, the society, if it wants to be human and efficient, it needs social groups, collectivities in which is cooperation, in which the members are not uniformed, passive and complying beings, but autonomous personalities, with initiatives, which assume responsibilities for themselves and others. That's why learning the democratic cohabitation and the cooperation between individuals and communities in a Europe of communities and democratic values, constitute a formative goal of first order.

Once with the introduction on a larger scale of the new electronic techniques, the representative democracy becomes more and more outdated, because today the citizens are possessing the knowledge and information necessary for the democratic and productive

development of life and for taking the right decisions. In these conditions, every citizen may become a responsible participant to a direct and efficient democracy.

Thanks to the telecommunication's revolution, each individual and small community may establish interrelations with the others via the cybernetic space, realizing an interactive global network. The fast development of the community networks of computers makes possible the maintenance of the cultural values, the assimilation of some languages and resolving some practical community problems. Summarizing, the globalization process converge towards the formation of some more vigorous functional units, more efficient, towards a system founded on the personal responsibility of each citizen.

The globalization process is a complex one, which manifests at many levels. The Greek theologian Georgios Mantzaridis¹³ managed to synthesize in one of his studies multiple aspects of globalization and, especially, the way it affect our daily life. The majority of authors, Orthodox or of other confessions, when they talk about globalization they also legally refer to the links of this phenomenon with the economy¹⁴. However, the globalization is not exclusively, nor primordial, a simple economic phenomenon, but extends to all the human life levels: the political one, religious one and cleric one. That's why this phenomenon has so much relevance for our times.

Appreciated by some as being a positive phenomenon¹⁵, criticized by others as being negative and even harmful¹⁶ for society, the globalization included the whole mankind today. Nobody can deny the existence of this phenomenon in the life of world's states, society and human person. That's why there were realized numerous studies, which try to present a coherent vision upon the phenomenon and of its consequences in the life of the human person.

The actual study tries to present these pro and counter visions of globalization, highlighting the fact that this phenomenon has also positive aspects, generally of economic nature, but also multiple negative aspects. Olivier Clément, realizing a radiography of his time, says: *"Today the Western Europe embarrassingly unifies in resignation and restlessness. Without any great visions*

¹³ Georgios Mantzaridis, *Globalizare și universalitate. Himeră și adevăr*, traducere de Pr. Prof. Dr. Vasile Răducă, Editura Bizantină, București, 2002.

¹⁴ It is very eloquent the globalizations' characterization a being *"the American answer to the European and Japanese tries to find themselves as dialog partners with the same mass as the U.S.A."* Cf. K. Melas, *Globalizarea. O nouă fază de internaționalizare a economiei. Mituri și realitate*, Atena, 1999, p. 68.

¹⁵ A positive vision is presented by the economists, in general. They want to present the *benefits* of the globalizing way of life, where the *individual* is caught in a real circuit and is fully dependent of all that is produced and consumed, becoming a wheel of the system, a consumer of goods and not necessarily, a generator of spiritual and human values.

¹⁶ Those who see this phenomenon as being a harmful one are generally the theologians and Church representatives, which analyze the implications of it in the life of the community and human persons.

upon the future, without a big purpose other than that one, as it appears, to protect the “rich ones” against the “invasion” of the Southern nations, against the turbulences from Eastern Europe, because despite the cultivation of Dostoevsky and Solzhenitsyn, the European money is prudent! The duty of the Christians – and, when they overcome the distrust and stereotypes, Orthodox strongly feel it – is to communicate to the European construction a renewing blast, in the divine-humanity perspective. The Christian societies have thought at God as being against the human, his freedom, and the secularized modernity thought the human as being against God, against his spiritual profoundness. It comes the time of the divine-humanity, when God reveals Himself in the human, and the human reveals himself in God. The divine-humanity can give a meaning to the humanism explorations, when the psychology of the deep and micro-physics can spiritually feel; it can give, also, a meaning to the explorations of the Eastern mystics when, in contact with the West, they have to take into account the cosmic and historical evolution and the other’s reality”¹⁷.

The process of secularization of the man and human society is determined in general both by theological and cultural causes. There is otherwise a certain continuity between the doctrinal errors appeared in the field of theology and some currents from the European culture.

Through theological causes we first understand the main heresies (regarding the dogma of the Holy Trinity, the person of Christ the Savior, the person of the Holy Spirit, the ones regarding the creation of the world and man and last but not least, the ones regarding the Holy Church) that accompanied Christianity since its appearance and till today. All these heresies have appeared from the exclusive use of ration in the interpretation of the divine Revelation and in the formulation of the faith doctrine. Those who were the partisans of this wrong method to dogmatize were actually those Christians that couldn’t liberate from the influence of different unchristian philosophical systems and that were wrongly trying, to reconcile the revealed offering or the content of the divine Revelation, found in the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition with the philosophical ideas that they were sharing. Their approach, apparently theologically, in fact purely philosophical, was leading to a fatal outcome: the Revelation was made dependent by philosophy and through this by the culture of a certain time and space.

Instead of aiming the Christianization of culture and spirituality of different nations through the incarnation in them of the fire core of the Revelation, it was tried indirectly, the

¹⁷ Olivier Clément, *Adevăr și libertate. Ortodoxia în contemporaneitate. Convorbiri cu Patriarhul ecumenic Bartolomeu I*, traducere de Mihai Maci, Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 1997, pp. 143-144.

alteration of the evangelical message. This explains the motive for which the Church Fathers were reproaching the heretics, in the first centuries of Christianity, an excess of philosophizing from the will to rationalize the mystery of God. *“Saint Basil the Great warned the Eunomians that their speculations hide an intellectual triumphalism that doesn’t match with the apophatic theology, with the godliness of the Church, and Saint Gregory the Theologian was speaking of the philosophizing necessity inside the bounds of belief”*¹⁸.

Through the heresies was altered the truth of belief, was being granted priority to the purely human conceptions toward the divine mysteries discovered, was preferred the ration before belief or it was made a proud separation between them, being situated the man in the place of God. Instead of the effort to appropriate the mind to the existence and supernatural and antinomical work of God, it was adopted the easier and enticing method to restrict till distortion and alteration the truths of faith, in the narrow patterns of the endless philosophical systems of thought. Hence the firm reaction of the Church to save, with any price, the apophatism of God’s mystery through which, paradoxical, He reveals Himself as a person or as a trinity of eternal and absolute Persons.

Although the theological causes favors somehow indirectly the human empowerment, through the weakening of the religious feeling and estranging from the Church and faith, the cultural causes are more direct in stating the self-sufficiency of man, and through this, the estranging of God. The relation between the two cause series is given in the extremely close elation between religion and culture. The whole human creation, firstly the culture and secondly the civilization, are influenced by the faith content, of the religious human life.

From the theological point of view it can be stated the existence of a genetic relation between religion and culture, the origin of the two being in the will of God. Precisely this kind of relation could guarantee the historical symbiosis of the religion and culture that can be observed in all stages that the human society crossed¹⁹.

However it must be specified that the relation religion-culture wasn’t conceived only in the first revealed monotheism of mankind, in the mosaic monotheism and Christian monotheism. In the matter of ancient pantheism, which tries to revive today under different forms, it tended to place the culture in the place destined to religion, to divinize the culture²⁰. It is exactly what can

¹⁸ Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Popescu & Diac. Asist. Doru Costache, *Introducere în dogmatică ortodoxă*, București, 1997, p. 67.

¹⁹ Nichifor Crainic, *Nostalgia Paradisului*, Editura Trinitas, Iași, 1994, p. 42.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

be observed today in the modern secularism, but, how a culture so bonded to religion managed to constitute a source of estranging the human from God, of denaturing the faith and to empty the content of faith is hard to demonstrate. However, here and some coordinates of today's culture that favor the secularization phenomenon, of estranging the human from God, appeared and developed in West, but that are being more and more present also in the East.

Globalization has determined a new redistribution of power in state, markets and civil societies. The relevance of the states hasn't disappeared, nevertheless, the fact that these are forced to share the power – including the social, political and security roles, which traditionally stood in the center of their sovereignty – with a multitude of actors, signals the end, at least for a period, of the Westphalian sovereign state²¹. In these conditions, the question is asked: which is the essential principle that will replace, in the international relations, the state's sovereignty concept? And as Carlson and Owens state²², any discussion, related to the foundation of this transformation of priorities and political paradigms, must have at the basis also the notion of the sacred, of the religious, whereas “the religious traditions incorporate moral beliefs, which inspire and historicizes the understanding relating the sovereignty and its sacred character” (Elshtain states that the attribute of sovereignty was transferred from theology to politic, becoming, especially after the 14th century, with the post-Ockhamian theology, from an attribute of divinity, an attribute of the monarch, respectively of the state²³).

Furthermore, although it is stressed many times the fact that the markets, media and telecommunications represent major factors, that contribute at the decline of the Westphalian sovereign state, through the fact that lead to the creation of some transnational arenas, in the form of new solidarities and loyalties, that excess the frame of the national state, a fact less highlighted, but equally important, is that (despite the fact that the sovereign state's principle has theological roots) in the context of globalization, the religious aspirations and practices represent some of the most serious challenges to state's sovereignty. The activity of the transnational religious networks are conducted according to certain “imaginary maps”, that cover the governed space by other considerations other than the ones of the sovereignty and that do not cancel the political map of

²¹ Jessica T. Mathews, “Power Shift”, in *Foreign Affairs*, 76, Ianuarie/Februarie 1997.

²² John D. Carlson & Erik C. Owen (ed.), *The Sacred and the Sovereign*, Background Readings for a Conference on Human Rights, the use of Force and Religious Pluralism at Century's Dawn, University of Chicago Divinity School, 20 Octombrie, 2000.

²³ *Ibidem*.

the state's defined space, but ensures alternatives to these²⁴. Crossing over the territorial borders, these shape new transnational patterns of solidarity and conflict, through the coalition and attachment around some traditions or religious values. The transnational religious networks have become, as Susanne Hoeber Rudolf notes, extremely important shapes of the civil transnational society, in conflict or cooperation with other sectors of the civil transnational society and with the state, representing and mobilizing interests and opinions, contesting, thus, the state monopoly upon representing the domestic opinions.²⁵

A particularly significant aspect in the context of globalization, is the one related to identity. Identities can be constructed in a variety of ways: an actor can define himself through the nationality, religion or the sect he belongs, ideology, political orientation, and in different historical moments, one or the other of the identities becomes prevalent, defining the course of action, depending on the interactions between the subjects and the historical opportunities²⁶. Huntington and Juergensmeyer, however, have expected an increase of the identities significance, defined mainly in religious terms and have sustained that future conflicts will not have as a source the ideology differences, but rather, they will evolve along the identities that are separating the communities (or civilizations) from each other²⁷. Global transformations have determined a relativity of identities, both of the individual and collective ones, despite being about national identities, or political, or religious or of any other nature, but has generated, in the same time, defensive reactions of these identities, or tries of reconstruction of the new identities. The religious traditions gain, in this context, an essential role, as sources of some new representations of the global order²⁸. It exists, on the one hand, religious movements that fight against the tendencies of identity relativity, by defending the social-cultural particularities, as in the case of the Islamic fundamentalists, for example, but exist, in the same time, other traditions and religious movements, that support a pluralist global order, that propose an extension of identity, thought in the terms of

²⁴ Susanne Hoeber Rudolf, «Introduction: Religion, States and Transnational Civil Society», în Susanne Hoeber Rudolf & James Piscatori (ed.), *Transnational Religion and Fading States*, Westview Press, Colorado, 1997, pp.11-12.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ Susanne Hoeber Rudolf, „Dehomogenizing Religious Formations”, în Susanne Hoeber Rudolf & James Piscatori (ed.), *op.cit.*

²⁷ Samuel Huntington, *Ciocnirea civilizațiilor și refacerea ordinii mondiale*, Editura Antet, Prahova, f.a. Vezi, de asemenea, Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War. ? : Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* University of California Press, 1994.

²⁸ Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Tlieory and Global Culture*, SAGE Publications, London, 1992.

the common humanity. Anyway, the problem of identity looms to be one of crucial importance, in the era of globalization.

Religion, therefore, is one of the important identity sources, and the identities religiously defined represent a part of the identities, more or less visible, that define the actors and their actions. From this point of view, the relation between religion and the security problem becomes one of major interest, especially in the new era of religious terrorism, inaugurated once with the attacks from 9/11. The definitions and paradigms of security are transforming, as Dennis Hoover observed, in a way that implies often religion²⁹. The non-state religious actors, as Al-Qaeda, are recognized as global significant actors for the problem of security, and the conflicts between or from the interior of the religious traditions, require higher attention. Although the relation between security and religion is often approached in negative terms, there exists also a positive aspect of this relation, which is, often, overlooked. As Hoover notes, the evolutions from the religious sphere accredit the idea that those nations that will not cultivate the respect towards religion will be vulnerable towards the threats to the stability and security, while the nations that will find a way to protect the religious liberty and religious pluralism, inside the civil society, will enjoy security, thanks to the inclusion, in the political life, of some elements, that, therefore, would be expelled. Thus, finding some durable solutions to the conflicts inspired or legitimated religiously, does not imply ignoring the religion, but, on the contrary, engaging its potential, as force of preventing the conflicts, but also of reconciliation and peace, by finding a language common to the religion and international relations³⁰. Douglas Johnston proposes even the creation of a special position, inside the foreign affairs, an attaché on religious issues, which can be assigned for diplomatic missions, in those areas where religion is more prominent and to contribute at the efficient administration of the complex religious problems that often are treated in an expeditious manner³¹. Surely, before 9/11/2001, there wasn't an interest as great as the occupied place of religion in the international affairs as today, although the world has offered numerous examples of incidents in which religion played an important part: the attacks on the American embassies from Africa in 1998, the bomb attacks, in 1997, on the clinics that were performing abortions, in Georgia and Alabama, of some Christian extremists, the destruction of the federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995, the

²⁹ Dennis R. Hoover, "Introduction: Religion Gets Real", in Robert A. Seiple & Dennis R. Hoover, *Religion & Security, The New Nexus in International Relations*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004, p. 1.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

³¹ Douglas Johnston, "Foreword", in Robert A. Seiple & Dennis R. Hoover, *op.cit.*, p. x.

explosions from World Trade Center in 1993, the bomb attacks, of the Algerian Islamists, in the underground passages from France, the attacks with sarin, spread in the Tokyo metro, on 20th of March 1995, by the sect Aum Shinrikyo, the complete destruction of the city Colombo, by the Tamils and Sinhalese extremists, in Sri Lanka, the never-ending conflict between the Israeli Jews and the Palestinian Muslims, the conflicts between the Sikhs and Hindus, in India and many others.

The events from 9/11 however, have brought religion in forefront the analysis – religion has become, all of a sudden, a field of interest for international relations. Researchers started to realize the challenge that 9/11 has brought to the paradigms on the basis of which they interpreted the international relations and to question themselves in what manner these are still adequate, in the new era inaugurated by the global terrorism, that often takes on religious valences. This fact is welcomed, in a discipline that had little to say, regarding the role that religion plays in modelling the world. However the way that religion is conceived, by many authors, mainly as generators of violent conflicts, is not necessarily for celebration. It would seem that the argument “clash of civilizations”, based on taking into account just the fundamentalist segments of religion, which, usually, finds itself in the first line of conflict, is emblematic for the way that religion is looked in the international relations.

However, religion is not related to violence, but has a role as important as in shaping a peaceful ethos, in in conflict prevention and resolution, in the reconciliation between the warring parties in the processes of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. This “ambivalence of the sacred”³² must be recognized by all researchers, for that the influence of the religion upon the international relations must be identified rightly. In both aspects, religion has become a major force on the international scene, which is required to be treated as a serious variable, in the behavior of the international relations, the stake being extremely big. In the words of Peter Berger, “those who neglect religion, in the contemporary problem analyzation, are doing it with a huge risk.”³³

³² R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, New York, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000.

³³ Peter L. Berger (ed.), *The Desecularization of the World, Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1999, p.18.

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