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Foreword

Timo Schmitz
Chief Editor

Dear readers,

I am very proud to present the first issue of the Journal of Ethnophilosophical Questions and Global Ethics. Philosophy is an important aspect of our lives, not just a subject of daily life, but a key to many disciplines, academically and non-academically. Nowadays, most academic journals and university classes deal almost exclusively with Western philosophy, from Pre-Socratic thought through Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Plotin right to Thomas of Aquin and Machiavelli to New Age and contemporary philosophy. However, in the last 5,000 years, not only the West developed its philosophical tradition, and it is still a widespread myth, that science arose out of the West. It was the Western colonialism that mainly spread Western education throughout the world, leading to a degradation of authentic systems of thoughts. Therefore, this journal wants to address philosophy globally. Whether it is giving an insight into a philosophical tradition or raising a question on a global matter, we want to create a room for discussion. The term ethnophilosophy often can be found in discourses on African philosophy. The term was coined by Beninese philosopher Paulin Houtondji to refer to Tempels' method as mainly used in his "A Bantu philosophy". The term itself raised a lot of criticism. However, Rwandese scholar Kagame for instance picked up Tempels and tried to find evidence for his ethnophilosophical method. Others, like Houtondji, stayed very skeptical towards Tempels' approach and many scholars in Congo saw rather an alienation of authentic African philosophy in it. Houtondji himself came to the conclusion that many African philosophers are actually doing rather ethnology than real philosophy, so to say ethnophilosophy.

However, ethnology and philosophy have a lot in common, as during different periods of time and due to the different conditions in the world, different stages of thought elevated. This journal tries to tear down the border between ethnology and philosophy. It is easier for us, if both disciplines walk hand in hand. In this way, we can learn a lot, for instance, not only about the system of thought, e.g. in shamanic traditions, but also can analyze the religions on the ground, such as Mongolian Shamanism. It is important that we acknowledge the great thoughts that were developed around the world and pay attention to them in academic approaches.

Even further, if we try to focus on global philosophy, it is worth to also do practical philosophy on a global stance. Therefore, we try to look on moral questions on a more global view and give different parts of the world a voice.

In this issue, we have a large variety of thoughts that all have to do with ethnology, philosophy, ethics, or anthropology. We have three articles dealing with religions: one introductory article on Korean shamanism, another one on reformation movements in Buddhism, and one article on the role of human-beings in Islam emphasizing on why Islam points out humanity and kindness so much. We have two articles dealing with ethnic groups and their customs: one about the Lingao who live in China, and another one about people who define themselves as Muslims by nationality in Post-Yugoslavia and the role of Neo-Ottomanism in the Balkans. Despite that we have two articles on socio-religious movements in the USA and three reviews, including one about the question whether ethnic psychology is reliable, and scientific research on suicides in polar regions.

I hope that this first issue sets a good ground for the coming issues and receives a lot of attention, since in a time of globalization, where several societies propose to go back to isolation and in/out-grouping, it is important to address furthermore the questions of globalization critically and find ways to think globally rather than isolationist. This journal shall be a good ground for researchers around the world and encourage ethnologically and philosophically combined researches.

Timo Schmitz, October 2017

Bible Belt Baptists. Working towards Prosperity and Salvation

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The South United States has often proclaimed itself as the last American bastion of authentic Christianity. There the teachings of Christ merged with a substrate of ultraconservative Anabaptist model of ecclesiastic and social organization.

All of this is being topped by the reminiscences of the postcolonial racial hierarchy which resulted in the formation of a community model that has as trait marks hetero-determination, unclear boundaries between social and religious norms and a high desire for social validation of one's worth. This paper attempts to highlight the social implication of religiosity on social and economic order in the South's agrarian communities.

Christianity is often held as synonymous with the model of social inclusion, common property and equalitarianism. Prosperity and social growth is directly linked with the quality of the men-God relationship, the prosperity of one's cornfields being credited to the mercy and blessing that God had granted.

From an anthropological perspective, the *work-prosperity-blessing equation* represents a structural component of communal social balance, through divine intervention, the healthy growth of crops was assured, thus the well being of the whole community.

Anthropologists may explain this need for *help from the exterior* as comparable to a type of insurance. This was needed mainly for two reasons, in the case of rural communities, families got their revenue, in the majority of cases, from a single economic activity which was connected to agriculture or livestock. This model presented a high risk for families in periods in which environmental factors weren't too favorable for the healthy growth of the crops, food shortages and financial downfalls being the result. The second reason is that of divine intervention, this one is a little more complex than the first one, even so, it gravitates around the idea of mutual exchanges between the two parties involved: men and God.

The mutual exchange has a validation aim to man, it validates the existence of the unseen being that it is worshiped by him, in this case as in many others, God's existence is validated through a

praxeological perspective rather through visual contact. In other words, *God exists because he does things. We prayed to Him to give us healthy crops and He did*, something along those lines. From a scientific point of view, every action that is carried out by an individual is done in order to gain something. It has a plausible reason behind it and is the subject of reciprocity. Acknowledging this leads us to questioning the authenticity of men's devotion towards God, shouldn't this devotion be carried out without expecting something in return? Is the bound governed by the same natural laws that are applied in the natural world? Or is reciprocity a law in its own right that is meant to keep a balance in the human society? Taking into account all that was mentioned in the lines from above, there is a close connection between Church, religious belief and social structure. The focus of this paper will be that of analyzing the connection between the primitive Anabaptist model of community organization, which traces its origins in XVIth century Europe, and the present-day social layering and functions attached to the communities from the US' predominantly Baptist South.

An important point of this paper is that of analyzing the way in which the Anabaptist model was implemented within the Baptist South, the mutations that it was subject of, and some of the critical differences that emerged between the social structures present in the American communities that trace their ideological background to the Anabaptist and the Anabaptist communities from Europe.

Another focus of this paper will consist of shading a light on the relation between life cycles and self identity in the context of the high peer pressure that is used in traditionalist evangelical communities as a stimulant for social conformity. America's bastion of conservative Christianity, widely known as the *Bible Belt*, has often been the target of waves of criticism in the democrat affiliated media, the states of *the bastion* being labeled as Christian-centric, prone towards the encouragement of bigotry and discriminatory policies directed towards those who do not share the traditionalist Christian ideals of the majority. Quite often human flaws are highlighted to the fullest and used in outline and agenda "Man is totally depraved. The corruption extends to every part and faculty of his being "(Taylor, 1993:8).

Known for their traditionalist views on social structure and order, the states of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Texas represent the perfect candidates that could take part in socio-cultural analysis of the USA's conservative Baptist communities.

An in depth understanding of the complex social network that joins together, and blurs from time to time the border between church and social normativity within the Deep South, can be obtained only through understanding the rigorous tenets that congregationalism imposed within numerous communities, especially if we are talking about rural communities and small towns. Congregationalism aimed at diffusing centrally-held church authority by giving local churches, organized in congregations,

the possibility of fully managing their internal affairs, and even adopting slightly different theological views than other congregations that are part of the same church.

The Anabaptist model, term which will be frequently used in this paper, does not make a direct reference towards a specific set of doctrine, it rather tries to explain the role that they played in the coming into being of the Christian Anabaptist lifestyle. Anabaptist theology, in its modern form, retained only a single teaching that is held by all the movements that trace their origins to the Radical Reform of the XVIth century, many protestant groups having as ancestors the “*re-baptizers*...it was given to 16th-century Christians who saw little value in infant baptism and, therefore, baptized each other as adults upon confession of faith” (Palmer, 2010:1). This can be considered the most representative theological doctrine that is still in use up to this day within all Anabaptist congregations is that of the rejection of infant baptism, this distinctive theological point being regarded as the ideological core of the movement. Some theology schools are still debating the actual classification of the Anabaptist movement. It should be mentioned that there are two camps that hold conflicting position in regards to the position of the movement within the waves of reforms of the XVIth century. The first camp states that the Anabaptist movement is an integral part of the Reformation, the difference between it and the mainstream protestant movement that arose from the Reform is its *radical – restorationist* character. Those who sustain this idea claim that even thou the movement is ideologically quite different from the Reformation, the Reformation was the one that gave the necessary impulse for the birth of the movement. The second camp puts an emphasis on the ideological profile of the Anabaptist movement, stating that the movement cannot be assimilated to the Reformation, even thou, in the present-day USA the churches that follow Anabaptist teachings are labeled as protestant. Traditionalism is regarded as a requirement for keeping a social balance within the community; traditionalism, the way in which it is present in the Bible Belt, is composed of rigid norms which often have a “*single-way result*”, “failure to live up to the colony’s rules will bring strappings to children “ (Satterlee, 2001:7).

Through the homogeneous character of the South’s confessional and ideological landscape, it tends to create rigid, exclusivist and *expulsion prone* local cultures. Even if the religious managed to exert a significant influence on shaping the South’s political doctrine, an essential aspect should not be ignored: The influence is attributed to *Conservative Evangelical Christianity* as a system of belief, not being attributed to a certain Christian Evangelical denomination. Going back to the Anabaptist model and the ideological differences between it and the present-day configuration of the South’s social landscape, we must take in to consideration a number of socio-historical factors that greatly contributed to the rift. It all can be beautifully translated in a graphic form through an axis that has as its starting point, the rising of the Anabaptist movement, and which continues from that point on to the present-day.

Historically speaking, there is quite of a controversy when it comes to tracing the exact origins of the Baptist movement, each theory trying to defend or to highlight the noble and unstained ancestry of the Baptist churches, even so, history is proving to have a different story “He found much church history--most of it seemed to be about the Catholics and Protestants. The history of Baptists, he discovered, was written in blood” (Carol, 200:6). The most traditionalist Baptists claim that their churches are part of an unbroken chain of beliefs, traditions and practices that date back to the time of Christ. This theory is also known as *Baptist perpetuity*, even if it is backed up from many Church members, it does not enjoy that much support from the exterior.

In the case of the Baptist, *the unbroken chain theory* is also supported through the similarities that the present-day Baptists have with some groups that practiced *anti-paedobaptist* teachings.

The usage of this similarities as plausible evidence for sustaining the *Baptist perpetuity* would easily come across a major problem: a disconnection between self-identification of those groups and present-day Baptists.

The rejection of the baptism of infants acted as a social label for the Anabaptists, their name, which was given by the non-members, emphasized this practice which stood up back in those days from the ones that were in use by the followers of the Reform and of the Catholic Church.

The central teaching of the Christian faith is the love towards the others, towards the gentiles, if we want to make contextualize it with the social realities of the biblical Israel.

Jack H. Williams states in his book, *The Bible and the Baptist Church*, that even thou the Baptists don't have a Church history as long as that of some other Churches, they have some “relatives” that were influential back in the early Christian days.

Being a Baptist is presented nowadays as both complex and multidimensional. It is not only a faith, a religion, a set of doctrines and practices; it is a lifestyle which is meant to balance out man's desire for material gain and to reconnect him with the most relevant aim for a Christian, Salvation. This presentation tries to emphasize the benefits of following a certain religion through the beneficial changes that it can bring into one's life.

This naturally gets linked to a need for social validation, which comes into play when a denomination tries to use the media in order to spread its message and to gain new followers. Such techniques are common among modern-day American Baptists, in fact, we can make a connection between this and a verse from the Gospel of Mark :“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” [Mark 16:15]. In connection to this, we can add an important teaching that became increasingly popular during the Anabaptist movement: the *priesthood of all believers*.

This new perspective in regards to the priesthood paved the way for a new generation of preachers, ones that won't follow the old rules of the games, ones that will aim at spreading the Word of God in ways which will make It understandable to people from any corner of the world.

The American Baptists managed to transfer their message into the media, thus creating in time very own *Christian media culture* which is represented by a number of radio/TV shows, magazines and books. Televangelism, a term that is quite familiar to many Americans, being connected with zealous preachers of some protestant denomination, being labeled as a modern component of the American protestant tradition.

Televangelists are “designed” to help their audiences to reconnect with God and hear His Word, their speech is often filled with enthusiasm and emotion. This way, they manage to bring together verbal and nonverbal communication for the purpose of offering a good understanding on the messages of the holy texts that make the subject of their shows.

The birth and development of televangelism within the Baptist Church was favored by thirst for information and by the *Biblicism* that characterizes the denomination’s perspective in regards to the legitimate source of revelation “...was committed to the principle of simplicity on the bases that Jesus himself was a carpenter and not a trained scholar” (Wiens, 2011:5). Even so, modern Baptists tend to be more sacramental than their Anabaptist ancestors but less sacramental than the Catholics. Televangelism can also be analyzed in the context of globalization; as a result of the development of technology and communication, the spread of God’s Words has never been easier. Nowadays televangelists do not aim only at making their voice heard only within the US, they broadcast their shows in different countries around the world, thus contributing to the spread of their teachings and to that of *American Christian culture*. Another element that we should mention that is often used by Christian scholars is that of church culture. Regardless if we are mentioning the Primitive Baptists, the Old Regular Baptists, or the General Baptists, they all trace their origins to a single and undivided Christian tradition “The Baptist Church admits that it is a denomination” (Eskew, 2004:1). Some authors present some church practices as being perceived as unpleasant by the youth “The Old Regular Baptist Church offers little to nothing to make young people want to attend. There lies a huge gap between the church and the young” (Maggard, 1950:1). Those differences are the result of the presence of a combination of sociological variables. In some churches we may find a bigger number of elderly, in others we may find more youth, in others the majority of the believers may be from the middle class, and in some, from below the poverty line.

Church traditions have different manifestations, and as it was mentioned in the line from above, they are the result of the presence of a combination of sociological variables. We will often see quite noticeable differences in the way a funeral is done by the Southern Baptist in comparison to the Old Regular Baptist or to the any African-American Baptist denomination. The Old Regular Baptists of the Appalachians are known for their traditional church culture which relies heavily on group singing. Thus the whole congregation becomes actively involved in the worship of the Lord through the intonation of hymns.

The traditions of the Old Regular Baptists are deeply rooted in the high plains of Eastern Kentucky, their social organization and traditions preserved many features that were also present in the primitive Anabaptist congregations, even so, their theological views are closer to ones of the Calvinists. The same is stated in regards to the Regular Baptists “On the other hand there were the Regular Baptists who opted for more traditional methods of evangelism and were proponents of Calvinist theology” (Flatt, 1994:2). The Southern United States, which mainly overlaps with the Bible Belt, is characterized by high degree of conservatism which results from the predominance of traditionalist conservative Baptist groups, socially speaking, the area holds a number of interesting social characteristics.

An interesting characteristic is the structure of the family, which situates itself in the lines of the nuclear one, and gender roles within the family, many tending to label them as traditionalistic. Even if the structure is predominantly nuclear in the *Bible Belt*, the term traditionalistic does not fit one hundred percent the nature of gender roles in this case.

The traditional family is characterized by a very rigid delimitation of gender roles, the dominance of the patriarchy and the inferior role of women within the economic and social life of their families and of the community. The industrial development of the area combined with the women’s struggle for equal rights resulted in a somewhat symmetric presence of both men and women in the labor market, many women preferring to work in order to assure their families a stable financial ground. When it comes to gender roles, the Southern families are somewhat more inclined towards the traditionalist model in which there are certain tasks for women and certain ones for men, this being even more noticeable in the rural areas.

According to the 2007 population census, we can remark also a slight difference in the percentage of college graduates between Southern States and the rest of the more secular US. Mississippi has a 20.1% of people that obtained a bachelors degree in comparison with a 25.2% that is scored by Ohio, or 34.8% that is scored by Vermont, one of the states that has the lowest percentage of religion practitioners. From an epistemological perspective, the conservative communities of the South tend to determine the validity of information through their non-contradictory relation with the teachings of the Church, thus the Church becomes the institution that detains the right of saying “this is good” and “this is bad”. And even so, one question remains. Why did the Baptist faith grow so much in this area? The answer is simple and complex at the same time, mainly because the growth of popularity of the Baptists in the South US can be attributed to a particular characteristic: functionalism. The transition from Anglicanism to the Baptist faith had at its base a functional aspect. Taking in to account that the area that we are talking about was at that time, and still is today for a big part, predominantly rural and agricultural, a faith that is less sacramental would had come in handy to the lifestyle that revolved around agricultural cycles.

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Origins of the Ku Klux Klan and its significance

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The Ku Klux Klan is America's most infamous and historic white supremacist organization. Founded as an obscure Confederate organization for southern veterans of the Civil War, the Klan grew quickly in the aftermath of a war which took the lives of more than 633,000 people. At the time of its founding in 1866, virtually no one in the United States even heard of this organization. Yet by 1868, nearly all Americans learned of it. The Klan terrorized former slaves, raped women and attacked anyone too closely associated with the Republican Party and its political allies. They demanded that whites alone should govern the United States in general, and southern states in particular. The Ku Klux Klan even became the most powerful political force in some states for awhile. Later it emerged in northern regions during the 1920s. They joined with other white nationalist groups in opposing immigration, opposing the Catholic Church, opposing equality for African Americans, and opposing modern values being taught in schools. What explains the rise of such an organization? How did it become so popular? What eventually drove people away from the Klan, making it a small and obscure grouping of organizations in the United States? This essay will examine these questions.

The Civil War was no easy time for Americans. Beginning in December 1860 and continuing until 1861, eleven states decided to secede from the nation because they bitterly resented the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in November 1860. South Carolina was the first to go. After the New Year celebrations, additional states quickly followed. Mississippi, Florida, and Alabama all withdrew from the Union within a week in January. Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas decided to leave shortly thereafter. Altogether, eleven states formed the Confederate States of America. They selected Jefferson Davis, slave owning Mississippian, as their president. Alexander Stephens, an avowed white supremacist, was chosen as vice-president. Executive departments, a Confederate Congress, and a Confederate Supreme Court were created. Montgomery, Alabama, became the new nation's first capital. Following the secession of Virginia, the capital was moved to Richmond as a way to gain stature to the Confederacy. Virginia, after all, was the home of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. All three owned slaves. All three believed in states' rights. Confederate leaders hoped that such a move would encourage European nations to recognize the new nation as a perfectly legitimate one.

Abraham Lincoln disagreed. Upon assuming the presidency on March 4, 1861, Lincoln announced that volunteers were needed to restore the Union. He believed that the Confederacy lacked legitimacy because southerners were amply represented in the Congress. He also believed that secession would endanger the Union and that the United States without the south would prove unsustainable. Southerners, aware of Lincoln's position, ordered their military forces to attack Fort Sumter, a Union stronghold, off the coast of South Carolina. The bloodiest war for Americans had begun.

Initially, Lincoln resisted efforts to end slavery. As a presidential candidate, he had promised to limit the expansion of slavery, not to end it. Yet his position changed after the war began. He concluded that freedom was a more compelling goal for the Union instead of merely forcing eleven states to be part of a nation that they did not want to be a part of. Accordingly, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, a measure designed to end slavery in all states that joined the Confederacy. Yet this measure did not end slavery everywhere. Four states remaining loyal to the Union still permitted slavery: Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri. As the Confederacy began to collapse in 1864, Lincoln planned to eliminate slavery everywhere. In 1865, just prior to his assassination, he proposed the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting slavery in all states. Tragically, Lincoln's assassination occurred just days after the last decisive battle. John Wilkes Booth, a Confederate sympathizer, decided to kill the president as revenge for the South's defeat. Vice-president Andrew Johnson was inaugurated quickly thereafter.

The creation of the Ku Klux Klan must be seen in the context of this history. Unlike Lincoln, Johnson was a member of the Democratic Party. Republicans had far more progressive views on race relations than Democrats at that time. Johnson, for example, opposed efforts to promote equality while most Republicans favored such measures. He was a southerner who had resisted secession. His goal was to restore the Union and to re-integrate the southern states back into the nation with as little pain as possible for whites. This period after the Civil War is known as Reconstruction. Unfortunately, Johnson offered very little to former slaves who struggled with poverty and overwhelming discrimination after the war's conclusion. It was during this period that a small and hardly noticeable group of Confederate veterans started a fraternal organization in an unremarkable town called Pulaski, Tennessee. Its goal was purely social. It borrowed rituals and other practices from the Sons of Malta, an obscure fraternal organization similar to the Freemasons, and called their new organization the Ku Klux Klan. This name stems from the Greek word "kuklos" which means 'circle'.

Yet Reconstruction soon changed. Upset with Johnson's lenient policies towards southerners in creating new state governments, the radical wing of the Republican Party asserted themselves in the Congress. They placed the south under military occupation again and required new state governments to accept the Fourteenth Amendment and other changes designed to promote racial equality. They

insisted that African American men have the right to vote. Predictably, Johnson vetoed most of these measures. The Congress, however, overrode the vetoes. This radical Republican effort infuriated southerners. Quickly, the Ku Klux Klan changed. Their new goal was to attack radical Republican policies in every way. They wanted to restore white supremacy in the south and impose racial restrictions to separate whites from blacks. They decided to use any tactic to achieve their goals, even if this meant murder, racial intimidation, arson, and other crimes.

Nathan Bedford Forrest was an important leader in this effort. A former slave owner and Confederate general, Forrest was most known for his decision to slaughter black Union troops unnecessarily during the Battle of Fort Pillow in 1864. Four years later, Forrest claimed that the Ku Klux Klan had more than 40,000 members in Tennessee alone. Over 550,000 had joined the Klan in the south as a whole. To be sure, Forrest denied that he was a member. This is not surprising. The Klan was a secretive society and concealed the identities of its members. White hoods easily covered the faces of members as they rode through the south on horses, pillaging and plundering black communities. Overwhelming evidence reveals Forrest's membership in the Klan and his leadership role in it. Historians agree that Forrest sincerely repudiated the Klan during his later years. The Klan's violence had become too much even for a man like Forrest to accept.

Eventually, Radical Reconstruction ended. In the aftermath of a disputed election in 1876, Republicans agreed to end the Union occupation of the south in exchange for gaining the presidency. Rutherford B. Hayes was inaugurated as Union troops returned to military bases throughout the American south. Southern Democrats reasserted themselves again. They refused to honor the Fourteenth Amendment and passed "Jim Crow laws" requiring the legal separation of blacks from whites in neighborhoods, schools, and other avenues of public accommodation. They refused to honor the Fifteenth Amendment which affirms that the right to vote shall not be denied on the basis of race. New voting restrictions appeared in the form of unfair literacy tests, grandfather clauses, and other devices to make sure that the great majority of African American men had no access to the ballot. Women were not voting anywhere. The Nineteenth Amendment ended gender restrictions on voting after the turn of the century.

This reassertion of white supremacy pleased southern Democrats. Membership in the Ku Klux Klan rapidly declined because they had achieved their goals. Yet during the 1920s, as immigration from eastern and southern Europe sharply increased, the Ku Klux Klan made a comeback. This "new" Klan grew quickly in northern states because many Americans feared the arrival of Catholics, Jews, and of course blacks who moved into the north from southern states in search of work. Over four million Americans joined the Klan at this time. Their power became so great that they virtually controlled the state of Indiana for awhile. Unfortunately for the Klan, their most visible leader in this state, David

Stephenson, brutally raped a woman, Madge Oberholtzer, who later swallowed poison and died. An Indiana jury convicted Stephenson of murder in 1925 and sentenced him to life in prison. Membership in the Klan quickly declined as people realized that the Klan had little to do with traditional values and meaningful patriotism. Gradually the United States refocused its attention on more urgent matters such as the Great Depression and the Second World War.

Yet the Klan never went away entirely. On the contrary, the Klan and other white nationalist organizations reasserted themselves during the 1950s and 60s as the civil rights movement emerged. Violence erupted as Klan members and their supporters resisted all efforts pass civil rights legislation designed to grant all citizens equality under the law. Members of a local Klan organization in Birmingham, Alabama, for instance, bombed the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on September 15, 1963. Another local Klan organization murdered three civil rights activists in Neshoba County, Mississippi, on June 21, 1964. It took decades for law enforcement to arrest and prosecute those responsible for these crimes. Despite these events, membership in several Klan organizations never reached anywhere near the levels of Reconstruction or the 1920s. This reality is an important consideration that historians must consider in any historical appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan.

In short, the Ku Klux Klan underwent three phases of development throughout its history. The first phase occurred during Reconstruction. The second phase occurred during the 1920s. The third occurred during the civil rights era. The historical question which emerges is this: do these three phases represent a larger undercurrent of white nationalism that exists beyond the actual membership of the Ku Klux Klan, or has the Klan represented only fringe elements of racism that is not reflective of the beliefs and values of most whites in the United States? An equally important question is whether white nationalism is somehow connected with political forces that enabled Donald Trump to win the presidency in 2016.

The first question is the easiest to answer. Throughout its history, the United States has experienced the rise of many groups which have resisted immigration, racial inclusiveness, equality, and modern thinking. Nativist organizations, for example, grew significantly in the United States during the 1840s when many Americans resented the arrival of Irish Catholics into the country. Large numbers of groups resisted modern science as evolution became the accepted scientific norm in most colleges and universities. Organizations opposing the rights of women, gays, and immigrants have emerged repeatedly over time as the United States experienced rapid demographic changes. It is reasonable to conclude that the Klan, while aberrational in its brutal tactics, reflects a larger undercurrent of people who bitterly resent perceived attacks on what they believe as the American way of life. This segment, to be sure, is a minority. But this is a minority with historical roots that are firmly embedded within the American experience.

The second question is harder to answer. The dilemma is that the election of 2016 happened too recently for scholars to offer real historical insight into the emergence of the Trump movement and its victory in November. Even so, it is possible to begin a process of examining these events historically. Public opinion polling overwhelmingly shows that most Trump voters made their decision largely because of economic considerations. Middle class voters became frustrated that the economic recovery during the Obama years was weak with little growth in jobs or incomes for most people. Immigration was surely raised as an issue. Yet immigration per se has never been rejected by the Trump administration as bad or even harmful. Instead, President Trump has proposed immigration reform designed to address national security concerns in the context of terrorism abroad and illegal entries into the United States. White nationalism continues to exist, of course, as recent events in Charlottesville, Virginia, have shown. But the existence of hate organizations and their activities occurred during the Clinton, Bush, and Obama presidencies as well. Again, white nationalism alone cannot adequately explain Trump's victory because of the overwhelming focus that voters had on economic considerations.

The outlook for white nationalism is bleak in the United States. Within decades, whites will become a minority. Latinos, African Americans, Asians, and other groups will represent an increasing percentage of the American people as a whole. Assimilation and intermarriage continues to result in a blending of groups along with mixed ethnic and racial identities. In short, the United States is a pluralistic nation. This pluralism, and the constitutional and legal order which remain firmly in place, will continue to weaken white nationalism despite individual incidents of racial and ethnic hatred which arises from time to time. White nationalism is on the wrong and losing side of history. Those who embrace pluralism, constitutionalism, pragmatism, and cooperation have much more to offer.

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Sketching the basic concept of Korean Shamanism – Theology, Rituals, Societal value

Timo Schmitz

In traditional Korea, a female shaman is called *mu* or *mudang* (Fenkel, no year), giving Korean Shamanism the name *Muism*. A male shaman is called *paksu* (Schmitz 2017a: 3), however, like in Japan, women are rather designated as shamans, and women also prepare the rituals for their male kins (cp. Fenkel, no year). To become a shaman, one normally is possessed by a spirit. This process of possession is called *sinbyŏng*, leading to the loss of oneself. Like in most shamanic traditions, the spirit inhabits the befallen person, which leads to physical symptoms and loss of self-control, as “the spirits have taken over that person’s mind” (Yang, 1988: 21). Therefore, one has to communicate with the spirit and receive him in a ceremony, the *naerim-kut*. The term *kut* in general means ‘ritual’ and describes all kind of rituals that might be performed by a shaman (Yang, 1988: 36). Other famous rituals include the *todang-kut* which is performed in Korean villages to ensure wealth for everybody, and the *ssitkim-kut* which is a ceremony to purify the soul of a deceased (cp. Mills, 2007). Yang points out that: “Since every charismatic *mudang* is believed to be spiritually connected with the gods, formal instruction is not considered necessary by the *mudang*. This way of thinking also means that every *kongsu* (message from the spirits through the *mudang*’s lips to the clients), every time of performance, every *mudang*’s methods, every customer’s reaction, every location, and every content of the ritual is unique” (1988: 23 f.). Anyways, everything has its cosmological order, since the theology of Korean shamanism is very profound. The ultimate being in traditional belief is the Heaven’s or God’s trinity: Hwanin, Hwanung, and Tangun (Schmitz, 2017a: 4). They are a manifestation of *Haneullim*, the Heavenly Emperor. The word *haneul* simply means heaven, and *nim* is an honorific suffix (Hong, 2008: 40), which can be compared to the Japanese suffixes of addressing people, such as ‘-san’. The word *haneulnim* is changed into *haneullim*, since an *l* and *n*, turn into a double *l* in Korean pronunciation. *Haneullim* is the High God in Korea (ibid.), or simply God, and thus the ultimate Being.

Despite the Highest Ultimate God, who symbolises Heaven, and his trinity form, there are several spirits, the most important being *kasin*, the faith into house spirits. The ancestral spirit is called *choryŏng* (cp. Garrigues, without year, who spells it *Joryeong*). The *jesa* is a ritual offering for the ancestors (Garrigues, without year). In addition, every family keeps a pot filled with rice called *chesŏk*

ogari, as well as *mom ogari*, which are potteries that are accompanied with the *chesök ogari*. In addition, in several regions there is a strong faith in *samsin*, the goddess of childbirth (Lee, 2011: 262).

As can be seen, Korean shamanism has a very strongly developed theology. Though there are local variations of the spirits and spirits who have different functions, they all fit into a well-ordered cosmic image. The shaman works as medium between the spirit world and the human world or even further, the shaman loses his ego and is filled by the whole spirit, so that the people who search a shaman to get advice are not talking to the individual person anymore, but to the spirit who keeps hiding in the body. This leads to a conflict between the teacher who instructs the new shaman into the rituals and songs, and the new shaman himself who is now driven by the spirit's voice (cp. Yang, 1988: 24). In addition, shamanism decreased in the second half of the 20th century, due to the anti-superstitious policy in South Korea's military dictatorship phases, and it was just at about 2000, when shamanism attracted people's public attention again and experienced a boom in popular culture. In North Korea, shamanism is officially banned, however, the government found a way to integrate the superstition of the lower part of the population into its political agenda and formed its own religious movement in which the Kim dynasty is given the Heavenly Mandate and thus the rulership by God (Schmitz, 2017 [b]). Due to the strong isolatedness and remoteness of North Korea, not only the belief in shamanism stays strong, since it has no competition by modern religions, but also the traditions are given secretly to one and another shaman. In the South, shamanism becomes a popular phenomena and might be commercialised. Since the religious persecution which lasted for half a century wiped out almost all traditional shrines and holy monuments in South Korea, 'true' or 'pure' shamanism is mostly absent now and most of the traditions which were common to the South are lost. In addition, the social rank of shamans in South Korea remains poor. In North Korea, people are classified into 51 *songbuns*, shamans appear in category 29 (Collins, 2012: 79-81). Collins also points out: "In recent years, after having virtually eliminated religion in society, the regime found it useful to establish a handful of churches and Buddhist temples that are controlled by local security agencies and the Party. No one is fooled by this subterfuge. The sermons in these religious gatherings actually reinforce regime policies" (2012: 81). This also goes together with Schmitz (2017[b]) who pointed out that the government finances places of worship and organises societal gatherings near obelisks to keep the lower-educated people in line. Therefore, shamanism has to receive more attention in scientific studies. At first, the study of original shamanistic cults has to be studied to be able to revive old traditions. Second, it has to be ensured that shamanism is not a victim of consumerism and that it will not be televangelised or put too much into commerce that it loses all its authenticity. Third, it has to be further studied, how officially sponsored shamanism influences political attitudes in North Korea. Korean shamanism is very important, since many Korean religious movements were founded in the last 200 years, which play an important role on the Korean peninsula until today. Most of them integrate shamanistic elements and

some tried to modernize shamanism. As such, the study of shamanism will make it easier for us to make us understand socio-political movements and events of contemporary Korean history.

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The Lingao people and Hui'an people – A mysterious relationship

Timo Schmitz

The Lingao people are a small ethnic group that can be found mainly in Lingao County as well as in the suburbs of Haikou in the province of Hainan in the People's Republic of China. Lingao County is situated in the very north of Hainan island, and thus it is no surprise, that it is assumed that the Lingao are originally from Fujian, as people in Lingao state themselves. According to Lingao inhabitants they speak a deformed variety of Hakka dialect that they see "as a bad way of speaking Chinese", however, in 2013 I already proposed that Lingao is a Tai language that originated from Fujian. Furthermore, I would go as far now to say that the next related language is Zhuang, but it does not fit in the sound pattern of Zhuang as both languages went their own way and therefore I suggested the 'Third Orthography' in 2016 which was not based on Zhuang, as my first and second try to find an orthography for this unwritten language was based on Zhuang and rather led to confusion. Lingao language has three dialects: Bohou, Lincang, and Jialai (see Schmitz, 2017).

In 2013, I published a paper on the Lingao people suggesting that they are relatives with the Hui'an people in Hui'an County in Quanzhou City in Fujian. However, my factual knowledge was much higher than my methodological knowledge, and thus, though the information in the paper might be very interesting, the paper itself fails all kind of scientific standards, as I was not enough acquainted with them back at that time, and therefore, I want to use this paper as a chance to elaborate my thoughts and present my thesis in a scientific paper, that fulfills the necessary standards and therefore can be accepted in the scientific community. Anyways, we are very happy about all the critiques which my paper received as it helped us to think further and to go further.

As a source for getting to know the Lingao, an online messenger was used to communicate with natives; for analysing the appearance of the Hui'an, photos of different sources were used which cannot be shown here however, for personal rights and copyright reasons.

I. The similarities of the Hui'an people with other ethnicities

A problem that we have with the Hui'an is that only one sex kept old traditions: the women, while the men of the Hui'an do not differ from Chinese at all. As I pointed out in my 2013 paper:

A traditional Hui'an woman covers her hair with colourful designed scarves and sometimes a hat, too. There are many different kinds of scarves and hats, and some women wear really small yellow hats while others wear a more wider orange hat. The scarves can be green, blue or red for example, and even have different coloured designs on it. They normally wear a dark blue or cyan kind of jacket which is very tight to the body, but interestingly these clothes don't seem to be strict or conservative as their jackets sometimes are really short and the bellies are totally uncovered.

The main thing that we could see here now are the different influences of Tai-Kadai people in their clothing. Especially the Dai people in Yunnan are renowned for their tight dresses, though they prefer to cover their bellies. Dai women also wear accessories in their hair, while Hui'an women might wear accessories on their hats.

When I saw some women belonging to the Maonan people on a photo, they were wearing thin blue hats which reminded me very much of one of the hats in a Hui'an picture. Although they don't seem to be as thin as the Maonan hats they were still very thin compared to the yellow brought hats [of the Jing].

Despite the dresses that seem to have an influence from Yunnan and probably also Southern Guizhou – though I am uncertain about the latter – and the thin hats as can be found by the Guangxi's Maonan people, the Hui'an have preserved a marriage custom which is fading away now, but that is very remarkable.

The grandmother takes care of the mother the whole life. She always looks after her girl to keep sure what she's doing and same does the mother with her daughter. She keeps sure that her daughter won't go out with other men. Therefore the women are always observed by their mothers. The marriage ceremony is very interesting. The bride is brought to the groom and in front of his house they pray for safety. Then after the groom took off her red scarf covering her face by not even really touching her, she can go to the bridal chamber. But both are not allowed to spend the night together, and there are some measures to avoid any physical contact between bride and groom. The bride won't stay alone in the bridal chamber the whole marriage night, but is accompanied by a neighbor, while the groom stays at a friend's house (Qiu & Lu, without year). The next coming five days, the bride has to obtain different marriage costumes in the groom's house and then she goes

back to her mother's house. From then on, there is at first no more contact between groom and bride and when both see each other somewhere in public places they won't even talk to each other. Only very few times in a year, they are allowed to meet and this goes on until she becomes pregnant (China Culture, 2006). During the few times they sleep together they are not allowed to speak any word.

I assumed that this tradition was conducted, since the parents always chose the marriage partners, and to avoid that they can easily divorce or run away, it would have been a shame for the people to split up, if a baby was in their life, keeping them together. In addition, the children always had to help their parents with the work, and therefore, they also probably stayed in their families for so long to be able to continue supporting them. People belonging to the Zhuang ethnicity told me that this custom was actually practiced in their society too, but faded away long ago. Hays (2008a) points out that “Both men and women are the labor force of the family, but only men have the right to inherit the family property”, which would emphasize my claim. Hays (2008a) also writes that “the wife stays away from the husband's home after marriage. At the wedding, the bride is taken to the bridegroom's home by a dozen girls of the same age. She returns to live with her parents the next day and visits her husband only occasionally during holidays or the busy farming seasons. The woman move permanently to the man's home two or three years later or after having a child”. This almost exactly equals the Hui'an tradition. The custom could not only be found by the Zhuang in Guangxi, but also by the Buyi in Guizhou as “in the past, [the] bride didn't move to her husband's home until after one or two years' living in her mother's home” (Hays 2008b). In fact, the Zhuang and Buyi are more or less one ethnic group, who call themselves “Bouxrauz” (Schmitz, 2017). It can also be observed here that the Hui'an must have a link to the Zhuang, as this marriage custom seemingly is very Tai and often labeled as “unique” in Chinese media.

However, the Hui'an have lost their language and speak a Minnan dialect now, and most of their heritage seems lost. An interesting fact is that the Tai people went southwards, so to say they went from China to Laos and Thailand; however as I already observed in 2013, they have a lot of things in common with people from Yunnan and Guangxi, and it might be possible that for whatever reason, they might be ‘returners’ who went back northwards. However, this is just an idea, and there is no proof for it, especially since it is difficult to trace the Hui'an back and put them in a certain time.

II. In search for the Lingao people's origin through their language

When analyzing the Lingao people, one should focus on their language, which is very close to Zhuang in many aspects, but also has a few features from Gelao, Li and Yunnan's Tai languages, though this is just an indicator that Lingao is a Tai language and shares common Tai vocabulary and not an indicator

that Lingao itself is from Yunnan or elsewhere. The word for ‘tongue’ for instance is [lin], not only in Lingao, but also “in many Tai languages of Thailand, Laos and southern China, also in Yunnan’s Buyang language and Laos’ Lao language” (Schmitz, 2013).

Zhuang and Lingao have a lot of similarities, as can be seen in the following chart, adopted from Schmitz, 2017. The first word is in Zhuang, the second in Lingao. Please note that the words were changed into the ‘Third Orthography’ here in the paper, while in the book they are still in the second orthography.

vah – vah, vo (话, 语)

har – ha (啦)

gwn – gan (吃)

dwg – di (是)

guek – guk (国)

sam – tamm (三)

haj, ngu – ngu (五)

biz, na – na (胖)

byom, bang – viang (瘦)

roeg – nok (鸟)

linx – linn (舌头)

raemx, naemx – namm (水)

hwn, fwn, paenz – funn* (雨)

** often pronounced like ‘hun’*

It also pointed out three similarities with other Tai-Kadai languages, the Lingao section is again translated into ‘Third Orthography’ here:

Rongjiang County Dong: jau (Long & Zheng, 1998)

Lingao: hau

Chinese: 我

Buyang: ma nuk (see Sagart)

Lingao: nok

Chinese: 鸟

Buyang: nga (see Sagart)

Lingao: ngiah

Chinese: 蛇

Even further, the question is, where the Tai-Kadai languages might originate from. Lee & Clontz (2012: 28) point out that “As early as in 1901 Schlegel maintains that Malay and Siamese/Thai are genetically related to one another, confirming the Austro-Tai hypothesis. [...] However, after examining reconstructions in subgroups of Tai-Kadai, Thurgood (1994) denied a genetic relationship between Tai-Kadai and Austronesian but claims a relationship of loan words from language contact”. However, there are also arguments that speak for a later migration from the Philippines or Taiwan to Hainan (ibid.). This could lead to the idea that Lingao might be an early Tai language that preserved older words than Zhuang. However, this idea can be easily rejected as the Lingao trace themselves back to Fujian and until now there is no evidence that the Lingao ever had any linguistic contact to Taiwan or the Philippines. However, some scholars – especially Chinese historians – claim that the home of the Tai-Kadai languages is actually on Hainan (Lee & Clontz, 2012: 33f.). Edmondson (without year: 9) states the Li (Hlai) went off to Hainan from Guangxi after the Tang Dynasty. Edmondson also argues that Fujian could have been multiethnic 2,000 years ago being the home to several ethnic minorities.

Gedney links the Tai languages to the “Kam-Sui languages of Guizhou as well as several languages of Hainan (i.e. Lingao/Be and Li/Hlai)” (Johnson & Wang, 2010: 8). Johnson & Wang (2010:8) emphasize that “Within China, speakers of almost all Central Taic languages have been grouped into the official Zhuang nationality since the late 1950s, together with those Northern Taic speakers residing in Yunnan, Guangxi, Guangdong and Hainan provinces.” However I want to point out that the Zhuang in Hainan make up only a very small part of the population, and therefore it is very unlikely that the connection between Zhuang and Lingao came through direct language contact on Hainan.

Even further, already Hansell pointed out that Lingao stands in a relation with Tai in 1988, however, he rejected that it is close enough to Proto-Tai and therefore suggests a common ancestor (Thongkum, 1992). I suggest that this common ethnicity might be Hui’an in Fujian or another ethnic group from Southern Fujian which might be distinct now. We can only hypothesize about how the Lingao arrived on Hainan, but the most possible explanation is that a few boats who went out for fishing got lost on the sea and were driven southwards straight to Hainan. This might be an explanation, why both, the Hui’an and the Lingao live at the seacoast. Even further, the Lingao live from fishing and farming. It is difficult to trace an own traditional background to the Lingao. Their contemporary understanding of morality and ethics is rather Chinese conservatism brought by the Communist Party of China, as Hainan has always been a peasant’s stronghold of Communism, even long before 1949 (cp. Feng & Goodman, 1997: 54). It is difficult to say whether this conservatism was always present on Hainan, but I suggested that Hainan was probably more liberal than their home in Fujian and therefore the Lingao intermarried with local Chinese people, rather adopting their costumes. As a result of the lost men in Hui’an, the local women intermarried with Chinese men, but insisted on keeping their costumes. This would be a possible explanation to explain the loss of male traditions in Hui’an County, and at the same time, why Lingao people came from Fujian. However, this is only one hypothesis which is difficult to prove. However, an important argument for that is the self-identification of one’s ancestors to Fujian, and the missing connection to Proto-Tai. In the future it should be researched how close the Lingao are to the Maonan, Buyang and Gelao, as well as to the Southern Dong as this might help us to see whether there might have been a ‘returner’ movement back to Guizhou as well as to find out the distance between the settlement of the Hui’an in Fujian and the Lingao on Hainan. This might solve, whether there is a certain connection among them.

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Navayana – A reformation of Buddhism

Timo Schmitz

Buddhism traditionally has three variants: Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. The oldest one is Theravada, which is an orthodox tradition practiced in South Asia, later Mahayana developed as lay-follower tradition, mainly in East Asia. However, in times of globalization, Buddhism is confronted with new issues and also found its way to the West, as well as to political spheres. As George Boeree states: “Many of us, easterners and westerners, have been profoundly influenced by our study of Buddhism, and yet do not find ourselves attached to any one particular sect or interpretation of Buddhism. Further, many of us, especially westerners, find the fundamental ideas of Buddhism deeply meaningful, but cannot, without being dishonest with ourselves, accept certain other ideas usually associated with Buddhism” (Boeree, 2002). In recent years, new branches such as Secular Buddhism or Engaged Buddhism have found its way into philosophical and practical main streams. The need to reform Buddhism arose out of the fact that Buddhism gained attraction for non-conformity and non-dogmatism, something which religion in the West seemingly could not give Westerners, just to find out that Buddhism has the same matters. As Timo Schmitz points out: “Many people want to find the way to Buddhism because they are against any doctrines. Therefore, one can study the Theravada teachings, which leads to a disadvantage in the eyes of many Westerners since it focusses on monk communities. Other people are fascinated by Vajrayana, but since it has a very organized structure, concerning hierarchy and practice, one will probably see the Vajrayana tradition to be a religiously-organized branch, which in the Western view can be seen as dogmatic again. Then we can practise Mahayana, and we are quickly confused with cosmological questions” (Schmitz, 2015). As a result, many Westerners did not copy Buddhism as practiced in Asia. People in the West mainly reject cosmology and Buddhist deities, but focus on the core teaching to reach enlightenment which resulted in the founding of Atheist Buddhism, since “Buddha himself rejected metaphysical speculation and did not talk about gods” (Schmitz, 2015/ 2017). Secular Buddhism tries to fight for a separation of state and church, especially in Christian dominated countries and emphasizes on the equality of all religions. Left Buddhism is a phenomena of Modernity, as most Buddhist countries are at the same time also Communist countries and Buddhism and Communism had to be put into harmony. A special form of it is Libertarian Buddhism which “stresses individual freedom and the choice for everyone to improve

and develop oneself according to one's need. Anarchism and Buddhism suit each other well, especially Zen-Buddhism as the latter is close to Taoism" (Schmitz 2015/2017).

However, all these forms cannot be subsumed under the traditional three forms of Buddhism and therefore a new school of Buddhism was suggested: Navayana – the new vehicle. Chung stated that "A new Buddhism does not mean that a completely new ideological system should be created, or that the established form should be radically changed. If we apply Buddhist Truth to our lives and sincerely practice and study its applicability, this in itself is a new form of Buddhism. In this regard, the emergence of Navayāna Buddhism is necessary" (Chung, 2003). The tricky thing however is that though this new umbrella term came into being, no one really considers himself as a "Navayarin" (Van der Velde, without year). Even further, publications about Navayana remain rare and scattered. There is no real formalization of the teaching, though more and more publications try to formalize it. But as self-identification lacks and as the teachings vary strongly, there is not *the* "Navayana teaching".

Some people call the Buddhist teaching by Ambedkar and the therein following Dalit movement as Navayana (see Hancock, 2004). However, the Dalit movement is just one part of Navayana and stands in opposition with the modern usage of the term. Thus, while Navayana was a term coined in India in the 1950s, it was re coined in the new millennia, and now the 1950s Navayana is actually just one direction within Navayana. Anyways, the conflict within the terms might be no surprise, since Navayana is still in developing and therefore, we are witnesses of a new reformed way of Buddhism that has many faces (cp. Schmitz, 2015). As such, Navayana is a way to adopt Buddhism to the 21st century and address the needs of global Buddhist adherents, who do not identify themselves within the three traditionally established doctrines. Buddhism is not a static, but fluid, religion. After Vajrayana developed at about 1,000 years ago and split off Mahayana, now we can see a new split in the Buddhist landscape of teachings. The reformation that is fueled by lay Buddhism is very necessary, as it shows the distrust in established bodies (Chung, 2003). Therefore, Navayana goes back to the independence of the Buddhist teaching outside of any strict additions, commentaries or societal backgrounds and leads a new era with many chances.

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"MUSLIM BY NATIONALITY" and the upcoming Neo-Ottomanism

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We know from the last few years that already passed, that Europe was repeatedly shaken by a wave of terrorist acts that were conducted by several fundamentalist Islamic groups. Most of the media coverage from this period centered its discourse about the connection between Islamic radicalism and migration to Europe from various Muslim-majority states.

There were very few remarkable discussions that put the indigenous Muslims of Europe into the spotlight in the present context. Yes, indigenous Muslims of Europe, this term might give certain people a headache as the general conception is that all of the continent's adherence to Islam have Arabic or Turkish ancestry, thus their ancestors came "from somewhere else" at a given time in history. The Balkans host a number of people groups that practice Islam and are neither of Turkish or Arabic descent. We are talking more exactly about the Slavic Muslims, a general term that is applied to describe groups, as it is the case with the Bosniaks of Bosnia and Sandzak, the Gorani of southern Kosovo, the Tordesh of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the Pomaks of Rhodopian Bulgaria and Northern Greece.

We can also add to the equation a small number of Muslim Greeks and Albanians. If we put aside many of the self-designated identities that are found throughout this region, we could easily come to the conclusion that the Slavic Muslims groups' cultural identities do not diverge greatly from one another. Later, this represent one of the reasons that lead to the creation of the Muslim nationality within Tito's Yugoslavia, thus people could identify as "ethnic Muslim". There were also a few other factors that we have to take in to consideration, by creating a free-standing Muslim nationality within Yugoslavia the long-standing conflict between the Serbs and Croats, that argued whether the Muslims should identify with one or the other side, was gradually neutralized. Even so, the religious landscape of the Balkans is gradually changing, in the aftermath of the breakup of Yugoslavia, there is a strong desire to reaffirming the identities of small ethnic factions. Some studies showed that, even though religion played a major role in crystalizing the Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian identities, there is a slow drop in religiosity that can be seen among Croats. This can be a sign that the nation is trying to put more stress on Croatia's links to various regional powers, to the West, and to highlight more its role in the regional history that it shares with former imperial powers such as Venice, Italy or Austria-Hungary.

The general trend in the region nowadays is that of a “radicalization of identities”, meaning that certain groups are more and more in favor of cutting, or denying, any historical ties that they have with their Slavic neighbors, accentuating the purely distinctive elements of its own culture. In the case of the Muslims, the material and spiritual heritage was passed on to them from the Ottoman Empire. Besides the well-known charm of Osmani towns such as Novi Pazar, we must understand that the rise of Neo-Ottomanism is becoming more and more visible throughout the Balkans, especially since Erdogan became the head of the Republic of Turkey, even though this ideology was existent way before his rise to power. Neo-Ottomanism stresses the role that the Republic of Turkey needs to play in those areas that were former part of the Empire, thus the Republic becoming a protector of those cultural values that are regarded as being Ottoman.

This approach is quite conflicting when it is put side-by-side with Kemalism, the later one is not so much in favor of the crystallisation in the Balkans, and not only, of a post-Ottoman realm, and stresses the need of a bigger involvement in internal affairs. Now, more than before, Neo-Ottomanism has a clear slope that helps with making its message well-known throughout the Balkans. There are a few factors that need to be addressed, that heavily contributed to the emergence of imperialism in the region:

The creation of the “Muslim Nation” in Tito’s Yugoslavia, which acted as a unifying framework for the Muslim groups that were scattered through the country;

Past tensions that were left unsolved between Muslims and non-Muslims;

A history of genocide which made many Muslims not trust central authority;

Forced policies of assimilation and systemic discrimination, especially in Bulgaria;

A diaspora of Slavic Muslims, especially Bosniaks, that live in Turkey, making the Turkish state a trust-worthy place for many Slavs of Islamic faith;

Investments made by Turkey within Muslim-majority areas of the Balkans, like Sandzak and Bosnia, contrasted with the lack of investment that came from the central authorities;

The common traits shared with Turkey through the Ottoman heritage inherited by the Muslims of the Balkans;

Radicalization of faith, a transition toward a more faith-based identity in the detriment of an ethnic-based one.

The upcoming years are vital for the stability of the Balkans. The degree in which stability, or the lack thereof, will be present will highly depend on how well aligned are the political elites and intellectuals with the radical ideologies that are surfacing. A very firm act of disownment of radicalism that would come from the elites would raise some red flags among the mainstream society in regard to the danger that such ideologies pose. Even so, we must take into account, that in the case of states of the Balkans, information has more difficulties in reaching people in short time. This is mainly due to the rugged terrain, lack of efficient technology and poor infrastructure. The radicalization of Islam can be only perpetuated through exploiting the weakest points of the local societies, mostly having to do with poverty and the lack opportunities for communal development. Using personal, material, gains as a means of twisting the minds of otherwise peaceful people and drawing them into fundamentalism is a technique that proved to be often efficient in the case of communities that are struggling with poverty. As time will progress, we will see the confrontation between the two Islamic traditions, now present in region, to be more visible, the future stability of the region will also be determined by which will gain the most ground.

Die Rolle des Menschen in der weltlichen Ordnung – aus islamphilosophischer Perspektive

Lava Mella

Das Verfassen des folgenden Artikels habe ich mir zum Anlass genommen, mich selbst genauer mit meiner Religion und seiner Botschaft an den Gläubigen zu befassen. Auch und gerade für mich als überzeugte Gläubige des Islam, ist es meine Pflicht, meine Überzeugung stets zu hinterfragen. Nicht ohne Grund hat Sokrates damals schon geboten, das eigene Leben zu hinterfragen, denn „nur das geprüfte Leben ist es wert, gelebt zu werden.“ So ist auch Ziel und Zweck des Islam, das eigene Handeln und Dasein als Mensch auf Gottes Erde zu hinterfragen und zur angemessenen Einsicht hierfür stets nach Wissen zu streben.

Dies wird in einer der Sammlungen des Propheten (Hadithe) deutlich erwähnt:

„Suchet Wissen, von der Wiege bis zum Grabe.“ (Hadith)

Als Ansatz dient hierfür die islamische Philosophie. Diese wurde über die Jahre hinweg durch verschiedene Gelehrte, Wissenschaftler und Denker des Islam mehrmals geändert und ausgeweitet. Sie dient der Orientierung an den grundlegenden Überzeugungen und Lebensvorsätzen des Menschen im Islam. Die islamische Philosophie steht im großen Verhältnis zur islamischen Offenbarung. Gott regelt mit seiner Offenbarung an den Menschen viele Bereiche sowohl des gesellschaftlichen Lebens, als auch in Hinsicht auf das Verhalten des einzelnen Individuums.

Durch die zahlreichen Ansammlungen von Interpretationsansätzen stehen mehrere Wege zur Verfügung, die Offenbarung und den Sinn des Lebens in der islamischen Philosophie zu interpretieren:

Eine erste Auslegung der islamischen Philosophie stützt sich auf die Vernunft, die Gott uns gegeben hat. Der Koran regelt all das, was Gott zu regeln als notwendig erachtet hat. Für alles andere hat Gott uns den menschlichen Verstand gegeben. Diesen sollen wir benutzen, um bestimmte Geschehnisse in der Welt auf angemessene Weise zu deuten und somit die richtigen Entscheidungen im Leben zu treffen.

Die zweite Denkweise misst der Vernunft ebenfalls einen hohen Wert bei und stellt diese zudem höher, als die Religion. Die Religion sei leichter, in verständlicher Sprache und primitiver Auslegung und somit

verständlicher für die Massen. Die Vernunft jedoch, gibt die Chance, über den reinen Glauben hinaus, die Glaubensansätze auf rationale Art zu hinterfragen.

Die dritte Auffassung setzt sich kritisch mit dem Islam auseinander und kommt nicht selten zu einer negativen Auslegung ihrer Glaubenssätze und Anhaltspunkte.

Die islamische Philosophie setzt sich mit vielen Bereichen zur Regelung des menschlichen Lebens auseinander, beispielsweise mit der Erkenntniskritik, der Geschichtsphilosophie, Rechtsphilosophie und der Ethik. Die Religion sollte demnach in Einklang mit der Vernunft stehen. Wie oben bereits erwähnt, soll die Vernunft es dem Menschen ermöglichen, Bereiche, die Gott uns durch den Koran nicht mitgeteilt hat, angemessen interpretieren zu können. Demnach können wir von Gott nur das wissen, was er uns durch den Koran mitgeteilt hat. Eine immer wieder aufkommende Frage in der Debatte zu möglichen Dualismen im Islam ist die Frage, wie denn die Vorstellung von einem „barmherzigen, allverzeihenden Gott“ mit der eines „strafenden Gottes“, wie dies im Koran erwähnt wird, zu vereinbaren sei. Die Antwort hierauf befindet sich in der Lehre des Tauhid (arab.), also der Einzigartigkeit Gottes. Demnach besteht kein Dualismus im Islam. Vielmehr basiert Gott seine Ge- und Verbote auf dem Prinzip der Gerechtigkeit. Wenn die Gerechtigkeit bedroht ist, droht den Unrechtschaffenden laut dem Koran die Strafe Gottes. Jedoch weist Gott im Koran auch darauf hin, dass er allverzeihend und barmherzig sei, solange die Ungerechtigkeit aufrichtig bereut wird. Gott gibt durch seinen Verweis auf seine Barmherzigkeit also dem Menschen die Möglichkeit, sich durch Einsicht und aufrichtige Reue zu einem besseren Menschen zu ändern und lässt dahingehend keine Hoffnung auf seine Vergebung aus. Die Barmherzigkeit und Gerechtigkeit sind zwei Pole, die gemeinsam wirken, um die Schöpfung Gottes zu bewahren. Die Gerechtigkeit ist notwendig, um die Schöpfung vor Ungerechtigkeit zu bewahren und die Barmherzigkeit und Vergebung sind notwendig, um der Schöpfung nach seiner Untat weiterhin Hoffnung auf ein gutes Leben auf Erden und im Jenseits zu geben. Der Mensch wird nicht ausgelöscht als Buße für seine Untat, sondern er wird bestraft und damit ihm die Chance verliehen, sich im weiteren Verlauf seines Lebens zu einem besseren Menschen hin zu entwickeln.

Das gemeinsame Wirken von Gerechtigkeit und Barmherzigkeit macht Gott im folgenden Koranvers noch einmal deutlich:

„Verkünde meinen Dienern, dass Ich wirklich der Verzeihende, der Barmherzige bin und dass Meine Strafe eine schmerzliche Strafe ist.“ (15:49-50)

Zu einem weiteren Punkt ist es nützlich zu erwähnen, dass Gott oftmals für das Leid in der Welt beschuldigt wird. Die Menschen geraten jedoch mit der Zeit in Vergessenheit darüber, das Wesen Gottes richtig einzuschätzen. Sie vergessen, dass Gott kein gleichberechtigter Partner ist, den man

einklagen kann. Sie tragen viel eher dazu bei, dass immer mehr eine Vermenschlichung Gottes in ihrer Auffassung von der Welt entsteht.

Die Antwort auf das Böse lautet im Islam jedoch: *sabr* (arab. Geduld).

Menschen vergessen, dass sie von Gott als Statthalter auf der Welt eingesetzt wurden, um damit für eine bessere und Leidlosere Welt zu sorgen. Hierfür steht der folgende Vers aus dem Koran:

„Und stiftet nicht Unheil auf der Erde, nachdem sie in Ordnung gebracht worden ist, und ruft Ihn in Furcht und Hoffnung an. Wahrlich Allahs Barmherzigkeit ist denen nahe, die gute Werke tun.“ (7:56)

Das Leid auf der Welt ist ein Ort der Prüfung, an dem Gott uns auf unsere Aufrichtigkeit, Standhaftigkeit und Gottestreue hin prüft. Darüber hinaus prüft er uns als Menschen. Denn das Leid soll den Menschen zum Handeln auffordern, ihn dazu auffordern, ein besserer Mensch auf Erden zu sein und für ein gutes Miteinander auf Gottes Erde zu sorgen. Gott lässt in seiner Offenbarung nicht aus, dass der Mensch selbst für das Leid, das auf Erden vorherrscht, verantwortlich ist. Leiden, wie Atomenergie, (Atom-) Kriege, Armut, Tyrannei und Mord sind alles Folgen menschlichen Fehlverhaltens.

Ein weiterer Ansatzpunkt, mit dem sich die islamische Philosophie befasst, ist der immer wieder aufkommende Drang, die Existenz Gottes zu beweisen oder zu widerlegen. Es ist unvermeidbar, dass Gottes bloße Existenz nicht bewiesen werden kann. Im Anschein dessen vergessen jedoch viele Menschen und vor allem Muslime, dass es nicht darauf ankommt, seine Existenz zu beweisen, sondern vielmehr, dass auf seine Existenz vertraut wird. Das Wort *glauben* (arab. *amana*) bedeutet in dieser Hinsicht nicht beweisen, sondern vielmehr *vertrauen*. Man vertraut als Gläubiger des Islams darauf, dass Gott wirklich nach seiner Darlegung im Koran existiert und glaubt an die Worte, die er uns durch den Koran übermitteln wird. Mit einer tiefergehenden Analyse dieses Vertrauens beschäftigt sich die Denkströmung des Sufismus.

Wie schon zu Anfang des Artikels erwähnt, beschäftigt sich die islamische Philosophie mit dem Individuum in Bezug zu seiner Umwelt und seinem Handeln als Reaktion auf seine Umwelt. Um hierfür eine verständliche Einführung zu liefern, ist es wichtig, auf den Ursprung des Menschen, wie der Koran ihn darlegt, hinzuweisen. Gott verweist im Koran daraufhin, dass er Adam als ersten Menschen nach seinem eigenen Bilde erschaffen hat. Die Schöpfung des Menschen soll somit als Beweis für die Existenz Gottes stehen. Damit geht unmittelbar einher, dass die Menschen im Islam höher gestellt werden, als alle anderen Schöpfungen Gottes, also den Tieren, Pflanzen und der Umwelt. Dies ist damit begründet, dass der Mensch als einziges Geschöpf Gottes über Vernunft und Verstand verfügt und dadurch dazu fähig ist, die Existenz Gottes und dessen Schönheit am besten zu begreifen und

widerzuspiegeln. Gleichzeitig wird dem Menschen damit jedoch auch die Macht zugeschrieben, jegliches Unheil auf Erden zu stiften und für Übel und Leid auf der Welt zu sorgen. In einem weiteren Vers wird dies anhand des sogenannten „Treuhänderamts“, explizit nochmal verdeutlicht:

„Wahrlich, Wir boten das Treuhänderamt den Himmeln und der Erde und den Bergen an; doch sie weigerten sich, es zu tragen, und schreckten davor zurück. Aber der Mensch nahm es auf sich. Wahrlich, er ist sehr ungerecht, unwissend.
(33:72)

Einer der meist vertretenen Interpretationen des Treuhänderamts stellt dieses mit dem menschlichen Ego dar. Dieses erkenne die Schöpfung Gottes an und damit auch seine eigenen Grenzen als Menschen. Um dies weiter auszuführen, wird auf den Menschen und seine Schöpfung hingewiesen. Der Mensch ist derart geschaffen von Gott, dass er für das Überleben in der Welt und der Natur gut gerüstet ist. Sein Körper besteht laut Beschreibung im Koran aus Bausteinen der Natur, die sich aus mineralischen, tierischen und pflanzlichen Elementen zusammensetzen. Als „Kinder der Natur“ wissen wir, dass die Materie von Gott geschaffen wurde. Dieses Bewusstsein zeigt die göttliche Seite in uns. Nur durch die Unterstützung des Schöpfers, sind wir als Menschen dazu fähig, uns auf der Welt selbst zu versorgen. Er hat durch den Aufbau unserer Schöpfung ermöglicht, dass sich unser Körper selbst regulieren kann. In Bezug auf das Treuhänderamt ist es demnach nicht vermeidbar, die Fähigkeiten des Menschen hervorzuheben. Das Universum wurde dem Menschen zur Verwaltung erschaffen, so beschreibt Gott es in seiner Offenbarung. Damit verbindet er die Pflicht, ein guter Mensch auf Erden zu sein und seinen Mitbewohnern in jeder Art nützlich zu sein. Die Besonderheit, die dem Treuhänderamt nun zugrunde liegt, besteht darin, dass sich der Mensch als einziges Geschöpf dafür oder dagegen entscheiden kann, seine Pflicht als guten Menschen auszuführen. Als Übergang ist es abschließend notwendig, auf die Möglichkeiten hinzuweisen, die Gott uns zur friedvollen Ausführung unserer Pflicht gegeben hat. Diese gibt er anhand eines Verhaltenskodex durch den Koran und die vom Propheten überlieferten Sammlungen über das angemessene Verhalten des Menschen (Hadithe- Sammlung).

Eine komprimierte Auffassung dieses Verhaltenskodex soll im Folgenden statiert werden:

Der Geist und der Körper des Menschen sind in ständiger Wechselwirkung zueinander. Der Geist ist auf den Körper angewiesen, aber wird dem Körper gleichzeitig auch nur durch den Geist Leben gegeben. Durch diese Wechselwirkung kann der Gedanke den Körper steuern und körperliche Ausführungen wiederum den Geist und dessen Wohlbefinden beeinflussen. Daher ist es nach islamischer Auffassung notwendig, sowohl seine Gedanken, als auch seine Taten zu kontrollieren. Denn ein schlechter Gedanke kann unweigerlich zu einer schlechten Tat führen, so wie eine schlechte Tat den Geist negativ beeinflussen kann und zu einem schlechten Wohlbefinden, bzw. „schlechten

Gewissen“ führen. Die islamische Philosophie leugnet genauso wenig wie der Koran, dass das Leben des Menschen von Anfang bis Ende aufgezeichnet ist und konsequent verläuft. Der Mensch erntet, was er säht, und der Wert seines Lebens richtet sich nach den Taten, die der Mensch vollbracht hat. Demnach profitiert laut des Islam der Mensch von seinen guten Taten, sowohl auf Erden, beispielsweise durch ein friedlichen Leben oder gutes Ansehen, als auch im Jenseits, durch die Belohnung Gottes für seine Wohltaten auf Erden. Um nun ein Verhalten, das nach Wohltaten ausgerichtet ist, überhaupt erst möglich machen zu können, wird der Verhaltenskodex in Bezug auf drei große Aspekte angewendet.

Laut islamphilosophischer Auffassung liegen dem Menschen drei Hauptantriebskräfte zugrunde: Begehren, Zorn und Verstand. Die Begierde gilt dem anderen Geschlecht, der Zorn den Missgeschicken, die sich uns im Laufe unseres Lebens in den Weg stellen und der Verstand den Entscheidungen, die wir im Leben treffen. Gott verlangt vom Menschen in seiner Offenbarung, dass er diese drei Triebe diszipliniert und geordnet reguliert und damit unter Kontrolle hält. Der Grund für dieses Abverlangen ist, dass dem Menschen bei Deregulierung dieser drei Triebe, große Leiden drohen. Die Folgen der Deregulierung stellen sich dann beispielsweise im unrechtmäßigen Erwerb des Lebensunterhaltes, unrechtmäßigen sexuellen Beziehungen oder Mord und Tyrannei dar. Eine fehlende Kontrolle führt demnach dazu, dass Gesellschaft und Individuum unter ihren Folgen leiden. In dieser Hinsicht ist es wichtig, dass die uns von Gott gegebenen intellektuellen Fähigkeiten beherrscht werden, um ein friedvolles, harmonisches Leben miteinander führen zu können. Da laut des Islam, der Verstand des Menschen nicht immer und in jeder Lebenssituation dazu fähig ist, ihm sein Glück auf Erden und für sein späteres Leben im Jenseits zu erfassen, ist eine Unterweisung Gottes durch seine Offenbarung im Koran und die Überlieferungen des Propheten nicht nur notwendig, sondern auch hilfreich.

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Writing about communism is actually one of the main directions of the Romanian intellectuals, not only due to the fact that it is a political regime integrated in our recent history, but also due to its capacity to be a great source of inspiration for „philosophical lessons”. Communism was the dominant ideology of the entire XXth century and it left its scars on the daily life of many generations. Communism was a totalitarian ideology that changed the society in all its areas: social and political structures, professional and moral rules and values, education and culture. The Romanian cultural field is particularly analyzed by most authors because it has, after the fall of communism, two distinct faces: one that fits the period before 1945 and featured by total freedom of creation, in which there were more literary and artistic currents, and the second fitted in the post-war period, in the communist era, which was characterized by censorship, terror and ideological domination. Ioan Stanomir and Angelo Mitchievici analyze, in this collection of essays, the intellectual resistance against communist ideology, in the 1948-1965 years, trying to disseminate the main features of this attitude. It is an approach for recovery of a *dark era*, in which the freedom of speech was only an illusion for most of elevated people.

I. Structure and main ideas of the book

As Stelian Tănase argued, „the fall of communist regimes in the Central and Eastern Europe made possible, for the first time, a deeply analysis of these regimes, of changes suffered by their societies in the post-war” (Tănase, 1998). After returning to democracy, the public space and cultural market of Romania was invaded by many studies and research on the communist regime and its impact on society. Some of these books have a historical perspective; other books have the social and political

evolutions as the main theme; other works are written in a nostalgic spirit, evoking the advantages of Communism and blaming the new democratic order.

But from this large diversity of themes and orientations on debating Romanian Communism, the cultural dimension has enjoyed a special attention. Beyond the tractors and satellites, it's worth noting that the Communists were also building their people by exercising strict control over the national culture. Indeed, the real flavor of Communism can more readily be experienced through its cultural expressions rather than its production schedules. Since culture and society were dominated by the ideology of proletarian internationalism, the freedom of creation and expression was very limited. The culture with its variety of forms and manifestations, is recognized as a fundamental component of a nation. All the cultural production is valuable only if it is the result of creation freedom. In this sense, any limit imposed to the cultural activity have clear negative consequences. A main idea of the reviewed book is the large and aggressive domination of the Romanian Communist Party not only on social life, but also on cultural production, and a major effect was a dramatic „closure” of the whole society.

The book recently published by Ioan Stanomir and Angelo Mitchievici has a great mission – remembering the „obsessive decade” of the 1950s and the „internal exodus” of a majority of intellectuals. As we know, in that period all the culture people in Romania had to choose between the material advantages of political regime – at the expense of their liberty of creation, and the alternative to retire in a virtual world and condemn the abuses of Communism. Obviously, the second variant was preferable but there were some notable exceptions, for example Mihail Sadoveanu who was simultaneously a great writer and an important member of Communist institutions. So, this book presents in an original manner the intellectual's interior adventure in a possible world that satisfied their needs to be absolutely free. „More over than any other period from our modernity, communism meant a capacity test for intellectuals to assume their own condition in the face of power and its instruments. Disposals, compromises, eulogy of tyranny, but also the courage to freely write are part of this road starting at 23 August 1944” (Stanomir & Mitchievici, 2016: 11).

The book is structured in two parts. The first part includes a series of essays written by Angelo Mitchievici on the theme of „the obsessive decade” in the 1950s. Some important and suggestive chapters, based on themes of reflections, are: „Realismul socialist si critica decadentei” („Socialist realism and the critique of decadence”), „Obsedantul deceniu, marea dezbatere si criza sacrificială” („Obsessive decade, great debate and sacrificial crisis”) „Marea dezbatere: în căutarea comunismului cu față umană” („Great debate: in search of Communism with human face”). Angelo Mitchievici analyzes here the evolution of Romanian literature in this decade and extracts some relevant conclusions. The second part of the volume contains the contribution of Ioan Stanomir, having the

beginning of cultural aggression and its consequences as main subject; „1947: Începutul” („1947: The Beginning”), „Acasă sau despre începutul exilului” („Home or about the beginning of exile”), „Vedere de pe pod sau despre memoria intelectuală” („View from the bridge or on the intellectual memory”) and „Litera stacojie” („Scarlet letter”) are significant essays to read and reflect.

As the authors say, „in the center of the volume are the decades that separate the moment of 23 August 1944 from the false turning operated by Dej. In reality, simultaneously with the death of Dej and ascension of Nicolae Ceausescu, an essential fact come to change the autochthonous intellectual profile. Relaxation of terror and simulation of a shy pluralism are the strategies through the regime make a new pact with writers, a pact through which they gain the sphere of aesthetics’s autonomy. It is a limited and severely controlled sphere, and any overtaking of the framework is punished. Group movements and solidarities can not survive. But the inner exile, as a widespread phenomenon, tends to disappear, because accommodation with the political regime is the dominant option” (Stanomir & Mitchievici, 2016:11).

Concretely, it approaches the evolutions of Romanian literature in the early Communism of the 1950s. „The book recovers not only the area of the official literature, imagined as an appendix of the propaganda, but also the enigmatic and protean territory of the inner emmigration. Inner exile – we are indebted to the Virgil Nemoianu’s suggestions – is the space within it formulates an ethic and aesthetic alternative to dogma and canon. More or less political in its attitudes, inner exile is the island where various spirits are found, with various aesthetic options, coming from different generations” (Stanomir & Mitchievici, 2016:11). The period between 1948 and 1965 has experienced a gradual dislocation of the Romanian culture, in terms of institutions and ideology, and a replacement with books, manuals, theses, ideas and structures transplanted from Moscow, with Soviet models. It is the period where the Romanian culture, especially the literature, was effectively replaced with a proletcultist structure and ideas, in which center was the Communist Party, the Marxist ideology and the foundation of a society based on the „new people”, away from its origins. It was a real „Holocaust” of national literature, in which the previous cultural elite was eliminated and marginalized, an era in which Romania lived under the aggression of a foreign cultural model, aiming destruction of the historical memory and Sovietization of the institutions, education and society.

II. Literature and politics. Recovery of an era

In the historical context covered by this book, the space of social and philosophical thought was completely monopolized by the Marxist ideology, in its Stalinist version, and the modern Romanian

thought with its most elevated expressions, was considered, without exception, as being idealistic, conservative and reactionary.

Giving literature as example, Angelo Mitchievici explains the negative consequences of the Socialist realism's introduction in Communist Romania. „Socialist realism is practically unknown to the inter-war Romania, and for communist Romania is a sovietic imported product. It does not exist any literary tradition that announce the appearance of the socialist realism in Romania, there are no literary critics interested in this area. The theory of socialist realism is formulated in the Soviet Union after the appearance of term *per se*, in the 1930s, an important contribution having Maxim Gorki” (Stanomir & Mitchievici, 2016: 12-13).

Through the approaches of political sciences, Stanomir and Mitchievici argue that „*Comunism, inc.* is the answer that authors wanted to offer to some of their contemporaries, tempted by progressist and communist illusions. Condemning the liberal and democratic anti-communism is a fashion that brings immediate popularity in the spheres that are fed by the utopizant and morally ambiguous legacy of the radical left. (...) Contrary to this more and more vocal and influential direction, reaffirmation of the imperative of freedom and memory is a legitimate and necessary option. Sacrificing the human dignity of a single individual, in the name of an Promethean ideal, compromise the entire edifice that new communists adore. The communist past is not gone, it still comes to haunt us”. In this sense, we have the opinion that in contemporary Romania we are spectators to an economic liberalization without political reforms; it is a hybrid situation that can not produce any positive effects. But the liberty of cultural creation is a warranty for the resistance of the national spirit faced with globalization. Surely, the idea of a *trial of communism* has many followers, but the Romanian cultural space is divided yet between more factions.

From the perspective of social behaviours, we can link this book with the research of Daniel David on Romanian's psychology. After the fall of Communism, the intellectual elites felt a difference regarding the social and cultural liberty, but at the level of entire society, the lack of civic engagement is a problem that is worth discussing more.

In our opinion, the Romanian literature is certainly the most valuable area of culture, with a cultural legacy traversing all centuries. This book wants to be a tribute for that spectrum of intellectuals opposed to all totalitarian ideologies. Recovering the period of cultural Stalinism in Romania is not only an intellectual work or a doctorate theme (as we actually can see), it is a philosophical exercise that involves objectivity and rationality.

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Alexandru Ionuț Drăgulin

I. The structure of book

The 2015 book written by Daniel David presenting the psychological profile of the Romanian people and its behaviors and attitudes in different aspects of social life as a main theme created a lot of discussions and controversies. From the beginning, this book received both positive and negative commentaries and reviews, probably due to a remaining conservative perspective of the society concerning this scientific area. When speaking on Romanian's psychological features, we find a lot of traditions and myths which provide a false image marked by idyllicism. For a long time the Romanian people were associated, by a significant number of researchers, with a rural existence and a powerful religious consciousness rather than offering a moral perspective on the world. It is not a simple task to investigate the psychological profile of the Romanian's behaviours regarding the political and social life, the personal life or the very wide range of emotions and reactions in banal situations. As we already know, the individual is very complex when we consider its social feature and researchers do not have a unique point of view on this subject. By centuries of existence, the Romanians survived and created an original culture in the South-European space, marked by a Latin feature given especially by their language. But the XXth century brought a series of radical changes in the social and political structures of this people and the consequences are now visible not only at the elites's level, but also in the everyday behavior of the masses. Today, Romanians appear as a conservative people looking suspiciously at the European and global changes and transformations, but what are the causes for it? What are the features that highlight Romanians in Europe and, much more important, what are their

capacity to preserve their identity and survive to numerous challenges? We will try to answer to these questions by analyzing the book of Daniel David, in the next passages.

As the author states in the introduction, this book is the result of 10 years research in the domain of cognitive psychology. „First, I wanted to do a complex and rigorous analysis. Unfortunately, at that time (2005) there were no major tests/psychological tools in Romania that allow us such valid analysis (e.g. „how we are” vs „how we believe we are”). Duration, although it may seem high, it is similar to major practical applications in other fields of life sciences; for example, in pharmacotherapy, distance from basic research to drug can take even longer and the same is true in clinical psychology / psychotherapy”(David, 2015: 16f.). This is the reason for the large amount of pages – 431 in the digital edition.

The book has a large introduction in which its author explains his reason for the research, the main targets of his work and the scientific tools used to investigate the Romanian people for establishing a psychological profile closed to actual realities. After that, the research is detailed in 5 chapters and each of it has more subsections. Finally, we have an afterword and a section of annexes that contains the conclusions and justifications with all psychological and sociological tools used.

In the *Introduction*, Daniel David presents the origins and reasons for his investigation and surely he details the scientific framework of the work. He argues that there are other similar books in the field of cognitive psychology which present the profile of an entire people, e.g. the Americans. „This project was conceived in 2005 when Terracciano and his collaborators published a major study in the prestigious journal *Science* in which they analyzed the gap between "how we are" in terms of personality traits and "how we believe" we are in 49 countries / cultures of the world. Publication of the article in *Science* magazine shows the interest of the scientific community on this topic. Indeed, in a globalized world in which countries/cultures come more often in interaction regardless of geographical distance, and in a European Union that tries to fit better members of highly diverse understanding of this issue, it is crucial to fostering collaboration and peace to avoid conflicts. For example, if a country/culture has a certain image of itself, and has many discrepancies over how it is in fact and another country/culture treats it as it is, not as it believes it is, it may occur frustrations, tensions and difficult international situation” (David, 2015: 15). Daniel David remembers also the previous contributions of Romanian scholars to this theme, especially the researches of Constantin Rădulescu-Motru.

Regarding the scientific framework, David says „one expanding area today is the intercultural psychology, where the analysis of psychological attributes is made at the country/culture level,

compared to other countries/cultures, not at the individual level or smaller/larger groups in the same culture” (David, 2015: 15).

The first chapter contains the scientific framework and the tools and methods used to adapt this theory to the psychological features of Romanian people. According to Daniel David, psychology of peoples is a scientific area that creates more and more interest for specialists and also for the large public. The intense interaction between individuals from different countries or cultures provide a base of scientific research with powerful, solid arguments. Adding to the discussion the case of Romanians and their psychological profile, David mentions the contributions of Constantin Rădulescu-Motru and Dumitru Drăghicescu. He argues the necessity of a new approach because the previous researches have important limits and the methods of investigation was changed over the time.

In the second chapter, David presents the theoretical and methodological frameworks used to create the psychological profile of Romanians. The scientific base is very large but has a wide coherence and relevance for social realities in contemporary Romania. So, the major theories cited by Daniel David are: multimodal analysis, cognitive-clinical theory of taking over information, psychometric theory and psychological profile, theory of stereotypes, theory of central attributes versus peripheral. Combining these frameworks is a valid method to identify the main psychological features of the Romanian people. The methodological framework is based on the social statistics: sampling and interpreting data from quantitative and qualitative perspective.

The next chapter explains the main cultural features of the Romanian people, the geographical position and its impact on the Romanian’s evolution, but especially the demographics is relevant for this project. Also the genetic structure is taken into consideration because some psychological attributes depend on it. Historical evolution of the Romanian society show us why there are some collective attitudes and ideas providing a conservative profile. Among knowledgeable researchers, discussions regarding genetic influences on psychological traits are not about whether there is genetic influence, but rather about how much influence there is, and how genes work to shape the mind. In the case of Romanians, this book sustains the importance of historical processes in creating a psychological structure of an entire nation. History and genetics are complementary, because the genetic features need a long time to develop and consolidate.

On the other hand, a psychological profile is influenced by many external factors. For example, the attitude of Romanians towards foreigners, the influence of social environment and political culture are presented as major factors that individualize this people in Europe. A synthesis of the cultural profile of Romanians, explained in this chapter, has generated a lot of controversies because some public figures, analysts and researchers argue that in this perspective, Romanian people are considered at a

lower level than other peoples in Europe. Contemporary Romanians are, undoubtedly, the combined result of genetic, historical and social factors.

In the fourth chapter we will discover the concrete results of this complex research in an empirical approach. The author offers information about the personality profile of Romanians, including their levels of intelligence, creativity, learning styles, emotional intelligence and temperaments. Some interesting conclusions are presented related to the Romanians' relationships with minorities. According to the study, „ethnocentrism spurred by conflicts in ethnic terms and ethnic discrimination, emphasizes the negative attitude relative to the majority population more than any other socio-demographic variables” (David, 2015: 279).

Romanians still have a reserved behavior relative to minorities, because the traditional and nationalist structures and thinkings have an important place in their life.

The last chapter widely explains the psychological profile of Romanians, using a historical perspective. Daniel David created this profile by comparing the Romanian people's contemporary profile with similar things in the past. The succession of historical epochs and political regimes have a substantial contribution to the actual psychological profile of this people. What is interesting in this chapter is the presentation of Romanian diaspora and ethnic minorities. For example, „Romanian immigrants from Spain have a lower level of psychic life's quality than Spanish”. But, on the other hand, „the Romanian cultural environment favors the national minorities (i.e. the Hungarians), in comparison to that of Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. Language and age predict the Hungarian ethnocentrism in Romania, much better than education and gender” (David, 2015: 312).

In the section of conclusions, Daniel David says that any scientific research must be analyzed in a logic of rationality. In the public sphere, Romanians are presented in two major perspectives: first of them accentuate the positive features and the second emphasize the negative. This study aims to demonstrate that there are not inferior or superior nations. One of main conclusions is that Romanians have a great potential but their social institutions are not sufficiently developed to sustain it.

The author opt for a rational nationalism, combined with a tolerant thinking and attitudes that allow Romanians to live in collaboration with other national minorities. As the author argues, „in the globalized world, nationalism is important to maintain the national identity, but, in order to be credible, it must be modern and progressive, in other words, tolerant, aiming to show correctly the rights/identity, without blocking the rights of others or defaming the identity of others. I think the maturation of the Romanian psychology allows a technical but constructive approach of the psycho-cultural profile of Romanians, formulating the conclusions with a scientific rigor, but also carefully to

extract the lessons that aid us, not only to punitively point some less satisfactory things” (David, 2015: 333).

II. Relevance, scientific contributions and controversies

This cognitive-experimental monography is the result of a long-term work, a work that totaled the application of numerous tests, data processing in statistical terms (and not only), reporting of obtained data to that from other countries (USA and nine other states from all around the world) and interpreting data so the conclusions are as less tainted by error. The publication of such a study required a long time, especially the other social sciences already brought their contribution to shaping a profile of Romanian people, referring there to sociology and anthropology but also to philosophy of culture (with indication that the studies from the domains mentioned above are not absolutely elaborated at the level of entire Romanian people, but can contribute to the creation of its own specificity).

As we know, the science of psychology is relatively new compared to other sciences and its development in Romania was blocked by the Communist regime, for decades the academic research of it becoming impossible due to the potential threat of its contents, but especially because this domain can not be politically or ideologically enrolled.

„Sapere aude!” – „Dare to know!” is an often used phrase in this book by Daniel David. We were greatly surprised by the capitalizing of previous approaches regarding the efforts to learn how are Romanians as a people; as we already said, the basic reference was the first treaty of Constantin Radulescu-Motru from the interwar period but the results from the studies of Mihai Ralea and Mircea Vulcanescu – with his book entitled *The Romanian dimension of existence* are also integrated. Daniel David also adds direct researches on the psychology of Romanians from all major university centres – Iasi, Bucuresti, Timisoara, Romanian Academy.

We are not surprised by the results of Daniel David, but in the last period I was very interested in searching and understanding much more things about our identity as a nation and how we relate to others. And one of main conclusions of Daniel David emphasizes the national unity of Romanians: „at this level of analysis we have not found major differences between the old Romanian territories, nor in the empirical approach nor hermeneutical, probably as a consequence of a common education/socialization and globalization in the last century” (David, 2015: 336).

After reading the book we discovered that the importance of national component is not so great as others say, especially from mass-media and public space. Actually, the Romanian public sphere is dominated by an irrational nationalism and ethnocentrism that blocks any development and progress in social thinking. We also observed the fear of change that characterizes a large part of Romanian people, probably as a consequence of an isolationist political discourse, based on the myth of a „besieged fortress”. Daniel David says that „these results must convince us that Romanian citizens have a more important psycho-cultural foundation than differentiating elements, foundation on which we can build a common future in which the differentiating elements find a place and contribute to the unity in diversity” (David, 2015: 336).

From our perspective, the book written by Daniel David is a perfect tool for any researcher in the social and psychological sciences to know the attitudes, thinking and behaviours of Romanian people, compared with other nations. In a similar study, published in 2003 by G. Hunyady, Americans are considered by Romanians as powerful, popular, with honour; British are intelligent, educated and patriot; Chinese are viewed as patriots, honest, diligent, intelligent; French are patriot, educated and bohemian; Germans seems to be diligent, honest, intelligent; Hungarians and Russians are patriot, adapted, well-oriented, assertive. As we easily see, to be patriot is a fundamental feature for a nation, in the Romanian’s opinion. From these nations, Romanians prefer British, Americans and French, then Germans and finally Hungarians and Russians (Hunyady, 2003: 155).

The book was positively perceived by most of academic reviews and research centres. In an old and prestigious review – *Timpul*, Ph.D. Luminita Iacob appreciates that, in fact, „the data used by the author were obtained through international research, with coordinators from outside the Romanian space. Thus, less accessible material, in part unique, went through this book, in the attention of those interested in the topic” (Iacob, 2015). Other two significant reviews were published by PhD Maria Nicoleta Turliuc and PhD Marius Lazar; they found both positive contributions and some inaccuracies regarding the methodology of research (Turliuc & Lazăr, 2015).

Finally, this massive monograph can be optimized in some aspects (e.g. compared factors and the writing style), but at the actual moment it can be really considered a starting point in the analysis of the Romanian people’s psychology. This book can be used by governmental and non-governmental organisations in development of their public image strategies, but also it can serve as an efficient tool for political parties in the electoral campaigns. It offers an impartial perspective on the Romanians, in lights and shadows, and this aspects confers a great scientific value.

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Kue Young (coord.), Suicide and resilience in circumpolar populations, International Journal of Circumpolar Health, published on circumpolarhealthjournal.net, Järfälla (Sweden), 2015, 320 p.

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The affiliated researchers of the Journal of Circumpolar Health carried out extensive research, over the last few years, on various topics that are closely linked to the particularities of suicide among the peoples of the Arctic. By now, most of the areas that lay within the boundaries of the Arctic are plagued by high abnormally high rates of suicide. A quick look in to the statistics that are available from Russia, Scandinavia, Greenland and Canada show us that suicide victims are somewhat equally distributed among various age groups. The scholars that contributed to this colossally complex piece of work come from a variety of academic backgrounds, ranging from medical sciences, statistics, demography, psychology and sociology. This crucial fact should not be ignored by any means, due to the fact that, as we may already suspect, suicide itself is an extremely complex phenomena, and the factors that influence people to consider engaging in such fatal deed vary considerably from case to case. Even so, as the findings that are listed in this book state, the causes of suicide usually follow certain patterns, and the action itself can find more fertile soil in certain cultural environments than in others.

The contributing scholars highlight the extremely frail state that characterizes the mental health of individuals that reside in various Arctic communities. This frailness is directly linked to total, or relative, isolation in which many communities live, also other factors such as the limited amount of sunlight and poor eating habits, along with an extremely limited volume of resources, leave a deep mark on the overall feeling of dissatisfaction towards life that the indigenous experience.

The book lists a total of fourteen studies, each study heavily relies on statistical data that was collected from various reliable sources, such as medical institutions, population statistics and various medical and historical documents that are relevant to the central theme. One aspect that should be mentioned is that, unlike other books and journals that focus on the study of indigenous peoples, this book analyzes certain social and health related issues linked to these groups from an anthropological

perspective, mainly characterized by the use of quantitative methods. The true value of this work can also be validated by the interest it poses in other fields of research, so it can be stated that it truly has a trans-disciplinary character.

If we were to point out a few of the disadvantages that can be associated with this work, we can mention that it is mainly targeted toward experts, or people that are familiarized with issues that are linked to the social and health issues from the Arctic area. Its overall format, the selection of words that is used through the whole book, will pose an impediment to readers that are not familiarized with this field's specific terminology and theoretical framework. But on the other hand, we can have a higher degree of trust when it comes down to unbiased positions, cultural studies books and journals that are centered around the study of indigenous groups often present extremely biased positions, and have the tendency to present the members of these groups more as magical creatures than actually fully fleshed humans.

In order to end this review on a positive note, I will state that *Suicide and Resilience in Circumpolar Populations* is a valuable collection of works which contributed greatly to the development of scientific literature in the field of indigenous anthropology. The findings that are presented within this book's pages offer us an in depth understanding of the factors that contribute to the high rates of suicide among individuals that reside in the Arctic region.