

Dereligionisation of Human Faith

Plamen N. Nikolov

PhD (Philosophy), Department of Philosophy, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Sofia, Bulgaria

ABSTRACT:

Belief no longer needs a ready-made picture of the world, in which consciousness can simply be transported through it in order to feel itself. The community of minds of the concept of faith, which is equally accepted by all of them, is not necessary for the individual to self-identify. It chooses by itself what to believe and defines the concept of faith itself. Faith in its religious version becomes a necessary condition for the integrity of human consciousness.

It is worth considering whether the abstract concepts defined in the mind of Homo Sapiens or its eventual desomatised aethereal being would have the same or similar connotations in the artificial variant of intelligence they created, bearing in mind that their creation presumably does not have a classical evolutionary component, nor a biochemical carrier to bind it to previous experience in the likeness of its creator.

KEYWORDS: Religion, Faith, Consciousness, Will, Creation

INTRODUCTION

At first glance, the transition of man in the classical way of its perception as psychosomata into his possible deprived from corporeal dimensions version seems to be the most painless in terms of religious doctrines. With most of them anyway, the human being is always, even in his somata form, as it were, with one foot in the afterlife. Human consciousness in religious discourse always places its distant liminality further than the earthly. It is as if the earthly is merely some stage of the universal, which is not, however, given to conditional mortals to know with their available gnoseological arsenal while they find themselves "enclosed" in their biochemical shell called "body." This is a comfortable worldview that guarantees safety in a world where dangers lurk on basically everywhere and creates a comfortable feeling in the self-limiting mind of not reflecting on the immediate future that is often not in its hands.

I. RELIGION AS A FUNCTION OF MIND

The socio-cultural reasons for this phenomenon are perennial and generally working quite successfully in order to keep human consciousness in the realm of the communal as the only alternative for the continuation of the evolutionary process in its intensely controlled version by well-defined consciousnesses.

Hence the origin of religiosity¹ – it is the primordial connectedness and interconnectedness of each sentient in the context of the common consciousness. In this sense it follows that religion has long since succeeded in uniting all consciousnesses in an essentialist matrix and making them function as one. This, however, is done not by the method of the mechanistically unified consciousnesses of individuals, but on an

¹ Religio – Latin – obligate, bind, reconnect

irrational principle that posits the binding unit of belief in something common as a unifying abstract principle that brings concrete practical benefits. For this reason, in the contemporary global world, the idea of a unified religion is emerging that is not based on self-defined, historically distinct irrational beliefs objectified in the world through the biographies of certain individuals prominent in their respective religions, uniting other believers on the basis of a particular religious symbolism or simply on the basis of common life experiences, but on the contrary – on the obliteration of all this and on the "shaping" of some formless rational substratum that has a claim to global universality. This religious Frankenstein downplays the role of the individual leader-symbols of each of the world's monotheistic religions, seeking such a common secularized ground in all incarnations of the world's religious cults as to be universally accepted by the collective social consciousness. Many would ask who needs this, and is it not more appropriate that religion should simply die out as a necessary solder for the minds of individuals. It turns out that at this evolutionary stage in the development of Homo Sapiens this is still impossible, as self-aware beings still need some kind of community to which they feel they belong in order to perceive themselves as identical. For this reason, phenomena such as neo-pentecostalism are coming to light, which makes claims for a global religion based on the principles of the market economy – the clergy here are more like managers who adamantly achieve pre-set goals, the religious services have no sacred character but rather resemble a corporate assembly, while the senior officials of this so-called "church" set strategic goals of attracting as many new "believers" as possible. (2;2014) And before we exclaim how such a religious outrage ever entered anyone's head, we inevitably think of the Middle Ages of papocentrism, which is in its very essence a *de facto* geopolitical doctrine carried out by a religious leader. The difference in the two worldviews then and now is that in the Middle Ages the unifying factor motivating individual self-conscious beings to act in its name was the irrational force of faith proclaimed through the Holy Gospel, whereas in our day it is the practical benefits that every human being, wherever they are on planet Earth, realizes as such and values. And since, on the basis of climatic, socio-cultural, historical, strategic and ethnic grounds, any opposition is now difficult to explain and even less feasible, since everything that is necessary for an individual to exist and develop is now supplied relatively easily by industrial means thanks to the level of development of technology, irrational faith is slowly but steadily beginning to become redundant in view of its unifying role in relation to the common consciousness. But the necessity of the existence of another connecting link for individual self-consciousness is still invariable due to the impossibility of living without coexistence, as defined by the hormonal peculiarities of the biochemical constitution of Homo Sapiens. The emergence of "new religions" in an increasingly existentially globalised world is therefore still the order of the day.

II. IRRATIONAL FAITH AND THE FREE WILL

However, the fundamental ethical question posed by both forms of coherence in human consciousnesses – the religious one, founded on an irrational predicate, and the essentialist one, conditioned by the mechanistic contingency of individuals – is what degree of freedom the human will has when it is in intersubjective coherence under the conditions of one of the two existential paradigms. This may not be too difficult to ascertain when one makes sense of the social opposition of the phenomenon – that is, how easily an individual self-conscious individual could leave the relevant community to which he "willfully" belongs. The cost of renouncing religious belonging in Antiquity and the Middle Ages led the individual to practically complete social alliteration, which in those periods of human development often also meant the impossibility of physical existence due to the extremely harsh conditions of life outside the community.

However, what is striking in the present day is the presence of a similar degree of personal free will if the individual attempts to renounce his aethereal avatar. Let us imagine for a moment a life without online banking, web ordering and social networking. We can't even imagine it, because very few of industrialized humanity can allow such a social experiment to take place, due to the extremely high degree of dependence of members of modern society on online civilization. The very fact that the rest of the offline part of modern civilization is highly marginalized and treated almost as individuals with special needs speaks to the degree of dependence and lack of freedom in terms of getting out of the online world. An individual leaving it even for a short period of time would cause the same consequences as a medieval person leaving a religious community.

The above leads to the conclusion that the degree of dependence and control of any consciousness on being in a mass community is the same over the course of the human evolutionary cycle. This leads to the logical assumption that the developmental spiral within the standalone subject will continue to provide a significant degree of connectedness and control over individual consciousness within the common collective being. As it is also certain that any form of emancipation from the generally accepted cultural model within a community will always be stigmatised and to varying degrees persecuted. The question that inevitably arises here, however, is whether two or more global social paradigms are in fact possible, and if it turns out that they are not – how will their coexistence be possible, or, in an old human-like pattern, will the resolution of the collision be sought in favour of one in a violent manner at the expense of the other.

As we well know from historical scholarship, the advocates of scientific progress and the naturalists were severely persecuted in certain periods and areas of the ancient world, as well as in the Middle Ages in Europe. The reasons for this were formally untenable but conceptually understandable. These individuals were destroying the existing social order before the rulers of the day were able to organize the next evolutionary stage of humanity's development in their favor. The degree of existential freedom which those avant-garde thinkers were willing to grant to the mass consciousness through their discoveries was unacceptable in view of the preservation of existing social relations at the relevant historical stage of the development of our civilization. For this reason, these minds had to be silenced until society was ready for their proposed concepts. It is not possible to require the mass consciousness of human kind to be able to grasp and apply as quickly for the benefit of the common being, as it does in the heads of its individual representatives of genius, those newly discovered phenomena and meanings which the most ardent minds of their time propose as solutions in science and social life, but for which the respective ruling elite or society as a whole is not prepared, without falling apart.

This is why revolutionary situations became more and more common after the European Middle Ages – it became more and more difficult to prevent or conceal discoveries unacceptable to the ruling elite. This is also why historically we have seen more and more frequent changes of ruling elites, who quite often have serious qualitative differences in their understanding of conceptual and existential freedom. However, nowadays, due to the extremely rapid development of technology and the lightning-fast global exchange of information, progressive inventions and concepts cannot be restrained at all in a manipulative way and the only way therefore remains violence. But the violent methods of the 21st century are also different from those of the Middle Ages, and today they are escalating extremely rapidly and can be completely destructive for all of humanity. For this reason, the containment of individual minds within a common social system can be easily achieved, but it can just as easily be deconstructed, especially if more adequate alternatives are available.

The degree of progress can no longer be controlled due to the atomisation of knowledge with a high degree of scientific authenticity. The main difference between individual consciousnesses today would be the degree to which they tend to perceive the artifacts and social phenomena of technological progress, and on this basis the self-aware minds would remain members of a particular social community. On the other hand, we have the manifestation of such consciousnesses that deliberately push social evolution to the point of a transhuman manifestation that manifests as an end in itself. Such a massive acceleration of inadequately formed evolutionist understandings has not been seen before in the history of Homo Sapiens. This is occurring in view of the cult's elevation of derationalisation as a tool for coping with the incredibly rapid pace of technological progress. The irrational belief not in a deity, but in technological progress, becomes a tool for contemporary elites who must adjust today's social consciousness in extremely short order to the constantly emerging collisions in the social fabric of common existence.

And if the connectedness of individuals still requires a compulsory profession of *religio*, the cognitive concept of faith no longer needs it to such a great extent. Belief in Homo Sapiens today is desacralised and increasingly individualised. These days it is much easier to declare that you are a believer than to explain what you believe. In past periods of human development, faith has not had to be explained. It just is, even when it is absurd (3;1980). Today, the stronger the faith, the less it needs *religio*. The rituality of religiosity gives way to the intimacy of faith because the consciousness of Homo Sapiens is in another instrumental coherence that provides it with the same degree of psychological comfort and existential stability that *religio* brings to medieval man. And since religion in modernity is losing its role as a binding link, it is looking for new fields of thought where to realize itself. "Though religion has often been regarded as the guardian of public morality, when we look at the history of many religions, it is not clear that it deserves that title." (1;2020) Not for any other reason, but because after the Enlightenment morality and law are now two different sides, albeit of the same coin. It follows that the imposition of a common global morality would only be possible if a common legal framework were also to reign, which at this point still sounds utopian.

CONCLUSION

During the last two millennia, morality, understood as *religio*, has been strictly personified, since the religious doctrines that have prevailed throughout the world are monotheistic. For them, what is moral is what the supreme deity declares to be moral. Therefore, morality has a well-defined hypostasis(es). With the aetherised consciousnesses of the future, however, one of the hypostases of monotheistic morality will no longer be relevant. The transcendent enigma of one of God's faces will now be mastered by "human" consciousness, which will not need a somatical form to exist. However, would the partial depersonification (deprivation of a face) of the divine lead to the complete depersonalisation of social morality? We will find out when Homo Aetherius becomes a reality. It is very likely that, due to the desacralisation of the immediate transcendent connection between the human and the divine, faith as a phenomenon will be de-religionised, which will lead to its strong psychologisation. From an omnivalent characteristic of personality, it will become a faculty of consciousness. Belief no longer needs a ready-made picture of the world, in which consciousness can simply be transported through it in order to feel itself. The community of minds of the concept of faith, which is equally accepted by all of them, is not necessary for the individual to self-identify. It chooses by itself what to believe and defines the concept of faith itself. Faith in its religious version becomes a necessary condition for the integrity of human consciousness.

The above is of course valid for that type of consciousness which extends that of the strictly human. However, there is also one that is created by him, and being such, it simply broadens ready-made human thought patterns to produce its own. In this sense, it is worth considering whether the abstract concepts defined in the mind of Homo Sapiens or Homo Aetherius would have the same or similar connotations in the artificial variant of intelligence they created, bearing in mind that their creation presumably does not have a classical evolutionary component, nor a biochemical carrier to bind it to previous experience in the likeness of its creator. That is, would the abstract conceptual apparatus of the created artificial intelligence tend to evolve in a different direction, and if so, would this be considered a continuation of human evolution or would it rather represent a new regional gnoseology with a tendency towards complete emancipation, which would lead to a new comprehensive cognitive theory?

To answer these questions we will need to do a new research which to examine the difference in the ontological status of creator and creation to determine whether we have the grounds to call ourselves "natural" in relation to what we have created "artificially."

REFERENCES:

1. **Andre, S.** (2020) Science and Religion: An Alternative View of an Ancient Rivalry. Open Journal of Philosophy, 10, 494-510. [doi: 10.4236/ojpp.2020.104035](https://doi.org/10.4236/ojpp.2020.104035)
2. **da Silva Moreira, A.** (2014) Globalization, Cultural Change and Religion: The Case of Pentecostalism. Open Journal of Social Sciences, 2, 381-387. [doi: 10.4236/jss.2014.24043](https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2014.24043)
3. **Sider, Robert D.** (1980). "Credo Quia Absurdum?". The Classical World. 73 (7): 417-9. [doi:10.2307/4349233](https://doi.org/10.2307/4349233)