

УДК 2-1+165.741+130.3

Tendency of Utilizing Religion in the Epoch of Political Engineering

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Received 4.11.2012, received in revised form 11.11.2012, accepted 16.12.2012

The article expresses the idea that all religions embody a common trait: they possess definite schemes, samples and patterns of actions aimed at tribe preservation and reproduction, and keeping inherent affiliation to it. The author believes that in spite of all efforts to overthrow religion, it is 'perpetually returning' exactly under man's need in the tribe preservation and reproduction. In view of this, it is easy to understand that any special attempt to establish religion made by the so-called political engineers, will lead to nothing but simulacra. Religion, in its turn, functions like a peculiar filter protecting tribe's interests.

Keywords. Study of religion, philosophy, pragmatism, simulacrum, God, wisdom, tribe, mind, man, atheism, cynicism, ideology, false consciousness.

The main threat for religion in the 20th – 21st centuries appears to be not atheism, but pragmatism which transforms it into a way of attaining definite social purposes in this world.

In the traditional society religion was a way to understand some objective truth, a chance to penetrate into the essence of being, and conceive the world order and man's place in the Creator's Universe. Revelation, permitting to perceive this place, was taken as man's affiliation with divine world construction. Against this background man found his previous life fussy and senseless. Being affiliated with this divine truth the man coped with neurotic problems, got guidelines and ability to distinguish material from immaterial. Religious truth was a clue in the labyrinth of life, a clue conducting to the light and promising salvation.

Such understanding of religion is visible through the whole tradition, from Church Fathers to the Modern era.

Atheism adopted this law. It began looking for the world construction content, man's place in the Universe and his abilities to conceive the world. The result of the search was Modern Philosophy that tried to dispense with God, but, instead, replaced Him with depersonalized substances like matter, nature, absolute idea, etc.

In fact, atheism indirectly confirmed the rightness of religious approach to conceive the world and took it without reservation.

Besides, it prevented religion from resting on its laurels, challenging to seek new arguments for theoretical controversy. Such a competitor did not make harm to religion but made it keep up a dynamic condition. Not accidentally, on the verge

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of the 20th – 21st centuries, Russian Orthodox Church tried to initiate public debating with atheists but found no opponents ready to take part in such debates.

Aspiration for rethinking religious functions and meaning in the dogmatic spirit turned out a justifiable threat for the church and religion. This doctrine rejects the idea of objective truth by reducing it to practical consequences of affirming one or another truth. There is no objective truth in terms of pragmatism. Different subjects try to set up some profitable ideas for objective truth for their benefit. Applied to religion, pragmatism shows a possibility to affect politics, get votes, change national principles and wage wars by promoting different religious doctrines about God, the world He created, and man's place and role in it. Thus, religion is, above all, a tool in the hands of the politicians. Moreover, many religious figures are tempted to be engaged in politics.

When did this pragmatic interpretation of religion come into life and gain ground? Rudiments of pragmatic interpretation of religion can be traced to Roman Empire, the time of Pantheon's erection – all Gods' Temple where Romans' and all conquered nations' idols were kept with the purpose of ensuring peace. But it was I. Kant who provided theoretical foundation for pragmatism in religion. He used the concept of 'pragmatic faith' that became a forerunner for Charles Peirce's notion of 'pragmatism'.

I. Kant analyzed man's cognitive abilities and came to conclusion that the most reliable of them were those giving an opportunity to gain experience by ordering these sense organs, as well as mind and its categorical mental models. Thus, mind as man's cognitive ability does not stand up to criticism.

Mind puts four questions: What is God? What is the world at large? What is man? What is freedom? When giving answers, mind falls into

insolvable contradictions. Mutually exclusive answers are equally verifiable. By means of mind we can prove existence and nonexistence of God, mortality and immortality of soul, finiteness and infiniteness of the world, reality or unreality of freedom. The history of philosophy and theology occupied with these questions is an evidence of mind's imperfection, which can't overcome insolvable contradictions – Antinomies. By reason of mind's incompleteness I. Kant offered to remove theology and philosophy (metaphysics), as well as psychology from the scope of science. He set limits to human mind and accepted its inability to study scientific issues as opposed to experience and reason.

However, I. Kant recognized that humankind will keep on thinking about God, peace, soul and freedom even if we prove that two and a half thousand years of reflection on this theme have led to no visible results. History of theology and philosophy is a ceaseless controversy of the followers with incompatible viewpoints. I. Kant announced that humanity wouldn't give up religious and philosophical search even if the state banned them.

The conclusion drawn by I. Kant was that, evidently, there was a fundamental and anthropological need for contemplation of the four referred topics. To acquire and keep mental health man should contemplate God, the world in whole, soul and freedom. These contemplations in theology, philosophy and psychology are doomed to appear unscientific due to human mind's inconsistency. Theological, philosophical and psychological issues will forever remain undecided. Therefore, I. Kant vigorously deduced these subjects from the scope of scientific knowledge, but admitted that without these unscientific subjects humankind will lose ability to psychical equilibrium. And the state, naturally, will always use these three subjects to ensure its supremacy.

Aspiring to be a true scholar I. Kant imposes a ban on going into any considerations about psychological, theological and philosophical issues. When facing them a true scholar should say they are beyond scientific knowledge, but, nevertheless, I treat them with great respect as religion, philosophy and psychology are useful for people's life.

Thus, I. Kant was the first scholar who consciously justified the conception of erroneous, but useful for man knowledge. Further, this conception laid down the foundations of his study of pragmatic faith: when a man lacks true knowledge about something but has to act, he relies on pragmatic faith, that is, he believes that his conventional actions will result into success, which is absolutely irrational from the scientific point of view.

This is the case with a doctor when he is unable to exactly diagnose the illness. He prescribes a medicine and treatment, which were previously helpful. The term "ARD" (acute respiratory disease) implies tens of diseases a doctor can't exactly diagnose. He just suggests taking tea with raspberry, applying mustard plasters, etc.

Religious faith, according to I. Kant, should also become pragmatic. Without exact knowledge of God, the world in whole, soul and freedom, but having to take an immediate existential decision, we can rely on customary rituals to cope with the problem.

In spite of I. Kant's prohibition, the successors concerned themselves with scientific studying of religious and philosophical illusions seeking to reveal the truth. Thus, 'The Essence of Christianity' by L. Feuerbach arose.

This thinker made an attempt to prove that Christian religious notions appeared as a result of transference of human family relationships to heaven. "God as god, as a simple being, is the being absolutely *alone, solitary – absolute*

solitude and self-sufficingness... But from a solitary God the essential need of duality, of love, of community, of the real, completed self-consciousness, of the *alter ego*, is excluded. This want is therefore satisfied by religion thus: in the still solitude of the divine being is placed *another*, a second, *different* from God as to personality, but *identical* with him in *essence*, – God *the Son*, in distinction from God *the Father*. God the Father is *I*, God the Son *Thou*. The *I* is *understanding*, the *Thou* is *Love*. But *Love* with *understanding* and *understanding* with *Love* is *mind*, and *mind* is the totality of man as such –*the total man*." (L. Feuerbach, 1995, pp.191-192)

Virtually, L. Feuerbach took up theomachism rejected by I. Kant. He aspired to find higher truth and proved fallibility of Christian conceptions about God and Man. In L. Feuerbach's opinion, unscientific truths should take the place of scientific physiological truths: "The new philosophy makes man, together... the exclusive, universal, and highest object of philosophy; it makes anthropology, together with physiology, the universal science" (L. Feuerbach, 1995, pp. 191-192)

It remained unclear what to do after this physiological truth acquisition. As religion let regulate people's relationships, enter into and keep social connections for centuries. For this world view, L. Feuerbach's approach was under attack of the founders of Marxism: "... the thing [Gegenstand], reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object [Objekt] or of intuition [Anschauung], but not as human sensuous activity, practice..." (K. Marx & F. Engels, Issue 2. V.3, pp.1-4).

K. Marx and F. Engels possessed enough good sense not to suggest physiology or any other science for explanation of social relations. But their position was drastically discrepant. In their early works K. Marx and F. Engels developed a conception about ideology as 'false, inverted

mind', and the main point of this was excellently stated by F. Engels in his last letters.

"Ideology is a process consciously accomplished by a so-called thinker, though with a false awareness. True factors evoking him remain unknown, if not, it wouldn't be an ideological process. Hence, he creates notions about false or seeming factors". (F. Engels. Letter to F. Mering, 14 July 1893- K. Marx, F. Engels. C. V.39, pp.82-84).

The main idea about ideology as inverted mind can be reduced to the following. Manufacturers (e.g. shoemakers) have neither time, nor will to sell their product in the market by themselves. As a result, they hire tradespeople, wholesalers. And these ones immediately develop in themselves a false ideological notion about their singular supremacy. They build in-company ethics, corporate educational institutions, corporate folklore, etc. Now it's common knowledge that merchants organize shoes manufacturing: if they don't sell finished products and buy raw material, shoemakers will stop the manufacturing process.

Merchants are in need of credit, money exchange, etc. Consequently, they develop banks to serve their needs. But as soon as they appear, the bankers and financiers develop their false awareness. They imagine they are principal: if they reject a credit, then both manufacturing and trade will be brought to a stop. This false awareness of financiers reproduces the conception about their priority in educational institutions that train financiers, their books, their corporate folklore, etc.

The pyramid's construction continues its escalation. The bankers' prosperity depends on a policy line of the state, taxation, government orders, etc. At first, financiers have to deal in politics themselves, but soon most of them get tired of it. Financiers make politicians as their representation in the bodies of power and administration. But the politicians, as soon as they

appear, also develop their false awareness. From now on, a politician is a demiurge of the social world. If he chooses a right economic course, the country will see flourished trade, production, etc. If he makes a wrong choice, all this will fall into decay. The notion of a politician as a supreme being is disseminated in special educational institutions, memoirs, and folklore.

Parliamentary rhetoric needs additional confirmation of different viewpoints about a draft bill. For instance, a politician exposing his opponent's bill should be able to dwell on justice in general, and supreme justice imperfectly embodied in human laws. Here come philosophy and theology representing the highest form of inverted mind.

Developed to serve the needs of politicians and lawyers, these subjects immediately form a false conception about their priority: the world now is ruled by philosophy and theology. Only the right belief can give prosperity to everything in the country: trade, finance, politics, and law. Special educational institutions are built with the purpose to strengthen this inverted ideological mind, etc.

K. Marx and F. Engels, who exposed this mystery of inverted mind, took up a scientific position. Production forms a basis for everything, and employees' physical labor forms a basis for production. Hence, just they, proletarians, must be considered principal in the society. Their mind and self-consciousness must be true: they must think of themselves as hegemony, that is, leaders of the whole society. They must be guided by science, first of all, natural and technical sciences. They must build plants, technical higher education establishments, and technical colleges. And all the rest, traders, financiers, politicians and philosophers, must consider themselves as proletariat's servants. Religious representatives, theologians and priests deserve a special consideration. They don't work even as

proletariat's servants as, in K. Marx and F. Engels' opinion, religion teaches submissiveness and reconciles with oppressed position: it is 'the sigh of an oppressed creature', and 'the opium for the people'.

But correction of this false, inverted mind, and inversion of everything upside down in practice led to revolution and complete disorganization of society, production, financial and political institutions of the country.

As P. Sloterdijk ironically stated the antinomy was in the fact that false mind and ideology excellently supported functioning of the state, while true notions, developed by Marxism, petrified its life in practice.

In P. Sloterdijk's opinion, Marxism led to a cynical conclusion: if social machine excellently works on the grounds of false notions, and true ones break it, then we can shut our eyes to 'falsity' of these notions. (P. Sloterdijk, 2001, pp.62-63).

One can say that 'truth' and 'falsity' of any notions are defined by their efficiency. If, for instance, economy of any region of the country is efficient on account of predominance of heathenism or shamanism, then such ideas should only be spread and advocated there. Atheism theoretically securing high production level and desirable policy was successfully introduced in another region. Therefore, this region must be treated in the spirit of atheism. The third region might be influenced by eastern Orthodoxy, or Judaism, or Protestantism, etc.

Cynicism of such ideas is obvious to both a priest and an atheist. Nevertheless, it sounds like music to a political engineer, who believes that to manipulate one's nation one can resort to any ideological conceptions, switching to the opposite ones, if it's required to obtain a necessary advantage. A society with political technologies dominating develops quite a different notion about the religion it needs. This religion puts an end to

being a 'religion of a book'. This name was given by Moslems to both coreligionists and adherers of Judaism and Christianity. When the nation puts an end to reading books in general and Holy books as well, it returns to heathenism. God's image is put to the front position, and to depict Him is categorically forbidden by Christianity and Islam.

Simulacrum took the position of God, conceived through Revelation and rational evidence of His existence, but as His colorful replicated imitation. This image is spread through movies, cartoons, printed on T-shirts and badges denoting affiliation to a certain social group. This type of a Christian or Moslim is wrongly called a fundamentalist, as the very dogmatic foundation is completely lost for him. He is unable to comment on the Scripture and doesn't require it. Religion for him is just Sunna, not even code of ethics, as standards are abstract, and regulations are changeable and of quite a specific character. The so-called fundamentalist loses freedom of choice, which he must possess like image of God and His simulacrum.

This freedom of choice expresses an ability to independently look about the routine issues guided by religious dogma. Instead, a fundamentalist begins his day with figuring out what the last requirements, he should follow, are. His independence is completely wiped off.

Then, what did I. Kant bear in mind? What did K. Marx and F. Engels write about? And what did P. Sloterdijk imply saying: "It is the unsurpassable rationality and human character of the great religions that permit them regenerating again and again from their rejuvenating sources"? (P. Sloterdijk, 2001, p.55).

In our understanding, these thinkers (as well as others) conceived religion as a moderator of human conduct that fulfils this function by admitting believers to the set of vitally important ways of behavior.

Thus, we speak about religion as an arsenal of solution of problems that man faces in his real life. The arsenal, a believer acquires a right to, when adopts religion. The arsenal that usually is called ‘wisdom’ anticipated from any historical religion.

In our opinion, as opposed to science, ethics, art and other forms, religion is a way of actualization of man’s need for human race affiliation.

What is meant here? Man originated as a member of a tribe. This fact makes us suppose man’s need in such affiliation. This need forms definite interests, notably, interest in keeping the tribe, not damaging it by one’s actions, interest in keeping inherent affiliation to the tribe, interest in being preserved as part of the tribe even after an individual’s death (as results from one’s activity and life). An individual can’t realize this need under finiteness of his existence. There must be forms of awareness, a root and a driving force of which is the human race in whole. Hence, the result of this awareness must be essential for every member of the tribe.

What’s in the basis of such process? What particulars can be transferred to the whole tribe and be recognized? Definite knowledge, as a rule, makes its sense just to a circle of people limited by time and space. Abstractions are too

much diverted from real life to be acquired by everyone.

What is in between? Schemes, samples and patterns of actions aimed at tribe preservation and reproduction. They don’t require special preparation to be adopted, and they are guaranteed to be efficient and universal. Acting in accordance with these schemes gives sense of rightness and justice, no rational arguments are needed. In other terms, society needs religion (if being isolated from the issues of metaphysics, ethics and culture) as an instrument that, regardless of any social changes, doesn’t analyze, generalize, compare, but accumulates and keeps schemes, samples and patterns of actions suitable in their simplicity for assimilation, and effective for preserving a tribe. It’s a peculiar independent filter holding only working schemes, and the process of filtering itself sanctifies them.

Hence, it makes clear the temptation to use the power of this instrument for manipulative purposes. And the core of today’s ‘pragmatists’ attack against religion lies in the attempt to show, as universal, efficient behavioral schemes targeted at tribe preservation, and samples of actions aimed at solving particular momentary tasks not related to tribe preservation.

That’s why religion according to pragmatism looks like simulacrum possessing no vital force, no grounds for existence.

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Тенденция прагматизации религии в эпоху политтехнологий

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В статье говорится о том, что все религии объединены общей чертой - наличием в них определенных схем, шаблонов, образцов действий, направленных на сохранение, воспроизводство рода и обеспечение принадлежности к нему. Автор полагает, что, несмотря на все попытки низвергнуть религию с ее пьедестала, она является «вечно возвращающейся» именно в силу потребности человека в сохранении и продолжении рода. Учитывая это, легко понять, что любые частные попытки так называемых политтехнологов создать религию не могут дать ничего кроме симулякров. Религия, в свою очередь, выступает своеобразным фильтром, защищающим интересы рода.

Ключевые слова: религия, философия, религиоведение, прагматизм, симулякр, Бог, мудрость, род, разум, человек, атеизм, цинизм, идеология, ложное сознание.
