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Political Sciences

Catanzaro | lagi

edited by
# Andrea Catanzaro
# Sara Lagi

The clash between monism and pluralism does exist. It has allowed the emergence of pivotal political theories during the centuries. It has inspired the construction of political models and theories. In our work we analyzed the term and the concept of monism and pluralism as having an historical dimension, changing over centuries, differently interpreted by the authors and ideologies that we have taken into account. In this sense, we investigated the terms and the concepts of monism and pluralism from the perspective of the history of political thought. That is the reason why we chose to talk about *monisms* and *pluralisms*. Through this particular viewpoint we analyzed how over centuries *monisms* and *pluralisms* have been used as conceptual frameworks, theories, ideologies to reflect on long-term issues such as the nature of political power, the problem of political legitimacy, the relationship between the rulers and the ruled, the meaning of freedom and tolerance, the sense of living together within contexts characterized by diversity. In other terms, we chose to reflect on monism and pluralism not as theoretical entities but as *monisms and pluralisms inside history*. In doing so, we tried to show how monisms and pluralisms in the history of political thought have posed and continue to pose a series of issues and problems concerning all of us and far from being mere erudition.

Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought

# Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought

Political Sciences

Edited by
Andrea Catanzaro
Sara Lagi

# Monisms and Pluralisms
# in the History of Political Thought

Sara Lagi wrote the essay Sir Isaiah Berlin: against Monism (1953-1958) and the Afterword entitled Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought: some (not conclusive) remarks. She also edited the essays of Andrea Catanzaro, Iolanda Richichi, Nicoletta Stradaioli, Federica Falchi, Stefano Parodi and Pejman Abdolmohammadi.

Andrea Catanzaro wrote the essay The Achaeans of Homer and those of Hobbes: from a pluralistic monism to absolutism and the Preface entitled Why monisms and pluralisms? Reasons and purposes of a path. He also edited the essays of Sara Lagi, Carlo Morganti, Carlotta Stegagno, Davide Suin, Giuseppe Sciara and the Bibliography.

# Contents

# Why monisms and pluralisms?
# Reasons and purposes of a path
*Andrea Catanzaro*

*"That depends, a good deal,*
*on where you want to get to"*

(L. Carroll)

The backbone of this work lies in the dichotomy between monism and pluralism. That being stated, in order to produce some curiosity and appeal, it would have been better to write "in the misleading dichotomy", though just for a while. Due to this, some preliminary remarks are needed: the adjective misleading is here clearly used as a part of a bait-and-switch strategy and the consequent choice of opening with such a provocative and apparently unreasonable assertion deserves to be carefully delimited and explained. How is it possible to define misleading such a crucial distinction from the perspective of political thought? How can this choice, clearly at odds with the title of the book, not sound as a sort of nonsense?

Both questions are correct. The clash between monism and pluralism should not be considered as *misleading*: it does exist, it deals with something real, it has allowed the emergence of pivotal political theories during the centuries. It has imbued, marked and shaped political debate, has contributed to the

construction of political models, societies and identities, has inspired authors, thinkers and philosophers. Above all, it has instilled actions with consequences – sometimes dramatic consequences – on human beings. So, why might it be deemed as *misleading*?

There is a main reason that can partially justify this claim that is – and remains – clearly provocative; in order to appreciate it, however, a lexical remark is needed. The Oxford English Dictionary writes about monism: "any theory or system of thought or belief, that assumes a single ultimate principle, being, force, etc., rather than more than one"[1]. Regarding pluralism, we read: "any theory or system of thought which recognizes more than one irreducible basic principle"[2].

If the dichotomy is clear-cut from a linguistic perspective, from a political one it is not as evident: monism and pluralism as previously defined appear more similar to empty boxes than to something able to influence the real lives of people and, accordingly, to be significant from a political-historical perspective.

So, their dichotomy might be regarded as misleading if they are taken into account as mere categories – the monism or the pluralism as theoretical entities – unlinked to history and, particularly, to the History of Political Thought. It might not be, instead, if we consider them – as they really are – as something different, that is, a sort of simplifying label wisely created and used in order to summarise and classify the more multifaceted and many-sided applied natures of those monisms and pluralisms that have appeared over the centuries in the course of history.

That said, the adjective misleading and its provocative role can be put aside and forgotten; what remains, the idea of the existence of historically framed monisms and pluralisms, is instead the load-bearing axis of this work. Such a peculiar reading implies the movement from the theoretical dimension and the entrance into the historical one, where the ideas of monism and pluralism become worth analysing from a political thought perspective because of their consequences on people's lives. This was the starting point from which this work was born, the idea taken as a cornerstone by all the scholars involved in the project.

If it is true that each title entails – less or more evidently – a question, the title we chose for this project perfectly fits this definition. The birth of a research-group to work on monisms and pluralisms through a perspective of

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[1]  Cf. Oxford English Dictionary, link: http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/121244?redirecte-dFrom=monism#eid; date of the query, 09/12/2015.
[2]  Cf. Oxford English Dictionary, link: http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/121244?redirecte-dFrom=monism#eid; date of the query, 09/12/2015.

history of political thought is not coincidence. It has a lot to do with a fundamental scientific and personal interest shared by the people involved in this project, the interest not so much in abstract questions – as we might consider at first glance the topic of our book – as much as in our current reality – characterized by growing turmoil, instability, contrasts – within which the term and the concept of monism and pluralism have been consolidating powerfully, so much that both terms have penetrated into our language through mass media, scholarly works, magazines etc.

In the fluid, complex context we all live in, one tends to associate monism with ideologies, theories, movements supposed to be inevitably fanatic, intolerant, just because of their monistic root, whereas pluralism is advocated as a positive value, as an intrinsic and positive connotation of free, open, tolerant societies and political systems. There is much truth in this (oversimplified) dichotomy but the point is: how helpful can these two terms – and the interpretative categories they represent today – be in order to "read" our current world? What do the term and concept of monism as well as of pluralism – as they are commonly perceived nowadays – say which is relevant to the world we live in? Aren't they more complex and rich in nuances than what one might think? And if they are, in what sense?

In this work we tried to respond to these questions by analyzing and investigating the term and the concept of monism and pluralism as "living entities" having an historical dimension, changing over centuries, differently interpreted according to the author, ideology, cultural context we have taken into account. That is why we chose to talk about monisms and pluralisms.

Nonetheless, having said that, we have not completely explained the ultimate sense of our research project yet. The above mentioned questions have a sense, because – in our opinion – what makes monism and pluralism so interesting from a perspective of history of political thought is the fact – as we are going to show – that over centuries both have been (and continue to be) used as conceptual frameworks to propose, discuss, reflect about long-term issues such as power and its legitimacy, the meaning of freedom (collective and individual), the relationship between rulers and ruled, between community and individuals, the meaning of tolerance and the sense of living together within contexts of religious, ethnic, national homogeneity as well as within contexts of diversity. All issues and problems concerning all of us, now, and far from being merely academic questions.

In this book, the choice of collecting works linked to each other by the analysis concerning specific historical readings of this dichotomy, but very

different from the perspectives of times, places and cultural contexts, arises from the desire to show how people, moving from the theoretical concepts of monism and pluralism, have adapted them to the real situations that, during the centuries, needed to be faced.

Accordingly, it does not appear so important whether these texts focus on the War of Troy or the Cold War, take into account Europe, U.S. or Middle East, analyse secular or religious political thoughts: each research work published in this book is aimed at freezing a clear-cut historical moment, examining a single face of the above-mentioned many-sided applied natures of *monisms* and *pluralisms*, highlighting how and why people – moving from theoretical ideas – have chosen to implement and apply them to specific contexts.

This was the common denominator that inspired the conference day entitled *Monismo e pluralismo nella storia del pensiero politico* which took place at the University of Genova last October. This event came after a long preparatory path, which started in the spring of 2015. This path involved several scholars of *History of Political Thought* who were interested in the subject, though in different ways. It was a sort of experiment, an attempt to create a *unicum* made up of different frames of the same topic analysed in various and peculiar historical moments and contexts, but unified by the same methodological perspective.

The suggestions coming from that preparatory path, the debate generated on the conference day and the discussions which arose after it, have allowed an in-depth-analysis of this topic. This book represents the natural outcome of the course, a work where the initial idea – grown, developed and enhanced through the debate – is the convergence point, which can join scholars with different peculiar research interests and show how the theme in question can be multifaceted, broad and wide depending on the various contexts.

As often happens, things balloon: new issues and questions emerged during the individual research work and collective discussions; new problems, subjects and themes would have been worth analysing and including in the book; other thinkers, situations and theories still need to be taken into account and sounded out in depth. In short, this book is far from being exhaustive, nor does it claim to be so; it represents a step, maybe a first step, in a wider path which was and is growing day after day and, because of its own nature, it remains a sort of long-time work in progress.

A last remark is needed: the choice of focusing on monism and pluralism not as theoretical entities detached from history but as *monisms* and *pluralisms* inside it, has given us the opportunity of avoiding a rigid black-and-white

viewpoint in favour of a more flexible grey-scale perspective. It has paved the way to further queries, whose summary – short but effective – can be easily explained through wondering if something exists between the two extremes and what its nature and distinctive elements are.

Each single work included in this book represents a piece of the answer to these questions.

# The Achaeans of Homer and those of Hobbes:
## from a pluralistic monism to absolutism
*Andrea Catanzaro*

The political structure of the Achaean army in the *Iliad* shows us a peculiar idea concerning the political power. The Achaeans who are besieging the city of Troy undoubtedly appear as a sort of alliance of different groups led by Agamemnon, king of Mycenae. Although it cannot be denied that the Homeric text is clear about the political supremacy of the Atrides, it does not allow us to think that the internal organization of the army is so simple, monolithic and led by only one man as it might appear.

 The poem, for example, opens with the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, a struggle that is far from being a mere fight for a woman: though the contenders are apparently clashing for Briseis, they are really battling for supremacy in the Achaean group. It implies that the regime in force is not so solid, defined and stable as it might seem, but hides some critical elements right inside. They are remarkable from the perspective of the political thought. The apparently monistic regime that characterizes the army besieging Troy is not so homogeneous, centralised in Agamemnon's hands and ordered in a stable strictly vertical dimension, but presents a many-sided and problematic structure that can perhaps be labelled as a sort of *pluralistic monism*.

In my opinion, the most important evidence that allows us to understand this situation, is the presence of a plurality of *basiléis* who lead the various people forming the Achaean army. Atrides is the commander-in-chief, but other heroes – Achilles, Ajax, Odysseus, Diomedes, Menelaus, Nestor, only to mention the most famous ones – have a *quantum* of partially autonomous power that they are used to exercising on the people they have guided under the walls of Troy.

After the quarrel, for example, Achilles chooses to get out of war and makes the people he governs, the Myrmidons, get out too. It makes sure evidence that, although Agamemnon holds a monocratic power, it is not completely absolute. The other Achaean *basiléis* have autonomous spheres where the Atrides cannot manage any authority.

Political decisions concerning war, strategies and relations against or with the enemies are Agamemnon's duty, though collegial consultations often take place between the *basiléus* and the *basiléis*. Despite that, in internal questions, as the quarrel is, the Atrides' position of power appears less monocratic than in the above-mentioned situations and the most important heroes act as if they were almost on a similar level to their leader. The *Iliad* describes criticisms during the assemblies, violent protests and discontent towards Agamemnon. His power runs even the risk of slipping away from his hands (cf. *Il.*, II, 142-277). However it cannot be overlooked that he is the commander in chief and the man who holds the pivotal power inside the Achaean army.

When in the 70s of the XVII century Thomas Hobbes started to translate the Homeric poems from Greek into English, this question put him in trouble; obviously it could not be a problem in itself, but it was because of the possible significance that the philosopher seems to have ascribed to this work. If we accept Eric Nelson's suggestion by which "Hobbes's *Iliads and Odysses of Homer* are a continuation of *Leviathan* by other means"[1], it appears clear enough that the situation becomes different.

The theme of the possible political value of the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric poems has started to be studied and debated only in recent times in literature[2]. It is based on the idea that these texts are not simply the outcome

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[1]  E. Nelson, *Translations of Homer. Iliad*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. XXII.

[2]  Nelson mentions these texts in his book (*op. cit.*, p. XIV): G. B. Riddeough, *Thomas Hobbes' Translations of Homer*, "Phoenix", XII, 1958, pp. 58-62; E. and I. Kontiados, *Thomas Hobbes ὡς μεταφραστὴς τοῦ Ὁμήρου*, "Parnassos", VIII, 1966, pp. 277-299; J. Ball, *The Despised Version: Hobbes's Translation of Homer*, "Restoration", XX, 1996, pp. 1-17; P. Davis, *Thomas Hobbes's Translations of Homer: Epic and Anticlericalism in the Late Seventeenth Century England*, "Seventeenth

of the work of an old man who chose to translate the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in order to spend also the last years of his life in studying or, as the same philosopher wrote in an essay, "because I had nothing else to do"[3]. Blocked by the censorship, Hobbes was to bypass this hindrance using an alternative means for spreading his political ideas; this tool was the English translation of the Homeric poems.

Due to this intention, however, a great problem was added to the obvious linguistic problems usually linked to any translation works. Hobbes did not simply want to translate the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: from a socio-political perspective, he wanted to teach moral virtue through them[4]. So he had to work hard on these texts in order to make them comply as much as possible to the ideas he had explained in his previous political works.

For the purpose of making the translations "a continuation of *Leviathan* by other means"[5], Hobbes was compelled to modify a lot of those Homeric lines that were at odds with his political theories. He had to manage the original texts very carefully because the story could not be changed in its essential passages[6], but he was obliged to do it, since some considerable incompatibilities threatened to undermine the moral and the political intents he had set as his goals.

One of the most remarkable elements that the philosopher needed to underline was the absolutist conception of political power. As he wrote in the *Leviathan*, in order to allow the community to live safely and in peace, people, through the covenant, must ratify that they accept to be ruled by a man, or a group of men, who holds the whole sovereignty[7]. In chapter XVII, Hobbes

Century", XII, 1997, pp. 231-255; A. P. Martinich, *Hobbes's translations of Homer and anticlericalism*, "Seventeenth Century", XVI, 2001, pp. 147-157; on the same topic, have to be also mentioned E. Fabbri, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes*, "Humana. Mente", XII, 2010, pp. 151-155; E. Nelson, *Translations as correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s*, in M. J. Burke – M. Richter (edited by), *Why concept Matter. Translating Social and Political Thought*, Leiden, Brill Academic Pub., 2012, pp. 119-139; C. Condren, *The philosopher Hobbes as the poet Homer*, "Renaissance Studies", XXVIII, 2013, pp. 71-89.

[3] T. Hobbes, *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, in W. Molesworth (edited by), *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol X, London, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1844, p. X; cf. E. Nelson, *Thomas Hobbes Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XV and XCIX; J. Ball, *op. cit.*, p. 2; P. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 233; A. P. Martinich, *op. cit.*, p. 147; L. Strauss, *Che cos'è la Filosofia Politica*, Urbino, Argalia Editore, 1977, p. 189; L. Borot, *The poetics of Thomas Hobbes by himself: an edition of his preface to his translations of Homer*, "Cahiers Élisabéthains", LX, 2001, p. 67 and, concerning the text of the *To the reader*, pp. 74-81.

[4] Cf. E. Nelson, *Translations as correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 127 and Id., *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXXIII.

[5] Cf. footnote n. 1.

[6] Cf., for example, E. Nelson, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXII.

[7] T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, XVII, in J. C. A. Gaskin, *Thomas Hobbes. Leviathan*, Oxford, Oxford

makes it clear that this man, or this group, is the sovereign; all the other people, without any exceptions, are subjects[8].

In translating the *Iliad* the philosopher chose Agamemnon as the model of the real king and tried to make him become as similar as possible to the sovereign he had described in the *Leviathan*[9].

In his article entitled *Political Ideology in Translations of the Iliad, 1660-1715*[10], J. Lynch highlights that, it was rather a usual custom by authors involved in the debate between Royalists and supporters of the Parliament to mention the heroes and the events of the Iliadic saga in order to support their arguments or discredit the adversaries' ones.

However Hobbes did not limit himself to quoting excerpts or mentioning characters and facts able to endorse his political theories. He went down an alternative path: he chose to work on the entire texts, altering what he did not consider useful to his purposes and in compliance with his political theories[11].

Obviously, if Agamemnon had to become the archetypal model of the king, the situation of *pluralistic monism* previously sketched out could not remain unvaried.

If in Hobbesian political thought peace and safety are consequences of the clear-cut distinction between sovereign and subjects, the political structure of the Achaean army does not fit well with this idea. The philosopher's absolutist conception, that he had explained and developed in his previously political works, compelled him to move from the original model of *pluralistic monism* to a new one, where the holder of sovereignty was unique and clearly identified.

In my opinion, the passage from the Homeric *pluralistic monism* to a more absolutist vision is one of the most remarkable pieces of evidence that Hobbes really wants to use the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as "a continuation of *Leviathan* by other means"[12].

Since he cannot completely modify the text so as not to distort the original Iliadic plot – he is translating the poem and not rewriting it –, Hobbes tries to stress all the monocratic aspects concerning Agamemnon and, at the same

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University Press, 1998, p. 114.

[8] Ivi.

[9] Cf. E. Fabbri, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-153; Id., *Dal realismo politico di Tucidide a quello di Hobbes*, "Annali del Dipartimento di Filosofia" (Università degli Studi di Firenze), XV, 2009, p. 23; J. Lynch, *Political Ideology in Translations of the Iliad, 1660-1715*, "Translation and Literature", VII, 1998, p. 27, p. 30 and p. 34; E. Nelson, *Thomas Hobbes. Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXII.

[10] J. Lynch, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-41.

[11] Cf. for example E. Nelson, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 139; Id., *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXII.

[12] Cf. footnote n. 1.

time, to decrease the power of the other Achaean *basiléis* in order to support the Atrides.

He principally reaches this target through linguistic tools that allow him to alter the Homeric lines without modifying the story as a whole. In his work, one of the most difficult situations that the philosopher has to bypass concerns exactly the simultaneous presence of a plurality of *basiléis* inside the same group.

If we focus on the *Iliad* II book we can find a clear example of it. During the assembly where he makes the fake announcement concerning the abandonment of the war, Agamemnon loses the control of the army. The order is restored by the intervention of Odysseus that allows Atrides to get back into power.

All of this notwithstanding, someone starts to publicly thwart Agamemnon and the other *basiléis*. He is Thersites, whose words surely could not sound good to Hobbes: the soldier does not only criticize his king in assembly, but also shoots the other Achaean kings with his verbal arrows. It was stopped by Odysseus, whose speech, however, clearly reveals the existence of a plurality of men who hold power and are called by the name of *basiléis* the same one used to denote Agamemnon.

So the philosopher, who wants to move from the *pluralistic monism* of the original texts, to the absolutisms, has to solve two relevant problems. The former, which I will not consider in this essay since it does not concern the theme I chose to discuss, deals with the protests against the holder – or holders – of sovereignty. The latter, instead, appears very remarkable under the perspective of the transition from the original structure of power to a new one that matches better with the Hobbesian absolutist theory. We read in the *Iliad*:

Θερσῖτ᾽ ἀκριτόμυθε, λιγύς περ ἐὼν ἀγορητής,
ἴσχεο, μηδ᾽ ἔθελ᾽ οἶος ἐριζέμεναι **βασιλεῦσιν**:
οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ σέο φημὶ χερειότερον βροτὸν ἄλλον
ἔμμεναι, ὅσσοι ἅμ᾽ Ἀτρεΐδης ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον.
τὼ οὐκ ἂν **βασιλῆας** ἀνὰ στόμ᾽ ἔχων ἀγορεύοις,
καί σφιν ὀνείδεά τε προφέροις, νόστόν τε
φυλάσσοις.
[...]

What a flood of abuse. Thersites! Even for you,
fluent and flowing as you are. Keep quiet.
Who are *you* to wrangle with **kings**, you alone?
No one, I say—no one alive less soldierly than you,
none in the ranks that came to Troy with Agamemnon.
So stop your babbling, mouthing the names of **kings**,
flinging indecencies in their teeth, your eyes
peeled for a chance to cut and run for home.
[…]

ὦ πόποι ἦ δὴ μυρί᾽ Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐσθλὰ ἔοργε
βουλάς τ᾽ ἐξάρχων ἀγαθὰς πόλεμόν τε
κορύσσων:
νῦν δὲ τόδε μέγ᾽ ἄριστον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρεξεν,
ὃς τὸν λωβητῆρα ἐπεσβόλον ἔσχ᾽ ἀγοράων.
οὔ θήν μιν πάλιν αὖτις ἀνήσει θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ
νεικείειν **βασιλῆας** ὀνειδείοις ἐπέεσσιν[13].

A thousand terrific strokes he's carried
off—Odysseus,
taking the lead in tactics, mapping battle-plans.
But here's the best thing yet he's done for
the men—
he's put a stop to this babbling, foulmouthed fool!
Never again, I'd say, will our gallant comrade
risk his skin to attack the **kings** with insults[14].

Hobbes translates:

*Prater, that to thy self seems eloquent,*
*How darest thou alone* **the King** *t'upbraid?*
*A greater Coward than thou art there's none*
*'Mongst all the* Greeks *that came with us to Troy.*
*Else 'gainst* **the King** *thy tongue would not so run.*
*Thou seek's but an excuse to run away.*
*[…]*
*And, Oh said one t'another standing near;*
Ulysses *many handsome thing has done,*
*When we in Councel or in Battle were,*
*A better deed than this is he did none,*
*That has so silenced this railing knave,*
*And of his peevish humour stay'd the flood,*
*As he no more will dare* **the King** *to brave[15].*

In the original text the safeguarding of monocratic power concerns Achaeans kings as a whole and does not exclusively refer to Agamemnon: though the *basiléus* in trouble is the Atrides in this section of the poem, the triple use of the plural form *basiléis* makes it clear that he is not the only man who holds royal power among the Achaeans.

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[13] *Il.*, II, 246-251 e 272-277; the excerpts coming from the original *Iliad* that I quoted in this article are shown according to the Greek text edited by Rosa Calzecchi Onesti (*Omero. Iliade*, Turin, Einaudi, 1950); modern English translations of the quoted excerpts come from this text: R. FAGLES – B. KNOX (edited by), *Homer. The Iliad*, London, Penguin, 1991 (henceforth [F.K.]); from this point forward, bold text both in Greek and in English is mine.

[14] *Il.*, II, 285-292 and 319-324 [F.K.]; from this point forward the Hobbesian translations of the *Iliad* are shown according the critical edition by Eric Nelson (*Translations of Homer. Iliad*, cit.); the symbol "*" placed after a line number denotes that the quotation come from this edition.

[15] *Il.*, II, 219*-224* e 241*-247*.

The choice of removing the plural forms and using the singular ones in order to show a political system centralized in the Atrides' hands is so frequent in the translations that we cannot consider the quoted example as an exception.

There is another tool, whose usage is more frequent than this one, which allows Hobbes to bypass the problem of the presence of several *basiléis* in the Achaean army. It is really used to remove several hindrances preventing the philosopher from making the translations a vehicle for his political ideas; however I focus here only on its value as a means employed to simplify the unwanted structure of the Achaean society.

The tool is excision of those words, portions of lines and, though rarely, small sections of text that Hobbes deems not to be in compliance with his political theory.

A significant example comes from book I of the *Iliad*: during the quarrel, Achilles says to his commander in chief that he is ready to retire from war because of the insult suffered. Agamemnon replies:

φεῦγε μάλ᾽ εἴ τοι θυμὸς ἐπέσσυται, οὐδέ σ᾽ ἔγωγε λίσσομαι εἵνεκ᾽ ἐμεῖο μένειν: πάρ᾽ ἔμοιγε καὶ ἄλλοι οἵ κέ με τιμήσουσι, μάλιστα δὲ μητίετα Ζεύς. ἔχθιστος δέ μοί ἐσσι διοτρεφέων **βασιλήων**: αἰεὶ γάρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε[16].

*Desert,* by all means—if the spirit drives you home! I will never beg you to stay, not on *my* account. Never—others will take my side and do me honor, Zeus above all, whose wisdom rules the world. You—I hate you most of all the **warlords** loved by the gods. Always dear to your heart, strife, yes, and battles, the bloody grind of war[17].

In the Hobbesian translation we read:

*Go when you will, (said* Agamemnon*) fly,*
*Ile not entreat you for my sake to stay.*
*When you are gone more honour'd shall be I,*
*Nor* Jove *(I hope) will with you go away.*
*In you I shall but loose an enemy*
*That only loves to quarrel and to fight[18].*

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[16]  *Il.*, I, 173-179.
[17]  *Il.*, I, 204-210 [F.K.].
[18]  *Il.*, I, 169*-174*.

The words of Atrides entail the presence of several *basiléis* in the Achaean army, since he mentions Achilles as the worst one among them. The original text is clear about this question, but the Hobbesian one is clearer, although in a different way. The philosopher chooses to drastically remove the expression *diotrephés basiléis – kings fed by Zeus –* and avoid maintaining something he considers dangerous.

There must be only one single and well identified holder of sovereignty in the same political community: it can be a single man or a group of men, but it is not possible that the distinction between sovereign and subjects is not clear cut.

In the case of the Achaean army, the *basiléis* authorities potentially run the risk of appearing in competition with Agamemnon's one. It is not a group that holds sovereignty, but a number of detached heroes whose powers overlap each other. In other words, the system appears as a *pluralistic monism* and this is an unacceptable situation for Hobbes. So excisions and modifications in words or lines allow him to change it.

Another tool that Hobbes often uses to reach this target is the downgrading of those *basiléis* that he does not want to present as holders of sovereignty. It is also strictly related to the question of the distinction between king and subjects explained in the *Leviathan*.

The *ratio* which inspires this Hobbesian choice is shown by the philosopher both in that work and in the *Behemoth*. In the former he writes:

> *For in the sovereignty is the fountain of honour. The dignities of lord, earl, duke, and prince are his creatures. As in the presence of the master, the servants are equal, and without any honour at all; so are the subjects, in the presence of the sovereign. And though they shine some more, some less, when they are out of his sight; yet in his presence, they shine no more than the stars in the presence of the sun[19].*

In the second one we read:

> *King they thought was but a little of the highest honour, which Gentleman, Knight, Baron, Earle, Duke were but steps to ascend to, with the helpe of Riches; and had no rule of equity but presidents and custome, and he was thought wisest and fittest to be chosen for a Parliament, that was most auerse to the granting of Subsidies or other publick payments[20].*

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[19]  T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, XVIII, in J. C. A. Gaskin, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

[20]  T. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, I Dialogue, in P. Seaward (edited by), *Thomas Hobbes. Behemoth*, Oxford,

So Achaean famous *basiléis* often become princes or lords in the Hobbesian translations[21]; through downgrading, the philosopher does not need to intervene heavily on the text; he makes only small focused changes that do not substantially modify the story; however they radically change the sense of the Homeric lines, making them in compliance with Hobbes political theories.

We find a significant use of this tool in book II of the *Iliad*: Agamemnon is seriously about to lose his authority over the army because of his fake announcement of the abandonment of the war and Odysseus tries to stop both the soldiers and the *basiléis* running away to the ships. We read in the *Iliad*:

| | |
|---|---|
| ὅν τινα μὲν **βασιλῆα** καὶ ἔξοχον ἄνδρα κιχείη τὸν δ᾿ ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς[22] | Whenever Odysseus met some man of rank, a **king**, he'd halt and hold him back with winning words[23]. |

Hobbes translates:

> *And when he met with any Prince or Peer,/He gently said[24].*

These Iliadic lines mention the existence of several kings in the Achaean army and, as in above mentioned examples, this situation is completely at odds with Hobbesian theories. However the philosopher cannot remove or modify this episode in depth because it is a crucial and famous event of the story. So he acts in another way: the men Odysseus meets are not called *basiléis*, but princes or peers in the translations.

This expedient allows Hobbes to reach two different and remarkable targets: firstly he removes the problem of plurality of kings in the same group, since only one man can be the king and "the dignities of lord, earl, duke, and prince are his creatures"[25]. Secondly, using the noun *peer* related to Odysseus, the philosopher puts him – a potentially dreadful Agamemnon's competitor – on the same level of the other Achaean leaders and, accordingly, makes him a subject of Agamemnon.

In line 309 of the book XIX of the *Iliad*, the text says that there are *other kings* – *állous* (…) *basiléas*[26] – surrounding Achilles; both the adjective, which highlights the presence of several *basiléis*, and the noun, whose significance

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Clarendon Press, 2014, p. 111.
[21] Cf. for example IX (699*/710 [S. 706]), XII (302*/319), XIV (346*/379), XIX (289*/309).
[22] *Il.*, II, 188-189.
[23] *Il.*, II, 218-219 [F.K.].
[24] *Il.*, II, 165*-166*.
[25] Cf. footnote n. 17.
[26] *Il.*, XIX, 309.

appears unequivocal, are removed. Hobbes simply translates "other Princes"[27] and avoids maintaining elements seriously dangerous from his perspective.

Also on this occasion, he seems to aim to change the original *pluralistic monism* in an *absolutism* more in compliance with what he wrote in chapter XVII of the *Leviathan*.

This transition work might have particularly troubled the philosopher on the four occasions where the Homeric Greek used the comparative and the superlative forms of the noun *basiléus*[28]. He had to face expressions like "to be more king than someone else" (*basiléuteros*) or "to be the most king among the other ones" (*basiléutatos*). Both *basiléuteros* and *basiléutatos* suggest the existence of a political system where sovereignties potentially overlap.

In book IX of the *Iliad*, Nestor, talking to Agamemnon, says:

Ἀτρεΐδη σὺ μὲν ἄρχε: σὺ γὰρ βασιλεύτατός ἐσσι[29].

Atrides. lead the way – you are **the greatest king** –
spread out a feast for all your senior chiefs[30].

Hobbes translates:

*And let them all from you (*Atrides*) take / Their Orders.* **For you are our General**[31].

He cannot use here, as he can in other passages, the tool of downgrading: although he could take advantage from calling Agamemnon "the greatest king"[32], he would have confirmed through this translation that there are also other kings in the Achaean army. So he chooses to move from the political dimension to the military one: the use of the expression "you are our General"[33] anyway highlights the supremacy of the Atrides, but omits whatever reference to the existence of other kings.

Line 392 of the same Iliadic book, allows us to appreciate a similar translation though it does not apply to a superlative but a comparative form.

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[27] *Il.*, XIX, 289*.

[28] Cf. *Il.*, IX, 69 (*basiléutatos*); *Il.,* IX, 160 and 392; X, 239 (*basiléuteros*).

[29] *Il.*, IX, 69.

[30] *Il.*, IX, 80-81 [F.K.].

[31] *Il.*, IX, 61*-62*; cf. E. Nelson, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 134: "The Greek term is 'the greatest king'" (βασιλεύτατος) (IX. 69). Again, Hobbes translates his way around the fact that Agamemnon is one king among many"; E. Fabbri, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.

[32] Cf. footnote n. 27.

[33] Cf. footnote n. 28.

Achilles, who was offered to marry one of Agamemnon's daughters as a compensation for the insult received by Atrides, replies:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| κούρην δ᾽ οὐ γαμέω Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο,<br>οὐδ᾽ εἰ χρυσείῃ Ἀφροδίτῃ κάλλος ἐρίζοι,<br>ἔργα δ᾽ Ἀθηναίῃ γλαυκώπιδι ἰσοφαρίζοι:<br>οὐδέ μιν ὣς γαμέω: ὃ δ᾽ Ἀχαιῶν ἄλλον ἑλέσθω,<br>ὅς τις οἷ τ᾽ ἐπέοικε καὶ ὃς βασιλεύτερός ἐστιν[34]. | His daughter … I will marry no daughter of Agamemnon.<br>Not if she rivaled Aphrodite in all her golden glory,<br>not if she matched the crafts of dear-eyed Athena,<br>not even then would I make her my wife! No.<br>let her father pitch on some other Argive –<br>one who can please *him*,<br>a greater king than I[35]. | I'll not his Daughter take. Bid him bestow her<br>Upon **some Prince** he thinks more worthy. Let her<br>For Husband have **a King of greater power**[36]. |

The expression "other Argive"[37] becomes "some Prince"[38] and "basiléuterós estin"[39] is translated "king of greater power". Hobbes cannot directly downgrade Achilles, a possible husband of the king's daughter, considering him less than a king: this could damage the image of Agamemnon. So, he transfers the idea of *greater* from the dimension of kingship to the more ambiguous level of power and makes a potentially dangerous Homeric verse useful to reaffirm the supremacy of Atrides.

In book X of the *Iliad*, the expression "basiléuterós estin"[40] referred to a generic Achaean *basiléus* is not translated at all but substituted with a more neutral verse[41].

Despite these translations, there is an occasion when the comparative form is duly translated. Although it seems to be a sort of exception, it is possible to find an explanation for this Hobbesian choice, an explanation that once again can be related to the theme of the passage from *pluralistic monism* to *absolutism*.

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[34] *Il.*, IX, 388-392.
[35] *Il.*, IX, 474-479 [F.K.].
[36] *Il.*, IX, 386*-388*.
[37] Cf. footnote n. 31.
[38] Cf. footnote n. 32.
[39] Cf. footnote n. 30.
[40] Cf. *Il.*, X, 234-239.
[41] Cf. *Il.*, X, 213*-215*.

Agamemnon was thinking to send Achilles a delegation in order to persuade him to come back to fight. He said:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| δμηθήτω– Ἀΐδης τοι ἀμείλιχος ἠδ᾽ ἀδάμαστος, τοὔνεκα καί τε βροτοῖσι θεῶν ἔχθιστος ἁπάντων– καί μοι ὑποστήτω ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι ἠδ᾽ ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὔχομαι εἶναι⁰. | Let him submit to me! Only the god of death is so relentless, Death submits to no one – so mortals hate him most of all the gods. Let him bow down to me! I am the greater king, I am the elder-born, I claim – the greater man⁰. | Inexorable none but *Pluto* is, But hated for't. **I am the greater King**, And elder man; he should consider thisᵖ. |

By maintaining the original expression, Hobbes surely cannot be as strict as on other occasions about the presence of a plurality of kings inside the Achaean army. However the advantage in doing so comes from the particular sequence told in these lines. Agamemnon is speaking about himself and says that he is *basiléuteros* – literally *more king* – than Achilles. In the Hobbesian perspective, this claim, though problematic for the overlapping sovereignties, is useful to restate the supremacy of the Atrides over his dangerous competitor. On this occasion, extinguishing Achilles's ambitions sounds better than removing a reference to an unwanted situation. Though in a different way from what we have previously seen, this translation too appears consistent with the idea of transition from the original *pluralistic monism* to an absolutist vision.

To sum up: through his translation work of the Homeric poems, Hobbes aspires to the ambitious purpose of teaching his political ideas; among them the dichotomy sovereign-subjects surely represents a cornerstone. However the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are often far from being in compliance with it. Particularly, the structure of power inside the Achaean army appears at odds with the absolutism explained in the *Leviathan*. So the pluralistic monism that can be found in the original texts has to be changed. Due to this, the philosopher modifies those Homeric lines that he considers problematic, in order to reach the target of really creating "a continuation of *Leviathan* by other means"[45].

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[42] *Il.*, IX, 158-161.
[43] *Il.*, IX, 189-193 [F.K.].
[44] Il., IX, 154*-156*; cf. E. NELSON, Translations of Homer. Iliad cit., p. 137: "Hobbes softens Agamemnon's remarks here. In the Greek he does not ask Achilles to 'consider this', but rather to 'submit' (ὑποστήτο) (IX. 160)".
[45] Cf. footnote n. 1.

# Nicolas Antoine Boulanger's portrait
# of "irrational monism"
## in postdiluvian humanity
### Iolanda Richichi

Secularization is one of the key issues considered by historians analyzing the modern era. In 1598, Alberigo Gentili claimed "Silete theologi in munere alieno"[1] to order theologians to keep silence about topics outside their domain. The historiography has often attributed the clear separation of religious discourse from political debate to this time. Thus, Gentili's works became the manifesto of this secularization.

However, an intense cross talk between politics and religion was still evident in Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Secularization is a complex phenomenon that fully became true only at the end of the eighteenth century. Indeed, it was only at the end of this century that the value of the Bible concerning topics not directly connected to this rule, like chronology, was questioned.

During this period a lot of papers, diaries and travel narratives about the East culture were published. Reading these papers the attention of European culture switched to the Chinese, Chaldean, Egyptian "endless antiquities"[2].

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[1] A. Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres* (1598), introduction by D. Quaglioni; trad. by P. Nencini; edited by G. Marchetto - C. Zendri, Milano, Giuffré, 2008, p. 83.

[2] See P. Rossi Monti, *Le sterminate antichità e nuovi saggi vichiani*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1999;

These facts prompted out some doubts about the reliability of biblical chronology. Compared to monistic-reductive point of view, where the history of all peoples was reduced in a universal archetype, founded by the story of the Old Testament, these works established a new and pluralistic point of view. As Alexander Koyré asserted:

> *No one had the idea of counting, of weighing and of measuring. Or, more exactly, no one ever sought to get beyond the practical use of number, weight, measure in the imprecision of everyday life - to count months and beasts, to measure distances and fields, to weigh gold and corn - in order to turn it into an element of precise knowledge*[3].

Koyré observed the fundamental transition of the conception of science in the seventeen century "from the world of the 'more-or-less' to the universe of precision".

The topic was complex, but it was much discussed in depth during that time. The Bible was held to be the oldest record of human history. After the circulation of new chronology it was necessary to fit the origin of different peoples to the Bible's content. When in 1653 Martino Martini arrived in Amsterdam after his trip in China, he brought with him his knowledge of the antiquity of that land. Taking account of these new ideas, the European intelligentsia pointed out some doubts about the ancient history[4].

The undermissed concepts were focused on the issue claimed by Le Comte called "prejudices of childhood".[5] The idea of right and wrong, of ancient and modern, the geographical limits of the world, the classification of a government in good or bad: everything had always been built on a speculative basis. Until now, the power of the Bible, always related to its sacredness, had been a reason to justify its veracity. However, at the end of the seventeenth century, its sacredness was no longer a sufficient reason and the Bible's content became the subject of scholarly scrutiny. For the first time, its contents were questioned, examined and compared with centuries of history until now completely ignored.

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C. Hermanin, L. Simonutti (edited by), *La centralità del dubbio. Un progetto di Antonio Rotondò,* Firenze, Olschki, 2010, 2 voll.

[3]  A. Koyré, *Dal mondo del pressappoco all'universo della precisione*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992, pp. 97-98.

[4]  See A. Romano, *La contre-réforme mathématique. Constitution et diffusion d'un culture mathématique jésuite à la Renaissance (1540-1640)*, Rome, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et Rome, 1999; A. Romano, *Multiple Identities, Conflicting Duties and Fragmented Pictures: the Case of the Jesuits*, in *Le monde est une peinture. Jesuitische Identität und die Rolle der Bilder*, E. Oy-Marra und V. R. Remmert (Gg.), Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 2011, pp. 45-69.

[5]  L. Le Comte, *Des cérémonies de la Chine*, Liege, Daniel Moumal, 1700, p. 6.

In particular, the topics discussed were the content of the Pentateuch and of the historical books of the Old Testament. The attention was focused on the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, therefore on the origin of the Jewish people. The Bible's content was compared with the records, the myths, the stories of other peoples. The assessment allowed to shift the Jewish's history in the chronological axis of the formation of civilization, which proved to be less ancient than they had always believed.

Isaac La Peyrère's, an Huguenot writer, aroused considerable interest in seventeenth century in Europe. The theory claimed by La Peyrère in his work *Praeadamitae* (1655) was essentially based on the possibility that Adam was the father only of the Jewish people. The humanity that had preceded Jewish people, the Gentile descendants, belonged to another race of men. The Bible concerned only the Jewish history, while the other peoples were this way released from the God's Providence. As Zoli has shown, the gentiles became "participating actors of a different story compared to the Bible description"[6].

This was the theory of polygenism and pre-adamism, in which even the Flood became a local phenomenon, which belonged only to the Jewish history.

In agreement with La Peyrere's thought, in 1672 the English chronicler John Marsham presented the sacred history like a narration only of the Jewish's events in his work, the *Canon chronicus Aegyptiacus, hebraicus, Graecus*. Marsham refused the idea that Jewish history was the universal beginning of the history of all peoples and he attributed to the Egyptians the temporal superiority over all the other peoples.

As Marsham claimed, the Egyptians had a decisive influence on the law, the precepts and the rites of the Jewish people. By following this idea, he emphasized also a key issue in religious field. The question was: did the Egyptian origin of Moses have an impact on the customs and the rituals of Jewish people? Thus, Marsham maintained that the Egyptians were the most ancient people but also that the Jewish religion derived from the Egyptian.

Conversely, Georg Horn presented a strong argumentation in favor of orthodoxy. As he claimed, the pagan history was originated by sacred history, so the Gentiles received the elements of sacred history from the Jews. Horn added that the Gentiles afterwards had corrupted these elements, making them unrecognizable.

Another excellent example was Daniel Huet, the bishop of the French church in 1685, who was one of the strongest representatives of apologetic

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[6] S. Zoli, *Il preadamitismo di Isaac de La Peyrère nell'età previchiana e il libertinismo europeo del Seicento*, "Bollettino del Centro Studi Vichiani", XXI, 1991, p. 62.

tradition. In 1679, he published his *Demonstratio Evangelica* where he demonstrated that pagan history and mythology were based on the Old Testament. Huet's attempt was to establish the truth of the Christian religion above any other religion and to prove the authenticity of the Bible's contents.

The debate about the reconsideration of human history concerned a broad range of secondary topics: the origin of the first human society, the birth of languages, the basis of knowledge, the foundation of religions, the creation of life. The source of all these subjects had been always the same, the Bible, that was more and more questioned. In particular, the analysis was focused on the Genesis and on the description of the Great Flood. The physical and material explanation of the Flood took a very important place within these debates. Until now, the Jewish history had represented the history of the first and most ancient people in the Earth, so the Flood was considered the starting point of human history. In the eighteenth century, not only the uniqueness of the Flood during human history was questioned but also its geographical extension.

According to Maria Susanna Seguin "if there is a subject that could attract the attention of the XVIII century it is the Great Flood"[7]. In the eighteenth century the thinkers accomplished an extraordinary effort to impose critical thinking, historical scholarship, scientific precision in areas where religion has predominated for a long time. The biblical account of the Flood contained, in its complexity, all the topics of the age: the Universe, the Earth, God, man.

The sacredness of the Holy Scripture was no longer the only source, for example identifying enough to prove what really happened, or to recognize in the presence of fossils on the mountains as evidence of the submergence of the Earth during the cataclysm. The new chronology questioned the value of the biblical account: the new theories on fossils had revealed many valid explanations of their origin, due to some revolutions of the Earth and not only to one phenomenon.

In the early eighteenth century, Nicolas Antoine Boulanger, French philosopher and engineer[8], was the first to link the geological results related to the myth of the Flood to its consequences for the humanity on social, political and religious plans.

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[7]  M. S. Seguin, *Science et religion dans la pensée française du XVII siècle: le mythe du Déluge universel*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2001, p. 38 (the english translation is mine).

[8] Nicolas Antoine Boulanger, engineer of *Ponts et chaussée,* lived in the first half of the eighteenth century. He published in life only some conclusions related to geological studies on the history of the Earth collected in *Mémoire sur une nouvelle mappemonde* (1753) and the articles "Corvée" (1754) and "Guebres" (1757) for the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire des arts, des sciences et des métiers.*

From a political point of view, the identification of the first people in human history allowed to determine the first government in history and therefore to identify the nature and the principle of political power. Boulanger was the first to offer detailed explanation of the origin of the different political forms from the geological disasters, particularly since the Great Flood, identifying the principle of political power in religion.

Boulanger died very young of a debilitating disease in 1759. Nevertheless, he was one of the most fascinating figures of the French Enlightenment for his posthumous story. After his death, his works were edited and published by Baron d'Holbach and Diderot. In d'Holbach's country residence in Grandval, a great work of editing on Boulanger's texts took place, made by the *coterie d'holbachique*, defined by the Abbé Galiani "la grande boulangerie"[9].

This work of editing produced by d'Holbach, Diderot and the *coterie* gave the opportunity to Boulanger's text to circulate. The two principal Boulanger's works, published posthumously by d'Holbach, were the *Antiquité dévoilée par ses usages* (1764) and the *Recherches sur l'origine du despotisme oriental* (1761)[10]. Besides, according to Franco Venturi – his interpretation found ample confirmation and remains the most supported by the contemporary historiography – they accomplished a transformation of Boulanger's figure. In 1791, Naigeon wrote an article *Boulanger* in *Encyclopédie methodique* where he described Boulanger as «une espèce de phénomène littéraire»[11].

Persuaded by Boulanger's genius, d'Holbach and the *coterie* made him the cornerstone of the reaction of the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire des arts, des sciences et des métiers* to the crisis of 1759. On January 23, the Attorney General offered to Paris parliament to condemn the *Encyclopédie*, as well as Helvétius's *De l'Esprit* and six other books. He described the *Encyclopédie* as a conspiracy "a Society organized to propagate materialism, to destroy Religion, to inspire a spirit of independence and to nourish the corruption of morals"[12]. On March 8th the work's press privileges were revoked and the publication of the others volumes prohibited.

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[9] See A. C. Kors, *D'Holbach's coterie: an Enlightenment in Paris*, Princeton, Princeton University, 1976; R. Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie*, 1775-1800, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.

[10] Naigeon asserted that they should have been, respectively, the first and the second part of a larger project dedicated to *Histoire de l'homme en société*.

[11] "Boulanger", in J. A. Naigeon, *Encyclopédie méthodique: Philosophie ancienne et moderne*, Paris, Panckoucke, 1791, vol. I, p. 534.

[12] *Arrests de la Cour de Parlement, portant condamnation de plusieurs Livres & autres Ouvrages imprimés. Extrait des Registres de Parlement. Du 23 Janvier 1759*, pp. 1-2.

In the midst of this crisis, when philosophers such as Voltaire, Rousseau and d'Alembert left the project, Diderot and d'Holbach celebrated Boulanger as the great Enlightenment philosopher. His work became the manifesto of the movement of renaissance of knowledge promoted by *Encyclopédie*[13].

Some articles in the *Encyclopédie* were associated to Boulanger. The historiography analysis demonstrated that the engineer composed during his life "Corvé", "Deluge" and "Langue hébraïque". However, a lot of papers were incorrectly related to Boulanger[14]. In particular, the articles "Vingtième" or "Society" were actually realized by the *coterie*. Instead, "Theocracy" or "Oeconomie politique" were written after his death by Diderot retrieving the contents of Boulanger's texts[15].

The interest of historiography was not focused on Boulanger's thought for a long time. The principal problem was to distinguish the works really composed by him from these texts. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a French historian, Henri Lion, was the first to recognize the intellectual autonomy to Boulanger[16], followed by Franco Venturi and John Hampton at mid-century. More recently Boulanger's thought was analyzed by Paul Sadrin and Pierre Boutin[17]. Their interpretation has delineated a description of Boulanger "naturalist" and "anthropologist", but also a thinker committed to the fight against the revealed religions.[18] They identified the key to the interpretation of Boulanger's thought in the myth of the Flood.

Little or no attention, however, has been paid so far to Boulanger's political thought and the importance that he attributed to the theocratic

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[13]  See F. Venturi, *L'Antichità svelata e l'idea del progresso in N. A. Boulanger*, Bari, Laterza, 1947, p. 69.

[14]  Many works were associated to the engineer as, for example, *Le Christianisme dévoilé* - wrote in 1756 and published after 1760 - actually composed by Baron d'Holbach.

[15]  For more details, see I. Richichi, *Quale «Economia politica» per* l'Encyclopédie*? Rousseau e Boulanger tra l'Economia politica degli antichi e dei moderni,* "Il pensiero politico", XLVII, 2014, pp. 60-78.

[16]  See H. Lion, *N. A. Boulanger (1722-1759). Contribution à l'histoire du mouvement philosophique au XVIII siècle*, "Annales révolutionnaires", t. VII, 1914, n. 4, pp.469-484; n. 5, pp. 617-645; H. Lion, *N. A. Boulanger (1722-1759). Contribution à l'histoire du mouvement philosophique au XVIII siècle*, "Annales révolutionnaires", t. VIII, 1915, n. 1, pp. 47-78; n. 3, pp. 377-404.

[17]  See F. Venturi, *L'Antichità svelata e l'idea del progresso in N. A. Boulanger*, Bari, Laterza, 1947; J. Hampton, *Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger et la science de son temps*, Geneve-Lille, Droz-Giard, 1955; P. Sadrin, *Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger ou avant nous le déluge,* Oxford, The Voltaire Foundation, 1986; P. Boutin, *N. A. Boulanger. Oeuvres completes*, édition critique: textes établis et commentés par Pierre Boutin, Paris, H. Champions, 2006 (vol. II), 2011 (vol. I).

[18]  The historiography emphasized the image of a brilliant young thinker, very interested in examining in depth the physical history of the Earth and the effects of natural events on the development of civilization.

model, as a consequence of social, political and religious mistakes in the human history.

Boulanger had a cyclical point of view about history. He believed that various human eras were occured and separated from each other by revolutions of nature, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions. In the *Antiquité dévoilée* he asserted:

> *Tout ce que nous avons vu jusqu'à présent nous montre que les hommes ont été si vive-ment frappés de la destruction de leur ancienne demeure, que non-seulement ils en ont long-tems conservé le souvenir, mais encore qu'ils ont long-tems cru qu'ils avoient une nouvelle destruction à craindre[19].*

According to Boulanger, every time regeneration was followed by destruction. The Flood was the regeneration of our era and thus he found the celebration of this event in the rites and traditions of ancient peoples. In Boulanger's opinion, the Flood was a crucial moment in the history of all peoples in the Earth. Indeed, the story of all people was unified into a commemoration of the same event in the following centuries. But the Flood was a crucial event also for the discovery of political power's origins. The physical explanation of the Flood didn't have aim to defending or contesting the Bible's content. Boulanger was only interested in observing its direct consequences on primitive humanity. The feelings of the primitive men that survived to the Flood got them to try to re-create "Heaven on Earth" establishing a theocratic government. Boulanger analyzed the topic in the *Recherches* arguing that it was the "crainte" to prompt the survivors, who were believing to be at the end of the world:

> *C'est enfin de-là que l'homme idolâtre courut ensuite consulter tous les jours l'aurore ou le soleil levant, et que généralement les peuples ont par toute la terre tourné vers ce côté les portes de tous les temples, s'imaginant que le soleil et le grand juge viendroient du côté de l'Orient[20].*

The first social aggregation of the survivors, described by Boulanger, were some groups of families strongly influenced by God's judgment. These families were only governed by domestic laws. But Boulanger emphasized

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[19]  N. A. Boulanger, *L'Antiquité dévoilée par ses usages*, in N. A. Boulanger, *OEuvres de Boullanger,* Amsterdam, [s.n.], 1794, tome II, p. 26.
[20]  N. A. Boulanger, *Recherches sur l'origine du despotisme oriental*, in N. A. Boulanger, *OEuvres de Boullanger,* Amsterdam, [s.n.], 1794, tome I.  p. 41.

how these early forms of aggregation did not constitute political governments yet. The first political society was established by men when families became more complex and therefore it was necessary to create a stronger relationship to keep the unity. Thus, men were forced to give themselves political structures, to recognize "des supérieurs" and "des magistrates", and to submit themselves to civil and political laws. Their mistake resided in the choice of their king: the men didn't choose another man them equal, but they chose God:

> *Les hommes voulurent appliquer les principes du règne d'en haut au règne d'ici-bas, et la plûpart de ces principes se trouvèrent faux, parce qu'ils étoient déplacés : ce gouvernement n'étoit qu'une fiction, qu'il fallut nécessairement soutenir par une multitude de suppositions ; et ces suppositions furent avec le tems, prises pour des vérités, d'où résultèrent une foule de préjugés religieux et politique, qui précipitèrent dans des abimes affreux la religion et la police primitive.*
> *C'est ainsi que les nations, après avoir puisé dans le bon sens et dans la nature leurs loix domestiques, économiques et civiles, les soumirent toutes à une chimère qu'elles appellèrent le règne de Dieu, et que nous avons appelé Théocratie[21].*

Boulanger distinguished the subordination to God into two binomials. On the one hand the engineer described the binomial religious/legitimate associated to the early forms of aggregation into families, the "théocratie sacrée". On the other, he emphasized the binomial political/unfair that was the basis of the first political society, the "théocratie civile". Boulanger considered sacred theocracy positively because the bond with God was only religious.

Instead, the choice to be governed by God into political society was founded on illusory basis. The men would try to apply the principles of the kingdom of Heaven on Earth. The first big mistake of man was the mixture of the religious and political spheres in a civil theocracy, because religion crept into civil and domestic laws:

> *Quoique Dieu fût l'unique roi de la société, comme il n'y a aucun pacte ni aucune convention à faire avec un dieu, la théocratie dès son institution et par sa nature fut un gouvernement despotique, dont le grande juge étoit le sultan invisible, et dont les prêtres étoient les vizirs et les ministres, c'est-à-dire les despotes réels[22].*

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[21]  Ibid., p. 65.
[22]  Ibid., p. 104.

This description of civil theocracy as a political negative model was the central topic of *Recherches sur l'origine du despotisme oriental*. The aim of this work was to demonstrate that the despotic regimes of the East were not the affects as Montesquieu had explained "de la volonté momentanée & capricieuse d'un seul", but they were the consequence of the existence of a primitive theocracy at the origins of humanity. Boulanger described this theocracy as "projet magnifique, mais fatal, qui a precipité toutes les nations dans l'idolâtrie et dans l'esclavage"[23]. He presented a monistic theory of human history, but developed in a strictly negative sense. In his historical-political analysis, religion was the only responsible of all evil in human history.

Boulanger's interpretation of a theocratic political model is strictly connected with the *Respublica Hebraeorum* literature.

From the 1570s to the 1670s many political thinkers transformed biblical 'exempla sacra' of Old Testament into an organic political model, the *Respublica Hebraeorum*. In the political debates of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in northern Europe, many specific treatises employed the biblical texts to find legitimation for either monarchy, democracy, or aristocracy, such as Bonaventure Bertram's *De Politia Judaica, tam civili quam ecclesiastica* (1574), Carlo Sigonio's *De Republica Hebraeorum* (1582), the Huguenot *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (1579), Althusius's *Politica methodice digesta* (1603). All of them discussed and referred to the biblical polity as a model[24]. Christopher Ligota, Lea Campos Boralevi, Diego Quaglioni, Vittorio Conti's studies about this topic showed the political nature of this debate over the biblical polity, though often using terms and themes which traditionally belonged to theology[25].

In *De Republica Emendanda* associated to Grotius (1605) and Petrus Cunaeus's *De Republica Hebraeorum* (1612) this model was identified as a theocracy. Their aim wasn't to legitimize their contemporary regimes but to recognize a new and different model into Jewish's theocracy. Cunaeus described the Jewish

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[23] Ibid., p. 18.

[24] For a more detailed list, see E. Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic, Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought*, Cambridge-London, Harvard University Press, 2010, pp. 16–22.

[25] See *Politeia biblica*, (edited by) L. Campos Boralevi - D. Quaglioni, "Il Pensiero politico", XXXV, 2002, pp. 365-521; L. Campos Boralevi, *James Harrington's "Machiavellian" anti-Machiavellism*, "History of European Ideas", 2011, pp. 113-119; V. Conti, *Consociatio Civitatum, le repubbliche nei testi elzeviriani (1625-1649)*, Firenze, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 1997; C. R. Ligota, *L'histoire à fondement theologique: la République des Hebreux*, in *L'Ecriture Sainte au temps de Spinoza et dans le systeme spinoziste*, "Travaux et documents du Groupe de recherche spinoziste", 4, 1992, pp. 149-167; E. Nelson, *op. cit.*, Cambridge-London, Harvard University Press, 2010; A. Sutcliffe, *Judaism and Enlightenment*, Cambdrige, Cambdrige University Press, 2003; I. Richichi, *Teocrazia*, "Il Pensiero politico", XLIV, 2011, pp. 211-229.

theocracy as a positive and normative model that would be applicable in the political reformation of the present Dutch republic.

However, the theocratic model described by Boulanger is very different from Cuneaus's. The consequences of new chronology theories on the reconsideration of the Holy Scripture caused effects on theocracy description too.

Differently from Cunaeus's thought, who talked about Jewish theocracy, Boulanger described theocracy as the first form of government adopted by all nations. He identified in the establishment of this "constitution" the reason of a further series of political and religious prejudices. According to Boulanger, theocracy was a universal, primitive and absolutely negative model. He described theocracy as a despotic government.

For Boulanger, God couldn't govern directly, so the men found ways to know his commands: first they explained a lot of signs on Earth as a connection between them and God, than they built a palace, a temple and a throne, giving God officers and ministers. The power of God's ministers was based on superstition. So, because of it, the men represented God by emblems and symbols. Thus, they were finally idolized as incarnations of God. According to Boulanger, the origins of idolatry date back when men lost the distinction between Heaven and Earth.

Lastly, by way of conclusion, for Boulanger theocracy was a political regime, as well as others of antiquity, associated to the primitive human history and the men had to move away from it. The fundament of society should no longer be religion and the present political models would need new principles to legitimize their power. Boulanger's intent was to prove the first big mistake of men after the Flood: reason was replaced by religion. So, men had founded political society on superstitious and supernatural principles. In Boulanger's historical-political analysis, the religious influence wasn't limited to one political model, but it concerned all political societies. Boulanger's aim was to show that the fusion of the religious and the political spheres was extremely dangerous for civil society.

The moral and political decline of humanity started with the birth of religion and, politically, with the establishment of a theocratic government. There is no more possibility to recognize the thesis of religion's social utility. Boulanger appears clearly projected towards a radical secularization of society and political power.

Chapter Three

# Religious pluralism
# and the International community:
# Alberico Gentili's contribution
*Davide Suin*

Alberico Gentili[1] (1552-1608)'s juridical and political work develops in a context characterized by deep political and institutional changes. Even if on the practical side the evanescence of medieval institutions, geographical discoveries and the end of Christendom's unity - events which introduce political modernity - implicate the upset of political horizons and undermine the traditional order in *Respublica christiana*, on the theoretical and doctrinal sides a redefinition of interpretative categories and legitimation of changes is necessarily requested.

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[1] Gentili, born in San Ginesio in 1552, graduated in law in Perugia (1572). He abandoned Italy in 1579 to reach England in 1580 where he became a brilliant academic jurist and lawyer. Biographical notes are in G. Speranza, *Alberico Gentili. Studi*, Roma, Tipografia Fratelli Pallotta, 1876; G.H.J. Molen van der, *Alberico Gentili and the Development of International law. His life, Works and Times*, Amsterdam, H. J. Paris, 1937, pp. 35-60; D. Panizza, *Alberico Gentili, giurista ideologo nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana*, Padova, La Garangola, 1981; Id., *Alberico Gentili: vicenda umana e intellettuale di un giurista italiano nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana*, in *Alberico Gentili giurista e intellettuale globale. Atti del Convegno, Prima Giornata Gentiliana*, 25 settembre 1983 (CISG), Milano, Giuffrè, 1988, pp. 31-58; A. De Benedictis, *Gentili Alberico*, in *DBI,* Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana, vol. 53, 1999, pp. 245-251; P. Ragoni (ed.), *Alberico Gentili: vita e opere*, San Ginesio, CISG, 2000.

The gradual disappearance of medieval universalism - clear in the progressive erosion of imperial prerogatives and in the widespread diffusion of Reformation doctrines in Europe - and the long process of Modern State development are the frame in which Gentili's reflection matures. In this framework jurists become creators of a system which is based on reinterpretation of *ius commune* and on *ex novo* elaboration of legal principles to guarantee political changes.

Gentili plays a central role in this process. He arrived in England in 1580 exiled *religionis causa* and there he was well introduced into influential court circles. He was protected by Robert Dudley, Oxford University's chancellor, thanks to whom he undertook a brilliant career becoming in 1587 Civil Law *Regius Professor*. In England, Gentili was involved in the hottest political and institutional debates, he held a central role in the legitimation of political assets[2]. In that period, the conditions of the Modern State's affirmation as *superiorem non recognoscens* grew. Scholars had to solve two problems: 1) the new relations between the sovereign States, 2) the relation between a declining Imperial authority and Modern States, which were juridically equal. Opinions like Miguel d'Elzurum's were not current any more[3].

Francisco de Vitoria, Diego Covarruvias and Fernando Vasquez de Menchaca had opinions which were much more realistic. The above named intellectuals, the greatest representatives of the Spanish Scholastic, had criticized European States' subjection to Imperial authority. These authors had a great influence on Gentili's internationalist doctrine[4].

By that time the Holy Roman Emperor, as Bodin[5] argued, did not have

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[2]  D. PANIZZA, *Alberico Gentili, giurista ideologo nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana* cit., pp. 15-54; G. MINNUCCI, *Jean Hotman*, *Alberico Gentili*, *e i circoli umanistici inglesi alla fine del XVI secolo*, in *Studi di storia del diritto medioevale e moderno*, edited by F. Liotta, III, Milano, Monduzzi, 2014, pp. 203-262.

[3]  Miguel d'Elzurum was an ideologist of Charles V's empire. In his *Tractatus universi iuris* (1525) he supported a universal order that was made up of States, ruled by not sovereign Princes but by authorities subdued to Emperor.

[4]  M. FERRONATO - L. BIANCHIN (edited by), *Silete theologi in munere alieno. Alberico Gentili e la Seconda Scolastica. Atti del Convegno Internazionale* (Padova, 20-22 novembre 2008), Cedam, 2011.

[5]  Bodin exercised great influence on Gentili's political reflection; D. QUAGLIONI, *The Italian "readers" of Bodin*, *17th-18th centuries*: *the Italian "readers" out of Italy – Alberico Gentili (1552-1608)*, in *The reception of Bodin*, edited by Howell A. Lloyd, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2013, pp. 371-386. Bodin was much esteemed in England (by Elizabeth too; M. LEATHERS KUNTZ, *Introduction* to J. Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, Pennsylvania Stare University Press, 2008, p. XXIII, n. 29), as we know from Gabriel Harvey:  "you can not step into a scholar's study but (ten to one) you shall likely find open either Bodin de Republica or Le Roye's Exposition upon Aristotle's Politics or some other like French or Italian Politic Discourses…"; G. HARVEY, *Letterbook of Gabriel Harvey*, ed. E.J.L. Scott, London, Camden Society, 1884, XXXIII, p. 79. *Six*

his medieval prerogatives any more. Bodin claimed the Emperor was not a sovereign Prince, but the first citizen in an aristocratic form of state, similar to the Venice doge but in contrast to the French king[6].

Sovereign States were replacing the universal empire. As Bartolo da Sassoferrato affirmed, developing Marino da Caramanico's conclusions[7], *rex in regno suo est imperator*[8]. The modern system of States was developing on the ruins of the *Respublica christiana*, demolished by Reformation. Consequently the need to clarify a new political praxis was rising. Gentili gave his important contribution upon this issue, in particular in *De legationibus* (1585)[9] and in *De iure belli* (1598)[10].

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*livres de la République* were printed in England in 1577, one Latin and one English version were respectively printed in 1586 and 1606; R.W.K. HINTON, *Les Six livres vus d'outre-manche*, in *Jean Bodin. Actes du Colloque Interdisciplinaire d'Angers (24-27 Mai 1984)*, Angers, 1985, vol. II, pp. 469-478; A. SURANY, *The Genius of the English Nation: Travel Writing and National Identity in Early Modern England*, Cranbury, Associated University Press, 2010, p. 72. *Methodus* had the same success, especially from 1582 when Bodin was introduced to the influent John Dee (*The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee*, ed. J. Orchard Halliwell – Phillipps, London, Camden Society, 1842, p. 10), but at that time this writing is already quoted by John Leslie, Mary Stuart's ambassador in England; *A defence of the honour of the right high, mighty and noble Princess Marie Queen of Scotland*, Rheims, J. Foigny, 1569. About *Methodus* in England (read by Sidney, Harvey, Nashe) see G.L. MOSSE, *The Influence of Jean Bodin's* République *on English Political Thought*, "Medievalia et Humanistica", 5, 1948, pp. 73-83. About the English *Six livres de la République* edition see K.D. McRAE, *Introduction* to J. Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale* (London, 1606), translated by Richard Knolles, edited by K.D. McRae, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1962. For the reception of Bodin in Elizabethan and Jacobean England see G. BURGESS, *Bodin in the English revolution*, in *The reception of Bodin* cit., pp. 387-408. Gentili met Bodin in London in 1581 (as testified by a letter recently discovered; P. MEYJES, *Jean Hotman's English Connection*, in "Mededelingen Afdeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks", 53/5, 1990, p. 209) when the French jurist was in England for the marriage negotiations between Elizabeth I and Alençon; J. BOSSY, *English Catholics and the French marriage, 1577-1581*, "Recusant History", 5, 1959, p. 10 n. 40.

[6] On this issue see: J.H. FRANKLIN, *Sovereignty and the mixed constitution: Bodin and his critics*, in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700*, edited by J.H. Burns with the assistance of Mark Goldie, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 298-328. See J. BODIN, *I sei libri dello Stato*, edited by M. Isnardi Parente and D. Quaglioni, vol. II, Torino, Utet, 1988, pp. 391-392.

[7] "Sicut dicimus omnia esse imperatoris […] ita possumus et in rege dicere de rebus omnibus regni sui". This quotation is drawn from F. CALASSO, *I Glossatori e la teoria della sovranità. Studio di diritto comune pubblico*, Milano, 1957, pp. 182-183.

[8] Cfr. D. QUAGLIONI, *Politica e diritto nel Trecento italiano. Il* De tyranno *di Bartolo da Sassoferrato (1314-1357)*, Firenze, Olschki, 1983.

[9] *De legationibus libri tres*, Londini, Vautrollerius, 1585. The treatise had other three different editions during Gentili's life: two reproductions in 1594 and 1607 and the 1596 edition in one composite volume together with Félix La Mothe le Vayer's *Legatus* […] and Ottaviano Maggi's *De legato*.

[10] *De jure belli libri tres*, Hanoviae, apud Guilielmum Antonium, 1598. The quotations in this essay are drawn from the recent critical edition A. GENTILI, *Il diritto di guerra (De iure belli, 1598)*. Introduction by D. Quaglioni. Translation by P. Nencini. Critical notes by G. Marchetto and C.

In 1584 the Privy Council recalled Gentili to express his opinion about a bitter question, about which treatment was to be given to the Spanish ambassador Bernardino Mendoza, guilty of conspiracy against Elizabeth's life. Gentili expressed legal advice[11], on which he based his three books *De legationibus*.

The treatise which is an emblematic example of a new kind of political literature - that is writing about ambassadors[12] - is a first significant testimony of Gentili's political reflection. In *De legationibus* Gentili aims to clarify the confused diplomatic praxis in that period and to define the perfect ambassador's duties and virtues. This issue gives the jurist the possibility to reflect about central topics in the late sixteenth century political debate, in the treatise Gentili touches sovereign power characters and *vexata quaestio* of the relations between politics and religion.

The consciousness of pluralism in the modern international community arises in the development of this reflection. The modern international community was uneven on both political and religious sides and it was made up of sovereign States, which had the same right to send and receive embassies. The institutionalization of diplomatic praxis and the elaboration of *ius legationis* were urgent. The right of embassies, Gentili argued, was based on *ius naturae et gentium*[13]. *Ius legationis* is a "immutabile ius" and "omnibus constitutum", to the barbarians too[14]. Only Lestrigons and Cyclopes, Gentili polemically affirms, do not respect the holiness of embassies[15]. Religious differences among States are not important; embassies between States with different creeds or religions had been frequent in the past and "nunc a Pontificijs admitti, quae a Protestantibus proficiscuntur: & contrari"[16]. Embassy rights "ne propter religionis disiidia debeant […] conturbari", because "religionis ius hominibus cum hominibus non est, sed cum Deo"[17].

In these pages, we can find the main theme of Gentili's political reflection, which is the clear distinction between politics and religion[18]. The

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Zendri, Milano, Giuffrè, 2008.

[11]  Gentili and Jean Hotman suggested the expulsion of the ambassador Bernardino Mendoza from England; *De legationibus libri tres* cit., II, 18-19, pp. 77-82.

[12]  See R. Langhorne, *Alberico Gentili sulla Diplomazia*, in *Alberico Gentili. Atti dei Convegni nel quarto centenario della morte*, 11-12-13 settembre 2008 (CISG), II, Milano, Giuffrè, 2010, pp. 443-456.

[13]  "Ius legationum (dicit Cicero) humano, divinoque vallatum praesidio est"; *De legationibus*, II, 1, p. 40.

[14]  *Ibid*.

[15]  *Ibid*.

[16]  Ivi, 11, p. 63.

[17]  *Ibid*.

[18]  Gentili's approach to this issue is greatly influenced by *politiques*, especially by Bodin (C.

last one is neutralized as an intimate relation with God. This phenomenon is the condition to reduce religious conflicts, which tore apart Europe in the second half of XVI century. This distinction is a premise to Gentili's reflections in his unpublished manuscript *De papatu Romano Antichristo* and in *De iure belli*, about the relation between different religions in international arena and in each State.

Alberico Gentili read reality with sceptical rationalism due to his humanistic education and the study of Giusto Lipsio's *Politicorum libri sex* (1589) and Michel de Montaigne's *Essays* (1580), frequently quoted in *De iure belli*[19]. Gentili distrusted the possibility of reaching a complete knowledge about Truth and God[20], whose nature is unknowable to man. This is why the Italian jurist accepts religious differences and wishes a peaceful interreligious and inter-confessional coexistence[21]: this was the

VIVANTI, *Assolutismo e tolleranza nel pensiero politico francese del Cinque e Seicento,* in *Storia delle idee politiche economiche e sociali. IV-Assolutismo, diritto naturale, costituzioni*, directed by L. Firpo, Torino, Utet, 1980, pp. 13-93; D. QUAGLIONI, *I limiti della sovranità. Il pensiero di Jean Bodin nella cultura politica e giuridica dell'età moderna*, Padova, Cedam, 1992, pp. 199-226; ID., *Sans violence ni peine quelconque au port de salut. Il problema della libertà di coscienza nella* République *di Jean Bodin*, in *La formazione storica della alterità. Studi di storia della tolleranza nell'Età moderna offerti a Antonio Rotondò*. Promoted by H. Mèchoulan, R.H. Popkin, G. Ricuperati, L. Simonutti, I, *Secolo XVI*, Firenze, Olschki, 2001, pp. 361-373) but also by his humanistic formation; D. PANIZZA, *Il pensiero politico di Alberico Gentili. Religione, virtù e ragion di Stato*, in *Alberico Gentili politica e religione nell'età delle guerre di religione. Atti del Convegno, Seconda Giornata Gentiliana*, 17 maggio 1987 (CISG), Milano, Giuffrè, 2002, pp. 59-213.

[19] About scepticism, tacitism and their influence on late sixteenth century English thought see: J.H.M. SALMON, *Stoicism and Roman example: Seneca and Tacitus in Jacobean England*, in "Journal of the History of Ideas", 1989, pp. 199-225; P. BURKE, *Tacitism, scepticism, and reason of state*, in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700* cit., pp. 479-498.

[20] This persuasion seems to be shared with Bodin, especially if we read *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*. It has been argued that this work is centred on "l'idée de l'absence de vérité absolue en matière de religion"; K.F. FALTENBACHER, *Examen de conscience à Venise: le "Colloquium Heptaplomeres"*, in *La liberté de conscience (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)*. Actes du Colloque de Mulhouse et Bâle (1989) réunis par H. Guggisberg, F. Lestringant et J.C. Margolin, Genève, Droz, 1991, p. 111.

[21] Gentili shares this ambition with a huge number of scholars who aim to resolve the tragic European religious conflicts and the reconciliation between Protestant and Catholic Churches. We can remember - among the several late-sixteenth century irenists who in England searched satisfaction to their projects - Jacopo Aconcio, Bernardino Ochino (M. FIRPO, *"Boni christiani merito vocantur haeretici" Bernardino Ochino e la tolleranza*, in *La formazione storica della alterità. Studi di storia della tolleranza nell'età moderna offerti a Antonio Rotondò* cit., pp. 161-244), Francesco Pucci (D. CANTIMORI, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento. Ricerche storiche*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1978, pp. 184-194; M. BIAGIONI, *Prospettive di ricerca su Francesco Pucci*, "Rivista storica italiana", CVII, 1995, pp. 133-152; ID., *Universalismo e tolleranza nel pensiero di Francesco Pucci*, in *La formazione storica della alterità. Studi di storia della tolleranza nell'età moderna offerti a Antonio Rotondò* cit., pp. 331-360) and Marc'Antonio De Dominis (E. BELLIGNI, *Marcantonio De Dominis tra l'Inquisizione romana e Giacomo I: nuove prospettive storiografiche dopo Cantimori*, in S. Villani, S. Tutino, C. Franceschini (edited by), *Questioni*

ambition also of the Huguenot Philip Duplessis-Mornay, intellectual near to the Sidney circle[22].

However, this pluralistic conception varies in Gentili's works. The author's position in *De iure belli* is much more conciliatory and open to differences than the limited confessional pluralism model in *De papatu Romano*[23], work" that had never been published because it was in contrast with Anglicanism and with Gentili's moderate philo-puritan patrons[24].

*De papatu Romano Antichristo* is part of a well-established current in Reformation writings, which is Anti-Christ literature. Ochino's *Imagine de Antechristo* (1542)[25] and Aconcio's *Stratagemata Satanae* (1564)[26] are emblematic examples of this literature and well-known to Gentili[27].

*De papatu Romano* is a strong invective against Catholic Church and its institutions. It represents a violent condemnation of the Pope's temporal

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*di storia inglese tra Cinque e Seicento: cultura, politica e religione. Atti del seminario tenutosi presso la Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 11-12 aprile 2002, Pisa, 2006, pp. 103-120).

[22] He pursued the reconstruction of unity among Christian churches. This aim is clear in *Exhortation à la paix aux catholiques français* (1574), *Traité de l'Eglise* (1578), *De la vérité de la religion chrétienne* (1581). This last treatise, partially translated in English by Sidney, was printed in England in 1587. The English courtier probably introduced in England *Vindiciae contra tyrannos*; S. Lee, *Sidney Philip*, in *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 52, 1897, pp. 219-234. Cfr. S. Testoni Binetti, *Introduzione* to Stephanus Junius Brutus, *Vindiciae contra tyrannos. Il potere legittimo del principe sul popolo e del popolo sul principe*, Torino, La Rosa editrice, 1994, pp. VII-XVI; Ead. *Il pensiero politico ugonotto. Dallo studio della storia all'idea di contratto (1572-1579)*, Firenze, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 2002, pp. 235-276.

[23] This theological-political treatise has an uncertain dating but recent studies seem to establish his writing between 1580 and 1591; D. Quaglioni, *Il "De Papatu Romano Anticristo" del Gentili*, in *"Ius gentium ius communicationis ius belli" Alberico Gentili e gli orizzonti della modernità*. Atti del convegno di Macerata in occasione delle celebrazioni del quarto centenario della morte di Alberico Gentili (1552-1608), Macerata, 6-7 Dicembre 2007, edited by L. Lacchè, Milano, Giuffrè, 2009, pp. 197-207; G. Minnucci-D. Quaglioni, *Per l'edizione critica del* De papatu Romano Antichristo *di Alberico Gentili (1580/1585-1591)* in *Alberico Gentili. Giustizia, guerra, impero. Atti del convegno XIV Giornata gentiliana*, San Ginesio 24-25 settembre 2010, Milano, Giuffrè, 2014, pp. 331-346. At the moment a critical edition by Giovanni Minnucci and Diego Quaglioni is in development.

[24] D. Panizza, *Alberico Gentili giurista ideologo nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana* cit., pp. 19-42.

[25] The work is quoted in A. Gentili, *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. *D'Orville 607*, f. 1*v*.

[26] The work is quoted in *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 3*r*. Gentili knew Aconcio's works. He was in good relations with Giovanni Battista Castiglione (by whom he was introduced to Robert Dudley) who edited the posthumous *Pia esortazione al timor di Dio* by Aconcio, printed by Wolfe; M. Firpo, *Giovanni Battista Castiglione*, in *DBI*, Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana, vol. 22, 1979, pp. 81-83.

[27] D. Quaglioni, *Alberico Gentili: il papato romano e il "potere totale"*, in *Machiavelli e la lingua della giurisprudenza. Una letteratura della crisi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2011, pp. 204, 206.

ambitions and of the Catholic Church's misappropriations. To this purpose, Gentili surprisingly quotes Agostino Nifo, who sustained, in his *De regnandi peritia*, that the Pope's ambition was moved "*a sacris ad imperia*"[28]. In addition, Gentili's treatise is relevant as the author's religiosity manifesto and it testifies his position about religious toleration.

Due to his adhesion to Reformation, Gentili was forced to leave his homeland and to search guarantees to his freedom of conscience abroad. This is why Gentili is so sensitive to religious toleration. Toleration guarantees an irrepressible conscience and spontaneity in man's relations with God. However, Gentili's toleration is mostly considered *instrumentum regni*. Religion is - as Machiavelli said - an instrument to cohesion and to subjection to authority[29]: "nulla autem res efficacior multitudinem regit, quam superstitio"[30].

So "auctores gravissimi" advise rulers to subject people by using religion or superstition and in this manner subjects are addressed "ad utilia"[31].

This is why religion has a great political value as a means of government. Religious unity is a mark of political and institutional stability.

The Italian jurist wished religious unity in each State, as Lipsio. Lipsio was well known to Gentili because he had been his brother Scipione's master[32] when he studied in Leida and because Lipsio had edited several versions of Tacito's works[33]. However, Gentili was a realist and he knew religious unity was unlikely to happen, especially by means of force.

Gentili affirms the irrepressibleness of conscience and suggests the principle of religious toleration as a solution to conflictual and destabilizing inter-confessional divisions. As for Bodin, toleration is the most effective means to maintain unity in a State, if not religious unity. Use of force in

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[28] *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 6r.

[29] N. Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I, 11, 11: «E veramente mai fu alcuno ordinatore di leggi straordinarie in uno popolo che non ricorresse a Dio, perché altrimente non sarebbero accettate».

[30] A. Gentili, *The Wars of the Romans*, edited by B. Kingsbury and B. Straumann, translated by D. Lupher, Oxford, University Press, 2011, II, 2, p. 132. Cfr. N. Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, I, 11, 3: "Il quale [Numa Pompilio] trovando un popolo ferocissimo, e volendolo ridurre nelle obedienze civili con le arti della pace, si volse alla religion come cosa al tutto necessaria a volere mantenere una civiltà, e la constituì in modo che per più secoli non fu mai tanto timore di Dio quanto in quella republica; il che facilitò qualunque impresa che il Senato o quelli grandi uomini romani disegnassero fare".

[31] *The Wars of the Romans* cit., II, 2, p. 132.

[32] A. De Benedictis, *Gentili Scipione*, in *DBI*, Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana, vol. 53, 1999, p. 268.

[33] F. Barcia, *Tacito e tacitismi in Italia tra Cinquecento e Seicento*, in S. Suppa (edited by), *Tacito e tacitismi in Italia da Machiavelli a Vico*. Atti del Convegno (Napoli, 18-19 dicembre 2001), Napoli, Archivio della Ragion di Stato, 2003, p. 43, n. 2.

religious subjects is counterproductive and brings political instability because it undermines sovereign authority[34].

In *De papatu Romano*, Gentili promotes an essential religiosity, simple on the dogmatic and sacramental side. He also promotes an anti-dogmatic Church, open to  interreligious confrontation. Though at the beginning of the treatise Gentili labels the Pope as the Antichrist, minimizing the typical association Antichrist-Islam[35], Papacy is not the only polemical target in this treatise because dogmatism and intolerance in Reformed Churces are also implicitly criticized.

The manuscript was written during the intensifying crisis between England and Spain, when a Catholic conspiracy was threatening Elizabeth's throne. In the manuscript, Gentili, close to militant Protestant circles, wishes a universal and pluralist Christian Church. In this Church, theological and dogmatic conflicts should be solved and doctrine reduced to a very few dogmas – among which Trinity is clearly affirmed[36]. In this Church, Reformed Churches (Lutherans, Anglicans, Zwinglians and moderate Calvinists) should merge and coexist with the Catholic one, only if the latter were tolerant and would redeem from its moral degeneration[37]. The Papacy is the Antichrist because it is intolerant: «Antichristus magna meretrix ebria sanguine Sanctorum, et sanguine Martyrum Jesu»[38].

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[34] "[…] il diritto di religione non riguarda gli uomini nei loro rapporti reciproci […]. La religione riguarda Dio, il cui diritto è divino e non umano, cioè tra Dio e l'uomo e non tra uomo e uomo"; A. Gentili, *Il diritto di guerra* cit., I, 9, p. 59. Those who have a different religion or "posseduti dall'umano errore […] non seguono una buona religione, non vanno per questo contro il diritto naturale" and hence they should be tolerated; ivi, p. 60. "[…] non si deve usare violenza contro i sudditi che abbracciano un'altra religione"; ivi, p. 64. Cfr. Bodin: "[…] il principe che, perfettamente convinto di essere nelle vera religione, voglia conquistare ad essa i sudditi divisi in sette e fazioni, a mio parere non deve usare la forza, giacché la volontà umana tanto più è ribelle quanto più si cerca di farle forza; invece, seguendo la vera religione e aderendo ad essa, senza finzione né dissimulazione alcuna, riuscirà, senza violenza e senza infliggere pena di sorta, un po' per volta, ad adeguare gli animi e la volontà dei sudditi alla sua […]"; *I sei libri dello Stato*, II cit., pp. 581-582.
[35] This is why Noel Malcolm has seen in *De papatu Romano* a germination of Calvin-Turchism; N. Malcolm, *Alberico Gentili and the Ottomans*, in B. Kingsbury, B. Straumann (edited by), *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations. Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 127-145.
[36] This is clear in one passage of the treatise in which Gentili defends Protestants: "Deum Trinum fatemur cum tua Ecclesia, fatemur Christum Deum, filium Dei coeternum, consubstantialem Patri: symbolum Apostolicum, Nicaenum, retinemus et Athanasium, novum Testamentum recipimus"; *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 70*v*.
[37] *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 28*r*, f. 32*r*. Cfr. D. Panizza, *Alberico Gentili, giurista ideologo nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana* cit., pp. 27-32; V. Lavenia, *Alberico Gentili: i processi, le fedi, la guerra*, in «Ius gentium ius communicationis ius belli» *Alberico Gentili e gli orizzonti della modernità* cit., pp. 185-186.
[38] *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 68*v*.

The aim is not only simply to overcome inter-confessional divisions, but also the political purpose to counterbalance the advance of international Catholicism. Gentili theorizes an anti-dogmatic and tolerant Church, in which a confessional pluralism could exist. This pluralism is carefully modelled as an effective answer to the threat coming from militant Catholicism and Spanish interference. This is a pluralism directed to defend Protestantism and England from Spanish expansionism, disguised behind religiosity[39]. To this purpose, taking Habsburg and Ottoman Empires on the same level, in *De iure belli* Gentili asserts: "Non dovrebbero giustamente opporsi tutti in oriente ai Turchi e in occidente agli Spagnoli, che, gli uni di qua e gli altri di là, ordiscono e si adoperano per espandere il loro dominio? […] Già in precedenza abbiamo parlato dei Turchi, e tutti li conosciamo. Se qualcuno non sa degli Spagnoli, ascolti da Paolo Giovio come anche la loro indole sia sfrenata e avida di comandare. Una volta insinuatisi, tendono sempre a raggiungere in tutti i modi il massimo potere" and "se nessuno sarà in grado di opporsi alla Spagna, l'Europa cadrà inevitabilmente"[40].

Gentili expediently excludes sectarian radicalism from this universal Church. This radicalism is typical of those who do not recognize the essential Trinity dogma and those who menace State stability and Protestant cohesion because they reject subjection to political and religious authorities. Gentili chooses a middle way between an extreme freedom of conscience and a safe State and Protestantism. The involvement of irenic and anti-Trinitarian Reformed currents in this universal Church would threaten Protestant unity and would help Catholicism advance. These *sectae* are considered Pope's emissaries, advocates of discord: "Sui sunt emissarii Anabaptistae, Libertini, Schwenckfeldiani, Servetistae, Antitrinitarii. Dixit in corde suo: Divide et impera"[41].

Gentili preferred established Churches and he mistrusted religious unrest typical of contemporary spiritualists[42]. His position was far from Italian heretics, well studied by Delio Cantimori[43]. Gentili did not agree with Bernardino Ochino's universalistic tension nor Francesco Pucci's universalism[44]. Gentili aimed at the ideal of a Christianism simplified in

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[39]  *Il diritto di guerra* cit., I, 8, p. 53.

[40]  *Il diritto di guerra* cit., I, 14, pp. 93-94.

[41]  *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 84*r*.

[42]  One general reconstruction of spiritualist movements in Italy is in M. Firpo, *Tra* alumbrados *e "spirituali". Studi su Juan de Valdés e il valdesianesimo nella crisi religiosa del '500 italiano*, Firenze, Olschki, 1990.

[43]  D. Cantimori, *Eretici italiani nel Cinquecento*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1939.

[44]  Probably Gentili met Pucci at the Italian Church in London (1579-1582) and he perhaps

its dogmas and rites, mediated by ecclesiastical hierarchies but outside of every form of authoritarianism. These premises explain Gentili's choice for Anglican Church, after he had frequented the Italian Church in London[45]. This choice is the natural result of his search for an anti-dogmatic religiosity aimed to politics. The Anglican Church did not emphasize theological distinctions, born during the Reformation. As for Richard Hooker, a State Church theorist, the Anglican Church was almost a civil religion in a country that conflicted with Rome and Habsburg. Paolo Sarpi, who knew Gentili's works through his pupil Edwyn Sandis[46], was led to get in touch with English scholars for similar reasons, wishing an Anglican solution for Venice during the Interdict years[47].

We cannot compare Gentili's realism to Erasmus's involvement in the promotion of a mild, original, charitable and anti-Augustinian Christianism. Gentili simply wished religious peace and State safety. A tolerant and anti-dogmatic Church should protect these values.

From the beginning of *De papatu Romano*, we can observe Gentili's aversion to Spanish religious policy and Habsburg imperial ambitions. In the first *folio*, close to the anti-Jesuit propaganda spread especially in France by Etienne Pasquier[48], Gentili mentions the sequence of Society of Jesus generals until Claudio Acquaviva (elected in 1581) and underlines that they were all Spanish or Habsburg subjects, except Acquaviva[49]. This consideration shows Gentili's interest for Spanish *legenda negra*[50] and testifies his will to disclose Habsburg mysteries of State and *arcana imperii*.[51]

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knew his work *Informazione della Religione Christiana* (1580), printed by John Wolfe, with whom the Italian jurist would start an intense editorial collaboration.

[45] Subjection to the Anglican Church is clearly testified in an apologetic letter annexed to *Disputationum de nuptiis libri VII*, Hanoviae, apud Guilielmum Antonium, 1601: "Ego sileo […]. Sto ego ecclesiae Anglicanae in politia sua" and «imo ius puto, et fas esse, principibus obbedire"

[46] Edwin Sandys was author of *Relation of the State of religion*, work translated in Italian by Paolo Sarpi and printed in 1625; T.K. Rabb, *The editions of Sir Edwin Sandys "Relation of the State of Religion"*, in "Huntington Library Quarterly", 26/4, 1963, pp. 323-326.

[47] See C. Petrolini, *Religione e potestà dei principi: Gentili e Sarpi*, in V. Lavenia (edited by), *Alberico Gentili. "Responsability to Protect": nuovi orientamenti su intervento umanitario e ordine internazionale. Atti del convegno della XV Giornata Gentiliana*, San Ginesio, 14-15 settembre 2012, Macerata, Eum, pp. 215-242.

[48] See S. Pavone, *Le astuzie dei gesuiti. Le false istruzioni segrete della Compagnia di Gesù e la polemica antigesuitica nei secoli XVII e XVIII*, Roma, Salerno Editrice, 2000.

[49] *De papatu Romano Antichristo*, f. 1*v*. Gentili's aversion to Jesuits is clear in a passage where they are described as "fex et ultimum Satanae excrementum"; ivi, f. 76*r*.

[50] It was spread in England by *alumbrados* and was appreciated by the most progressive circles in London court; G. Ungerer, *Anglo-Spanish Literary Relations in Tudor Literature*, Madrid, Artes Graficas Clavileño, 1956.

[51] A certain interest in Tacito's political thought is evident in Gentili's first writings. Cfr.

The rising crisis between England and Spain, which threatened to restore its control over the Netherlands and to expand its influence on France, urged Gentili to write a treatise about war. In *De iure belli*, a masterpiece of modern war and international law, the author suggests a war law systematic doctrine, whose aim is the legitimation of English foreign policy and the objection of Spanish imperialism. The treatise belongs to that anti-Spanish literature which flourished in the Earl of Essex's entourage (Gentili's illustrious patron and dedicatee of *De iure belli*) in the eighties and nineties of XVI century[52].

In *De iure belli*, Gentili refers to the most modern developments in political and international praxis and he makes use of a large apparatus of *fontes* (a heterogeneous whole of quotations drawn from Scriptural writings, from civil and canonical law, from classical and modern historians[53]). In the treatise, the jurist formulates the criteria of just war. Justness and legitimacy of war, differently from the medieval tradition of just war, are not based on the canonical criterion of *iusta causa*, but in a merely formal criterion taking root in Roman law. This criterion, neutralizing the concept of *iusta causa* and enemy criminalization, reduces war to a duel[54]. War is the last verdict for subjects that resort to arms, because they do not recognize higher authorities to settle controversies[55].

Developing reflections outlined by Raffaele Fulgosio (1367-1427)[56], Andrea Alciato (1492-1550) and Balthasar d'Ayala (1548-1584)[57], Gentili defines war as

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*Lectionum et epistolarum quae ad ius civile pertinent libri IV*, Londini, excudebat Iohannes Wolfius, 1583-1584, II, 11, pp. 116-117.

[52] P. E. J. Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

[53] Cfr. C. Zendri, *Metodo e sistema delle fonti in Alberico Gentili*, in *Silete theologi in munere alieno. Alberico Gentili e la Seconda Scolastica* cit., pp. 45-64 and, in the same book, G. Marchetto, *Le fonti del De iure belli libri tres (1598) di Alberico Gentili: osservazioni sull'uso dei consilia*, pp. 65-82.

[54] *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 2, p. 16.

[55] Ivi, 3, pp. 21-30.

[56] Raphael Fulgosius, *Super prima digesti veteris parte*, rubr. in D. 1, 1, 5 ex hoc iure, Lugduni, 1654, p. 8: "…cum ex utraque parte bellantium contingant acquisitiones dominiorum et servitutes […] quomodo ex ea parte que iniuste bellum agit contingit quod acquirat dominia eodem que capit iniustum agens. Respondeo quod quia incertum erat utra pars iuste bellum moveret, nec erat iudex communis utrisque superior per quem possit cetum civiliter effici, optima ratione constituerunt gentes, ut eius rei iudex bellum foret: hoc est, ut quod in bello vel per bellum caperetur, partis capientis fieret: quasi sibi adiudicatum a iudice fuisset".

[57] Author of *De iure et officiis bellicis et disciplina militari* (1582). «Quae hactenus de iustis belli causis dicta sunt, magis ad aequum et bonum, et viri boni officium, quam ad iuris effectus referri debent. Cum enim summis tantum Principibus, qui superiorem non habent, belli gerendi ius sit, de aequitate causae disceptare non convenit. Hinc certo modo iustum poterit dici bellum, etsi non ex iusta causa feratur […]. Similiter iustum bellum dicitur, quod publice legitimeque

the last judgement for public and sovereign powers, monarchies or republics. Just enemies are not those who hold a just cause - unknowable to man[58] - but those who hold a public and sovereign power. *Liberi principes* and *liberae res publicae* - in *De legationibus* Gentili defines sovereign entities in this way[59] - are the modern international community's subjects which exercise a power juridically independent from superior authorities. This international community is plural, both on religious and political sides, with regard to the systems of government chosen by States. Gentili must take into consideration a complex reality in which States with different creeds and those torn by religious conflicts coexist. Gentili, educated by the reading of Bodin, Machiavelli and Guicciardini[60], admits that the intrinsic reasons of conflicts - which tear Europe apart - should be searched for in human passions, thirst for power and people's nature.

Religion, Gentili asserts quoting Lattanzio[61], cannot be forced[62]. Likewise Bodin, Gentili observes, using Cassiodoro's words, that "*religionem imperare non possumus*"[63]. Refusing the Holy War theorists' traditional reasons, the author formulates a system of inter-state relations that, relegating religion to man's inner life, solve political-religious divisions making Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists and Mohammedans juridically and formally equal[64]. Gentili bases rules for relations between States on natural and rational law, common to all men and nations[65]. This is a subject reserved to jurists and not to theologians,

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geritur ab ijs, qui belligerandi ius habent"; BALTHAZARIS AYALAE I. C. *Exercitus regii apud Belgas supremi iuridici, et apud Mechlin. Consiliarii, De iure et officis bellicis, ac disciplina militari Libri III.* Accedit MARTINI LAUDENSIS, *Tract. de Bello*, cum notis, Lovanii, Typis Ioannis Vryenborch, sub Bibliis, 1648, I, 2, p. 41, nn. 33-34.

[58] "È nella natura delle guerre che entrambe le parti pretendano di avere la ragione dalla loro parte» because «tutto è avvolto nelle tenebre e si ignora quella verissima e purissima giustizia che non porterebbe due persone a litigare giustamente"; *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 6, pp. 44-45.

[59] *De legationibus*, I, 4.

[60] Gentili's considerations on religious wars are strongly drawn from Guicciardini. In this manner Gentili expressed his opinion about Ferdinand the Catholic: «che ha fama di cattolico, mascherò quasi tutte le sue cupidigie sotto l'onesto velame della religione»; *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 9, p. 58. Similar observations are in Guicciardini: "coprì [Ferdinando] quasi tutte le sue cupidità sotto colore di onesto zelo della religione e di santa intenzione al bene comune"; *Storia d'Italia*, edited by S. Seidel Menchi, Torino, 1971, XII, 19, p. 1267.

[61] *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 9, p. 56.

[62] Ivi, pp. 55-60.

[63] Ivi, p. 55. Cfr. J. BODIN, *I sei libri dello Stato*, vol. II cit., pp. 583-584: «Teodorico re dei Goti, per quanto favorisse gli Ariani, non volle mai forzare la coscienza dei suoi sudditi, e ne spiega le ragioni con queste parole: "*religionem imperare non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut credat invitus*, così come leggiamo in Cassiodoro"»

[64] Equality between Christians and Muslims is not substantial; see. *infra.*

[65] *De legationibus*, II, 1, p. 40. Cfr. *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 1.

traditional actors in political legitimation[66]. "Silete theologi in munere alieno" Gentili affirms at the end of the twelfth chapter in the first book of *De iure belli*, blaming theologians' interference in politics and their unsuitability for dealing with political affairs – in particular the relations between Europeans and Ottomans[67].

The author affirms that just reasons of war against Ottomans always exist, however these just reasons are not based on religion but on a different question. Gentili develops a point of view similar to Covarruvias, affirming that Ottomans should be fought not because they are infidels, but because their imperialistic policy threatens Christianity's safety[68]. A preventive war, called "utile"[69] by Gentili, should be fought against Ottomans[70]. For Gentili this form of war is an accomplishment of the natural principle of self-defence[71].

A certain mistrust towards infidels persists, in spite of a formal collocation of the Ottoman Empire on the same level as Western powers. Likewise his brother Scipione, author of *Annotationi sopra la Gierusalemme liberata* (1586)[72], Alberico does not give up traditional anti-Islamic reasoning.

As mentioned in *De legationibus*, establishing diplomatic relations with Muslims is allowed (in 1581 Elisabeth established a permanent embassy in

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[66] D. Panizza, *Alberico Gentili, giurista e ideologo nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana* cit., pp. 55-88.

[67] *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 12, p. 83.

[68] Ottomans, Gentili argues, "ci insidiano, ci minacciano e, con grande perfidia, sono sempre pronti a depredare i nostri beni"; *ibid*. "Non si deve muovere guerra a chi se ne sta quieto, a chi coltiva la pace, a chi non fa nulla di male contro di noi. Ma quando mai si comportarono così i Turchi?"; *ibid*.

[69] See *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 14.

[70] This kind of war should be undertaken also against Spain. De Mas has seen Gentili as one of the first theorists of preventive war; F. Bacone, *Saggi*, introduzione di E. Garin, a cura di E. De Mas, traduzione di C. Guzzo, Milano, Tea, 1995, p. 73: "esso - il concetto di guerra preventiva - deriva dalla formulazione del diritto bellico secondo la scuola protestante capeggiata da Alberico Gentili". Cfr. R. Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace. Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 16-19.

[71] The historical context strongly influences these reflections, indeed in 1593 a war between Ottomans and Habsburg burst, it finished in 1606. Relatively to defence war Gentili asserted that: "È una legge unica e perpetua: difendere la propria salvezza con ogni mezzo. Ogni modo è onesto per porsi in salvo: ai dotti lo prescrisse la ragione giuridica, ai barbari la necessità, alle nazioni il costume, agli animali la natura stessa. E questa non è una legge scritta ma innata"; *Il diritto di guerra*, pp., 85-86. These considerations are drawn from Ammiano Marcellino (*Res gestae*, XXIII, 1, 7) and Cicerone (*Pro Milone* 4 and 11).

[72] First commentary to *Gerusalemme liberata* by Torquato Tasso, in which Scipione did not give up the typical Christian prejudice against Ottomans, though he observed that Turkish arms were considerable as "pietose" and "giuste" as Christian ones; *Annotationi sopra la Gierusalemme liberata*, in *Opera omnia in plures tomos distributa*, t. VIII, Neapoli, sumtibus Joannis Gravier, 1769, p. 325.

Istanbul), as well as stipulating commercial treaties. Muslims have the same juridical status as Christians, but establishing military agreements or alliance treaties with them is not allowed[73] – this is the *vulnus* of religious pluralism in Gentili: "Io rimango dell'opinione di un dottissimo teologo del nostro secolo [Vermigli[74]], il quale sostiene che si può stare in pace con gli infedeli, ma non è mai possibile unire conformemente a giustizia le nostre armi alle loro", infidels – Gentili affirms – are "genti di religione contraria e per lo più spregiatori di ogni costume e di tutto il diritto bellico"[75].

In dealing with relations between Europeans and Ottomans Gentili seems to be much less modern than the contemporaneous Bodin. The French jurist was fascinated by Islamic culture and he had studied the Ottoman Empire's political institutions by reading Paolo Giovio's *Commentario de le cose de' Turchi* [76]- work frequently quoted in Gentili's *De iure belli* - and Guillaume Postel's *République des Turcs*[77]. In his *République* Bodin had affirmed that treaties stipulated with pagans and idolaters were no less binding than those signed between Christians[78].

In Gentili the distinction between politics and religion aims to maintain peace among States and – an essential value in his view - to guarantee the safety of the State. For him, as for Bodin, the neutralization of the religious sphere has

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[73] "Non è proibito avere relazioni con gli infedeli: la legge divina non ci ordina di isolarci dal mondo e la legge umana comanda a tutti di mettersi in relazione con gli altri. Qui però ci si interroga sulla liceità degli accordi, un genere particolare delle relazioni umane, che le cose sopra dette dimostrano non essere lecito con uomini di religione diversa dalla nostra"; *Il diritto di guerra*, III, 19, pp. 580-581. Also military alliance "in cui un fedele unisce le sue armi a quelle di un infedele" is illicit and "se non è lecito fare queste alleanze contro altri infedeli, sarà ancora più illecito farle contro chi professa la nostra stessa religione"; p. 581. Likewise Vermigli Gentili affirms that is possible to maintain peace with Infidels but not "unire conformemente a giustizia" Christian weapons to Muslim ones; p. 582.

[74] Gentili quotes Vermigli's *Commentarius in librum Iudicum*. It has been affirmed that Gentili had "particolare affezione per le opere di Pietro Martire Vermigli e di Theodore de Bèze"; G. MINNUCCI-D. QUAGLIONI, *Il* De papatu Romano Antichristo *di Alberico Gentili (1580/1585-1591): primi appunti per l'edizione critica*, in "Il Pensiero politico", XLVII, 2, 2014, p. 147.

[75] *Il diritto di guerra*, III, 19, p. 582.

[76] *Commentario delle cose de' Turchi* had extraordinary fortune. On this see L. MICHELACCI, *Introduzione. La nostalgia dell'altro*, in P. Giovio, *Commentario delle cose de' Turchi*, Bologna, Clueb, 2005, pp. 8-67.

[77] This work exercised great influence on Jean Bodin, especially on the writing of *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* (1593). About the relation Bodin-Postel see M.L. KUNTZ, *Jean Bodin's Colloquium Heptaplomeres and Guillaume Postel: A Consideration of Influence*, in *Jean Bodin. Actes du Colloque Interdisciplinaire d'Angers* (24-27 Mai 1984), Angers, Presses Universitaires d'Angers, 1985, II, pp. 435-444.

[78] J. BODIN, *I sei libri dello Stato*, edited by di M. Isnardi Parente and D. Quaglioni, Torino, Utet, vol. III, 1997, pp. 252-254.

the political purpose of preserving State stability and unity[79]. It pragmatically allows removal of one of the reasons to polity disintegration and to prevent State division into factions which do not recognize the authority principle on whom it is based. These factions contest State existence as a unitary and monist entity and hence they cause crisis. On the side of foreign relations the value of peace and inter-State harmony can be efficiently guaranteed by refusing religious wars and the diffusion of faith by use of force[80]. On the other side (that is the relation between different religions and confessions in each State) the author affirms the value of toleration. However in *De iure belli*, differently from *De papatu Romano Antichristo* and three *commentationes* on war (1588-1589)[81], toleration is valid *erga omnes*: also Anabaptists and Antitrinitarians should be tolerated.

Jews too, Gentili argues, should be tolerated as we can infer from the blame moved to Seiano, accused to have solicited Tiberio to eradicate the Jewish community in Rome: «Vorrei che non ci fossero più Seiani!»[82]

Gentili considers toleration as an ethically compulsory behaviour but also, pragmatically, as a useful instrument to rule differences and to legitimize public and common State institutions. The State is an actor moved to solve and neutralize differences, for the purpose of safeguarding the effective implementation of sovereignty and its monism.

Gentili's religious pluralism does not hinder State monism, on the contrary pluralism is a means to perseverance of the community's political and juridical organization. State safety is a central principle in Gentili's hierarchy of political

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[79] Gentili and Bodin's positions are radically opposed to Estienne de la Boétie's. In his *Memoires de la pacification des troubles* la Boétie had affirmed that "Tout le mal est la diversité de religion qui a passé si avant, qu'ung mesme peuple, vivant soubz mesme prince, s'est clerement divisé en deux pars […]. Non seulement les opinions sont differantes, mais déjà ont diverses esglizes, […] aucunement deux diverses republicques oposées de front l'une à l'autre."; *Memoire sur la pacification des troubles*. Edité avec introduction et notes par M. Smith, Genève, Librairie Droz, 1983, pp. 35-36. To safeguard unity and stability, the sovereign is needed to use force against his subjects; see D. Quaglioni, *Bodin: sovranità e libertà di coscienza* in *Machiavelli e la lingua della giurisprudenza* cit., pp. 169-170 and, in the same book, *La Boétie: servitù volontaria e guerra civile*, pp. 129-142.

[80] Only towards those that do not have religion force can be used. In Gentili atheists are seen as enemies of humankind; *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 9, pp. 58-60. Similar observations are in Bodin; *I sei libri dello Stato*, II cit., pp. 581-585.

[81] See I. MacLean, Appendice. *Alberico Gentili: bibliografia annotata delle sue opere, 1582-1614*, in *Alberico Gentili. Atti dei convegni nel quarto centenario della morte*, vol. II cit., pp. 161-162.

[82] A certain openness towards Jews appears in *De papatu Romano Antichristo*. Gentili affirms that "iudei peiores aliis infidelibus" but that "iudeorum fides habet primordium veritatis" and "iudei possunt habere synagogas in terris christianorum"; f. 2*r*.

values and *pro salute reipublicae* it is allowed to use force - so denying toleration - if State safety is compromised[83].

The author explains that the use of force to impose the sovereign's faith is illegitimate except when toleration could cause State destabilization and crisis: "A buona ragione gli epicurei furono espulsi da Roma; quella setta infatti dissolveva del tutto l'amministrazione dell'Impero, essendo questa amministrazione per gran parte fondata sulla religione e sul timore degli dei"[84]. "Non si deve usare violenza contro i sudditi che abbracciano un'altra religione"[85] unless "da ciò la cosa pubblica non ne riceva detrimento"[86].

This position is antithetical to Giusto Lipsio's. The Flemish humanist had sustained the need for a policy aimed to religious uniformity[87]. Gentili referring, as Bodin, to examples drawn from Ottoman history, rejects Lipsio's position and asks: "Oggi nell'Impero Turco, non sono forse pubblicamente tollerati i Giudei e i Cristiani?"[88]

Polemically associating the Ottoman Empire and the Pontifical State, Gentili clarifies that in Ancona Turcs, Jews and Greeks are tolerated[89]. But in Ancona Gentili underlines, toleration has economical and commercial reasons: the Papacy had developed Ancona as a commercial base to rival Venice, the majority of its exportations were directed to Ottoman regions in the Balkans. Michel Foucault affirmed that in the period in which Gentili lived, European thought was still limited to the research of similarity and did not formulate the conceptual instruments to face difference[90]. Foucault's observations are certainly sharable however Gentili's reflection is an important step in the long history of inter-cultural and inter-religious relations. Gentili gives a significant theoretical contribution to the human progress towards a more peaceful

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[83] Force can be used against those religious creeds and cultural manifestations which damage cohesion and stability in the State; *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 10, p. 62.

[84] *Ibid*.

[85] Ivi, p. 64.

[86] *Ibid*.

[87] G. Lipsio, *Politicorum sive civilis doctrina libri sex*, in *Opera Omnia*, Anversa, Officina Plantiniana, 1637, IV, 2, pp. 63-64. *Politicorum libri* are costantly recalled by Gentili who approached neo-stoicism by reading Lipsio; cfr M. Senellart, *Le stoïcisme dans la constitution de la pensée politique. Les Politiques de Juste Lipse (1589)*, in Lagrée J. (edited by), *Le Stoïcisme aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles. Actes du Colloque CERPHI (4-5 juin 1993)*, Cahiers de philosophie politique et juridique, Caen, 1994, pp. 117-130 and A. McCrea, *Constant Minds: Political Virtue and the Lipsian Paradigm in England, 1584-1650*, Toronto, University press, 1997, pp. 3-37.

[88] *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 10, p. 65. Cfr. J. Bodin, *I sei libri dello Stato*, vol. II cit., pp. 583-584.

[89] *Il diritto di guerra*, I, 10, p. 65.

[90] M. Foucault, *The Order of Things : An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, New York, Vintage, 1973.

inter-cultural exchange. This was Jean Bodin's purpose too, common to both the intellectuals was also the desire to see a new era of peace established in Europe by means of the annihilation of inter-religious and inter-confessional conflicts. The French jurist in the conclusion of his *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* (1593) exclaims rather significantly: "Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum, cohabitare fratres in unum"[91].

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[91]  J. Bodin, *Colloquium Heptaplomeres de rerum sublimium arcanis abditis*, curavit L. Noack, Parisiis-Londini, 1857, p. 358.

# BENJAMIN CONSTANT THE "FOX"
## AND THE IDEAL OF FREEDOM
## BETWEEN POLITICS, HISTORY AND RELIGION
### *Giuseppe Sciara*

*I've been defending the same principle for forty years, freedom in everything, in religion, philosophy, literature, industry and politics: and for freedom I intend the triumph of individuality as much over authority which wants to govern through despotism, as over the masses who claim the right to render the minority subservient to the majority[1].*

With these words included in the preface of *Mélanges de littérature et de politique* of 1829, Benjamin Constant proclaimed two features of his political and philosophical thought: continuity and consistency. They certainly were not superfluous clarifications, because out of the numerous preconceptions to which he had been subject to for some time, the label "changeable Constant", given to him following his collaboration with Bonaparte during the Hundred Days after having been his sworn enemy for 12 years, is the one that has resisted through time more than any other.

Benjamin Constant is now considered one of major minds from the

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[1] B. CONSTANT, *Mélanges de littérature et de politique*, in *Œuvres complètes de Benjamin Constant, Série Œuvres*, vol. XXXIII, dirigé par F. ROUSSET, Berlin/New York, De Gruyter, 2012, p. 145. My Translation. From now on, to indicate the volumes of *Œuvres complètes de Benjamin Constant* I'll use the letters *OCBC*.

history of political thought and some commentators consider him the first
true theorist of liberalism, not only because he was the first to clearly theorise
liberalism as a theory of limitation of political power, but also because his
reflections come in a particularly emblematic time frame in the formation
process of our political and cultural identity: the period running from the
French Revolution of 1789 up to the July Revolution of 1830[2].

Some biographical notes allow us to understand the importance of his
thought and his political experience[3]. Constant was born in 1767 in Lausanne
from a Protestant family, which had fled from France and taken refuge in
Switzerland at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1683.
This is certainly no insignificant detail, because as I will explain soon, the
concept of freedom theorised by Constant contains a religious weight which
is rich in meaning as regards considerations on monism and pluralism. After
having studied in various Universities around Germany and Scotland, the
Swiss liberal arrived in Paris at 28 years old, in 1795, when the Revolution
had just entered into its Thermidorian stage. Here his intellectual and political
career started and its path was completely dissimilar to that of other figures at
that time, such as Hegel, an intellectual who was dedicated to studying within
the four walls of his study. Constant instead was an *engagé* intellectual, strongly
motivated to play a political role in revolutionary France and this aspiration
was never to abandon him. This is a characteristic always to bear in mind to
understand some of his attitudes towards historical and political events which
he experienced first hand.

During the Thermidor Constant sided with the government of the Directory,
a political regime based on the principles of the representative republic, the

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[2] There is an extensive bibliography on Constant's political thought. I will limit myself to
indicating some international texts which have become "classics": E. Hofmann, *Les "Principes de
politique" de Benjamin Constant*, Droz, Genève, 1980; S. Holmes, *Benjamin Constant and the making
of modern Liberalism*, Yale U.P., New Haven & London, 1984; M. Barberis, *Benjamin Constant.
Rivoluzione, costituzione, progresso*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1988; M. Gauchet, *Constant*, in F. Furet - M.
Ozouf, *Dictionnaire critique de la Révolution francaise*, Paris, Flammarion, 1988; B. Fontana, *Benjamin
Constant and the post-revolutionary mind*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1991; G.
A. Kelly, *The humane comedy: Constant, Tocqueville and French Liberalism*, Cambridge University
Press, Cambridge, 1992; T. Todorov, *Benjamin Constant. La passion démocratique*, Hachette, Paris,
1997; S. De Luca, *Alle origini del liberalismo contemporaneo. Il pensiero di Benjamin Constant tra il
Termidoro e l'Impero*, Marco Editore, Lungro di Cosenza, 2003. Among the more recent works
cf. K. S. Vincent, *Benjamin Constant and the birth of French liberalism*, Palgrave Macmillan, New
York-Basingstoke, 2011.
[3] For Constant's biography the fundamental references are: K. Kloocke, *Benjamin Constant. Une
biographie intellectuelle*, Genève-Paris, Droz, 1984; D. Wood, *Benjamin Constant: A Biography*, New
York, Routledge, 1993.

regime which followed the Reign of Terror during which the Jacobins had tried to put into practice the model of the ancient city, or direct democracy, giving life to the first assembly-based dictatorship in history. Constant, writing a series of perfunctory pamphlets, is thus a Republican at this stage who keeps his distance from the Jacobins and their radical democracy. He was a tireless advocate of freedom and was convinced this could only be guaranteed by the directorial Republic's government. Later on, after the Coup of 18 Brumaire, which paved the way for Bonaparte, Constant started to reflect systematically on political principles and realised that freedom is independent from the form of government adopted. No matter what the political regime is, republic or monarchy, and no matter who power legitimately belongs to, what matters is how far this power can get, and what its limits are. Criticising Rousseau and his *Social Contract*, which the Jacobins had taken as a justification for establishing the Reign of Terror, Constant in the *Principes de politique*, a work composed around 1806, but which remained unedited until the 1960's[4], theorises the existence of a sphere of the Individual's own rights, a private area where authority, be it of the monarch or the people, has no right to enter.

This concept, developed in the years of Bonapartist authoritarianism (Constant was sworn enemy of Napoleon for all the Imperial Age) would no longer change. During the years of the Restoration, from 1814 onwards, the Swiss liberal first sided with the Bourbons, convinced that the monarchic regime restored by Louis XVIII might guarantee the rights of freedom to the French again. During the Hundred Days, as outlined, Napoleon was called to issue the new constitution and the decision to accept this offer greatly influenced the rest of his life and the idea future generations would have of him. But even after the definitive failure of Napoleon and the second return of the Bourbons, despite the accusations of opportunism and being a turncoat, Constant had the chance to show his own consistency and his own faith in the principle of Freedom, struggling in the political agon against the *ultraroyalistes*, pronouncing a great many political speeches being a member of parliament and publishing works fundamental for the history of liberal thought, among which *De la liberté des Anciens comparée à celle des Modernes* stands out for its importance and clarity of explanation.

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[4] On the origin and the historiographical value of this fundamental work cf. E. HOFMANN, *Les "Principes de politique" de Benjamin Constant*, cit. On Constant's publication method and use of the *Principes de politique* dated 1806 as *réservoir* of Restoration works cf. ID., *'Les Principes de politique' de 1806 comme 'réservoir' de textes pour les publications de Constant sous la Restauration. Une description schématique du problème*, «Annales Benjamin Constant», XXXIII, 2008, pp. 25-61.

Constant's liberalism is thus established on a strictly political definition of freedom as an individual's independence from power, from state authority. Nevertheless this definition, which we found in the quotation which I started this paper with, is the guiding principle of all Constant's considerations as regards politics, literature, history and religion. Constant thus as a first impression may seem a monist thinker, guided, to quote Isaiah Berlin, by a single inspiring principle, in his case that of freedom. And moreover a great deal of commentators, above all ones with a Marxist background, interpreted Constantian thought in a monistic sense, as a superfluity of bourgeois interests[5]. On the basis of Berlin's classification between monist thinkers (hedgehogs) and pluralist thinkers (foxes)[6], my intent is hence to demonstrate that Constant is by no means a hedgehog, safe in his spiky shell, who thinks he has found an absolute truth, that is one single principle which can explain the complexity of living in society; Constant is a fox who pursues many ends, often disconnected and contradictory, a thinker who is not at all convinced of being the guardian of truth and well knows that no-one can boast such a title.

However, for this purpose, it is not enough just to analyse his political writing. We need to look at the many-sided nature of his work, consider the various fields where his considerations were reached (politics, history, religion, literature) and the different forms where they were expressed (political booklets, articles, theoretical treaties, diaries, novels): from the *pamphlets* of his younger days, to the articles published almost daily on the Restoration periodicals, from political essays which remained unedited for a long time, to writings about religion (above all *De la religion*), from novels such as *Adolphe* to autobiographical writing such as *Journal intime*. Only by bearing in mind his complete work – and I believe that for the history of political thought it is necessary to deal also with sources which are not essentially political, not great essays – is it possible to highlight how his idea of freedom transcends the typically political dimension which one thinks of usually when approaching his thought and does not appear at all like a monistic philosophical principle[7].

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[5] A typical example is the reading of U. Cerroni, *Introduzione*, in B. Constant, *Principi di politica*, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1970², pp. 7-44. For an analysis of the different interpretations of Constant's political thought cf. S. De Luca, *La riscoperta di Benjamin Constant (1980-1993): tra liberalismo e democrazia*, "La Cultura", XXXV, nn. 1-2, 1997, pp. 145-174 e 295-324.

[6] I. Berlin, *The hedgehog and the fox: an essay on Tolstoy's view of history*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1953.

[7] For an overall view of Constant's political, philosophical, historical, literary and religious thought cf. *The Cambridge Companion to Constant*, edited by H. Rosenblatt, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Here I cannot proceed to a systematic analysis of the whole *corpus* of Constant's work. So as to outline the originality of Constant's individualistic liberalism and his conception of liberalism not as a monistic ideal but as an opening towards political, religious and moral pluralism and more generally, to pluralism of values, thus I will pause a while on two aspects which in my opinion make up the basis of all his considerations: firstly his philosophy of history and his concept of the perfectible nature of the human race; secondly the concept of ethics focused on the concept of religious sentiment. This analysis will allow me to emphasise a contrast, or rather, a continuous intrinsic tension in his ethical and political thought: between requests for Enlightenment and requests typical of that type of Romanticism which was about to get established[8].

One of the greatest debts that Constant holds towards the Scottish Enlightenment, with which he had entered into contact with at an early age during his time in Edinburgh, is the abandonment of the paradigm of natural law in favour of "*reasoning through history*", an element which foretells an attitude which was to be typical of the nineteenth century. In fact at the base of all Constant's thought exists a philosophy of history based on the perfectibility of the human race, the only theory which is able to explain the enigma of individual and social existence[9]. According to Constant, only the progressive perfection of the human species creates relationships between different generations: each one leaves the following a real heritage of moral and spiritual knowledge, discoveries, and conquests. In this process every individual plays a fundamental role, bringing his own special contribution. Even just a small intellectual contribution makes man an essential part of this process:

> *He who with meditation discovers even just one principle, he who with his hand traces out just one truth, can allow that the peoples and tyrants use his life; it will not be lived in vain, and if time cancels even the name that labels his fleeting existence, his thought will however remain impressed and totally indestructible, and nothing can prevent the fact that he has contributed to its formation[10].*

[8] This tension clearly emerges from B. Fontana's volume, *Benjamin Constant and the post-revolutionary mind*, cit.

[9] On this aspect of Constant's thought cf. in particular E. Behler, *La doctrine de Coppet d'une perfectibilité infinie et la Révolution française*, in *Le groupe de Coppet et la Révolution française*, Actes du Quatrième Colloque de Coppet, 20-23 juillet 1988, sous la direction de E. Hofmann et A.-L. Delacrétaz, "Annales Benjamin Constant", VIII-IX, 1988, pp. 255-274; E. Hofmann, *The Theory of Perfectibility of the Human Race*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Constant*, cit., pp. 248-271. For a wide ranging examination of Constant's philosophy of history cf. E. Travers, *Benjamin Constant: les principes et l'histoire*, avec une préface de P. Raynaud, Paris, H. Champion, 2005.

[10] B. Constant, *De la perfectibilité de l'espèce humaine*, in *OCBC*, vol. XXXIII, p. 435.

The foundation of the theory of perfectibility lies in the distinction between feelings and ideas. All the notions man receives are transmitted by the senses. On one side are feelings, said to be "fleeting, isolated, and leave no trace of their existence"[11]; on the other there are impressions which take shape through remembrance of a feeling or several feelings together and these are called "ideas". The former, feelings, cannot be conserved, are fleeting, the latter on the other hand make up a real asset for the individual, because they are conserved in the thinking part of man, are subject to different modifications, they weave together, multiply or are simply conserved over time forming a kind of "interior world".

While starting from an empirical and sensualistic basis, Constant immediately distances himself, imagining a human being with strong spirituality and intense creative skills who possesses his own interior world produced by the formation of ideas and the encountering or clashing between them. The ability for man to be perfected lies in the supremacy of ideas over feelings. If an individual was dominated by feelings he would have no chance to improve himself; but for man, who "behaves through ideas, improvement is assured"[12]. In fact, even if the ideas at a given moment are wrong, they carry with them "a seed with ever new combinations, more or less instant but unfailing corrections, and uninterrupted progress"[13].

With this faith in the *puissance des idées* Constant did not mean to reason in a normative way, in fact he wanted to distance himself from the imperative of illuminist origin for which "man must free himself from slavery of the senses and act according to the light of reason"[14]. Constant proposed simply to study what man does without worrying what he should be doing; he restricts himself to highlighting that what makes man different from the other creatures, is his continual inclination to sacrifice a feeling for an idea and consequently "relinquish the present for the future"[15]. Man thus becomes morally and spiritually independent; and it certainly is no coincidence that freedom of thought acquires fundamental importance in Constant's thinking. Reason, that is the human inclination to combine, modify and perfect ideas, must enjoy the utmost independence from authority: "independent thought is indispensable for light literature, science and the arts as much as air is necessary for physical

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[11]  Ivi, p. 436.
[12]  Ivi, p. 437.
[13]  Ibidem.
[14]  Ivi, p. 438.
[15]  Ibidem.

life". Hence, freedom of thought and perfectibility end up coinciding: obstructing the free exercising of reason, for example by limiting freedom of the press means attacking the human being in his very essence, striking him in his "most noble parts" and depriving him of the most powerful means of improvement.

Constant thus from some points of view could be considered to belong to the Enlightenment tradition – the concept of perfectibility, after all, is typical of the Enlightenment – while from others he strictly keeps his distance. One instance where this detachment materializes is where he refuses to attribute everything, both regarding morals and regarding politics, to the idea of interest: the liberal from Lausanne here introduces the concept of religious sentiment, which he needs, to criticize the utilitarian morals of Benthamian origin[16].

Religious sentiment appears as "the most natural of our emotions"[17], thanks to which the individual finds his own consolation from everyday evils. Constant thus starts from the statement that the human condition is unhappy, due to the pains and difficulties which continuously arise. Man is not only a creature whose hallmark is the inclination to use his own intellect, to gradually approach perfection through his ideas, but he is also a weak and fearful being who can find himself in difficulty when faced with the obstacles life has in store. An individual's religious sentiment originates directly from this weakness, from this daily sacrifice to suffer the pain and equally from this self-deception that above it all there is a superior being ready to reward him for such an act of devotion. Religious sentiment represents the other side of human existence, quite the opposite compared to its constant tendency towards perfection.

There is however a common focal point, an element where perfectibility and religious sentiment find their own origin and together their own fulfilment: it is the individual's natural inclination toward sacrifice which in the first case comes about by rejecting a feeling in favour of an idea and in the second bearing up to pain and difficulty, with a view to some higher

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[16] Constant dedicates several works to religion. It is sufficient to recall book VIII of *Principes de politique* and *De la religion considérée dans sa source, ses formes et ses développements*. On the religious theme in Constant cf. K. Kloocke, *Le concept de la liberté religieuse chez Benjamin Constant*, "Annales Benjamin Constant", X, 1989, pp. 25-39; P. Deguise, *La religion de Benjamin Constant et l'Unitarisme américain*, in *B. Constant: philosophe, historien, romancier, homme d'Etat*, Actes du Colloque de l'Université du Maryland, October 1989, "Annales Benjamin Constant", XII, 1991, pp. 19-27. A systematic study of Constant's religious thinking and its political implications in the context of French debates was performed by H. Rosenblatt, *Liberal Values. Benjamin Constant and the Politics of Religion*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

[17] B. Constant, *Principes de politique applicables à tous les gouvernements*, in *OCBC*, vol. V, p. 268.

objective, but in both cases it is nothing but the attitude of "sacrificing the present for the future"[18].

Constant hangs the same concept of moral on the idea of religious sentiment, because on it are based man's most noble sentiments such as love, melancholy, need for glory, that is "all the delicate, noble and profound passions" that reason cannot explain. Thus, the notion of religious sentiment also absorbs the concept of doubt, which becomes almost a principle of method for an individual's moral conduct. In the *Mélanges* as in *De la religion*, but also in many pages of his *Journal* Constant maintains that "religious sentiment is surely compatible with doubt" and that in fact, "it is much more compatible with doubt than with any religion"[19]. The doubt that Constant mentions is not man's doubt while suffering, far away from God, but it is a positive doubt, an instrument of reason, a doubt which is almost "Popperian", belonging to whoever does not have blind faith in dogmatic beliefs, because they know that dogma is an obstacle to man's progress, whereas doubt gives rise to life and continuous renewal[20]. Therefore, the religion which Constant refers to is not dogmatic, but personal, inner and free. Considering the above we can understand why in *De la religion* – which has always represented, for Constant, his greatest work, which he had worked on, even if it was not continuously, for almost 40 years – among other things Greek and Roman polytheism comes to be glorified: because the Swiss liberal considers it a set of religious beliefs which is much better disposed towards tolerance compared to the monotheistic religions. In fact, through this reasoning on Greek and Roman polytheism, Constant in *De la religion* reached the point of theorising religious, moral and political pluralism[21].

When Constant bases his human moral on religious sentiment he clearly distances himself from the Enlightenment, from the English Utilitarians and from the French *idéologues,* who assert that man's morals are based on the notion of interest. This reasoning can be found and not by chance in the *Préface* to the treatise *De la religion*, in which Constant argues that interest makes us "know only what is useful or what is harmful"[22] and hence ends up "destroying everything which is against it"[23]. The man who shapes his

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[18]  B. Constant, *De la perfectibilité de l'espèce humaine*, cit., p. 438.

[19]  B. Constant, *Journaux intimes (1804-1807)*, in *OCBC*, vol. VI, p. 259.

[20]  Ibidem.

[21]  Cf. regarding B. Fontana, *Benjamin Constant and the post-revolutionary mind*, cit., pp. 131-174.

[22]  B. Constant, *De la Religion considére dans sa source, ses formes et ses développements, tome I*, in OCBC, vol. XVII, p. 78.

[23]  Ivi, p. 77.

own behaviour on interest establishes a moral based on one single rule: to refrain "from everything which is able to harm us"[24] and this brings him to be continually influenced by feelings which are either selfish or overly prudent, hence repudiating that instinctiveness, that element of passion and emotion which belong to the human being. Rational calculation of interest cannot be, in Constant's view, the source of morality because it does not allow man to abandon and liberate himself from his own selfish ambitions. Only religious sentiment can produce elevation of the individual due to disinterest and continual sacrifice of material interests in favour of something more sublime and nobler. However, as has been pointed out, disinterest for Constant, "is not the fruit, as in Kant, of unconditioned obedience to the imperatives of reason, an obedience made difficult by the irredeemable contrast with our sensitive impulses"[25], but flows directly from religious sentiment and thus is not in contrast with man's sensitive side. To summarise, the Enlightenment's understanding of morality, and Utilitarianism, and Kantian morals, have all omitted the importance and complexity of the individual's inner life.

This mentality, this idea of an individual who is surely rational, but distinguished by turbulent passions and emotions emerges clearly in Constant's literary works, in particular in *Adolphe*: the psychological study and characterisation of the young protagonist, the description of his inner turbulence, of his change in beliefs, his choices which often went against his interests, his doubting even as regards the value of freedom, make this work a forerunner as regards themes which were to belong to Romanticism. Both from a philosophical point of view, and in the development of the characters in his own literary works, Constant bluntly refuses behaviour inspired by a mere rational calculation based on interest and juxtaposes the principle of *perfectibilité* and religious sentiment, which make up the two complementary aspects of human existence, both, as we have seen, based on the concept of sacrifice.

Hence, Constant represents a fundamental milestone on the long path of ethical and political thought. His considerations, on one hand, make up a part of the furrow dug by the Kantian revolution which puts man at the centre of the universe, on the other in the tradition of the French *Lumières*, but which it is substantially different from, as we have seen. In Constant's work, freedom is made individual, it is no longer the characteristic of a common body, but instead becomes a typical feature of a human being, able to make

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[24] Ibidem.
[25] S. De Luca, *Alle origini del liberalismo contemporaneo*, cit., p. 208.

choices, express judgements, to be morally independent[26]. This consideration of freedom in man's intimate domain brings Constantian liberalism to assume "a spiritualistic inflection, because historical values are overcome by meta-historic values"[27]: Man's actions and experience assume a deeper meaning, not only because of their efficiency with regard to the political and social world surrounding them, but also, above all with regard to his own inner ego and its relationship with the Transcendent.

Freedom thus assumes a sacred quality because it is included in the ethical edifice founded on the concept of sacrifice, the original cause of human perfectibility, and on religious sentiment. The latter is founded on a collective and individual moral based on the refusal of self-interest well understood to be of Benthamian origin, a moral handed down through the generations through the process of perfection. In this way, freedom ends up coinciding with the "same moral conditions of civil life"[28].

This greater intricacy in understanding individuality, this element of inner being and spirituality when perceiving freedom thus bring Constant closer to Romantic inspiration. But in his view, conversely to Romanticism, freedom is not represented as a myth and "faith in freedom is not born from an abstract conviction or a revelation, but from a historical experience"[29] and thus is a faith which is constantly being renewed. Freedom is not presented just as a romantic ideal which individuals must aspire to, but is inevitably linked to a conception of man which is part of a historical process, one which he himself is leading, through the power of ideas and by means of his own inclination to sacrifice current passions for the fulfilment of a future project.

To sum up, in Constant's thinking, freedom, religious sentiment and historical philosophy are bound indissolubly to create a morality, a life direction which is realised outside the standards of utilitarian selfishness and, as can be inferred, Constant is certainly not advocate of one single ethic, of values which are valid for all in space and time. Utilitarianism, with its pretension of quantifying pleasure and pain and basing what is right and wrong on these measurements, claiming even to define what happiness is, making it coincide with the pursuit of what is useful, fundamentally had theorized a single system

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[26] Cf. A. Zanfarino, *Introduzione*, in Id., *Constant. Antologia di scritti politici*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1982.

[27] F. Valentini, *Liberalismo e gradualismo. Humboldt, Constant*, Staël, in Id., *Il pensiero politico contemporaneo*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 1985, p. 116.

[28] A. Omodeo, *Benjamin Constant e la libertà come ideale e come metodo*, in *La cultura francese nell'età della Restaurazione*, Einaudi, Torino, 1974², p. 203.

[29] P. Biondi, *La politica di Constant*, in "Studi politici", II, nn. 3-4, 1953-54, p. 299.

of values, bringing the life of man down to something decided in advance.

For Constant it is not so. An ethic valid for all does not exist, neither does one single system of values, nor does one single lifestyle that everyone has to follow, and happiness cannot have the same meaning for all. Precisely because he distinguishes religious sentiment from dogmatic beliefs, he highlights the value of doubt, he imagines individual freedom with a strong ethical and spiritual charge, freedom which dwells in the inner world of each of us, he demonstrates acknowledgement not only of the concept of tolerance, but also of pluralism of values, which are in fact individual values hence different for each of us.

# Frances Wright:
# Liberty as a founding principle
# of Republican America
### Federica Falchi

It was between 1760 and 1830[1] that the term democracy first came to be used with a positive connotation in British political discourse (e.g. T. Paine in *Rights of Man* and *Letter Addressed to Addressers)*, albeit with a quite different meaning from that associated with the Greek city states [2].

This semantic shift was a direct result of the American experience that led to the growing resentment against the monarchy. It was spawned by the ideals of individualism and egalitarianism and inspired by English history and Law as well by Lockean Contractarianism.

It should be remembered that the word democracy was at the time practically synonymous with the term Republic, which thanks to the ideas spread by 18th century writers was associated with the splendour and power of the Roman Republic that "had achieved, in its glory and fame, all that any people on earth could have wished for […] «It was impossible» said Montesquieu, «to weary of

[1] M. Philip, *Reaching for democracy in Britain 1760-1830*, in Carmelo Calabrò, *Viaggio nella democrazia. Il cammino dell'idea democratica nella storia del pensiero politico*, edited by Mauro Lenci, presented by C. Palazzolo, Pisa, Edizioni ETETS 2010, p. 106.

[2] "The reference of the term 'democracy' changes from ancient small city-states in which the people rule directly, to the idea of representative institutions serving states of often considerable territory and scale" in ivi, p. 105.

something as great as ancient Rome»"[3]. In the *Federalist*, the Founding Fathers had equated «pure democracy» with the republic[4].

In the years following the establishment of the American Constitution, the United States attracted the curiosity of numerous scholars due to the novelty of it being a Republic located within in a vast territory; it was a federal state with extensive male suffrage. In short, as Tocqueville noted, it was the first example of a modern democracy. «I admit that in America I saw more than America; I sought there an image of democracy itself, its tendencies, its character, its prejudices, its passions; I wanted to know democracy, if only to know at least what we must hope or fear from it»[5].

Before the French philosopher arrived in America to write his celebrated analysis of the events underway there, another thinker had already made the voyage across the Atlantic with the intention of studying this new and revolutionary political model; the person in question was the Scotswoman Frances Wright[6] who

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[3]  G. S. Wood, *L'eredità di Roma nella rivoluzione americana*, in *La virtù e la libertà: Ideali e civiltà italiana nella formazione degli Stati Uniti*, Torino, Edizioni della Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli 1995, p. 22.

[4]  See also J. Madison, *Federalist* No. 10, November 23, 1787, in http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_10.html.

[5]  A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America: Historical-Critical Edition of De la démocratie en Amérique,* ed. Eduardo Nolla, translated from the French by James T. Schleifer. A Bilingual French-English editions, (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2010). Vol. 1. 21/2/2016. http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2285.

[6]  Born in Scotland in 1795, she was the daughter of the well-to-do radical James Wright. Both her parents died when she was still a child, so she was brought up mainly by relatives on her mother's side, who were part of the prestigious Campbell clan. One person who played a particularly important role in her education was her uncle Mylne, professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow and a well-known figure in the Scottish Enlightenment movement. A lively, enquiring mind, she lived her years between the United States (eventually taking citizenship), Great Britain and France. Her first publications were an essay on Epicurean philosophy and a play, *Altorf*, about the independence of Switzerland. After a visit to Owen's New Harmony, she set up a community for the emancipation of blacks in Nashoba. When it was clear her emancipationist project had failed, she went to New York, where she held the first of a series of lectures on politics, religion and female emancipation. As a result of some unfortunate personal events, she gradually withdrew from public life and sadly died in solitude in 1852, in Cincinnati. On Frances Wright see my F. Falchi, *Frances Wright, una scozzese alla ricerca delle origini e della valenza politico-sociale dell'idea di eguaglianza nel nuovo mondo*, in G. Scichilone - M. Ferronato (edited by), *Lo scrittoio dell'intellettuale. La sfida del conflitto nella storia politica occidentale*, Roma, Aracne, 2016 and among others: F. Wright, *Biography, Notes, and Political Letters of Frances Wright D'Arusmont*. Dundee, J. Myles, 1844; W. Waterman, *Frances Wright*, New York, Columbia University 1924; Margaret Lane, *Francis Wright and the Great Experiment*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1972; R. Stiller, *Commune on the Frontier: The Story of Frances Wright*, New York, Crowell, 1972; C. Morris, *Fanny Wright: Rebel in America*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1984; S. Kissel, *In Common Cause: The "Conservative" Frances Trollope and the "Radical" Frances Wright*, Bowling Green, OH, Bowling Green State UP, 1993; J. Rendall, *Prospects of the American Republic, 1795-1821: The*

disembarked in New York with her sister Camilla, convinced that she would find her imagined utopia.

It was after reading *La Storia della guerra dell'indipendenza degli Stati Uniti d'America* (1809) written by the Piedmontese historian Carlo Botta[7], that she took a passionate interest in American affairs and read all the books on the United States[8] that she could find in her family library as well as at the Glasgow university library. As a child she had read widely because «Surrounded at all times by rare and extensive libraries, and commanding whatever masters she desired»[9]. Her thirst for knowledge was such that «she applied herself by turns to various branches of science, and to the study of ancient and modern letters»[10]. Her curiosity still unquenched, she decided she had to go and see for herself the truth that lay behind what she had read.

Wright spent almost two years travelling around North America, recording her thoughts and impressions in letters she exchanged with Robina Craig Millar[11] who also had a keen interest in American affairs having lived there herself. On her return to England, her friend Robina encouraged her to select and edit her letters for publication; the English edition of the volume went to print in 1821 with the title *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820.* The French version, *Voyage aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique, ou Observations sur la société, les mœurs, les usages et le gouvernement de ce pays, recueillies en 1818, 1819 et 1820 Par Miss Wright,* came out in 1822.

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*Radical and Utopian Politics of Robina Millar and Frances Wright*, in Manning Susan and France Peter (edited by), *Enlightenment and Emancipation*, Lewisburg, Bucknell University Press, 2006, pp. 145-159; M. T. Pichetto, *"A friendship of no ordinary character". Frances Wright e il generale Lafayette*, in G. Angelini - M. Tesoro (edited by), *De amicitia. Scritti dedicati a Arturo Colombo*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2007, pp. 284-294; A. J. G.Perkins - T. Wolfson, *Frances Wright, Free Enquirer: The Study of a Temperament*, Philadelphia, Porcupine,1972; C. A. Kolmerten, *Women in Utopia. The ideology of gender in the American owenite communities*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1998.

[7] On Carlo Botta, see for example: R. Grasso, *Carlo Botta e la Storia della guerra dell'indipendenza degli Stati Uniti d'America*, Chiaravalle C.le, Industria tipolitografica Frama, 1972; L. Canfora - U. Cardinale (edited by), *Il giacobino pentito: Carlo Botta fra Napoleone e Washington*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2010.

[8] She quotes among others: Lieutenant Hall, Travels in Canada and in the United States in 1816 and 1817, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown 1818; H. Bradshaw Fearon, *Sketches of America: A Narrative of a Journey of Five Thousand Miles Through the Eastern and Western States of America*, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1818.

[9] F. Wright, *Biography, Notes, and Political Letters of Frances Wright D'Arusmont*, cit., p. 6.

[10] Ibidem.

[11] Robina, of radical persuasion, was the daughter of the doctor and academic William Cullen (1710-1790). She married John Craig Millar (1762-1796) and went with him to the United States, where she remained until his death. See C. Morris, *op. cit.*; J. Rendall *op. cit.*

Working on the text gave her the opportunity to come into contact with «the prominent Reformers of Europe»[12].

Notwithstanding a few inaccuracies and a level of enthusiasm that sometimes seems to compromise objectiveness, her writing is filled with rich descriptions and reflections on American institutions and society. Her prose also reveals an admiration for some of the features of the modern conception of republic adopted by the New world; she emphasizes how the principle of liberty brings harmony and a pluralist vision of social and political life.

It is difficult not to agree with Duran when she states that *Views* «May also be read as a product of the late – very late – years of the Scottish Enlightenment»[13] in which Wright systematically refers to «classical republican imagery to represent the heroic face and political goals of the American republic»[14].

The structure of her prose, her methods of research and analysis, as well as the numerous learned references all revealed the education that Wright had received. In addition to being well versed in the classics and in Italian writers, she was also familiar with the works of writers during the Scottish Enlightenment, thanks to the influence of her uncle Mylne and his friends and colleagues at the university of Glasgow, one of the main centres of this school of thought. On top of this wealth of cultural knowledge, she had also studied the works of Paine[15], a republican and a central character in the American revolution, and the works of the leading proponents of Natural law and Contractarianist theory in England[16].

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[12] F. Wright, *Biography, Notes, and Political Letters of Frances Wright D'Arusmont*, cit., p. 12. During her lifetime, as a result of her success as an author as well her political and social initiatives, Wright had the opportunity to meet and mix with a number of the most illustrious thinkers and politicians of the day. Among them were J. Bentham, Lafayette, J. Monroe, T. Jefferson, James e John S. Mill, J. Madison, G.J. Holyoake, R. Owen. V. W. Waterman, *op. cit.*; C. Morris, *op. cit.*

[13] J. Rendall, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

[14] Ivi, p. 146.

[15] She would certainly have had access to the works of Paine in the family libraries because her father James was an admirer of the American and French revolutions, and of Paine. In 1794, he published a low-priced version of *The Rights of man*, drawing the suspicion of the government, who thereafter kept him under surveillance. V. F. Wright, *Biography, Notes, and Political Letters of Frances Wright D'Arusmont* cit., p. 4.

[16] As Marco Geuna says «The Scottish enlightenment can perhaps be considered as another cultural context in which the languages of Natural Law and Republicanism are intertwined and superimposed in the writings of various authors. Further, it is a context in which thinkers whose roots lie in either one or the other tradition are often confounded; a context in which the two traditions are, as it were, placed in opposition, albeit in renewed terms» in M. Geuna, *La tradizione repubblicana e l'illuminismo scozzese*, in edited by L. Turco, *Filosofia, Scienza e Politica nel Settecento Britannico*, Padova, Il Poligrafo, 2003, p. 56.

## 5.1 The Republican spirit

In spite of the conviction held by many Englishmen that America was «in a sort of middle state between barbarism and refinement»[17] Wright's first impression of America when she arrived was a country whose political, social and economic foundations were clearly in the making and that liberty, in the broadest sense of the word, was the driving force of a progress: «recalling the rapid strides which these States have made, in less than half a century, from unknown colonies to a vast and powerful empire, you cannot help invoking the name of Liberty, under whose auspices all has been effected»[18].

Frances Wright sensed the presence of liberty, the essence of pluralism, not just in a theoretical dimension, as was the case in Great Britain, but on a practical level as well. It was perceptible in all sectors of society, in political and social institutions, to the extent that there was no distinct barriers separating the governed from the governors, nor conditions of oppression and domination, but rather a balance borne of a common consensus. All this was thanks to the «universal spread of useful and practical knowledge, the exercise of great political rights, the ease, and, comparatively, the equality of condition»[19].

Wright's selection of her letters broadly followed the outline of Botta's book, since a number of them dealt with an analysis of the birth of the United States. Evidently, she thought this would be crucial, according to the precepts and principles of the Scottish Enlightenment, to better understand the chief origins of the social and political genesis of 19th century America. Under the strong influence of this school of thought, she believed it necessary to look closely at both the social and political environment that had formed and compare it to the one that people had come from, in order to gain a better understanding of man and the development of ideas[20]. As Trevor-Roper writes, «the study of

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[17] F. Wright, *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820*, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown 1821, p. 311.

[18] Ivi, p. 21.

[19] Ivi, p. 118.

[20] The most noteworthy figures of the Scottish Enlightenment included such names as Francis Hutchenson, Adam Smith, Thomas Reid, Adam Ferguson, William Robertson, John Millar and David Hume. V. H. Trevor-Roper, "The Scottish Enlightenment", in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 68, 1967, pp. 1635-1658; N. t. Phillipson, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1981; P. Jones (edited by), *The 'Science of man' in the Scottish Enlightenment. Hume, Reid and their Contemporaries*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1989; T. M. Devine (edited by), *Improvement and Enlightenment*, Edinburgh, John Donald Publishers

man merges in the study of his social context, and the pupils of Hutchenson, from being moral philosophers, concerned with the problem of virtue, became social historians, concerned with the problem of progress»[21].

One important point that the Scotswoman highlights is the homogeneity of the settlers' economic and social conditions, which contributed to the making of a society without hierarchical divisions. Indeed, the fact that many settlers were either dissenters, drawn by the desire to practice their own faith freely, or had little interest in religion, meant there was widespread acceptance and tolerance of religious diversity. Faith was a personal matter that would not intrude on political and institutional affairs.

Wright saw that a thorough description of the life and character of the first settlers would be necessary to highlight the correlation she had observed between liberty and the practice of religious tolerance[22].

In America as in other countries, the transition from freedom of conscience to freedom of expression was a brief one, albeit longer in some cases. The case of Pennsylvania is emblematic and is examined closely by Wright. The state's founder, William Penn, had made a name for himself in his homeland for his campaigning in favour of the freedom of conscience. For example, in the *Great Case of Liberty of Conscience Once More Debated & Defended*[23] he declared that the freedom of expression was his right, and the right of every human being: Wright writes «intrepid Penn, not only asserted his own right to freedom of opinion,

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LTD, 1989; M. Geuna, *La tradizione repubblicana e l'illuminismo scozzese*, cit., pp. 49-86; M. Rubboli, *Illuminismo, filosofia scozzese del Common sense e protestantesimo americano*, in G. Cantarutti - S. Ferrari (edited by), *Illuminismo e protestantesimo*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2010, pp. 229-242.

[21] H. Trevor-Roper, *op. cit.*, pp. 1640.

[22] With regard to this, see among others: G. Jellinek, *La Dichiarazione dei diritti dell'uomo e del cittadino*, Bongiovanni Giorgio (edited by), Roma-Bari, Laterza, (1895) 2002; N. Bobbio, *L'età dei diritti*, Torino, Einaudi, 1997; G. Oestreich, *Storia dei diritti umani e delle libertà fondamentali*, Gustavo Gozzi (edited by), Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2001; A. Facchi, *Breve storia dei diritti umani*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2006; T. Casadei, *Tra ponti e rivoluzioni. Diritti, costituzioni, cittadinanza in Thomas Paine*, Torino, G. Giappichelli Editore, 2012; E. Pariotti, *I diritti umani: concetto, teoria, evoluzione*, Lavis (TN), Cedam, 2013; M. Lenci, *Dalla libertà religiosa alla libertà politica: il radicalismo anglo-americano*, 1689-1776, in (edited by) M. Lenci - C. Calabrò, *Viaggio nella democrazia. Il cammino dell'idea democratica nella storia del pensiero politico*, cit., pp. 43-68.

[23] His battle for the freedom of conscience cost him dearly; he was imprisoned in the infamous *Tower of London*. The treatment he received convinced him in Pennsylvania to adopt a penal code that took into consideration the humanity of a convict, substituting just punishment for cruelty and giving convicts an opportunity to redeem themselves. See for example: C. Mabel Mason, *William Penn: founder of Pennsylvania*, Boston, John Hancock Mutual Life Ins. Co., 1924; E. J. Gray, *Penn*, New York, Viking Press, 1950; M. K. Geiter, *Wiliam Penn*, London, Longman Pub Group 2000.

but claimed it also for mankind»[24] and that his 'colony'was an example of virtue, a state where the people were all free citizens with the same rights and duties and all in control if their own destiny and patrons of their own sovereignty.

The conviction held by Wright that «It is difficult to make observations upon the inhabitants of a particular district that shall not more or less apply to the nation at large. This is the case in all countries, but more particularly in these democracies»[25] was shared by many, particularly since there was an openness towards the themes of tolerance, humanity and self-government that was generally uniform throughout the colonies, even though to varying degrees. On this, Wright cites Burke, who had also identified the correlation between freedom of conscience and the consequent expansion of liberty in America:

> In this Character of the Americans, a love of Freedom is the predominating feature which marks and distinguishes the whole […] This fierce spirit of Liberty is stronger in the English Colonies probably than in any other people of the earth; and this from a great variety of powerful causes; which, to understand the true temper of their minds, and the direction which this spirit takes, it will not be amiss to lay open somewhat more largely[26].

Burke again:

> Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new people is no way worn out or impaired; and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are protestants; and of that kind which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favourable to liberty, but built upon it[27].

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[24] F. Wright, *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England*, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820, cit., p. 54.
[25] Ivi, p. 118.
[26] E. Burke, *Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq., on Moving His Resolutions for Conciliation with the Colonies 22 March 1775*, in Edmund Burke, *Select Works of Edmund Burke*. A New Imprint of the Payne Edition. Foreword and Biographical Note by Francis Canavan (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999). Vol. 1. 25/2/2016. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/796>.
[27] Ibidem.

## 5.2 The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution

The Declaration of Independence and the creation of a constitution were able to come about thanks to the combination of the socio-historical conditions of the American colonies and the judicial and philosophical tradition of England, the latter being a vital *sine qua non* for political legitimacy in the United States.

Wright reminds us of the key events and moments in history associated with the Declaration of Independence, recalling the emotion she felt during a visit to the building where it was signed:

«I know not, in the whole page of human history, anything more truly grand and morally sublime than the conduct of the American Congress throughout that unequal contest, upon which hung not the liberties of one people but those of mankind»[28]. Memories of the war invoke the heroic actions of a people who had become beacons of the principle of liberty, of self-determination and who, notwithstanding the difference in military might continued the struggle unwaveringly because they had «confidence in their just cause, and, with their eyes upon the pole-star of liberty, did they steady the helm of the reeling vessel of the infant state, ride out triumphantly the storm of war and revolution, and gain the glorious haven, from which their thoughts had never swerved»[29].

As she takes us through the stages of the American revolution, Wright recalls that the members of the Assembly enjoyed the complete trust of the populace and draws attention to how they claimed their natural right to choose their own representatives and could participate in establishing laws according to the precepts and precedents of the British tradition. The apparent indifference of the motherland combined with the vast distance separating them brought people together and made them more receptive to the «numerous energetic pamphlets which began to advocate the national disunion of the colonies from the British empire»[30].

Faced with an evident disregard of their natural rights, and on the strength of the contractarianist tradition from which they had come, these settlers had staged all manner of protests possible, thus exerting their right to popular resistance to the point where the continuing injustices perpetrated by the

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[28]  F. Wright, *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820*, cit., p. 87.
[29]  Ivi, p. 88.
[30]  Ivi, p. 95.

motherland led to the breakdown of the pact and the foundation of a state based on liberty and popular consent. These events in American history represent a milestone in the history of civilization and progress because, to quote Wright «It was not the cause of Americans only, it was the cause of the very people whose injustice they opposed»[31].

Further, «the people were now their own lawgivers, whatever they decreed amiss could be forthwith amended, and from that time we find no political disputes in this or the other republics, but those of a day»[32].

A further defining characteristic, according to Wright, is one that emerged tangibly during the revolutionary period: moderation. It enabled Americans to reach decisions in a spirit of harmony and consensus, providing a beacon of light for a people forced to deal with huge human and economic loss. Referring to them as «modern Romans», she draws a parallel with the political and civic virtues that helped the Roman Republic become a model of civilization and political maturity. The use of moderation was perhaps motivated by a will to distinguish the values underlying the American revolutionary experience from the French revolution, frequently cited for the brutality of its summary executions.

An oft-quoted feature noted by Wright is «the integrity of the Congress, or the confidence of the people in their integrity»[33]. Integrity is the civic virtue traditionally held to be an indispensable ingredient for the good functioning of a Republic; a virtue that guarantees the people's representatives will focus on the common good rather than on personal gain.

> *we find not one member of that magnanimous assembly even suspected of peculation, or of a desire of personal aggrandizement; and the latter [confidence of the people in their integrity], that, during the worst days of that storm period, the public suffering was never charged to any willful mismanagement on the part of the government[34].*

Republican virtues are something that every citizen must exercise through active participation in the life of the community and state, something made possible by the right to vote given to most American males[35]. The fact that the

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[31]  Ivi, p. 96.
[32]  Ivi, pp. 106-107.
[33]  Ivi, pp. 89-90.
[34]  Ivi, p. 90.
[35]  Despite her great admiration for the American republic, Wright didn't hesitate to draw attention to what she considered two detestable evils: the inferior legal and political position of women and slavery. The Scottish author had a positive, rosy outlook on the progress of

settlers had a generally higher level of education compared to most European countries, that they had been granted suffrage and were encouraged to play an active part in the resistance against the motherland, instilled in Americans a sense of belonging, while also maintaining a spirit of individualism. The Scottish writer first discerned this during her voyage to the United States; engaging in conversation with the crew she observed that «every man of the crew, from the old veteran to the young sailorboy, could read and write, and, I believe, I might almost say every man could converse with you upon the history of his country, its laws, its present condition, and its future prospects»[36].

Within any state, notes Wright, peace is obtained through a balance between power and liberty, which had been achieved in America. Commenting on the debate between supporters and enemies of the Republic, she affirms that it was futile for the latter to point to the example of Rome with its feuding factions and internecine war, because America had created institutions with popular representation and «this is which gives to modern liberty a character foreign to that which she bore in ancient times; this is which has made freedom and peace shake hands, and which renders the reign of one coeval with that of the other»[37].

A system of representation which was:

*invented, or rather by a train of fortuitous circumstances brought into practice in England, has been carried to perfect in America; by it the body of the people rule in everything; by it they establish their constitutions; by it they legislate according to the Constitutions established; and by it again they amend their constitutions, according to the gradual advance of the public mind in political wisdom. Thus, though the form of government should in some cases be found deficient, yet as the door is ever left open to improvement, in system it may always be pronounced perfect[38].*

mankind, but was convinced there were evident signs that both these evils could be corrected «The prejudices still to be found in Europe, though now indeed somewhat antiquated, which would confine the female library to romances, poetry, and belles-lettres, and female conversation to the last new publication, new bonnet, and parasol are entirely unknown here. The women are assuming their place as thinking beings, not in despite of the men, but chiefly in consequence of their enlarged views and exertions as fathers and legislators» Frances Wright, *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820*, cit., p. 422; «The counsel, and perhaps ultimately the assistance, of the great and numerous northern and western states, may in time be useful in relieving their sister states from this crime and calamity; if the former be given with temper, and the latter yielded with unpretending generosity», ivi, p. 72.

[36] Ivi, p. 5.
[37] Ivi, p. 116.
[38] Ibidem.

The scholar from Dundee was convinced that even imperfect Republics, where liberty and power are in the hands of the people, can strive to reach excellence. In support of her argument she cites another passage taken from I discorsi sopra la prima deca Tito Livio «"Quelle republiche che, se le non hanno l'ordine perfetto hanno preso il principio buono e atto a diventare migliore, possono, per la occorrenza delli accidenti diventare perfette"»[39].

## 5.3 The birth of the Constitution

These republics based on common principles were able to privilege the «common good» and overcome their differences because «there is no strength without union»[40]. Wright cites the words of Ramsey that she thought best described the sense and the driving force behind the adoption of a Federal government.

> *The adoption of this constitution was a triumph of virtue and good sense over the vices and follies of human nature; in some respects, the merit of it is greater than that of the declaration of independence. The worst of men can be urged on to make a spirited resistance to invasion of their rights; but higher grades of virtue are requisite to induce freemen, in the possession of a limited sovereignty, voluntarily to surrender a portion of their natural liberties; to impose on themselves those restraints of good government which bridle the ferocity of man, compel him to respect the claims of others, and to submit his rights and his wrongs to be decided by the voices of his fellow citizens. The instances of nations which have vindicated their liberty by the sword, are many; of those which have made a good use of their liberty when acquired, are comparatively few[41].*

Americans had the merit of not abusing their liberty, and realized that a respect for rights could not be attained without an acceptance of shared rules; this co-existence of liberty and restriction is, as Kant explains, the only path to peace and the rule of reason.

The adoption of a Federal constitution was an absolute novelty in history, a constitution which the liberty of a nation and the world in general was entrusted.

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[39]  Ibidem.
[40]  Ivi, p. 329.
[41]  Ivi, p. 328.

The spectre of 'dictatorship of the people' and the loss of individualism was still present in the memory and knowledge of the traditional diffidence towards democracy voiced by the fathers of ancient Greece and in Rousseau's experimental democratic ideas. Frances displayed an awareness of the democratic debate and was keen to draw attention to the innovation in the American system: «the voice of the sovereign people is not altogether absolute, and by no means undisputed. If the people be proud, also are their agents in congress; and few are found who will passively surrender their right of judgement to their employers»[42]. On occasions when the people are at odds with their representative, the latter may exert the right to a 'call to reason'. Taking such a liberty is not a betrayal of the electorate because it occurs only on rare occasions and in any case, any ambitious politician would see the danger of doing so. As Wright specifies, if a man is ambitious, he will only be successful if he acts on the interests of others: «the moment that he ostensibly opposes his own to those of his fellow citizens, he must throw up the game»[43].

America's republican model, observes Wright, is at variance with the Machiavellian model that lauds conflict between opposing factions with conflicting interests, because it rests on the principle of parity in political and civil conditions. Revolts and struggles do not occur, nor are they necessary because the systems seems fair and just to all: «Liberty is here secure, because it is equally the portion of all. The state is liable to no convulsions, because there is nowhere any usurpations to mantain, while every individual has an equal sovereignty to lose»[44].

## 5.4 Broad consensus

The Union's political system, writes the Scottish scholar, comprises two chambers having legislative functions. The first represents all the people of the Union while the second those states in which the union is split «the hall of representatives may be said to speak the feelings of the nation, and

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[42]  Ivi, p. 508.
[43]  Ivi, p. 360.
[44]  Ivi, pp. 361-362.

the senate to balance the local interests of the different sections of its vast territory»[45].

This particular arrangement ensures that a law must gain the assent of both the majority of the people and the majority of states, i.e. a high level of consent. Furthermore, the system also has the advantage of factoring in the needs of different states according to the number of inhabitants and each state's economic features. While in America the boundaries between the three powers are clear and well respected, this is not the case in England; although the theory of the division of power may be well understood in principle, it is not put effectively into practice. Legislative and executive power often confusingly overlap, due both to the influence of the monarchy and ministers on the legislative process. In America, on the other hand, neither the president nor any member of his government may play a part in the workings of either chambers.

This separation of tasks and responsibilities seemed unclear in both practice and theory to many Englishmen. In support of her argument Wright cites «the mistake of a wellknown political economist in London, who (as I was told in Washington,) once addressed a letter, apparently intended for Mr. Madison, To the President of Congress. I understand that a similar error is to be found in a published work of Mr. Jeremy Bentham»[46].

The guarantee of a well balanced political and institutional framework assuring that the rights of every person be respected, is the Constitution, affirms Wright. Created by common will, the document represents a shared heritage that anyone may appeal to in cases of injustice. The English had no prior experience of a document of this kind, as it afforded stability even if majorities were altered. Indeed, it set an example to European states that from the mid 1700s began to recognize its effectiveness not only in safeguarding rights and defining duties of citizens, but also in ensuring that governing majorities conducted themselves with fairness and ensured stability.

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[45] Ivi, p. 365.
[46] Ivi, p. 367.

## 5.5 Conclusion

Wright's analysis brings to light the distinguishing features and conditions identified by scholars of the Republican tradition, while also acknowledging the existence of numerous republican families[47].

The first of these distinguishing features is undoubtedly liberty, in both its positive and negative senses: the positive liberty that arises from the opportunity for self government and the negative liberty that generates discussion and debate in the search for the common good that serves to foster an awareness and inclusiveness in legislative processes. In brief, Wright considered liberty to be an indispensable ingredient because «the human mind is ennobled by liberty»[48] which cultivates knowledge, reason and the understanding of reality, leading to the adoption of 'good laws'.

The second feature to note is civic virtue. Wright refers to the citizens as «modern Romans» who all felt part of a community, who behaved decorously according to the guidelines of a constitution recognized by all; determined to attain the common good, they became naturally virtuous.

Finally, the real novelty that made America a modern republic and as Paine said, what distinguished it from the «simple democracy» of the Greeks, is the establishment of representation that allowed for the right balance between involving people in the political process and the criteria of competence, between the principle of liberty and equality. Such an achievement was the culmination, asserts Wright, of a long journey through history from the Roman republic, through to those of Florence in the Middle Ages, with a theoretical base originating in the English system. The republic could not have come into being overnight, but was rather the fruit of the gradual improvement of man

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[47]  Geuna's analysis is wide-ranging and thorough in this regard: «Suspended between political theory and historiographical research, the concept of republicanism seems to elude an all encompassing definition. A look at the historiography reveals that during the 80s and early 90s, Geuna's analysis led to continuing debate and questioning of certain strongly continuationist ideas in Pocock's "tunnel history". Focusing closely on single events concerning the republican tradition as yet unexplored […] it became apparent that one could no longer speak of Republicanism in general, but of different kinds of republicanism. What also clearly emerged is that from the middle of the 1600s, many Republican theorists mix and merge republican discourse with other traditional political discourses, namely the language and discourse of natural law» in M. Geuna, *La tradizione repubblicana e i suoi interpreti: famiglie teoriche e discontinuità concettuali*, Filosofia Politica / a. XII, n. 1, aprile 1998, Bologna, il Mulino, pp. 111-112.

[48]  F. Wright, *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820*, cit., p. 116.

through learning from practical experience and from theories that helped to iron out defects. While in Britain the discussion of philosophical principles remained within philosophers' circles, in America the institutions and citizens put them into daily, collective practice. As Petit says, «a republic demands that an institutional system be based on a network of check and balances to power, which in turn allows for the rule of law»[49]; in America such a network was embodied by and represented in the effective division of powers, in the Constitution and in the watchfulness of its citizens.

After such a thorough analysis, the question was whether such enlightened republicanism could be transposed to Europe. Wright's answer was that despite the experiment failing in France and the possibility that the same fate would befall America, «surely it is proposed to force the same attempt elsewhere»[50].

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[49]  M. Geuna, *La tradizione repubblicana e i suoi interpreti: famiglie teoriche e discontinuità concettuali*, cit., p. 112.
[50]  F. Wright, *Views of society and manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England, during the years 1818, 1819, and 1820*, cit., pp. 362-363.

# Plurality and Decision.
# State and Society in Romano Guardini
*Carlo Morganti*

Romano Guardini (Verona, February 17th 1885 – Munich, October 1st 1968)[1] is a German philosopher and catholic theologian, one of the most important thinkers of the Republic of Weimar.[2] He is sometimes referred to as a «Philosopher of the Christian world […] whose longlife task was that of proclaiming the sacred in a modern world».[3] Probably, he is not a political thinker,[4] but his works lead the reader to hold a different opinion.[5]

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[1] About Romano Guardini's biography see H. B. Gerl Falkovitz, *Romano Guardini 1885-1968 – Leben und Werk, Mainz,* 1985, tr. it. *Romano Guardini – La vita e l'opera*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1988; H. Kuhn, *Romano Guardini. Der Mensch und das Werk*, tr. it. *Romano Guardini. L'uomo e l'opera*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1963. See also H. Engelmann - F. Ferrier, *Introduzione a Romano Guardini*, Queriniana, Brescia, 1968.

[2] Among his most important works see *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, Herder, Freiburg, 1918; *Vom Sinn der Kirche*, Grünewald, Mainz, 1922; *Liturgische Bildung. Versuche*, Deutsches Quickbornhaus, Burg Rothenfels am Main, 1923, then published under the title *Liturgie und liturgische Bildung*, Grünewald, Mainz, 1992.

[3] See G. A. Panichas, *The essential Guardini*, "Modern Age", 2005, pp. 171-175.

[4] See R. Guardini, *Verantwortung und Urteilsmöglichkeit in politischen Fragen. Ein Brief in der Zeit von der Wahlen* (1953), in "*Geschichte in Wissenschaft und unterricht*", 21 (1970), p. 719; and R. Guardini, *Letter to Joseph Müller-Marein, "Die Zeit"* (23/9/57), cit. in H. B. Gerl, *Romano Guardini 1885-1968 – Leben und Werk*, cit., p. 314.

[5] Romano Guardini is studied as a political thinker particularly in Italy. See for example A. Babolin, *Religione e politica in Romano Guardini*, "Archivio di filosofia", 1978, pp. 329-354; R. Esposito, *Teologia politica. Modernità e decisione in Schmitt e Guardini*, "Il Centauro", 6, 1986, 16,

Romano Guardini was born in Italy, in Verona; his father and his mother were supporters of the idea of Italian unity led by Camillo di Cavour against the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Hapsburg monarchy. In 1886, when Romano Guardini was only one year old, his family moved to Germany, to Mainz. There, his father ran the local branch of his own company, the Grigolon-Guardini and Bernardinelli GmBH, and was the Italian Counsel.

Romano Guardini studied in Mainz, then attended university courses in Freiburg, Tubingen, Munich and Berlin. He tried to study chemistry and political sciences, however, his religious vocation led him to study theology in Freiburg, with an abiding interest in liturgy. In 1910, he was ordained a priest.

After becoming German subject in 1911, during the First World War he was a nurse in the ranks of the German Imperial Army.

He is German and Italian, entwined by bonds of responsibility to both Germany and Italy. So, he starts to think about a supranational entity, in order to go beyond differences and irreducible nationalistic disagreements: he starts to think to Europe. But, first of all, he thinks towards the idea of community, a strange idea in an era of individualistic edonism.[6]

In 1913 he publishes *Die Grundlagen des Sicherheitsbewußtseins in den Sozialen Beziehungen*[7] and in 1916 *Die Bedeutung des Dogmas von dreieinigen Gott für das sittliche Leben der Gemeinschaft*.[8] He wants to describe the characters of the idea

pp. 103-139, then also in *Idem, Categorie dell'impolitico*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1988, pp. 27-72; M. Nicoletti, *La politica tra autorità e coscienza in Romano Guardini*, in *La Weltanschauung cristiana di Romano Guardini* (edited by S. Zucal), EDB, Bologna, 1988, pp. 209-227; M. Borghesi, *Romano Guardini. Dialettica e antropologia*, Studium, Roma, 1990; G. Campanini, *Romano Guardini e il nazionalsocialismo: l'atteggiamento pratico, la riflessione teoretica*, "Humanitas", 47, 1992, pp. 666-689; M. Nicoletti, *La democrazia e i suoi presupposti in Romano Guardini*, "Communio", 22, 1993, 132, pp. 109-122; L. Bezzini, *Tecnica e potere nella riflessione di Romano Guardini sulla fine dell'epoca moderna*, "Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia. Università di Siena", 12, 1991, pp. 173-198; M. Tronti, *Guardini e il potere*, in M. Nicoletti – S. Zucal, *Tra coscienza e storia*, p.187-194; M. Nicoletti, *Guardini e il problema dell'etica tra autorità e coscienza*, in *Ibidem*, pp. 195-209; S. Zucal, *Romano Guardini pensatore europeo e pensatore dell'Europa*, in R. Guardini, *Europa. Compito e destino*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 2004, pp. 77-112; M. Nicoletti, *Introduzione*, in R. Guardini, *Opera Omnia*, VI, Scritti politici, edited by M. Nicoletti, Morcelliana, Brescia, 2005; S. Zucal, *Romano Guardini, una cristologia politica?*, "Theologica & Historica. Annali della Pontificia Facoltà Teologica della Sardegna", 2006, 15, pp. 191-207.

[6] Guardini is in this sense a "thinker of Europe", see R. Guardini, *"Europa" und "Christliche Weltanschauung". Aus der Dankrede bei der Feier meines siebzigsten Geburtstags in der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität München am 17. Febr. 1955*, then also published in *Stationen und Rückblicke*, Werkbund, Würzburg, 1965; *Europa. Compito e destino*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 2003, edited in the Italian translation by S. Zucal.

[7] *Die Grundlagen des Sicherheitsbewußtseins in den sozialen Beziehungen, "Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland"*, 152, 1913, pp. 687-702.

[8] *Die Bedeutung des Dogmas von dreieinigen Gott für das sittliche Leben der Gemeinschaft, "Theologie und*

of community, by emphasizing both the individual and the community as original and irreducible parts of the same entity;[9] Trinity speaking, the idea of community thought by Guardini derives from the perfect community of the Holy Trinity: the former mirrors in the Holy Trinity, and the latter is the very "Magna Charta" of any human community.

After the war, Guardini publishes *Vom Geist der Liturgie* (1918)[10] and then *Vom Sinn der Kirche* (1922),[11] in which he continues, in an ecclesiological study, to speak about the community, affirming that a religious process of incalculable importance has begun : «the Church is coming to life in the souls of men»; a community coming to life in the souls, religiously speaking; a community coming to life by creating its own State, politically speaking.

The State is in fact the second important concept in Guardini's political thought. A community acts through the State and the State is the means by which a community develops itself politically and historically.

In the early 1920s he dedicates to the State two articles: *Rettung des Politischen*[12] and *Der Staat in uns,*[13] both published in 1924. In the former, Guardini develops his idea of politics by referring it to the State – so an indissoluble bond is created between Politics and State, i.e. they are not conceptually unrelated worlds; in the latter, Guardini describes his idea of State as God's representative in worldly things – while the spiritual field falls under the competence of the Church.

All that lets us think towards a theocratic model, but a more general study of Guardini's thought leads us to different conclusions. Guardini's political considerations take place against the powerful conception of the German *Reich*, a conception that is strongly monistic in its fundamental structures; the language Guardini uses is a typical theological language. So, it can appear a theocracy, but it could be intended, more simply, as a particular German political form, in which there's no place for the philosophic-political concept of popular sovereignty – the real Sovereign is God – but where people matters in creating its own State. Creating the State is an ethic task given to a people by God, however a State is not an ethic necessity and a people can create its own

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Glaube", 8, 1916, pp. 400-406.

[9]  "When I affirm the church," he writes, "I am at the same time affirming individual personality, and when I speak of the interior life of the Christian, I imply the life of the Christian community".

[10]  *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, Herder, Freiburg, 1918.

[11]  *Vom Sinn der Kirche*, Grünewald, Mainz, 1922.

[12]  R. Guardini, *Rettung des Politischen, "Die Schildgenossen"* 4, 1924, pp. 112-121.

[13]  R. Guardini, *Der Staat in uns*, in *Gottes Werkleute. Briefe über Selbstbildung*. In *Einzelheften, Verlag Deutsches Quickbornhaus*, Burg Rothenfels a.M., 1924.

State, in order to develop himself historically, or not.[14]

However, speaking à la Guardini, God is a "politikum", i.e. He must have a public role in Politics.[15] The presence of God in public life assures single persons that their own personalities are guaranteed by the State and thus assures people from any totalitarian degeneration of the State. So, we can argue that a State is entwined by mutual bonds of responsibility with God and with the people: it is God's representative and not the real God and it has to respect the nature of people as God's child.

Thus, the monism of Guardini's personal interpretation of the State – that is often considered a theocratic model, in a hurried reading – is perfectly counterbalanced by the pluralism of the God's childhood. In other words, we can not consider here a pluralism of the institutions, as though Guardini preferred an institutional decentralization or those medieval intermediate corps that were considered bulwarks of liberty against the hypothetical excessive power of a Leviathan.

The pluralism to which Guardini refers in his political writings is the «personal» pluralism  of the human being, which is a «person» and a God's child, he is a unique and irripetible being, and not an unrelated atom or a gear of a bigger mechanism.[16] According to Guardini, «the totalitarian State denies the personhood of the human being. In this State – which actually should no longer be described as such – the human has no unconditional dignity stemming from his human being as such, he is merely a biophysical individual, and the standards determining how he must be treated are those of political, social, economic achievement»[17].

Consequently, it is possible to argue that Guardini's political conception is fundamentally antitotalitarian[18], because the personality of the human being is

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[14] See R. Guardini, *Der Staat in uns, in Gottes Werkleute. Briefe über Selbstbildung in Einzelheften. Zehnter Brief*, Verlag Deutsches Quickbornhaus, Rothenfels am Main, 1924.

[15] See R. Guardini, *Ethik. Vorlesungen an der Universität München (1950-1962)*, Grünewald, Mainz – Schöning, Paderborn, 1993; see also the Italian article M. Nicoletti, *Gott ist ein Politikum: Dio, il potere e la coscienza in Romano Guardini*, "Rivista della Scuola superiore dell'economia e delle finanze", 2005, 6-7, pp. 346-357.

[16] About the anthropological thought of Romano Guardini see, e.g., M. Acquaviva, *Il concreto vivente. L'antropologia filosofica e religiosa di Romano Guardini*, Città Nuova, Roma, 2007, pp. 27-29.

[17] See *Totalitarianism and political religions*, edited by H. Maier, Schöning, Paderborn 1996, Routledge, 2004.

[18] See particularly M. Borghesi, *Crisi del moderno. Nichilismo e totalitarismo in Guardini,* "Il nuovo Aeropago", IV, 1985, 2, pp. 65-88. See also G. Campanini, *Romano Guardini e il nazionalsocialismo. L'atteggiamento pratico, la riflessione teoretica*, "Humanitas", 47, 1992, pp. 666-689; M. Nicoletti, *La democrazia e i suoi presupposti in Romano Guardini*, "Communio", 22, 1993, 132, pp. 109-122; U. Bröckling, *Katholische Intellektuelle in der Weimarer Republik. Zeitkritik und Gesellschaftstheorie bei*

independent of such standards. «It is the human being as such, and with that it possesses something categorical, something that withdraws from it any right to be an instance of power»[19].

The 1930s is a traumatic decade. The German economic system is still not completely restored when in 1933 the Nazi party gets the majority of votes. The middle and later years of the decade are dominated also by the militrarism of Fascism and Nazism and by the Stalinist show trials in the USSR, which are a profound shock to the many who have regarded it by contrast as a beacon of light. The Spanish Civil war points to a coming international war, while the entire Europe, deeply divided socially and politically, is inept in avoiding the even more real danger of a new war. During this decade, Romano Guardini does not stand plainly against the Nazi regime, against that regime that removes him from his chair at Berlin University – he is being Professor of "Philosophy of religion and catholic vision of the world (*Religionsphilosophie und Katholische Weltanschaaung*)" since 1923. He does not side against the Nazi regime. During this decade, Guardini is dedicated to what is well known in literature as *immunization of the consciences*[20] – he devotes himself entirely to the anthropological research, to the study of person and personality, and writes *Welt und Person*, published in 1939, and *Der Mensch*, only recently published and translated also in Italian (2009), in which the philosopher assembles the fruits of his lectures at the University of Berlin, held between 1930 and 1939[21].

When the community seems to prevail over the individual, Guardini works in a complementary manner, in comparison with what he has done in the first decades of the century: then, he emphasizes the communitarian aspects of human life, as though he wants to free people from a wrong individualism caused by the positivistic atmosphere of the end of the XIX century and by a process of modernization, yet begun in the XV century – he offered to his readers, as a solution to the problem of individualism, the Faith, neither in man nor in history, but in God alone and in His Providence. Wilhelmsen's words cogently summarize Guardini's significance as an extraordinary commentator on the crisis of modernity in the context of the «search for orientation» and

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*Walter Dirks, Romano Guardini, Carl Schmitt, Ernst Michel und Heinrich Mertens*, München, 1993.

[19]  See R. GUARDINI, *Ethik. Vorlesungen an der Universität München (1950-1962)*, Grünewald, Mainz – Schöning, Paderborn, 1993.

[20]  See M. NICOLETTI, *La democrazia e i suoi presupposti in Romano Guardini*, "Communio", 22, 1993, 132, pp. 109-122; H. ENGELMANN - F- FERRIER, *Introduzione a Romano Guardini*, Queriniana, Brescia, 1968.

[21]  See R. GUARDINI, *Welt und Person. Versuche zur Christlichen Lehre vom Menschen*, Werkbund, Würzburg, 1939 and *Der Mensch. Grundzüge einer christlichen Anthropologie*.

«a course of action for the New Age».[22] Now, Guardini pays attention to the individual, that he considers lost in the sea of indifference of the modernity. According to Guardini's idea, the human being of the modernity looks for new reference points and solid values to which he can ground his opinions and his life.

The atheistic idea of modernity conceived by positivism and determinism makes human beings not more free than in the past, but alone.[23]

So he is ready to abandon himself to new forms of religion: the Blood, the Soil, and to be seduced by new salvation bringers, namely, in this specific case, by Adolf Hitler. In the German language, there is a play on words – *Führer* and *Verführer*, leader and seducer – that cannot be translated into English, but that is really explanatory to understand what occurred in the Nazi Germany.

Romano Guardini takes his rightful place in that school considering the origin of any form of totalitarianism in the atheism of politics – namely a school rejecting a public role for any religion; Guardini doesn't ask for a political system based on a mixture of politics and religion, as there was during the Middle Ages, but a political system in which politics and religion meet in armonic cohabitation.

Recognizing a public role to religion constitutes the basis of a social form of pluralism. In other words, it allows us to recognize to the individual that autonomy which is peculiar to any human being, for he is a «person», a God's child. It means also that it is important to recognize to any person a significant role in realizing his own State, that is not necessarily a determined human construction, but a harmonic whole of human beings; without them, it couldn't exist.

In the essay *Der Heilbringer in Mythos, Offenbarung und Politik. Eine theologisch-*

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[22]  See G. A. Panichas, *The essential Guardini*, "Modern Age", 2005, pp. 171-175.

[23]  See e.g. R. Guardini, *Briefe von Comer See*, Matthias Grünewald Verlag, Mainz, 1927; *Das Ende der Neuzeit. Eine Versuch zur Orientierung*, Hess Verlag, Basel, 1950, then Werkbund Verlag, Würzburg, 1951 and *Die Macht. Versuch einer Wegweisung*, Werkbund, Würzburg, 1951; see also *Das Phänomen der Macht. Vortrag bei der philosophischen Zusammenhang in Gallarate bei Mailand 1962*, in "Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht" 13, 1962, pp. 617-625 and *Fragen zum Problem der Macht in Gott in Welt. Festgabe für Karl Rahner*, hrsg. Von J.B. Metz, W. Kern, A. Darlap, H. Vorgrimler, II. Bd., Herder, Freiburg i.B., 1964. See also M. Nicoletti, *Romano Guardini: la fatica della libertà*, "Il margine", 1995, 1. See also G. A. Panichas, *The essential Guardini*, "Modern Age", 2005, pp. 171-175:"A de-divinized and desanctified language of life and faith, as it has emerged and solidified in the modern and now the postmodern world, has become a kind of superstructure in which a verb like venerate and a noun like reverence are debased words. Guardini's thoughts on Christian faith and revelation show him at his best in his contention with the empirical process and habits of mind; steadfastly he testifies to the sacredness of humankind regardless of the demons "who rule people once they have abdicated their responsibilities".

*politische Besinnung,*[24] published in 1946 in a larger form, if compared with that of which appeared in 1935, Romano Guardini considers the twelve years of totalitarian dictatorship of the Nazi Party in Germany as a form of «civil» or «political» religion[25]. In *Zum Problem der Demokratie,*[26] appeared in the same year, he declares himself as a supporter of the democratic system, even if with some specifications. «Personally, I think I am a democrat»,[27] he writes, but he thinks also that the idea of democracy needs some more specifications. He says that a catholic democrat has to recognize «absolute values and objective authorities»,[28] i.e. to respect individual personalities and freedoms, the desire for a more communitarian life; Guardini is firmly convinced in respecting all these values and he has testified to them during all his long life and in his writings: the real authority is that of God, which is the real Sovereign – and the popular sovereignty does not exist but as a fictitious political idea.

According to Guardini's political idea, this concept of political sovereignty of God does not contrast with that of democracy: equality, comparison, respect do not sap the doctrine of authority and the idea of law in the *res publica* – the State as an organized totality – can not indulge in the relativism expressed by a majority, which is bound by fundamental values – and at last the authority of God, so really intended, a la Guardini, as a «Politikum».

And we can also read in the pages of his *Ethics* that it is not correct to identify the reference to God with a given form of government, for every authentic form of government refers to God, whether it be monarchy or aristocracy or democracy. Guardini's perspective recognizes the relativity of the problem, because there is a truth transcending them. And even democracy has to refer to God, if we want to consider it a right form of government and an authentic State and not simply a form of organization assuring its members safety and welfare. And also democracy has to be responsible both to its people – or, better, to the Parliament – and to God.

Another typical aspect of a democratic system is obviously the concept of freedom. A man in a democracy is naturally free – and this freedom derives

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[24] R. GUARDINI, *Der Heilbringer in Mythos, Offenbarung und Politik. Eine theologisch-politische Besinnung*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart, 1946. A first version of the essay appeared in 1935, under the title *Der Heiland*, in "Die Schildgenossen", 14, 1934/1935, pp. 97-116.

[25] See E. GENTILE, *Le religioni della politica. Fra democrazie e totalitarismi*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2001, p. 206-207. See also, by the same author, *Il mito dello Stato nuovo*, 1999, *Il culto del littorio*, 2001[8], *La via italiana al totalitarismo*, 2001; see also R. ARON, *La mentalità totalitaria*, Roma, 1955.

[26] R. GUARDINI, *Zum Problem der Demokratie*, manuscript going back to 1946, then published in "*Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*" 21, 1970, edited by F. Messerschmid, pp. 711-716.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] Ibidem.

from the fact that man has been created in God's own image and likeness. Man is in a direct reference with God. With the divine Revelation, man is redeemed from sin's slavery and made free. Guardini does not consider this idea of freedom as a moral freedom, i.e. the possibility for the mankind to do good and evil without distinction.

The crisis of the modern State resides, for Guardini, in the basic mistake of a freedom from God, intended as the maximum of freedom and self-realization for the mankind and for a political organization. Romano Guardini paints a lucid and merciless portrait of such a State. From the pages of his *Ethics*, he accuses clearly those people who have tried to propagandize this idea as it was the best or the unique idea of State and society. The rejection of an objective truth – and particularly of the divine truth, given to mankind through the Revelation – replaced by more truths valid everywhere and every time, does not constitute a form of freedom for the mankind, but just an intolerable load man wants to free himself from.

The mankind of the modern era thinks to be free and in his action there is no place for faith, that has neither a real significance nor a specific role in public life. Faith, and specifically the catholic faith, is derided and considered in the same way of a superstition; the man no longer trust in God, because God is dead.

According to Guardini's theory, this leads to two results: the crisis of the modern State, that has no more reason for existing; and the neutralization of the distinctive personal feature of all men, who are reduced as if they were a mere object in the hands of those people detaining power within society and the State.

The concept of authority is thus undermined and every reference to transcendence is cancelled by referring politics just to the worldly sphere. The State is convincing till it is successful in remaining faithful to its own tasks: to guarantee welfare, prosperity and economic development to its citizens, public order, etc.

If the State is unable to conclude its own tasks, if the State is no more capable of morally binding its citizens, they realize that they have no real obligation in obeying to it and to its laws, for it has no real authority or sovereignty. Hence, the irreversible crisis of the State, that, according to Guardini's theory, is man's and society's crisis.[29]

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[29]  See particularly R. Guardini, *Das Ende der Neuzeit. Eine Versuch zur Orientierung*, Hess Verlag, Basel, 1950, then Werkbund Verlag, Würzburg, 1951 and *Ethik. Vorlesungen an der Universität München (1950-1962)*, Grünewald, Mainz – Schöning, Paderborn, 1993.

Man tries to find an answer to his request of interior order by referring his life to transcendence: however, in this case, the transcendence is demoniac. It could lead to a new totalitarianism, a danger that Guardini tries to avoid.

A democracy based on an excessively individualistic freedom is a false democracy; Guardini argues that the democracy could be helped by an authentic sense of pluralism, in which the interior spiritual attitude of the individual is not the unique *criterion* to interpretate world and ethics.

This idea of pluralism is not thought against society: i.e. there is not a prevalence of the plural-individual element over the social one. Guardini asks for a democratic principle informing forms and interpretations of the reality.

I am obliged now to affirm that Guardini does not want to reduce this pluralism of ideas and concepts within a monistic order, as if a monistic world interpretation has to prevail over a pluralistic one: this would be against the dinamic order of the existence described by Guardini himself in his work *The opposition*, published in 1925;[30] in this sense the individual element can not prevail over the social one and viceversa, and even the idea of order can not include within itself the opposite parts of the political existence – the individual and the society – by neutralizing their individual values. The style of Guardini's thinking is prophetic, for the solution he offers tends to occupy the political place left empty in post-war Europe by Totalitarianisms. Undoubtedly the suffering which the war brought, mixed with the gleams of hope, fostered a community spirit in the German nation and when peace finally arrived energy welled up. Chances now could be taken and the right political chance is that for democracy.

A real democracy is based, in Guardini's opinion, on a plural variety of persons, on the variety of their social and cultural impulses. The unity can be carried out by an inter-personal collaboration that must be necessarily free. Everyone must recognize the other, accept him and his opinions, even if he doesn't agree with them; and everyone must be willing to cooperate with the other.

On such a basis, it is possible to create a true political unity, and all that is really democratic. This unity is always threatened, it is true, but it is also always renewed. As if it is led by an *ethos* based on an in common conquered experience.

All that derives not directly from human nature, that is not naturally inclined to meet other people; in Guardini's opinion all that asks for a strong personal decision for an ethically correct choice, for good and not for evil, for

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[30] See *Der Gegensatz. Versuche zu einer Philosophie des Lebendig-Konkreten*, Grünewald, Mainz, 1925.

an intra-personal cooperation, decision that must be free and autonomous. And the choice is difficult because contemporary individuals are lost in his research for new reference points.

To conclude, I try to summarize the results of this essay about the political idea of Romano Guardini within the more general background of the end of the German Empire and the growing totalitarian Third Reich.

My personal judgement is that the Guardini's idea of the State as God's representative in worldly things could lead to a strongly monistic interpretation of the political thought of the philosopher. It could be even possible to consider this idea as the cultural basis for the creation of an authoritarian or a totalitarian State. However, this monistic perspective proves just apparent, for it is strongly counterbalanced by the pluralism that is naturally within any society, that provides for persons and not for atoms, persons able to know, decide and act.

Politically speaking, it emerges that in Guardini's works there is a strong stand against every totalitarian hypotesis and a position favourable to a democratic system in which the individuals meet and cooperate without cancelling each other out in a confused social amalgam. They maintain their own dignity and, first of all, their own freedom.

Just in a free decision the individual reveals his own nature as «person». And just in a background not excluding a religious dimension, the political system and, at last, the democracy find their authentic sense.

# Monism and Pluralism:
# Eric Voegelin's contribution
## Nicoletta Stradaioli

Among the contemporary political philosophers who pay attention to monistic and pluralistic conceptions of society and the State, Eric Voegelin plays a significant role, developing an original contribution revolving around a dominant theoretical project: the critical analysis of totalitarianism and of the crisis in Western civilization. Such a speculative path is carried out through a complex and multilayered investigation. At the basis of his study there is the problem of the political order and its foundation, which results in the questioning of modern political (positivist) science. Voegelin's aim is to build a "new political science", referring to the *politiké epistemé* of the classics. This methodological approach is also linked to Voegelin's intention to reject Hans Kelsen's legal positivism, because the scientific, legal perspective of the Austrian jurist reduces the State to *Normlogik*. Voegelin maintains that for Kelsen anything which does not fit into the categories of *Normlogik* could no longer be considered science. Thus, in Kelsen's view the State and the legal order coincide and the human being, as the nucleus of political life, is eliminated from the reality of the State itself. According to Voegelin, a theory of the State (*Staatslehre*) as such is insufficient, because it does not accept any question about the nature, substance, historical and ontological origin of society. Moreover, it eliminates the symbolic quality of social order which, for Voegelin, is the primary element for reading the various and different political phenomena[1]

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[1] Since the beginning of his scientific career Voegelin wanted to overcome the neutral approach

In this context, Voegelin's *The New Science of Politics* (1952) offers a vantage point for examining the most significant moments of his interpretation of the concepts of monism and pluralism. More specifically, the idea of representation constitutes the thematic nucleus dealing with the substance of monism and pluralism.[2] In this perspective, Voegelin highlights **a)** the most important features of the Western crisis, the inadequacy of modern political science and thus the urgency of its restoration, **b)** the problematic core of the relationship between liberal democracy, pluralism and political order.

## 7.1 A new science of politics and a new philosophy of history

Voegelin condemns the method of modern political science which claims to extend the procedures, techniques and categories of the so-called exact sciences to the study of politics, society and history. That methodological layout, very similar to that of natural sciences and mathematics, reduces reality to a plurality of objects and transforms political science into a fixed and dry discipline. Hence, according to Voegelin, it adopts a dogmatic paradigm for reading reality which consists of a mere anticipatory, descriptive scheme, a

to politics of Hans Kelsen's *Normlogik*. That meant to drop out the *Reine Rechtslehre* of the Austrian jurist, focusing on the symbolic dynamics of the political community. The analysis of the symbolic quality of the State is of particular interest to Voegelin who devoted his first systematic research to studying the symbols that define social mechanisms. This perspective clashes with Kelsen's. However, Voegelin recognizes the validity and the logic of Kelsen's theory, even if he challenges the theoretical premise that allowed Kelsen to remove from the legal system any "residue of anthropomorphism" and reduce the theory of the State (*Staatslehre*) to a mere appendix of the theory of law (*Rechtslehre*). Kelsen considered the State the only object of legal science, and this allowed him to put aside the question of whether the State is also something different from positive law. He was not interested in the relationship between human beings and the State: positive law and the logical interactions between a hierarchy of norms are the main phenomena which constitute the State. For Voegelin, this meant «to purge *Staatslehre* of everything that does not pertain to positive law»: reducing the State to a legal system and excluding from the State political and social elements that are the core of the experience of communal life.

[2] For Kelsen review of *The New Science of Politics* see, H. Kelsen, *A New Science of Politics, Hans Kelsen's Reply to Eric Voegelin's "New Science of Politics". Contribution to the Critique of Ideology*, Frankfurt-Lancaster, Ontos Verlag, 2004; trad. it. Id., *Una Nuova Scienza Politica*, a cura di F. Lijoi, Torino, Giappichelli, 2009.

rhetorical exercise. In this way, political science can become an instrument for legitimizing brutal totalitarian regimes.

Therefore, it is necessary to end the neutral and value-free approach of this kind of positivistic political science which is inadequate for understanding and questioning the issues underpinning man's history. In order to examine the crisis of modern science, Voegelin pursues a style of thinking which explores political order, political unity and political pluralism. The German philosopher examines the dichotomy monism-pluralism from an epistemological-gnoseological perspective that is a criticism of every rationalistic monistic model. In fact, monism demands **a)** knowing the socio-historical and political elements of communal life through the exclusive use of a single principle, of a single interpretative model and **b)** developing formulations always and universally valid, simplifying the set of factors which constitute human existence.

For Voegelin, science in general terms can only grasp a purely external (and superficial) knowledge of phenomena; whereas the cognitive relationship we have with phenomena, especially historical ones, is completely different. Here we face a sort of "inner/inward" knowledge, an intimate understanding of the actions that organize socio-political reality. Therefore, according to Voegelin, political science is not a reasoning or an understanding of the external world, but rather a critical analysis of a field already structured by previous knowledge. Every society possesses an inner dimension of meaning, through which human beings interpret their very existence. The community carries out a process of self-understanding, a self-interpretation of society in history, an autonomous cognitive scheme that political science must investigate.

> *Human society is not merely a fact, or an event, in the external world to be studied by an observer like a natural phenomenon. Although it has externality as one of its important components, it is as a whole a little world, a cosmion, illuminated with meaning from within by the human beings who continuously create and bear it as the mode and condition of their self-realization. It is illuminated through an elaborate symbolism, in various degrees of compactness and differentiation – from rite, through myth, to theory – and this symbolism illuminates it with meaning in so far as the symbols make the internal structure of such a cosmion, the relations between its members and groups of members, as well its existence as a whole, transparent for the mystery of human existence[3].*

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[3] E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, in Id., *Modernity without Restraint. The Political Religions, The New Science of Politics, and Science Politics, and Gnosticism*, CW 5, Columbia and London,

Hence, political science occurs in a society that is already structured and so it does not create social order by its own means.

The voegelinian theoretical analysis also criticizes severely the philosophies of history because they want to demonstrate that the historical process conforms with laws that are explanatory and predictive toward the past, the present and the future. Then, history itself follows a certain uniform path. Voegelin believes that we must resist these philosophical perspectives that transcend the boundaries of historical interpretation and historical methodology. He condemns the philosophers of history who investigate the past stressing the stages of the historical process that lead to a predictable conclusion. They have the illusion of owning the laws of history that secure the creation of a perfect society, in which all the evils of the world will be wiped out. Finally, philosophers of history profess an a priori history that embodies a unique interpretation of the multiple elements that constitute it. Here lies, for Voegelin, the hallucination of the twentieth-century totalitarianism which stems from the irrational assumption of possessing a privileged point of view, thanks to which it is possible to solve the uncertainties of the political order.

According to Voegelin, political science is undermined and weakened by these kinds of ideological representations of reality which reduce reason to a purely instrumental function: a spell is cast on rational arguments about reality of phenomena. In fact, it is not possible to think through the achievements of an era by applying an absolute and anti-historical principle, and even less to solve once and for all the riddle of history. History is never at rest and it always poses new problems and new solutions. Political science (and the political scientist) must be suspicious of rigid theoretical schemes that oversimplify the multifaceted richness of human life, pretending to understand and generalize it by means of similarities and uniformities. The task of political science is to pay attention to what is unique and special in historical events and to highlight the peculiar characteristics that ground human experiences. For Voegelin, the search of political order is a never-ending exploration, because it takes into account variables which are perpetually in motion. Hence, political science is a demanding journey: an inquiry which will never reach final solutions, fully conscious that any attempt to impose a political design from above leads to totalitarian regimes.

University of Missouri Press, 2000, p. 109; trad. it., Id., *La nuova scienza politica*, Roma, Borla, 1999.

## 7.2 The theory of representation

In *The New Science of Politics* the concept of political representation is the interpretative paradigm to analyze totalitarianism and examine the relationship between pluralism and liberalism. Voegelin describes four types of representation (elemental representation, existential representation, representation of Truth and transcendental representation) and develops a "theory of representation" that highlights the complex nature of socio-political reality.[4]

The simplest type of representation is the elemental one. He refers to its formal, constitutional and institutional aspects, founded on the principle of elected officials who "stand in the place of others". The elemental representation depicts the external existence of society, the delegation of opinions and interests to representatives.

Another type of representation is existential, through which a society literally exists. By means of it a politico-legal system puts into effect an aim, a plan that keeps the political organization alive. In this context, Voegelin mentions Maurice Hauriou and his concept of the *idée directrice*. According to the French jurist,

> *the power of a government is legitimate […] by virtue of its functioning as the representative of an institution, specifically of the state. The state is a national community in which the ruling power conducts the business of the* res publica. *The first task of a ruling power is the creation of a politically unified nation by transforming the pre-existent, unorganized manifold into a body organized for action. The nucleus of such an institution will be the idea, the* idée directrice*, of realizing and expanding it and of increasing its power; and the specific function of a ruler is the conception of this idea and its realization in history*[5].

The political-institutional system reaches its full realization when, on the one hand, the ruler of the State (the representative) makes every effort to give effect to the idea in history and, on the other hand, the *consentement coutumier*

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[4]  For an analysis of Voegelin's theory of representation see, C. Galli, *Eric Voegelin: la rappresentanza, la trascendenza, la storia*, in *Aspetti e problemi della rappresentanza politica dopo il 1945*, edited by C. Carini, Firenze, CET, 1998, pp. 73–107; Id., *Contingenza e necessità nella ragione politica moderna*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2009, pp. 209-236.
[5]   E. Voegelin, *The new Science of Politics* cit., p. 126.

(customary consent) of the members of the political community is achieved.

For Voegelin, Hauriou's theory is significant because it indicates that in order to be representative (and to be a representative) the delegation of interests or the constitutional dimension of popular legitimacy through public free elections is not enough. It is essential to establish (democratically) not only those who govern, but "what" directs the State, which is the idea of the institution, the substance of political institutions realized in history through the actions of rulers of a country.

> *In order to be representative, is it not enough for a government to be representative in the constitutional sense (our elemental type of representative institutions); it must also be representative in the existential sense of realizing the idea of the institution. […] If a government is nothing but representative in the constitutional sense, a representative ruler in the existential sense will sooner or later make an end of it; and quite possibly the new existential ruler will not be too representative in the constitutional sense[6].*

Representation in the elemental sense is not a guarantee of avoiding the disintegration of society: when representatives fail to fulfill their assignment (the idea), the constitutional legitimacy of the institutions cannot contain the collapse of the political and social order.

Then Voegelin makes a distinction between representation of Truth and transcendental representation. The first consists of bringing fully into effect the idea that grounds the political unity of society. This kind of representation may also be seen as a close and undifferentiated form of existential representation that can easily take totalitarian directions. By way of examples Voegelin refers to the ancient cosmological empires which were considered representative of the cosmic order. More recently, another case is embodied in the Marxist dialectics. In Marx the truth of the cosmic order is converted into the truth of an immanent historical order that asserts unquestionable truth: the order of society must be in harmony with the truth of history; the aim of history is to achieve a realm of freedom and peace; opponents of the truth of history will be routed, or set free from their oppressors.

Transcendental representation is characterized by subjects open to transcendence. Hence, society is representative of something beyond itself, «of a transcendent truth».[7] When Voegelin speculates about representation it is precisely this type of representation that he has in mind; and the aim

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[6]  Ibid.
[7] Ivi, p. 147.

of his study is to identify the symbols by which political societies interpret themselves as representative of a truth that goes beyond worldly existence.

From this perspective, central to the voegelinian theoretical speculation is the relationship between truth and representation, which is analyzed by digging out the historical symbols of this relationship.[8] For Voegelin, classical philosophy (Plato in particular) discovered that at the foundation of a well-ordered society there is the relation of the human soul to the Divine. Plato introduced the anthropological principle that stated: «polis is man written large. […] [T]his is the dynamic core of a new theory […] A political society in existence will have to be an ordered cosmion, but not at the price of man; it should be not only a microcosmos but also a macroanthropos».[9] «By this interpretation, the true order of society depends upon the true order of man; the true order of man, in turn, depends upon the constitution of the soul; and the constitution of the soul, its order and disorder, comes to view through the experiences symbolized in the course of a sensitive man's loving search of reality for the divine Wisdom […]».[10] The importance of the intimate individual descent to the depths of the soul emerges here. It is a descent that reveals the structure of the soul, but does not grasp definitively an absolute truth. This journey shows the significance of a constant tension towards the Ground of Being, and highlights the impossibility of establishing the perfect polis, a political form "true" in an absolute sense. The truth of the soul is a structure open to transcendent reality, which can be experienced, but not represented in all its facets.

From Plato onwards, therefore, the problem of the political order is expressed in the tension between the truth of the soul and political truth, or between the order of the soul and the actual order of society. The next step, according to Voegelin, which follows the Platonic anthropological principle (or the anthropological truth) is the Christian soteriological truth. Soteriological truth emerges with the broadening of the Platonic-Aristotelian[11] knowledge;

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[8]  In Voegelin's view there are three types of truth: cosmological truth (the truth of the early empires), anthropological truth (the truth that appears in the political culture of Athens), soteriological truth (the truth that appears with Christianity). See E. VOEGELIN, *The New Science of Politics* cit., pp. 149-150.

[9]  Ivi, p. 136.

[10] E. SANDOZ, *The Voegelinian Revolution. A Biographical Introduction*, New Brunswick and London, Transaction Publishers, 2000, p. 103.

[11]  Voegelin explains the transition from the anthropological truth to the soteriological truth and he refers to the contrast between the Aristotelian *philia* and the Thomistic *amicitia*. The former is possible only between equals, and this excludes a friendship between man and God. The love of the Greek philosopher for the divine is a tension toward something in the non-

it is the expression of the human soul that opens to a God who becomes man, who is present in the world and in history and, then, again absent but symbolically present in the world thanks to the Church. This new relationship between man and God should not be read as an exaltation of the possibilities of the human being; on the contrary, de-divinization of the world and a larger articulation of the soul of man is proper to Christianity. If God embodies salvation, he must be loved, but cannot be represented politically.

From this description emerges the specific Western tension between the truth of the soul and the truth of political order, between transcendence and immanence that should not end up in the elimination of either of the two extremes. History tells us that this tension has been often betrayed in trying to build a perfect and final political order on earth. These experiments immanentized the transcendent truth, lost sight of the unresolved tension between immanence and transcendence (that, according to Voegelin, is at the basis of true political order), paving the way to totalitarianism and to the crisis of Western civilization. Thus the representation that Voegelin has in mind consists of a peculiar mediation between heaven and earth.

Moreover, the German philosopher highlights how pluralism is the main characteristic of representation. In voegelinian terminology pluralism is expressed as articulation or differentiation. He says «articulation [...] is the condition of representation».[12] The historical process of the articulation-differentiation of society is at the basis of social and political development. The evolution of society is founded on diversification, on the rise of different centers of interest and power which produce the need for representation: to produce a representative who can act on the behalf of the community and organized groups. The articulation of the community leads to a plurality of social and political subjects which need to be represented; representation is, therefore, essential for the proper functioning of society, because it orders the social and political dimension of the community. Thus representation is

reciprocity. The lack of mutuality characterizes the anthropological truth. (See E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution. A Biographical Introduction* cit., p. 104). The Thomas's *amicitia*, on the contrary, emphasizes the mutual relationship between man and God. «The Christian bending of God in grace toward the soul does not come within the range of these experiences [Classical philosophy] – though, to be sure, in reading Plato one has the feeling of moving continuously on the verge of a breakthrough into this new dimension. The experience of mutuality in the relation with God, of the *amicitia* in the Thomistic sense, of the grace that imposes a supernatural form on the nature of man, is the specific difference of Christian truth». (E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* cit., p. 150).

[12]  E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* cit., p. 120.

centered on diversity and breaks the original uniformity of society itself. In other words, the articulation and differentiation of society create a complex and multilayered order that substitutes the previous homogeneous unity; at the same time, thanks to representation order and unity are restored, without denying plurality (the unity or integration of the socio-political sphere cannot be at the expense of diversity and pluralism). In Voegelin's perspective, this depends on the type of representation: then, the significance of a correct choice of representation that is the criterion that orders society itself is evident. Political order must be based on a type of representation that does not ignore the articulation-differentiation achieved by the community; a form of representation must be chosen that safeguards plurality and, at the same time, builds a political order that is not a single all-inclusive unity. In fact, the final outcome of this all-inclusive order is the reduction of all social and political processes to an absolute and static organization.

Voegelin's theory of representation is a criticism of all monistic political constructions that, on the one hand, understand and organize society on the basis of one single principle and, on the other, eliminate the tension between immanence and transcendence. Above all monism is dangerous because it falls into the temptation **a)** to match God, church and politics, with the emergence of a kind of fundamentalist political theology; **b)** to divinize the political world (as in Gnosticism). But Voegelin also denounces the weakness of liberal-democratic representative institutions, far removed from the Christian tradition of the differentiated soul. The liberal democracy has preserved an extremely weak form of transcendental representation, being at the mercy of the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century. In particular, modern liberal democracy has been seduced by Gnosticism. Modern Gnosticism pretends to possess a form of perfect knowledge by means of which it is possible to purge the world of all injustices and inequalities. It offers man the opportunity to build an earthly paradise through his own actions and deeds. Transcendence is denied, the tension between immanence and transcendence is denied as well, and with them the articulation-differentiation of the political order.

The drift towards Gnosticism of the liberal democracy occurs in similar forms: on the one hand, claiming that elemental representation is the only effective form to give voice to different interests and opinions, dividing immanence and transcendence and proclaiming the scientific and political irrelevance of transcendence (considered an intimate and private sphere); on the other hand, asserting the exclusive significance of the representation of Truth, in which immanence and transcendence coincide with the total elimination

of the latter. Modern civilization is therefore characterized, for Voegelin, by a regressive dynamic that reverses the movement towards differentiation-articulation of reality. For Voegelin, the chance that the Western world can preserve its pluralistic organizations is seriously threatened.

This pessimism depends on the historical and political context during which *The New Science of Politics* was written: after the Second World War, in the anxiety of the Cold War. This context troubled Voegelin, who well remembered the victory of Nazism over the Weimar Republic. The West seems to Voegelin to be facing a difficult situation: it is not able to defend an idea of articulated and differentiated order, and thus to defend itself from external and internal enemies. Liberal democracy needs to reaffirm the centrality of transcendental representation: a society is really articulated and differentiated, and therefore truly representative, only if it is founded on two forms of representation: the elemental one (the representation of interests and popular legitimacy) and the transcendental representation that is the infinite tension towards transcendence.

Voegelin's theory of representation identifies a philosophical field of action capable of founding a just political order. The paradigm of representation reveals the logic of politics and helps to comprehend the logic of modernity. In this perspective, the dichotomy of monism-pluralism is connected to the questioning of modern political science, to the diagnosis of the crisis of modernity and to the critique of totalitarianism. Monism is intended as a model of science desirous of building with mathematical certainty the right political order. A unique and definitive reality that distorts reality itself ends up producing ideological deformations, which find their maximum expression in the tragic events of totalitarianism. Ideological and totalitarian monism, in particular, eliminates the tension between immanence and transcendence, claiming to achieve in this world a realm of perfection. Politics must resist political experiments that try to solve permanently the uncertainties and difficulties of the present. We must remember that the values and goals which men can aspire are many and different. In Voegelin's perspective pluralism in its broader sense is based on the mutual relationship between immanence and transcendence: both of them determine our existence and the structure of the political reality in which we live.

# Beyond Politics: Organizational Pluralism and Technocratic Monism in the Functionalist Proposal of David Mitrany

*Stefano Parodi*

In 1943, David Mitrany (1888-1975)[1], Rumanian economist at the London School of Economics, presents in his most famous work, *A Working Peace System*[2], a proposal to renew the international system. In that he is influenced by a widespread concept about the international system in the English academic world at that time[3]. Such a concept is based on the possibility of creating tools which are suitable to ensure a reciprocate comprehension and thus to

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[1]  For biographical information see Dorothy Anderson, *David Mitrany (1888-1975): an Appreciation of his Life and Work*, paper available on the Internet site http: journals.cambridge.org; see also D. Mitrany, *The Making of the Functional Theory: A Memoir*, in *The Functional Theory of Politics*, London School of Economics & Political Science, London, Martin Robertson, 1975, pp. 3-46.

[2]  D. Mitrany, *A Working Peace System. An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization,* London, 1943; Italian translation *Le basi pratiche della pace. Per una organizzazione internazionale su linee funzionali,* "Orientamenti", Cambridge University Press, 1945; see also S. Parodi, *La teoria funzionalista di David Mitrany. Con riproduzione anastatica della traduzione italiana del volume di David Mitrany Le basi pratiche della pace. Per una organizzazione internazionale su linee funzionali,* Firenze, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 2013, pp. 67-160; and *A Working Peace System (1943),* in Id., *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit., pp. 123-132.

[3]  In particular at the London School of Economics and at Oxford University.

automatically activate forms of cooperation and integration among States[4].

It should not be forgotten that Mitrany lived through the horrors of the Second World War, so he strongly feels the urgency of such a renewal in the international relations and works out a model of integration among States which is finalized to eliminate the war causes and strives to reach a permanent («perpetual») peace condition. This model represents an answer to nationalism and to the state-centric structure of the international system and it is founded on the belief that taking away the international cooperation from the political province, that is to say from the conflicting field, is the only road to peace. Moreover, according to Mitrany, social and economic problems are not merely of a political nature, so their solution can be easily assigned to a staff of technical experts, thus making up a supranational level set free from politics.

In that we can see the great attention Mitrany pays in his analysis to the deep changes in international politics, to the globalization of economic and political issues, as well as of the wars effects:

*In the light of the great effort which the nations are making to outlaw war, neutrality is rapidly changing its meaning. Most wars have been limited in scope and in extent; they were fought out by two or three countries for some limited national interest. To keep out of war, to remain neutral, was even from an international viewpoint sound policy for a country which was not directly involved. Neutrality helped to narrow the field of battle and the play of national policies. But already the last War has wrought great changes in this. It has shown that the effects of a modern war cannot be localised; in other words, material neutrality had disappeared. Secondly, the consequence of this is that general interests, and rules which had been created to protect them, like the 'freedom of the seas', inevitably get involved; hence political neutrality becomes growingly impossible*

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[4] See G. Sola, *Storia della scienza politica*, Roma, La Nuova Italia Scientifica, 1996, p. 408. About the functionalist perspective of international relations, Alfred Zimmern's studies are very important. See A. Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*, London, Oxford University Press, 1911; Id., *Nationality and Government*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1918; Id., *The Study of International Relations*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1931.
We can also find some interesting parallelism between Mitrany's functionalist theory and «planning theory» in the Thirties. About that see O. Neurath, *Pianificazione internazionale per la libertà* (with introduction and edited by T. Carena and F. Ingravalle; Italian translation by L. Coppo), Torino, Scholè, 2010. About «planning theory» see A. Salsano, *Ingegneri e politici Dalla razionalizzazione alla "rivoluzione manageriale"*, Torino, Einaudi, 1987. About «managers revolution» see J. Burnham, *The Manager Revolution*, New York, Day, 1941 (first Italian translation: *La rivoluzione dei tecnici*, Milano, Mondadori, 1946); see also B. Rizzi, *The Bureaucratization of the World*, edited by A. Westo, New York, The Free Press, 1985.

*and incompatible with the development of international law. If nations are unwilling to exert themselves for the maintenance of existing international rules, there is not much sense in creating new ones. Neutrality is not a virtue in itself, its merit is relative to the cause with which it is connected. Not to join national wars probably was a contribution to peace; not to join in organising international peace may probably mean a contribution to war[5].*

In this framework does the «functionalist road»[6] to peace rise and it is marked by the detection of «the practical foundations» of the solid elements and of the «relation of things» and this is a hallmark of Mitrany's work:

*Without doubt the first light towards a 'functional' outlook on things social and political came from my two teachers at the London School of Economics, in its early days, when it was small but intensely alive, and truly free intellectually. L. T. Hobhouse was a Liberal, with a close personal connection with C. P. Scott and The Manchester Guardian; Graham Wallas had been one of the founders of the Fabian Society. Both of them were Oxford men, and both had recoiled from the traditional way of studying and teaching political theory; both were true searchers, allergic to the slightest whiff of*

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[5]  D. Mitrany, *The New Meaning of Neutrality,* in Id., *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit., pp. 146, 147; from *The Problem of International Sanctions,* OUP, 1925; see also Id., *The End of "Morality" in War* («International Relations», London, November 1973), in Id., *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit., pp. 231-236.

[6] About functionalist perspective, for a general idea see J. R. Arthur Groom - Paul Taylor (edited by), *Functionalism. Theory and Practice in International Relations,* London, University of London Press, 1975; see also Paul Taylor's introduction in D. Mitrany, *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit., pp. ix-xxv; see also Paul Taylor, *Functionalism: the approach of David Mitrany*, in Groom and Taylor editors, *Frameworks for International Co-operation,* London, Pinter Publishers, 1990; C. Navari, *David Mitrany and International Functionalism*, in David Long and Peter Wilson (edited by), *Thinkers of the Twenty Years' Crisis. Inter-War Idealism Reassessed*", Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995; L. Ashworth, *Creating international studies: Angell, Mitrany and the liberal tradition,* Ashgate, Aldershot, 1999; G. M. Ambrosi, *Some Literature relating to David Mitrany, Functionalism, and European Integration* (available on the Internet site of the University of Trier, www.uni-trier.de); Id., *Keynes and Mitrany as instigators of European Governance*, in *Millennium III*, N. 12/13, Summer 2005 (a version of the paper (2004) is available on the Internet site of the University of Trier, www.uni-trier.de). About neo functionalist perspective and regional integration, for a first approach, see E. B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe. Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950-1957*, Stanford, University Press, 1958; Id., *International Integration: The European and the Universal Process,* «International Organization», 15, 1961; Id., *Beyond the Nation State. Functionalism and International Organizations,* Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1964; Id., *The Study of regional Integration: reflections on the Joys and Agonies of Pre-theorising,* «International Organization» 24 (4), 1970.

*dogmatism. Hobhouse, essentially a philosopher, had given a definition of politics as a 'science' which to me remains fundamental: that the part of the political scientist was not to predict events but to uncover and make clear 'relation of things'*.

Another aspect of Mitrany's scholar personality comes out of his words: his ideological anti-dogmatism[8]. It is not possible, therefore, to understand Mitrany's functionalist theory unless we grasp the fundamental element represented by his absolute mistrust in ideologies, and, in general, in politics. From this point of view, the fact that Mitrany's name is often linked to the events of the European integration process is undoubtedly correct, if we take into account the influence wielded, even indirectly, on Jean Monnet and the functionalist solution used instead of the one proposed by the federalists: «The last months of 1945 also marked the crisis and the paralysis of the Italian MFE[9] and Spinelli[10]'s abandon, who had got to the conclusion that the possibilities of a concrete action towards European federation were invalid[…]. Exactly in those months, inspired by the Rumanian economist David Mitrany, a new functionalist school of thought rose and it was meant for opening the way of a new strategy towards Europe [...]»[11].Yet, considering

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[7] D. Mitrany, *The Making of the Functional Theory: A Memoir*, in *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit., pp. 16, 17.

[8] An example of his ideological anti-dogmatism can be found in D. Mitrany, *Marx Against The Peasant,* Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, London, Georg Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1951. Italian translation *Il marxismo e i contadini,* Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1954. Mitrany already deals with this topic in the Twenties see D. Mitrany, "Marx v. The Peasant", in T. E. Gregory and H. Dalton (eds.), *London Essays in Economics in Honour of Edwin Cannan*, London, Routledge, 1927; republished with the title *Marx si Taranimea; teoria agrariana a lui Marx, Reactia Poporanista*, Biblioteca economica, Bucuresti, Institut de arte grafice, No. 7, 1930.

[9] About MFE see L. Levi, S. Pistone, *Trent'anni di vite del movimento federalista europeo*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1973.

[10] About Altiero Spinelli see E. Paolini, *Altiero Spinelli. Appunti per una biografia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1988; P. Graglia, *Unità europea e federalismo, Da "Giustizia e libertà ad Altiero Spinelli*, Bologna, 1996. See also A. Spinelli, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio. Io Ulisse*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1984 and A. Spinelli, *La rivoluzione Federalista. Scritti 1944-1947*, edited by Piero Graglia, Bologna, il Mulino, 1996.

[11] See G. Mammarella - P. Cacace, *Storia e politica dell'Unione europea,* Roma-Bari, Editori Laterza, 2° ed., 2002, pp. 22, 23. In this paper I personally translated all the quotations in Italian. About the historical framework of European integration see L. V. Majocchi, *La difficile costruzione dell'unità europea,* Milano, Jaca Book, 1995; B. Olivi, *L'Europa difficile. Storia politica della Comunità europea,* Bologna, il Mulino, 1998; B. Olivi - R. Santaniello, *Storia dell'integrazione europea,* Bologna, il Mulino, 2005; see also M. Albertini - A. Chiti Batelli - G. Petrilli, *Storia del federalismo europeo,* Roma, ERI, 1973; S. Pistone, *L'Italia e l'unità europea. Dalle premesse storiche all'elezione del Parlamento Europeo,* Torino, Loescher, 1982 and S. Pistone (edited by), *L'idea dell'unificazione europea dalla prima alla seconda guerra mondiale,* Torino, Loescher, 1975; C. Curcio, *Europa. Storia di*

Mitrany only as the theoretician of the functionalist road – chosen by Europe in the years after the Second World War – doesn't allow us to assess the most relevant aspects of his theoretical elaboration.

First, it shouldn't be forgotten that Mitrany builds his functional model making up a new kind of international organization, that is to say, global and not regional: the European integration process, from this viewpoint, can represent a step in the right direction, but not the final result. Secondly, the net of independent authorities he proposes goes beyond a simple economic integration; it reduces the weight of political power as much as possible in its various international activities as they are established by the functionalist approach and it creates, at international level, a growing de politicization of decisions and thus the overcoming of the political dimension. On this point what Antonio La Spina and Giandomenico Majone write about the authorities is enlightening. These authorities (now inside each individual State) represent «[…]the abandon of a State model seen as a direct manager, a goods distributor, a social engineer in favour of the idea of a Regulator State. Its strategic tools are the regulative authorities: institutions that are independent from the political class and the electoral cycle and are provided with a specific mandate and with incisive powers, which are provided for by law, only about distinctly limited issues. These authorities are composed by people who were chosen because of their high technical knowledge and their impartiality»[12].

*un'idea,* Torino, ERI/Edizioni Rai, 1978; L. Levi - U. Morelli, *L'unificazione europea. Cinquant'anni di storia,* Torino, Celid, 1994; H. Mikkeli, *Europa. Storia di un'idea e di un'identità,* Bologna, il Mulino, 2002; S. Fagiolo, *L'idea dell'Europa nelle relazioni internazionali*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2009.

[12] See A. La Spina - G. Majone, *Lo Stato regolatore,* Bologna, Il Mulino, 2000, p. 7. See also Alessandro Arienzo's essay *Oltre la democrazia, la governance economica della politica*, in A. Arienzo - D. Lazzarich (edited by), *Vuoti e scarti di democrazia. Teorie e politiche democratiche nell'era della mondializzazione*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2012. In his essay Arienzo writes: «The *governance* must foster the continuous transformation of the boundaries and of the nature of the public space and of its movers through a wider opening and flexibility of the state administration, of the broadening of decisional spaces by means of public-private partnership courses, of externalization, privatization and joint management of public policies. It must ensure the containment and the management of the conflicts produced by the free flow of the interests dynamics: on the one hand, those conflicts must be free to be delocalized and broken up; on the other hand, their political load can be reduced by moving – when it is possible – their foci to different planes, either technical, scientific or economical ones. Hence, it operates horizontally in form of nets/*networks* of collective movers who are engaged in contractual processes by means of mediation procedures and of consensus building which are aimed to gain legitimacy and *compliance*. The change of the public space is in part due to the transformation of the traditionally established boundaries, between domestic and international politics, which are deeply modified by new movers: independent and/or regulative agencies, corporations of

This kind of de politicization, in the field of international relations, might get Mitrany's thought close to the federalists' positions, because it provides for the overcoming of the politics of power and, within certain limits, of the sovereignty of the national State[13].

In reality, Mitrany goes so far as to overcome the federalist dichotomy between national State and Federation and, substantially, to spread the criticism related to the national State also to the federations: the real problem lies in the existence of an international system concept based on the world division in separated political-territorial units. According to Mitrany, inside the federalist perspective, the risk is moving on from rivalries and potential conflicts among national States to rivalries and potential conflicts among national States and federations and among federations themselves. From this point of view, even the Pan-European project of Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi is judged negatively insofar as it stands as a «bulwark against the Eastern danger»:

> *Pan-Europa recalls in its second main purpose another nineteenth century proposal for the union of Europe. Russia has never been felt to be so much the 'common enemy' as since the Bolshevik revolution; Pan-Europa has been presented from the very first as the only effective bulwark against that Eastern danger. The aim of Pan-Europa, according to Kalergi, is 'a federation of states and a customs union for the salvation of Europe, of western culture and of the white race'; or again, 'the struggle for Pan-Europa is a struggle against barbarism'. The core of the Pan-European scheme thus consists of certain economic aspirations, to be surrounded with a protective covering against the competitive and the envious. Mercantile and military interests in a weakened and impoverished Europe feel the need for a coalition with a common policy and, therefore, some form of central authority[14].*

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interest, political and economic macro-regional aggregates, international organisms. Notably, the appearance of international regulative regimes – as they are the needed answer to the emergencies produced by the processes of economic and financial globalization – reduces the margins of autonomy of the state sovereignty, both inside and outside them» (pp. 98, 99).

[13] About federalism see C. Malandrino, *Federalismo. Storia, idee, modelli*, Roma, Carocci, 1998; Id., «*Tut etwas Tap feres»: compi un atto di coraggio L'Europa federale di Walter Hallstein (1948-1982)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2005. See also F. Terranova, *Il federalismo di Mario Albertini*, Milano, Dott. Giuffrè, 2003.

[14] D. Mitrany, *Regional Pacts: Their Uses and Dangers*, in Id., *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit.., pp. 152, 153 (from the paper *Pan-Europa: A Hope or a Danger?*, London, «The Political Quarterly», Sept.-Dec. 1930).

Not wanting to betray the aims of peace and international cooperation, it is thus necessary to neutralize the causes of division, otherwise if we set a limit to what would actually be just a territorial reorganization, we would not get a solution to the problem, but simply its dimensional variation. Obviously in Mitrany's view, not even a global federation is thinkable: «To have lasting effect the solution must be global. In theory it could be done through a world state or federation, but even if desirable such a monstrous construction could hardly come about except through conquest»[15].

It is rather easy to understand the reasons why Mitrany identifies in the overcoming of politics and in the meantime, in the division of the world in closed and separated political-territorial units the main road towards a permanent global peace. From this viewpoint, Alberto De Sanctis, in his essay about Leonard Trelawny Hobhouse, highlights the problem of the differences and rivalries among European States:

> *In order to keep militarism and nationalism from getting the better of freedom it was necessary to give life to a peoples' Europe which, according to Mazzini's teaching, would progressively extend the right of citizenship to the whole continent. Europe was characterized, according to Hobhouse, by being what some philosophers defined 'a unity in or permeating differences'. It was a continent, a civilization, it had common religious basis behind, a common culture, a long tradition of close political interactions. Nevertheless, 'this community is split up into different centers, speaking different languages, putting a different color and interpretation even on that which they hold in common, often divided in the past by bitter antagonisms, inclined to mutual rivalry even in peaceful times, and easily inflamed to mutual suspicion. These different centres are organized, the common centre is not'[16].*

Hobhouse, unlike his former student Mitrany, approaches the European unification issue from a political viewpoint as whatever «European alliance, in order to have any chance of success, should have been based on the

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[15] D. MITRANY, *The Prospect of Integration: Federal or Functional*, in «Journal of Common Market Studies», 4, 1965, p. 135.

[16] A. DE SANCTIS, *Europeismo e pacifismo nel pensiero politico di L. T. Hobhouse*, in M. G. Bottaro Palumbo - R. Repetti (edited by), *Gli orizzonti della Pace. La pace e la Costruzione dell'Europa (1713-1995)*, Genova, ECIG, 1996, pp. 216, 217. De Sanctis quotes L. T. Hobhouse, *The World in Conflict*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1915, p. 75.

principles of nationality and self-determination. 'I shall content myself with two propositions which I believe to have a bearing, the first on the permanent order of Europe, the second on the prospect of terminating the war. The first is that in proportion as political unity can be brought into accord with national sentiment the chances of international union are improved. The second is that as a practical policy the principle of national choice should at least be a limiting condition. I mean that no portion of European territory should be transferred from one government to another without the concurrence of its population, and that concurrence should be expressed by a vote taken under the presidency of a neutral Power. This is a principle which even now might be accepted and proclaimed by the Allies as a condition governing their policy, without the smallest prejudice to their vigour in the conduct of the war. To hope for it may be Utopian, yet it is but the translation into literal terms of that combination of the ideas of nationality and of public law which has been inscribed on our banner by official sanction'»[17]. Another aspect showing the originality of Mitrany's theory compared to his professor's thought – even though he was deeply influenced by him – is represented by the persistence of the political-legal dimension in Hobhouse's thought: «The international anarchy along with the war could only be won if the dogma of State sovereignty had been impaired. That is how Hobhouse's pacifism might be defined a kind of *'legal pacifism* (peace through law), according to which war is an event depending on the existence of the State for its own sake, […] or more precisely on that character that is typical of every State […]: the supreme and exclusive power of making the ultimate decisions about using the force'. In foreign politics Hobhouse hence believed in the institutionalization of the international binding forces as the only possibility to ensure peace. 'Advocates of non-resistance' – he stated – 'will never prevent the shedding of one drop of blood by telling us not to fight in our own defense. If they would really minimize warfare, they would do better to find a working ethics, a code of justice in international relations which men would accept. Of all statesmen Gladstone came nearest to this in his doctrine that the obligations of States were in principle identical with those of private persons. A code based on this principle, and a habit of detailed application to international politics in the interests of such a code, might build up the international institutions which alone, in the end, can supersede war. It might at least avert some wars, while the mere reiteration of an abstract principle averts none'»[18].

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[17]  Ibid., pp. 217, 218.
[18]  Ibid., pp. 219, 220. Among the texts quoted by De Sanctis see L. T. Hobhouse, *The World in*

Following these premises Mitrany sets three possible approaches based on «[…] the various ideas for international organization. These have followed in the main three lines of thought. (1) An association of nations, like the League, which would leave the identity and policy of states almost untouched; though comprehensive, would be a loose association merely suggesting the need for a measure of material integration. (2) A federal system, favored because it is thought to provide the cohesion lacking in a league; but this would be so only within the limits of some new continental or regional group, and so would tend to divide the world again into a number of potentially competing units. (3) The functional approach, which by linking authority to a specific activity seeks to break away from the traditional link between authority and a definite territory (perpetuated by either an association or federation of nations). This approach resolves the dilemma of creating either too loose or too narrow an international organization by building up authorities which would be both comprehensive and solid, in selected fields of common life"[19].

The functional approach allows the concrete realization of the purpose of going beyond the division among States, because functional divisions can replace geographical and physical divisions: "The possibility of changing our view of nationality and our policy towards it is not visionary. It is the confusion in our attitude which has caused such endless suffering and hardened division. The essence of the problem is that 'the rights of nationality depend on the possibility of a reasonable adjustment between the interests peculiar to a people and those which they share with others. This adjustment, however difficult to formulate in abstract and general terms, raises in fact precisely the same question as every other function of government. We have seen just the same difficulty in defining the liberty of the individual'. And in one case as in the other the solution is not possible by any geographical and physical division of the respective spheres, but only by a reasonable and liberal adjustment of the respective functions of the private and public domains, of the national and the international domains"[20].

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*Conflict*, cit.; ID., *Questions of War and Peace*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1916; ID., *The Metaphysical Theory of the State*, London, G. Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1960; N. BOBBIO, *Il problema della Guerra e le vie della pace*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1991. About «legalpacifism» see F. TERRANOVA, *Il federalismo di Mario Albertini* cit., pp. 66, 67.

[19] D. MITRANY, *A Working Peace System*, in *The Functional Theory of Politics* cit., p. 125.

[20] D. MITRANY, *Nationality and Nationalism*, in ID., *The functional Theory of Politics* cit., p. 145. It is rather interesting the relationship between the borders elimination and the rise of a "global administrative law": about this topic see S. CASSESE, *Oltre lo Stato*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2006. See also ID., *Il diritto globale. Giustizia e democrazia oltre lo Stato*, Torino, Einaudi, 2009.

After all these considerations, Mitrany – aware of the fact that "creating an international system of 'law and order' – and nowadays one must add, of 'social security' - is by far the most difficult task in the history of modern political society"[21] - elaborates a model of international organization based on the idea that the functions to be carried out in the course of international activities can generate *ad hoc* institutions (the Authorities): specific organizations for specific functions. Mitrany who, according to me, embraces a sort of "evidence naturalism", this way abandons, within certain limits, the traditional organization founded on prearranged jurisdictional subdivisions of rights and powers. The role of the States, hence, is reduced to its lowest terms: they simply have "to ratify" what is evident in nature, setting up all the needed Authorities, without making it substantially the result of a decisional political process.

That, if we may say, represents the "dark side" of Mitrany's theory. In fact, as it was previously said, a functional kind of organization is managed by a body of international executives. Those executives can not be merely experts, but experts above any affiliation (national, political, and so on). Inevitably, a body of such executives must have the task of telling the governments, as they are necessarily called to set up the various Authorities "what is naturally evident". In connection with the role of the economist (but that works for all the "experts") Lionel Robbins "[...] claims the impossibility of pinpointing the scientific criteria of choice among the different kinds of governmental intervention. He states that the economy is 'neutral towards the ends', meaning it is not able to provide with scientific assessments about them, since they imply different kinds of judgment (moral, political etc.).

This concept of economics as a 'positive science', free from value judgment, implies that the economist's task is not to indicate the aims the society proposes each time by adopting measures of economic politics.

Their 'professional' task is to show the best way, from the scientific point of view, to reach certain aims proposed by others (for example the politicians) and not to choose among those aims"[22].

In Mitrany's functional model, there are no politicians to be given the suitable tools to implement certain politics. The experts benefit from the same property of "self-definition" which Mitrany thinks typical of functions and, therefore, of the Authorities. In this sense, exceeding the political dimension,

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[21]  D. Mitrany, *Retrospect and Prospect*, in Id., *The functional Theory of Politics* cit., p. 241.
[22]  G. Casale - G. Gianelli, *Il pensiero economico da Platone a Sraffa*, Genova, INS-EDIT, 1993, p. 291.

which means to delegate the international executives, the "technicians", chosen exclusively according to their expertise - the management of the international economic and social activities, can transform the international system into a technocracy.

To better understand this concept, it might be very useful to resort to the distinction made by Isaiah Berlin between "monism" and "pluralism". In fact, seemingly, the international organization suggested by Mitrany is characterized by a "pluralism" which could be defined "total", since the functional method does not envisage (at least basically) any hierarchical and coordinative structure. The international Authorities represent, according to Mitrany's approach, some independent "islands", which can freely be transformed depending on needs, activities to be carried out and problems to be solved.

However, analysing Mitrany's functionalist proposal we will have to face a "unidimensional" approach, characterized by a sort of "exclusive thought": if the political dimension is the "evil", the main cause of wars, the "technical" dimension is the kingdom of the "good", of the lack of conflicts and of power struggles. And that is founded on the belief that following only the criteria of competence and efficiency represents the only way to build a world without rivalry and conflicts.

The trust in competence and, it must be underlined, in the technicians' fairness is constantly recognizable in Mitrany's thought who does not pay attention to a very important question: the selection of international experts[23]. According to the functionalist approach, in fact, the technicians must be evaluated and chosen by other technicians having the necessary expertise.

According to me, such a "unidimensional" scheme refers to a vision that could be defined "monistic". It is rather enlightening what Marco Ferrari writes about "monism" in an essay about Berlin: "Monocracy in its despotic, oligarchical, majority or totalitarian forms, in which the government of the 'one' gets organized each time, is the political expression of monism, a religious, moral and philosophical ideal, whose critique is one of the recurring themes in Berlin's work. The most persuasive reasoning lies in the conclusion of the *Two Concepts*, meaningfully titled ' the one and the many', a proposition S. Lukes considers the keystone of his thought […]. 'Metaphysical chimera' present in the whole western thought, 'from Plato to the latest followers of Hegel and Marx', monism is described as the 'belief that somewhere in the past or in the future, in the divine revelation or in the mind of a single thinker, in the solemn declarations of history or of science or in the simple heart of

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[23] We can also notice a certain "self-referentiality" of the body of international executives.

a good and honest man, there is a final solution' where 'all the positive values men have always believed in', freedom, equality, justice, brotherhood, order 'must in the end be compatible and maybe imply each other'. The conflict among values makes a complete human realization impossible: accepting the choice, the compromise and the settlement implies the renunciation of 'equally absolute needs' and it leads into believing that any means is legitimate in order to attain this 'total harmony'"[24].

In these lines we find some parallelism with at least two of the fundamental elements of Mitrany's thought: believing in the existence of a "final solution" (a kind of functionalist international organization) and the aim of "total harmony" (the permanent peace).

Moreover, there is the tangible risk that downsizing the political power[25] in favour of the "international experts" could help the birth of an "international technocratic oligarchy".

Politics[26], in these terms, risks having to face what is considered a downright "technocratic ideology". On this point Michela Nacci writes: "Technocracy deems politics irrational: the skills it requests are certainly different from the rational choice, from the same economic rationality. But the typical rationality of politics must take into account non-rational factors which are at the same time absolutely crucial such as beliefs, emotions, general opinions.

Technocracy would like to do without ideologies, values, abstractness, recourse to general concepts such as the common good, mediation, negotiation, the class of professional politicians: these are probably requests which politics can comply with only effacing itself. […] In the technocratic question the expertise, the knowledge take place only on one side: the side of technique, whatever it means, of the technicians, whoever they are. […] Technocracy is an ideology in itself and as such it must be dealt with and discussed"[27].

It is thus clear the relationship between the blind trust in the "technicians" and the onset of technocracy forms and the potential dangers looming on democracy. The latter, in fact, allows citizens to control the political power, while technocracy rules out, by its own nature, the democratic

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[24] M. Ferrari, *Berlin: Individuo e governo*, in S. Mastellone (edited by), *Il pensiero politico europeo (1945-1989)*, Firenze, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 2001, p. 117.
[25]  Obviously only at international level (but the domestic politics of the various States must "conform" more and more to international politics).
[26]  And the political ideologies.
[27] M. Nacci, *Tecnica e fine della politica: l'ideologia tecnocratica*, in M. Nacci (edited by), *Politiche della tecnica. Immagini, ideologie, narrazioni*, Genova, Name edizioni, 2005,  pp. 273, 274.

legitimation. Rita Baldi, about the importance of democratic control, recalls what Karl Popper wrote: "The right of people to judge and bring down their government is the only known tool through which we can try to protect ourselves against the political power abuse; it means the control of the rulers by the ruled ones. And since the political power controls the economic power, political democracy is also the only way the ruled ones can control the economic power. Without democratic control there can be no reason at all why any government should not use its own political and economic power with aims very different from the protection of its citizens' freedom"[28].

On this point, deemed the "dark side" of his functionalist theory, the following question might be put: can Mitrany be considered a theoretician of technocracy? According to me the answer is no, since his functionalist theory – founded on the certainty that outside the political sphere problems can be solved in a not conflictual way – does not envisage, on the theoretical plane, the substitution, in the international relations, of the "political power" with another "power", but only the reduction of the "political power" itself. In other words, the almost inevitable technocratic drift could be defined as a side effect, forseen probably by Mitrany, but considered the lesser evil. In fact, we should not make the mistake of decontextualizing the origin of the functionalist theory of Mitrany, whose life goes through both World Wars and the Cold War[29]: the real danger is the politics of power of the States[30].

Another element to take into account is Mitrany's firm belief that an automatic mechanism can be triggered off, that is founded on the "common interest"[31], able of linking governments and even peoples beyond the will of international cooperation and of good intentions: peace, in other words, becomes an everybody's "interest".

A sort of "invisible hand"[32] turns single country's "interests" into

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[28] R. Baldi, *La "società aperta" di Karl Popper*, in S. Mastellone (edited by), *Il pensiero politico europeo (1945-1989)* cit., p. 101. Baldi quotes K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1945; Italian translation: *La società aperta e i suoi nemici*, Roma, Armando, 1993-1994.

[29] It should not be forgotten Mitrany's objective: peace.

[30] National States and federations, that is to say, separated political-territorial units.

[31] It is one of the aspects which most influence had on Jean Monnet's European Community building: "Monnet wondered what could link, before it was too late, France and Germany, what could cement a common interest between the two countries". C. Malandrino, *Federalismo. Storia, idee, modelli* cit., p. 116.

[32] Giuseppe Casale and Giulio Gianelli write: "[…] Smith claims that human acting is determined by six impulses: selfishness, desire for peace, sense of ownership, habit of working, tendency

international community's "interests". From that it is possible to conclude that in Mitrany's thought there is a sound "anthropological pessimism": he does not trust politics, politicians and, with good reasons, mankind.

In conclusion, the mistrust of politics and the growing estrangement of citizens from it[33] fuel technocracy, building up a downright democracy deficit. The events linked to the European integration process[34] from this viewpoint show how the functionalist road leads or can lead to technocratic structures which are mostly taken away from the citizens' control.

In the end, the overcoming of the political sphere can lead to the overcoming of democracy and to a dangerous chance.

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for taking one thing for another, 'sympathy' (= social consensus). Pushed by them, men – who are the best judges of their own interests – act in a way to realize the maximum of collective utility unawares. 'It is not from the generosity of the butcher, of the baker or of the brewer […] that we can hope to get our lunch, but from their evaluation of their own interests. Each individual strives as much as possible to use his capital in support of the national productive activity, and to direct then that activity in such a way that its product can get its maximum value, each individual necessarily works to make the annual income of the society as high as possible. Actually he does not usually mean to pursue the public interest nor is he aware of the extent in which he is pursuing it…when he directs his activity in such a way that his product is as high as possible, he only aims to his own advantage and he is led by an invisible hand […], in this as in many other cases, to pursue an aim that does not form part of his intentions…Pursuing his interest, he himself pursues the interest of the society in a way more efficient than he intended to pursue it'". G. Casale - G. Gianelli, *Il pensiero economico da Platone a Sraffa* cit., p. 135.

[33] In Italy this is especially evident.

[34] Also a renowned constitutionalist is not satisfied about it: see G. Zagrebelsky (edited by), *Diritti e Costituzione nell'Unione Europea,* Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2003, p. V.

# POLYTHEISM VS. MONOTHEISM:
## SOME IDEAS REGARDING
## THE PASTORAL FORM OF POWER
*Pejman Abdolmohammadi*

The relation between religion and politics could be stricter than it could appear in a general approach on social sciences. In other terms, the form by which human mind will shape its own religious and spiritual ideas might also influence its socio-political relations. In such context, the differences between monotheism and polytheism are relevant. The main Abrahamic religion such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam are mostly characterized with an 'Earth' vision of life, while the oriental religions such as Zoroastrism, Hinduism and Buddhism are more characterized with a "celestial" vision of life.

Philosophy is a science who enables man to attain knowledge of the origins of things and of the living beings. The ultimate goal of Philosophy is to remove the darkness of ignorance and to reach the light of reason. In other words, according to Descartes[1], the use of reason and common sense

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[1] R. DESCARTES, *Discours sur la méthode*, (Leiden, 1637), Premiere partie: "En quoy il n'est pas vraysemblable que tous se trompent; mais plutost cela tesmoigne que la puissance de bien juger, distinguer le vray d'avec le faux, qui est proprement ce qu'on nomme le bon sens ou la raison, est naturellement esgale en tous les homes; et ainsi que la diversité de nos opinions ne vient pas de ce que les uns sont plus raisonnables que les autres, mais seulement de ce que nous conduisons nos pensées par diverses voyes, ne considerons pas les mesmes choses. Car ce n'est pas assez d'avoir l'esprit bon, mais le principal est de l'appliquer bien".

is fundamental to humans in order to distinguish the truth from the false. In such process of acquiring knowledge, also the vision of life and the religion can be relevant.

The true meaning of civilization consists in the effort to collect all the necessary elements of nature and human life for the transformation of society, from its primitive and savage state to the civilian one. As a result, the more the civilization of humankind has developed, the higher has been the quality of its life. In the state of nature, the man is weak and defenseless: in addition to the fear of animals, he is afraid even of his fellow-kinds. The sexual instinct, coupled with the need for self-protection from environmental hazards, brings Man to develop the desire to aggregate and to build a community. The pre-social Man lives in solitude and does not tend to join others. Only his relentless need for knowledge led him to progress, giving him access to *Roshanestan* (the enlightened place) of rationality. It is therefore the thirst of wisdom that is the main engine that leads Man to evolve, transforming his bleak and lonesome state of nature to a civil society based on a social contract.

As also Rousseau states men in their State of nature are born equal and inequalities among them arise only with the emergence of civil society. In this sense, I believe in a peaceful and egalitarian essence of man in the state of nature and I am critical of Hobbes, who argues instead that peace is only a temporary element of the human condition and that war, instead, it represents the true primordial nature.

The follower of monotheism, in their religious history, have often built an absolute and unique idea of their God: they recognized in their sovereign a divine figure descended from the sky, believing in one God gifted with all the existing positive attributes.

In front of such a power, there is no possibility for any criticism or protest. This type of behavior, might lead to the establishment of despotic governments in the world. The followers of monotheistic religions, therefore, need a shepherd to guide them to the truth: this leader is infallible and his word is indisputable. The people seek in their sovereign "a political shepherd" who wants to guide them in an absolute way to the material bliss. Consequently, the sovereign becomes infallible: his policies, although absolutist, cannot be called into question.

The idea of an absolute mono that appears mainly in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean religions has led these communities to develop the idea of despotic political power and to not be able to develop a real critical consciousness. The people of the West had, in Greek and Carthage civilizations, a polytheistic

religious tradition in which there were several Gods with different powers. Each of them enjoyed a wide sphere of power, but at the same time, this sphere found its limit in the presence of the other Gods. This allowed to Western (pre-Christian) religious thought to develop the idea of non-omnipotence of the divine, an idea that has moved from the religious sphere to the political one, bringing the Greeks, for example, to not being subjected to the will of a single entity without the opportunity to discuss and criticize. The polytheistic roots of the West helped the enlightened Western thinkers, once freed from the Abrahamic monotheistic thought, to lay the foundations for a rational thinking, pluralistic and not absolute. The same plural idea of the divinity existed both in the Persian and Roma pre- Islamic and pre - Christian era. In the Zoroastrian Persia, we could see a very particular angelology, which is mapping an interesting balance of relations between 6 angels, which represent the light, and the other six which represent the evil. The God is represented by Ahura Mazda, (the Lord of Knowledge), while his/her main competitor is Ahriman, the Lord of obscurity and ignorance. The Persian Zoroastrian cosmology is featured by contrasts and particularly with several players and divine icons. By the arrival (through invasion and/or conquest) of Islam in Persia in the VI century A.D., there was a paradigm shift of the religion and the religiosity. The orthodox monotheist Islam replaced the Zoroastrism. However, we could see that, during centuries, within the Iranian cultural sphere of influence, the pure Islamic monotheism has been influenced with soft hidden pluralism. The Persian trend towards Shiite Islam and Sufism could be interpreted as an important example of this.

This basic differences between the philosophy of religions of the East and of the West has been significant in the development of Western thought in the direction of a Republican form of government and Constitution, while in the East the growth of despotism was due to the monotheistic shepherd mentality.

According to the Persian Rationalism, promoted by Mirza Aqa Khan Kermāni (1853-1896)[2], who was also influenced by Decartes, the science is very important in the Creation and the universe is governed by a series of

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[2] On Kermani's political biography see F. ADAMYYAT, *Andisheha-iye Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani*, Tehran, Payam Press, 1978, pp. 13-48; P. M. BAYAT, *The Concepts of Religion and Government in the Thought of Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani, A Nineteenth-Century Persian Revolutionary*, "International Journal of Middle East Studies", 5, 4, 1974, pp. 381-400; H. NATEQ, *Nameha-ye Tab'id*, Köln, Ofoq Press, 1989, pp. 13-43; M. A. KERMĀNI, *Se Maktub be-kushesh va virayesh-e Bahram Chubineh*, Essen, Nima Verlag, 2000, pp. 3- 92; M. A. KERMĀNI, *Sad Kehtabeh ba virastar-e Mohammad Ja'far Mahjub,* Tehran, Nashr-e Ketab, 1990, pp. I – XXXIII.

natural laws, based on rational intelligence and not on divine intervention[3]. In addition, according to Kermāni, once a man knows the truth, thanks to the use of reason, he must apply it to the progress and for the common good of humanity. In fact, for Kermāni, as well as Descartes, it is not enough to be endowed with intelligence and knowing the truth, but it is necessary to apply it in everyday life. Kermāni, in fact, on his intellectual life, will always try to connect the world of ideas to practical politics, trying to stimulate Persians not to be passive towards the tyranny in which they lived, but to intervene in their public life and bring down the evil through an anti-despotic revolution[4].

The true meaning of civilization consists in the effort to collect all the necessary elements of nature and human life for the transformation of society, from its primitive and savage state to the civilian one. As a result, the more the civilization of mankind has developed, the higher has been the quality of its life. In his description of the state of nature, I would consider the man as weak and defenseless: in addition to the fear of animals, he is afraid even of his fellow-kinds. The sexual instinct, coupled with the need for self-protection from environmental hazards, brings Man to develop the desire to aggregate and to build a community. The pre-social Man lives in solitude and does not tend to join others. Only his relentless need for knowledge led him to progress, giving him access to Roshanestan (the enlightened place) of rationality. It is therefore the thirst of wisdom that is the main engine that leads Man to evolve, transforming his bleak and lonesome state of nature to a civil society based on a social contract.

It is by adopting a part of Rousseau's discourse in both his notable works "Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men" and "The Social Contract", that I would share the idea that men in their State of nature are born equal and inequalities among them arise only with the emergence of civil society. In this sense, I believe in a peaceful and egalitarian essence of man in the state of nature and I am critical of Hobbes, who argues instead that peace is only a temporary element of the human condition and that war, instead, it represents the true primordial nature.

However I will not share the pessimism of Rousseau regarding the institution of society. Th civil society represents an evolutionary and positive step, as the only way to develop man and let him achieve prosperity and happiness. Through the contract and the law, the order among different human realities of the world is set. An order that needed to run a sovereign organization

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[3]  Cf. footnote n. 1.
[4]  Hekmat-e Nazari cit. in F. Adamyyat, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-83.

capable of governing: both religion and the government are artificial creations of men aimed at his social development. In other words, the different forms of government and the different religions that have occurred over time were the result of human reason.

Therefore, civil society itself is not a source of inequality, but it can become if the civil government and the spiritual power do not govern according to virtue and the proper use of reason. It is the relation between the temporal and the spiritual power that determines the prosperity of a society or its complete darkness. Although state and religion were created following a natural human need, they are artificial and therefore susceptible both to passions and to reason. Therefore when instinct and passion prevail then they create inequality within the society, whereas when reason guides society it instead creates prosperity and equality.

Those who represent the general will, will ensure the implementation of justice in order to create a virtuous system; otherwise, if the head of the community will not be able to be fair, despotism, characterized by torture and repression, will prevail.

According to the Persian thinker Kermāni, despotism is the worst of evil. Two are the tyrannical symbols that cause evil and injustice in Persian society: the clergy and the monarchy[5]. The first one continues to leave the people in ignorance and spreads a sense of fear among the population against God's power, while the latter keeps the people in poverty by creating terror towards the use of violence against men. The influence of Montesquieu's thought seems obvious. Identifying terror as a principle of despotism has its origin in Montesquieu's classification of the various forms of government, with their principles and their different characteristics[6]. Kermāni, like Montesquieu, is also very sensitive to despotism, which he considers the worst of evil for a society and thus must be fought. In one of his last two political works, Sad khetabeh, he states: "When religion and politics are subjected to the despotism of the rulers and to religious fanaticism, the breath will be taken away from that people, now subjugated. Its evolution will be suspended and its future annihilated".

The religious fanaticism of the clergy or of those who take interest in the spiritual sphere of society, together with the despotism of the rulers, are considered by Kermāni two worst of evils of human society. In his argument on the origin of despotism and its relationship with religion, Kermāni,

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[5]  M. A. KERMĀNI, *Se Maktub be-kushesh va virayesh-e Bahram Chubineh* cit., p. 129.
[6]  Montesquieu outlined his classification of governments in *L'esprit des lois*, (Geneve, 1748), Second Book, Chap. II–V.

influenced by Voltaire and Rousseau, makes a distinction between polytheistic and monotheistic religions.

According to Kermāni, Oriental peoples (referring to the Chinese, Mongolians, Semitics and Aryans) in their religious history have often built an absolute and unique idea of their God: "they recognized in their sovereign a divine figure descended from the sky or they widened their fantasies, believing in one God gifted with all the existing positive attributes"[7].

Kermāni believes that this basic difference between the philosophy of religions of the East and of the West has been significant in the development of Western thought in the direction of a Republican form of government and Constitution, while in the East the growth of despotism was due to the monotheistic shepherd mentality.

During the second phase of his intellectual life in Istanbul, Kermāni had the possibility to read Montesquieu political text "L'esprit des lois". Thus, influenced by the thought of the French intellectual, he developed his thoughts on the principle of the relativity of laws and of religion.

He argues that when political and religious powers conform to the customs, to the history and to the nature of the people, they may significantly contribute to human development and to the promotion of peaceful coexistence. Otherwise, they both will cause the worst of evils: despotism. In support of this idea Kermāni mentions the example of Persian history, recalling that "when, in the era of Cyrus, the government followed the nature of his people it managed to achieve a government so virtuous that has been well known throughout history. Instead, when Persian governments in other eras forgot the nature of their people they fell into the darkness of tyranny"[8].

These rules, however, are useful only for those socio-political contexts and for that specific historical moment. In fact, not only would they be useless in other contexts, but they may even be harmful.

Kermāni supports the relativity of religions. Religion can be in harmony with rationality only when it is adapted to the specific nature of the population for whom it is addressed.

For example, the Zoroastrian religion was in harmony with the nature of the Persian people, as opposed to the Islamic one, which was addressed to the Arab people[9].

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[7]  M. A. Kermāni, *Se Maktub be-kushesh va virayesh-e Bahram Chubineh* cit., speech n. 13.
[8]  M. A. Kermāni, *Sad Kehtabeh ba virastar-e Mohammad Ja'far Mahjub,* Tehran, Nashr-e Ketab, 1991, speech n. 14.
[9]  M. A. Kermāni, *Sad Khetabeh* , *op. cit.*, speech n. 9.

"A religion is solid and perfect only when it is consistent with the nature of the population and its way of life; in these circumstances, religion can bring to the moral and cultural development of that particular people"[10].

"Religion is like a medicine that can cure the disease of a nation. So, as a medicine, (religion) will be suitable for a specific disease and must be consumed at a given time. As any disease requires a specific medicine, every nation needs its specific religion. Consequently, a religion that can constitute a cure for a nation, it can be harmful to another population. Indeed, sometimes it can turn into poison".[11]

Even time plays a key role for religions: the peoples progress and so they need new rules that old religions cannot provide. According to this reasoning, religions are related to the nature of the people and are subject to the time factor. Abrahamic monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, for example, are now not suitable to modern times and therefore must be viewed in a historical perspective.

The human visualises a desirable reign as an ideal place to attain: a space where justice, peace and the constructive powers definitively replace the negative ones. The ideal reign will be reached at the end of time by the human being; heroic figures will guide him to overthrow the negative powers of despotism. This type of myth, which envisages the arrival of a decisive moment in human history in which (by the help of a heroic figure) the human being will be freed from the chains of obscurity, discovering a messianic reign, is classified as the 'myth of liberation'. It has an apocalyptic vision of history and maintains that, after the final battle between good and bad, a new earth and a new sky will be born and there will no longer be any space for tears and blood. The 'myth of liberation' constitutes one of the most important parts of the monotheism way of thinking. The need of being guided might be confused with the need of being saved or liberated by a heroic figure, who will one day come to save the people from injustice and despotism. In such context, the role of self-determination and rationality might be weaken as the believer might prefer to delegate the individual power to a divine representatives who could be member of its own church or mosque.

Such "tribal" or "pastoral" way of thinking and way of being does not express itself only within the form of States (authoritarism or totalitarism), but also express itself in various socio-cultural forms. In a simple public office (with the director), in an Embassy (towards the role of the Ambassador), in a

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[10]  Ibid., speech n. 17.
[11]  Ibid., speech n. 18.

Newspaper (with the Editor) in the University (with the Full Professor who is in charge) and in many other similar places. In other terms, the "monotheism syndrome" is partly the result of pastoral and tribal communities and could produce a model of human relation based on the patriarchal form of power. Today's post-modern and post-human societies, characterized with mass media, social network and other frameworks, could represent an interesting instrument to reinforce the pluralism of ideas and or the polytheism of the values. Such pluralism could challenge also the orthodox and rooted idea of pastoral power. However, a part of the human mind is so much used of tribalism which is able also to create patriarchal and familiar spaces even in the post-modern world. Look at for example to the tribes which are created in new social medias such as 'WhatsApp" "Telegram" or even Facebook. Many families or group with the same interests, they have trend to create their own tribes also in the global and globalized world. This shows that the pastoral and tribal minds are rooted in the human mind and that, once they find their new way, they are ready to come back protagonist in the social arena.

Chapter Ten

# Political and religious monism in Michel 'Aflaq's political thought
## Carlotta Stegagno

## 10.1 The foundation of the Ba'th Party

Michel 'Aflaq, the founder of the Ba'th Party, was an untypical character in the Arab world and society: he was a thinker, a philosopher and a teacher who inspired an entire generation of young Arab men.

He was born in 1920 in Damascus, from a Greek-Orthodox family, his parents were involved in nationalistic activities against French rule in Syria[1]. After attending the Thajiz High School in Damascus, from 1928 to 1932 he moved to Paris to study at Sorbonne after winning a scholarship. The years in Paris were the formative ones: the young Michel 'Aflaq got acquainted with European life and society, he studied History and Philosophy; he also became familiar with Marxism, Communism and Socialism. But those years were important especially because they marked the beginning of the development of the idea of unity, the main pillar in Michel 'Aflaq's political thought. In

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[1] Kamal S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party History, Ideology and Organization*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1966, p. 10.

Paris, the future founder of the Ba'th Party was in contact with others young Arabs with whom he established an Union of Arab students; through these meeting he become conscious of the importance of political unity as a means for ending the Western exploitation in the Arab lands.

Once back in Syria, Michel 'Aflaq begun to teach History and to gather around himself a group of students with whom he discussed the main contemporary political issues. Those meetings, that were usually held on Fridays in Damascus coffee houses, represented the first activities of the future Ba'th Party. In the early 1940s 'Aflaq's ideology wasn't fully developed yet and his political activity was in its starting phase: the first official statement of the Ba'th Party was issued in 1943[2] mainly focusing on nationalism and Arabism. Here 'Aflaq traced the outline of the Arab mission i.e. the Arab people's awakening and renewal after decades of political fragmentation, exploitation and moral debasement.

In 1940 'Aflaq resigned from teaching to devote himself to a full-time political activity. In this period he got acquainted with nationalist and socialist political groups and organizations. Due to his political activity, he was imprisoned several times: in 1939, 1948, 1949, 1952 and in 1954[3]. Those facts enhanced his public image and his prestige in the Arab world.

In 1947 'Aflaq celebrated the official foundation of the Ba'th Party in its first congress, during which he was appointed General Secretary and the Constitution of the Party was issued. We can describe the 1947 Constitution as the political *manifesto* of the Ba'ath and the first formalisation of Michel 'Alfaq's ideology. Meanwhile, due to its Pan-Arab identity, the Party spread in other Arab countries: in Jordan in 1948 and in 1952 in Iraq and Lebanon. More branches were also open in the Nile Valley and in North Africa in the following years.

In 1954 the Ba'th merged with the Arab Socialist Party, founded by Akram Harwani in 1946[4]; the union didn't change the ideology, or the 1947 Constitution, and it was only underlined by the adding of the adjective socialist (*al-i-shtiraki*) to the official denomination of the Party[5]. In this new form the Ba'th run for 1954 elections, obtaining 17 seats: its strengthening was a consequence

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[2]  Cit. in D. Roberts, *The Ba'th and the Creation of Modern Syria*, Kent, Croom Helm Ldt, 1987, p. 18.

[3]  Kamal S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party History, Ideology and Organization*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1966, p. 13.

[4]  S. Moubayed, *Steel and Silk Men and Women Who Shaped Syria 1900-2000*, Seattle, Cune Press, 2006, p. 246.

[5]  G. H. Torrey, *The Ba'th: Ideology and Practice*, "Middle East Journal", Vol. XXIII, No. 4, Autumn, 1969, p. 455.

of the merge, and in particular, of the widening of the electoral base that the merge has caused[6].

   In the second half of the 1950s the approaching between the Egyptian President Gamal Nasser and the Ba'th begun. This will led to the creation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) between Syria and Egypt in 1958. The union represented the climax of 'Aflaq's popularity but also the beginning of his political decline. The UAR was the product of two different forces. On the one side we had Nasser's charisma, that was particularly enhanced after the 1955 Bandung Conference and the 1956 Suez Crisis. On the other side we had the political doctrine of Michel 'Aflaq and his original and revolutionary idea of Arab unity. After the 1961 UAR break-up, due to a military *coup* in Syria, Michel 'Aflaq described the Union and its failure with these words:

> *The unity between Syria and Egypt in February 1958 was not sudden nor was it rash and unmeditated. It was not an accident brought by circumstances. It had an history and a past behind it [...]. The Ba'ath Party thought and declared that behind its intention to realise the first step in Arab Unity was its will to restore to all the Arabs their confidence in the idea of unity and its capacity for realization, and to make the first state of unity a support and a foundation for the Arab struggle in every part of the Arab homeland[7].*

The UAR break-up was a turning point in Michel 'Alfaq's life and political career. In the 1960s a process of "ruralisation" occurred within the Party led to a change in its ideology, membership and even leadership. These transformations led to the isolation of the Ba'th founding member: 'Aflaq retired from political life and, after Hafiz al-Asad rise to power in 1970, he went in voluntary exile in Iraq, where in 1968 the Iraqi branch of the Ba'th had seized the power. He spent the last part of his life in Baghdad, in a condition of increasing isolation from political activity. When he died in 1989[8], Saddam Hussein stated that 'Aflaq converted to Islam[9] and built after him a mausoleum. After

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[6]  Kamal S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party History, Ideology and Organization*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1966 p. 35.

[7]  M. 'Aflaq, The Relapse into Secession, febbraio 1962, in *Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*, Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 27.

[8]  Reuters, *Michel 'Aflaq dies in Paris at 79; founder of Iraq's Baathists Party*, «The New York Times», 25 June, 1989 http://www.nytimes.com/1989/06/25/obituaries/michel-aflaq-dies-in-paris-at-79-founder-of-iraq-s-baathist-party.html.

[9]  M. Virost, *Sandcastles: the Arabs in Search of the Modern World*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1995, p. 31.

the collapse of Iraqi regime the mausoleum was converted into a gym for rehabilitation of Us soldiers; this was a sign that Michel 'Aflaq's cultural heritage was neither embraced nor preserved by the new generations.

## 10.2 The ideology of Michel 'Aflaq

Michel 'Aflaq's ideology can be summarized in three different topics: socialism, nationalism and unity. The Ba'th is primarily a nationalist and a Pan-Arabist party, but 'Aflaq also insisted on the need for socialism to realize the Party goals. Thus, socialism is the economic tool of the Party, for this reason the Ba'th Constitution states that:

> *The Party of the Arab Ba'th is a socialist party. It believes that socialism is a necessity which emanates from the depth of Arab nationalism. Socialism constitutes, in fact, the ideal social order which allows the Arab people to realize its possibilities and to enable its genius to flourish, and which will ensure for the nation constant progress in its material and moral output[10].*

Arab socialism is different from European socialism since it allows private ownership and inheritance rights. 'Aflaq utilised the adjectives Arab and human to define and describe it: Ba'thist socialism is Arab because it is designed for meeting the demands of Arab society[11]. It is also human because it is not conceived merely as an economic system but as a combination of values designed to achieve dignity for man through social participation. Thus Arab Socialism, for 'Aflaq, is based on the concept of justice and co-operation among individuals and not on class struggle[12].

The second key-word in 'Aflaq's ideology is nationalism: it is the embodiment of Arab spirit, the path that the Arab people must follow in order to ending Western exploitation and colonialism. This goal can not be achieved

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[10]  *Constitution of the Arab Ba'th Party*, in S. G. Haim, Arab Nationalism An Anthology, Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1962, p. 235.
[11]  M. 'Aflaq, *Fi Sabil al-Ba'th*, in M. Khadduri, *Political Trends in the Arab World: the Role of Ideas in Politics*, Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970, p. 157.
[12]  M. Khadduri, *Political Trends in the Arab World: the Role of Ideas in Politics*, Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970, p. 157.

all at once, but through two main steps: firstly, the emancipation of Arab land from colonialist influences, and, secondly, by the unification of the Arab homeland[13]. After accomplishing these two steps, the Arab people can achieve the Arab mission, that is the re-awakening of their soul and the establishment of a unitary state amongst all the Arab-speaking countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf.

So we see how unity is both the the starting point and the final goal in Michel 'Aflaq's nationalism. For 'Aflaq nationalism is «love before anything else'[14] and «the same feeling that binds the individual to his family, because the fatherland is simply a large household and the nation is a large family»[15]. For 'Aflaq nationalism is an all-embracing feeling, it is open to anyone who shared with the Arab peoples their history, language and culture[16], it is a unitary idea in which different parts co-work in creating a monist ideology centered around the idea of unity.

Arab unity is, together with nationalism and socialism, one of the key-words of 'Aflaq's political thought, but it have the preeminence over them:

> There is no doubt that the goals of "The Arab Baath", which we have summarized in "Unity, Freedom and Socialism" are fundamentally equal in importance and should not to be separated from each other or to be postponed. In addition, unity has a moral priority and superiority which should not to be overlooked by the Ba'athist lest they follow ideological and political currents that are the most remote from the idea of Arab renaissance[17].

Unity is a general goal and the core of the Ba'th ideology and Pan-Arabism. It gathers under itself many different goals, such as the struggle against colonialism, the liberation of Palestine and the achievement of a territorial union embracing all the Arab countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. Unity, is not only just a pragmatic goal but it also has a spiritual dimension that refers to an internal re-awakening of the Arab people by the means of education and religion.

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[13] Ivi, p. 195.
[14] M. 'Aflaq, *The Duty of Nationalist Action, 1943, in Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*, Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 58.
[15] S. G. Haim, *Arab Nationalism An Anthology*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1962, p. 242.
[16] Ivi, p. 243.
[17] M. 'Aflaq, *The Revolutionary Nature of the Arab Unity* in *Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*. Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 10.

## 10.3 The monist content of Michel 'Aflaq's political thought

The idea of unity, which I briefly drafted in the previous paragraph, is the core of Michel 'Aflaq's monism and the unifying principle of his ideology. Unity, as many other political concepts in Michel 'Aflaq's political thought has a double dimension since the founder of the Ba'th Party developed this idea with a tangible and intangible meaning. It is both spiritual and political.

From a political point of view, 'Aflaq saw himself as the herald of a new institutional form which will helps the new generation of Arab youth to achieve his dream of unity. In the mid of 1950s the political realisation of Arab unity from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf seems to be easily reachable and Michel 'Aflaq's Ba'th Party is hardly working for this goal. The efforts will be compensate with the establishment of the United Arab Republic (UAR) created by the union between Syria and Egypt from 1958 to 1961.

To have a fully understanding of why and how Michel 'Aflaq created a monist ideology centered around the concept of unity, it must be necessary to point out that the Arab motherland was in a condition of fragmentation imposed by the Western countries and the Zionist movement: «Unity has become axiomatically synonymous with liberation since imperialism fears nothing as it fears unity. Unity has also become synonymous with progressiveness inside the Arab nation»[18]. It is for this reason that Michel 'Aflaq gave a revolutionary meaning to the idea of unity. In 1953 he wrote that «unity, as seen by the Arab Baath is a fundamental and living idea. It is a theory in the same way as freedom and socialism have theories»[19]. The final aim of the idea of unity is the overthrowing of the present condition of the Arab motherland by the means of struggle and revolution. This struggle must be directed against the enemies of Arab unity:

*Unity is not an automatic act which comes into being by itself as a consequence of circumstances and development. [...] Unity is a concept of overthrowing and an act of struggle. The onslaught of imperialism and Zionism is practically confined to preventing Arab unity. Imperialism does not need direct intervention to counterfeit democracy and progressivism since fragmentation guarantees this as long as its posi-*

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[18]  M. 'Aflaq, *There is one Road for Unity*, 21 giugno 1957, in *Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*. Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 19.
[19]  M. 'Aflaq, *The Revolutionary Nature of the Arab Unity,* 1953, in *Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*. Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 11.

*tion and logic tempt every part to exploit it with a view of attaining certain illusory benefits at the expense of the other parts[20].*

In 'Aflaq's mind unity has its own values and steps for the final realization: «it has its principles, organized daily and continous struggle as well as its stages of application and pave the way for the final victory»[21].

But unity, for 'Aflaq, is also something different from the simple struggle against Western colonialism and Zionism, thus, in 1960, the founder of the Ba'th wrote: «Unity is not addition and connection and a materialist process. Unity is a new fusion through the new experience of the Arabs»[22].

As many others Michel 'Aflaq's political concepts unity is both a metaphysical and a tangible idea. The first dimension is represented by the cultural, political, historical and religious bonds existing amongst all the citizens of the Arab motherland. The guiding principles of the idea of unity in 'Aflaq's mind:

*Could never claim profundity and genuineness if they were not inspired by the history of the Arab nation when it was unified and if the image of the forthcoming unity does not exist continually in the minds and hearts of people holding these principles[23].*

The awareness of these principles is latent because of the exploitation of the Arab world by Western countries. The solution is a reawakening process achieved with a long education work aimed to instill in the Arab minds the ideal of unity; thus the Arab citizen will understand the link that bonds together the different parts of the Arab motherland and he would be conscious of the power that he can use when he acts not individually but on behalf of the entire Arab nation.

It is due to the importance that 'Aflaq assigned to political unity and to the fact that he connected the different components of his thought with a unitary principle that I define his ideology as a monist one.

For 'Aflaq, monist is a philosophical system that unified the plurality of the existing reality under a single principle and that contested the duality between matter and spirit and between world and God. There are two different sources of Ba'thist monism: the Aristotelian idea of prime mover and Islam as monotheistic religion. We can define the Aristotelian influence as implicit, since

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[20] Ibidem.
[21] Ibidem.
[22] M. 'Aflaq, *Landmark of Progressive Nationalism*, 1960, in *Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*. Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 23.
[23] M. 'Aflaq, *The Federation of Egypt and Syria*, 1956, in *Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*. Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977, p. 16.

'Aflaq seemed to be unaware of it and Aristotle's thought is mediate through Arab philosophy and literature.

In Michel 'Aflaq's political thought we can find also Plato and Aristotle's influences mediated by Arab medieval philosophers who translated their works and were influenced by them. From Plato he brought the possibility to discover the Ideal and the Good, while from Aristotle he derived the idea of the Prime Mover, which is combined with the Islamic concept of Allah. The combination of these two elements is a common feature in the Arab culture. Thus, the second component of Michel 'Aflaq's monism is the Islamic religion and, in particular the idea that the Prophet Mohammad is the great initiator. This principle finds expression in the idea that the life of the Prophet represented the golden age of Islamic civilization and that Prophet Muhammad was the embodiment of the virtues and qualities of the Arab people in all eras of their civilization. 'Aflaq made a comparison between the past of the origin of Islam and his contemporaneity; in 1943 he wrote:

> In the past, one person's life summarized the life of a nation. Today the life of the whole nation in its new revival should become a detailed exposition of the life of its great man. Muhammad was all the Arabs. Let all the Arabs be Muhammad today[24].

In this excerpt we see how, for 'Aflaq, the identification with the life of the Prophet is the key for the rejuvenation of the Arab people. This process could succeeded only because Mohammad was the prime principle and represented the perfection of Arab civilization:

> The external perception of the life of the Prophet has been as a beautiful picture for us to admire and treat with holy reverence. However, we should begin to perceive it from within ourselves, so we may begin to live it. Any Arab of the present time can live the life of the Prophet, even in small proportions as the pebble is to the mountain and the drop is to the sea[25].

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[24] M. 'Aflaq, *'A Zikra al-Rassoul al-arabi [In memory of the Arab Prophet]*, Damascus, Ba'th Party Publications, 1943. The speech could also found in M. 'Aflaq, *Choice of Texts., Choice of Texts from the Ba'th party founder's thought*. Firenze, Cooperativa Officine Grafiche, 1977 pp. 55-58. A Spanish translation could also be found in Ruiz Bravo, Carmen; Martinez Montavez, Pedro, *La controversia ideologica nacionalismo arabe - nacionalismo locales*, Oriente 1918-1952. Istituto Hispano-Arabe de Cultura, 1976. The Arabic and the English version can be consulted on http://albaath.online.fr/English/Aflaq-00-In-Memory-of-the-Arab-Prophet.htm. Here, after a comparison of the different sources, I used this source.
[25] Ibidem.

The relationship with the past is characterized by a constructive approach and not by an imitative one since the present can took advantage from the lessons of the past in order to create a better future[26]. Islam, in the monist philosophy of 'Aflaq, represented a period of the history in which the Arabs had announced their eternal mission in the most suitable form to the historical circumstances:

> *Islam does not remove itself from its natural stage, which is the land of the Arabs, and it cannot be removed from the workers and heroes that fulfilled it - all of the Arab people. The nonbelievers of the Qureish tribe were as important to accomplishing Islam as the believers were. Those who fought the Prophet were just as important to the victory of Islam as those who backed Islam and empowered it. However, this effort took more than 20 years to accomplish. Allah was capable of delivering his Quran to Muhammad in one day, but despite this, it still took 20 years to accomplish this mission. Allah was also capable of directing all people to his religion in one day, but that too took 20 years. He was also capable of bringing about Islam's appearance centuries before he did, and in any of the many nations he created. However, he chose to make the appearance of Islam at a certain time, and he chose for its deliverance the Arab people and their Arab heroic prophet, the Prophet Muhammad. There is wisdom behind all of this[27].*

Because of that, the Arabs, of whatever religion they may are, must find in Islam the primary source and the origins of their national culture. By affirming this 'Aflaq gave us an historical interpretation of religion, underlining how Islam represented the beginning of Arabism. He did that also for utilitarian reasons: 'Aflaq developed a secular thought in a Muslim word, but he had to insert religion in his ideology for avoiding the exclusion of the majority of voters.

> *The understanding of Islam was Arab* [...] *Muslims were Arabs who believed in the new religion; they do that because they acquired the characteristics, the qualities and the values essential to comprehend that this new religion it wasn't just a new religion, but it was the Arab drive towards unity, development and force[28].*

Thus Islam is one of the main pillars of the Arab culture and one of its distinctive and integral parts:

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[26] S. N. Babikian, *A Partial Reconstruction of Michel Aflaq's Thought: The Role of Islam in the Formation of Arab Nationalism*, «Muslim World», Vol. LXVII, No. 4, October 1977, p. 286.
[27] See endnote n. 24.
[28] M. 'Aflaq, *Fi Sabil al-Ba'th*, Damasco, 1959, p. 55.

*The Muslim was the Arab who believed in this new religion because he attained the qualities required to understand it, which in itself constitutes the leap of Arabism to unification, power, and civilized accomplishment[29].*

One of the characteristic of Michel 'Aflaq's ideology, that differentiate it from the preceding theories of Arab nationalism is the connection between the ideal and the real, between the theoretical and the practical side of reality. Even regarding the religious theme this characteristic is clear, since Islam, for 'Aflaq, provides the daily basis for men's life:

*Every great nation is deeply attached to the eternal verities and is founded to fulfill an ideal of values. Islam in its own right is the clearest expression of the Arab nation's effort to achieve eternity and completeness[30].*

For 'Aflaq, Islam has an eternal message: the unity of universe and the omniscience of Allah. The Islamic religion is a monotheistic faith in which the creator is not detached from everyday life, but he is animated and lively. Allah is close to men, he loves them, he takes care of them and absolves them: there is a communication process between men and God. The message of Islam has a tangible value: faith is connected to daily life and to human behavior; it set up the basis of human action and life. Therefore 'Aflaq admits the existence of a single creator, Allah, who gave birth both to the tangible and the intangible aspects of human life.

## 10.4 Conclusions

The founder of the Ba'th, Michel 'Aflaq, sees reality as a unity, and, to be more precise, as inspired by a unitary principle that affects all the aspects of Arab people's life and thought. Due to the fact that 'Aflaq describes unity in different ways we can speak about a pluralism in the monist idea of Arab unity. We have seen that unity has a practical political meaning that refers to the goal of the Arab motherland's territorial unification from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. But, to achieve political unity, it must be necessary that the Arab people

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[29]  See endnote n. 24.
[30]  See endnote n. 24.

must pass through a two-step process - here we have pluralism- : the struggle for freedom from Western colonialism and Zionism and, then, the struggle for unification. The Arab people must be united not only politically but also militarily: Michel 'Aflaq fought in Palestine in 1948 with the Arab army. As many other politicians of his generation points out the lack of unity in the army as the main reason of the defeat. In 'Aflaq's mind, the struggle for unification would be fought in a revolutionary way, as an independence battle, but also - here we have again pluralism- with social, educational and economic means. Socialism will be the economic tool of unity, while, the creation of a welfare state and the spreading of public education and the enhancing of the historical and linguistic ties between all the Arab people will be the cultural ones.

From a metaphysical point of view, the monist principle can be found, as we have seen in the previous paragraphs, in the idea of the Arab mission and in the importance that Michel 'Aflaq assigns to the Islamic religion. The Arab mission is a single one that last since the inception of the Arab history, before the Islamic era, during the so-called Jahiliyah (the age of ignorance) until the present day. This unitary idea is related to the re-awakening of the Arab people that must be achieved in a pluralistic way: through the unity of struggle, the unity of a socialist economic program and through an inner renewal of the Arab spirit that now is detached and fragmented. The Islamic religion plays, in Michel 'Aflaq's political thought, a major role in this regard. Thus, the Arab people must follow the example of the Prophet Mohammad, who had united them for the first time in history, to achieve the goal of the Arab mission. So, to sum up, Michel 'Aflaq sees his nationalistic ideology as a civil religion in which unity, as a monist principle, is both the source and the final goal of his thought.

## Chapter Eleven

# Sir Isaiah Berlin:
# against Monism (1953-1958)
### Sara Lagi

*"All forms of tampering with human beings, getting at them,*
*shaping them against their will*
*to your own pattern, all thought control and conditioning is,*
*therefore, a denial of that in men which makes them men..."*

I. Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty* (1958)

## 11.1 Introducing the person and his work

In the past century Sir Isaiah Berlin (1909-1997) embodied one of the most prominent intellectuals of liberal inspiration we had in Europe. By defining Sir Isaiah Berlin as a liberal thinker I am referring to the definition of political liberalism proposed by D. J. Manning in his major *Liberalism*, according to which liberalism implies a view of power as limited in order to protect individual freedom, minorities and "society's dynamism", along with a rooted fear towards any form of social conformism[1]. Having said that, I have no intention to reduce or simplify the complexity and originality of Berlin's liberal thought, but rather to briefly clarify the points of connection between Berlin,

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[1]  D. J. Manning, *Liberalism*, London, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd 1976 p. 15.

on the one hand, and the philosophical and political tradition we call liberalism on the other. It was Isaiah Berlin to coin the term monism and pluralism in the 1950s and his life long he elaborated these two concepts giving them a precise philosophical and political connotation. In general terms, by monism and pluralism Berlin meant a particular philosophical approach to the meaning of life and reality resulting – according to the English intellectual – in two different philosophical views. Pluralism implies recognizing the complexity of reality, pluralism of values and pluralism of ideas whereas monism refers to those philosophies and thinkers trying to reduce such complexity to a single model, theory, standard[2].

In this essay I want to focus on Berlin's idea and critique of *monism* because, in my opinion, it encompasses some of the key components of his political thought. What I propose in my essay is not so much to examine Berlin's interpretation of those cultural heritages (notably Enlightenment and Romanticism) that, in his opinion, influenced both monism and pluralism – for which there is  extensive and excellent academic literature about[3] – as much as to trace and reconstruct some key aspects of Berlin's discourse on monism *per se*, i.e. I want to show, through a series of writings dating back to the 1950s, how his critique of monism reflects a particular vision of moral and human reality and how, in connection with this, it reflects his liberal spirit in moral, philosophical and political terms.

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[2] I. Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty* (1958), pp. 1-32, in Id., *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969, now available online at: www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de. Berlin's famous seminal essay is also included in H. Hardy (edited by), *I. Berlin, Liberty*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002. For a summary on Berlin's life, his scholarly work and his definition of monism and pluralism see: the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy online: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/berlin.

[3] See: B. Baum - R. Nichols (edited by), *Isaiah Berlin and the Politics of Freedom:"Two Concepts of Freedom" 50 Years Later*, New York and London, Roudledge, 2013 G. Crowder, *Isaiah Berlin. Liberty and Pluralism*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2004; G. Crowder - H. Hardy (edited by), *The One and the Many: Reading Isaiah Berlin*, Amherst, New York, Prometheus Books, 2006; J. L. Cherniss, *Introduction to* I. Berlin, *Political Ideas in the Romantic Age*, edited by H. Hardy, London, Pimlico, 2007; J. L. Cherniss, *A Mind and its Time: the Development of Berlin's Political Thought*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; J. Gray, *Isaiah Berlin: An Interpretation of his Thought*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, reprinted version 2013; R. Hausheer, *Introduction to* I. Berlin, *Against the Current: Essays in the History o* Ideas, edited by H. Hardy, London, Hogarth Press, 1979; J. Reed, *The Continuing Challenge of Isaiah Berlin's Political Thought*, in "European Journal of Political Theory", vol. 8, n. 2, 2009, pp. 253-262; H. Yeh, *History, Method and Pluralism: a Reinterpretation of Isaiah Berlin's Political Thought*, Phd. Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK, 2006, available online at: etheses.lse.ac.uk. For a complete and updated international bibliography about scholarly works on Berlin see: The Isaiah Virtual Library, available online at: berlin.wolf.ox.ac.uk.

I can commence by saying that Berlin elaborated the fundamental dichotomy monism-pluralism through a series of scholarly works dedicated to the history of ideas and intellectual history. He was firmly convinced of the power of ideas, of their impact in historical, social, political terms. It is Berlin who reminds us of the German Poet Heinrich Heine's warning that the power of ideas can be immense: "philosophical concept nurtured in the stillness of a professor's study could destroy a civilization"[4]. Berlin argued that ideas and their influence should never be undervalued and this is one of the chief elements characterizing all his intellectual works, including his reflection on monism and pluralism. The English philosopher's profound interest in the history of ideas developed over years and in order to fully understand it we must look back at his life and cultural formation. Isaiah Berlin was born in 1909 to a wealthy Jewish family in the city of Riga and when he was a child he moved with his parents to England where he grew up and received an excellent education. He attended Oxford University where he studied philosophy and initially had contacts with A. J. Ayer and the group of logical positivists – a sort of English version of Viennese logical positivism – whose major objective was to conceptually separate philosophy from any form of metaphysics with the declared purpose to coherently change philosophical method into a true scientific method. Berlin was impressed and fascinated by logical positivism, chiefly as far as the critique of the traditional philosophical thought embodied by Hegel, Fichte, Schelling was concerned[5].

In 1939 Berlin published his first major work, an articulated scholarly analysis on *Karl Marx: his life and Environment* (1939), where one can already identify two of the key elements of his further intellectual reflection, namely the necessity for scholars to recognize the importance of historical dimension in the shaping of political ideas and the profound conviction that philosophical, ethical, moral questions could not be studied and explained by means of scientific method. Both aspects emerging from the essay on Marx can be considered as Berlin's personal response to logical positivism and his first serious path towards a specific direction of study focused on "the love of literature and ideas"[6].

During the 1950s Berlin published some of his most relevant works, from his *Russia and 1848* to a *Marvellous Decade,* from *Historical Inevitability* to the most popular *Two Concepts of Liberty.* The topics and figures Berlin discussed

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[4]  I. Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty* online version cit., p. 1.

[5]  G. Crowder, *Isaiah Berlin. Liberty and Pluralism* cit., pp. 1 ss.

[6]  C. J. Galipeau, *Isaiah Berlin's Liberalism*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994, pp. 4-5- 21-22.

in all these writings were highly diversified: from Marx to Rousseau, from scientific determinism to Romanticism, from the heritage of Enlightenment to his beloved Alexander Herzen's populist socialism.

Yet, within this diversity of interests and issues, Berlin's ultimate intellectual and political vision is quite clear: he tried to critically reflect on long-term philosophical, ethical, political questions, such as the nature of liberty, human dignity, human will and personality, how to protect individuals and individual freedom from power abuses[7]. Investigating and critically thinking about these questions – profoundly interconnected with the dichotomy between monism and pluralism – corresponded not only to Berlin's ultimate and most intimate philosophical interests, to his aforementioned liberal inspiration, but also, in my opinion, to his intellectual and political need to reflect on the idea and meaning of liberty within a complex historical, political and cultural context, still influenced by the tragedy of WWII and totalitarianism. Discussing about liberty during the 1950s was much more than a mere academic exercise: it was a way to seek an explanation to the moral and political devastation of the previous decade.

## 11.2 Berlin and the importance of thinking like a "fox"…

In the early 1950s Berlin was already an internationally recognized scholar and in many respects he could be defined as a representative of the so called "free" world. It is true that Berlin was passionately against soviet communism but his reflection on monism and pluralism goes beyond his personal political sympathies and affiliation[8]. Already in his scholarly work on Marx, dating back to 1939, one can observe Berlin's opposition to all those philosophies and theories – including, in his opinion, Marx' scientific materialism – trying to identify and disclose objective laws capable of determining and therefore explaining an historical, social, political dimension[9]. A kind of intellectual opposition Berlin would further elaborate some years later, and more precisely in his work *The Hedghog and the Fox*, published in 1953.

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[7]  See: G. Crowder, *Isaiah Berlin. Liberty and Pluralism* cit.
[8]  M. Ignatieff, *Isaiah Berlin: A Life*, London, Vintage, 2000, p. 193 ss.
[9]  G. Crowder, *Isaiah Berlin. Liberty and Pluralism* cit., pp. 20-23.

*The Hedgehog and the Fox* was above all an elegant exercise of history of ideas, where one can already identify the core elements of the dichotomy monism-pluralism. The title referred to a fragment attributed to the ancient poet Archilocus, according to whom "a fox knows many things but a hedgehog one important thing". It was an essay basically dedicated to the human and intellectual figure of Lev Tolstoy, and above all an in-depth analysis of what Berlin thought was the most intimate spiritual and mental conflict characterizing Tolstoy, namely the Russian writer's being torn between his effort to see the world through an all-embracing view and his writings where reality and people were portrayed in their infinite variety and plurality. In Tolstoy Berlin saw a "hedgehog" and a "fox". To Berlin, a "hedgehog" was that kind of person who sought an universally valid truth, capable of explaining reality and all of its aspects, aiming at finding out the ultimate sense of everything. Instead, a "fox" was that kind of figure who refused to reduce the awesome variety of reality to one single and univocal explanatory model[10].

Starting from this premise, Berlin was able to portray the figure of Tolstoy in his complexity and nuances. To the author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* the British philosopher recognized the fundamental, undeniable ability to reconstruct and brilliantly describe his time, his society and single personalities with a great sense of psychological and human penetration, grasping their singularity and "multiplicity", but, at the same time, Berlin stressed how profoundly the Russian artist believed in the existence of a "law" determining the "whole"[11]:

> *Tolstoy's central thesis [...] is that there is a natural law whereby the lives of human beings no less than that of nature are determined; but those me, unable to face this inexorable process, seek to represent it as a succession of free choices, to fix responsibilities for what occurs upon persons endowed by them with heroic virtues or heroic vices, and called them "great men"[12].*

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[10]  I. BERLIN, *The Hedgehog and the Fox. An Essay on Lev Tolstoy's View of History*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953, now available online at: http://uniteyyouthdublin.files.wordpress.com p. 437. From now on, I will refer to the online version. Berlin writes: "For there exists a great chasm between those, on one side, who relate everything to a single central vision, one system, less or more coherent or articulate, in terms of which they understand, think and feel [...] and, on the other side, those who pursue many ends [...] their thought is scattered or diffused, moving on many levels, seizing upon the essence of a vast variety of experiences and objects for what they are in themselves, without [....] seeking to fit them all into [...] a unitary inner vision". Ivi, pp. 436-437.

[11]  Ivi, p. 466.

[12]  Ibid.

And Tolstoy believed in this because, as Berlin argued:

> *He advocated a single embracing vision; he preached not variety but simplicity, not many levels of consciousness but reduction to some single level […] Tolstoy's genius lies in a capacity for marvellously accurate reproduction of the irreproducible […] But then, this same writer pleads for, indeed preaches with a great fury, particularly in his last, religious phase, the exact opposite: the necessity of expelling everything that does not submit to some very general, very simple standard[13].*

By reading Berlin's essay one can immediately realize two relevant things: first of all the fact that Berlin introduces, interprets and uses the metaphor of the "hedgehog" and the "fox" to identify the chasm between those professing a monistic vision and those embracing the pluralist one. Also, one can see how Berlin's personal sympathies are all for those who think like a "fox" and, in this specific case, for the "fox" inside Tolstoy who is interestingly portrayed like "a fox who drove himself mad by trying to be a hedgehog"[14].

A few years later, In a *Marvellous Decade* (1955), in my opinion, Berlin continued to reflect on monism and pluralism, by approaching the group of intellectuals and writers who emerged in Russia in the mid nineteenth century. Among them Berlin paid particular attention to the personage of Alexander Herzen. Berlin describes Herzen as the father of Russian populist socialism but most importantly he gives us a precious insight into Herzen's human and intellectual personality. The Russian revolutionary is depicted in his complexity: he advocated a profound transformation in Imperial Russia; he defended the importance of individual liberty, he was coherently averse to the tsarist regime but, at the same time – despite his revolutionary claims – he was also scared, according to Berlin, of the potentially tragic consequences on single human lives a revolutionary, violent, radical overthrow of the Russian authoritarian system could have had. Berlin seems to be intellectually and emotionally attracted by Herzen's sincere concern about the tragic effects of any attempt at radically changing a society in the name of an ideal. In these pages, Berlin recognizes to Herzen a "sense of reality" that is – in Berlin's opinion – a key component of a pluralist view of reality and human life[15].

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[13]  Ivi, pp. 466-467.

[14]  A. Ryan, *The Making of Modern Liberalism*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2012, p. 406. See: pp. 405-406.

[15]  I. Berlin, *A Marvellous Decade*, "Northcliff Lecture" delivered in 1954, re-issued with the title of *A Remarkable Decade*, in Id., *Russian Thinkers*, ed. by H. Hardy and A. Kelly, New York, Viking Press, 1978, pp. 189-197. See also about: C. Crowder, *Isaiah Berlin. Liberty and Pluralism* cit., p. 32.

Both *The Hedghog and the Fox* and a *Marvellous Decade* allow us to understand a chief element of Berlin's thought, namely his genuine interest in those intellectual figures, writers, thinkers and ideas capable of grasping and describing the complexity and variety of life, the variety of values, ends, goals, perspectives[16].

Nonetheless, this interest should be put within a broader context of reflection that directly regards the relationship between the way one considers reality, human existence, on the one hand, and the capital and moral issue of human liberty and dignity, on the other. In my opinion, this particular aspect powerfully emerges from Berlin's essay on *Historical Inevitability* (1954), I want to particularly focus on because of the critique Berlin moved against determinism. By this term, Berlin meant all those philosophies seeking to interpret every single aspect of human life as part of a broader design, of a broader "whole", whose subject - as Berlin argued – could vary: it could be the Church, the Party, the Race etc[17]:

> *To find the the explanation of why given individual, or groups of them, act or think or feel in one way rather than another; one must first seek to understand the structure, the state of development and the direction of such "wholes", as for example, the social, political, religious institutions to which such individuals belong; one that is known the behaviour of the individuals […] should become most logically deducible[18].*

In Berlin's view, along with this kind of determinism a second one does exist and, in his opinion, it is much more refined and intellectually elegant. It corresponds to those philosophies, theories, ideologies identifying universally valid, objective, scientific "laws" supposed to regulate and determine human reality and history. This kind of determinism, whose cultural roots Berlin traces back to modern scientism and Enlightenment rationalism, would be based on the assumption that society, politics, human life follow universally valid and comprehensible "laws" that can be identified in the same way a scientist identifies the laws of nature:

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[16]  Another important Berlin's work characterized by this kind of reflection is Id., *John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life*, "Robert Waley Cohen Memorial Lecture" delivered in 1959 at the Council of Christians and Jews (London), re-issued in Id., *Four Essays on Liberty* cit.

[17]  I. Berlin, *Historical Inevitability*, "Auguste Comte Memorial Trust", Lecture n. 1 delivered on 12 May 1953 at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, London, New York, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1954, p. 5 ss.

[18]  Ivi, p. 25.

*If Newton was able in principle to explain every moment of every particular constituent of physical nature in terms of a small number of laws of great generality, is it not reasonable to suppose that psychological events […] could be explained by the use of similar methods? […] If this is (as surely it is) the theoretical ideal of such sciences as psychology, sociology, anthropology, historical explanations will, if they are successful, simply consist in the application of the laws of the sciences to specific individual situations. […] The inevitability of historical processes, of trends, of "rises" and "falls", is merely de facto for those who believe that the universe obeys only "natural laws" which make it what it is[19].*

The interesting aspect for me is not so much to evaluate the objectivity (or lack thereof) in Berlin's interpretation of determinism as much as to follow him step by step in his reflection. Both types of determinism shared, according to Berlin, one basic element, namely a particular idea of individual's freedom:

*All one common characteristic of such outlooks is the implication that individual's freedom of choice is ultimately an illusion, that the notion that human beings could have chosen otherwise than they did usually rests upon ignorance of facts[20].*

Berlin's discourse on determinism represents, in my opinion, an aspect of great relevance for two reasons: on the one hand, his definition and critique of determinism reflects once again – even more powerfully than in his previous works – Berlin's intellectual hostility towards omni-explanatory theories, ideologies, philosophies, and on the other the ultimate root of such hostility, i.e. the drastic limitation of individual's freedom that, according to Berlin, inevitably results from those theories assuming to be able to explain the extreme complexity of human life by identifying special "forces", "wholes" or special "laws" (to obey). Being monist seemed to imply for Berlin the acceptance of determinism, being pluralist implied a critical attitude towards it.

If it is clear that Berlin preferred *foxes* to *hedghogs* and this preference passed through a clear critique of determinism(s), one key question arises: in what sense, and to what extent Berlin's reflections just discussed are essential to understand Berlin's liberal view and his idea of liberty?

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[19]  Ivi, p. 19.
[20]  Ivi, p. 20.

## 11.3 Two concepts of Liberty: against monism

A response to this question emerges from Berlin's most popular writing, his *Two concepts of liberty* (1958)[21], in which he identified a *positive* and a *negative* liberty. We will see how Berlin's interpretation and definition of positive and negative liberty recalls – in part – his previous works. My purpose is to focus on the first type of liberty identified by the English philosopher, because it allows us to better comprehend the significance of monism.

Negative liberty was, according to the British philosopher, involved in the answer to the following question: "what is the area within which the subject – a person or a group of persons – is or should be left to do or be what he is able to do or be, without interference by other persons?", whereas the second form of liberty was involved in the answer to the question of "what, or who, is the source of control or interference that can determine someone to do, or be, this rather than that?"[22].

The definition of negative liberty was clearly influenced by the intellectual lesson of Mill, Constant, Tocqueville whom Berlin openly referred to. Negative liberty essentially meant "being free from interference".[23] Positive liberty coincided with individual's ability to be master of his/her own. Negative and positive liberty apparently seemed to encompass a very similar idea of being free. Instead – as Berlin stresses – they were profoundly different, because, in his opinion, they answered two radically different philosophical (and moral) questions:

> The answer to the question "who governs me" is logically distinct from the question "How far does government interfere with me? It is in this difference that the great contrast between the two concepts of negative and positive liberty, in the end, consists. For the "positive" sense of liberty comes to light if we try to answer the question, not "What am I free to do or be?", but "by whom am I ruled?". [….] The desire to be governed by myself, or at any rate to participate in the process by which my life is to

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[21] The title refers to the inaugural lecture Berlin delivered at the University of Oxford on 31 October 1958, after accepting one year earlier the prestigious Chair of Social and Political Theory in the same University. The lecture appears in *Four Essays on Liberty* – the collection of a series Berlin's writings – in 1969. Recently, *Two Concepts of Liberty* was re-issued in Id., *Liberty* cit. As stated at the beginning of this essay, I will refer to the online version of Berlin's writing, available at available at: www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de.

[22] Ivi, p. 2.

[23] Ibid.

*be controlled, may be as deep a wish as that for a free area of action, and perhaps*
*historically older. But it is not the desire for the same thing[24].*

I want to focus my attention on the positive significance of liberty and more
precisely on the capital implications (philosophical and political) the question
"by whom am I ruled?" had in Berlin's opinion.

  If being free in the positive sense of the word means to govern myself,
how – Berlin wonders – can an individual carry out a perfect positive liberty,
neutralizing the impact of external factors (from laws of nature to activities of
other men)? In his essay Berlin identifies two responses: on the one hand, the
first option could be "the retreat in the inner citadel", that means the refusal
of external world, by training oneself to avoid any form of desire, expectation,
ambition[25]. On the other hand, the second option – philosophically more
relevant to Berlin – implied the perfect identification between "being free"
and "being autonomous":

*[According to the positive sense of liberty] I identify myself with the controller and*
*escape the slavery of the controlled. I am free because, and in so far as, I am autonomous*
*I obey laws I have imposed them on, or found them in, my uncoerced self [26].*

In Berlin's opinion, both Kant and Rousseau seemed to embrace this particular
kind of liberty. More precisely, Kant – Berlin writes – tended to identify an
individual's freedom, namely an individual's autonomy, with an individual's
ability to govern oneself by reason[27]. In this sense, in Berlin's interpretation
of Kant, the "Rational Myself" - that basically meant "True Myself" - had to
prevail over the "Irrational one" – that basically meant "False Myself", and by
doing so the "Rational Myself" had to coerce the "Irrational Myself" because,
from this perspective, "the only true method of attaining freedom […] is by
the use of critical reason, the understanding of what is necessary and what is
contingent"[28].

  Berlin observed that the contrast between "Rational/True Myself" and
"Irrational/False Myself" seeped into Romanticism that, according to him,
ended up identifying the "Rational/True Myself" with the "Will" capable

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[24]  Ivi, pp. 7-8.
[25]  Ivi, p. 10.
[26]  Ivi, p. 15.
[27]  Ivi, pp. 16-17.
[28]  Ivi, p. 18.

of creating, changing every aspect of life, as long as G. W. Fichte – as a representative of German Romanticism – went as far to identify this "Will" with the "Will of the Nation" capable of submitting single, individual wills in the name of a superior ideal[29].

Once delineated Berlin's idea of positive liberty, what is really interesting to me is to follow the conceptual trajectory the English philosopher was tracing in his essay of 1958: *what happens – Berlin wonders – whether the philosophical idea of positive liberty is applied to political reality? What kind of consequences could it generate?* If we replace the "Rational/True MySelf" with a Charismatic Leader, a Vision supposed to be the Absolute Truth, with the Leading Party, with a Church, or more simply with a Commonwealth the immediate consequence – as Berlin argues – is the inevitable imposition of this supposed Rational and therefore Just, True, Perfect Subject to the whole community, to the single individuals, who – by obeying this Subject – will become perfectly free because by doing so they will behave according to principles of Rationality[30].

> *Liberty, so far from being incompatible with authority, becomes virtually identical with it. This is the thought and language of all declarations of the rights of men in the eighteenth century, and of all those who look upon society as design constructed according to rational laws of the wise lawgiver, or of nature, or of history, or of the Supreme Being[31].*

Berlin thought that we can directly or indirectly find this kind of assumption in many prominent thinkers of European political tradition: Spinoza, Rousseau, Kant and in some respects even Locke and Montesquieu. In all of them Berlin identified one basic idea, that freedom does not mean "to do what is stupid or irrational", but rather to behave according to rational principles and, in his opinion, all these thinkers basically tended to associate these rational principles with laws[32].

Berlin emphasized the dangers implied in the identification of autonomy with authority, liberty with law. Following this reasoning, what happens then – Berlin wonders – if someone rebels against the law and authority, what happens if someone, led by irrationality, passions, instinct, refuses this kind of liberty?

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[29] Ivi, p. 20 ss.
[30] Ivi, p. 18 ss.
[31] Ivi, p. 18.
[32] Ivi, pp. 17-18.

In an ideal society, Berlin argues, these individuals should be coerced, that means, they should be "forced" to be free because the only way they have to be free is to obey the law. Berlin correctly insists on one important point: the idea that being free basically means to obey the laws of reason and the identification between the laws of reason and a specific political system inevitably encompass a powerful threat to individual freedom and rights because in the name of Reason (or any other ideal supposed as universally valid and rational) a political regime, a single Leader, a Party can justify any form of coercion. It is no coincidence that Berlin quotes Fichte who said: "no one has…rights against reason"[33].

It is quite clear that Berlin's definition of positive liberty and the dangers it might imply was a critique of every form of political ideology or regime that, in the name of a superior ideal, or in the name – like in this case – of the "true" idea of freedom commit abuses of power. But I think that Berlin's reflection on the meaning of positive liberty – along with his attack against determinism(s) – is also an integrative part of his discourse on monism and pluralism. Berlin did not want to say that the only "good" or "just" form of liberty was negative liberty in contraposition to the positive, or worse that obeying laws was something unjust. He rather wanted to stress that the positive concept of liberty had a strong monistic connotation: behind the idea of positive liberty he believed to recognize that *forma mentis*, typical of monism – and I would add typical of determinism – according to which there must be one single principle, one single theory, one single element capable of explaining everything, capable of giving a reason to everything, capable of showing us the intrinsic harmony of reality. A kind of *forma mentis* characterizing, as I have tried to show earlier, the different forms of determinism as well as all those intellectuals, thinkers who could be defined as "*hedgehogs*".

The positive idea of liberty seems to have a monistic connotation and this is why, according to Berlin, it could potentially nurture and justify the establishing of despotic regimes. Yet, one fundamental question remains to be clarified about Berlin's idea of monism (in contraposition to pluralism), i.e. trying to understand the profound philosophical and moral root of monism. It is Berlin who clearly explains this important aspect in his essay: in his opinion, monism and more precisely all those monistic political systems professing the existence of one single universally valid and just Belief, ready to sacrifice "individuals on the altars of the great historical ideals", are fundamentally based on the idea that "all the positive values in

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[33] Ivi, pp. 19-20.

which men have believed must, in the end, be compatible, and perhaps even entail one another"[34].

In these pages, Berlin declares once again and even with more force to be against those philosophies, ideologies and political systems believing and seeking to reach a supposed "final harmony in which all riddles are solved, all contradictions are reconciled"[35]. Against those armed with unshakable faith in a "total harmony of true values", Berlin advocates the power of "empirical observation and ordinary human knowledge"[36].

In doing so, Berlin seems to embrace and maintain the British philosophical tradition, skeptical and reluctant towards excessively abstract and omni-explanatory theories:

> *The world that we encounter in ordinary experience is one in which we are faced with choices between ends equally ultimate, and claims equally absolute, the realisation of some of which must inevitably involve the sacrifice of others. Indeed, it is because this their situation that men place such immense value upon the freedom to choose; for if they had assurance that in some perfect state, realisable by men on earth, no end pursued by them would ever be in conflict, the necessity and agony of choice would disappear, and with it the central importance of the freedom to choose[37].*

In my opinion, in this passage we can fully grasp the ultimate bond between Berlin's critique of monism and his liberal attitude. He is critical towards monism and he is a thinker of liberal inspiration because he fundamentally sees in monistic theories, philosophies, ideologies the refusal of that immense pluralism of ends and values representing – in his opinion – one of the conditions to the "freedom to choose". This liberal heart of Berlin's thought emerges even better and more powerfully from the reflections he dedicates to pluralism in contraposition to monism. Berlin declares his philosophical (and moral) preference for pluralism. At the beginning of this essay I wrote that pluralism, according to the English philosopher, is that view recognizing the variety and complexity of reality and the human condition, so diversified and complex they can not be reduced to one single standard. But just because it means all these things, pluralism, in Berlin's opinion, will tend to accept freedom to choose and it does it because, unlike

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[34]  Ivi, pp. 29-30.
[35]  Ivi, p. 30.
[36]  Ivi, p. 29.
[37]  Ivi, pp. 29-30.

monism, it recognizes more than one single end, more than one single value supposed as universally true:

> *Pluralism, with the measure of "negative" liberty that it entails seems to me a truer and more humane ideal than the goals of those who seek in the great disciplined, authoritarian structures the ideal of "positive" self-mastery but classes, or peoples, or the whole of mankind. It is truer, because it does, at least, recognize the fact that human goals are many, not all of them commensurable, and in perpetual rivalry with one another. [...] It is more humane because it does not (as the system-builders do) deprive men, in the name of some remote, or incoherent, ideal, of much that they have found to be indispensable to their life as unpredictably self-transforming human beings[38].*

In this passage Berlin defends pluralism in opposition to monism – as a "more humane ideal" because it recognizes individual's freedom that, for Berlin, means individual's dignity. When writing about "system-builders" depriving "men in the name of some remote ideal" – it seems to me – Berlin is referring not only or simply to tyrannical systems but more precisely to the twentieth century totalitarian regimes with their ambition of creating a new Race, a new Mankind, Justice and Equality on earth. Behind Berlin's discourse on monism and pluralism there is the persistent shadow of totalitarianism and in many respects we could interpret Berlin's reflection on monism as an attempt at finding the philosophical, ideological and moral roots of the totalitarian tragedy[39].

However, even from this perspective one element clearly emerges from our analysis, namely Berlin's refusal of any "dogmatic certainty", and his idea that reality is too complex, diversified, characterized by too many different and equally absolute ends to be philosophically explained and politically governed by a monistic credo, faith, ideology. In Berlin, accepting and internalizing this complexity means to defend individual's ability and right to choose – regardless with the content of the choice – because just this "necessity of choosing" that gives "its value to freedom"[40].

But, in Berlin's opinion, this "necessity of choosing" does concretely exist and can be preserved only within a (political) space granting individual freedom, rights, recognizing the ultimate value pluralism, paradoxically including the

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[38] Ivi, p. 31.
[39]  C. Aarsbergen-Ligtvoet, *Isaiah Berlin. A Value Pluralist and Humanist, View of Human Nature and the Meaning of Life*, Amsterdam-New York, Editions Rodopi B.V, 2006, pp. 27 ss.
[40]  I. Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty* cit., p. 31.

risks such pluralism might cause. In other words, Berlin's refusal of monism seems to be indissolubly interconnected with anti-dogmatism that, in my opinion, represents one of the core elements of his being a liberal intellectual. Against any form of monism, against any form of "dogma", Berlin opposed the infinite complexity and variety of reality, the idea of freedom to choose, pluralism of values and goals. If we look at our world, Berlin's lesson seems to be still extraordinarily current and evocative.

# MONISMS AND PLURALISMS
# IN THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT:
## SOME (NOT CONCLUSIVE) REMARKS
### Sara Lagi

The essays collected have shown us how nuanced and highly articulated the dichotomy between monism and pluralism can be, especially if analysed and discussed – as we have actually done – through the lens of the History of Political Thought.

In the *Preface* we commenced by declaring the *ratio* of our work and more precisely the reasons why several scholars of the History of Political Thought had gathered together to reflect, discuss and write on the meaning of monisms and pluralisms. Far from being moved by a mere attraction for "erudition", this research group devoted a particular attention to how and to what extent the often oversimplified monism/pluralism dichotomy – interpreted according to a specific methodological approach – could tell us something not only about how specifically several authors and thinkers of the past time considered and defined monisms or pluralisms, but most importantly what, only through these authors and their political reflections, we can "learn" and grasp about relevant political issues. It is relevant to all of us, living in the twenty-first century within a historical and political context, which poses complex challenges.

We think that there are two core, relevant – as we were just saying – *thematic directions* emerging from the essays collected here: the nature of power and the

nature of the moral and ethical sphere; both intimately interconnected. All the essays seem to share one fundamental basic question: *can political unity exist and how?* We will seek to show, by following the aforementioned thematic lines, how the essays collected here have tried to reflect on this capital question.

In his *The Achaean of Homer and those of Hobbes: from a Pluralistic Monism to Absolutism*, Andrea Catanzaro proposes a comparison, between the Achaeans described in the Homeric text and those of Hobbes' s translation of the Homeric poems, through an in depth analysis of the linguistic dimension of the text. In doing so, the author is able to emphasize the political and ideological dimension of the Hobbesian translation and most importantly how behind them there is a concrete and tangible will (political) to transform the *pluralist monism* characterizing the "political structure" of the Achaean army into a true absolutist political vision. If in Homer, Agamemnon holds "a monocratic power", although not "completely absolute", in Hobbes's translation Agamemnon becomes "as similar as possible to the sovereign […] described in the *Leviathan*". In this sense, Hobbes continues to theorize and profess the monistic and absolutist view of sovereign power by modifying the lines of the Homeric poem which do not fit into his particular idea of sovereignity: "in my opinion – Catanzaro argues – the passage from the Homeric pluralistic monism to a more absolutist vision is one of the most remarkable pieces of evidence that Hobbes really wants to use the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as a «continuation of *Leviathan* by other means»[1].

From Catanzaro's essay, monism and absolutism emerge as the key-terms and the key-concepts to analyze Hobbes' political thought and his conception of the ultimate nature of political power. In some respects – even though within a different historical, political and cultural context – the French philosopher Nicolas Boulanger, who lived in the early 18th century, analysed by Iolanda Richichi in her *Nicolas Boulanger's Portrait of "Irrational Monism" in Postdiluvian Humanity*, reflected on the origin and meaning of a specific political model, "theocracy" and more precisely "civil theocracy". As Richichi stresses, Boulanger rejects theocracy because he sees in religion "the only responsible of all evil". According to the French Philosopher, the theocratic political model has a profoundly monistic connotation; a monistic connotation he directly relates to a form of "despotism" in the sense that "theocracy was a universal, primitive and absolutely negative model" and Boulanger's aim "was to demonstrate that the despotic regimes of the East […] were the

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[1] For the internal quotation cf. E. Nelson, *Translations of Homer. Iliad*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. XXII.

consequence of the existence of a primitive theocracy at the origins of humanity" rather than – as explained by Montesquieu – the consequence of "la volonté momentanée et capricieuse d'un seul".

Andrea Catanzaro's and Iolanda Richichi's essays provide us with examples of figures who seem to be focused on the *monistic* side of power, although the two thinkers undoubtedly decline this aspect in different ways, living within different historical backgrounds and responding to different political problems. On the one hand we have Hobbesian absolutism as a way to think and justify a stable, unitary, strong kind of political power, on the other hand we have a 18$^{th}$ century French philosopher whose critique of theocracy should be situated within a broader political and philosophical discourse on secularization.

Nonetheless, notably in the case of Hobbes and Boulanger, we are basically dealing with thinkers who reflect on sovereignty, political power and political unity. A substantially identical kind of problem emerges from Alberico Gentili's and Romano Guardini's intellectual and scholarly work, respectively analysed in David Suin's essay *Religious Pluralism and International Community: Alberico Gentili's Contribution* and Carlo Morganti's essay *Plurality and Decision. State and Society in Romano Guardini*. Yet, as we can observe, both Alberico Gentili's and Romano Guardini's reflection on political power seem to entail a series of relevant *pluralist* elements.

Historically speaking, Gentili and Guardini belong to different periods and are influenced by different political and cultural situations: Alberico Gentili was a sixteenth century jurist and academic lawyer reflecting on the development of a modern international political system based on the emergence of modern states. He comes to terms with a growing pluralist international system whose development runs parallel to the fragmentation of Christianity due to the Reformation. To Gentili, the latter and chiefly the Catholic reaction represent a source of a powerful pluralism, which might – and actually did – lead to struggles and bloody contrasts threatening any form of political unity. As a response to this, Gentili thinks that it is essential to separate politics from religion in order to "preserve State stability and unity" and, at the same time, it is vital to respect "religious pluralism" as a means to support the "community's political and juridical organization".

A substantial and continuous tension between monism and pluralism as a hallmark of political power, chiefly in times of crisis and radical changes, characterizes the German philosopher and Catholic theologian Romano Guardini's political work. His political profile is linked to the Weimar Republic, namely to a time of profound social, ideological and political divisions. We

could be tempted to labeling Guardini's political thought as monistic because of the central role the state plays in his writings. It is by means of the state that – in his opinion – "a community develops politically and historically". Guardini's core idea of the state as "God's representative in worldly things" might be considered as even more monistic, so far to establish and justify a potentially "authoritarian" political view. But, as Morganti argues, Guardini actually tries to find a balance between monism and pluralism in the search of a more human, peaceful and renewed political order: a democratic order which is monistic (the state) while being based on pluralism of persons with their ideas, interests, peculiarities, who are able to cooperate with one another, far from being mere "atoms". Re-establishing a just and stable political order means finding a compromise, a balance between the request for unity (political system) and pluralism (society).

The problem of political unity is effectively crucial to the political thinker and political activist Michel 'Aflaq. The founding father of the Ba'th party, analysed by Carlotta Stegagno in her essay *Political and Religious Monism in Michel 'Aflaq's Political Thought*, promotes a well-defined ideology based on "socialism, nationalism and unity". Unity – in particular – seems to be "the starting point and the final goal in Michel 'Aflaq's nationalism […] For 'Aflaq – Stegagno writes –  nationalism is an all-embracing feeling, it is open to anyone who shared with the Arab peoples their history, language and culture, it is […] centered around the idea of unity", and more precisely with the idea of "Arab unity". Stegagno identifies the more pluralist elements characterizing 'Aflaq's political theory, whereas she highlights how his political discourse remains essentially monistic. In fact, 'Aflaq's monism ends up to coincide and embrace noble values of emancipation, liberation, dignity for the Arab peoples: "Aflaq traced the outline of the Arab mission i.e. the Arab people's awakening and renewal after decades of political fragmentation, exploitation and moral debasement".

If unity and monism represent the key-words to describe Michel 'Aflaq's political project, pluralism and pluralist – although within certain, specific limits we are going to mention –  are central both to Federica Falchi's contribution on *Frances Wright. Liberty as a Founding Principle of Republican America* and to Stefano Parodi's essay on *Beyond Politics: Organizational Pluralism and Technocratic Monism in the Functionalist Proposal of David Mitrany*.

Falchi introduces us to the figure of the Scottish political thinker Frances Wright whose voyage  across the Atlantic Ocean – which took place in 1818, many years before Alexis de Tocqueville – turns into a unique opportunity

to explore and investigate the American republican spirit. Wright tends to emphasize the central role played by liberty in the development and aftermath of the American Republic. Liberty which – as Federica Falchi clearly stresses – is, according to Wright, the source and the consequence of a truly pluralist political and social system: "Frances Wright – Falchi writes – sensed the presence of liberty, the essence of pluralism, not just in a theoretical dimension, as was the case in Great Britain, but on a practical level as well. It was perceptible in all sectors of society, in political and social institutions, to the extent that there was no distinct barriers separating the governed from the governors, nor conditions of oppression and domination, but rather a balance borne of a common consensus". Moving ideally from the early nineteenth century to the second post war period, we "encounter" another interesting personage coming to terms with the problem of pluralism and its political implications: the Rumanian David Mitrany.

During the 1940s, Mitrany, Economist at the London School of Economics, thinks about how to reform and pacify the post WWII international order by elaborating a "functionalist theory" based on a "total mistrust towards ideologies and politics" and concretely consisting in the establishment of "specific organizations for specific functions". Behind this project there is the idea that these "functions" have to be carried out by "ad hoc institutions" ("Authorities"), namely a body of international executives who have to work in "selected fields of common life" without any actual political legitimacy. Mitrany seeks to imagine a new pluralist international system which can overstep the traditional bond between sovereignty and territorial divisions, even if, according to Parodi, just this pluralist system potentially entails a monistic side because it seems to be "characterized by a sort of «exclusive thought»: if the political dimension is the «evil», the main cause of wars, the «technical» dimension is the kingdom of the «good»"". Mitrany believes in a solution – the creation of a functionalist international organization – capable of restoring a "total harmony".

Parodi's essay ideally creates a kind of "bridge" between the two sections of this work, corresponding – as aforementioned – to two specific thematic lines. In the authors discussed so far – and despite belonging to different historical contexts – the dichotomy monism-pluralism is essentially related to the dimension of political power and to the establishing or re-founding of political order, chiefly in times of crisis and changes. The second section of essays we want to briefly discuss highlights the more moral, ethical and even epistemological aspect of such dichotomy; an aspect which remains profoundly

intertwined with the problem of political power, and more precisely with the problem of how to reach and preserve political unity.

Giuseppe Sciara's essay on *Benjamin Constant the "Fox" and the Ideal of Freedom between Politics, History and Religion*, defines the Swiss thinker's liberalism as a political view based upon the idea of the intrinsically limited nature of political power in the name of a supposed "sacred" sphere of individual liberties. After observing that Constant's idea of liberalism might paradoxically sound univocal, not to speak of monistic, the author seeks instead to prove how profoundly pluralist Constant's liberalism actually is. By a critical approach to the Enlightenment heritage, to Utilitarian and Kantian views of morality and moral life, the Swiss thinker re-discovers the importance of the individual's inner life, the complexity of moral life elaborating a reflection (political, moral and philosophical) which is liberal because it is pluralist and it is pluralist because it refuses absolute truths: "For Constant […] an ethics valid for all does not exist, neither does one single system of vales, nor does one single lifestyle that everyone has to follow, and happiness cannot have the same meaning for all".

Although conscious of the particular and historically defined background Constant belonged to, the passage just quoted could be applied in many respects to two prominent twentieth century thinkers: Eric Voegelin and Isaiah Berlin. The Americanized political Scientist and the British philosopher seem to share a basic mistrust towards one single, universally valid political or moral model to be applied. Influenced by the tragedy of totalitarianism, both tried to come to terms with the intellectual and political challenges posed by the post-WWII period. Eric Voegelin, portrayed by Nicoletta Stradaioli in her *Monism and Pluralism: Eric Voegelin's Contribution*, focuses his attention on the problem of the State and society, whereas Isaiah Berlin, introduced by Sara Lagi in her *Sir Isaiah Berlin: Against Monism (1953-1958)*, is particularly fascinated by the problem of liberty both in political and ethical terms. Yet, both thinkers pose themselves (and all of us) substantially the same kind of problem: the tragedy of the 20th century, marked by totalitarianism, barbarian ideologies, the Holocaust, could be considered in part as the extreme result of a society nurtured – and distorted – by the poisoning "fruits" of a certain type of scientific rationalism and determinism, by the conviction to find a common solution to all problems, to create a perfect, radically new political order. Both Voegelin and Berlin seem to share the idea that totalitarian systems essentially stem from the will to create political unity eradicating any form of pluralism.

If it is true that Voegelin, as Stradaioli argues, identifies in part the roots

of such conviction in the widespread gnosticism of the twentieth century liberal society – whereas this kind of argumentation is absent in Berlin's work – it is also true that both thinkers speak about "totalitarian monism" which is above all and first of all a philosophical, moral, epistemological vision refusing the complexity and plurality of human and moral existence even before being a concrete and historically determined political system. As Stradaioli writes about Voegelin's political thought: "monism is intended [by Voegelin] as a model of science desirous to build with mathematical certainty the right political order. A unique and definitive reality that distorts reality itself ends up producing ideological deformations, which find their maximum expression in […] totalitarianism". It is interesting to observe how a thinker – who is historically and culturally distant from Berlin and Voegelin – a nineteenth century Persian philosopher Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani, influenced by Descartes, Voltaire, Rousseau and portrayed by Pejman Abdolmahammadi in his *Polytheism vs. Monotheism: some ideas regarding the pastoral form of power*, seems to share just with the British philosopher and the American political scientist the same profound mistrust toward any form of monism. He criticizes the monistic nature of religious faith and more precisely the dangerous "myth of liberation", according to which: "the need of being guided might be confused with the need of being served or liberated by a heroic figure, who will one day come to save the people from injustice and despotism. In such context [...] the believer might prefer to delegate the individual power to a divine representative who could be a member of one's church or mosque". But this kind of "delegation" might lead – in Kermani's view – to a "despotic rule". Against a "pastoral" way of thinking, characterized by a monistic connotation, Kermani advocates the critical use of reason.

Although the authors, thoughts, political projects proposed and discussed so far are objectively diversified – in terms of content and in terms of historical, political and cultural backgrounds taken into account – an attempt to critically reflect on all of them allows us to identify some capital aspects. Generally speaking, monism seems to refer to the key problem of sovereignty and political unity; at the same time we can observe that the political and philosophical question of how and to what extent political unity can be established or restored – and therefore the search of a monistic order in the sense of a unitary and stable political system – does not necessarily imply the elimination of any form of pluralism. In this sense, the complex connection between monistic and pluralist elements is declined and interpreted in different ways according to the author and the historical-cultural context considered:

we pass from thinkers such as Hobbes theorizing and justifying absolutism to Boulanger who identifies monism as one of the hallmarks of a regime he rejects, i.e. "civil theocracy"; from Guardini's monism which seems to be open to pluralist instances to 'Aflaq's revolutionary and emancipatory monism aiming at the "awakening" of the Arab people. We pass from Mitrany's institutional pluralism which is conceptually situated within a theoretical and philosophical framework having a monistic connotation, to Voegelin who re-thinks the foundations of political community in terms of political unity and society's pluralism, while rejecting single omni-explanatory models and political solutions.

At the same time, the particular perspective characterizing these essays – the perspective of the History of Political Thought – allows to see how concretely the different ways to elaborate and decline monistic *or* pluralist theories as well as monistic *and* pluralist theories are basically conditioned and influenced by concrete and historically determined contexts. It is the relationship between political theories, projects and proposal, on the one hand, and historical dimension, on the other hand which show us the impossibility to reduce monism and pluralism to univocal definitions and therefore the importance of recognizing the historical existence of diversified *monisms* as well as diversified *pluralisms*.

Moreover, if we tried to ideally "match" all these aspects, we could finally observe that not always and not necessarily the different kinds of monism signify something intrinsically negative or that monisms and pluralisms inevitably and necessarily belong to two totally separate dimensions. This is obviously not a conclusion, as we said, but – we hope – a first path towards a further elaboration on the meaning and the implications of monisms and pluralisms.

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