

Stelian MANOLACHE
Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxă, Constanța
Universitatea Ovidius, Constanța

POSTMODERNITY AND
GLOBALIZATION IN THE
CONTEMPORARY WORLD
- BRIEF THEOLOGICAL
CONSIDERATIONS ON HUMANS
AND RELIGION -

Review
Article

Keywords

Globalization,
Globality,
Postmodernity,
Pseudo-spirituality,
Utopia of horror,
Perverted triad,
Eschatological perspective

Abstract

Nowadays-world is under the sign of the triadic concept of globality, globalization and postmodernity. While the first concept refers to an entire system of socio-political and ethical-theoretical relations, which, in their dynamism, lead to the appearance of new knowledge, globalization is the practical phenomenon of manifestation of the relations inside the globality, aiming for the economic and utilitarian domain. The domain of the practical globalization is moved by the mechanism of the new informatics technological revolutions, stimulating the production and the consumption, by cohabitating in its civilizational demarche, questioning all the former historical stages, through the encouragement of the perfidious triad of Profit, Consumption and Entertainment a show. In this context, the world tends to shape as a global universal village (Marshall McLuhan), continuously celebrating, in a climate of moral and metaphysical incertitude, with a flatten and flattening consciousness, not interested, even abandoning, in the spiritual values, proposing and launching in the first rows only the utilitarian-values (Dumitru Popescu, 2005). We discuss in the present study this real utopia of horrors (Joseph Ratzinger, 2005), with continuously moving ideas, where the most radical and profound mutation is on the ontological level, the man and the religion being reduced in a nihilist manner to the stage of object merchandise value.

PRELIMINARIES

In the above presented context, we may say that globalization intends to be a supra-culture, starting from a new economic and social support, specific to the virtual postmodern pseudo-spirituality; a life sunk into the immanence, longing for the *possibility to state a transcendent principle as credible as possible (H-R Patapievici 2001)*, bursts in solidary searching of the divinity – dramatically acts at least from the appearance of theological improvisations. At least from this point of view, globalisation and postmodernity are somehow interdependent, influencing empowering each other, appropriating the determinant values and marking lines – individualism, pragmatism, utilitarianism and the refuse of the dogma – often used in practice together. The accelerated course toward globality assumed by the contemporary post-industrial society – aiming for a *global unicity*, supported by political, juridical and ethical values (Roland Robertson), boosts the expansion of the postmodern spirituality, through the attempt to suppress the particular identities in order to put them under the reign of a *simplistic uniformity*, as base for a *global human condition*, whose phenomenological complexity is indubitable (John Tomilson, 2002). The man and religion are in the centre of the multiple interferences between globalization and postmodernity; the man appears with his desire for transcendent and his inclination – rational and sentimental in the same time – for religion and religiosity, for the Real God preached by God-Human Jesus Christ, the Apostles and the Holy Fathers. Through their multiple influencing factors – as techno-information, the cyber space of the techno-finances, the commerce and the entertainment – the globalisation and the postmodernity will put the *recent man* (H.-R. Patapievici, 2001) under a systematic pressure, imposing him conditions meant to lead him away from his real vocation – believing in the Trinitarian God of the Church and of the perfection of the human, the face of the Face of God in History – by the embezzlement, the practice and the reductionist attachment to the utilitarian and hedonist values from the fields of entertainment and consume. Appealing through their constitution altering continuously The Face of the Trinitarian God in History, modernity and postmodernity, *even if they tried, did not manage to suppress the need for believing in God and generated the search, the agitation and the unilateral effort of the human who, although contested the Truth of the Gospel and of the Holy Tradition, deflecting them from their traditional eschatological course (Matei Călinescu, 2005)*, is longing for the dialogue with the Divinity revealed in Goodness, Truth and

Beauty, all preached by Jesus Christ. The human, more or less religiously desacralized, through his place and destiny, is the subject of our study, whose necessity and opportunity is, in our opinion, obvious.

THE HUMAN CONDITION IN THE GLOBAL WORLD

From the perspective of our study, the diagnosis of the globalisation requires the investigation of its impact from economic, social and anthropological point of view, the resulted analytical coordinates being later used to measure the effects of the manner the human being assumes and relates to the values of the religious belief.

a). the economy is, without a doubt, the last reason of the course to globalization. Still, we are not talking simply of the economy – because the industrial revolution expressed itself at least for a century inside the western world, not being, obviously, a global phenomenon, we are talking about the *post-industrial sequence* of the economy, which *moves the accent from the energy obtained from coal and oil, the heavy industry, the protectionist politics of the states and the limited markets to the unconventional energy, the technology of information and the global market of the capitals and of the consumption goods*. From a certain perspective, the course to globalization was inevitable, because the preservation of the economic progress/ growth required it. In order to maintain its yearly growing rates – concretised in proportional growth in the individual and general wellbeing, the post-industrial economy needed a *global access to the resources and to a global market*, so its manifestation scale have grown to entice the entire world; if the natural resources were extracted in a country, they were transformed in another country and exported in several other countries. In this dynamic global economic space, transforming the science and the innovation in major factors of production, the post-industrial society will solicit, generalising new competitive relations, new laws, constant from a mathematical point of view, guaranteeing the desired result and becoming the predilection engine of the development, under the sign of the inter-human relations of the post-industrial society. In order to adapt in this world, the man is constrained to permanently and consistent adapt his axiological profile, because globalisation imposes a revision of the values, especially of the religious values, assimilating with predilection those *conform* to the epoch. A world finding its reason of *being and becoming in the quantifying growth of the wellbeing through consumption and entertainment, will operatemostly with economic values 1) related*

to production – efficiency, productivity, mastering the new equipment's and technologies and so on, and 2) *related to the consumption of goods and services*, so the contemporary man is *brought back to the temporal flux of the production and consumption* (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2005). Thus, this axiological placement will not remain without effects and will tend to affect the man, inclusively from an ontological perspective, *by the nihilist reduction of the beings to objects and merchandise and of the life to wellbeing or exchange value* (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2005). Thus, the economic factor – the production of goods and the consumption – will tend to (self) convert through an element of alienating existential manner (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013), through the event-spectacle that confers, by itself, ontological consistence to enslaved man/people, suggesting that they fulfil the best their natural humanity when they *integrate in an efficient production system* (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013). Obviously, the good effects of the globalization may not be contested (Olivier Clement, 1997), neither some *thinking and living styles* (Dumitru Popescu, 2005), changed for the better in the present social evolutions. Still, we come to the situation when, *for the modern man, the economy is more important than the spirituality, the body is more important than the soul, the time is more important than the eternity, the relative is more important than the Absolute and the man is more important than God* (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013); *the pervert triad production, profit, consumption/ spectacle/ communication* puts the man in the situation of being *alone and defenceless against the technical and economic manipulation* (Ioan I. Ică Jr., 2002)

b). from the point of view of the social impact, globalization is contoured as a somehow paradoxical process as long as, simultaneously:

- Coagulates a global economy and market, a cross-border civilisation (Kenichi Ohmae) and a *global culture*, meaning a *homogenous reality, whose cohesion is ensured by systems of communication, information, entertainment and commerce* (Benjamin Barber) (Dumitru Popescu, 2005); from these perspectives, globalisation leaves the impression of a process whose mechanisms – inter-changeability of the values, the relativisation of the identities and the upset of the traditions – tend to level and dilute the distinctiveness and to erase *asperities* of all kinds;
- Generates the *fragmentation of the social in a lot of group particularities, destroying the social cohesion and dissolving the culture* (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2002), affirming itself as ferment for the pulverization of the social structures and of the unitary cultural values of the pre-modern world. In fact, beyond the two apparent antinomial dimension, globalization operates a huge

modification of the traditional social order, the previous cohesion element, some of them consecrated during centuries – as the ethnical and cultural identities, the religious beliefs and the traditional customs – dissolving under the pressure of its course; not even the state entities cannot evade the action of the globalising vector (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2002). Behind this wave, *globalisation builds its own social landscape*, one that stops from the traditional forms of cohabitation and renounces to their binders – the ethnical, linguistic, territorial, religious unity and so on. All these elements of social proximity become obsolete; the social relations are not conditioned anymore by what previously offered them meaning; they, as A. Giddens says, un-encapsulate, because they are not conditioned anymore by the contact/ the physical interaction and of the space and time coordinates (John Tomilson, 2002), coagulating as well in the lack of any proximity. Globalisation will generate new forms of relation, communion and social identity, new social entities – from the already consecrated NGO's to the informal groups of the social networks – with accentuated subjective profiles, distant from any traditional conditioning and immune to their values, the previous referential being substitute by utilitarianism and hedonism. In these circumstances, it is no wonder that the Church will accuse the most the dissolving pressure of the globalising wave, the pseudo-spirituality of the globalisation finding in the sacramental hierarchy and its centralised organisation some inopportune forms of religious expression, considering them tributary to a rigid dogma, exaggerated and belonging to an infertile sacramentality. Once repudiated, the traditional institutional organisation of the Church will be substituted by entities – formal or informal – with a congregational declared vocation, but which, many times are articulated substituting multinational networks, the so-called religious global networks that appropriate at their turn the general values of the global society – efficiency, pragmatism and so on – even if under the slightly adapted form of numerical growing rate of the local communities – the ecclesiological substitute of the economic performance.

c). Cultivating thoroughly the values of the economical-financial pragmatism, the utilitarianism and the hedonism, the globalisation will stay into immanence, as a horizontal phenomenon, without a vertical spiritual dimension, ignoring a series of fundamental components of the existence, as the transcendence, the deliverance, the origins and the eschatological destiny of the humans (Dumitru Popescu, 2001). Obsessed by reaching new higher levels of productivity and efficiency, the globalisation is not interested (Benjamin Barber) in the authentic problems of the human nature; it

refuses the existential profoundness – the aspect that gives to the man meaning and value and separates him from the rest of the material creation, preferring to replace it with the commodity and the mediocrity of a consumption life (Adrian Iemeni, 2003). Globalization is a phenomenon that aims exclusively the immanence of the horizontality, the man renouncing willingly to the vocation of religious being, tending by verticality to God. In these conditions, the man overwhelmed by the wave of the globalisation empties himself by any transcendence (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2002) and loses the meaning of living religiously (Olivier Clement, 1997) ; for this man, the material Universe and its limitative laws – including the death – becomes the infinite and absolute prison – a reclusion space where the reality of the Resurrection is forgotten (Olivier Clement, 1997). The man becomes impersonal, aligning as a good pupil to the commandments of the economic pragmatism, which are exterior and, from a certain point, strange and alienated; the man becomes a simple pawn, dominated by the self, an easily manipulated impersonal component of a uniform globalisation dominated by consumption (Dumitru Popescu, 2005).

A FEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE GLOBALISING POSTMODERNITY

H.-R. Patapievici observes that *the rule of the modernity was the discontinuance with the past* (H.-R. Patapievici, 2001). In other words, the modernity is defined by distancing and/or programmatically repudiating what is previous to it, from the major importance of the industry to the hierarchical institutionalised Church and from the local traditional community to the spiritual ethno-centrism. At its core, the modernity is built around some *invariants*, systemised by Dumitru Popescu as follows (Dumitru Popescu, 2001):

- *the anthropocentrism*; the modern man sees exclusively introspective; the self is the absolute referential, the measure of all things, the etalon of any axiology; the modern man astray God from the world, because He is dead, without any role in the life of the created one; the aim of the modern man – the growth of the prosperity and of the individual wellbeing is different from the aim of the Medieval man – the eschatological deliverance; reaching his aim, the man is counting only on himself, on his own capacities and inner resources, so the entire existence stays under the sign of the autonomy; even the moral – a value perfectly accessible to the human nature – stops its connection with God, *because the man feels autonomous in front of the divinity, considering the will of God only as an attempt against his freedom*; in conclusion, affirming a world with the human

being as centre and aiming exclusively in immanence, the modern man refuses to look up to search for Him and to relate to God, stopping, as consequence to be a real human being – *anthropos*;

- *the abandonment of the spirituality of community type*; an immediate reflex of the man discovering himself through the anthropomorphical references from *Genesis*, the communion – *koinonia* reflects, in the end, the ontological unity of the human race; the modernity reverses completely this approach, because the man, the absolute producer of science, technology and material goods, is capacitated by the desiderate of its own wellbeing and only by the self; the prosperity belongs and is conditioned by the creating individuality, because high qualified work and economical maximum efficiency – in fields as artificial intelligence and bio-technology – do not require physical efforts for imposing a solidary action of the individuals; thus, the modernity produces *a separation between the public and the private field*, a separation that can only be artificial, meant to stimulate the individualism and the indifference towards the fellow beings;

- *the privatization of the religion*; the modernity brings *the elimination of the religion in the social life*, so the practice of the faith does not represent anymore a determinant social landmark, becoming just a strictly private matter, indifferent to the society; implicitly, the modern civilisation will refuse to the religion any role of public utility and any social relevance, because the religion will not be able to influence positively the productivity and efficiency values.

In these circumstances, the inter-war statement of Professor Nicolae Balca to the Congress of the Orthodox Youth in 1936 in Salonica, according to which *the ancient man used to talk to the cosmos; the Medieval used to talk to God and the modern man talk to himself* (Nicolae Balca, 1936) proves its truthfulness over decades, inclusively in post-modernity. Finally, we have to mention that Eric Voegelin sees in modernity *a form of neo-Gnosticism*, because *the modernity is an inversion of the fundamental ontological affirmations of the tradition*, as if a new reverse exegesis – *hermeneutical method specific to gnosis* – turns upside down the fundamental landmarks of an obsolete world. Thus, **1)** related to the Medieval theocentrism, God becomes in modernity an *useless epistemological hypothesis*; **2)** unlike the knowledge based on supernatural revelation, the modern gnoseology gains primary technical-scientific and empirical-experimental consistencies; **3)** also in modernity, the world stops being a hierarchical structure – because the human stopped looking up – aspiring to *uniformisation and homogeneity* and **4)** the human ideals are concentrated in immanence – prosperity and wellbeing – ignoring the eschatological of the

medieval human, as he used to live in the ecclesial space (H.-R. Patapievici, 2001 and I.P. Culianu, 1995).

In this generalizing modernity, the postmodernity, with its values and referential slightly modified/nuanced appears as something sufficiently distinct and particular, even if H.-R. Patapievici considers it nothing more than the infinite pseudomorphosis of modernity (H.-R. Patapievici, 2001). So let's try to follow some considerations on what is specific to postmodernity, especially from a theological perspective:

a) according to Professor Viorel Ioniță, from the point of view of the spiritual and religious values, the postmodernity means first of all (Gheorghe Istodor, 2005):

- *post-Christianity*, as a theological reality expresses a preponderant non-institutional, non-confessional, non-community and egocentric – oriented to individual and not to community - , non-hierarchical – Congregationalist and /or Presbyterian-, non-dogmatic, non-sacramental and non-exclusivist Christianity, accepting and cultivating various forms of pluralism;
- *post-Individualism*, as form of social attitude overcoming the exaggerated individualism of the modernity, apparently reconsidering the value of the man in the community and expressing it especially through philanthropic actions of autonomous and/or not institutionalised social entities.

b). Although not explicitly expressing it, the deacon and the professor of Orthodox missiology Andrei Kuraev shows the consistent connection between the postmodern spirituality and the and the Protestant/ neo-Protestant western spirituality, both being marked by Christological visions, dogmatically and sacramental-liturgically – considered as incomplete or partial:

- in cohabitation with the Christian teachings proclaiming the special juridical character of the soteriology and seeing God as a deity aiming mostly to preserve its own glory, the postmodernism is nothing else than the sinking into the world of the Good Friday, never going out from it to Sunday and never knowing the Resurrection (Savatie Baștovoii, 2001); in other words, like the Protestant Christianity, the postmodern world retains mostly the crucifixion and highlights the sacrifice in the detriment of the Resurrection, because the substitutive sacrifice of Christ is the one that repairs the honour of the Father, being in the top of the earthly activity of the Saviour, while the reality of the Resurrection tends to be seen as a simple corollary;
- in the same manner the Protestant spirituality of the postmodern world ignores the Eucharist Christ, because if Christ cannot be found

anymore in the chalice, in time, is natural not to find Him anymore in the heart or in the mid either (Gheorghe Istodor, 2005); indeed, assuming the liturgical vision of Zwinglian type, which reduces the Eucharist to the dimension of a simple commemoration of the Last Supper, the postmodernity renounces willingly to the continuity of the communion with the deified body and blood of the Saviour.

c). Gheorghe Petraru and Emil Stan connect the postmodernity with the relativism in an ontological, gnoseological and axiological sphere, because a postmodern spirit is a spirit living profoundly the drama of the relativism and which legitimates the relativity (Emil Stan, 1998). Thus, the postmodern spirituality is contoured as profoundly subjective – because it is the only way for the relativism to gain meaning and object – and hostile to any form of authority or normative tendency, because it does not accept anything in an absolute manner (Gheorghe Petraru, 2005). Implicitly, the Christian dogma and the dogmatized Christianity have few chance to survive when they must to cohabitate with such spirituality, generating the significant tendency of the contemporary beliefs of compressing and simplifying at maximum their cognitive discourse and of renouncing to the preoccupations for the conceptualization and the rigorous theological and philosophical foundation of their teachings.

d). From the perspective of the social psychology, Walter Truett Anderson considers that there are six major influencing vectors interfering in the space of the postmodernity, whose action is rather diffuse than explicit, being more like some tales in the collective mentality than effective myths or ideologies (Nechita Runcan, 2005):

- *the western myth of the progress*, the “tale” on the unlimited and constant growth of the social wellbeing and, implicitly, of the individual one;
- *the Marxist tale*, the recurrence of the visions – many time too little intellectual visions! – on an exclusively immanent world, lacking God or, in the best variant, where God has an economic role;
- *the fundamentalist Christian tale*; an echo of the public propaganda actions of the Protestant/neo-Protestant Christian groups, of congregational or Presbyterian type, which disseminates systematically messages related to the individual piety, the ethical rigour, the morality, the family, the help of the fellow beings, etc..;
- *the fundamentalist Islamic tale*; worthy of note especially for the reaction it generates in the western world, where it bring into discussion, firstly to repudiate, the problems of the intolerance,

fanaticism, radicalism, exclusivism and, perhaps, the theocratic idea;

- *the green tale*, meaning the multiplication of the discourse related to the reconsideration of the cohabitation of the man with the rest of the material creation, assuming a perspective that overcomes the modern vision on the subject, one that used to transform the man in the absolute master of the nature, with no responsibility related to the nature;
- *the tale of the new paradigm on a sudden jump ahead, toward to a new way of being and understanding the world*; in fact this take is related to the way the postmodernity is positioned compared to the past, not only for investigating the past and eventually criticise it, but also to revalue it and reintegrate it in the concert of the contemporary values.

Obviously, the six stories do not act solidary, do not push the society in the same direction and seem to be more some dividing forces than unifying forces (Nichita Runcan, 2005). Thus, the postmodern world is characterised also by the fact that it does not adopt a unitary course, a unique direction of evolution – as was the programmatic rejection of the religiousness in the modernity. It seems to be a huge attempt of social synthesis – to a global scale! – an attempt, facilitated by the conversion of the tolerance into a norm, to integrate values, marks, community, behaviour, etc., condemned to reciprocal isolation.

THE HUMAN AND THE RELIGION IN THE POSTMODERN WORLD – A BRIEF ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE

The Eastern Church interprets the postmodernity from the perspective of the pneumatological and sacramental-liturgical Christianity, thus valuing the incontestable *contemporaneity* of the referential built by the *Gospel* and the *Holy Tradition*. On this base, we will try to perform as follows a diagnosis of the positioning of the human and of the religion in the complex context of the postmodernity.

a). For a more judicious evaluation of the anthropological tendencies of the contemporaneity, we observe that, reported to the force-points of the modernity, the postmodern world marks *a return to tradition, an overcoming of the modernism* (Luc Ferry) (Gheorghe Istodor, 2005), as in a *curving of the historical space* (J. Baudrillard), *fixed obsessional on the past, especially on the simulation and the re-invention of the origins and of the past* (Ioan. I. Ică jr., 2002). Reconsidering the past, somehow idealising it – also in a context of lacking an exact predictable future – , the postmodern man rehabilitates the idea of religion, starts to rediscover the sacredness, the ritual, the

religiously inspired moral, the faith in God, the more so as, sinking in the egocentrism of the modernity, the society *does not manage to satisfy some existential necessities of the humans* (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013), exactly the ones that belong to the intrinsic religious vocation of the human nature. So, which are the causes for which, as Jurgen Habermas and Martin Riesebrodt write, the postmodernism registers an obvious resurrection of the religions and of the religiosity? A synthetically scheme may be the following:

- *an underlying crisis of the modernity*, generated by the interference of some convergent factors, generating the profound alteration of the human condition, because, as Paul Tillich shows, *the humans are transformed in objects, in a medical, psychological and sociological meaning*; other characteristics of the modern world are relevant from the same perspective, as the cultivation of the so-called conflict between science and religion or the presumption, proved as without base, according to which the laic culture and humanism are enough to satisfy the general human requirements/ needs related to the spirituality (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013);

- *the failure of the secularist project*; in fact, *even considered as dead, God remains the reference of a world once Christian* (H-R. Patapievici, 2001), the religiousness being, in spite all the efforts meant to eliminate it – a programmatic dimension of the modernity – , a constant of the humanity; the modernity thought that it can replace the propulsion of the humans toward religion with the *secularist surrogate* coagulated from elements taken from the field of the economy – productivity, efficiency, technological progress, access to goods, personal development and so on – which, in the end, does not represent nothing more than a huge mystification (Jean Danielou), the way to a so-called *earthly paradise* based on illusion (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013);

- *the tragic destiny of the modern man*; refusing the connection – based on the reality of the divine face – with the Creator and the Saviour, the modern man finds out quickly – more exactly after the overcoming of the temporal ecstasy created by the personal and professional success – , that, beyond the mirage of the consumerism, an abyss stays, also a profound crisis that dissolves the personality of the humans, who become *frustrated, a victim, an alienated person* (Adrian Marino), predisposed to *negation, revolt, contestation, nonconformist* (Gheorghe Istodor, 2005), and not comforted victim of the personal future: the death.

b) In its essence, the return and the reintegration of the religious in the postmodern world does not mean at all the *come-back* in the front line of the society of the traditional

powerfully centralised ecclesial institutions – even if, unlike the previous era, the pressure of dissolving them is weaker – , but, on the contrary, the configuration of a new religiosity, capable to cohabitate – in an *amiabile neutrality*, at least apparent – with the non-religious civil society and with the traditional religions. One the hostility and the public reserves toward faith stopped, as in an *exhaustion of the modern world* (Gheorghe Istodor, 2005), as David Lyon mentions, the postmodernity redefines completely the report of the humans to divinity, creating a new religiosity, with a specific morphology. Thus, acknowledging that *at the core of the anxiety and of perturbation suffered by the modern humans* is the deliberate annihilation of the religious vocation, as previously practised (Vasile Cîțirigă, 2005), the postmodernity gives up limiting the inevitable religious human searching process, trying to assimilate it to the irrationality and obscurantism and validate it as legitimate only because it tries to pierce through the immanent reality. Thus, it results what is called *the new religiosity*, trying to reconstruct the face of God in the human being, to make the humans make peace inside them, to bring them together and, especially, to overcome the fetish of the economic efficiency and consumerism; its major features seem to be as follows:

- *the gnoseological relativism*; in postmodernism, the effective content of the religious belief is not subject in the exam of the truthfulness and sustainability; the belief is, thus, under the sign of the relativism (Gheorghe Petraru, 2005) , arbitrary and subjectivity of each creator of a system – autonomous searcher for ontological meaning (H-R-Patapievici, 2001), when the referential built by the supernatural revelation and the ecclesial community are not relevant anymore; each religious belief is equally legitimate, because *there is no essential reality and everything is relative from an epistemological point of view*, so *there is no objective criteria to establish if someone is right or wrong* (H-R-Patapievici, 2001); each new religious movement, no matter how subjective and bizarre, can stay next to the divine-human Church, sharing a faith considered to be equally valid, with the same presumed force and soteriology viability;
- *the refuse of dogma*; as an immediate corollary of the absolutism of the relativism, the postmodern religiosity refuses to assume systemic conceptualisations – sustainable from a theological-philosophical point of view – on the object of the faith and on the manner how the human being relates to divinity; H-R. Patapievicidescribes this state as an authentic *transcendental iconoclasm* – the refuse of the human to come intellectually close to the sacredness, which is nothing else than an extension of the protestant thinking on God,

because *the modern man is naturally a protestant* (H-R. Patapievici, 2001);

- *the individualism*; the postmodern religiosity is powerfully private and not only because it does not give credit to the ecclesial community (*koinonia*); it generates a *spirituality* with no vertical dimension, anchored in subjectivity an immanence as long as it fails in pietism, in *private initiative in religionwith an economical-financial model* and, especially, in sentimentalism (Gheorghe Petraru, 2005);fusing with the *gnoseological relativism, the individualism generates a deconstruction movement of the metaphysical and transcendent centre of the world by inducing a plurality of centres, leading in the end to no* (Ion Popescu, 2005);
- *the competitive spirit* ;as Peter L. Berger and J.-P. Willaime show, in the postmodern world, the religions connect to the fundamental features of the production and of the consume; they, especially their soteriological offers are a real market, a *psycho-market, which is ruled as a market economy*, so we may speak of an *offer concretised in small enterprises in the field of deliverance, acting on a competitive market* (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013);
- *the tendency of syncretism*; while the doctrinarian rigour becomes obsolete, the religions of the postmodernity are vulnerable in the face of the syncretic developments; from this perspective, R. Lemieux speaks of a *dismembered imaginary of those declaring to be Christians* – a synthesis largely arbitrary of some Christian elements – with themes and visions taken from the oriental pantheism – as the universal energy – and with psychologic/ para-psychologic constituents – *the sublime self or the inner divine* – and general moral-ethical values – *love, freedom, peace* (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013).

In these circumstance, the Church is forced to represent *a specialised institution, limited to the management of the humans' deliverance* (Ioan I Ică jr., 2002), with a public/ social impact limited to its human area of influence, because the society is willing only to *(re)consider, from a distance, various versions of metaphysical interrogation, without stopping even for a moment to place on the first place the creating individuality, meaning the intellectual autonomy and an ideal of human perfection* based on the same items as the modern individualism (Gheorghe Petraru, 2005).

c).Confronted with these aspects, the Orthodox spirituality observes firstly that *the tragedy of the modern and postmodern human being resides that longing for God, searching for Christ is always inside, while the meaning of our life is discovered only when we discover our deep roots in the Trinitarian reality and in the cosmic reality in Christ* (Dumitru Popescu, 2001). The Eastern

Church does not deny the return in the present time of the religious belief and practice, but, fully understanding its causes and the theological and anthropological consequences, maintains a distance from some particular aspects of the new religiosity, especially from those compromising *the fundamental coordinates of the Christian life, as the witnessing community, the authentic spirituality and the eschatological expectation* (Valer Bel, 2005). The Orthodoxy will notice that, in relation with the postmodern religions, *there is no place for a mysticism and a spirituality founded on the Gospel revelation and in a dogmatic-ecclesial manner if the Trinitarian, Christological and pneumatological community* (Gheorghe Petraru, 2005). Remaining outside the ecclesial space – where we are offered *the perspective of living in anticipation the divine transcendent present in His uncreated energy* (Mihai Himcinschi, 2003) -, these religions cultivate a spirituality based more and more on subjectivity and on the principle *do it yourself* – experiment yourself (Nicolae Achimescu, 2013), where the individual feelings and experience are more important than any norm revealed by faith. The Orthodoxy will always insist – there is no other way – on the biblical conformity of the faith, because a teaching not centred on *the Living Christ, the Crucified and Resurrected Christ, the Life and the Light of the Church and of the entire world* (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2002) lacks any meaning and value. In other words, the Orthodoxy will recognise as Christian only the faith that comes *through the Gospel of Christ* (Valer Bel, 2005), noticing with sadness that the postmodern world offers us the image of an *atemporal religiosity, lacking eschatological perspective and a community consistence, structured in an individualist and strictly immanent manner, only on the horizontal line, without any vertical dimension, oriented to God* (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2002), but expecting and hoping for its perfection.

CONCLUSIONS

Under the simultaneous pressure of globalization and postmodernity, the contemporary human being has no chance to rediscover *koinonia* of the Church, the divine-human space filled with God's grace where the existence is completed and gains meaning, being outside it chaotic, without direction and aimless. The Church is the only one capable to guide the human being, because only the Church holds the treasure of the supernatural revelation and fructifies it in the sacramental-liturgical ceremonial, offering in the same time theological certitude and an accurate soteriological message, along with the fullness of the trinitarian, Christological and pneumatological teaching. Fully aware of its position in the postmodern world, a

position of *minority and diaspora active spiritually, morally, socially and culturally in a religious and plural ideological environment*, the Church needs to acknowledge *the spirit of witnessing Christianity and of the pre-Constantinian apologists*, so those in his structure have the chance to *become the body of the world and the divine spirit in this body* (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2002). The Church will reject the present temptation of separation from a world that, in the best variant, ignores the Church, and will try to put in practice the present missionary priorities, systemised as follows by Ioan I. Ică Jr. (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2005) and Valer Bel (Valer Bel, 2005):

- *the assimilation and overcoming from the inside or the transformation of (post)modernity*; thus, the Church should not condemn the world as a whole, but its vices; the Church must empower its missionary voice, one that is Christocentric, and to oppose to relativism and subjectivism with the certitudes of the supernatural revelation, to oppose to individualism with the vocation of the communion, to fight the individual experience with the sacramental service and the doctrinaire voluntarism with the evangelical rigour;
- *the assumption of the ecumenical unity of the planet*; acting in a world where the pluralism of beliefs and ideologies cannot be ignored without the risk to sink in isolation and autarchy, the Church must adapt its message to this reality and to see the dialogue with the other Christian denominations and with the other religions as a chance to promote its treasure of teachings and the richness of its sacramental service;
- *the twerp of the bad effects of the secularisation and globalisation*; for this, the Church should avoid to be perceived as an *obstacle*, many times an *irrational one*, for the progress and the growth of wellbeing, and must insist, in its pastoral activity, on aspects as the ethics of the work and the individual/communitarian responsibilities in the social repartition of the profit, and the necessity of the philanthropic action (Ioan I. Ică jr. 2002).

REFERENCES

- [1] *Biblia sau Sfânta Scriptură*, 2004, București, EIBMBOR;
- [2] *** *Biserica în era globalizării*, 2003, Alba Iulia, Editura Reîntregirea;
- [3] *** *Biserica în misiune. Patriarhia Română la ceas aniversar*, 2005, București, EIBMBOR;
- [4] Ioan I. Ică jr., Germano Marani (coord.), 2002, *Gândirea socială a Bisericii. Fundamente, documente, analize, perspective*, Sibiu, Editura Deisis;
- [5] Ioan I. Ică Jr., 2005, *Biserica în Misiune. Patriarhia română la ceas aniversar*, ed. EIBMBOR, București,

- [6] Conf.pr.dr. Vasile Nechita (coord.), 2005, *Simpozionul „Modernism, postmodernism și religie”*, Constanța, mai, 2005, Iași, Editura Vasiliana '98
- [7] Pr. prof. dr. Nicolae Achimescu, 2013, *Religie, modernitate și postmodernitate*, București, Editura Trinitas
- [8] Pr. dr. Nicolae Achimescu, 2006, *Religii în dialog*, București, Editura Trinitas;
- [9] H.-R. Patapievici, 2001, *Omul recent*, București, Editura Humanitas;
- [10] Pr. prof. univ. dr. Dumitru Popescu, 2005, *Ortodoxie și globalizare. Cultură global și culture particulare*, în vol. Conf. univ. dr. Vasile Nechita (coord.), *Simpozionul „Modernism, postmodernism și religie”*, Constanța, mai, 2005, Iași, Editura Vasiliana '98;
- [11] Pr. prof. dr. Dumitru Popescu, 2001, *Omul fără rădăcini*, București, Editura Nemira,
- [12] Nicolae Balca, 1936, *Criza culturii*, în „Telegraful român”, nr. 42, Sibiu.
- [13] Matei Călinescu, *Cinci fețe ale modernității*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2005,
- [14] John Tomlinson, 2002, *Globalizare și cultură*, traducere de Cristina Gyurcsik, Timișoara, Editura Amarcord,
- [15] Joseph Ratzinger, 2002, Europa, globalizare și noua ordine mondială: spre o utopie a ororii?, în *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii*, coord. Ioan. I. Ică Jr. și Germano Marani, ed. Deisis, Sibiu,
- [16] Olivier Clement, 1997, *Adevăr și libertate. Ortodoxia în contemporaneitate. Convorbiri cu Patriarhul Ecumenic Bartolomeu I*, Sibiu, Editura Deisis,
- [17] Asist. dr. Adrian Lemeni, 2003, *Globalizarea – o deturnare a unificării lumii în Hristos*, în vol. *** *Biserica în era globalizării*, Alba Iulia, Editura Reîntregirea,
- [18] I.P. Culianu, 1995, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, traducere de Thereza Petrescu, București, Editura Nemira, București,
- [19] Monah Savatie (Baștavoii), Nicolae Balotă, Diacon Andrei Kuraev, Dumitru Crudu, 2001, *Ortodoxia pentru postmoderniști*, Timișoara, Editura Marineasa,
- [20] Emil Stan, 1998, *Nae Ionescu și postmodernismul*, în „Viața Românească”, nr. 11 – 12,
- [21] Pr.prof.univ. dr. Gheorghe Petraru, 2005, *Paradigme conceptuale moderniste și postmoderniste și impactul lor asupra teologiei și misiunii Bisericii*, în vol. *Simpozionul „Modernism, postmodernism și religie”*, Constanța, mai, 2005, Iași, Editura Vasiliana '98
- [22] Pr. conf. univ. dr. Nechita Runcan, 2005, *Confruntarea teologiei actuale cu mișcarea postmodernă*, în vol. *Simpozionul „Modernism, postmodernism și religie”*, Constanța, mai, 2005, Iași, Editura Vasiliana '98
- [23] Pr. conf. univ. dr. Vasile Citirigă, 2005, *Taina omului și tragedia lui în epoca postmodernă*, în vol. *Simpozionul „Modernism, postmodernism și religie”*, Constanța, mai, 2005, Iași, Editura Vasiliana '98
- [24] Pr. prof. univ. dr. Valer Bel, 2005, *Comunitatea mărturisitoare în contextul lumii secularizate și globalizate*, în vol. *Simpozionul „Modernism, postmodernism și religie”*,
- [25] Pr. lect. dr. Mihai Himcinschi, 2003, *Creștinism și mondializare*, în vol. *** *Biserica în era globalizării*, Alba Iulia, Editura Reîntregirea