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Religion and Semiosphere: from Religious to the Secular and Beyond

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RELIGION AND SEMIOSPHERE: FROM RELIGIOUS TO THE
SECULAR AND BEYOND

by

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RELIGION AND SEMIOSPHERE: FROM RELIGIOUS TO THE SECULAR AND BEYOND

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Religion is a system of structural ideas that involve the natural ability of the mind to engage itself into the process of unlimited semiosis which can be defined as an existential openness of one's consciousness to the universe as a system. This primary religious consciousness becomes limited by language, symbolic, and cultural constraints. The religious semiotic space is a sub-cultural system open to culturally and cross-culturally encoded idioms and concepts. These cultural potentials are interpreted and settled by the religious exegesis expressed in the behavioral patterns of the symbolic actions that reflect a specific worldview of the closed community controlled by institutional authority. In spite of the religious exclusive position in the cultural space, almost every religious worldview offers elements of ethical and aesthetical universalism, which religious potentials are seeds for the secularization processes of the religious.

This dissertation offers a Semiotic Theory of Religion, explaining concepts such as dynamic signs, signification process, and unlimited semiosis developed in the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce, Umberto Eco, Yuri Lotman, and the religious semantics of Jürgen Habermas.

Habermas thinks that religion still has semantic potentials that should be rescued. The ethical aspect of religion concentrates on the ideals of universal solidarity,

compassion, and peace. These are the foundational values of the autonomous religious

consciousness that should transform its individual ethos into the objective reality of

socio-economic and political norms.

Yuri Lotman's semiotic theory of culture is functional in the examination of religious

pluralism and examines the diachronic continuum, explaining a vicious struggle for the

preservation of the semiotic space, which emerges as the dominant in competition with

the other alternative religious movements.

The salient focus of this dissertation concentrates on an unlimited semiosis. This

concept seems most curious to a human mind, requiring of an interpreter to rediscover the

cognitive and aesthetic immanence of the mind, where resides the religious source. The

Semiotic Theory of Religion offers religion as one of the most dynamic cultural

movements interconnected with all humankind's cultural space—the Semiosphere.

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"Every object whose end is unknown to us is provisorily monstrous."
Jorge Luis Borges, *A Vindication of the Cabala*

It is not an easy task to write a dissertation with the megalomaniac aspirations, and this is what has happen to me. First, I began my research with the semiotic theory of Umberto Eco, thinking that will be an easy task to apply his semiotic models to the comparative study of religion, but the field of research began to grow. I expanded the research with Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, then I moved one step further on the communicative praxis of Jürgen Habermas, and finally, I found that Dr. Rudolph J. Siebert was right and that I couldn't escape from discussing the problem of modernity along with the process of the secularization of the religious ideas. As research grew, I felt like I was drowning in the "monstrous" arms of endlessness....

This long journey would have never been fully accomplished without the great help of all my committee members from the Comparative Religion Department at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Dr. Thomas E. Lawson and Dr. Brian C. Wilson have tremendously helped me to incorporate in my work modern methodology, analyzing case studies in a manner of cognitive and anthropological evaluation, which then nicely supported my research and theoretical constructs. Dr. Michael R. Ott from Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Michigan has helped me to better understand the sociological dimension of religion in modernity.

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My special and great thank goes to my mentor and dear person, Dr. Rudolph J. Siebert. He worked with me through all steps of my doctoral program, encouraging me whenever I faced any difficult situation. Dr. Siebert worked with me diligently throughout the four years of writing, helping me to focus my research and make valuable points relevant for the comparative study of religion.

I also give my great thanks to my husband, Kim Rush, who was always beside me, no matter how desperate I would feel in the arms of "monstrous" endlessness. His great support and encouragement can only be explained by one word, Love.

Rajka Rush

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CHAPTER I

FOUNDING ELEMENTS OF THE SEMIOTIC THEORY OF RELIGION:
DYNAMIC SIGNS, SEMIOSIS, UNLIMITED SEMIOSIS,
AND FIXED BELIEFS

A man denotes whatever is the object of his attention at the moment; he connotes
whatever he knows or feels of this object—his interpretant is the future memory of
this cognition, his future self, or another person he addresses.
<div align="right">Charles Sanders Peirce, Collected Papers 7.591</div>

1a) <u>Application of the General Semiotic Theory to the Study of Religion</u>

Semiology, or a general Semiotic theory, has become known through the unique

work of the French linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, who compared his new subject of

study to a science which combines a social and general psychology in a way to explain

the ability of the human mind to create and communicate concepts and ideas via

language. Saussure thought that Semiotics should become the most general science that

would present a connection between what is naturally presupposed with what is culturally

postulated and encoded in a language as a system. According to Saussure, this new

science would concentrate on language, which was defined, in a new way, as a

signification process, being highly complex and encoded through the integral web of

connections that people learn and know as convention. It seems that Saussure actually

envisioned the possibility for a general science that could unify different special sciences

into one line of research via a new methodology.[1]

In his *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) Saussure's definition for a language

is given as, ". . . a system of signs that expresses ideas, and is therefore comparable to the

system of writing, the alphabet of deaf-mutes, symbolic rites, polite formulas, military signals, etc." This explains language as a semiological process, but also opens the idea that in the progress of future semiotic research an amazing amount of different language systems may be recognized which are relevant for human existence and its relevancy in culture. The problem that arises from the Saussurean approach is the arbitrariness of the sign, i.e., a sign is always only a convention that reflects to some extent a collective behavior relevant to only one culture.[2]

The scholarly work and research done for this dissertation concretely finds a need to outline religion as a unified language system that opens the analogy between the system of belief (general conceptions) and practices (conceptual gestures and communicative acts) that are crucial to transform internally (experiences into conceptions) and externally (conceptions into the system of communication) nature into the culture, which maintain the conceptions and symbolic signified practices through the organized system of communication with in-group identity. One of the main ideas in the study of Comparative Religion is a cross-cultural comparison between different arbitrary signification systems: rituals, object(s) of worship, ethical values, moral rules, system(s) of symbols, integral social community, religious institutions, religious specialists, religious ideas systematized in a code of beliefs (dogmas, sacred texts, myths, etc.). The main endeavor of the Semiotic Theory of Religion would be to explain the necessity of putting the parts of different signification systems into the web of logical connections by which religion could be explained as a complex cultural signification system.

As often happens, when a new concept is brought to the human pool of knowledge, it is questionable as to whether Saussure realized the breakthrough he had

created by developing a new definition of language, explaining the mode of signification process, and proposing a theory of signs. The consequences of Semiotics were that the object of knowledge was no longer simply given or imposed to the subject, but it is a code that functions as the process of signification between the signifier and the signified. Actually, the object of knowledge is encoded as a mental space in the mind, and it has an interactive function as a signifier which then is able to decode the meaning of the signified.[3]

If one were to apply the process of signification to religion, then the object of study in religion usually corresponds with the idea of a god that is defined as belief in superhuman existence, agencies, and/or supernatural powers. In clarifying the issue, for example, the idea of god would be a relevant point for the religions of the Book— Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but one can equally talk about an object of religion as an ultimate reality in Hinduism where believers relate to the supreme reality of the whole universe, and in the idea of Brahman, one can also relate to the consciousness which becomes one with everything out of compassion, like the Buddhahood consciousness in Buddhism, or even the complex worshiping of the supernatural powers and spiritual agencies that are present in the worshiping of Mother Earth, or a creator god, high god, relevant for native religions. In the application of the signification process this object of religion as god, is no longer presupposed as the absolute that exists for all believers as was usually presented by the phenomenological approach in the study of religion (Eliade, Jung) and as is cross-culturally compared in a historical or cultural sense as an arbitrary sign, which can be used in comparison to the other signs of the same range to emulate the

similarities and differences through an unique interpretation, but it outlines a more specific idea.

This idea is that there is a natural ability of the human mind to transfer internally--the most comprehensive experience of the self--that which appears as one which is in the state of acknowledgment that exits in the system arranged by the power of higher purpose. This system is something apart from the consciousness that experiences his/her critical moment of being apart, or the critical understanding of being finite, or being only a little part of the universal system of all things. So, the God/Ultimate Reality/Buddhahood Consciousness; the "mystical participation" in the world that relates different spirits and powers (native religions)—these concepts are all actually the result of the systematization of signs which brings dual analogical structure: signified is what outlines a natural ability of the mind in every religion that relates to the object that is of a superhuman, supernatural, or mystical character and a signifier as a specific sign that arbitrarily functions (historically, symbolically, and culturally) in one religious system. Actually, the object of knowledge is encoded as a mental space in the mind, and it has an interactive function as a signifier which then is able to decode the meaning of the signified.

Very often Semiotics (the theory of signs) opens a problem of terminology, because it is not entirely clear whether Semiotics is the same as Semantics (the theory of meaning). Semantics is a discipline developed in the circles of "Continental Philosophy" in the early twentieth century and concentrates on the discourses and meaning related to a new philosophy of language that fluctuates from mathematical logic (Frege, Wittgenstain) to the continuation of Husserl's phenomenology investigating the

connotations of an intentional object (Vienna Circle, Bolzano, Brentano). The intentional object (modified traditional object of knowledge) is now explained as the systematic transformation of the personal existing being and his/her consciousness into the higher structure of signification that interprets itself and acquires as the result the circle of meaning. Traditional continental Semantics also influenced the theory of interpretation called hermeneutics that puts in the main discourse aesthetical meaning. The main concern in the works of Dilthey and Gadamer is the amazing power of art work and literature where one can experience and reach the same meaning in these works as was originally posited. The question is: If the various cultural systems have passed through different socio-economic, political, even ethical changes of paradigms, how is it possible not to loose the original interpretative meaning of a work of art? The final crown of continental Semantics that combines hermeneutics, philosophy of language, and phenomenology as a question of human existence and meaning is given in the works of Martin Heidegger. He tries to explain the phenomenological outline of human existence as *Dasein* (here and now being) whose main crisis involves the relationship to death—the human being is a finite being—so, the only question worth investigation is that of meaning, and meaning opens itself by authentic language.[4]

Sometimes it is difficult to definitely differentiate Semiotics from Semantics, and this problem also reflects to a degree on this dissertation. This dissertation's research and approach has the goal to incorporate the two different contemporary Semiotic theories, one of Umberto Eco and the other of Jürgen Habermas, as crucial for the formation of the Semiotic Theory of Religion. The reasons for connecting these two theories into one Semiotic Theory of Religion are: (1) shared methodology rooted in semiotics of Charles

Sanders Peirce, which has successfully redefined the object of knowledge as a "production" sign in a new triadic semiotic methodology; (2) shared critical observations to the traditional religious system of beliefs and their institutions; (3) the importance of the open and unlimited religious signs and symbols that still affect the modernity and consciousness of modernity; (4) the idea of the transformation of religious highest ideas into the all modern social, political, and cultural sub-structures—from the work of art to the normative validity claims present in modern legislation processes.

While Eco takes Peirce's Semiotics in the traditional way of understanding it as the theory of signs, Habermas reconstructs Peirce's Semiotics in the discourse of communicative theory that, in his view, opens the Semantics of religion, which concentrates on questioning and analyzing all aspects of the religious consciousness. Habermas' project of "linguificaiton" of the sacred offers the idea that the transformation of the religious idea of the sacred is secularized by means of Semantics, opening the meaning of values that are derived from the past religious experiences into the modern principles that are preserved in the contemporary institutionalized world. One could say that Habermas' theory stands on the level of Semantics, but the methodology that is the underlying power of his presentation is very much rooted in Semiotics. Also, one can see that Eco's research tends to concentrate more on symbolic dynamism that can be interpreted as the revitalization powers of religious through the symbols, signs, semiosis, unlimited dynamic signs, and limits of possible beliefs, while Habermas develops a comprehensive insight on the social evolution through the religious symbolic actions that evolve humankind in the new sublated form of the modern consciousness and their social and political sub-structures. In this sense, Eco's research in Semiotics opens topics that

are of cognitive and aesthetic value for the new Semiotic Theory of Religion, while Habermas' theory opens the view on ethical and practical (politics, economics, and creative human potentials) aspects of religion, society, and the personhood. The conclusive goal of this dissertation is to summarize Eco's and Habermas' views on religion and to reconstruct their Semiotic theories, giving a better picture on religion within the context of the universality of cultural systems, and also to give the methodological strength in explaining religious existence in our time.

The pattern—from the religious to the secular and beyond—is present in all religions of the world. It is necessary to explain how and why the dynamics between the religious and the secular exist and in what way it can be seen, the transformation of the religious or religious consciousness from their primary existent forms to the comprehensive functioning in the contemporary time, when the religious is no longer dominant in the secular world, but is transformed in new qualitative forms by the means of symbolic and dynamic sign transition.

The main tension and strength of this research is to explain religion as the dynamic organism that functions as the important part of the larger system in the dominant culture, but also in the dynamism of all possible cultures. Religion, religious reasoning, religious faith as the substrate of one's consciousness, religion in connection to political affiliations and convictions, new religious movements, religious sacrifices, religious symbols, and religious texts often surprises one with ideas that can range from aesthetical stunning revelations to ideas which are totally opposite and pushes one away.

The first step of this presentation will offer to the reader a better understanding of the main Semiotic methodology related to the open sign, symbols, and unlimited semiosis.

At the same time when Saussure's semiology was becoming more and more popular in the study of the continental intellectual circles, Charles Sanders Peirce, independently from Saussure, in the USA, presented the triadic general semiotic model by which any object of knowledge acts as a sign and by this virtue is a referent, which takes the form through its representament that is at the same time its interpretant. By his triadic interpretation of the sign, one can say that Peirce definitely moved general Semiotic theory from linguistics to the realm of epistemological investigation and philosophical interpretation. His main idea is that a sign can be either possible or real, so it encompasses everything, but either way—possible or real, a sign denotes the basic structure of the process that communicates the sign, the intellectual abilities of the one who invents or acknowledges the sign, and finally the result of the semiotic process is settled in interpretation. The most important aspect of Semiotics is the reproduction of the signs. In this, Peirce has a view of the universe as ". . . perfused with signs, if it is not composed, exclusively of sings," so he calls this new discipline pansemiotcs, which, according to him, will develop in the future as the most general science.[5]

1b) Open and Dynamic Signs

What is inspiring about Peirce's Semiotics is the representation of a sign as the dynamic object. To Peirce, the universe of signs cannot be absolutely conventionalized or settled. This point contradicts Saussure, but it opens the line of contemporary research in

Semiotics that is used to compare the shift of meaning and contextualization of signs from one historical paradigm to the other.

This investigation is present in the Semiotic works of Umberto Eco where he often researches the shift of meaning in the signification process that occurs with the new poetics of modernity, or influences from one cultural system to the other. For example, he shows that the system of sings in the Middle Ages functions under the umbrella of the global theocentric allegorical structure, so every sign is a symbol that has a theological aspect of meaning and is fixed. With modernity, the old system is engaged in the deconstruction process, which finally re-interprets signs that once were symbols, isolates them from the former signification, and puts them into a new perspective. A sign might be transformed into another signification process and from the association with the sacred or theological aspect, by which it could be interpreted simply as an iconic sign—i.e., its function that is naturally presupposed and possibly defined scientifically (the Enlightenment period); or perhaps could be interpreted by the extraordinary personalist experience that is important for the poetics of romanticism where a sign becomes a new open symbol (nebula); or simply a sign could be put in the processes of experimentation, changing different perspectives and modes, which is a crucial point for the Avant-garde poetics. In any way, the sign opens its potential in each new epoch, and although sometimes has a fixed meaning in one system of signification, because it is a sign it is also a possible object of knowledge, so, does not necessarily stay fixed.

The value of Eco's research brings to the main focus the functioning of the dynamic sign under different ideological, philosophical, and cultural changes. In his book, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (1986) Eco analyzes the changes of

symbolic interpretation of the Old Testament. He states that the Old Testament was used by many of Stoic philosophers, writers, poets, and even by Philo of Alexandria who influenced early Christian theology. They read the Old Testament as an example of allegorical story that can be used for secular purposes—to enlighten or educate people about opposites—good and evil—in their nature and they were giving a secular interpretation trying to translate the allegorical message into the real aspect of life. In the first-century C.E. an opposite direction in interpretation took course. Clement of Alexandria and Oregenes found themselves in a difficult position to decide: Were they going to accept only The New Testament as relevant, or were they going to interpret both, The Old and New Testament, as crucial to the Christian movement and theology? They decided that the Old Testament speaks in a significant sense of the New Testament, so they are both engaged in producing semiosis (the signification process) with one sense and meaning. For example, the Exodus story represents a signifier of the signified story with the redemption through Christ. As Eco states:

> The semiosic process was thus rather complicated: a first book speaking allegorically of the second one, and the second one speaking—sometimes by parables, sometimes directly—of something else. Moreover, in this beautiful case of unlimited semiosis, there was a curious identification between the message sender, message as signifier or expression, and signified or content and referent, intrpretandum, and interpretant—a puzzling web of Identities and differences that can be hardly represented by a bidimensional diagram....[6]

Because of the complexity of problems in interpretation, and the necessity that Semiotics takes a critical distance, Eco thinks that general Semiotics cannot function without interpretation, which engages philosophy. Eco purposes that all research in general Semiotics is primarily philosophical, rather than scientific. This means that this research then requires a unique interpretation—a view on the issue, which also implies a specific method of investigation (theory) in order to process the abstract and complex signs. In this approach, usual topics of religion might be how one interprets or sees good and evil in one religious system. These kinds of signs cannot be scientifically explained; the interpretation of such signs requires what U. Eco says, "positing [a] question philosophically," i.e., a possibility to use one's experience, interpretation, and all faculties of the mind to circle the possible authentic understanding of the problem. If we detach the concepts of good and evil from philosophical discourse, then these concepts in the scientific reasoning barely exist, and there is not "possible unity and cohesion" in their understanding.[7]

There is another great value of Eco's research that can be applied to the problems in the study of religion. The most dynamic (unlimited) signs are symbols and they are an important part of a signification system in religion. According to Eco, there are open symbols with the metaphoric transitional ability, and there are symbols that function as the subclass to the larger allegorical system--where the symbols are fixed, but the system itself is open.[8] Both types of symbols are also the signs relevant for the greatest concern of religion.

Every religion communicates its ideas through symbols, and tries to settle symbols in a fixed doctrinal perspective where there is no fear of collapse with the pillar concepts supporting the dogma.

For example, in the book by Caroline Walker Bynum *Metamorphosis and Identity* (2005), where in the introductory chapter there is given an exposition to the problem of her research, the change and metamorphosis interpreted in the traditional Christian theology of the Middle Ages, she presents the question: What if a priest is asked to give the Eucharist to the mate of a lycanthrope? As shown in Dr. Thomas E. Lawson's cognitive methodology the use of examples in comparative religion studies is crucial to represent the obvious differentiation between the "theologically correct" reasoning, usually highly philosophized and abstract (that might be compared to the U. Eco's semiotic allegoric system), and the religion of the common people. Dr. Lawson's methodology has had a great impact on this dissertation and the way of thinking about religions of the world and their complex dynamic structure that exist. Dr. Lawson defines religion as a necessary organism/system of the culture, which transforms what is naturally presupposed into the culturally postulated "conceptual ideas" that reflect and reason about the "superhuman agents."[9] In relationship to this approach, Bynum's example about the Eucharist given to the werewolf represents a problem that is differently viewed by the eyes of a theologian vs. the cultural spontaneity of common people expressed in their oral tradition and fictional story. As she describes, in the writings of Gerald of Wales, who wrote the ethnography of Ireland in 1187, he tells the story of a priest who has been traveling from Meath to Ulster and meets on the way a werewolf who tries to get the Eucharist for his dying mate. The priest, from this original

story, gives the mate of the werewolf the Eucharist, but Bynum gives the great

observations on Gerald of Wales's comments, which are substantiated later on, where he

tries to explain and theologically justify the story and the act of the priest who gave the

Eucharist to the werewolf's mate. Wales has a problem how to explain the regressive

change that occurred from human to the wolf. It seems, according to Bynum, that Wales

doesn't want to say that any substantial change or metamorphosis is just a make-believe

story, and not really related to the true belief as Christianity. At one point Wales talks

about real Incarnation and he defines it as a true miracle and metamorphosis from human

to superhuman, god's, nature. So, he uses an analogy to explain the werewolf's nature.

Now, Wales tries to compare the regressive change in human nature to the Eucharist,

which represents the real substantial change in one's nature. In short, Wales says that the

werewolf represents the hybrid change that is not substantial to the nature but is only

changed in appearance, while the Eucharist represents the true change in quality, and so

is substantial, but not related to the change of appearance.[10] This example nicely

underlines what kind of problems can be faced in religious symbolism. This example

gives a picture that the signification of symbols in religion is a very complex problem—

the highly theological, "clean" systems of signification are in constant contact with the

culture in change. One can notice, when religion spreads and is missionary, rather than

stationary, then as the body of believers change, the religion and its symbols modify and

change. In this sense, the Semiotic Theory of Religion relates to the symbols as

metaphors (transitional symbols—in the above noted story a werewolf) and the

mainstream fixed symbols in the allegorical system, which the main concern is to re-

enforce the belief concepts in one religion as true and absolute.

Every religion develops a system of signs and symbols. This system of symbols acts as the main motivating power to the believers and, also, it is the most important factor in the unification of the religious community into one recognizable identity. Religious signs and symbols have the most immediate access to the supreme religious content, but also they are an active force, because they represent the transformative powers in religion: they initiate, for a believer, the transformation from the denotative level, ideas and beliefs, into the gesture, action, and finally, they may represent the whole meaning for one's religious worldview, which directs a person's practical aspect of life. Therefore, religious symbols are dynamic signs in a semiotic sense, having multiple intentions, possibilities, and powers for the religious community and the personal religious consciousness. The problem is that the religious dynamic signs are interwoven with the cultural, historical, and social heritage, so very often the existence and rise of symbols relevant for one religious tradition might not be always distinctively pure in meaning and have a clear message. This problem appears with the religious movements that grow in the multicultural surroundings, so they generate different cultural codes as their possible subsystems. This alternative subsystem very often becomes deeply buried and hidden under the surface of the theological accepted ideas and canonized religious texts that through time become the exclusive interpretative authority for the symbols. There is no better example than that of the rise of Christianity, which outlines perfectly the religious symbolic dynamism and the existence of the alternative semiotic subsystem within the mainstream theological interpretation of the Christian church.

1c) <u>Semiotic Dynamism in Early Christianity and Overinterpretation Beyond Belief</u>

In the last half of the century from the discovery in Qumran, Nag Hammadi of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1945) and the comparative studies of the Gnostic Gospels in contrast to the created traditional Christian Canon (E. Pagels), to the question of identity and the role of Jesus during his life-time in the scholarship of Jesus Seminar and works of J. D. Corssan, it has become obvious that Christianity, indeed, is rather a very syncretistic movement, rather than an unified and monolithic as known from theology and the canon of the Church. [11] One of the Gospels found in the hidden jar of the cave in Nag Hammadi was the Gospel of Thomas, whose existence was known to Biblical scholarship prior to this discovery, but finally the whole text revealed itself. In this Gospel the idea of the Kingdom of God definitely contrasts the one in the synoptic gospels and Paul, which presents an Apocalyptic Jesus, where the Kingdom of God is put in the perspective of the future event, in the theology known as a "parousia" delay (Matt. 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 21; 1 & 2 Thess.; 2 Pet. 2-3). [12]

In the Gospel of Thomas 113 Jesus says that "The Father's kingdom" will not come by expecting the great apocalypse "there" or "here," but it is stated that the Kingdom of God is here, "spread out upon the earth, but people don't see it." This definition of the Kingdom of God is similar to the ideas of ethics presented in Greek stoic philosophers that traces its roots in ideas of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle who believed that ignorance is the source of all wrongdoing. If one might doubt that the Gospel of Thomas has a different view on Jesus, how then can one interpret the Gospel of Thomas 3? There, it is quoted that Jesus said: "When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do

not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty."[13] Definitely, the Gospel of Thomas appears in recent discoveries as the most compelling text of the early Christianity which has the purpose to express, not the story of Jesus, as J. D. Crossan suggested "prophecy historicized," but simply the collection of original teachings of Jesus.[14] This Gospel is presented in a different structural manner than the Synoptic Gospels, only as the combination of Jesus' original quotes.[15]

Still, it is left to our time to puzzle how to interpret the Gospel of Secret Mark where it is given the clear message that the knowledge about the Kingdom of God is a mystery that can be told only to the chosen disciples and pupils. [16] Also, the Gospel of Secret Mark awakens again some suspicions about Jesus' sexuality: Jesus is presented as the one who resuscitates a rich young man who recently died, but then "the young man looked at Jesus, loved him, and began to beg to be with him" (Secret Mar vs. 8). The similar case is presented a few lines later in the Gospel of Secret Mark when Jesus spent the night with the young man and Jesus "taught him the mystery of [the] Kingdom of God." The interesting point being here, that the term "mystery of Kingdom of God" is also used in the canonical Gospel of Mark (Mark 4:11).[17]

Perhaps, the most stunning story presented in the non-canonical Gospels is the story about Jesus' infancy, where in The Infancy Gospel of Thomas, Jesus was presented as a child with the strong "magical" powers that he uses for revenge when someone crosses him. One of the stories says that Jesus killed his teacher who didn't recognize his talents and his mystical interpretation of the Jewish letters. Jesus was presented that he made so much troubles using his powers, that the people of Nazareth asked Mary and Joseph to lock the child at home. [18] Finally, it is presented that Jesus decided to use the

powers only for good deeds and to help. Interestingly, we know that there is no one canonical Gospel referring to Jesus' childhood in any extensive sense, but we know that all Synoptic gospels present the rejection of Jesus' teachings when he went to visit his birthplace, Nazareth (Mark 6:1-6, Matthew 13:54-58, and Luke 4:1-13).

With the discovery of the Gnostic Gospels, and all non-canonical Gospels, it is proved that the canonization process of the Christian Church was borne through the political and theological battle, which arose in the late second century C.E., when the persecutions of Christians became a serious problem. At that time Irenaeus of Lyons proposed the four Gospels as the main canonized story of Jesus' life and mission, which definitely opposed to Marcion, who wanted only parts of Luke's Gospel to become a canon, because he wanted to separate the new covenant and Testament from the Old one, being prone to the Gnostic type of Christianity.[19] In the light of these discoveries, one thing is clear: the theology or the main Christian ideas were not unified and settled from the beginning. For example, it is a known fact that in 367 C.E., Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, declared that all noncanonical books should be destroyed in the land within his rule (Egypt).[20] Today, with the new comparative analysis of the apocrypha and early Christian artifacts whole symbolic subsystems are discovered which reveal the diverse multicultural connections with the so called "pagan world."

Unlike the Mosaic interpretation of Christianity, which necessarily contextualizes the Christian tradition in the discourse of the Prophetic writings, Jewish monotheism, and the idea that the Christ is the Messiah, there is also the other Christian tradition that can be interpreted in connection to the Hermetic philosophy, concepts of Pythagoreanism, and the Neoplatonic mysticism, which influenced Jewish mysticism. A large number of

the common Christian practices show how Christianity has emerged from the cults of the mystery religions, where actually the central rituals are related to the concepts of the birth and resurrection.

The initiation rites in the mystery cults were secret (Eleusis), but modern studies were able to reconstruct the main concepts, ideas, and ritual significance. The central idea in all of them is the enlightenment of the soul that has to undergo through death, which symbolizes the detachment from the biological, pragmatic, and earthly life and coming into the other, spiritual realm, as a new birth that is resurrection, where the consciousness moves in the spiritual life. The final goal of the spiritual life is that the person unifies with the powers of god himself, usually named and glorified as the "light of the world." These ideas ware present in worshiping Dionysus and Orphic traditions, where Orpheus was presented as a "fisherman" for human souls. Many symbols from the Orphic cults are found in the Christian tradition too. Just the resemblance between Dionysus and Jesus is stunning: both are the sons of supreme gods—Dionysus is son of Zeus; Jesus is son of god; both are the sons of virgins, Semele and Mary, both survived the attempt of being killed (Hera almost killed Dionysus; King Herod almost killed infant Jesus); both battle supernatural evil (Dionysus struggled against Titans; Jesus against Satan); Dionysus invents wine; Jesus transforms water into wine; Dionysus is wounded and is killed by Titans; Jesus is crucified by Romans and undergoes a shameful death; Dionysus becomes immortal and join his father Zeus; Jesus is resurrected to glory and unifies with his father; Dionysus punishes opponents to his divinity; Jesus will return on the judgment day to punish those who do not believe (Matt. 24-25; Rev. 19-20).[21]

In Mithraism, Mithras is presented as a solar deity of the whole universe, whose birth was on December 25, when Mithras would slay a bull (Taurus) as a form of a sacrifice, from which a new life arises. The initiation ceremony has represented usually a spiritual rebirth where a person which undergoes through the symbolic death, now is re-born spiritually and then is committed to follow the principles of light and life.[22] Mystery cults in Eleusis were associated with worshiping mother goddesses: Demeter, the goddess of fertility and life, who gave grain to the world as the substance of life—bread, and her daughter Persephone, was abducted by the underworld king Hades (Aidoneus).[23]

During the Roman Empire's time a more popular cult than that of Demeter, was Isis, an Egyptian mother goddess, usually portrayed as a goddess that holds her little infant son, Horus. The Roman writer, Apuleius, in his work *The Golden Ass,* describes his mystery experience by which the goddess Isis appears to him as a savior. He gives the details about his religious enlightenment, explaining that this new spiritual life gives him blessing, and knowledge of what life and death are, and the goddess Isis appears to him as a redeemer who saved him from his animal soul.[24]

Some research shows possible connections between the Egyptian worship of Amon-Ra and an understanding of the Christian god, some concentrates on the important role of John the Baptist, who influenced Jesus and even might be that both were associated with the Essene movement which assumes even the possible influences of Buddhism and probable connections with the mysticism of Pythagorean schools that influenced some Essenes groups of the Jewish scholars.[25] Definitely, some form of the Jewish mysticism is ascribed to John the Baptist and after the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery

there is a serious attempt of scholars to explain the connection of John the Baptist and

Jesus in a new way.

Burton L. Mack argues in his book *The Lost Gospel of Q* (1993) that the whole

methodology of the Biblical scholarship in the past was wrong, because they wanted to

prove the existence of the Christian community along with the appearance of the first

Christian texts. The modern comparative religion approach to Early Christianity shows

that this was not the case. The Christian movement was developed despersivelly

throughout the Mediterranean area, North Africa, and the parts of the Middle East where

the originated Jewish Christian sect was separated from the new becoming Christians and

their way of beliefs and practices. A. N. Wilson, in his book *Jesus* (1992), tries to prove

the point that in the Mediterranean area actually spread the religion of John the Baptist

rather than that of Jesus, which was a different type of a Christian movement more prone

to the mystery cults, so important to religious practices of the ancient Greco-Roman

world.[26] Today, modern research shows that more than half a century passed after Jesus'

death the existence of the larger and ideologically unified Christian community in

Jerusalem or any other Jewish territory can be confirmed.[27] The modern biblical studies

as well as comparative religious studies in Early Christianity concentrated on the

anthropological Biblical research and archeology, comparative linguistics, history of art,

and contextualization of the Hellenistic culture of that time. The main idea was to

historically contextualize Christianity as a social, political, and religious movement (R.

Stark) "painfully" separating the theological and dogmatic aura from the facts (D.

Crossan).[28]

Perhaps, before half a century ago no one could predict how far and beyond any expectations Biblical connectionism along with the history of art, history, church history, comparative literature, and religion would progress. Presently, most are familiar with the enormous popularity of David Brown's novel *Da Vinci's Code*, which was inspired with the earlier popular book by Michel Baigent, Richard Leigh, Henry Lincoln *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (1982), the adventours scholars in comparative literature and journalists. Both, Brown's novel and the historical mystery about Jesus' blood line *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* --the Merovingian dynasty in France is the result of the direct bloodline of Jesus and Mary Magdalene--were inspired by the works and research style of Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince, which specialized in the theories of paranormal, historical and religious mysteries, and the occult tradition. The crown of their research appeared in the bestseller- -a pseudo-history book that uses a methodology "if it is possible to happen, then it has happened, or if it is possible to see this way, then it signifies this"-- *The Templar Revelation: Secret Guardians of the True Identity of Christ* (1997) where Picknett and Prince constructed a sensational, new story of Christianity as a 2.000 year hoax. [29]

According to Picknett's and Prince's theory, Jesus was a competitor with John the Baptist, who was his religious leader. John the Baptist is presented as the mystic who was introduced into the Egyptian mystery religions of Isis and Osiris. Their theory goes so far that Jesus' group, which separated from John the Baptist, was actually responsible for John the Baptist's death through their treason. Jesus himself organized the treason because he was expected to become the successor to John the Baptist, but the honorary position was given to Simon Magus. Also, Picknett and Prince disputed the role of Mary Magdalene in early Christianity. Picknnett claimed that she had a "ritualized" sexual

relationship with Jesus, signifying through the sexual act the access to god himself and unification with him.[30] Mary Magdalene was presented as the main "initiator" into the sacred mystery cult to which Jesus belonged. Finally, Jesus himself was described as an "aggressive" political charismatic leader who was introduced into the magical powers by John' the Baptist, but his miracles were publicly acknowledged after John the Baptist's beheading.[31] Their final saying on Jesus' role in the early stage of the formation of Christianity was that Jesus hid from his disciples the mystery and initiated knowledge learned from John the Baptist, so he manipulated the whole movement. As the main support for their thesis these authors use the interpretation of the term "Christ," which at the time of John the Baptist in his circle meant simply the initiation ritual into the circle by baptism. [32]

Picknett and Prince, prior to their popular book *The Templar Revelation,* published the text *Turin Shroud: In Whose Image.* They concentrated on the mysterious picture titled *Shroud of Turin,* the 13-1/2 foot long piece of fabric having a photo-like image of the crucified body of a man. The Catholic Encyclopedia interprets the *Shroud of Turin* as an extraordinary image that projects "the Holy See." Picknett and Prince tried to prove that this photolike-picture is the work of Leonardo who was able to use a *camera obscura* technique. The *Shroud of Turin* became one of the most important relics to Pope Sixtus IV. Picknett and Prince posed the question: Why would Leonardo "fake" the image of Jesus' body for the Christian Church? For a true believer this would be an offence. Their final interpretation of the *Shroud of Turin* is that Leonardo himself was involved in the battle against the Church. The head on the picture appears to be beheaded, which might send a message that the real leader was beheaded, and to Leonardo this

leader might be John the Baptist. Picknett and Prince created an idea that Leonardo might be associated with the underground movement that was oriented towards the Johannite tradition, and that he developed the web of encoded symbols which generate the movement opposite of the traditional Catholic Church. Consequently, Picknett and Prince concluded that there is a possibility of connecting what is known as the legacy of the Priory of Sion to Leonardo's work and possibly his religious convictions.[33]

Of course, the alleged secret organization of the Priory of Sion for which it was claimed that was founded in the 11th century and created by the medieval order of Knights Templars to protect a secret about the bloodline of Jesus, supposedly continued in the Merovingian line of rulers, was shown to be actually a pseudo-history. Namely, May 1956 was the first time when this organization was registered as an existent society and was established by Pierre Plantard. He was also responsible, along with his friend, de Cherisey, for the production of the forged documents known as *Secret Dossiers of Henri Lobineau*, planting them in the French Bibliothéque Nationale and using the pseudonym "Philippe Toscan du Plantier." The content of these forged documents was presented in the form of different parchments used to prove the existence of the Priory of Sion and the line of the Grand Masters. The list of the Grand Master includes names such as Marie de Saint-Clair (1220-1266), Leonardo Da Vinci (1510-1519), Isaac Newton (1691-1727), Victor Hugo (1844-1885), and Claude Debussy (1885-1918). On the *Secret Dossiers* i.e., a modern myth, is based Dan Brown's novel *Da Vinc'si Code*.[34]

The most appealing argumentation in both of their published works was that in Leonardo's *The Last Supper* located in Santa Maria delle Grazie (Mila) to the left of Jesus from the viewer's point of view is painted Mary Magdalene rather than John the

Apostle. The whole theory of Picknett and Prince is laid-out in the fashion of a mystery story, where the scholars act as detectives and re-write the meaning and signification processes of the whole history of Christianity. Seven years after their popular book, Dan Brown's novel reached enormous popularity and, even more interesting, engaged people of different agendas in the great public debate in the American Media. What this public debate about Dan Brown's book opened for the American society was that common religious men and women showed fear and disappointment that the cannon of religion, with the whole meaning of Christianity, could be highly disputed if separated from the theology and main Christian set of beliefs, and put into the historical perspective with the interpretative freedom from the researcher's point of view. The true Christians asked themselves: Is it possible that the Christian Church and Churches hid from the public and their own believers a "thread of heresy" for more than two-thousand years? Is it possible that what was believed to be on Leonardo's picture *The Last Supper* is actually an encoded story of Jesus' betrayal? Is it possible the "John's gesture," an index finger pointing up, is a sign on *The Last Supper* that denotes and defines Jesus as a traitor?

This example of reinterpretation of Leonardo's signification of religious symbols in his paintings shows what is the power of the religious symbolization: they tend to be open to interpretation as time changes and the structures of society changes aspiring in modern time for secularism rather than theocentrism. One might say; these, in many of ways, "paranoid" interpretations seem to be strictly secular and critical to the religious establishment. These free interpretations of Christianity today radically dispute the apocalyptical, the eschatological, and the Christological picture of Jesus that the Christian theology and religious establishment preferred for Jesus as the "wise teacher" or even

Jesus as only a man and the charismatic leader of a religious movement. Although only a novel, David Brown's book opened a war in the media between the pious Christians with their Churches and his poetic license to use the research of Picknett and Prince for his plot of the hoax story that lasts for centuries. For example L.D. Meagher's for CNN book review concludes about Picknett and Prince:

> In the end, Picknett and Prince propose that a murky conspiracy has been at work for nearly 2.000 years. Two conspiracies in fact: one, involving all denominations of the Christian faith and spearheaded by the Vatican, suppresses the truth while the other, stage-managed by the Priory of Sion, hides it. Their theory makes the "X-Files" look like "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington". The publicity for 'The Templar Revelation" claims the book "could shatter the foundation of the Christian Church.' It's been more than a year since it was first published in Great Britain and there's no indication religious institutions are beginning to crumble.
> (http://www.cnn.com/books/reviews/9902/19/templar, accessed June 6, 2006)

The making of Christianity a mystery story with a paranoid plot, of course, is an appealing and new method that opens material interesting for scholars, writers, academia, those open and prone to secular ideas, but definitely seems offensive to pious Christians. Meagher ironically concludes in his review that there is no sign of the breaking of religious institutions by all of these alternative truths about Christianity. This is, of course, a simple truism, but still doesn't give a full explanation of why and how Christianity exists, and even reaffirms its position in the time when science, history,

comparative methodologies developed in diverse scholarship projects offer more common sense explanations and answers to human existence and problems, than the ones offered in religion.

The question of belief and what are the limits of possible beliefs, is a critical question that Semiotic Theory of Religion vigorously discusses, because sometimes beliefs are also viewed as the expression of foolishness or craziness. So, the questions for the Semiotic Theory of Religion are: How does the human mind distinguish foolish ideas from righteous ones, or acts of free imagination from the valuable beliefs? Of course, when talking about the nature of belief, in the semiotic approach, one should always take into consideration the faculties/abilities of the human mind and what are the limits of free imagination.

1d) The Nature of Belief and Cognitive Limits of Belief

The nature of belief has been one of the crucial questions that also has amazed semiotician C. S. Peirce. His idea is that the source of belief can be anything. This view is supported with an idea that any object of knowledge can become signified not just as the "real" object of knowledge, but can also become a symbol, a sign for something else. Peirce expands the theory of knowledge in semiotics. The object of knowledge is not fixed only as an object in reality, it is only a sign, so it can change or switch from the fixed meaning to the open sign again.[35]

Based on the research and in-depth study for this dissertation, the Peircean concept of belief is founded on the strong influence, but also criticism of David Hume's skepticism, who put in question the continuum of consciousness existence, metaphysics, god, and morality. One work that specifically has triggered Peirce has been Hume's

criticism of the religious miracles.[36] First, Hume argues that the consciousness is problematic in its existence, because it is rather the entity that emerges from various discontinuous time fragments. Besides this problem, Hume thinks that this "disappearing self" is in the constant change of the roles while processing through experience knowledge about the world: (1) consciousness first becomes one with the object of knowledge and so it looses itself in the process of understanding the object; (2) consciousness interprets the object of knowledge, putting it into the perspective of causality; (3) and the final circle of knowledge is an achievement of differentiation of the object and the self, distinguishing one from the other.[37] According to Hume, the most dangerous part of "knowing" of an object is the application of causation, which, he perceives, is one of the greatest limitations of human knowledge. The idea that one event makes another happen assumes that there is a necessary connection of events, but Hume is skeptical that the causation is a sufficient explanatory theory either for the object of knowledge, or the problem of consciousness/the self. According to Hume, what we know as the self is established as the habit and the self as a continuum is explained through the cause and effect pattern, so, it is a belief rather than the objective knowledge.[38]

Analyzing the problem of superstitions, for example, Hume thinks that the belief in miracles is one of the superstitious elements of reason, and he is critically positing the question: Why does the mind use the explanation of events that are contrary to logic and reason? Hume thinks that the problem is in the connection between the impressions (matters of fact) and the association of impressions with the ideas. While ideas are presented as the rational conceptualization of reality and backed up by reason, the impressions are derived from experiences, and finally, they are associated with ideas.[39]

The human predicament is to apply causation logic to every single thing. The problem

occurs when the idea is associated with the impression as a short-cut explanation that

denotes the pattern between the cause and effect. The whole human perception is intuitive

rather than scientific; so every day we see the sun rising from the East and going down in

the West, and our perception that is based on the causation intuitive logic is wrong, while

scientific proof that the sun doesn't go anywhere is truth.[40] In this sense, Hume sees the

par excellance problem: How can one be sure about anything that is perceived and what

might be the consequences of the limitation of knowledge by causality?

In summarizing the problem, to Hume religion appears as a critical problem

because faith is based on the acceptance of miracles or stories that are imaginative and

symbolic, rather than rational and logical. Hume rejects miracles, because they contradict

to the laws of nature. Hume also doubts god because all our knowledge is derived from

experience and therefore all our knowledge is a construct based on a-posteriori access to

reality. The miracles presented in the Gospels contradict to reason, and so the miracles

should be suspended as the suitable reason for being religious.

Peirce, however, would have a hard time to accept this argument. He states in his

text *The Laws of Nature and Hume's Argument against Miracles* that this is a wrong

argumentation based only on a simple inductive logical method, which doesn't apply real

aspects of probabilities that are even becoming the part of modern scientific reasoning.

He goes so far to confront Hume's argument with the definition of miracles by the church

fathers: "The fathers of the church defined a miracle as performance so far beyond

ordinary human powers as to show that the agent must have had extraordinary super-

human aid," and he states that Hume was not familiar with this definition, but rather

Thomas Aquinas's, who opposed miracle to the law of nature. Peirce argues that what

Hume sees is only the "regularity" of the phenomena in the law of nature that is projected

by the scientific method.[41] Actually, Peirce proves that the irregularity of the phenomena

is a common aspects of the modern scientific theory of probability, but also that the

irregularity of phenomena is the issue with which humans live everyday. To count the

Gospel story of miracles as "evidence" that counter reason because it is an extraordinary

story with nothing like it in history or in other life experiences, to Peirce, is an absurd

idea. To him the objective probabilities are statistical facts that have an origin in the

insurance business, subjective probabilities, or likelihoods, all of which rely on

preconceived notions.[42] What Peirce says is the following, yes, the sun appears as

traveling around the Earth, so the Ptolomaic view is common to our experience based on

perceptions, but at the same time we know the scientific truth, and this is not going to

change the perceptions in anyway. So, the sun can co-exist in two different aspects of

signification, one perceptive, and another scientific, but also can function in different

cultural signification processes as one can find in ancient Greeks, to whom the sun was

the God Helios.

On the matter of belief, Peirce comes close to a problem presented and outlined

by Hume. Still, Peirce goes further in his inquiry and asks why don't we accept the

simple beliefs that are the most opportune, convenient, and comfortable to us as truths?

The belief is a will powered conviction. In his text *How to Make Our Ideas Clear* (1878)

published in *Popular Science Monthly 12* Peirce says: "And what, then is belief? It is the

demi-cadence which closes a musical phrase in the symphony of our intellectual life. We

have seen that it has just three properties: First, it is something that we are aware of;

second, it appeases the irritation of doubt; and third, it involves the establishment in our nature of a rule of action, or say for short, a habit."[43] When Peirce investigates the power of beliefs, he sees that lots of beliefs are indeed in contradiction to reality, but a person who believes feels that this belief, although against the objective reality, is somehow settled and he/she doesn't think that the statement of the belief is in contradiction to reality. Peirce asks a further question: why then don't we have only beliefs, but also knowledge that is backed up by reason and science? His answer is that beliefs are not simply voluntary things, but are settled not only by our faculties and abilities of the mind, but also by and in the community. In his text *The Basis of Pragmaticism* Peirce writes: "Now a sign as ordinarily understood is an implement of intercommunication."[44] If anyone would simply believe what he/she wants, there would no longer be even a possibility for any communication.[45] That every person has a different explanation of what is the sun, god, or goodness, this would mean a total disintegration of the human race. Therefore, all beliefs are settled in the community. The communication community establishes a simple system of language—to every object it is assigned the word, and the word is encoded through the system of written signs, letters. One can interpret Peirce's view on religious beliefs as a very interesting concept. Religious beliefs are those which trigger equally the imagination, the powers of life, and reason, and are settled in the ideal communication community. This ideal communication community reflects what is taken as the norm of belief, which now reflects its value and content throughout time of the past, present, and future.

Surprisingly, to Peirce, knowledge established by science is the highest aspect of beliefs, because there is no possibility to know something in the context of absolute

objective knowledge or in the realm of *noumena*. According to Peirce, every science

begins with the hypothesis, and this hypothesis should be confirmed by the methodology

that the scientists have established. Science is not the absolute knowledge. It is only the

best belief we can finally settle upon: science acknowledges the object of knowledge as

independent of our intentions or opinions, by science is confirmed only as a thing that is

put in the perspective of predictable and regular laws, and when the hypothesis is

confirmed by the experiment, we can agree easily to one conclusion.[46]

Peirce finally concludes his observation on the problem of beliefs: belief is a

habit, and doubt is the lack of a habit.[47] On one hand, the religious beliefs and simple

personal convictions are beliefs that often bring forth doubts, a sense of relativism, or

even rejections. On the other hand, beliefs are necessary to straighten a person's will and

power as a condition from which one behaves in a specific way when the occasion arises.

Without beliefs it would not be possible to act and fulfill the practical aspect of life. The

doubt is something that urges a person on the journey of inquiry, but this is rather a rare

moment of our existence than the rule according to which we act. We accept beliefs as

long as we have no cause to doubt. Truth is a fixed belief.[48]

There are definitely different ways how beliefs can be fixed in the community: by

tradition, by authority, and by accepting what is the most reasonable or favorable

explanation. What is important for religious studies is that the fixation of beliefs is one of

the great parts of every religious tradition. It has been discussed on the former pages

about the canonization processes in Christianity, and how this process was crucial to the

formation of settled Christian ideas in theology and in the Church. It seems that the

Mosaic interpretation overpowered any Hermetic or philosophical interpretation of

Christianity. One can also see that even a forgery or a myth—something made up and thus the result of imagination--can become sensational for the public discussions and viewed as real. Consequently, often the imaginative ideas act as the real ones, as one could see in the examples of the popular story about the secret society Priory of Sion which was a hoax, but still it has been engaged in a labyrinth of false connections to scholars and writers. The best example is given in the popularity of Dan Brown's book *Da Vinci's Code*.

Eco in his collection of essays, *Serendipities: Language & Lunacy* (1998) discusses in what way a myth, a fake story, or a fake narrative can become a part of history or an important cultural idiom.[49] The essay *The Force of Falsity* discusses known historical forgeries, which were created and designed to maintain the desired worldview, to sway political directions of the rulers, produce a feeling that the world is governed by the higher secret authority on which a common person cannot have any impact, so called the conspiracy theory. Eco notes some examples: (1) the official stand of the Medieval Christian Church (Eastern and Western) that the earth is a flat disk in the shape of a tabernacle with Jerusalem in the middle, the very idea of Cosmas Indicopleustes, the geographer committed to the Church fundamentalism, which idea became accepted as official for a thousand years after its publication; (2) the Donation of Constantine, a forged document by the Roman Church between 750-850 C.E. that proves how the Roman Emperor Constantine I had granted Pope Sylvester I and his successors as those who has the right to rule over the city of Rome, Italy, and the Western Roman Empire; (3) the letter of Prester John to the Pope and the West in which is described the non-existent land of non-existent ruler where one can even find the beings of imagination

such as hippopotami, metagallinari, cametennus, tinsirete, onagers, gryphon, centaurs. This letter is believed to be the main motivation for the third Crusades under the leadership of Frederick I; (4) the manifest of Roscirucians for which it was believed to exist as the secret society, the organization allegedly established in 1615, but no person has ever seen one Rosicrucian, so it is most likely to be the popular idea of utopian aspirations of the intellectual elite; (5) and the text the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* that was written as the satire on the events during the French Revolution between 1797 and 1798 and has made the whole literary journey from France to tsarist Russia. There, a Russian Monk, Sergej Nilus, added to the original text his vision of reality. He was inspired with the romantic Rasputinian mysterious religious experiences, so he associated the idea of "the Antichrist" with the underground movement embedded in the secret societies of Europe i.e., Masonry, which he has presented to have an intention to provoke the line of revolutions in all European countries in order to enhance social injustice and ensure the mass control of the rich ruling class over the common people, adding the chauvinistic perspective on the Jewish nation, accusing them that the final goal of this conspiracy was de-Christianization and conversion of the ruling class to Judaism.[50]

In examining the nature of belief one could easily see that even fake tales, false theories, or ideas opposite to reality and reason can become accepted in the society, so we can interpret such ideas as the myth-making constructs. Analyzing the unifying aspect of all fake stories/new myths that caught on and have become accepted, Eco states that the power of these stories lays in their persuasiveness. Some historical events that resulted with the unexpectable consequences seem to be not logical or believable at all. With the split between the Christian Church in the East and the West to true Christian may seem

incredible and foolish. So, if one would add to the plot of events, the text such as the Donation of Constantine, the split would look more logical and acceptable to people. The same power of persuasiveness can be seen in the anti-Semitic text of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The idea of the total conspiracy theory is a short-cut story that puzzles together a complex situation of modern political developments that are going astray, against the rational reasoning, against social, political, and economic piecemeal, making dialogs in societies, so it is easy to piece together the story that makes sense and blames someone for all of what was done wrong in the complex reality. After the critical observations of how does the society accept as the truth, the fake tales or stories, which then make them the modern myths, Eco concludes his text with an observation that the "cultivated person's first duty is to be always prepared to rewrite the encyclopedia."

Eco's point is again important for the Semiotic Theory of Religion. In the modern world that is split between the religious and the secular worldviews, there is an attempt to analyze the main beliefs of religions as ideas that are presented in the stories that have the elements of the myth, and therefore, of the fake. Naturally, no one immediately associates the problem of the fake as closely related to the religions of the world because these mythical stories became such an important part of the common human knowledge and are associated with the cultural norms and values that are observed by the global community as an important source of culture, society, and personhood.

1e) Eco's Differentiation of Religious Symbolism

In every religion there are the fixed set of beliefs and practices by orthodoxy, which is given as the primary resource for a specific religious worldview. Once when this code is absorbed, a believer has to engage his/her own experience by the power of one's

own reasoning and imagination in order to rejuvenate faith and to understand what religion stands for in reality.

Analyzing the power of religious symbols Eco gives an interesting analysis on how did the vision of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, who experienced the mystical presentation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the 17th century, became accepted by a large amount of the Catholic followers in the 20th century.[51] Margaret Mary Alacoque was born in 1671 in France, and after surviving a rheumatic fever at age 11, she became a devotee of the Blessed Sacrament. A few years later she joined the Order of Our Lady of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial where Mary Margaret received visions of the "Lord Himself," who appeared to her and asked her to be devoted to his sacred heart because the heart is the center of true love.[52] Eco states that Pope Pius XII, who wrote the Encyclical that promulgated the devotion to the Sacred Heart in 1956, definitely knew that the heart is a human organ with the crucial physical function for the organism's survival, and not a place of a religious or spiritual significance or sense of love, but he still insisted on the symbolic significance of the sacred heart of Jesus: "Who does not see, venerable brethren, that opinions of this kind are in entire disagreement with the teachings which Our predecessors officially proclaimed from this seat of truth when approving the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus? Who would be so bold as to call that devotion useless and inappropriate to our age which Our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, declared to be 'the most acceptable form of piety'?"[53] It was in the Middle Ages when the majority of people believed that all human emotions and feelings, especially the sense of love, were placed in the heart, so the heart was understood not as an organ, but as the place where the soul reflects all turmoil in the emotional sense. The

scientific and commonly accepted knowledge in the 20th century that the heart is an organ with strictly physical function didn't put aside the authentic mystical experience of Margaret Mary. In her vision a symbol of the heart appears as the sign that serves as the vehicle and detonator for the "transcendent voices" of what Jesus stands for and what true faith in Christian parameters is, or should be. In this sense, religion always involves the action as semiosis—interpretation of the signs that are open to its interpreter which acknowledges at the same time present other higher concepts hidden in the religious message. Eco accepts the definition given by Peirce who says that a sign is "an action, or influence, which is, or involves, an operation of three subjects such as a sign, its object, and its intrpretant, this tri-relative influence not being in any way resolvable into an action between pairs." (C.P. 5.484).[54]

A religious symbol is not only a picture of something that represents something else by the virtue of analogy. It is a full representament of the communicative process between the sign that is open for interpretation to its interpreter, and at the same time an object that stands open for interpretation as it is in the role of dynamic object. This object then transforms one thing to the other. This thing might be even a concept, but under its appearance underlies the importance of the deep religious experience as the faith and mystery. Religious symbols and the religious highest concepts are similar to nebulas and are religious symbols because they are open for interpretation. They are open signs in a sense that they are often ambiguous, empty and full at the same time. Analyzing symbols as archetypes and the Sacred, Eco concludes that these symbols as universal images and representations of the collective unconsciousness such as solar, lunar, vegetal, meteorological representations are fundamentally vague. This vast openness of religious

symbols gives the tri-level hermeneutic circle in order that the symbol can be understood: a religious symbol appears as a sign which involves interpreter, but at the same time appears as the object whose identity is changed by the virtue of analogy with the other object whose meaning is more open and again involves the interpreter's experience to participate in its transformation.

According to Eco, for any religious tradition the most difficult problem is to translate the exegesis of one religion into the other culture. Although every exegesis tends to give a strict and orthodox interpretation, the religious symbols are so vastly open and require immediate and often spontaneous reactions of believers that every translation requires as well reinterpretation. Every religion, of course, has symbols, even more so, a system of symbols. In every religion allegorical representations are crucial for understanding fully what this religion is about. As Eco thinks, "allegory transforms an experience into a concept and a concept into an image, but so that the concept remains always defined and expressible by the image." Once when the system of symbols is transferred into other cultures the interpretation of specific symbols might slightly change or these symbols can be accepted as important because they are analogous with the codes and symbols of the other culture. One example is that of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe.

Eric R. Wolf, an anthropologist and an expert in popular religion associated with their main symbols did research about the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe that is perceived as the main national symbol of Mexico as well as the main patron saint of all Mexican Catholics. The Virgin Mary of Guadalupe is perceived as a stunning symbol, the main refuge for the poor, especially women, and the common people of Mexico. Also, under this symbol were fought two great battles—the War for Independence of Mexico and the

revolution led by Emiliano Zapata and his followers. Wolf, interested in the specifics of the regional religious past, found a curious fact that on the mountain Tepeyac where was built the shrine to "Our Lady of Guadalupe" was prior to the Christian worshiping place a shrine to the mother, fertility goddess, Tonantzin, which in translation means Our Mother and was often addressed by people as Our Lady. Also, Tonantzin was surrounded with the symbol of the moon as well as was the Virgin Mary.

When in 1531 the Virgin Mary was said to appear to Juan Diego, she addressed him in the area's native language, and demanded of him that the archbishop of Mexico build the church on the hill where she appeared. Diego's request was denied several times, and finally, it is said, the Virgin Mary acted miracouslly; she caused roses to grow in the desert soil, gathered roses in the Indian's cloak, and gave them to Juan Diego as a proof of her presence. When Diego came with the bundle of roses before the archbishop the Virgin Mary miraculously appeared and the archbishop soon built the shrine in her behalf.

Researching the church documentation about the Virgin Mary's appearance, Wolf has discovered that the Catholic Spanish establishment was very much aware of the syncretism that occurred between the goddess Tonantzin and the Virgin Mary. Two church officials, F. Bernardino de Sahagún and F. Martin de León, stated that on the hill which the common Mexican people address as Our Mother or Our Lady is actually the old goddess, Tonantzin. They even express their fears that this kind of mixing of the old goddess with the Virgin Mary might have some "satanic code" or the whole worshiping can actually be idolatrous for those who address the Virgin Mary as Tonanzin. Wolf presents an interesting quote by F. Jacinto de la Serna who stated discussing the

pilgrimage to the Virgin Mary in this way " . . . it is the purpose of the wicked to [worship] the goddess and not the Most Holy Virgin, or both together."[55]

The Mexican people didn't consciously compare these two religious symbols and made a simple replacement as the result of their rational decision, but the long process of semiosis was involved in this substitution. Semiosis is a process of having a dynamic object as the signifier which significance is in correlation between the interpreter, its interpretation, and the possible modification of a dynamic object by the interpretation.

1f) Aesthetical Hermeneutics of Religious Experience

The semiotic process is similar in its methodology to the process defined as the hermeneutic circle by Hans Georg Gadamer.[56] Trying to find a new methodology for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Wilhelm Dilthey and H. G. Gadamer investigate how to explain why and how works of art, literature, mythologies, philosophies, religions, and of different cultural values persisted throughout time, and even are still of value in the modern world where science is the dominant tool for explaining reality. Gadamer asks the following questions: How is it possible that a modern reader or an intellectual can relate with the same passion to an ancient Greek tragedy? How is it possible, for example, that the text of Sophocles's *Antingona* can be still understood and its meaning recovered but the audience does not live in the Athens of 5 B.C.E?

It can be easily recognized that the context of reading has drastically changed throughout the cultural and historical developments. While, in the Athens of the 5th century B.C.E. the tragedy had a great ritualistic character and was played on the behalf of the god of darkness, Dionysius, celebrating his "resurrection," usually in early or mid April. The tragedy represented the great collective catharses which involved the whole

community. The modern form, however, is reduced basically on the contact between a single person and the text (whether it is dramatized on the stage) stripped from its original mythological and ritual character. These generational, political, and cultural changes are called in the German tradition the "*zeitgeist.*"

According to Gadamer, it is amazing that the meaning of Antigone's great moral action--choosing death in order to save the memory of her loving brother Polynices by giving him a proper burial and homage, and opposing the absolute rule of the king Creon--is still preserved in its original sense. How is it possible that this meaning is not lost throughout historical changes and translations of original Sophocles' text? Wilhelm Dilthey and Hans Georg Gadamer have found an answer in the human ability to reconstruct the past involving the cultural and individual potentials in a sense to circle the experiential path that was given as an input in the original text. This means that every person who is capable of understanding the tragic event when read Sophocles' *Antigone* has, on the objective level, enough and efficient information that is preserved in a proper translations, commentaries, and understanding of what was the Greek tragedy as the literary form, but also has freely open one's self to become one with the characters and can experience the tragic event in the same way as the drama unfolds in the actions of the main protagonists.

In order to explain the horizon of understanding, Gadamer powerfully uses Schleirmacher's description of the aesthetic experience that is similar to the process of divination by which "all individuality is a manifestation of universal life and hence everyone carries a tiny bit of everyone else within himself, so that divination is stimulated by comparison with oneself."[57] In this sense, the peak of the aesthetic

experience is in the transformation of oneself into the aesthetic object, where the truth of this object becomes as well the truth of its observer, but both transcend this recognition of the universal human value as the act of collective consciousness that stands potentially open for the future. The hermeneutic circle is like the kaleidoscope of mirrors that unfolds one image that reenacts itself through time. In other words, one is able to grasp a meaning of *Antigone* if it is able to reenact the same moral feelings, doubts, and experiences, as the part of him/her, the tragedy of confronting rules where morality appears as the center of one's autonomous acting. Gadamer would say that one transforms one's self into the other.

To Gadamer, hermeneutics appears as the "art of understanding" that is circular. He even defines the hermeneutical rule as the "whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of whole."[58] It is similar to what M. Heidegger has defined as the hermeneutical circle that can be expressed in terms of "the most primordial kind of knowing," where intuition such as fore-sight or fore-conception is in action.

The hermeneutic circle appears as a great methodology from the mid 20th century that has been able to explain how occurs the transformation of the aesthetical and moral potentials from the distant historical into a modern time.

In this sense, what is given in the example of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe, when in the 16th and 17th centuries indigenous people from Mexico at the same time greeted the goddess Tonanzin and the Virgin Mary making the identification of the two female goddesses is not a simple translation of one symbol into the other, but it is a process of interpretation where two different traditions – the indigenous and the Christians – are becoming one in a sense that the meaning of the one, almost, divinely,

becomes the other. Syncretism as blending of two different traditions is a powerful

expression of the human ability to correlate two different cultures and their symbolic

idioms interpreting both in a new form and a new experience.

The discovery of the aesthetic experience that has become a new salient point of

modern philosophy from Kant to the post-modernist thought could be seen as crucial for

the interpretation of the religious experience, but also for the movements that try to

primarily concentrate around the value of personal religious experience, spiritual growth,

and new interpretations of the traditional religious concepts. Movements that would

imply redefinition of the old concepts or a search for a new spirituality are usually

perceived as off-shoots of the mainstream religions such as religious syncretism, new

religious movements, and the modern audience cults. The elitism and high training of the

members of these groups often require the sophistication of the religious concepts,

symbols, or unlimited religious objects such as deities, spirituality, or other intelligible

forms. For instance, the religious training in the Wicca movement requires of the

members a high level of study and intellectual training in a specific either pagan, some

mystical, or ancient tradition that the group arranged by their interests is dedicated to.

This intellectualism is then used for designing the rituals that would enhance the religious

experience and achieve a full dedication of the member of the movement to the group and

their practices.[59] This new spirituality can be comprehended by circling a religious

experience, similar as described in acquiring the aesthetic experience in modern

hermeneutics. Religious experience, as C.G. Jung would define is indisputable, and

represents the pivotal point for a person dedicated to a religious tradition. It requires of

its members deep "divination" processes in which one's individuality becomes one with the acquired religious object or power in order to transcend it in the future.[60]

Kant was the first who defined the importance of an aesthetic experience in the discourse of modern philosophy in his book *Critique of Judgment*. As he defined, the real aesthetic object when it reaches its actualization through one's experience, it escapes any utilization, interest, or even conceptualization biased on the schematism of reason. The aesthetic object becomes real through one's experience demanding the normative validity. The individuality and extraordinarity of aesthetic sublimation is so important in the circling of the aesthetic judgment that one feels his/her objectivity is not questionable, but because the individuality is crucial in expressing one's tastes, this supposable universality is only tentative and not real. In this sense, the aesthetic judgment is defined as "a free play between the imagination and understanding" where one becomes the other, and the other becomes the one, and both transcend a possible universality by opening a sensible meaning that transcend beyond the limits of time continuity.[61]

Eco acknowledges the importance of Kantian aesthetics and later hermeneutics, which both have led modern investigations from aesthetics and epistemology to redefine the object of knowledge. If the hermeneutic circle insists on the point that the understanding horizon of a true aesthetic object means for the subject to become one with its object in the act of his/her sublime experience, this does not mean that differentiation of the subject, and the object has become an invalid inquiry for sufficient understanding of the world or even applicable to the aesthetics.[62] The point of their identification means that the aesthetical object can no longer be seen as a static object, let alone as only an object. The importance of the aesthetic object that unfolds itself through the free play of

parts and the whole is in the reaching of the understanding that can be explained as the identification of the subject of knowledge and its object in experience, where this experience, then, in the breadth of life into the object and its intention becomes fulfilled action.

In many of ways the dynamics of the aesthetic object with the underlying intention to integrate the subject of knowledge in a process of understanding is similar to the grasping of the knowledge about the highest spiritual objects of religion. The objects such as gods, god, the ultimate reality, angels, spirits, mandalas, and enormous range of other religious dynamic symbols are intentionally unlimited objects that engage the subject of cognition into the process which result is in the achievement of the sublimity of experience and transcendence. This kind of experience that is described as important for modern art in the aesthetics of the 19th and 20th century is present in religion from its beginnings. In the primary oral and basic traditions, rituals are still associated with the mystical and transient experiences.

For instance, in the Navajo culture, the manadalas are important. When the Navajo medicine man constructs with the colored sand the Creation image (a symbolic picture), it has the intentional healing purposes or it is strictly used for a ritual of the tribe, but for the public display no mandala is ever finished. The purpose of the mandala construction is to reenact the sacred powers of the Mother Earth and to apply this power to some purposes such as a healing ceremony. The mandala is to restore an "inner" lost balance that is believed to be expressed in illnesses. The one to whom the mandala is dedicated has to undergo through the transformation of consciousness and become one with the powers of the universe. The person that undergoes the ritual must be encircled

by the sand image to regain the balance with the universe. C.G. Jung explains the purpose

of the Navajo mandala as bringing "a sick person back into harmony with himself and

with the cosmos." [63]

In analyzing the example of the Navajo mandala one can recognize that the

Navajo people perceive the power of their mandala symbol as unlimited within their

cultural experience, but they also set well the limits of interpretation that come, one might

say, from their cultural code. In the New York museum of the Navajo, all mandalas are

presented unfinished because the pure presentation of the mandala as an object without

any healing purposes and engagement of real actors of the ritual can be considered

"sacrilege" to the Navajo people.[64] The point here is that every religious object that has

the intention of the unlimited object also implies limitations that are crucial for its

understanding and is associated with the cultural code.

1g) Cognitive and Aesthetic Aspects of the Dynamic Sign and Unlimited Semiosis

The value of Eco's interpretation of Peirce is in his focusing on the dynamic sings

and unlimited semiosis and applying these concepts on the religious symbols and their

historical interpretations or re-interpretations. Religion always develops its tradition

through the dynamism of the signs, that are transformed into the symbols, and sometimes

goes beyond the expected, into the unlimited signification process that is, for example,

one of the chief characteristics of the mystical insights.

In summarizing this part of the research, once again, religion could be defined as

an open system of signs that is originated in the cognitive ability of the human mind to

become engaged in the process of an unlimited semiosis (un-ended signification

processes). The unlimited semiosis denotes a cognitive ability of the mind to create the

possible system of connections between all things, whether they are existent or not. This ongoing process of thought which can create the idea of arranged connections between all things is very much analogical to the ability of a traditional believer relating to the supreme idea existent in his/her religion that is traditionally known as the object of belief. This object of belief is defined usually as a superhuman/supernatural being or an ultimate reality, which, for different religions, is common to refer to as god, gods, could be also an all encompassing reality such as Brahman, consciousness of the world and supreme (Buddhahood), or creator (native peoples of Northern America or Africa). The semiotic theory defines the idea of this "absolute" as a dynamic object that is put in the process of unlimited semiosis. This ability of the human mind to project a supreme being (God), ultimate reality (Brahman, Buddahood), or the way of truth that reveals itself in the world (Tao), comes from a natural presupposition of our consciousness to project a connection between all things that are separated from the mind itself (thinking consciousness) in a way of purposive relationships. The unlimited semiosis process tends to outline the unified system in an ethical and aesthetical sense (theleology), which opens the meaningful solution for the existence of the self and the world, that is not, of course, a common ability of the actual natural world.

Besides this natural presupposition of the mind, there are also critical amounts of the cultural constraints that influence the process of thought and how a person reflects and outlines this unlimited semiosis. Accordingly, the Semiotic Theory of Religion interprets culture and the environment as the base for the interpretation of the unlimited semiosis. However, semiosis is a process that denotes the ability of the human mind, and,

so, is, on the one hand, universal to all humanity, but, on the other hand, is very much the matter of a personal experience.

As a personal experience the process of unlimited semiosis reflects the tripartite structure: the appearance of a generic sign that represents the unity of all things, the referent who stands as the observer of the generic sign, and finally, the intepretant, who creatively interprets in a meaningful way the sign that transforms itself into the symbolic system of signification. The idea that the cognitive ability of the religious is in the interpretative strength of the mind, which connects the imaginative and real, the conceptualized and phenomenal, is very much an aesthetical ability, whose roots are in going beyond what is known and given. This level of semiosis represents the unique aspect of the human aesthetical potential. Of course, the cognitive aspect always lacks to fully comprehend the process of knowledge because it separates it from the social contextualization and interaction with the world. Very often the unlimited semiosis process is constrained by the social aspect of the religious and religious practices. How do the symbols and their openness influence the religious praxis is the task for the next chapter to discuss.

CHAPTER II

SEMIOTIC THEORY OF RELIGION: COMMUNICATIVE PRAXIS AND LINGUIFICATION OF THE SACRED

2a) Evolution of Communicative Praxis and Ethical Semantics of J. Habermas

The transformation of religious consciousness into new forms of secular ethics, which transforms the highest religious ideals into the longings for universal ideas such as solidarity, equality, and justice in social reality, empowered by the idea of the welfare state and democracy, has deepened the crisis of the religious, requiring of the religious institutions to undergo through diverse processes of reforms and re-evaluation of their traditional canon, exegesis, and practice. There is also another serious problem. In the contemporary world it seems that the enlightenment ideal of scientific inquiry and the openness of communicative rationality has been challenged with an intention to instrumentalize the social, political, and humanistic world to the point of dehumanizing each person and putting everyone into the realm of numerical expression (every institution associates a numerical code with the real person) and quantitative value that is then used to express the human condition, situation, or a problem by the means of dry statistics which is reduced to the strictness of mathematical reasoning. The instrumental rationality depends on the advanced technological development that tends to build greater and greater control by means of the administrative society. This control engages the greater and greater institutional, political, and social control which dehumanizes every

individual of society. The administrative society threatens every individual with the loss of one's true identity, so the only protection against loosing one's human value is to search for any form of spirituality or spiritual community. It seems that this dehumanized aspect of the instrumentalized rationality strengthens the need of individual to associate themselves with religious communities that already exist, or the search for new spiritual movements. In this sense, the new religious revivalism is associated with the crises of modernity. In the contemporary world, the religious revivalism that is present in the USA, in post-communist countries, in India, and other world religions fluctuates from the blossoming of new religious movements and spirituality to the revivalism of religious fundamentalism. The social, ethical, and political aspect of the religious is the primary concern of the social philosopher Jürgen Habermas.

One could say that Habermas agrees that the study of religion is continuously engaged in the interpretation of the dynamic signs, but the religious dynamic signs can vary from the representations in cultural symbols to the symbolic actions that denote the practical aspect of the religious in rituals. This is the focal point for J. Habermas' communicative praxis. In the exquisite interpretation of Cassirer's theory of symbols, J. Habermas, in his text *The Liberating Power of Symbols,* explains in what way symbols trigger practice and action: "The world of symbolic forms extends from pictorial representation, via verbal expression, to forms of orienting knowledge, which in turn pave the way for practice."[65] In the first half of the 1980' Habermas worked on his philosophy of communicative praxis and this approach brought a new theory of religion and a new aspect of a semiotic theory.[66] This theory concentrates to explain the evolutionary change from the symbolic actions of the significant language of rituals in

pre-linguistic religious reality to the emergence of the comprehensive socio-economic and cultural sub-systems. He sees the communicative praxis as the dialectical interplay between the private and the public. The personhood or the life-world (inter and intra-personal communication) reflects its reality in the normative actions that set the value system through the validity claims, established and preserved in the social, political, cultural, and economic institutions. This evolutionary view on the humankind communicative praxis in Habermas' work has taken into consideration two traditions: (1) the tradition of rationalization processes and reification, which he associates with the Enlightenment philosophy, modernity with the critique of metaphysics and modern arts, critical social-cultural philosophy from Marx and Weber to Lukacs; (2) and the tradition of social theory of communication that is founded on Durkheim's theory of religion, communication theory of G.H. Mead, and semiotics of C. S. Peirce.[67]

In his study of religion, Habermas brings as necessary a combination between the semiotics, philosophy of language, and the communication theory. This new approach seems to work well for explaining the evolutionary process from the symbolically expressed actions of the religious collective consciousness in the pre-linguistic condition of humankind to the liberation and emancipation of the personhood. The formation of the emancipated person in a social and political sense is achieved through the autonomy that is present in the governance of the person, where the set of convictions, or beliefs, even religious ideals are put in the perspective of the discourse ethics: the inter-subjective argumentation by which the main moral or ethical values exist in the practical reinforcement of social tolerance, solidarity, and humanity that are derived from the appropriation of the principle of universalizability. Habermas says: "For the justification

of moral norms, the discourse principle takes the form of a universalization principle." To

Habermas, universalizability is the appropriation of the idea of equality and impartiality

to all people to whom we perceive ourselves equal. [68] The idea of morality is in itself

discursive (inter-subjective argumentation and justification of actions) in a way to re-

affirms the personal view as justified by "all others," who are equals, and in this sense

others appear as the unlimited communication community.[69]

In the traditional theory of religion, the evolutionary approach usually represents

the dawn of the academic study of religion. The most popular representatives were the

British evolutionists E. B. Tylor and G. J. Frazer, who both tried to explain human

evolution as the journey from the "primitive" to the "scientific" mind. Both of these

theories were highly criticized by modern scholars who pursued their research in the filed

of the anthropology of religion. As James Thrower in his book *Religion: The Classical

Theories* (1999) has presented, for Tylor and Frazer, religion as well as the primary forms

of beliefs such as magic and animism represent a type of erroneous thinking, the

"primitive" mind.[70] For example, the French thinker L. Lēvy-Bruhl argues that native

peoples didn't think about their world in an erroneous way, but they simply developed a

different type of reasoning that prefers mystical participation to strictly logical

reasoning.[71]

The traditional evolutionists argue that human knowledge evolves from the basic

religious forms of beliefs to scientific reasoning, which, then, dismisses the old

superstitious beliefs. The primer forms of beliefs are magic and animism, by which the

world is explained as the interplay of the different supernatural powers that can be

controlled or modified in some ways, using the magical formulas and ritualized actions in

which a person becomes one with the spiritual power(s) or divine source (divination). In the next stage magic and animism become more and more obsolete, but religion appears as a new form of a belief that offers universal ideas of human origin, destiny, and the projection of the afterlife. In the stage of religion, humankind expresses its dependence on the will and grace of the god(s). The traditional evolutionists conclude that the final progression of knowledge comes with the full maturation and enlightenment through science.

In comparison to this view on evolution, Habermas concentrates on the social evolution that, in his point of view, begins with the notion of the sacred in association with the collective consciousness and then leads toward the personal autonomy by substituting the collective consciousness with new institutionalized social and political sub-structures, in which the humanization process is important because it preserves the idea of the human regard to ethics and morality as an universal solidarity in normative actions and validity claims. Basically, Habermas thinks that moral regard and the idea of solidarity should be rescued from the semantic materials of religion, so that the experience of the transcendence would not be closed. Habermas doesn't think that science represents the final liberation of humankind. He actually thinks that science, in association with technological progression, alienates. The instrumental rationality is the biggest part of the modern scientific consciousness and it reflects to all sub-structural elements of the society.[72] Therefore, Habermas' approach to the evolution of humankind is radically different than a simple application of the Darwinian evolutionary theory in the social world. Besides this, Tylor and Frazer didn't, in any way, concentrate on the idea of a collective consciousness. They would rather explain that religion emerged from

different speculations about the death and experience of the dead body. This experience to them was a crucial trigger for evolving the concept of the spirit that the "primitive mind" then associated it with every living being, and it finally became an abstract concept of the existence of invisible spirit, and later became known as the concept of god. Habermas comes close to the traditional evolutionary idea in the application of Weber's idea of disenchantment to the different forms of religions of the world. Definitely, Habermas' new attempt to reconstruct the evolutionary development of humankind also requires systematic research of the diverse religious forms and beliefs.

Habermas' theory of communicative praxis combines the communication theory of G. H. Mead and the modern semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce in order to support an idea that the "collective" consciousness in the primer and re-structured public mind in modern societies is a necessary condition for understanding the personhood. Habermas accepts Peirce's stand that all beliefs are framed by imposing semantic discourse onto them, and by this virtue beliefs are settled in the community presuming the existence of the ideal communication community—the concept of community which settles beliefs by accepting them as norms. The ideal communication community represents to Peirce the primer form of the consensus. The consensus is achieved when a belief becomes a norm to the people of the present through the assumption of those who are accepting a specific belief which is something that could be accepted by people who lived in the past, and if they were present now, they would be able to accept these ideas presently—as they would have in the past--and in the future. In this sense, the ideal communication community of Peirce is the very concept of Habermas' "collective consciousness" that existed in the pre-linguistic society, and has been transformed in the modern society as

the discourse and argumentation language that settles ideas, beliefs, and discourses socially as norms through the political consensus.

2b) Evolution of Communicative Praxis and Types of Rationalization in World Religions

Besides these two important influences, still one should not forget that Habermas' theory is developed in the discourse of the Frankfurt School's critique of modern society. One can see this when Habermas discusses the critical aspects of modern civil society which function in the discourse of socio-political and economic developments of late capitalism as monopoly capitalism; problem of identity formation and preservation in modern structural society that is polarized between the different worldviews; critique of traditional metaphysics and rescue of rationalism; and the consequences of modern nihilism and subjectivism on the personhood. Also, Habermas doesn't define his method of research as the critical theory, but one can see the critical theory' imports in his methodology. The following concepts can be seen as strongly tied with the critical theory: (1) the objective rationalism in methodology of investigation, (2) elements of dialectical thinking between the personhood (life-world) and societies' super-structures, and (3) Habermas' insistence

that one should view the globalized world as the result of transformation of the Judeo-Christian worldview into the objective social and political norms and standards. Habermas' stand seems to have the intention to again revive Hegel's old idea of "the objective mind" and to apply it to the contemporary configuration of the modern sub-structures of the social, political, and economic world. The main problem with this--Habermas' idea--is the assumption that no other civilizations than Western civilization have taken the course of secularization of religious ideas, transforming them into the

ethical values and norms, and no other culture has transformed the *par exallanlce*

religious experience, faith, into the further experiment of subjectivism which is so

important for the modernization processes that one can see in romanticism, or even later

in the Avant-garde.[73]

Habermas comes to this point of understanding by taking into consideration Max

Weber's analysis of the world religions; especially the differentiation between the

Eastern and Western religions, and he outlines the comprehensive concepts of the world

religions patterns as to their rationalization processes, attitudes toward the world, and

evaluation of the world.[74] Habermas defines religion as the worldview and world order

that "reflect some totality that is meaningful."[75] Although all religions reflect the

meaningful totality, there is a crucial differentiation between their objects of beliefs.

Habermas analyzes the god creator as God of Action or a personal god that is dominant in

the religions of the Book, and the God of Order or impersonal supreme deity that is

common to the Eastern religions of Hindu, Taoism, Confucianism, and even Buddhism.

The Eastern religious consciousness perceives itself as being the vehicle of the supreme

energy and by this position, a believer has to work on loosing one's self and giving one's

self to the supreme by meditations or experiencing unification with "it" by the mystical

insight. Consequently, Habermas divides religions on the theocentric (Judaism,

Christianity, Islam) and the cosmocentric (Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism)

worldviews.

Habermas also accepts, but as well expands Weber's concept of rationality. He

agrees with Weber that rationality of religious ideas depends on the level of

disenchantment from the magical, mythological, and divination aspects of religiosity. At

the same time Habermas makes a distinction between the cognitive aspects of rationalization in religions, and ethical, which is inspired with the salvation principle. The cognitive rationalizations are the principle oriented, but they are not always in opposition to the magical, divination, or mythological practices and religiosity. Cognitive rationalization can achieve the diverse aspects of the mastery over the world, but the ethical rationalization is inspired by the salvation theory, which maintains the dualism between the world of appearances and the world transcending principle envisioned in the salvation.[76] The salvation principle, according to Habermas, has a pessimistic worldview, so world rejection is the dominant attitude in Judaism and Christianity, but also is shared with Hindusim, which also offers the path to salvation, although Hinduism is also a cosmocentric religion. Here, as he posits, is the difference between the ways of seeking salvation and securing the world: Judaism and Christianity via the dominance of ethical commands and values require believers to turn from asceticism and the private experience to the mastery of the world, objectifying reality, while Hinduism requires, rather, a passive mysticism of the believer, so the flight from the world is the desirable final goal. An example of this can be found in the idea of sanyasin, the one who renounces the world by leaving everything he possess, including his family.[77]

Confucianism, Taoism, and Greek philosophy, Habermas says, are not religions of the salvation. These religions lack the experience of the world that is divided on the real world of phenomenological appearances and the transcendent realm that is of noumenal character. Obviously, Habermas refers to the Judeo-Christian worldview which perceives reality as ephemeral, transient, and temporary, so the whole life is in anticipation of death. The living and the dead, Jews and Christians, equally expect the

coming of the apocalyptic end of time which is signified by the second coming of the

Messiah, where the natural world will be transferred into the new nominal and ethical

realm: for example, the lamb will sit with the lion and justice will be fulfilled on Earth.

Consequently, Habermas sees the differentiation between cognitive and ethical

rationalizations. The cognitive rationalization presents the world as the system of "forms

and processes" that can be contemplated and grasped by the faculty of the mind.[78] He

disagrees with Weber that one should interpret Confucianism and Taoism as primarily

ethically oriented religions where the rationalization processes didn't succeed fully.[79]

Weber interpreted the worldview of these two religions as the "ethic of unconditional

affirmation" and "adjustment" to the authority, where actually the traditional forms of

beliefs such as magic and animism overturned the possibility of final rationalization.[80]

Habermas uses Joseph Needham's field work about China and reconstructs in a new way

the theory of cognitive rationalization. He states that it was not the ethical rationality that

was dominant in China, but rather a cognitive one. Habermas supports his thesis by the

fact that from the first century B.C.E. to 15th century C.E. the Chinese were more

successful in "developing theoretical knowledge" and using this knowledge for practical

purposes.[81] The point of this great knowledge is that it was supervised by the authority of

the local and dynastic rulers, so this knowledge didn't develop the alternative worldview

based on the theoretical insight independent from the cultural and religious constraints.

Habermas interprets the Chinese example of rationalization as the "potential

rationalization process" that was not developed as the dominant worldview. The salvation

aspect of religiosity was missing for further development of the full rationalization.

The idea of rationalization and modernization processes is highly disputed in China, and there are views that are in strong opposition to Habermas' interpretation, but also there are existent ideas that go along with Habermas' concepts. Tong Shijun, in his book *The Dialectics of Modernization* (2000), compares Habermas' theory to the discussions about the modernization processes in China that were popular among Chinese scholars from 1920-1940. He states that popular Chinese cultural thinker Lian Shuming in his book *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies* (1921) stresses the point that the Chinese culture would never move toward the reconstruction of institutions which would engage the modernization processes and reformation of the traditional Chinese society that was in its base feudal, unless it was imported from the West.[82] This point supports Habermas' analysis of the Chinese religions. On the other hand, in opposition to Shuming's stand, Hu Shi argued that the Western modernization processes are developing in the stress crises where the biggest problems had occurred on the level of interpersonal relationships i.e., in Habermas' terms, the subjective identity construction of the lifeworld and its imbalance with the objective social and political sub-structures. At that time, Hu Shi proposed that the West should be more introduced to the original aspects of Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism and should apply some Eastern models to the Western developments. Today many different ideas are present as the response to the problem of the rationalization processes. For example, Peter Berger doesn't believe that the strong development of individualism is necessarily linked to the development of capitalism, because we can see strong capitalistic developments in Asia—Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, and China. The development of individualism as

personal autonomy was one of the main tenants of Weber's sociology, which became also

one of the main concepts accepted by Habermas.[83]

Rudolf J. Siebert, the critical theorist of the third generation, has been inspired by

the works of Habermas and he defines the critical theory of religion as the rescuing

potentials of the "traditional religious-metaphysical and mystical systems of

interpretation and orientation that the practical communicative rationality underlying

them and a corresponding universal communicative ethics, expressed, e.g., in the golden

rule, intrinsic to all presently alive world religions."[84] Obviously, the modern critical

theory of religion too, contests Habermas' "conservative" view that only the Judeo-

Christian worldview has engaged a complex secularization processes where the religious

potentials are transformed into the social and political sub-structures. The new critical

theory of religion wants to bring the multi-cultural perspective in a sense that all world

religions have the enormous ethical potentials in their religious concepts and these

potentials are transforming into the socio-economic structures.

The important value of Habermas' investigation is that the religious potentials are

already transformed into the secularized world. For example, Habermas refuses

Horkheimer's idea that morality with a sense of justice is only possible if it is derived

from a concrete religion. This association with religion for Horkeheimer can vary from

normal religious profession i.e., employing the whole range of religious experiences and

ideas, to the negation of a religion and rebellion against it as atheism, or even the highly

developed concept of inverse theology. "Longing for the totally other" is a new form of a

modern theological transcendence inspired by Karl Bath and is conceptualized as a

critical question in the works of Benjamin, Adorno, and Horkheimer where the "totally

other" stands as a symbol for the universal solidarity and justice, which opposes to the "slaughter bench" of the history that is symbolized in the critical theory of the first generation through the horrific experience of the Holocaust.[85] Contrary to Horkheimer's idea that religion is a necessary condition for the conceptualization of the universal ethical ideas, Habermas thinks that Horkheimer confuses the role of religion in modernity and that he still "insists on the kinship between religion and philosophy," which is not a relevant issue any longer for the post-metaphysical thinking.[86] Habermas builds his theory of religion in a way to show that the religious has already been transformed into the secular. The linguification of the sacred transforms the authoritative sacred (absolute social or moral norms justified through the authority of god, myth, supernatural powers) into the rationalized forms that preserve moral values of justice and solidarity in the structures of institutionalized reality and in the communicative rationality, which necessary condition sets in the personal autonomy and speech acts.[87] The problem is that the institutions themselves are in the competition of one with each other, because they belong to the different aspects of the modern superstructures such as economic, political, social, scientific, cultural, ethical, aesthetical, or religious realms. In this sense, the only answer to the problems of competition between the worldviews and institutions is the discursive ethics. The new discursive ethics can be translated as the argumentation ethics.

In the modern world, Habermas sees, also, a great gap between the public and the private spheres, between the religious and the secular, between the religious consciousness that reflect the transcendence of the highest human longings such as the prevalence of goodness over evil, humanity, compassion, and solidarity versus

instrumentalized rationality where a person sees himself/herself as the object and means that serves as one of the vehicles in the system of the objective world.

The domination of the secular is based in a political sense on the transformation of the particular or personal will via the procedural tools of modern political systems into the normative actions. The public sphere of civil society is maintained through the culture experts whose main agenda is to rationally explain natural and cultural phenomena putting themselves, most of the time, in contradiction to the religious consciousness and worldview.[88] For example, one of the predominant psychological theories in the United States is Behaviorism, which influences today the majority of clinical psychological practices. The main idea of behaviorism is that the human psyche should be explained and researched strictly scientifically, i.e., all human behavior is a response to the past contingent set of conditions that engage in the brain a response as a reinforcement. Accordingly, behaviorism stays on the course that concepts such as the mind, the set of beliefs important to a person, ethical ideals such as freedom, compassion, and kindness, or religious concepts such as the soul, really do not exist objectively. All of these concepts are subjectively clothed expressions that are reinforced through the environment and maintained as culturally relevant. The reality of the human behavior is determined through the cause and effect connection between the conditioning and reinforcement. Perhaps, the most radical view was expressed in the positivist philosophy of Harvard scholar B. F. Skinner who argues in his book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971), that "freedom is a dangerous myth," because freedom has a meaning similar to supreme quality or, even, sacred. Skinner thinks that what we "experience" as a free choice is actually a false feeling that our will is not determined, while actually it is. He thinks that

the scientific reality shows that "free choice" is simply the response to the given conditions. In this example one can easily see that behavioral psychology stands in opposition to the traditional religious worldviews, which glorify the moral human dignity, the soul that transcends existent conditions, and ethical ideals of universal solidarity and humanity.

2c) <u>Semantics of Ethics</u>

For Habermas' theory of religion, the two most critical aspects are the secularization processes by means of the socio-political superstructure (change of the society structure and acceptance of the rational worldview that separates irrational thoughts and actions as unacceptable) and the transformation of religious ideas into the secular ethics and morality (recognition of personal autonomy and acceptance of the argumentation dialogue in achieving the normative values). Both aspects actually present the hegemony process of the secularization norms, which are not easy to define, describe, and analyze.

To outline this problem, the best example can be given by the Kantian idea of morality and ethics. Any discussion about morality always begins with examples of what a society considers a good moral deed. The analysis of the moral action always includes the consideration of two important aspects: one aspect is that of inclinations and motives for an action, another is that of the consequences of the action. Immanuel Kant thinks that humanity cannot ever predict the consequences, but one can control only the thought process that results in an action. He thinks that every moral action is rationalized by virtue that requires the decision and choice; therefore, there is no moral action without prior thought that settles the will in one direction as a maxim that then appears as the

principle upon which one really acts. In this sense, moral action is a fully cognitive process that follows the dictate oaf the imperative that is created in the consciousness itself. For any moral act the decision has to come out of the personal autonomy. The only imperative one's mind follows is that, directed from the free will which constitutes a person and acts at the same time as the maxim, and is only acceptable as a moral act if it fulfills the moral law. Now, the moral law is comprehensively defined in Kant's Categorical Imperative: "But what sort of law can that be the thought of which must determine the will without reference to any expected effect, so that the will can be called absolutely good without qualification? Since I deprived the will of every impulse that might arise for it from obeying any particular law, there is nothing left to serve the will as principle except the universal conformity of its actions to law as such i.e., I should never act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law."[89]

Following this thought Kant later clarifies more specifically that the moral law is what people use to perceive through religion as the kingdom of ends: "By 'kingdom' I understand a system of different rational beings through common laws.... For all rational beings stand under the law that each of them should treat himself and all others never merely as a means but always at the same time as an end in himself. Hereby arises a systematic union of rational beings through common objective laws, i.e., a kingdom that may be called a kingdom of ends...." In the final instance, what Kant has done with defining the Categorical Imperative as a moral law (law that is acceptable to all people) is that he explained the Christian ideal of solidarity and human dignity as interdependent. What was expressed in the simple idea of the Golden Rule, with the Kantian moral law

now is presented as the rationally explained concept which serves to explain the connection between personal freedom and integrity. The Golden Rule summarizes the expression, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," and is based on Jesus' original saying reported in the Gospel of Matthew, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (7.12). When comparing the religious expression to the Kantian Categorical Imperative one has to notice that both ideas correspond with the same message/meaning—the universal law is to act in a way that everybody treats everyone with respect and dignity, because everyone perceives themselves in this way, as beings of dignity, so they are ends in themselves and not only means to others, and this equal treatment is perceived and understood as a value to all people, without exception. The only difference between these two expressions is that the religious one is commanded because of righteousness and authority, while the Kantian one is based on the internal input that appears to a person as the self-imposed authority.

This Kantian methodology of the rationalization of the religious commands via the concepts into the modern personal consciousness tremendously inspired J. Habermas. He thinks that on this level of comparison between the Christian Golden Rule and the Categorical Imperative one could explain the rationalization process only as a paradigm shift from the religious to the secular, where the religious moral rule is sublated on the higher level of personal understanding. Habermas calls this methodology the reification theory that is present in the philosophy of the Enlightenment era, social philosophy of Marx, theory of religion in Weber, and Critical Theory of the Frankfurt school.

2d) Linguification of the Sacred

The transformation of the religious into the secular is a much deeper problem than it appears on the surface and Habermas precisely diagnoses the problem: the transformation of the religious into the secular actually denotes the transformation of the collective into the personal consciousness in an evolutionary sense. According to Habermas, religion is engaged as the main cohesive social force that is transformed by the powers of the ontogenetic and phylogenetic changes into the structural transformation of worldviews: secular and religious. To explain this evolutionary transformation, Habermas is inspired with Durkheim's theory of religion. He presents the beginning of this evolution as the formation of the sacred that powerfully stands in its pre-linguistic realm. Habermas says, in the modern world, where the individual personality, a worldview, and institutionalized normative rationality are in the conflict of powers and wills, what still has the value is the personalist intentionalism of morality, which appears to transform a personal will into the idea of universal solidarity and then acts proactively in society. This unchanging aspect of the universal solidarity as an ideal of humankind and its communal identity—recognition and acknowledgment of others--is equally important for the social aspect of the sacred in the past as it is for modern society. Habermas thinks that all validity claims (values that are pertinent for personal and social worlds) relevant for modern societies and even one's culture are established through the comprehensive process of the transformation from the symbolically mediated to normatively regulated actions. Habermas brings Durkheim's concept of the sacred into the focus of his research. The sacred is one of the best points in the modern theory of

religion which explains the true process of the socialization pattern, but still is missing the explanation of communicative action and linguification of the sacred. According to Durkheim, the sacred stands in society as the main source of authority and it means all things that are "set apart" from the ordinary, personal interests, one's passions, or desires. This sacred is expressed as the will of the collective consciousness that represents its power through the set of symbolic actions or rituals that are of great importance for the identity of society, where society acts celebrating its own authority and power (great yearly ceremonies and celebrations). According to Habermas, these symbolically mediated actions are explained as salient symbols of the dominant religious tradition that can steer behavior and he wants to progress in research as to this aspect of religious symbolism.

The problem with the sacred is, as Durkheim put it, that the sacred authority, which is the expression of the collective consciousness, acts often in a way to express the terror and punishment toward acts of the followers of the group who oppose to the main commands, which are important to maintain the unity of the collective. Sometimes the arbitrariness of the punishment takes place and then the moments of crisis appear. The negative sanctions filled with terror and punishment are the rites associated with the Taboo, and it is a common way to maintain the continuity of the community unified with the sacred symbols (Totem). Habermas gives credit to Durkheim on his unique interpretation of the sacred as the symbol of the domination of the collective consciousness in society. Habermas considers that what is really missing in Durkheim's theory is the semantic analysis of how the religious potentials have been transformed from the symbolic to the normative actions, by which one can explain the need and

necessity of separating the religious from the political or legislature powers, and the growth of the personal consciousness that is realized in the social surroundings by fulfilling the social roles (division of labor) and through interpersonal communication acquiring the set of responsibilities and freedoms that are equally relevant for the private and public spheres.

Habermas sees that there is a necessary fusion between Durkheim's and Mead's theories in order to explain the evolution of the social consciousness from the pre-linguistic realm of the sacred that is symbolically represented in the collective consciousness to the rational acceptance of the standard and moral idioms as the normative actions and validity claims:

> Durkheim shares the social-evolutionary perspective with Mead. But he is unable to conceive the transition from forms of mechanical to forms of organic solidarity as a transformation of collective consciousness reconstructible *from within*; thus it remains unclear what entitles him to conceive of the changing form of social integration as a development toward rationality. The idea of a linguistification of the sacred is, to be sure, suggested by Durkheim, but it can be worked out only along the lines of a Meaden attempt at reconstruction. Mead does in fact definitely conceive of the communicative thawing of traditionally solid institutions based on sacred authority as a rationalization. Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action,* vol. 2.,

Translation: Thomas McCarthy, Boston: Beacon Press, 1987, p. 91.

While Durkheim has given the explanation of how has emerged the idea of the universal solidarity explaining the social unity as the collective and symbolic act of all members, which relate to the sacred, Habermas thinks, George Herbert Mead was able to explain the very point of how the structural transformation of the life-world and personhood occurs in the objective world. Durkheim and Mead are similar in the idea that the social is prior to the private or to the individual personality. Every personality is pre-structured i.e., limited to the conditions of the social interactions and structures. Mead sees that the personal identity is the result of the comprehensive processes of socialization and the inter-personal relationship with others.

The communication act, first as a gesture and the speech act, represents the internalization of the objective environment. The communication begins with the conversation and the exchange of gestures, then moves on significant gestures, and finally forms through language symbolic meaning which is internalized in the person. Language through the processes of transformation of symbolic meaning is able to open semantic potentials that the person can use as the response to the systematized environment. What the person is learning through the socialization is to adequately act responding to the environment by accepting specific social roles that design behavior and actions. Also, this internalized world should become externalized through assimilation process, when the personhood associates with the external as a group.

The concept of time is inhabited in a person through the experience of the emergence situations, which require of a person immediate responses to the environment.

An emergency situation gives to a person the sense of discontinuity, and, of course, by its virtue the continuity reaches the point of meaning in the inhabitation of the self as continuity in the social environment.

Habermas adopts Mead's theory of communication as an important step of communicative praxis. The social evolution begins and ends with the semantic realm which unfolds, through social interaction and communication, the emancipation of the self in the autonomous rational reasoning through socially mediated argumentation, which final argument is humanized through the acceptance of morality as universal solidarity embedded in institutionalized forms of standards and norms.

Habermas still critically analyzes the modern self and its existence. Modern consciousness is born in the crisis of identity construction: on one hand the emancipation and recognition of the self requires acceptance of the social roles and playing them as games, but then the universality of moral norms and validity claims settle the personhood giving it the meaningfulness in the domain of the public sphere unifying personhood with the group identity, on the other hand, the self requires its authenticity that is derived from the subjectivity of the experience and, at the same time, circles the separateness of the self from the public and the collective.

However, Habermas sees in the religious the very source of humanity. As the sacred once represented the source of the collective consciousness that symbolically accepts the higher authority as the expression of the absolute, so in the modern time when some semantic potentials of religion are transferred into the secular norms and values, the religious still represents a challenge even to the modern atheist, because in its theological and reflexive thought religion calls for openness i.e., consciousness of transcendence,

search for unconditional, ethics of compassion, and redemption. In his text

Transcendence from Within, Transcendence in this World (1992) Habermas sees that the

universality of the religious is in openness for transcendence, but this transcendence is a

semantic realm, where the linguistic condition opens a communicative act, which reflects

the self, what was communicated, and the other in a perspective of understanding.

Religious transcendence is too illocutionary for Habermas, because it is present with the

in-group community, shaping the basic validity claims as positive dogmatic or

theological concepts relevant for this specific religious tradition. True transcendence

should exist from these restrains, and save those linguistic potentials that are universally

accepted. Habermas as a methodological atheist sees in the transcendence the

configuration of linguistic potentials that are important to form a proper understanding of

the self and the community, even the ideal community, but he doesn't see in the

transcendence openness for truly supernatural or absolute. Both, the supernatural and

absolute are comprehensive signification processes of the true linguistic condition that is

sui generis human and, therefore, intersubjective. The lifeworld is a pool of forces where

a personhood is pre-structured and already defined, but still through language and

understanding can reach the point to really be and act in a sense of preserving one's

autonomy, but also acknowledging the others of the in-group structure as equals. This

linguistic condition shows that it appropriates the self and the others as the autonomous

integral beings by the power of a reflexive communicative act. That a personhood has a

possibility of self-determination and self-cause is expressed in the ability of language to

go beyond what is only communicated, or what is practical and purposive; language

reflects the human condition and the human relationship emerges from the linguistic

reality. The intelligible aspect of transcendence is actually the experience of going beyond what is known, given, or expressed for the sake of understanding the position of the self in the universe and bonding the self via linguistic condition with others. Habermas defines this important search as:

> The Logos of language founds the intersubjectivity of the lifeworld, in which we find ourselves already pre-understood, in order that we can encounter one another face to face as subjects. Indeed, we meet as subjects who impute to each other accountability, that is, the capability to guide our actions according to transcending validity medium of our communicative actions which are to be accounted for by us. Yet, this does not mean that the lifeworld would be at our disposal. As agents of communicative actions, we are exposed to a transcendence that is integrated in the linguistic conditions of reproduction without being delivered up to it. This conception can hardly be identified with the productivist illusion of a species that generates itself and which puts itself in the place of a disavowed Absolute. Linguistic intersubjectivity goes beyond the subjects with putting them in bondage. J. Habermas, ed. E. Mendieta *Transcendence form Within, Transcendence in this World*, in, *Religion and Rationality,* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002, p. 91.

Habermas' linguistic intersubjectivity resides in every personhood and the transcendence as the sense for openness is integrated within a possibility of language itself. These elements of understanding--the self and the community--are present in the linguified religious that should be rescued in modern society. The rescue of the religious

potentials requires the process of communication in which it is possible to reach semantic openness of the self, the validity claims through which the community is bounded. This communicative praxis can help to loosen the totalization of a crisis between the religious and the secular, fundamentalism vs. openness of modern theology or endeavors of ecumenism, cultic totalitarianism and open spirituality, closed worldviews and disenchanted openness of meaning.[90]

Habermas also acknowledges that the secularization processes began with the crisis of the religious consciousness. The crises of the religious consciousness can be defined as a compendium of doubts about what is common in society to be interpreted as the supernatural power(s) and its/their impact on the world. For example, from the anthropological field work of E.E. Evans-Pritchard about the Azande, one could see that even in the basic and culturally isolated societies of the African tribes, a person might have such crises and have doubts about the sacred authority, but the person who experiences such crises cannot openly reflect to it. The Azande person who doubts is not able to present or define clearly the problem, and finally has no alternative system to the belief system that would support for a long time these thoughts.[91] In this sense, the Azande society is not ready to publicly acknowledge such an experience and to openly deal with it.

Unlike indigenous societies, the crisis of the religious consciousness in modern society is a significant problem because it has the alternative theory or a system to which a person with the doubts can refer. Habermas stresses in his work that the Ancient Greek philosophers had established an intellectual and ideological tradition of the rationalism,

anthropocentrism, and skepticism that formed a strong alternative to the religious and mythological consciousness.

Even under the influences of the Christian theological ideas, Western philosophy was never able to definitely dismiss the philosophical anthropocentrism, rationalism, or skepticism, so there was formed a strong metaphysical tradition that combined religious inspiration with the strong secular thought--the rationalism, idealism, and the theodicy argumentations. For instance, it is enough to remember the continental rationalists and works of Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz.[92] During the Enlightenment period in Europe and the U.S.A. the rationalism and anthropocentrism have been enriched with the secularized idea of the historical self-sufficiency and ideal of freedom that was derived from the interpretation of Christianity as emancipation theology. It is obvious that secularized ideas have served as the corrective to the strict Christian theocentric worldview.

It seems that in Western society the crisis of the religious consciousness is substantial for a modern man/woman because it leaves him/her to struggle for an individual set of rules, which are crucial for forming one's identity. Whether one is religious or an atheist, both have to acknowledge the leap between strictly rationalized world explained through the facts via the diverse scientific entitlements (economy, medicine, biology, zoology, sociology, political science, positive history, etc.) and the world of the human potentials that is build upon the different value entitlements (culture, philosophy, religion, art, morality, ethics).

As Habermas suggests, the processes of secularization of religious ideas are specified and can be summarized in a way that in modern societies, religion undergoes the following changes:

1. Demythologization of traditional religious semantic potentials – back away from the reification in a sense of literal interpretations of the original religious sources;

2. Development of more open and philosophical theologies by which religious ideas are rationalized and interpreted in a more open way insisting on ethical and humanitarian contents rather than on extravagant and closed interpretations of religious potentials;

3. Religious communities direct their existence as the moral, ethical, and spiritual resources for the individuals who make choices;

4. Competitions between different religious paradigms, religions, and secular – religious worldviews is a common position of religions that exists in the modern world;

5. Definite split in the religious communities between liberalism and fundamentalism;

6. Religious communities experience an essential change as to their role and status in community as voluntary organizations that are separated from the legal and political body of society/separation of the church and the state.

Modern semiotics stresses that its methodology is capable of explaining humanity in a new way; where the relevant aspects of the modern world and the differences of the historically or culturally different worlds are not categorically juxtaposed, but put in the

same perspective of the growth of dialog between cultures, religions, and different socio-economic cultural units. In the semiotic theory any aspect of the communicative action (personal thoughts, public observances, religious rituals, gestures, political speech, religious cannon, etc.) stands as a sign which necessarily underlies, as its signifigher, the significant interaction between the subject matter that appears as the object to its interpreter, and implies the interpretation that is possible to become socially or culturally relevant. Of course, the most curious aspects of the communicative action are related to the analysis of the signs that are transcendent and unlimited in its appearance to the intepretant. In this sense, modern semiotics, from C.S. Peirce to J. Habermas and U. Eco always has reflected on diverse aspects of religion such as the different interpretations of the power of the sacred, supernatural being, transcendent realms, superhuman entities, and spirituality. In this regard, one of the most appealing questions of the modern Semiotic Theory of Religion is to analyze and explain the resources of the transcendent (unlimited semiosis) in modern, secularized, and critical to religion world, that can offer to contemporary men and women a meaning providing the space for the realization of their creative human potentials.

This dissertation has the agenda to present the new Semiotic Theory of Religion as the theory that can outline the transformation of the religious into the secular and beyond. Definitely, the important part of it is Habermas' communicative praxis because it explains in a new way modern rationalization processes which maps the journey from the realm of collective and religious consciousness bound to external authority to the modern emancipated personhood that stands open for the universal principles of solidarity, ethical values, and compassion by the virtue of the personal autonomy. Also, the value of

Habermas' theory is in the attitude that the preservation of the *unlimited semiosis* or, as Habermas would say, semantic potentials of modern religions, is crucial to prevent the humankind of becoming totally mechanized and instrumentalized by the powers of technology, ideology, modern scientific positivism, or the comprehensive systems of social, political, cultural, and economic sub-structures. The important issue here is that Habermas sees that these religious potentials are present and embedded in the functioning of the modern world and personhood. Only the preservation of the *unlimited semiosis*, not its dismissal, can release the space for conquering human nature that can be enough strong to resist to the vast inconsistency of human fallibility.

CHAPTER III

CONTEXTUALIZING RELIGIOUS SEMIOSIS: MODERNITY DISCOURSE AND THE SECULARIZATION PROCESSES OF THE RELIGIOUS IN THE WEST

3a) Philosophical Rationality in the Old Greek Philosophy

"Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. *Sapere Aude!* "Have courage to use your own understanding!—that is motto of enlightenment." (Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays,* trans. Ted Humphrey, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1983)

The secularization processes can be understood as the critical sum of various

scientific, rational, materialistic, ethical, and agnostic arguments that stand in opposition

to the traditional religious worldviews. In the cultural history of the West first formation

of the arguments based on logic, scientific observation, critical, and moral reasoning are

associated with the formation of the philosophical methodology.

For the first time in the Western Culture philosophy defines itself as the rational

investigation of the world, universe, and human nature where gods are put aside from

explanations of how all nature really functions or even how the whole universe function

in connection with the particular beings (Epicur). With the emergence of the powerful

Athenian sophistic thinkers, gods and religious beliefs are interpreted as the result of the

social conventions (*nomos*) and the ruling class which establishes the political control

using religion and religious piety of believers. First time religion is interpreted as the tool of social control and supernatural beings are interpreted as culturally postulated, which explains religion materialistically (Xenophanes, Protagora, Trasimach).

Even the idea of god, developed in time of Plato and Aristotle, as absolute being presented either as the great architect of the universe (*Demiurgos*) or pure form and natural light (in Aristotle *noes noetos*, pure form) doesn't need any form of human religious practice, but rather rational mathematical reasoning and knowledge of the first physical principles. This firm inquiry of philosophy for rationality as a thought that is self-standing in a form of arguments and methods causes a serious split between the secular and the religious. In Athens, the most culturally advanced polis of all Greek city-states, philosophy has faced in several occasions public challenge registered in history as trials against philosophers.

First, Anaxagoras from Clazomenae in Asia Minor, a presocratic philosopher and a friend of Pericles, who has observed the system of eclipses and heavenly bodies, has claimed that the sun is a mass of blazing metal and not any sort of god. Also, he has stated that heavenly bodies are masses of stone ignited by rapid rotation. For these ideas Anaxagoras was soon put on trial for not believing in the official gods and promoting medism (Persian religious ideas). Pericles spoke in his defense before the Athenian assembly, and was able to save his life making a deal for Anaxagoras' exile to Lampsacus in Ionia.[93]

Almost the same charges were brought to the Athenian assembly against Socrates by Miletus and Anytus in 399 B.C.E., but besides not believing in official gods of Athens, to his accusation are brought two new things, introducing the new gods and

corrupting the youth. Socrates has openly opposed to the political corruption and was teaching that the ignorance is the cause of all wrongdoing. He didn't want to take any public job that would be connected with the administration and Socrates was very disappointed of how the Council often handled cases related to the war. It seems that Socrates was the first to oppose to the great Pericle's idea that each free person has a duty to care for a common good of the state and therefore should be engaged in the public service.[94] He thought that after Pericle's time the idea of public work that benefits all community lost the primer meaning and the course of practice.

Instead following this rule, Socrates openly proposed that the only way to secure the freedom of critical investigation is to act as a private citizen.[95] Hegel in his *Philosophy of History* described this Socrates' endeavor as Athens coming to the state of the "self-consciousness," "inwardness of knowledge itself," "absoluteness of true knowledge," "consciousness reflecting upon the self," and finally free thinking that as a result encounters a subjective moral independence that might be in opposition to the written and unwritten conventional laws.[96]

Socrates has developed his own style of reasoning by questioning the base of knowledge through the dialectical investigation--prose and cons, and moving argument towards a secure concept that can be defended by reasonable definition or proofs and examples from reality. He often stated that all philosophical investigation begins with "*daimonion*"—a spirit of curiosity that doesn't settle truths without investigation and questioning. Socrates was persecuted for his active engagement against the political and social utilitarianism of that time that put Athens in the horror of continuous wars known as Peloponnesian Wars. It is good to remember that Socrates was in several occasions

during Peloponnesian Wars a soldier in Athenian army doing heroic deeds, saving his wounded fellow soldiers (Alcibiades, Xenophanes) from the battles.[97]

It was not Socrates' piety toward Athens, the laws, or main ideas that brought him to the court. It was that the public and the Athenian political establishment couldn't put up with his personalist approach to the objective problems because this way was a new style of communication and a new level of consciousness with which Athenians didn't use to deal with in the public life.

In order to maintain his independence the cost was high. Socrates faced the unjust accusations and finally a court decision that he was guilty of impiety and leading youth astray. Socrates decided to accept these accusations taking the burden of collective consciousness on his life and he drank a poisonous hemlock. He didn't want to accept the counter-offer and leave Athens going into the exile. In this sense, Socrates is used in history of philosophy as a step-stone of Western path of philosophy. Socrates was a person with the vision and as such he anticipated the path of modernity: personalist ethics, methodological investigation of the highest truths without any limits, and free thinking.

We should not forget that Aristotle also faced the accusations by the Athenian political establishment, but he decided to leave Athens. It is well documented his statement: "Athens will not sin third time against philosophy."

These examples of the interaction between politics, religion, and philosophy vividly testify that the split between the religious and the secular have had dramatic climatic moments in ancient history of Athens. It seems that the political establishment

felt an enormous fear of exposing people to the critical thinking and rational explanations of natural events.

Although in ancient Greece philosophy became a great source of education for the elite intellectual class, it failed the primer Socrates' mission to become the part of everyday life of common people. This great spirit of liberation against the psychological dependency of humanity from supernatural forces and political utilitarianism will become a predominant quest for Western Culture in all times ever after, but it will culminate during the Enlightenment movement in Europe and the New World.

3b) Political, Religious, and Natural Rationality of the Enlightenment

During the Enlightenment period in 17th and 18th centuries, the arguments that cherish diverse rational forms of thinking and link themselves with the investigation of nature and humanity, first time became systematized to the point of offering secularism as a solution to theocentrism, causing at the same time serious social and political changes throughout Europe and the New World.

One of the crucial change that is going along with the formation of the national states in Europe and formation of the United States was the establishment of the positive state laws that are grounded on the presuppositions of the theory of natural rights, social contract theory, and understanding that human rationality has its full realization in freedom of moral choices. Within the Enlightenment philosophy of liberation that is coupled with an idea of self-responsibility: state laws are becoming more and more separated from any religious laws as well as powers of the monarchs, feudal lords, or domination of the Church.

Countries of the Commonwealth accepted this serious process as the continuous legislation processes by the secular means of the Government, the state rule, the legislator, and the people that is called a Common Law. In the continental European countries is accepted the Civil Law, which reconstructs the base of the Roman Law into the modern legislation process. The very idea that the law should be statutory, rather written than oral, although dependant on the contextualization of either the precedent court decisions (Common Law) or former law codes (Civil Law) it has to be confirmed by the political and juridical authorities, and finally adversarial or inquisitorial, has to involve the jury. All of these requirements of modern legislature process resulted with the separation of the positive state laws from the authority of the state religion (Christianity), and powers of the monarchs. The French Revolution (1789) with its "codè civil" (1804) placed the matter of marriage and religion as a totally private matter, and finally with the American Constitution (1785) and the acceptance of the First Amendment (1791) religion was definitely legally interpreted as the private matter of every citizen. Although, this is a change that will fully become realized in the late 20th and 21st centuries, the main framework was established in the existence of the positive laws in 18th century.

The systematic and continuous challenge of the secular Enlightenment ideas including the growing Deist movement as a solution to the problem of religious intolerance and religious wars became the great intellectual challenge of 18th century. The secularization process became dominant in the social and political reality of Europe where the practices such as the expropriation of the church properties, formation of the public school systems, and fragmentation of the "universal church" into the competitive Protestant churches have radically changed the old feudal system and the Middle Age

picture of the world. Within these practices the understanding and the meaning of religion for a modern man/woman began to change too.[98]

The first changes occurred within Christianity, more specifically with the Western Christendom unified in the authority of "a universal Christian church," which began to dissolve into a serious crisis.[99] The Reformation movement demanded the redefinition of the substantial religious elements--beliefs and practices— of Catholicism. Although, Reformation was not an ideologically unified movement in any sense, it showed the extraordinary revolutionary courage of its people who were even willing to sacrifice their lives in order to change traditional views.[100] Let us illustrate for what kind of changes they were struggling for.

The central question was directed on the investigation of meaning of the main Christian rituals known as the sacraments and the question was posited as follows: Are the sacraments the authentic expression of beliefs that are grounded in the Bible or later invention of the Early Catholic Church? One of the most discussed sacraments became the Eucharist, which was always perceived as the central symbolical expression of the Christian faith. The Lutherans have proposed the doctrine of con-substantiation that is opposed to the traditional transubstantiation. According to the Lutherans, Christ is present in the Eucharist, although the bread and wine did not actually become his flesh and blood. At the same time, the Lutherans also strongly opposed the Zwingli's concept that the Eucharist denotes only the symbolic presence of the Christ.

The same happened with the understanding of Baptism: while the Lutherans thought that the baptism can take place when a child was born or very young, and that really a person doesn't need to wait until adulthood to accept the faith, the Anabaptists

opposed this idea, teaching that only an adult person through the ritual of baptism can experience a real conversion to the faith. The Anabaptists, then, faced the most severe prosecutions by the Catholic Inquisition of all Reformation movements. Soon, in Europe began mushrooming of different churches that split with the Catholic mainstream. Just the redefinition of the main religious practices that were perceived substantial for the church put in action hundreds of different Christian movements and their new churches.

Besides redefining the main sacraments' practices, the Reformation was determined to attack the church corruption that grew out of the Papacy and the church high officials which in the course of time built an enormous wealth in lands given to them by the secular rulers in order to preserve their sovereignty.[101] Taking into consideration this point, the Reformation soon demanded the serious redefinition of the Christian beliefs too: they were definitely unified in an idea that the system of penance should be rejected, the ultimate authority of the Pope overthrown, and that the power of the universal Catholic Church has to be challenged and turned back to the local level. As to doctrines, they accepted the old Augustine idea of predestination that opposed the one, traditional, Aquinas' by which every person earns the beatified and eternal life by the means of the deeds that they had done during the lifetime.

Different protestant denominations have argued about the details of how predestination unfolds affecting reality, but the main idea that God's wisdom and knowledge is transcendent was accepted. True believers can only try through the institution of the church to maintain the level of Christian awareness about Jesus and his suffering. Theology of crucifixion (*theologia cruces*) has replaced the scholastic philosophy by which the reason can logically proof the existence of God. According to

the new Protestant theology no one can earn their salvation, but can welcome graciousness of God, so the final outcome of salvation is given by the grace of God that is absolute. God is only revealed to us through the scripture alone (sola scripture) and his absolute power and reasoning is hidden to us. The idea of *dues absconditus,* the hidden God that is concealed and indirect to us, puts human rationality, philosophy, and human nature as autonomous entities separated from the project of salvation. This very thought opened the door for the improving theology in a more anthropological sense than ever, which then became liberal and philosophically rational.

In many of ways, these continuous changes within church and critical observations addressed to the traditional views on beliefs, ideas, representations, and practices, have then brought diverse rationalization processes by which the socio-political sphere became secularized. As the result of these processes religions in modern society are not any longer self-explainable and self-understanding, let alone, self-sufficient.

Today, modern societies face religious pluralism and competition of different religions. Perhaps the biggest challenge for the mainstream religion is split of the religious organizations on the part that is more open for the dialog with the secular world and scientific arguments, and the other part, which still wants to preserve their fundamental ideological course and the extraordinary position in society.

The most interesting question about religion in the modern world is, of course, its persistence: Why in a world that can be explained with science and other scientific entitlements modern men and women still need religion? This main question opens the line of other questions that are important for the further research in the modern secularized world: What is the role of the religion that exists in a secularized society? Is

there anything worth rescuing from the religious world that can be transferred into the modern society? Is it possible that the religious consciousness acts in the society as the reconciliatory element between the drastic economic-materialistic reality and need for human spirituality? Why do we experience in the contemporary world a rise of the religious consciousness which is reflected in the popularity of traditional religious beliefs in all post-communist countries, the growth of new religious movements that acts as the splinter groups of the mainstream world religions, new religions, and a new spirituality among the intellectual elite? Can we talk about this worldwide new religious revival in terms of post-secular society, as Habermas put it? Finally, what would be presuppositions of this new society as to traditional enlightenment idea that stands on the course of transformation of the religious into the secular sphere? These questions are crucial for the time of modernity that in its multi-faced forms goes even beyond expected.

3c) Crisis of the Enlightenment: Modernity

As Jürgen Habermas has defined, modernity is an "unfinished" and "dynamic concept," never definitely complete. It began as a systematic movement that has challenged the old Medieval closed paradigms with "revolution, progress, emancipation, development, crisis, and *Zeitgeist.*"[102] Putting the modern world with the Enlightenment progress into the secular sphere, i.e., people themselves are responsible for their destiny and can direct it as they want to, modernity opens itself for the future. Modernity means for Hegel, as well as for Habermas, a "continuous renewal" of the Enlightenment, i.e., the quest of the individual, which comprehensively relates to the objectives of social, economical, and political super-structures in order to direct its future.

For Hegel, the medium through which an individual becomes aware of itself is the kingdom of passions. Passions, desires, and emotions motivate the practical aspect of human nature.[103] These passions sometimes transform their impulses into the steady continuum, which than defines an individual's life. The transformation of the passionate aspect of human nature to the steady inclinations that are accepted from the person as the autonomous and rational decision making process results in "will." According to Hegel, this subjective "Will" finally becomes realized when the individual subjectivity rationally directs its morality (*moralishe*), based on personal autonomy, in accordance within the objective spirit which is realized through culture, religion, laws, the state, and finally generational-historical challenge (*zeitgeist*). This ethos that reflects the value-system (*Sittlichkeit*) of Hegelian objective spirit is realized in the Western culture through the lives and actions of individuals.

> "Subjective volition—Passion—is that which sets men in activity, that which effects "practical" realization. The Idea is the inner spring of action: the State is the actually existing realized moral life. For it is the Unity of the universal, essential Will, with that of the individual; and this is "Morality." The Individual living in this unity has a moral life: possesses a value that consists in this substantially alone. Sophocles in his Antigone, says, "The divine commands are not of yesterday, nor of to-day; no, they have an infinite existence, and one could say whence they came." The Laws of morality are not accidental, but are the essentially Rational. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*[104]

Hegel still thinks that the Christian religion represents the symbolic and abstract form of the liberation spirit for every individual. More than this, he really thinks that an individual can reflect this spirit of liberation on the objective level. Providence, the great "thought" and "idea" that "the world is governed" by the higher principles giving at the same time meaning to the world, all existence, all human suffering, and all historical challenges. Philosophy should serve to a purpose to transform the abstract idea of the Providence into the particular experience of the individual. Hegel states in his *History of Philosophy*: "In the Christian religion God has revealed Himself—that is, he has given us to understand what He is; so that he is no longer a concealed or secret existence." To Hegel, Christianity appears as the "thinking spirit," the way how a person can explain his/her existence as valuable, positive, and congruent within the historical challenges, destiny of the state and nation.[105]

Habermas cannot accept any longer the part of Hegel's philosophy where Christianity is viewed as theodicy or "a justification of the ways of God." Instead of the messianic role of Christianity Habermas accepts Hegel's point that passions, authenticity, and "grounding modernity out of itself" is the core of the modern decentered individuality. In his lectures *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* Habermas analyzes modern aesthetic criticism of Baudelaire, Benjamin, and Nietzsche in comparison to Hegel. All of them stressed the importance of the philosophy of history projecting shift from the Enlightenment paradigm to the new age era. In this new era the true moral value of the individual would be equal to the aesthetic value that comes from the authenticity of individual creation, which establishes the norms out of its passions,

feelings, aesthetic contemplation, intelligent criticism, and a "now time" that fights the oppressed forms from the past (Benjamin).

All the three thinkers, Baudelaire, Benjamin, and Nietzsche, who opened for modernity an idea of the shift to the new ages, critically think that the state, religion, culture, political or social super-structures, or even the philosophy of the Hegelian objective spirit can be no longer congruent with the quest of individuality. The individual cannot find his/her substance any longer in the objective sphere. Nietzsche's idea of the death of God represents a strong criticism of the traditional religious practices and beliefs of Christianity—religion and God, both are dead, because there is no any longer presence of the living God where the practical is congruent with the theoretical, or aesthetical. Nietzsche in his *Will to Power* in the section *On the Natural History of Morals* defines family alliance, community, tribe, peoples, states, and churches as the advancement of human herds and structures of obedience to authority. He thinks that the individual is weakened by the dictate of the formal conscience that represents in its core "the moral hypocrisy of the commanding class."[106] For Nietzsche the real individuality rests on the experience of the pessimism; being alone, functioning as a self-sufficient being, and creating out of this experience an invention which expresses true human morality as congruent to the aesthetical enchantment. Habermas seriously takes into consideration Nietzsche's criticism of the Hegelian objective sphere and substantial importance of strong creative personality. Using this important model of decentered individuality that creates innovative and new challenges, Habermas defines modernity as the creation of normativity that comes out of itself.[107]

If one examines the new religious movements in the contemporary world it would find that all of them offer, whether in a good (syncretism, audience cults) or bad sense (brainwashing cults), the set of corrections, alternative, or radical opposition to the mainstream religious ideas or practices. This spirit of change and revolution juxtaposed to the old paradigm, rebellion against the theological and doctrinal uniformity of the traditional churches, and experimentation in the field of religious practices; these all very much define the new religious movements. Habermas' definition of modernity as the "creation of normativity out of itself" is substantiated in the practices and beliefs of the new religious movements. Although Habermas is skeptical to the new religious movements in the contemporary world calling them "symptoms of ego weakness and regression" and signs of "returning to mythical forms of thought" such as magic, and esotericism, which "the Church overcame" centuries ago, interestingly, his own definition of modernity fits new religious movements just fine.

The "post-secular" society, one of the crucial Habermas's notion, is a term that denotes society where the dominant movements are associated with the revival of the religious consciousness, growth of the new religious movements, and/or flourishing of the traditional religious beliefs which bring fourth negative elements such as nationalism, religious intolerance, religious conflicts, and conservativism instead of their decline. This neo-conservative revival in the global world is one of the most critical problems.

Habermas actually thinks that the religious renewal in the most secularized parts of the world, the United States of America, is strengthening, which causes deeper and deeper political division in the country and in the world, especially with the present war in Iraq.[108] Habermas sees September 11 as the most tragic sign of a dangerous religious

revivalism: the economic, technological, and political supremacy of the United States is interpreted by al Qaeda, Bin Laden, and other Islamic fundamentalists as the real body of the "Great Satan," so with September 11 began the attack on the most powerful symbol of the economic and political supremacy of the West. In response to the terror attack the Bush's administration pronounced the "war against terrorism" and began to take the struggle against Islamic fundamentalism in a "new crusade" fashion. [109] These recent political events brought on the public seen problems of the Western dominating democracies to lapse in protection of the human rights at any cost, protection of the citizen rights and their privacy, creating the politics of the fear and insecurity with the projection in the public sphere of the everlasting war, and the collapse of the trust between the government and the people.

Habermas urges that only the protection of the secularism of the democratic state can open a society for success, because the modern world is more and more multicultural. In his recent text *Religion in the Public Sphere* Habermas writes in what way should be open process of tolerance between the citizens who belong to the different religious confessions and the state:

> It must albeit expect of them that they recognize the principle that an impartial rule is exercised with neutrality toward competing worldviews, but it must not expect them to split their identity in public and private components as soon as participate in public debates. I would therefore suggest the following interpretation: Every citizen must know that only secular reasons count beyond the institutional threshold that divides the

informal public sphere from parliaments, courts, ministries, and administrations. J. Habermas, *Religion in the Public Sphere*, p. 11. [110]

Although there is fear for fragility of Western civilization that might loose its normative actions and validity claims under the pressures of new challenges competing with the dangerous religious fanaticism and fundamentalism, still it remains Habermas' conviction that the Western civilization was able to open the argumentative and dialogical humanity where every person can use its world-view as the opportunity to teach others and learn from others. Habermas says:

> For under certain circumstances secular citizens or citizens of a different faith may be able t to learn something from these contributions and discern in the normative truth content of a religious expression intuitions of their own that have possibly been repressed or distorted and obscured. The force of religious traditions to articulate moral intuitions with regard to communal forms of a dignified human life makes religious presentations on relevant political issues a serious candidate fro possible truth contents that can then be translated from the vocabulary of a specific religious community into a generally accessible language. J. Habermas, *Religion in the Public Sphere*, pp. 11-12.

Habermas' solution to the post-secularism is that the language potentials of believers and secularists should not be closed. Each world-view and lifeworld has its own authenticity and is worth to be heard. The main value of democracy and Western normative actions within the culture is in the possibility to leave the room for the diversity of the worldviews and their plentiful semantics that can be involved in the further process of

dialog, argumentation, and growth of knowledge, which can benefit the society as the whole.

3d) Classical and Modern Theory of Religion and the Secularization Processes

In reflection to religion and the secularization processes, the classical theory of religion has given diverse answers for this problem. One of the first interesting concepts that explain religion as the result of human's deepest hopes, longings, and ideals is exemplified in the philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach and his analysis of the idea of God.[111] He has offered the projection theory, by which the notion of God denotes a pure human condition expressing the anthropomorphic structure in the main statements of belief.[112] In his *The Essence of Christianity*, Feuerbach powerfully concludes that the essence of religion is "Man," as well as its "beginning, middle and end."

Almost in line, Karl Marx developed a substantial critical socio-economic analysis of religion, pointing out its political character in modern, national states, where the mainstream religion highly supports the powerful ruling class of the society. He also stressed that modern states need new legislation, where all religions are perceived as equal, by which religion is becoming a very important private matter and its role is secularized by state law.[113] Marx also points out that where the state is more open toward different religions, at the same time it is becoming much closer to the social use of religion. His main idea is that for modern humanity, religion is a source of alienation and men/women become alienated from their essence. The condition of religious dependency disables the ability of a person to act against the social or political oppression. Religion is the means of oppression for the class of the oppressors.

In his *Theses on Feuerbach* he writes that Feuerbach has not seen in "religious sentiment" a problem. To Marx, religion is a social product and the result of a "particular society," and a tool of keeping religion as the main psycho-social addiction for those who are alienated from their own essence. To him, religion still preserves the right to be a "general theory of the world,", but the world is the world of man, so religion is an "inverted consciousness of the world."[114] Definitely, in his mind, religion is the result of a social, political, historical, and economic complex structure as its surplus as well as the superstructure in order to maintain powerless class in a good state of hope and addiction. [115] In this sense, the main task of the religious dominant institutions is to support a *status quo* power relationship in society maintaining the supremacy of the ruling class.

The modern anthropology and sociology of religion soon followed Feuerbach and Marx, who first time outlined what are the secularization processes of the religious sphere. From E. B. Tylor and J. G. Frazer, to E. Durkheim and M. Weber, or B. Malinowski and E.E. Pritchard—all research concentrated on explaining, contrasting, and describing religion as an important anthropological and cultural fact that outlines a systematic structure of the beliefs and practices in every religion of existence.

Whether it is the world of the mainstream religion, basic (native), or new age movements, all of them exist in a same form having a code of beliefs and practices. All religious movements show through their codes of beliefs and practices the following: (1) compendium of materials that explain their statements of beliefs (exegeses, sacred texts, myths, dogmas); (2) maintain by their own means a community of believers; (3) establish the important body (sometimes the system) of symbols that are mediators between the

beliefs/practices, exegeses, and the community; (4) acknowledge their experts for the purposes of preserving their spiritual ways, practices, and beliefs as a tradition.

In this sense, one of the best definition of religion as a cultural system was given by Clifford Geertz who transformed the beliefs and practices into a term "symbols," which then are presented as important codes that transform human motivations into a clear and steady direction which can then produce conceptions relevant for the existence and translate the expressions of the existence in the "general order." He also states that every religion gives a "unique" explanation of the relevant concepts by giving its symbols special status of being factual i.e., believers do acknowledge that their (expressed in symbols) statements of beliefs are true.[116] For instance, a true Catholic does take as relevant that the mother of Jesus is a virgin, even though this statement of belief clashes with the human natural experience, or can be perceived as questionable if it is taken into consideration that the Gospels of Mark and John never ever touched upon the story of the Virgin Mary.

A very important point of the anthropological and sociological research is that all religions can be compared as to their substantial systematic elements either cross-culturally or in an evolutionary sense--from the emergence of the primer forms of beliefs to modern scientific reasoning--as well as historically.

As the knowledge of different religious traditions progressed as well as the knowledge of their main anthropological, historical, cultural, aesthetical, and social forms, for the scholars the rationalization processes became more and more a focus of the research.

"Liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty," is one of the strong definitions of the rationalization processes given in the famous book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947) by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno. They have seen in the Enlightenment period a turning point for modern men and women by which self-governance has destroyed the authoritarian, enchanting, magical, and mythological powers of religion.[117] The result of putting the self-governance and responsibility instead of the authority of religion, taking free choice instead of following blindly the religious and culturally idiomatic demands, and using the power of the scientific knowledge before any enchantment forces of the faith have transformed a human consciousness into the giant master of the world that finally appears to transform itself even beyond expected limits.

Adorno and Horkheimer have seen in the modern technology a problem. The overuse of the scientific methodology based on the mathematical logic (application of numbers to the interactive entities and social subjects), statistics, induction, and experiment that is dominant in the modern world, they found, have unexpected consequences on the everyday human life. With this drastic change, the Enlightenment ideal fell into its contradiction. Adorno and Horkheimer were seriously concerned that modernity in this new form threatened a survival of any moral, aesthetical, philosophical, or any higher meaning for humans.

It seemed that modernity has resulted in a crisis of the human spiritual and intellectual potentials. Modernity has built a new world in which the human existence has become subjectively minimal, dominantly materialistic, ethically utilitarian, politically manipulated by the power of the mass culture and media, senselessly instrumental,

atomistically isolated, and fearfully alone. In this sense, they found that beyond the limits of the disenchantment and enlightenment ideas, stands a terrifying vastness and emptiness of the human existence that can even loose the belief in reason itself.

In a serious concern with the rationalization processes in modern society one can find not only in the critical analyses of Horkheimer and Adorno, but also in other works of the first generation of the Frankfurt school (H

Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, and Eric Fromm), which also has tried to outline the comprehensive structure of modern society in which they found that the secularization processes were crucial triggers of transforming the religious potentials (beliefs, ideas, concepts, sacred texts, theologies) into the history, philosophy, secular ethics, secular laws, and individuals orientations.

For the explanation of the secularization processes they have seriously analyzed the works of Hegel's Philosophy of History, Philosophy of Right, and Phenomenology of Mind, where the world religions, although presented in the Euro-centric fashion, are understood as the main wheel of the historical development which crown is the final achievement of the society of the free and consciousness of the freedom, self-sufficiency, and responsibility.

The Frankfurt school has seriously, but critically, examined the role of Christianity in Hegel's philosophy. For Hegel, Christianity represents in its historical sense the *par exellance* example of the religion that on its historical journey passed through the abstract idea of the transcendence of human freedom to its historical realization to become an active subject in creating the society of the free. According to Hegel, Christianity that has accepted the idea of the absolute God rooted in Judaism,

where God serves its people in the great story of emancipation which is presented in the symbolism of the covenant between the God, chosen people, and exodus from Egyptian slavery, becomes more progressed in the idea of freedom, because with Christianity all people, despite their origin, are equal in the eyes of God and ready to build their freedom. The example of Jesus as a man and god at the same time describes this idea symbolically. Substantially, Jesus' sacrifice for humans gives the example that the messianic demand in the history is present in every human being where Jesus becomes the ideal for every Christian individual (individuum), even accordingly, for every living individual. In this sense, an individual is not only abstractly free before God, but is free substantially, before his consciousness, which is transformed through the example of Jesus, himself.[118]

Finally, the secular recognition by the positive laws that in one organic unity (nation) all humans are substantially free and that they are designers of their life by free choices, and as such they are in accordance by the responsible, just and ethical governing, Hegel defined as the progression of reason itself in the historical sense. This progression of the historical consciousness of freedom is theologically expressed in the concept of providence i.e., in Christianity symbolically expressed through the idea of the Holy Ghost. With Hegel's idea that religion in its highest conceptualization of beliefs/ideas and historical consciousness are in the Western society analogical through the dialectic development of the growth of consciousness of freedom through the abstract thesis (theology, philosophy, art), its historical antithesis (wars and human suffering), and finally unified in the great historical synthesis (becoming in accordance with the "objective spirit"), as it occurred in the example of the French Revolution (1789), the

secularization processes are defined as sort of a transformation of the religious ideas into the social, political, and humanistic realm.

Inspired by this idea of the transformation of the religious potentials to the secular sphere, Horkheimer has even tried to rescue religious consciousness and the religious potentials envisioning that they might be transformed in the secular society as the demands for the absolute i.e., transcendence and the absolute justice. The historical tragedy of the institutionally torched in the concentration camps and six million killed Jews in Nazi Germany during World War II, for Horkheimer, and other intellectuals of the Frankfurt circle, became an important sign of terrible crises of the Enlightenment and modernity. It seems like that the progress of the consciousness of freedom became the paradox and irony to itself in this historical atrophy.

Searching desperately for answers that would overcome -- not in a sense of forgetfulness, but as the historical and conscious remembrance-- this new horrific face of the negation of the progress of the human freedom, Horkheimer and his followers from the Frankfurt school tried to outline the path of the transformation of the religious potentials into the secular world. Horkheimer and Adorno have an idea of the new role of the modern arts, philosophy, sociology, morality of the individual, and ethics. They thought that these spiritual disciplines can developed a strong critical analysis of the modern instrumentalized rationality and take over the power of the religious forms in modern society. According to Jürgen Habermas (who began his philosophical career as the member of the third generation of the Frankfurt critical school), Horkheimer and Adorno in their late works acknowledged the strong skepticism to their capital idea that the transcendence as the secularly transformed idea of the absoluteness of the religious or

the God, and the demand for the absolute justice as the regulative idea of the religious fulfillment of the justice as the end of time in Judeo-Christian tradition, could be rescued through the expressions of modern arts, concepts and ideas of philosophy, value ethics, personal morality, and other entitlements of the humanistic disciplines. Habermas found himself disappointed with Horkheimer/Adorno's giving up on the future demands of the social philosophy, interpreting this skeptical aura of their work as coming into the crisis of reason itself, which is going to enhance the chaos of modernity, as so called post-modernism.

Habermas has found himself on a new mission, trying strongly to rescue the reason of the Enlightenment with its transcendent potential, but now, this potential appears to us in its totally secularized form, which is to him, an important appropriate of the linguistically open subject, as an individual, which can critically evaluate the only thing he/she has, and that is reality.

This post-modern reality appears to Habermas as extremely complex in a sense that is irreconcilable with its parts and it grows in the grotesque difference (*difference*). The two structures appear as the post-modern reality continuous: either the brutally arranged order present in the social, political, economic, national, military, legal, religious consistency encaged in the institutional-bureaucratic (as it is) everlasting persistency, or the chaotic inconsistency of the simple human subject with its lifeworld that is in constant identity transformation as to the consistent world. As the continuum appears the public sphere, which in the traditional Hegelian sense can be understood as the objective world, as the diachronic momentum appears the private sphere as an individuum in a crises, impossible to realize its potentials.

In an ontological sense, these two worlds are irreconcilable, and too different that can ever reach each other and exchange any mutual meaning. In a sense of the materialistic, dialectic-historical method these two worlds has to negate each other, because they cannot any longer sublate a synthesis between the individual and the objective spheres. Because of these reasons, Habermas sees that the social philosophy has to accompany itself with a new methodology, which can rescue reason and its transcendent residue as well as its potential and finally sublate the private (as individual) and the public (as objective) spheres in a new meaningful reality.

Habermas sees the new semiotic philosophy, as the new shoes for his social philosophy. Although, the post-modern world appears as a great *difference*, it is one equivalent between these two worlds: a communicative action that in a linguistic reality appears as the sign that can with its potentiality of interpretation and significance become transformed in the discourse, which would open the dialectic between the public sphere and the lifeworld. The final result of these dialectic parts is possible improvement of both worlds, on each side, which accomplishment Habermas sees as the discursive ethics.

Regarding our concern as to the rationalization processes of the religious Habermas would agree that they can bi understood in a dialectic fashion as the challenge, critical inquiry, disposition, opposition, and dismissal of the religious beliefs. What is difficult to explain is how these rationalization processes have become the political, scientific, and cultural alternative to the closed, rigid, and orthodox religious worldviews, but at the same time, through the criticism some of the religious potentials such as a sense of transcendence, ethical ideal of justice, goodness, and righteousness are preserved in communicative action of the public and the lifeworld? More than this, as the biggest

problem of the communicative action as general semiotic theory of religion is why and how are religious potentials translated into the public sphere as the normative standards of the legal system and system of values.

3e) <u>American Experience: Religious Freedoms and Freedom from the Religious</u>

Religion of the Christian Reformation has always played important role in the culture of the United States. In the Declaration of Independence it is stated that God has granted people with basic natural rights and sense of freedom.[119] The God of singers of the Declaration was understood as a God who realizes itself through reason as an invisible, inner part of nature that unfolds historical progress through the development of human freedoms. The main meaning of life has been seen in the fulfillment of the liberty that naturally expresses natural human rights, which source is in the Creator itself. The idea that a human stands as the equal to God and represents with the comprehension of its freedom the realization of the creation process was the idea very much in opposition to the traditional Pilgrim, Evangelical, or Presbyterian movements of that time.

In the Declaration it is also stated that the realization of humanity can be seen in the "pursuit of happiness" of each individual and this new nation itself. Well being and pursuit of happiness are quite different ideals than those spread in the different colonies, which called their communities "New Jerusalem" and promoted moral rigorism based on the literal interpretation of the Biblical texts. At the end of the Declaration it is stated that the new leadership would struggle for freedoms and well being of its citizens by having a faith in the "divine Providence." There is no question that people who signed this document had a very generic, deistic, and modern view of God, a Creator, and the Providence that stood in many of ways as the challenge and even an opposition to the

strictly Biblical notion of God spread among the Pilgrims in New England, revivalists in Pennsylvania, or Anglicans, Presbyterians, and later, Episcopalians in Virginia.[120]

It is interesting that the name of God is not mentioned in the American Constitution and it is stated in the Article VI under the session *Official Oath* that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." In this sense the separation of the state and the church become one of the main priorities for the founding fathers of the United States, even before was proposed and passed the First Amendment in 1791. Definitely, the first American politicians have had been very aware that different American colonies have very diverse Christian ideas that might come into the serious conflict with each other once when these colonies are united in the federation.[121]

Founding fathers of the US, J. Washington, T. Jefferson, and J. Madison were all inspired by the Enlightenment European movement and ideas of John Locke, J.J. Rousseau, and Voltaire as well as with ideas of Bishop Joseph Butler and Anglican minister Samuel Clarke.[122] The Enlighteners tried to overcome terrible challenges regarding the interpretation of which Christianity is right by giving a concept of the intellectual generic concept of God in their idea of "natural religion" as deism. Today we know that deism was the dominant idea in the Masons Lodges in the US. The Enlighteners and the members of the Masonic Lodges have believed that God emanates itself through nature, of which reason is its inner part and the highest expression of God's will. God was understood as a great Architect of the human history in which people can see the progress in a sense that humans are becoming more emancipated and realized as individuals than in the former historical stages and political systems. These lodges were

important because they became the main institutions for designing the trade and other connections between the different colonies. Very often the lodges in the main city centers would plant the Liberty Tree, and these places would become important to the revolutionaries and their followers who wanted to free themselves from the British rule. Finally, it is good to remember that 52 out of 56 signers of the Declaration were members of the Freemason lodges. [123]

Besides the main ideas of God expressed in the funding document of the USA, the creation of the United States is associated with remembrance on the role of diverse Christian religious groups that have had opposite views on political and social challenges in their colonies. For instance, Pilgrims in Massachusetts have thought that Native Americans have to convert to Christianity--their original culture was perceived as bad or "savage" and the conversion was seen as the process of Enlightenment of their consciousness. At the same time Pilgrims strongly opposed to the slavery practiced in Virginia and other Southern states. The revivalist in Pennsylvania have opposed to legality of slavery in Southern Colonies, but were more open for the interactions with the Native Americans, and the Anglicans with Presbyterians in Virginia wanted a firm state church as a tool of maintaining institution of the black slavery.

American early Colonial experiences are important in History of Christianity and further development of Western Civilization. Never before one could see so many opposite voices within Christianity which resulted in concrete application of specific beliefs to the secular and political life. Also, this American experience is extraordinary in a sense of creation of first normative laws that would legislate as necessary religious tolerance and allowed the growth of religious pluralism. For instance K. Marx in his early

writings *The German Idealism* and *The Jewish Question* praises American legislators which at that time accepted The First Amendment (1791). He pointed out that states in Europe at that time (1886-1890) still didn't emancipate the state from the state religion. He used the text of the First Amendment associated with American Constitution to stress that emancipation of Jews in Germany, have led by Bruno Bauer, doesn't mean that Jews should became equal to Christians in their rights for religious freedom, but that the state has to emancipate itself from any religion in order to grant this right to its people.

Today is still wide open for interpretation the meaning of the first amendment: although the state should totally separate itself from religious institutions, movements, and ideological influences, it has to secure the freedom of religious affiliations and expressions. Open, sharp, and sometimes emotional discussions such as evolutionism vs. creationism, use of religious prayers in the public schools, placing a statue of the Ten Commandments in an Alabama courthouse, abortion, removing a word God from the Pledge of Allegiance, and the embryonic stem cell research are good examples of topics that repeatedly shake American media and engage people of all ages and professions in open dialogs that tend to form two different political sides—a conservative and the liberal one.

American society is very polarized and often unsure how to balance religious freedoms and high standards that are result of democratization processes which support cultural and political pluralism and autonomy of the scientific, social, and academic research. One of the highest ideals that have formed American great pluralistic Nation is the First Amendment by which is secured the freedom of speech, but is also ensured the

freedom of religious convictions and beliefs, whether they are extreme and sometimes even harmful for their followers.

For example, one of the highly disputed religious groups in the USA today is the white supremacist movements that use the right of the First Amendment in the inverse manner. They teach as a legitimate the hate toward other races as Jews, Afro-Americans, and so called "mud" races. The Creativity Movement and the Church of the Creator inspired by Ben Klassen and Matt Hale are similar in their program to the Nazi ideology. While the Nazism was crashed in 1945 by the American and Western European military intervention (and the post-war rule which established democracies resolving the right totalitarian tendencies in Germany and Italy based on justification of racist laws toward Jews, Slavs, Gypsies and other smaller Eastern or Southern European Slavic minorities), this group feels quite comfortable in continuing the thread of hate. It is awkward that the movement which promotes as the main slogan "race is our religion" and as the main ideal a racial holy war (RAHOWA) by which the white race will become the dominant one in the future of the Earth, uses for its survival in the public sphere the most humanistic and liberal norm of the West, embodied in the philosophy of the First Amendment.[124]

The freedom of religious affiliation and the freedom of speech guaranteed by the American Constitution is one of the most important norms that modern societies developed in a sense of protecting human rights and dignity as an ideal of the secular humanism. The First Amendment designed in 1771 by Madison and Jefferson still represents the norm as an ideal of the true fulfillment of emancipation processes in the modern world. Both, Madison and Jefferson, have experienced what it means when only one church is licensed in the state, which was the case with the Anglican Church in

Virginia. The domination of one church in the state is a dangerous ideological monopoly. Immediately after the First Amendment was accepted by the Congress, in Virginia began flourishing of the revival movements such as the Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers who then licensed black preachers and established the black church movements who were going to change the attitude by which black slaves should not be baptized. It was the Anglican/Presbyterian idea that if the black slaves are not baptized then the slavery can be justified for the Christian community because slaves are not Christians themselves. The First Amendment broke the monopoly of one church as well as the ideological indoctrination that the slavery can be justified.

One of the discussions that exemplifies the confrontation between the religious and the secular we can find in the broadcast presentation *Creation vs. Evolution: Battle in the Classroom* produced by the *National Science Foundation* in 1982, where it is presented the case study of Livermore, California public schools. The school offered a course in the Science using both "scientific" approaches: evolution and creation. Lots of students and their parents, although pious Christians, opposed the idea of teaching creationism, saying that in this class the mythological stories from the Book of Genesis about Noah's Ark and the creation story are misrepresented to the students' as science. They were also taught that the Earth in the physical sense is only ca 6 - 8 thousand years old.

The school board had to respond to the disappointed parents and students who complained about creationism as a science, while the other half of the students liked the class because it offered to them a possibility to take the side and choose which model works better for them. Parents who argued that creationism and evolutionism should be

taught side by side in the public schools thought that a true Christian believer could have a problem to follow its religious convictions if only evolution is taught in the public schools. Soon it was decided that science class should not teach creationism in the public schools. Many of parents supported creationism, but a slight majority won in favor of evolutionism.

One might be confused of how creation theory can function as a science. Creationism as a science is the main project of the Institute for Creation Research (ICR) in San Diego, California. The main data about the institute and the scientists involved in this project can be found on the Internet at this address www.icr.org.

The founder of the ICR is Henry M. Morris, the specialists in the hydraulics, hydrology, geology, and mathematics, who has published 24 books in which the science is presented to support the Genesis story. One of the most popular biologists in ICR, Duane T. Gish, is Associate Director, interviewed in the broadcast presentation which published numerous books trying to prove that the Genesis story about Noah's ark can be scientifically proven. Before Gish became one of the founders of the ICR, he worked for many years as a biochemist in Upjohn Company, Kalamazoo, Michigan. He tried to defend the fact that the Earth is only 6-8 thousands years old, as well as to prove that all living beings existed simultaneously before the big flood (amoeba, man, and dinosaur), which took place before several thousands years, as the catastrophic event that changed the Earth only in the course of one year.

Along with ICR a very active is the Creation Research Society in Ann Arbor, Michigan, from which the majority of scientists are recruited to work for ICR. Amazing subtitle appears as one finds the web-site "we are Christ focused Creation ministry,"

which bluntly shows that the scientific methodology is biased and that the Bible truth is understood as the main hypothesis that frames their scientific research and interpretation of the facts that are the result of this pseudo-science.

To show polarization over the issue whether is evolution acceptable for the Christian believers today, two local preachers were interviewed and both of them had totally different answers on understanding science and evolution. While the local fundamentalist preacher (Scott Memorial Baptist Church), Tim LaHaye, said that evolution definitely conflicts the truth of the Bible and that this teaching should be expelled from the schools even blaming the evolutionary theory for the "political, moral and social chaos" of the 60's, a liberal Presbyterian preacher (First Presbyterian), Bill Nebo, explained that he had no problem with evolution and the scientific facts involved in its explanation. He supported his claim with an idea that evolutionary theory also cannot explain every possible change in the development of species. For Nebo, this very fact means that even in scientific evolution a true Christian can find space to integrate a thought of the higher being that acts with the higher purpose through nature. In his opinion evolution is not in opposition to the Christian belief and its canonical compendium. He also said that he understands the Bible stories in a metaphorical sense and not strictly literal, so for him, it is not necessary that science proves the story of the Genesis. This way of opening religious paradigm to the facts of science can be consider as an example of the secularization of religious ideas.

In analyzing this case study, it seems that religion appears in modern society as the most controversial psycho-social, cultural, and ideological construct in the world of Modernity. Religious responses to modernity fluctuate from the open dialogs of religious

specialists, theologians, and believers with the representatives of the secular ideas (the liberal paradigm) to the denial and challenge (the fundamentalism) of the same.

This situation with the religion and secularization processes is the number one topic in modern scholarship in philosophy, comparative religion, ethics, aesthetics, and sociology. The goal of this doctoral dissertation is to concentrate on the research of how belief(s) and religion(s) are explained in the context of modernity taking into consideration semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce, which is differently applied in the theory of religion by J. Habermas and U. Eco. It is interesting that both scholars, Habermas and Eco, have analyzed the functioning of religious consciousness in modernity; have involved themselves into the public dialogs with the representatives of the Christian theology; and adopted Peirce's semiotics as a relevant frame of reference by which they can explain the processes of the secularization of religious ideas in modern society.

3f) Peirce and the Model of Scientific Revolution

According to Peirce, beliefs hold one's worldview as long as they are fixed and do not clash under the weight of any doubt. As soon as doubt appears, beliefs are challenged. For Peirce the scientific statements are also beliefs (habits), but with a more secure methodology than pure beliefs, because the hypotheses on which the research is processed is proven and supported through the material facts.

Pure beliefs have no secure methodology in acquiring the knowledge of nature, but they open a search for the self through the conceptions of the superhuman being. According to Peirce, the very idea of nature appears to a human mind as the representation of the unity that stands separate from the self. The feeling of finitude and

helplessness appears before the sign which stands wide open to a self. Human consciousness creates a further conception of the dynamic object, and it appears in the form of a superhuman being or God. Consciousness that understands itself in its finite position, through religion now, is forced to interpret its existence by referring to the dynamic object.

Peirce understands belief as a rule for action, because it establishes a claim, a proposition, a fixed knowledge, from which the practical action is possible. To Peirce, religion is a special type of a belief that acts to the human mind as a key for understanding humanity and its possibilities. According to Peirce, the source of all possible beliefs is in the primary religious experience when a mind acknowledges the idea of the infinite, omni-powerful (God, creator), and absolute God, who then stands to a human mind as the sign for the unity and order of all things in the universe. God is the most exhaustive sign that is progressed into a mirror-symbol through which we are able to see ourselves and open up the mind for communication with the world by which every possible object that mind can grasp becomes a sign. To Peirce, humans are not any longer *animal rationale* as it is presented in philosophy from Aristotle to Descartes, Kant, and Hegel; but rather interpreters that are deciphering the world through the very fact of their freedom. Peirce defines a sign (representamen) as "something which stands to somebody form something in some respect of capacity." The object of knowledge is not any longer reduced to the things that consciousness is able to produce from the transcendental conditions of time and space as described in Kant, but it can be a concept, a feeling, and an action, anything that the consciousness can grasp in some respect. In this sense, consciousness appears to be an interpretant of signs in an indefinite way and the

"religious science" helps a consciousness to understand itself in the deepest way. To Peirce, religion is a science of communication in which God appears as a regulative idea (almost in a Kantian sense), in a way that a person exists as communion with another being that represents itself through the unity with the dynamic object. Religion is the only science which opens objects (interpreted signs) as the modus of the self to the public sphere.[125] In Peirce's philosophy, religion is the only science that anticipates the transcendental and transcendent truth of the self. Religion represents the communicative ability of the human mind that is able to unfold to a person meaning that one can find in the act of love.[126]

Referring again to the case study at the beginning of the text we can find an amazing resemblance between the reasoning of the liberal preacher Bill Nebo and Charles S. Peirce's understanding of religion. Although Peirce was also a great mathematician, logician, and scientist in physics, he opposed the radical skepticism of Hume and tried to find some space in which he could preserve religion as an important psychological, phenomenological, rational, and developmental fact for humanity. Peirce really gave a convincing answer for public like Bill Nebo – it is possible to be a scientist and to be religious; while evolutionary theory cannot answer to the highest questions of humanity because of the reduced scientific hypothesis that in its answer cannot break from the conditions of its scientific method – proving the logic of natural selection and survival of the species--, religion can be understood as additional science that explains the growth and functioning of the self which is able to explain the meaning behind the highest human doubts.

While the discourse of meaning for religious person answers the question of what life is and gives guidelines of how to achieve good, valuable way of living through the set of rules that frames morality, ethics, human relationships, and the self, the secular or lay individuals search for new answers that appear as the substitution for an old paradigm in which religion is not enough a satisfactory level of consciousness for the secular rationalism.

3g) Habermas: Methodological Atheism and Rationality as a Solution

J. Habermas defines himself as a methodological atheists i.e., he preserves the right to understand the importance of the religious highest values and their truth claims, but he needs to reject, in the name of rationality, the old paradigm where religion involves the authority of a superhuman being as the transcendent sublimation of the absolute as well as the mythological aspects of religion. This methodological atheism is a comprehensive tool of the critical evaluation of religion that at the same time rejects, transforms, translates, and finally sublates religious truth into the domain of social reality. In his debate with modern theologians Johann Baptist Metz, Francis Schussler Fiorenza, Hugo Ball, Helmut Puekert and Jens Glebe-Möller, Habermas tried to explain in detail what methodological atheism is.[127]

The negative character of religion Habermas sees in mythological forms and reification processes by which religion is alienated from its substance by formalization of behavior in the ritual (symbolic acts as referents to the objects of religion) and cultic (worshiping) acts. Habermas thinks that the cult and ritual stand as the obstacle for understanding of religious semantic potentials. He says that in rituals religion is "protected against a radical problematization by its being rooted in cult."[128] Habermas

sees the "radical problematization" of religion in the theodicy and salvation theory. He thinks that only theology tries to explain the most difficult religious questions such as humans suffering (theodicy), freedom and emancipation (salvation theory) focusing on the truth claim of religion which aims the most inspiring part of religion and that is the growth of consciousness in a moral sense what humans should (oath) to do in regard to the others.

Habermas also thinks that those who accepted the symbolic interpretation of religious potentials miss the main challenge that religion offers to believers, but also to the whole community. Interpretation of the Bible in a symbolic sense represents the aesthetization process in which the real truth claim is omitted from the consideration. In this sense, the symbolic interpretation of religion appears then as a pure language game.

Habermas says that the modern theologians deal with extremely complex problems as to maintaining the sense of religion in correlation to the reality in which the lifeworld is complexly encaged by the instrumental rationality of the political, economic, and social subsystems of the modern democratic institutionalized world. In his interview with Eduardo Mendieta, Habermas states that the churches in modern societies face unavoidable competition with "other forms of faith" and "other claims to truth."[129] It is time to remember again the example from the beginning of the text that described the liberal preacher's approach to evolution and the fundamentalist one. While Bill Nebo, the Presbyterian preacher, sees the Genesis story as the symbolic representation of the omniscient God, which acts in the world in a way that everything is put together in a complex way, so, to him evolution can be the way how God in its freedom acts in nature;

for the fundamentalist preacher evolution is the insult to God's omniscience and omnipotence.

According to Habermas, the liberal side of the Christian theology tries to explain that Christianity has a value in offering to the modern world the principles of solidarity, emancipation, autonomous conduct in life, universalistic egalitarianism, individual morality that is directed under the consciousness of universal justice.[130] To Habermas, competition with other forms of faiths and beliefs--which is the case from the very moment when Christianity was formed as the splinter movement of the Jewish faith in the 1st century C.E. in Galilee up to the contemporary denominational paradigm--forced Christianity to continuously opt in its theological, political, and social debates for more universalistic ideas than any other religion in the world. Habermas thinks that the semantic potentials of religion preserved in the basic canon, theology, practice, symbolism, and rituals in competition with modern secularism and other religions on the market have to be enough universal, but also have to be exemplary in a sense of giving directions to the autonomous personality of how to live alone and as a member of a community of the church. The potentials of the semantic material of religion can be found in the dimension of ethics and morality—religions definitively outline what humans ought to do in order to achieve their true humanity.

Also, Habermas thinks that in the situation where the personal autonomy is recognized as the normative character of society some of religious semantic materials become inaccessible and they are then forgotten, some of them are redefined in a more universalistic sense. Some of them are viable enough to be transferred in the secular domain. For instance, if we read Chapter 21 from the Book of Exodus there are different

norms of how one should behave regarding laws to slaves, personal injury, and property damage. It is written in Exodus 21: 28-29: "When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox must be stoned; its flesh may not be eaten. The owner of the ox, however, shall go unpunished." Definitely this is an example of the social norm presented in the Bible compendium, but no common Jewish or Christian believer refers any longer to this norm as relevant for their faith. When it is written in the same chapter -- "When men have a fight and hurt a pregnant woman, so that she suffers a miscarriage, but no further injury, the guilty one shall be fined as much as the woman's husband demands of him, and he shall pay in the presence of the judges. But if injury ensues, you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." – conflicting views might appear in liberal and fundamentalist Christians, or the orthodox and liberal Jews on the issue of the *tallion* principle as acceptable social norm. In this sense, the semantic potentials of the Old Testament still have relevance for the religious consciousness of the believers. Finally, if we read in the Chapter 22:20-22 from the Book of Exodus the following excerpts, "You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land Egypt. You shall not wrong any widow or orphan."—they might seem to the majority of believers, but also to common sense people, as rules that should be preserved in the attitudes of human conduct today and even transformed in the positive laws that the whole society follows.

In this dissertation it was already discussed in the first chapter the value of Habermas' communicative praxis. Habermas reconstructs the importance of Durkheim's theory of religion. Analyzing the outcome of Durkheim's point of view in which the collective consciousness is the *conditio sine qua non* of the private affairs and is derived

from the religious consciousness that relate itself to the sacred. For Durkheim the sacred is "set apart" from everyday life and is *par excellence* (the thing that the profane should not touch) in the world order, unifying the whole community together in one single body of the church.[131] Habermas accepts Durkheim's view that religion in its primer form is the most important institution that forms the identity of the collective. In the experience of the sacred the whole community becomes aware of itself as one, using the analogous symbols such as totem as the means of representation in which the beliefs are expressed through the cult and rituals of the community that perceives itself as one. Although, Durkheim gives a good interpretation as to how religion functions in its primer stage, Habermas thinks that believers themselves in the primer societies are not able to rationally understand the meaning of the communal unity achieved through the relationship to the sacred even when they refer to it through the cultic and ritual observances. He thinks that the linguification of the sacred is important and it means the transformation of the religious transcendent abilities into the profane sphere or the migration of religious ideas into the secular sphere.

The demythologization processes Habermas sees in the ontology and metaphysics of the West: from the Ancient Greek philosophy, through the metaphysics of the Enlightenment (Descartes, Leibnitz, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Hobbes) and the philosophy of German Idealism. The philosophy of the West throughout its history has expressed the compulsive wish to outline the totality of reality in a rational way, but always gives the possibility for the transcendent residue to have some impact on the rational systemic thinking. This transcendent residue is defined in Kantian philosophy of antinomies in which rational reasoning is trapped without a final resolution for the

highest inspiring human truth claims--immortality, existence of God, human freedom, and the first cause of the world. Impossibility for reason to resolve the final metaphysical questions left philosophy open for serious critique of traditional metaphysics. With Kantian *Critique of Pure Reason* (1871), first time reason itself became a problem and philosophy found itself in a deep crisis floating on the open sea of ideas like the cursed *Flying Dutchman* which is not able to find any safe land. Kant tried to resolve this problem by giving the primacy of the practical reason. Kant is the first philosopher who acknowledged that the metaphysics couldn't fulfill any longer its assignment, supplying the rational worldview as the totality of systematic relationships. Science definitely endangered security of any mythological, religious, and then metaphysical worldviews. The common thing for all three types of the worldviews is possibility for one integrative reality to which human subject gives inputs and directs it.

In this sense the discussion about rationality in primal/native/basic or closed societies and scientifically advanced Western societies can be a good way of sharpening the views. in his first volume book *Theory of Communicative Action* (1981) Habermas states that modern society would not be able to understand either the mythology of the Azande, their concepts of the witchcraft and spirituality (Kwoth), or even the crucifixion of Jesus, unless these concepts are transformed and reconstructed through the learning process in which is then explained the transition from the mythological thinking to the more abstract theological concepts in a rational way.[132] The way of how the modern anthropologist Evans-Pritchard presented the Azande can be taken as a good example. Proving that the Azande logical thinking is not different than the one in the West, but also presenting in what way the Azande would have a different worldview and religious

content than the Western societies give modern anthropological research a clue why and how modern societies might be different than the traditional, pre-modern one. Habermas thinks that the main characteristic of the pre-modern societies is blending between the cultural spheres with the natural surroundings. It seems, as he states, that some sort of confusion between culture and nature occurs, and that the social world is crucial for explaining the natural world.

Very often this discussion would produce sharp arguments about rationality, because cultural explanations for the natural occurrences seem to Westerners as irrational explanations. For instance, in the Nuer tribe Twins are not understood as twins, but as birds that are sings of the spirits. In many African tribes any sickness is perceived as the result of the witchcraft. Habermas accepts partly the position of Winch. The same logic is present in the Western world as well as it is in pre-modern societies of the basic cultures: they both use the same logical apparatus—the premises from which is drawn inferences and applied on the world, but there is only one difference. In the primal societies the premises are not questioned are they true or not true, they are basically the statements of belief, while in the science of the West one can draw the validity claims about the objective reality only and only if drawn inferences from the premises can prove the truthfulness of these premises. According to Winch, it is possible to talk about logical unscientific and the scientific way of thinking. Both are substantially equal because they express the worldview through language, which maintains the cognitive adequacy between the signifier and signified.

What Habermas sees as the substantially different between these two worldviews is a lack of any alternative interpretations. The normativity of one interpretation comes

from social unity that is maintained through the taboo as the institution that protects "the categorical foundations" of that one worldview. The scientific rationality is basically "instrumental" in a sense that has to prove the hypothesis, and is cognitively rational in a sense that does not need a cultural foundation to prove its methodology or reflect to a specific case out of the foundation system. Science goes beyond the cultural differences.

The pre-modern societies function on the system that has only one set of rules and they are interpreted as they do not contradict each other, the main authority for this set of rules is envisioned in the authority of the sacred. Modern society is a comprehensive in its structure because it reflects different "objectified" worlds as the sub-systems that are hypostased as one form of reality. The same object of knowledge can have its religious, scientific, cultural, economic, or social interpretation. This net of different codes through which the reality can be explained is not available in the pre-modern societies.

In this sense, the methodological atheism is the only solution in studying modern lifeworld and its objectified subsystems that represent possibilities for the normative interpretations. Religion passed its path from being the absolute source of authority in primer societies to being the last resource of human salvage. Rescuing religious potentials after a moment when is clear that the whole religion sublimated and transcend the deepest anthropomorphic ideals of ethics and humanity itself is crucial to Habermas. He thinks that these ideals should be transferred into the legal, social, aesthetical, and political spheres of modern society and a sense of transcendence into the lifeworld. The transformation of these religious potentials into the secular sphere calls everyone to participate in a discourse: what is really the future of humanity in the modern instrumentalized world?

3h) Eco: Natural/Lay Religiosity

In the prestige Italian daily national newspaper *La Correra de la Serra* was published Umberto Eco's discussion with Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, in which both scholars open the line of appealing questions about ethics, women in the Catholic Church, abortion, beginning of the human life, and apocalypse. The newspaper editors had an idea to show a vivid polemics to the public between the two different sides; one religious and the other secular, i.e., the atheistic. Eco/Martini discourse reached the high intellectual level. They offered to the public a sophisticated dialogue with an intension to open a room for mutual understanding, rather than the sharp polemic. The interesting point was that both scholars masterfully referred to the theological and philosophical tradition maintaining the interpretation faithful to their different worldviews—the religious and the secular.

During their public discourse the audience began to comment it and via the readers' letters they demanded of Eco and Martini to be more straightforward and less intellectually comprehensive in their explications. It seems that the Italian public didn't share the same feelings that the religious and the secular views on everyday problems could be disputed with such level of recognition from both sides, as did Eco and Martini. In any rate, the expectations of the great "sour" polemic between the atheist, ex-Catholic, Eco and the high Catholic official—the bishop of Milan, a great Jesuit scholar, and the Cardinal--failed in eyes of the ordinary people, but the discourse has left amazing feeling that religious and the secular worldviews although juxtaposed are ready to listen each other taking into consideration their arguments with the great respect. However, the

sophistication in the discussion and mutual intellectual recognition couldn't cover their obvious differences.

Especially in the last discussion Martini and Eco tried to sharpen the difference between the secular and the religious, so they touched the question about the personal foundations that are important for creating moral and ethical reasoning. Martini asked in his letter a question how it is possible a secular ethics in the postmodern time, when there is no any longer available strong foundation for it. He, then, referred to the crises of philosophy, so, as he said, a person cannot call on the metaphysical principles, the categorical imperative, God, Absolute, or even a personal god. Martini stated that he had a hard time to understand why would be a secular person able to sacrifice itself for anything greater in this world than the self if there is no, at least, present the idea of a personal god. He also stressed that he cannot see modern positive laws being the source of inspiration for the great moral or ethical challenges and deeds.

Finally, this Martini's point provoked Eco to explain in a substantial sense the position of a secular person in contemporary world and pushed him to justify existence of the secular ethics. Eco made the following exposition in his response to Martini:

> Can you, Carlo Maria Martini, for the sake of our discussion and the confrontation in which you believe, try to think for a moment that there is no God: that man appeared on Earth through a clumsy accident, consigned to mortality but also condemned to be aware of this, and that therefore he is the most imperfect among all the animals (an permit me my gloomy Leopardian tone for this hypothesis). This man, to find the courage to face death, would out of necessity become a religious creature and aspire to

construct narratives capable of providing an explanation and a model, an exemplary image. And of those that can dream up – some illuminating, some terrible, some pathetically self-consolatory – in the fullness of time, he has at a given moment the religious and moral and poetic strength to conceive the model of Christ, of universal love, of forgiveness of one's enemies, of life offered in terrible sacrifice for the salvation of the other. If I were a traveler from a distant galaxy and found myself before a species that knew how to construct such a model, I would be captivated, I would admire all this wicked theogonic energy, and I would judge this wicked and miserable species, this species that committed so many horrors, redeemed solely because it had succeeded in desiring and believing that all of it was the truth. (Umberto Eco & Cardinal Martini, *Belief or Nonbelief: A Confrontation*, (Translation from the Italin by Minna Proctor), Arcade Publishing: New York, 1997., pp. 101-102)

Eco, unlike Martini, perceives religion as the cultural and man made construct that underlies the desire for truth and opens sense for transcendence. Something greater than sole individuality exists even for a person that is not religious. It is the desire for truth that tries to outline some absolutes that are result of human longings for better future and improvement of human relationships. For Eco, the great ethical ideas of humility, solidarity, emancipation, recognition of others have a root in human natural potentials and cognitive abilities.

Eco explains that the great "golden rule" is not only the privilege of the religious people, but is a common shared experience of all humanity. It is not needed to obey the

golden rule because it is believed that an absolute being, God, commanded this to the people, but the functional naturalness of our body and consciousness gives us this great experience, which then becomes knowledge of the norm directing human actions in the future. For Eco, a "universal semantic" exists, a shared body of conceptions that can be expressed in all languages of the world. These general conceptions refer to the "position of our bodies in space." The experience of pain in our body or a wound gives us a notion of what it is to hurt and this experience can be projected to any other being that is in the same situation.

Eco also stresses that no human likes to be absolutely controlled in a sense that cannot freely talk, express what it sees, sleep when it wants, go where it wants, etc. The notion of constrains is also one of the notions that is so natural and common to all people. Also, Eco gives an example that every person that would experience a total isolation by society would eventually die, so the notion of human relationships and further social and communal identification is also common to all cultures and all people.

Eco also points out that these simple conceptions could be much more comprehensive when comes to the parental love, the great loss of the child or anyone close to the person, and experiences of pleasure. In this sense, ethics is the result of the human constant growth of awareness that the "physical rights of others, including the right to speak and think" should be reciprocated to everybody. This ethics comes from bellow, out of experience, reflection, and interpretation of it, all at the same time. For Eco, the same is with religion. Religious consciousness imprints these ethical conceptions as sort of commandments, but when these conceptions become to someone a reality it is always the result of the human growth in consciousness itself.

A believer or an atheist are in the same position when comes to the test of morality and humanity. Eco asks, how would one explain all kinds of crimes against humanity such as "the Massacre of the Innocents, Christians fed to the lions, the Night of St. Bartholomew, the burning of heretics, extermination camps, censorship, children working in the mines, atrocities in Bosnia," if a religion is enough strong and secure guarantee for the righteous and ethical conduct?

For instance, in James Sterba's book *Three Challenges to Ethics: Environmentalism, Feminism, and Multiculturalism* (2001) the author investigates an American Holocaust in association with the domination of Western ethics in the USA. It seems that Western local and state rulers couldn't accept the multicultural challenges given by the Native American ways of living, believing, and autochthon observances. In connection Sterba has also stated that that only chance for modern ethics is to develop a solid secular ethics and to broaden its horizons taking into consideration the multicultural challenges such as the ecological ideas, and breaking with masculine and strictly Western bias in ethics. The idea of veneration of nature, protection of natural resources, the idea that nothing should be vested, understanding land as sacred and not and only as a resource for humans was genuinely different from the Western point of view where nature is perceived as given on governance to people. In the Book of Genesis 1: 28 is stated that humans have domination over the Earth, and this idea has affected Western perception of nature, where nature has became a pure object and people appear as its masters.[133]

One of the most impressive speeches ever written in modern American history that described the clash of two civilizations and their ethics can be found in Chief

Seattle's reply to US Government proposal by which the Suquamish and Duwamish tribes are ordered to leave the traditional lands of their ancestors. The Chief Seattle's respond to this proposal analysis the differences in beliefs between Western and his people, also he insists on giving the insight what land means and meant to the native people and their ancestors. Here is the excerpt from his speech:

> To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their resting place is hallowed ground. You wander far from the graves of your ancestors and seemingly without regret. Your religion was written upon tables of stone by the iron finger of your God so that you could not forget. The Red Man could never comprehend nor remember it. Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors – the dreams of our old men, given them in solemn hours of night by the Great Sprit: and the visions of our sachems; and it is written in the hearts of our people.

> Your dead cease to love you and the land of their nativity as soon as they pass the portals of the tomb and wander way beyond the stars. They are soon forgotten and never return. Our dead never forget the beautiful world that gave them being. (. . .)

> But should we accept it (the proposal), I here and now make this condition that we will not be denied the privilege without molestation of visiting at any time the tombs of our ancestors, friends and children. <u>Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people</u>. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished . . . The very dust upon which you now

stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than to yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch. . . Even the little children who lived here and rejoiced there for a brief season will love these somber solitudes and at eventide they greet shadowy returning spirits. And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. . . At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land. The White Man will never be alone." [134]

According to Sterba, only secularized ethics has a chance to overcome huge ethical differences that come from various religious exegeses. In all religions there are sources worth of preserving and transferring them into the secular sphere. The Western ethics and ethics in America should be less and less biased by Christianity and more and more open to the corrections that come from multicultural experience. [135]

Peoples and nations of the Native Americans have been very often displaced from their original lands, destroyed, or even extinct from Columbus' discovery to the beginning of 19th century. Sterba's research sources showed that when Columbus entered in the American Continent approximately 100 million people were living, and at that time 15 million lived north of the Rio Grande. [136] He also gave a comparative analysis of

population at that time and in Europe lived cca 70 million people, in Africa 72 million, and in Russia 28 million people. From 1492 to 1535, 8 million Taino people (who came in the contact with Columbus and his mission) were extinct. In central Mexico population was 25 million people at the beginning when Cortes arrived, by 1595, 95% people died or were extinct, and was left cca 1, 300,000.[137] At the beginning of the conquest of the North America lived cca. 450 different tribes, today we were talking about cca 200 tribes. One cannot only accept these numbers and not ask why and how was possible that such holocaust of native peoples really happened?

We know that the Northern America was inherited by pious, religious people that joined missions in the new part of the world and that they all escaped from the terror of the religious wars in Europe in 17 and 18 centuries. Who would ever guess that these people would today be considered the cause of terrible tragedy and involve in the political atrocity that happened to the Native Americans? For Eco religion is not enough secure guarantee for the human ethical conduct and for this very reason religious consciousness is in the serious crisis.

Even if a religion offers ways of correcting human vices through conversion, redemption, and forgiveness, and is successful in the intent to change people's conceptions that led someone to commit the crime doesn't necessarily mean that "god" or the "Holy Spirit" arranged and made these changes. As Eco stated, our experiential knowledge tells us that those who killed, raped, robed, and violated basic human rights didn't do such things out of their common standards of behavior, but did this out of insanity, fear, misperception, greed, jealousy, and they usually saw such atrocities as the exceptional moments in their life. At the moments when a person understands

wrongdoing it desperately needs to redeem and submit itself to the higher authority and power, and receive some sort of relief. The experience that one passes when committed the crime and comes to the revelation of what has been done, a terrible turmoil captures one's consciousness. As Dostoyevsky, described in his *The Crime and the Punishment*, there is no peace within it, only redemption and confession can help. To Eco, crimes such as genocide, humiliation of others, and mutilation of others' bodies are the result of closing one's identity and reducing it to the point that others do not really exist. He says:

> Why then is it that certain cultures condone, or have condoned in the past, murder, cannibalism, the humiliation of another human body? Simply because those cultures restrict their concept of the "other" to those within their own tribal community (or ethnicity) and think of the "barbarians" (the outsider) as inhuman. Not even Crusaders thought of the infidels as brethren to love beyond measure. The recognition of the role the other plays, the necessity to respect in him those very needs we could not ourselves live without fulfilling, is the fruit of millennial progress. Even the Christian commandment to love was enunciated, and accepted with difficulty, only when the time was ripe. Umberto Eco & Cardinal Martini, *Belief or Nonbelief*, (Trans. Minna Proctor, Arcade Publishing: New York, 1997), pp. 94-95.

True ethics begins with understanding and recognition of others. If we assign to the other the same properties as we do to ourselves, then is less likely that people would direct the act of violence to them. The picture of Jesus in the West who is able to willingly sacrifice himself for humanity, or the Buddha in the East, who teaches that through transformation of its consciousness the whole world can be reconciliated can

definitely help people in a specific culture to accept the high ethical ideals as something

that is worth living for. What is then worth of studying in religion are the high ethical and

humanistic conceptions that denote what is extraordinary in humanity that transcend a

message of possible submission of the self to something that is expressed as the faith to

the higher being, or mysterious self-generating energy. What we find in religion is the

reflection of the valuable experience of the great conversion to the spiritual forces that

become one's inner center. The true religion is not in one's acceptance of formality of

beliefs and practices, or in the simple act of belonging to one religious community, but it

is in the extraordinarity of religious experience and maze of codes that religion offers

available as the access to the transcendence that can be the higher being, alternative

reality, superhuman being, or simply mysterious self-generating energy. In this sense

religion always deals with the dynamic object and unlimited semiosis.

3i) Unlimited Semiosis in the Concepts of Being and God: Production of the Signs

Eco states in the introduction to his *Kant and the Platypus* (2000) that the limits

of interpretation appears as a true quandary for the semiotic dynamic object that appears

to an interpreter as an unlimited semiosis.[138] This kind of object can be only understood

through the interplay between openness of the abstract signs that are in continuous

progress in association with the limits of interpretation. A curious question here is: are

these limits coming directly from the cultural code and language or are they associated

with the logic of the object itself (Being)?

When we presume a subject that tries to understand what it experiences (and the

object – that is to say, the Thing-in-Itself—becomes the *terminus a quo*), then,

even before the formation of the chain of interpretants, there comes into play a process of interpreting the world that, especially in the case of novel or unknown objects (such as the platypus at the end of the eight an "auroral" form, made up through trial and error; but this is already semiosis in progress, which calls pre-established cultural systems into question. (. . .) I try to temper an eminently the weight of our cultural systems, there is something in *continuum* of experience that sets a limit on our interpretations . . . (Eco, 2000, pp. 4,5)

Eco thinks that traditional ontological and metaphysical modeling of Being in Western philosophy shows a good example of a theory that actually was referring to the make up of the dynamic object as an unlimited semiosis.[139] Furthermore, Eco also thinks that every general or main religious concept of god or ultimate reality expresses the logic of the dynamic object as an unlimited semiosis. Religion, though, uses metaphorical, allegorical, or mythical language, and very often a hermetic drift to come close to the problem of Being and its meaning that was posited by rational and logical thought in the traditional Western ontology or, later, metaphysics.

At the very beginning of its development Western philosophy has established the ontological differentiation between a being as an entity (*to ón*) and Being as the substantive of every existent being (in Parmenides and Plato *ousia*; in Aristotle *to ti en einai*). Expressing the world around us in a comprehensible way, for every thing that exists there is a pre-linguistic condition and its correlate "is." As Eco pointed out; in any rate, alluding on Heidegger's reconstruction of time and being in the horizon of an existence that comprehends its finitude; we do not thing about the meaning of Being as such, but we simply assume it as a natural or pre-conditioned linguistic act. As Peirce has

defined, Being is an abstract concept; it belongs to all objects that we perceive as entities, and because of this in a logical sense has an unlimited extension and null intension/comprehension.[140]

To Peirce, this acknowledgment of the subject of cognition who comprehends the condition of Being as unlimited and dynamic also reflects itself as a continuous representamen (an immediate object). This representamen can be defined as an active conscious that produces a secure belief in "I" as a continuum of the self.[141] This reflective (transcendental) part of consciousness acts in a sense of becoming the active interpreter of the sign that appears as an object of cognition. This "I" that is constituted through experiencing the condition between the ontic and ontological spheres appears as the norm of the experiential and intelligible world. Consciousness that reflects itself as the norm ("I"), but as well as the sign of the interpreter of the world is the most secure belief as a habit that human knowledge can really produce and rely on it.

Albeit, this substrate of consciousness as the sign of continuity of the self in Peircean tradition is different than in traditional Descartian metaphysics, where it is perceived as the pure *res cogitans* and the result of an innate idea of God. According to Descartes, the existence of God can be proven only by mind's ability to detect the logical connections in natural world using mathematical abstract ratios that are able to decode the "secret" of the coded creation. Peirce thinks that continuity of consciousness is the result neither of an innate idea of God like in Descartes, or Kantian necessary condition of the cognition that comes from the nature of the human reasoning that is not only theoretical, but as well practical and through the perception of the world alters nature as well; but it is a habit or a strong belief that reflects in its constitutive element a communal

code – the self, the human condition, and the cultural code imprinted in language and horizon of understanding. Again, this main representamen is a part of a sign, because it appropriates its conditions to the object, and the object cannot be absolutely resolved as a simple thing, but only as a sign.

Eco has stressed that in traditional Western philosophy the most important question about Being was, as Leibnitz put it, "Why is there something, rather than nothing," or as Heidegger formulated, "Was its das Seinde, das Seinde in seinen Sein?" which translates in English: "What is being, what is beingness, in its Being?" That a being is something in a sense of being existent and its entity implies that "is," and that an entity has a substrate of Being, which is also given to all other existent entities, it also means that its condition opposes to the condition of not being existent or being nothing.[142] Being can be comprehended only and only by having set limits of interpretation as its negativity, or lack of any Being as nothing (*me on*). At the same time, "is" means something put in the perspective of everything existent. If something "is" the limit of philosophical interpretation for the existent thing is in the opposition of nothingness, but also, that "is" requires a progress of thought and logic in a sense that every entity requires some sort of categorization in perspective of all existent things. In this sense, the question of what is definition of a thing, or what is a meaning of a being, plays a crucial role. Looking at this philosophical universe a being (any entity) is associated with Being in its crucial logical way and it unfolds a meaning, but it is questionable are the limits of Being set by the real ontological conditions, or simply by the limits of our mind?

Peirce is skeptical to human possibility to resolve this problem. As Aristotle stated in his Metaphysics, *to on leghetai men pollahos* or being can be said in many ways and in several senses (Met. 1001a 33). This means that the final resolution of a being and Being is not possible and always opens a fundamental chasm (*aporein*): what is perception of a being is not of Being, and what is first question for a being is not relevant for Being.

Peirce in this sense states that being is not anything that is ontologically established, but is "anything that we can spoke of." To talk about anything requires a mental representation, code of language, culture, and specific species acquisitions through which representations are formed. Entity or a being can be equally a material thing as well as entities of reason, laws of mathematics, and thoughts. When one sees the chair and associates with a chair the proper word that denotes the substance of the chair, the chair doesn't appear as a simple material thing, but was transformed through the reasoning, mental representation, and language into an appropriate category. The chair is a coded sign that will fulfill its mission by the proper interpretation through its interpretant.

To Peirce, the idea of Being is not particularly philosophical but is, in its main endeavor, religious and the matter of faith. The question of Being cannot escape from the problem of alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the reason why is something rather anything than nothing and the question of meaning. But the answers on these comprehensive insights are not only logical or philosophical and only individually or culturally postulated—they are formed in the transcendent community of unlimited communication, that is to Peirce similar to the Church. In every religion, especially in

Christian tradition, the existence of church underlies two main spiritual aspects: the community unified in their hopes toward a transcendent being (God, or ultimate reality, gods), and community that exists in order to expresses closeness between the public and the private spheres. To illustrate this Peircian obsession with religion we can read the point where he acknowledges that religion, not philosophy, deals with the final cut edge question such as the one of the absolute beginning and end:

> And what is religion? In each individual it is a sort of sentiment, or obscure perception, a deep recognition of something in the circumambient. All, which, if he strives to express it, will clothe itself in forms more or less extravagant, more or less accidental, but ever acknowledging the first and the last, the A and Ω, as well as a relation to that Absolute of the individual's self, as a relative being. But religion cannot reside in its totality in a single individual. Like every species of reality, it is essentially a social, a public affair. It is the idea of a whole Church, welding all its members together in one organic, systemic perception of the Glory of the Highest—an idea having a growth from generation to generation and claiming supremacy in the determination of all conduct, private and public. CP 6. 429

It seems that Eco has never acknowledged Peircean strong theory of religion that acts in his semiotics as the important part of support theory for the human growth of knowledge, morality, and love. A true progression of the human knowledge (evolution) can be found in an idea of humanity as solidarity, moral sensibility, and legacy of love. To Peirce the example of these highest human ideals is present in the message of true Christianity. Peirce was using extensively a Christian experience in which he was

brought, including the ideas of Unitarian theology, to oppose to one-dimensional scientific theory of evolution. Also, he needed his Christian knowledge to explain what is actually the meaning of the unlimited community of communication, one of the focal points of his semiotics. Although in a quite different way than Hegel, Peirce brought one more time a strong connection between his philosophy of general semiotics and religion. A simple human religion as faith exists in every conception of the wholeness of the world. The world is overwhelming, it appears as the contrary to the finite and relative self, it appears only as a sign that is often presented in human concepts as God—the ultimate creator, the beginning and the end.

The problem with Peircean theory of religion is in a strong association of his theory with religious symbols and assumption of exclusivity of Christianity. Peirce never talks about any other religion, or any other religious symbolism. Peirce also thinks that the connection between Western Philosophy and Christianity is legitimate and he is not concern with this attitude at all. To Peirce a philosophical Being is the same as the concept of God in Christianity: Being develops via basic human concept of awareness of the self, its finitude and relativity in association of powerfulness of something higher than all particular beings:

> The universe is a book written for man's reading. If it were destitute of strict logical connection, it would fail of its purpose and be unintelligible. The luminous order of the pages and the successive introduction of strange and new truths are adapted to the development and expansion of the created intellect. It is a glorious manifestation of the all pervading affection and the fostering care of divine wisdom. (CP 5.119)

Eco accepts Peirce's idea of unlimited semiosis, although stays away of association of Peircean general semiotics with Christianity as exclusive religiosity. He thinks that Peirce actually achieves through his concept of unlimited semiosis, the first theory of deconstruction. The main assumption of Peirce's philosophy Eco summarized in three points: all knowledge about the self, inward, and our consciousness is developed through the hypothetical reasoning and abduction; every knowledge relays on previous knowledge, every cognition is in association with previous cognition; and there is no absolute concepts or knowledge, human knowledge needs signs. In the process of deciphering signs, human conscious appears as the interpreter and a sign of a continuum consciousness, representing the core of the self as quality that is determinate. Continuity is an assumption of a quality that can be determinate, but Peirce states, and Eco accepts, reality is indeterminate, and continuity is the main source of fallibility. Assuming that for many of our knowledge we have to correlate appropriation of the transcendental community of unlimited communication in order to reflect knowledge of the self and the world, it seems that our substance acts actually as we are infinite and undetermined individuals. Reducing the self on something determinate, the possibility of error is present. The very fact that our knowledge is indeterminate because it operates in indeterminate world interpreting signs, but still produces the determinate conceptions, proves actually that all our knowledge and conceptions are fallible. Every judgment, idea, or knowledge is conjectural in nature, while emotions, common sense, and experience are vague.

This leads toward an idea that all knowledge is a habit, a disposition to act upon the world, which legacy comes from the community as the transcendental principle.

Whenever knowledge appears as a habit, it assumes the question what would any person generally think about this idea? If knowledge survives the appropriation of the transcendental community it establishes itself as a habit. Peirce's idea of the ideal Church corresponds with an idea of transcendental community of unlimited communication. The world, Being or consciousness is unlimited, open, vague, and undetermined. This very assumption of the world that is different of all possible knowledge and acts almost as it is *Deus Absconditus* because it is infinite, undetermined, and free of any notions, categories, or ideas is one of the main points of post-modern deconstructionist. How does this deconstructionist universe really function?

CHAPTER IV

UNIVERSE AS SEMIOSPHERE

4a) <u>Yuri Lotman's Concept of the Semiosphere</u>

Semiosphere is a term developed by Yuri Lotman in his motivating study on the

semiotics of culture. Umberto Eco has written an inspiriting introduction to this study,

explaining the development of Lotman's semiotics from the structurlist inspiration by de

Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Prop, Shlovski, and Tomashevsky to his later acceptance of

general semiotics stimulated by C.S. Peirce and C. Morris.[143] The central concept of the

semiosphere in Lotman's study, Eco indicates, is now developed in accordance to the

ideas of general semiotics and becomes crucial for explaining the functioning of all

different cultures of humanity as well as the great epochal changes within each culture.

What is the semiosphere? To develop this term, Lotman was inspired with the

concept of the biosphere in biology. As Verdansky has defined, the biosphere, it is the

necessary universal ecological system of the Earth. It is understood as a condition for the

development of all living beings on Earth whether they are the simplest or the most

advanced biological organisms, but also the biosphere means that all life on Earth is

interconnected. Inspired by Verdansky's holistic approach, Lotman has tried to find a

holistic answer for the existence of different cultural forms. He invents the semiosphere,

defining it as the cluster relevant for all different cultures on the Earth. To him, the

semiosopehre is the universal system of basic codes and modeling subsystems that

express the human condition, which are then crucial for every living human being; his/her language, and all social or cultural forms. In explaining what the biosphere is, Verdansky also uses an idea of cluster (the atmosphere) under which all life is developed, but also, he stresses that created life forms effects equally the biosphere and its eco system. The changes in the biosphere are indicated by evolutionary changes. For instance, from the right combination of the atmospheric chemical substances were developed proteins and acids which in combination led to the revolutionary replication of the genetic code. From the first simple form of life, genetic recapitulation and replication continued initiating the emergence of the new system of living forms among which the photosynthetic processes positively effected the biosphere and triggered further development of complex life forms as species. Finally, the humanization of nature represents the last great change and challenge to the biospheric eco-system.

Taking into consideration the point that the biosphere interconnects all life on Earth, Lotman thinks that there must exist such a thing under which all human social, cultural, psychological, spiritual, religious, and creative developments are interconnected and explained not only as particular developments of specific cultures in specific times or spaces, but as an universal development of humanity. The semiosphere is perceived as the coded matrix of humanity. The human condition alters the natural environment through perception, reasoning, and behavioral patterns. The semiosphere appears as the coded memory of humanity. In this sense there can be enormous amounts of authentic cultural identities, but they all are interconnected in the semiosphere.

Imagine a museum hall where exhibits from different periods are on display, along with inscriptions in known and unknown languages, and

instructions for decoding them; there are also the explanations composed by the museum staff, plans for tours and rules for the behavior of the visitors. Imagine also in this hall tour-leaders and visitor and imagine all this as a single mechanism. This is an image of the semiosphere. Then we have to remember that all elements of the semiosphere are in dynamic, not static, correlations whose terms are constantly changing. We notice this especially at traditional moments that which have come down to us from the past. Lotman, 1990, pp. 126-127.

One of the proofs for the semiosphere can be found in the ability of translating one language into another. There is no language of any culture that cannot be translated into others. This translatability shows that the main human concepts, ideas, relationships, perceptions, and reasoning are universally-culturally domesticated.

Lotman's concept takes into consideration the semiotic concept of the *umwelt*, which is defined as the "subjective universe" emerged through one's perception, but also relies on the limits imposed by the environment. Jakob von Uexküll and Thomas A. Sebeok uses the *umwelt* as the signification process, where the human stands in the middle of the world that is consciously constructed through communication with the environment, self, perception, social relationships, and other culturally imposed structural elements of society. The basis of one's *umwelt* is socio-biological input which is able to open uniqueness of the single organism. When this single organism communicates and realizes itself through interactions, it creates a semiosphere through which is possible development and projection of the future acts.[144]

From the structuralist point of view, language is perceived as a primary modeling system, while symbols, myth, cultural patterns, religion, art, literature, or science represent the secondary modeling systems, but both are equally important. Lotman stays on the structuralist side, accepting the idea of modeling systems in one culture as crucial for his semiotics.[145] For him, culture appears as a code-system which can be changed through the communication processes. Accordingly, everything that builds a cultural code and system of rules can be understood as a pre-fixed make-up in which different types of communication can initiate inventions, which effects can go so far as to modify the state of consciousness or, even sometimes, social codes, and religious beliefs.

In his introduction, Eco gives the example of the great paradigmatic epochal changes that have affected Western Culture, changing radically the theocentric Middle Age paradigm into the secular Enlightenment period. The great medieval culture that represents an unified epoch from the 4th to late 16th centuries can be defined, as Eco puts it, from the semiotic point of view in the following way: "Everything (not merely words but also things) signifies a higher reality and objects themselves are important not for their physical nature or their function, but rather in so much as they signify something else."[146] The best example of the Middle Age semiotic modeling typology can be found in the onto-theological argument for the existence of God developed by Anselm (1033-1109).

He philosophizes that from the essence of God one can conclude to its existence. The essence of God Anselm defined as *that, than which no-greater-can-be-thought*, so, if anyone would say that this thought does not imply existence of such thing would fall into an absurd contradiction by the reference to the meaning of the notion "grater" in the

statement *that, than which no greater can be thought* (N.G.T). The greatest thing one can

think implies perfections similar to the one that faith implies to the God, such as

omnipotence (to be the cause of all things as absolute creator) and omniscience (to

embrace everything in its knowledge as providence). If N.G.T. is only in the mind, and is

not as well in the reality, then, is not greater than a pure thought or a finite mind, which

implies that the statement N.G.T. by the logical implication involves resolution by which

such thing is greater than a thought because it exists, but at the same time in reality does

not.[147]

Anselm's point was the following: although, the human mind cannot transparently

grasp the existence of God because it is believed that God transcends a finite being

abilities, its existence can be derived from the analogy to all other beings by which it is a

logical necessity that every being or entity has existence as its evident modus.

Accordingly, the greatest thing, which contains in itself the cause of everything and

embraces everything with its knowledge, logically has to have its existence, but this

existence is not evident to humans. In this sense then, in every being or entity their

properties are in the function of building the great chain of beings or a metaphysical

system that will in its final account express the great existence of God, as it is presented

in the improved argument for the existence of God from design (the argument from the

governance of the world) by Thomas Aquinas. The finite being lacks in knowledge, that

this being would achieve its end and meaning is governed toward it by the higher

intelligence that he believed is God.[148]

Unlike the medieval *analogia entis,* the Enlightenment period appears with a

rationalistic philosophy, scientific reasoning, and secularism as it is a different cultural

system of the Middle Age. Eco describes the Enlightenment semiotic system in the following way: "we have a cultural system where the world of objects is real, while words and signs in general are conventional constructions and vehicles of falsehood, and where only the "noble savage," who is not aware of the constructions of culture, can understand reality."[149]

The best expression of the Enlightenment spirit one can find in Immanuel Kant's antinomies of reason presented in his famous *Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant's antinomies of reason can be understood as there is the irreconcilable difference between the statements of metaphysics and science. It is a very narrow line between skepticism and dogmatism when we are talking about the world beyond our limits of experience. As Kant states, any knowledge that goes beyond the experiential discourse depends on the ideas, assumptions, or hypotheses, but not facts. Even if the facts are used to prove the hypothesis, assumption, or idea, it is questionable if that would be the only satisfying conceptual model that would explain general questions about the world.

Kant points out on four different questions as those which over and over appear in the main scientific and metaphysical discourses: Is it (1) the world limited in time and space or is it infinite?; (2) what is the substance of the world—is it one, as Spinoza thought, is it dualistic in a sense of being *res extensa* and *res cogitans* as it is suggested by Descartes, or is it, perhaps pluralistic, made of many particles, as suggested in Leibnitz' philosophy?; (3) does freedom exist, because humans experience their actions as independent of any force or it doesn't, because everything acts in accordance with the natural laws?; (4) and finally, does there exist an absolutely necessary being, which cause is in itself and by this acts as the cause of the world, or such being (God) doesn't exist?

According to Kant there is no final answer to these antinomies. Any final answer about the antinomies can be understood as the dogmatic, because humans have no ability to experience what really the world is or is not. Though, he thinks that freedom can be experienced, because humans have an ability to act according to their own decisions that are independent of any natural laws, but are in accordance to the highest moral demand, i.e., categorical imperative. Finally, although Kant thinks that an atheist cannot ever accept an idea of an absolute being (God) as the cause of the world, the atheists are not deprived of an attempt to find unified knowledge which outlines the wholeness of the world. There are two different basic world-views that answer differently on the question of the fourth antinomy: the atheistic world-view tries to describe the world in terms of time and space physicality, while theism tries to give the advantage to the noumenal world. In the impossibility to resolve the antinomies, Kant accepts God, human freedom, and the idea of the immortality of the soul as the regulative ideas (they act as it is) important for the practical and moral actions in the world.

Through these two examples it can be seen that the semiotic codes of two different epochs have been radically changed. Lotman's semiotics of culture concentrates on the alternative communication styles that stand often as altering examples of code changes and usually are not recognized within the culture as turning points, while they are actually salient for the change from one epoch to the other. We can all easily notice that the Renaissance codex in art, philosophy, and literature is different than the Baroque style or later Classicism which was dominant through the age of Reason and the Enlightenment period. The question is how is it noticed that the shift or change has taken place? One of the exemplary works about the "silent" changes from one epoch to the

other can be found in Gustav René Hocke's book *Der welt als Labyrinth* (1957). [150]

Hocke investigates the period in European art between 1520 – 1650, for which he believes is bursting with changes that can be already interpreted in terms of modernity.

Hocke was a student of Ernst Robert Curtius who made a breakthrough in the research of Latin Antiquity correlating it to European literature as its main source-book. [151] His very point was that the European highest literature achievements such as works of Shakespeare in England, Dante in Italy, or Goethe in Germany, understood as the classical code from the modern point of view, were basically the ingenious stylistic recapitulations and innovations to what had already existed in the works of the Late Antiquity. Analyzing through the works of the Greek and Roman classics and comparing them with the Latin literature, Curtius focuses on the power of mannerism in Late Antiquity as the constant which should be analyzed more specifically. He sees that every classical period is challenged with new mannerism; its main purpose is to invert, criticize, or have ironical implications to the dominant classical style. In this approach, every mannerism is an expression of the departure from the dominant or classical style and it represents something new that is an innovative move from the former point.

The way in which Curtius and Hocke have analyzed mannerism can be defined as a, sort of, "deconstruction" of the classical or dominant style. For instance, Hocke stresses that in 1639 was published *Tractate of the Rhetoric Figures,* where Peregrini defined *concetto* as a very fashionable modern figure, which is used to express "impossible, ambiguous, contradictory, and which implies the usage of allusions, dark metaphors, extravagance, sophism, and shrewd observations." [152] This use of the stylistic forms like *concetto* obviously was ment to challenge or invert the primer message.

Concetto can be understood as one of the alternative, hidden styles of communication at that time, and finally it has become the strong fulcrum of change.

One of the best examples given in Hocke's book is the analysis of Il Parmiganino's self portrait (Fancesco Mazzola from Parma) with the image as though in a convex mirror. The hand of Parmiganino appears as a giant object in comparison to his enigmatic smile and distant face. The inverted hierarchy of presentation is applied in his painting. Instead of a classical presentation where the face is the focus of the portrait, Parmiganino inverted the classical image and shocked the public with the new perspective. This small insertion into the dominant style of the Renaissance, inverting the expected hierarchy within the common presentation represents the alternative style of communication and is the announcement of the upcoming change. The dominant style of the Renaissance in painting was all about achieving the perfectionism in proportions, giving the sense of the perfect harmony, rest, and focus on the middle. Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* reaches the perfection of harmony and rest, while the middle radiates her enigmatic smile. Parmiganino's self portrait opposes and demolishes traditional proportions between the parts and the whole, seeking for the shock and wonder from the viewer. Also, he leaves the picture without a clear center, expressing the pressure of vertigo empowered by the convex deformation.

The friend and contemporary of Parmiganino, Jacopo da Pontormo, expressed, in his work, the same sensibility of a revolutionary challenge to the classical composition. His picture *Taking Jesus from the Cross* (1518) underlies the point of the lost center. Instead of Jesus in the middle and the concentration of other participants around his body, we find an empty center where the dead hand of Jesus hangs lifelessly, while hands of

other participants in the sorrow serve to potentate the round space and dynamics of the composition. This empty space is not only a tactic to enforce the round composition, but is a metaphor of "emptiness and soulless."[153] Every participant of this event faces different direction away from Jesus. Has this Pantormo's painting already anticipated the Nietzschean idea of the death of God where the "whole horizon" is wiped out and the whole culture faces the loss of meaning? The avant-garde model had already begun its development in the Renaissance period, but as a "rebellious fringe" as Lotman described.[154]

When the avant-garde achieved its prime in the first half of the 20th century, it became "a phenomenon of the centre," changing the semiosphere in the direction of secularism, experimentalism, and free critical thought where it built the "metacultural" level in "intense theorizing."[155] This "intense theorizing," as Lotman calls it, put the whole art as one of the most important Western modeling system into the dynamic self-questioning. The avant-garde finally put into the question the validity of an artistic code where the artistic artifact appears as the object and has challenged the semiospheric code of all socio-economic, political, and religious power-relationships.

The whole prefix of one epochal cultural code is changed when one historical epoch or style is replaced with the other, but this change happens slowly and comes usually unknowingly to its prime. Lotman thinks that besides the synchronic analysis (the historical knowledge that led toward the great changes), also the diachronic analysis (the study of alternative communication styles) should be applied in this research. The research of alternative types of communication can bring some clues why and how have

changes occurred, and bring some new information about a web type of connections that influenced and modeled a new approach.

One of the most dramatic examples given in his book was an analysis of The Kievan Chronicles written during the conversion time of indigenous Slavs and other tribes to Christianity in Russia in the 10th century. At that time the process of conversion from native beliefs to Christianity was brutally enforced and many tribal religious authorities were tortured and publicly executed as heretics. Their ideas and beliefs were pronounced as heresy and sacrilege. Their style of life was interpreted as wild, barbaric, and savagery. Slavic tribes that were still not Christianized usually were called "devil worshipers," "savages," and "animals," and were deprived of their human status.[156] With this degradation they experienced the loss of their own semiotic space and ability to maintain their cultural identity.

Lotman says, the simple logic is applied to ensure the semiotic space: the Christian semiotic space was presented as "ours, my own, cultured, safe, harmoniously organized," while the space of native peoples became "their space, hostile, dangerous, chaotic, evil, barbaric." Lotman calls the logic of ensuring the semiotic space and making clear the semiotic boundaries, bynarism.[157] Every culture demands the formation of its strong identity by making sure that it is distinct from the other competing culture. Multiplying its linguistic reality through the secondary modeling systems which pillars are beliefs, religious system, literature, art, and the way of life the semiosphere is becoming outlined and defined. If the way of life and the multiplying of linguistic reality are challenged with the strong counter-culture that offers as a solution the different system of values, then bynarism grows to the possibilities of destroying the "other" side.

For example, the U.S., mid and late 19th century was marked by the terrible crisis between the U.S. government and Native Americans. In November, 1864 was committed one of the most gruesome crimes against humanity against the Native Americans which is known as the Sand Creek massacre where Cheyenne and Arapahos people were attacked by a 700-man and 5-battalion army group. Colonel John Chivington was in charge for this atrocity, and Theodore Roosevelt commanded the action.[158]

After the massacre was done, a government investigation was ordered. Collecting the evidence for the case against colonel Chivington and his action the following was recorded by the soldiers engaged in the battle: "Women and children were mutilated in the most horrible manner. All cut to pieces. Nearly all, men, women, and children were scalped." In March 1863, before the Sand Creek massacre took place, the Rocky Mountain News editorial published: "They (natives) are a dissolute, vagabondish, brutal, and ungrateful race ought to be wiped from the face of the earth." This local newspaper definitely played an important role in promoting the negative emotions toward Native Americans. After the official investigation was ordered, again published in the Rocky Mountain News, colonel Chivington, who, in the mean time, became also the Colorado Governor, reacted angrily to the accusations before the Colorado senate. Finally, to prove his point he asked people of Denver to support him. In the senate he asked the invited public: "Would it be best henceforward, to try to "civilize" the Indians or simply exterminate them?," according to the newspaper report, the mass responded "Exterminate them! Exterminate them!" The congressional investigation didn't accomplish anything and Chivington was never charged with any crime.[159]

Four years later, after the Sand Creek massacre took place, a new investigation was ordered by the Congress involving the U.S. Army officials. Their reported on the action by Chivington and they stated: "It scarcely has its parallel in the records of Indian barbarity—men, women and infants were tortured and mutilated in a way which would put to shame the savages of interior Africa." Although officially condemned, Theodore Roosevelt spoke on the Sand Creek massacre, saying "a righteous and beneficial a deed as ever took place on the frontier.," and later, "I don't go so far as to think that the only good Indians are dead Indians, but I believe 9 out of 10 are, and shouldn't like to inquire too closely into the case of the tents."[160] In more recent research Hans Koning noted in his text:

> From the beginning, the Spaniards saw the native Americans as natural slaves, beasts of burden, part of the loot. When working them to death was more economical than treating them somewhat humanely, they did work them to death. The English, on the other hand, had no use for native peoples. They saw them as devil worshippers, savages who were beyond salvation by the church, and exterminating them increasingly became accepted policy. (Hans Koning, *"The conquest of America: How the Indian nations lost their Continent,"* Monthly Review Press, 1993)

The story behind the conquest of Northern American lands gives an astonishing example of how Western civilization supremacy in an economic and military sense utilized among the pious Christian population of the U.S. a myth by which American Indians were not defined as humans, but savages whose only chance to become truly human is in accepting Christianity and Western cultural life-style. The Native American boarding schools

invented by different Christian denominations in the 18th century expressed this attitude very openly in their known slogan "Kill the Indian, save the man." This myth about Native Americans as savages lasted successfully for three centuries under the cover of utilized Christianity. The purpose of this "bad mythology" was in taking away more and more of the original American Indian cultural space.

It is interesting that Lotman defines myth as "a central text-forming mechanism" which purpose is "to create a picture of the world and establish identity between distant spheres." Also, he identifies myths as text-mechanisms necessary to develop whenever one semiotic space faces the critical moments that could endanger the survival of the cultural identity. For Lotman, myths are not only archaisms derived from the historical past like the symbols, which he defines, are necessary archaics because they are derived from the "mnemonic programmes" preserved in the community's oral memory.[161] Myths are similar to symbols in a sense that both are the diachronic devices of the semiosphere, always coming from the past but linger to the future. Accordingly, the myths can form the new text as a response to the new reality, but will always reflect the system of symbols that substantiate the cultural identity.

Definitely the Native American life-style was substantially different than the new settlers' prudishness and their complex social, educational, and political bourgeois stratification, and the obsession with the hierarchy, so important for 18th century Western culture. The American Indians enjoyed their innocence and simplicity in worshiping Mother Earth and the veneration of natural forces. The diversity of belief-frameworks expressing the awe toward the God of the high (the Creator, or Great Spirit) was confusing to Westerners. The plurality of ritual practices such as magic, healing,

divination ceremonies, and simplicity in understanding death as a natural fact, and a change of different worlds, appeared scary and confusing. The most troubling fact Westerners found in the existence of so many different Native tribes where each of them had had the "natural" sovereignty over the lands. All these factors appeared to the young American nation, the majority of which were Christian believers, and the American government as challenging "distant spheres" that were seriously endangering the preservation of the cultural identity of the West.

In order to preserve their identity, the new world of the West found itself fighting these "distant spheres." The American Indian cultures appeared to the Western system as a chaotic world in a political, religious, social, and ethical sense. The American Indian cultures had no notion of the unity of the one semiotic space between themselves, and their single tribal territory was much smaller than the unity of all American territory perceived from the West. To organize and put in order the territory perceived, the new American government had to make distant spheres marginalized, diminishing their true and powerful significance.

The marginalization of Native Americans was finally realized by the strong political action of the U.S. government creating a new map for America and putting American Indians into the reservation lands, where their sovereignty was minimal and supervised by the government. To each tribe was ascribed a small, very often, not substantial for existence, land in remote areas. Often parts of the tribes were removed far from the original lands and were placed in much smaller territories where one tribe had to adjust on living with another American Indian tribe. These lands were placed often in wilderness where agriculture or business could not be successfully developed. All better

parts of the Indian lands were taken by the Westerners, so the economic integration with the New American mainland could not happen even over a long period of time.

The other aspect of the marginalizing strategy was to convert American Indians to the Western life-style and Christian religion. As briefly noted earlier in the text, at the late 18th and the beginning of 19th century boarding schools were organized by different Christian denominations. In these schools Native American children were forced to forget their language, culture, and identity because they were told in the schools that their native culture was shameful along with their traditional heritage and that was not worth preserving.

From the Western point of view, the purpose of these schools was to teach boys how to become farmers and girls housewives. Female students were taught how to sew, clean, cook, nurse, and childcare. The school curriculum consisted of the religious classes covering the Christian Catechism, study of the Bible, and Christian morality, but also a few general education classes were offered such as arithmetic, history, and geography.[162]

Of course, not all American Indian children were recruited to these schools forcefully. Some children, whose families had already adjusted to modern living in the single family houses, sometimes chose to attend the boarding schools. There is an interesting example of the first Cherokee convert to Christianity, Catherine Brown, who voluntarily signed up for the attendance at the Brainerd boarding school organized by New England Protestants. The story tells us that even when her parents decided to move to the West lands, Catherine didn't want to leave the Brainerd boarding school. She was very determined to convert to the Western style of life and Christianity. When eighteen years old Catherine arrived in the recruiting center for the school, the minister C.

Kingsbury thought that this girl which expressed such self-confidence in her cultural background and was attached to the self-made beautiful jewelry consisted of earrings, pins, rings, a large necklace, and a stunning traditional colorful design on her dress, would never experience a true Christian conversion. He was wrong.

Surprisingly, after two weeks of the school attendance, Catherine decided to give up her traditional jewelry and she touched the hearts of her host family and missionaries by giving each a peace of her valuable belongings. She was willing to talk and share her dreams with other missionary women, and they seemed to respect and care about Catherine's dreams, of which one had even triggered the experience of conversion. Soon, after the altering dream occurred, Catherine amazed the school officials by acknowledging publicly before her host family that she was a sinner. In 1818 Catherine was baptized and in 1820 she organized her own school for the Cherokee girls that followed the principle of children and parents voluntarily deciding to sign up for the school. Although Catherine's school was known by the excellence in treatment of the young American Indian children, unfortunately, the school didn't last too long because of Catherine's early death caused by tuberculosis in 1823.[163]

On the contrary to the carrying and gentle experiences associated with Catherine Brown's school, the boarding school project was often harsh and highly supported by the U.S. government. Often, the government agents were involved in recruiting the American Indian children to such programs, and in the majority of cases this was done against the wishes of children's parents. Joel W. Martin in his book *The Land Look After Us* (2001) documented a case from 1879. The federal agent took the Sioux boys and girls from South Dakota and sent them to the Indian school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Upon the

arrival to the school, the government officials stripped off the children's Native clothes, cut their hair, and forbade them to speak in their mother tongue. Soon these children found themselves in Western clothes, alienated from their culture, family and their life-style. If these children would speak in their Native language, they would be severely punished and beaten.[164] Martin also quotes the words of a Navajo writer Luci Tapanhonso, who remembered at one occasion an experience from boarding school:

> Sometimes late at night or toward morning when the sun hadn't come up completely, everything was quiet and the room filled with the soft, even breathing of the children; one of them might stand at the window facing east and think of home far away, tears streaming down her face. Late in the night, someone always cried, and if the others heard her, they pretended not to notice. They understood how it was with all of them–if only they could go to public school and eat at home everyday. Joel W. Martin, *A History of Native American Religion,* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York, 2001), p. 81.

Today the words of L. Tapanhonso haunt, weigh upon, and the modern person with great sorrow, but also challenge our society to critically think about what was done in the past that would not be repeated any longer in the future. The boarding schools hurt the hearts of Native peoples and made young people of that time "culturally sick," teaching them to feel guilty and humiliated, often worthless just because their tradition appears to Westerners as ignorant and distant.

The interesting point here is that the globalization tendencies in Western civilization are associated with the experience of domination over the smaller cultures

and is deeply rooted in the interpretation of the righteousness of the Christian faith. From the moment when the Christianity becomes a dominant religion in a large region, one can soon witness the decay and break up of the native and basic cultures. What has Lotman found in reading the Kievan Chronicles about the behavior and attitude of the Christian authorities toward the Slavic tribes, it was repeated almost in a same manner centuries later during the conquest of the Northern American lands. This mistreatment of the smaller and self-sufficient cultures is rooted in the absoluteness of the Christian faith. The most important demand of Christians is in understanding of the creator God through the profession of the Christian faith: there is only one and true God, and worshiping spirits of nature or even the Great Spirit or Creator that is named differently or associated with different cultural ideals appears to Christians as an anathema. This Christian attitude is monopolistic and imperialistic, where everything what is different appears as too exclusive, distant, and unacceptable to the Christian concepts.

Following this path, Native Americans soon became "the boundary" of the predominantly Christian, Western culture. As Lotman defined, in the semiosophere "the boundary is a mechanism for translating texts of an alien semiotics into **our** language, it is the place where what is external is transformed into what is internal."[165]

The struggle for the United States as a nation and as a territory was finally achieved, defined and then stabilized with putting the Native Americans into a position of minority that lives on the outskirts of the mainstream culture, but also alienating them from their own tradition. According to the statistical data's from 1990, taken among the high school senior year population, 46.4 percent of American Indians perceive themselves as Protestant Christians and 21.4 as Catholic Christians.[166] Alienation from

their own tradition has a great impact on American Indians and their vital survival. In his

study on modern ethical challenges in the U.S. James P. Sterba has discussed the long-

term effect of the atrocities committed to the Native Americans. According to his analysis

based on the sources provided by Sharon O'Brien and David Stannard, given

compensations from the U.S. Government (from 1934 up to present time) to American

Indians still didn't open enough opportunities for them to successfully integrate with

American society.[167] Sterba writes:

> Currently, the poverty rate on American Indian reservations in the United
>
> States is almost four times the national average, and on some reservations,
>
> such as Pine Ridge in South Dakota and Tohomo O'Odham in Arizona
>
> (where more than 60 percent of homes are without adequate plumbing,
>
> compared with 2 percent for the nation at large), the poverty rate is nearly
>
> five times the national average. As late as 1969, the average life
>
> expectancy for an Indian was forty-four years, compared to sixty-five for a
>
> non-Indian. The suicide rate among young Indians aged fifteen to twenty-
>
> four years is also around 200 percent above the national average for the
>
> same age group, and the rate for alcohol-caused mortality is more than 900
>
> percent higher than the national average. The destitution and ill health
>
> that prevails on many reservations today is similar to conditions in the
>
> third world. American Indians today suffer not only from alienation by
>
> from extreme social and economic injustice as well. James Sterba, *Three*
>
> *Challenges to Ethics: Environmentalism, Feminism, and Multiculturalism*,
>
> (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

The bynarism and asymmetry are only two aspects of the semiosphere through which is ensured for one culture its domination to maintain its identity. Bynarim can be defined as the necessary understanding of one semiosphere as unique semiotic structure through an idea of what is ours and familiar in opposition to what is theirs and distant. The asymmetry means the creation of the semiotic space through the language of culture that reflects its boundaries on the time and space levels. If two different cultures, or more, are involved in the interaction and are substantially different in their practices, beliefs, and socio-economic structures, the side that is stronger in use of technology, mobile ability, and social dynamism will probably establish the domination over others. Besides the bynarism and asymmetry as two important mechanisms of connecting culture and space in the semiosphere, Lotman finds amazing the importance of the geographical symbolism—establishing the connection between the symbolic, utopian, or spiritual places with the real geographical sites.

For instance, to Native Americans who are greatly associated with their natural surroundings every mountain, river, lake, or any landscape significance represents the sacred space. Through these sacred spaces people are in connection with the great spirits and powers. The "codes" (meaning) of the powers is preserved in myths, which purpose is to re-in-act the sacred time of creation with the present time. The spirits are great symbols of formidable powers relevant for nature and the humankind; they exist to explain this curious connection. The purpose of myths preserved in oral traditions, as Lotman stresses, is to transform the world of "anomalies and surprises" to "norm and orderliness."[168]

According to Lotman, myths always function in circling life insisting on points of radical natural changes and expressing the sense of the cyclical time. The symbolic expression of the cyclical time can bi found in the stories that explain the existence of days and nights, deaths and births, natural exchange of the seasons. Myths ensure "the continuity of the flow of cyclical processes in nature itself." The characteristics of the mythical stories maintained in the oral tradition are usually told from any point. Myths are texts without the certain beginning and end. Myths are structured through sequences in which the hero enters in the closed space and exit from it, and this pattern can be "endlessly multiplied." In all traditional and basic societies myths also give the significance to the surroundings.

Lotman thinks that for each culture develops a certain "symbolic spaces or cultural geography," by giving to specific spaces access to the sacred or supernatural. Describing the spaces in the medieval times, Lotman points known symbolic spaces such as paradise, hell, or purgatory are derived from the Christian distinction between the earthly and heavenly realms. Hell and paradise are just two main corner stones of the medieval geography. It was a common thing for the medieval mind to divide countries on pagan and Christian, while pagan were perceived as sinful and earthly. Now, this distinction is interesting because the earthly, pagan, and sinful is unified in opposition to Christian, heavenly, and moral. Association of the geographical space with the moral significance was the base of the medieval geography that functioned in support to Christian ideology. In support to his topic of the geographical moral spaces in the Middle Ages, Lotman has analyzed interesting theological discussions in Russia in which was argued that Garden of Eden really exists in a true geographical sense and is placed in East

of India. To a true geographical place was added the association with the mild climate, abundance of fresh waters, and everlasting spring. The theological discussion and presentations can be found not only in the Orthodox Christianity of Russia, but also these concepts were discussed in the West, of which the most known is the obsession with the distant country of Prester John, several time described as the real geographical place close to the Garden of Eden where one can find along with the normal animal world the mythical creatures. In opposition to the places close to Eden, the hell was usually presented as a place that involves fire and ice and unpleasant surrounding for living.[169]

In the Renaissance time the idealistic and utopist geography became a common reference for free thinkers who dreamed about the radical and true reforms of the medieval feudal society. Lotman points, we can see a continuous inspiration with the intellectually created ideal political spaces such as a city, state, or more just, socially engineered, reality, as we can find in T. Campanello's *City of Sun*, C. Stiblin's *Island of the Land of the Blessed,* F. Bacon's *New Atlantis*, or T. Moore's *Utopia.*[170]

All of these non-existent, but symbolically important places of which some of them are associated even with the real geographical places by which they became culturally significant, Lotman says, are semiotic meta-structures. These meta-structures are created as the fusion between the experiential world that is realized through the knowledge derived from categorized objects and imagination that has a significance of the collective unconsciousness. The significance of religion and art is to "replicate reality" and to transform "the world of objects into the world of signs."

One of the best examples, which can be used to describe how the semiosphere can be recreated is found in Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe.* Defoe is concentrated on

the main character's ability to re-create his lost world by isolating objects and projecting them into a general modeling system. The story of *Robinson Crusoe* can be interpreted in a way that the main character recreates from the memories, artifacts, and personal tenacity his lost semiosphere.

Here is a hint how this works in Defoe's adventure novel. After the second shipwreck, Robinson finds himself in a position similar to biblical Noah—the lost island appears to him as the new world and the things that have survived the shipwreck on his destroyed ship are substantial for starting and rebuilding a new life. But one slight difference between Noah and Robinson is present from the beginning. To Noah, the new world emerged as the result of the new hope and new covenant, which God had given to the humankind. Noah was aware from the beginning that he was chosen by God, and that he was the one who represented the rope between the humanity and God, beginning the new world from scratch from the old one. He knew that he was going to strengthen the covenant between the God and the humanity. The new land has a meaning from the beginning of the story.

The purposive actions and faith in providence are not the main characteristics of Robinson's character. At first, to Robinson, a new world appears as the result of the meaningless adventure. The island appears as the new reality that is created by misfortune and absurd. Robinson faces the place that is not even marked in the geographical map, so it is a symbol of no-place or being nowhere. This little island is the place of a geographical insignificance and mistake and to Robinson it appears to be a place of misfortune and contingency. This insignificant place becomes now a place of a great existential challenge, because Robinson is eager to struggle for life and feels every

day greater and greater reverence to God, because he is the only survivor of the shipwreck. As the place is becoming more and more familiar and livable, it is becoming more and more morally significant to Robinson. Finally, it becomes the place of the test of true Robinson's faith and humanity.

How did Defoe transform the island from the symbol of absurd to the symbol of faith and God's providence? Robinson's faith in which he was brought up is not only a simple Christian faith based on piety, obedience to the Bible, reverence in worship and love of God. It is a faith that reflects the social hierarchy, excludes any radical challenges, change of place and status, and settles within the person when one achieves the happiness of the middle bourgeois class. At the beginning, the father proposes to him "nice and calm life" possible to achieve in the middle class British society. Father opposes to Robinson's wish to become a sailor telling him that "the calamities of life were shared among the upper and lower part of mankind, but that the middle station had the fewest disasters, and was not exposed to so many vicissitudes as the higher or lower part of mankind" and that "the middle station of life was calculated for all kinds of virtues and all kinds of enjoyments where peace and plenty were the handmaids of a middle fortune."[171] It is a faith that supports18th century British structured bourgeois society in which the position on the social scale denotes the worth of a person in the ethical or moral sense, whether the person's autonomous norms are morally significant or not.

Robinson's story begins with the escape from this ordered hierarchical society that is empty in its content. It is better to have a pure adventure and insecurity of contingency than to live predestined life that is socially engineered by the family, church, schools, and social status. Immediately after escaping, Robinson faces the wilderness of

adventure on the lost island. Similar to Noah, the remains of the boat maintain enough artifacts for Robinson that he can begin reconstructing the lost life. First, Robinson gives the objective significance to every new day by continuing the calendar, than he gives some deeper meaning to his misfortune deciding that God's will in the form of a providence acted upon him, so he was saved. He finally turns his long search into the play between being *homo faber*—changing the world of natural objects into the humanized world, and *homo religiosus*, writing every day a journal of what was done, giving to the world he created, a general order, perspective, and seeking for a higher meaning by reading the Bible and being religiously dedicated to God. At one point Robinson is happy because he interprets his two built shelters as a home and a vacation house –so in an ironical sense, the ideal of the British high bourgeois class to have two homes is now realized in a new form, and although there is no other being who can acknowledge this progress, Robinson feels as he returns back home.

Robinson is able to recover his lost meaning by slowly recovering his former world and transforming it into the new world. There is no doubt that his true faith emerges from fear and loneliness, but it makes him work every day to overcome a deep existential crisis and results in the happiness of reproducing the artifacts and changing the island into the humanized place. Everything is a challenge on the island. At one point, Robinson sees the native cannibals, which he at first plans to kill them, but than he thinks that this act would not be righteous, because they didn't harm him. At one occasion, he is able to free the prisoner from the cannibal tribesmen, and he names the native man Friday, who converts to Christianity, becoming his long life companion. Modeling another person, he feels satisfied, and fulfilled in the mission to "civilize" Friday. His

former culture is fully re-created now, and the semiosphere is finally reconstructed when Robinson is able to transfer the meaning and the system of existence from his former life into the new one. Robinson marks the geography of the island giving the significance to every place he relates to. The message of the story is, of course, that the adventure denotes discovery of the self and underlying meaning of the life. Reconstructing the meaning of life means the growth of the self and circling in one point everything that one knows. The center of the self is open when mirroring the whole semiosphere.

Lotman's main idea is that the cultural semiotic systems emerge from the collective memory, going back to the roots from which one understands it-self. Culture is the pre-structured modeling system which exists along within the person. It is also the encoded system that grows along within the person's organism, which can be understood only through the interplay between the language and memory. Lotman summarizes how he understands the collective memory in the following way:

> The individual human intellect does not have a monopoly in the work of thinking. Semiotic systems, both separately and together as the integrated unity of the semiosphere, both synchronically and in all the depths of historical memory, carry out intellectual operations, preserve, and work to increase the store of information. Thought is within us, but we are within thought just as language is something engendered by our minds and directly dependent on the mechanisms of the brain, and we are with language. (Juri Lotman, *Semiosfera,* St. Petersburg: Iskusstvo, 2000, p. 273.)

Lotman understands the semiosphere as the semiotic space that is necessary for the existence of language, but also a generator of information. Every language has to secure its space, thinks Lotman, so the boundary (граница) of the semiotic space provides the communication potential and possibility of building a new information system, which changes with the generation and generational challenges.[172] The most interesting part of Lotman's semiotics is the explanation of cultural dynamics, which shows that the culture is at the same time very propulsive, taking other influences into the system, but also very stiffly, trying to preserve the cultural code as the multifaceted continuum. Culture is heterogenetic in its attempt to preserve its boundaries in which the code is translatable into the surrounding space, but is also asymmetric.

This asymmetry comes from internal structure where sometimes the center redefines the periphery or reverse, but also it comes from diversity of metalinguistic structures coming into the contact with diverse semiotic spaces. Also, the semiotic boundaries creates the individuation of one semiotic space, through which is defined the essence of the semiotic process, which includes the binarity of the culture as the distinction between the internal semiotic vs. external space.[173]

This doctoral thesis takes Lotman's concept of the semiosphere as a very important for the comparative study of religion. The concept of the semiospehre is definitely applicable on the diverse diachronic processes in the mainstream religions. The religious syncretism, appearance of new Gods and Goddesses within the mainstream religion, new religious movements that try to expand through the audience interest for new spiritual ideas that are reconstructed from the past such as the Wicca movement, the

blending of the native traditions with the mainstream religions, which one can see in the tantric Vajrayana Buddhism.

The semiosphere describes the cultural space as the changing organism that functions so comprehensively in a cognitive, political, and aesthetical sense that is similar to the little brain. The connection between language and meta-language, between the cultural code and external spaces that might even appear within the culture are of amazing importance to understand diachronical and synchronic or continuous and discontinuous processes in religion. The most interesting examples in presenting the comprehensiveness of the semiosphere one could find in the work of writer and semiotician Umberto Eco. His novels *The Faucault's Pendulum* and *Baudolino* open for a reader the maze of semiotic spaces directly connected with religious consciousness, and religious meta-semiotic spaces that are derived in Eco's novels from the real religious history and aspect of the religious existent practices.

4b) <u>On the Edge of the Paranoid Semiosphere: Religious Syncretism in Faucault's Pendulum</u>

The main topic of Eco's mystery story *Foucault's Pendulum* is a religious syncretism, which is displayed throughout the form and content of this post-modern structured novel. Perhaps, the idea that someone uses an actual literary work for the explication of religious syncretism instead of a concrete ethnographic or anthropological case study seems, at first, too interpretative and theoretically loose. The eminence and quality of the post-modern novel shows the complex structure in which the genre's fictional plot is melded with the author's theories and the critical analysis of diverse social and cultural phenomena, which in this case is the religious syncretism of Western mystical traditions.

Eco, as a recognized scholar in semiotics and communication, critic, and writer, incorporates his main philosophical, semiotic, and post-modern theories of traditional and modern Western mystical syncretism into the structure of his novel *Faucault's Pendulum*. Consequently, elements of Eco's novel can be isolated, reconstructed, and explained as a specific theory of modern culture, mystical symbolism, and religious syncretism. Mystical syncretism can be interpreted through the three hegemonic structural elements: a rhizomatic makeup as the encoded connections of symbols between different religious traditions; the diffusive framework as elitistically dispersive societies based on secret knowledge and "underground" social connections; and a symbiotic condition as the exclusion of the dominant religious tradition and a fixing of the "hybrid" quazy-religious position in the society.

4c) Crossing the Semiotic Boundaries: Connecting Science, Religion, and Culture

In one of the best literary analysis of Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum*, P. Bondanella uses the term "paranoid interpretation" as the best expression for the complex plot of this novel. Namely, the whole plot is built around one publishing house, which tries to sale the most profitable books on the Italian market. According to the publishing houses' owner (Guaramond), the best selling books would be those that deal with the mystical side of history such as the history of the Templars, Teutonics, alchemy, or anything mysterious, but which are enough scientific so that it can catch the reader's attention. As Eco presents. the modern reader doesn't want science fiction any more, but rather fictional science. In the late 70s and early 80s of the twentieth century these types of writing overwhelmed publishing houses—books such as the history of the Pyramids and

their mystical and religious connotations, the new Gothic movements, the Templars, the Holy Grail, Picknett and Prince, etc.

As the beginning of each chapter, Eco uses quotations from various popular books that can be interpreted as being on the edge of pseudo-history and are related to interpretation of mystical traditions. Some of the books that Eco mentions in the novel are: M. Barber, *The Trial of the Templars* (London, 1978), M. Baigent & R. Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge*, Max Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception or Mystic Christianity* (London, 1973), Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Quabalah* (London, 1957). It seems that Eco's inspiration for his novel came from these popular-pseudo-historical books, but none can compare with the content of the disputable book written by Michele Baigent, Richrad Leigh, and Henry Lincoln *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (London, 1981), which probably induced Eco to write this novel.

At first sight, the plot of Eco's novel in many details corresponds with the factual work of the three authors of the book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail,* where the factual historical data are put into a new contextualization process forming a new semiotic space for interpretation. Eco's book, begins as a mystery story. The main characters of the story, Casaubon, Diotallevi, and Belbo presuppose that an old text given by Ardente represents a "coded" message relevant for deciphering the "secret" history of the Templars. Casaubon searches with his two friends on how to decode the message, which in their opinion represents the code of the secret communication between diverse Templars' groups around Europe.

In their progressive decoding job they begin to connect the text with mystical stories of the Holy Grail. The context of the message becomes larger and larger, and even

connects with secret societies such as the Rosicrucians and the Masons. Finally, they think that the coded message is the key for the interpretation of the "secret knowledge" of the Templars, but this message is so complexly encoded that it can be interpreted as the "mystical science."

Here, the artifact, Faucault's pendulum, becomes a crucial point. Casaubon finds that the Templars invented an earlier machine similar to the later Faucault's pendulum (17th century)--the machine which proves the rotation of the Earth. He tries to answer some questions: why is Foucault's pendulum so important for the Templars' tradition and why are the "Diabolics" so interested to know the secret behind the pendulum? Casaubon finds that the earlier type of Faucault's pendulum probably corresponds with the ancient map of the Earth that was used by the Templars. They used the pendulum and the map to provide the means for the "secret" communication between the forbidden Templars' organizations spread out throughout Europe and the Middle East. He thinks, if someone would be lucky to find the old map, probably he/she would be able to know the details of the lost and secret Templars' history. As he presupposed, the Templars had an annual meeting every year at a specific place. They used the map and the pendulum on a specific day each year (at the solstice on June 24th, Saint John's day) to determine which place would be the next gathering of their annual meeting. At the end of the mystery story, Casaubon is convinced that the map is forever lost, and that he hasn't got any definite solution for the whole problem. Ironically, Casabuon's wife discovers that the piece of paper with the enigmatic text is nothing more than a "shopping list" of a trader of fabrics from a small French town.

Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum* represents the novel that represents the semiosis

process of the personal mystical experience in conjunction with "secret knowledge" and

science. These quotations from the book show how Eco presents this unification of

mysticism and science:

I knew—but anyone could have sensed in the magic of that serene breathing—

that the period was governed by the square root of the length of the wire and by π,

that number which, however irrational to sub lunar minds, through a higher

rationality binds the circumference and diameter of all possible circles. The time

it took the sphere to swing from end to end was determined by an arcane

conspiracy between the most timeless of measures: the singularity of the point of

suspension, the duality of the plane's dimensions, the triadic beginning of π, the

secret quadratic nature of the root, and the unnumbered perfection of the circle

itself. (...) What would its rotation have been had it hung instead from the dome

of Solomon's Temple? Perhaps the Knights had tried it there, too. Perhaps the

solution the final meaning would have been no different. Perhaps the abbey

church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs was the true Temple. (...) I knew the earth

was rotating, and I with it, and Saint-Martin-des-Champs and all Paris with me,

and that together we were rotating beneath the Pendulum, whose own plane never

changed direction, because up there, along the infinite extrapolation of its wire

beyond the choir ceiling, up toward the most distant galaxies, lay the Only Fixed

Point in the universe, eternally unmoving. U. Eco, *Faucault's Pendulum*, 1989,

pp. 3, 4, 5.

The point that Eco makes with *Foucault's Pendulum* is that in the present "globalized world," everything is connected with everything, and the synoptic whole is so complex that it simulates the "mystical whole" known from Kabalistic Gnosticism or medieval Neo-Platonism.

However, people today do not live in the peaceful practice of meditation which is connected with the religious experience; they want to materialize their ideas as much as they can. That is exactly Eco's point: religious mysticism no longer serves the purposes of either making human knowledge broader about one religious tradition or to open the human mind for the psychological transformation of consciousness into the experience of the mystical union, but it does the opposite.

One can interpret Eco's novel as the critique of today mysticism, which wants to become the hidden governor of the real human historical practice and to be an active tool for further social stratification of society. Because of that, modern mysticism needs new ways of interpretation that bind with the so-called "scientific" worldview, rather than with only the theological one. It seems that Eco recognized the problem of modern "enigmatic syncretism" which in the circumstances of dispersive modern culture cannot exist without the connection between religion, science, and culture, where the semiosis crosses its boundaries and creates the meta-semiotic spaces.

When scholars publish a book about the Rosicrucians, for whose existence no one is really sure about, they tend to explain their esoteric Christianity (M. Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, London, 1973), as the long lasting intellectual journey into the theosophical spheres. M. Heindel writes that the receiver must take courses in Greek philosophy, world religions, Middle Age's *Ars Combinatoria*, Jewish mysticism of

the Cabbala, alchemy, and astrology to understand truly the new spiritual call. Also, to become a Rosicrucian the prospective member must be chosen by the Rosicrucians. Sometimes a person is not even aware of the membership while passing the time required for the initiation process. Usually, members are chosen by their superior education, devotion to esoteric studies and sciences. Also, sometimes religious piety can play an important role, but it is not a necessary requirement.

In Eco's novel, the character of young Casaubon, who wrote a thesis on the Templars and is deeply involved in the study of the Middle Age illuminations, symbolism, aesthetics, and history, is created as the character who represents the person to became an initiate for the membership in one of the "Diabolic" associations. Casaubon seems suspicious that he became a candidate and he doesn't want to become a part of a secret society, but he is not sure anymore if he is already "in" the group or "out" of the group. In chapter 118 Eco presents Casaubon when he retrospectively thinks about his connection with the "Diabolics":

> A plot, if there is to be one, must be a secret. A secret that, if we only knew it, would dispel our frustration, lead us to salvation; or else the knowing of it in itself would be salvation. Does such a luminous secret exist? Yes, provided it is never known. Known, it will only disappoint us. (...) But everything is not a bigger secret. There are no "bigger secrets," because the moment a secret is reveled, it seems little. There is only an empty secret. A secret that keeps slipping through your fingers. (...) Initiation is learning never to stop. The universe is peeled like an onion, and an onion is all peel. Let us imagine an infinite onion, which has its

center everywhere and its circumference nowhere. Initiation travels an

endless Mobious strip. (U. Eco, *Faucault's Pendulum*, 1989, p. 514.)

Although, he knows that he should stop the investigation of the mysterious

connections between the pro-scientific artifact Faucault's pendulum, the map, and the

encoded text, he goes deeper and deeper into the mystery, which makes him more and

more "in" the group of the "Diabolocics" than "out."

4d) Rhizomatic Labyrinth of Knowledge

At the beginning of the closing chapter of *Foucault's Pendulum*, Eco uses a

quotation from the modern philosopher of science K. R. Popper: "The conspiracy theory

of society (. . .) comes from abandoning God and then asking: *Who is in his place?*"[174]

Popper's quotation summarizes in the best way, the central questions of *Foucalt's*

Pendulum: What if the idea of God and the religious type of social control are secularized

in the way that is substituted by diverse secret societies, which initiate and control all

contemporary historical events? Are we all a part of the syncretic whole in which our

existences are manipulated by the higher political power or the whole of the modern

culture which can be interpreted only through the unique parts that can be scientifically

explained, but they are basically autonomous and disconnected? If we claim that modern

Western culture is globalized through economical, political, and technological socially

rationalized forms, where are the borders of that rationalized system? Is the organized

"underground" really exist? Or, are we living in the nicely organized chaos in which

things do coincidentally happen?

At first sight, it seems strange that Eco, known for introducing the open forms of

modern literature and interpretation, would reduce his understanding of modern

mysticism as to the simple mode of social control. But, looking back at his theoretical

works, it is interesting that he has represented medieval Western mysticism as the vivid

cultural struggle between the "open" interpretation of the Scripture and the "closed"

interpretation. In his book *Semiotics and Philosophy of Language*, Bloomington, 1984,

Eco opposes the allegory (a "nonsecular" symbol) to the open symbol as a "nebula"

(making it possible for many interpretations). He still thinks that mystical interpretations

are controlled by the higher authority of religious institutions, cannons, and dogmas:

> In the mystical experience, symbol must be tamed exactly because they are
>
> exaggeratedly "open"—and their force must be controlled. (...) the mystic is the
>
> "detonator" of the symbol, but immediately afterward a public "elaborator" who
>
> establishes certain collective and understandable meanings of the original
>
> expression. U. Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, (Indiana:
>
> University Press, 1984), p. 75.

As Eco presents, the position of modern intellectuals in which they either

scientifically and historically reconstruct (a positive theoretical formation), or esthetically

deconstruct (a probable critical analysis) the religious mystical traditions or their

syncretic forms invented by the mixing of different culturally postulated beliefs and

rituals—is almost unbearable. In the post-modern context, the modern globalized culture

represents the "rhizomatic" web of connections between the whole human history and the

present time in which "everything is connected with everything else." For this reason, the

position of the modern intellectual resembles the position of mystics throughout history.

For modern intellectuals the universe does not represent only the real physical

object of knowledge necessarily explained rationally through theological, philosophical,

or natural scientific theories, but it represents the object as a contextual interpretative encoded message and symbol.

Modern knowledge is basically encyclopedic—each object of knowledge refers to the labyrinth of different contextual meanings. Water can be equally understood as a metaphysical object which initiates the question—what is really water?—and can it be explained by the H2O chemical compounds definition; or can water be understood as an archetypal symbol of unconsciousness in the Jungian theory, etc.

As Eco states in his works of the 80s, our knowledge functions through three different types of methodological mechanisms, which he compares with three different types of labyrinths. The first one is the classical labyrinth—the "Minotaur" (as the symbol of the center of knowledge) and the "Ariadne's thread" (as the symbol of linear methodology). The classical labyrinth represents the vertical, hierarchical, and taxonomical model of the arborescence knowledge and can be compared with the "Porphyries tree."

The second type of knowledge is probable, founded on experimental methodology. Eco compares this knowledge with the maze and meander types of labyrinths—knowledge achieved by trials and errors. Intuitive abduction (intuition accompanied with deductive reasoning) is an important logical characteristic of that methodological mechanism.

The third type of knowledge is encyclopedic, and it corresponds with the vegetable metaphor of the rhizome explained by post-modern structuralists Deluze and Guattari (1976). For Eco, rhizome can be presented as the modern labyrinth or "inter-net" type of knowledge which maps and computes everything that comes into account.

A rhizome is a tangle of bulbs and tubers appearing like "rats squirming one on top of the other." The characteristics of a rhizomatic structure are the following: (a) Every point of the rhizome can and must be connected with every other point. (b) There are no points or positions in a rhizome; there are only lines (intersecting lines make points). (c) A rhizome can be broken off at any point and reconnected following one of its own outside with which it makes another rhizome; therefore, a rhizomatic whole has neither outside nor inside. (f) A rhizome is not a claque but an open chart which can be connected with something else in all of its dimensions; it is it is dismountable, reversible, and susceptible to continual modifications. (g) A network of trees which open in every direction can create a rhizome (which seems to us equivalent to saying that a network of partial trees can be cut out artificially in every rhizome). (h) No one can provide a global description of the whole rhizome; not only because the rhizome is multi dimensionally complicated, but also because its structure changes through the time, moreover, in a structure in which every node can be connected with every other node, there is also the possibility of contradictory inferences. U. Eco, *Semiotics and Philosophy of Language*, (Indiana University Press, 1984), pp. 81-82.

The rizomatic knowledge develops the post-modern condition for all people that find themselves caught in the web of global inter-connections. Rhizomatic knowledge tends to be by itself syncretic and eclectic. Deleuze and Guattary, for instance, define a "rhizomatic structure" as a connection of concepts in which some concepts can contradict others, but still can function as the relevant parts in the "endless" whole. Though, every

object of knowledge in the context of the rhizomatic web connections must become a symbol—something that represents (or stands for) something else. Units of rhizome are not only things as such, but rather contextual signs in which is imprinted the concept that can become relevant only and only if the interpretation of it is chosen by the subject of cognition, or its participant.

For example, in D. Hick's book *Ritual and Belief /Reading in the Anthropology of Religion* (McGraw Hill, 2000), in the chapter about death the case of the "Voodoo" death is discussed (article written by W. Cannon) and the main question is: Can we accept that a death was really caused by a Voodoo spell? Can we scientifically prove it? The author of the text describes the circumstances of the person before death: the person is totally isolated from the community, the person feels the absolute existential insecurity, because the world around is seen through the spell and everything that one sees in that state is interpreted as something else. Furthermore, even when other people around communicate, each expression, sentence, or sign is interpreted as the connection with the original spell. In these circumstances the person is under terrible stress an enormous amount of time, and the rise of adrenaline is so high that it can produce death. Now, is the Voodoo death possible or not? How can we interpret this case?

In Eco's rhizomatic, combinatory, and alternative knowledge the Voodoo death is, of course, possible. It is possible, not because someone really believes that the cause of the death is a spell, rather one can explain it through the combination of several different framed concepts: the real functioning of the Voodoo religion; an impact of the spell in their religion; scientific interpretation of the fear, and the final impact of the fear on the person's organism.

The position of the modern intellectual is basically aesthetic—the object of knowledge can be only interpreted through the contextual labyrinth of the already established set of theories and concepts.

> In the modern aesthetic experience, the possible contents are
> suggested by the co-text and by the intertextual tradition: the
> interpreter knows that he is not discovering an external truth but
> that, rather, he makes the encyclopedia work at its best. Modern
> poetic symbolism is a secularized symbolism where languages
> speak about their possibilities. (U. Eco, *Semiotics and the*
> *Philosophy of Language*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press,
> 1984, p. 163.)

If the object of our research is a mystical tradition, then it represents not only the historical event with its specific cultural context which can be described with a set of chosen scientific methods, but it also requires interpretation.

4e) Rhizomatic Syncretism

It is presented for example that the Rosicrucians equally believed in the Christian Trinity, explained through the alchemical transformation of metals and the Kabalistic understanding of the seven spirits and the unveiled spheres before the throne, and in re-incarnation, which is actually the mystical path of the Holy Spirit.[175]

Of course, according to Christian dogma, the Trinity should, at least, exclude belief in reincarnation. To understand the Holy Trinity according to Rosicrusians, one should know very well Neo-Platonism, mystical Kabalistic Gnosticism, the theory of reincarnation in theology of Buddhism, alchemy, astronomy, etc.

The Rosicrucians also developed diverse forms of pantheism, which can be explained through the Kabalistic understanding of "Adam Kadmon" and the interpretation of the Sefirot, which is another, later paradigm of Jewish mysticism of the Gnostic Kabbala.

Historically, the pantheism assigned to supposable existent Rosicrucians was culminated in the 15th and 16th centuries. Many authors who researched more closely the Rosicrucians claimed that, for instance, F. Bacon and B. Spinoza belonged to their circles. F. Bacon was known in philosophy as one of the first thinkers who invented the methodology of modern sciences and posited its autonomous status. He interpreted nature within natural laws as an encoded "blueprint" of God's will, while he thought that the authority of Scripture is only the symbol for the "real" creation. Spinoza made a pantheistic concept of nature—*Deus sive naturae*—in which creation is a continuous process (*natura naturans* as a creative nature) unlike created nature, which is fixed in a meaning as being separated from the reason and appears as the object.

The point for using these two philosophers' concepts is to present how comprehensive the structure of the Rosicrucian belief system is desirable to be, and is the probably result of the vivid imagination of the various writers. A person who would follow this comprehensive spiritual quest could spend an entire lifetime wondering how to connect all the possible sources of the eclectic whole that the Rosicrucians presume as the frame of references for their belief. It seems that a Rosicrucian may never achieve the whole picture of his/her own religion.

In the sense of the synchronic analysis, Rosicrucians blended several different religious traditions. Namely, throughout time (centuries of the Middle Ages) they came

into contact with the contents of many religions, and they absorbed and melded their theological concepts. Throughout time, these concepts were left open for the influences of modern science too. For example, they incorporate the evolutionary ideas into their religious concepts, although they presume that inorganic matter is animate and that God can be found in all things. Diachronic analysis can show that they didn't blend theological concepts, but they bred the representative symbolic units of diverse religions and their own, and incorporated them into their teachings.

In order to preserve their own religious teaching, which is the compilation of all possible ideas that can create their diffusive universe; they needed to encode their spiritual identity. The encoding process can be explained as the formation of the hierarchy and linearity of their secretive practices among them. Obviously, what had happened through time, the Rosicrucians developed diverse types of interpretation of their mystical religiosity such as the theosophy developed by R. Steiner. Actually, every person has to interpret differently that mystical religiosity, but everybody refers to the same set of symbols. The problem, now, is that for the Rosicrucians exists the infinite numbers of symbols, which one can refer to, so the net or the web of symbols is more important than any kind of canon. The system of connections is more important than the fixed set of symbols, which would be necessary for the common religious community. In that sense, the biggest problem of their social organizing is that no one can be secure that he is already in the group if he/she matches one of their symbolical concepts from the open system of connections.

> It was all this and more. And had I had the sixth sense of the Masters of
>
> the World, now that I stood within its bundle of vocal cords encrusted with

rivet polyps, I would have heard the Tower hoarsely whisper the music of the spheres as it sucked waves from the heart of our hollow planed and transmitted them to all the menhirs of the world. Rhizome of junctures, cervical arthrosis, prosthesis of prostheses. The horror of it! To dash my brains out, from where I was, they would have to launch me toward the peak. U. Eco, *Foucalt's Pendulum*, p. 503.

The rhizomatic makeup is only one aspect of modern mystical syncretism and it answers questions as to why and how different beliefs that traditionally exclude each other are interconnected. The next interesting question is why and how this rhizomatic makeup became a part of Western culture and its cultural heritage?

4f) The Diffusive, Elitistic, and Symbiotic Framework of Western Syncretism

A good example for the explanation of syncretic framework of the mystical traditions in Western society can be seen in the historical plot of the Knights of Templar. They were formed as a "secular" and "monastic" order at the same time. It is very difficult to historically reconstruct the ways of their inner organization, because they were a combination of laymen and educated monks. This order was established to protect the territories that were conquered during the First Crusade (1095-1099), and the main task was to protect the Christian pilgrims from Muslim attacks.

Their dual identity formation warriors and a religious community became a problem for the official church authorities. Furthermore, the persecution of the Templar began with the accusations that they did not believe in Jesus and that they were involved in many obscene cult practices, including the worship of Baphomet. In France (1307) the Templars were arrested and put on trail. The "holy warriors" overnight turned into

criminals. This dramatic trial in France culminated with Squint de Florian, who had been condemned to death, but begging for his life by promising to reveal to the king of France the secret in exchange for his life. He confessed that the Templars denied Jesus Christ and spit thrice on the Cross when they were received into the order. Very soon, Jacques de Molay, the leader of the order of that time, was arrested as well as other Templars, knights of France. The knights had an opportunity either to confess their sins, or they were tortured and burned at the stake. One hundred and forty members of the Templars gave their confessions, but all documents with the initiation rites disappeared and they were never found. Later, there were many assumptions, speculations, but also relevant historical facts that supported the thesis that the Templars continued their order in secret formations, even though they, as refuges, were spread across a wide area and had joined diverse monasteries of different monastic orders.

After that Clement V definitely dismissed the order; all Templars were officially transmitted to the Hospitallers, and later they became a part of the Teutonic order in Germany.

The situation with the Templars is very interesting for the micro-study of religious syncretism. The Templars invented a specific type of their inner order which functioned independently. Through the time of their independent functioning they became exposed to other religious influences, primarily Jewish, Muslim, and other religious movements in the Middle East.

The Templars, developed their own rhizomatic symbolism that became incompatible in some parts with the official dogmas. They also developed their own

symbolic emblem, which was denied and forbidden by the church authorities. As M.

Magre states in analyzing deeply the Templar's persecutions and their later destiny:

> In reality, Baphomet was a symbol of Gnostic origin, intended to embody
>
> the doctrine of the Temple and to recall its aim. It was neither the figure of
>
> Jupiter nor that of Mohammed   that was worshipped in it; it was power
>
> that was worshipped, power directed by   intelligence, which was the
>
> ideal of the Temple and which was always represented in ancient
>
> symbolism by a bearded man wearing a crown. This bearded man is found
>
> on the seals and medallions belonging to the Templars. It was for them
>
> what the rose in the middle of the cross was for the Rosicrucians, the
>
> symbol of the sublime ideal to with they had   dedicated their lives. M.
>
> Magre, 1932, p. 95.

The church authorities excluded the Templars from any further participation in

social life, but more than this, they rejected the Templars' sacred symbol which they

presented as the incarnation of evil and heresy. This case can be interpreted in the

following way: in one moment a very important social and religious group was oppressed

which resulted in their denial, and definite exclusion. If the Templars was only a secular

organization, they probably would not have been able to survive, but the value of their

religious status before the persecutions helped to continue their order. The result of the

oppression partially excluded the Templars from the community and made them

transform their order in a diffusive way throughout society. The content of their beliefs

became richer and the web of symbols continued to grow within the new ways of secret

practice. The diffusion framework was totally fulfilled: from the Templars' pouring out

from the society to be dispersed to the periphery of society and then finally to return and infiltrate all spheres of society, but in another form, namely, as secret organizations.

In Eco's novel he exemplifies this diffusive framework of syncretism through the character Casaubon. At the beginning of the story Casaubon is a student of history who is writing a thesis on the Templars. Very soon he becomes an employee in the publishing house and he then is accepted by the public as an expert of the rhizomatic symbolic structure connected with the Middle Ages and the Templars, a structure comprises of such disciplines as alchemy, astronomy, Middle Ages *Ars Combinatorica*, etc. His involvement with the mystery of colonel Ardente and his encoded text from the 17th century causes him to become the main player—the master "crypto" analyst of the real and historical mysteries, which bind together the past and the present. Instead of finding the history of one lost tradition, the Templars, he actually found a live tradition that has already become the tradition of many others, and the story continues paranoidly on that, even though he is no longer sure whether he is "in" a secret tradition or "out."

How is it possible that the Templars developed a whole tradition which survived for centuries in the periphery of the public sphere? How did the process of transformation go on—from the Templars to a variety of other secret orders? The symbiotic structure is the best explanation for this. Although, the dominant religion excluded the Templars from the public sphere, the order continued to live in silent exile from which they evolved their extremely complex encoded communication within symbolism, which formed different satellite micro-traditions. Each unit of that new order preserved the substantive system of the common practice, but also invented new forms of interpretation of the original movement.

Therefore it seems that the variety of secret societies develop a specific encoded language of communication which ensures them an elitistic position in modern, globalized and secular society. This communication developed a specific tradition, which stands with many aspects of secret organizing in opposition to modern ways of communication and modern integrity. As Eco wanted to show, everyone is caught in the rhizomatic mode where everything is connected with everything else, there is no center and the circumference is everywhere.

4g) Eco's Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectivism

Religious syncretism can be defined as the continuous dynamic process of mixing, exchanging, borrowing and translating different religious symbols and ideas between two or more religious orthodox traditions in comprehensive political, historical, and cultural circumstances. The problem is how to define and understand this dynamic process. If we are going to analyze any syncretic form of religion, then we need to research the historical and political circumstances in which the specific case took place. For instance, if one wants to distinguish the Santeria religion among Caribbean and South America's black people, he/she has to know that this religion was developed as the adapted of Christianity from the African slaves and their priests of the Yoruba who were deported from African areas of present Nigeria and Benin. The political circumstances in this case can be defined as the oppression of black slaves produced by the dominant race (white conquers) in connection with their usage of Christian dogmatized ideology. Historical circumstances can be understood as the domination by the advanced technologically developed Western Civilization over the indigenous tribal communities who were less technically developed. Also, the process of cultural and identity

transformation of the slaves can be defined as the conversion evolved through power domination. The Santeria emerged as a result of the mixing of the Orixa religion of the Yoruba and Catholicism, where became a new religious movement. This process of syncretism includes that the Orixa believers extracted, compared, and translated the main spirits of their religion (Agayu, Babaluaye, Elleggua, Ibeji) into the names of the saints from the Catholicism (Agayu as Christopher; Babaluaye as Lazarus; Eleggua as Anthony of Padua; Ibeji as Cosumus & Damien, etc.). The historical and political analysis of the Santeria represents the synchronic interpretation of that specific syncretism.

Another approach to the Santeria religion would be a deep micro-analysis of their identity formation and their "hybrid" existence on the periphery of Christianity, including the analysis of the diverse agents of changes in the larger context of a new maze-way reformulation of their belief system. The explanation of the "mechanical" religious mixing (blending, translation and borrowing of religious symbols, ideas, rituals, and ideologies) in the political and historical circumstances represents the basic synchronic approach to syncretism.

In many ways syncretism can be understood as the revitalization movement and the diachronic "event" in the dominant religious systems. The diachronic analysis of the revitalization movements such as syncretism, cargo cults, charismatic movements, messianic movements, nativity movements was discussed in contemporary behavioral (post-structural anthropological) science, especially in the works of Anthony F.C. Wallace, Julian Steward, Margaret Mead, Mooney James, Peter M. Worsley, and Alice Beck Kehoe.[176] Worsley explains the "diachronic event" as the formation of diverse "hybrid" religious movements and practices through their unique structure. Such a

movement begins with the steady state explained as the chronic stress within the system and the participant's individual stress. The stress produces cultural distortion and the change of behavioral patterns, and finally eventuates with the revitalization processes such as maze-way reformulation, communication, and an organizational adaptation of the traditional or orthodox religious system. This maze-way reformulation of the orthodox religious system builds the rhizomatic makeup of the new movement. When this makeup is finally formulated the "diachronic event" is fixed and it achieves the new steady state as a viable organization.[177] According to Worsley, "hybrid" types of religious movements consistently deal with several problems: these groups would have several choices for their identification, they usually mix the secular and religious means, they have their original ways of practices (nativism), and finally, they either succeed or they are aborted.

The application of Worsley's model on Santeria, works perfectly: it is true that at the beginning of the Santeria movement their participants were exposed to long stressful state (slavery), they changed their behavioral patterns and built a rhizomatic makeup of communication between two orthodox belief systems. Finally, they mixed the secular and religious means through the way of their organization of "ile" and they are considered today as the original movement, culminating with their "hybrid" religious formation.

It seems that Eco is completely aware of this synchronic and diachronic perspectivism of syncretic religious movements and forms exemplifies in his book. One, the book's episodes in the "Hesed" part (chapters 27, 28) took place in Brazil. Casaubon has an opportunity to participate in several different rituals of the Candomble and the Orixas. Also, he is involved in a relationship with the beautiful women Amparo, whose

heritage is Orixas, but she changed and replaced the Orixas' belief with the revolutionary Marxist ideology, which can be a good example of the mixing of secular and religious means among believers of the Orixas. Also, the friend, Aglie, who is a "Master"of a secret societies, is present in Brazil and he researches these syncretistic religious movements. Aglie introduces these movements to Casaubon and gives a short synchronic analysis of their establishment and growth:

Infinite are the powers of syncretism, my dear. Shall I tell you a political version of this whole story? Legally, the slaves were freed in the nineteenth century, but all the archives of the slave trade were burned in an effort to wipe out the stigmata of slavery. Formally, slaves were free, but their past was gone. In the absence of any family identity, they tried to reconstruct a collective past. It was their way of opposing what your people call the Establishment. (...) The original African cults possessed the weakness of all religions: they were local, ethnic, and shortsighted. But when they met the myths of the conquerors, they reproduced an ancient miracle, breathing new life into the mystery cults that arose around the Mediterranean during the second and third centuries of our era, when Rome in decline was exposed to ferment that had originated in Persia, Egypt, and pre-Judaic Palestine. U. Eco, *Foucault's Pendulum*, pp. 154-155. Also, in the same chapter Aglie discusses syncretism as the "diachronic event"—he explains how difficult the process of religious identification is for such groups as the Umbanda or the Condomble in Brazil:[178]

Syncretism, however, is a very subtle process. Did you notice, outside, near the comidas de santo, a little iron statue, a feet? That's Exu, very powerful in the Umbanda, but not in the Candomble. Still the Candomble

also honors him as a kind of degenerate Mercury. In the Umbanda, they

are possessed by Exu, but not here. However, he's treated affectionately.

But you never can tell. You see that wall over there?" He was pointing at

the polychrome statues of a naked Indio and an old black slave, seated,

dressed in white, and smoking a pipe. 'They are a caboclo a preto velho,

spirits of the departed. Very important in the Umbanda rites.' 'What are

they doing here?' 'Receiving homage. They are not used, because the

Candomble entertains relation only with the African Orixas, but they are

not cast out on that account.''What do all these churches have in common,

then?'Well, during the rite in all Afro-Brazilian cults the initiates go into a

trance and are possessed by higher beings. In the Candomble these beings

are the Orixas; in the Umbanda they are spirits of the departed. U. Eco,

Foucault's Pendulum, p. 154.

As Eco states, syncretism is a subtle process and it needs analysis and interpretation not

only through the universal knowledge about religions which will produce specific forms

of their mixing, but also a micro-analysis of multi-cultural connections and social

circumstances which produce these syncretistic forms. These syncretic forms usually

develop a very complex "maze-way" of reinterpretation of the dominant religion and

through that reinterpretation they encode the communication of their own sect or cult that

is embodied in their religious symbols and rituals.

Through the whole of *Foucault's Pendulum*, the tension between the synchronic

and diachronic interpretations of syncretism is present. For example, in chapter 75,

Casaubon gives a three-page long list of the chronological development of Western secret

societies. He begins the chronology with the Ashmole Invisible College established by

the Rosicrucians in London, and then continues with the College of the Royal Society

from which the Masons are formed, and other Paris diverse associations, which he

finishes with the movement of theosophy (Madame Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott) and

other modern secret and mystical groups. Also, at the beginning of the novel Casaubon

tries to present the chronological development of the Templars and to historically

evaluate the persecutions of the Templars. This, linear, rational, categorical explanation

for syncretism and its forms are not enough. He finds that each of these traditions

developed this "maze-way" and rhizomatic encoded systems. The message of his analysis

is that syncretism can be only interpreted and not definitely explained. The interpretation

of syncretic forms of Western mystical traditions is similar to the deconstruction-process

of forming a post-modern novel. A normal expected chronological structure of Foucault's

Pendulum is however, deconstructed: the novel begins in the middle, the moment when

Casaubon researches the importance of the pendulum for the Templars, but also interprets

the "pendulum" as the symbol of the mystical experience as such. He explains that the

pendulum represents the proof of the existing, geometrical (invisible) point from which

you can see that the Earth is spinning on its axis. The Foucault's pendulum in the Paris

Observatorie can be placed everywhere, but it would always prove that the center exists

and the Earth is moving. In Eco's interpretation, the Foucault's pendulum is not only the

scientific invention and the instrument which proves human rational and scientific

knowledge of the Earth's movement; it can also become a symbol for the interpretation of

mystical experience, a symbol of mystical tradition, and a symbol of inner human

experience. It represents the center of the world and the center of the universe can be

found everywhere. From that middle, where Eco begins the story, he gives the reader the task to find other parts of the story and to construct them into a synchronic progression. But even when the full understanding of the plot-progression is achieved, it still seems that the "riddle" of the Templars and their connections with modern "Synarchy" (the name for modern secret associations in the novel) is not solved.

Syncretism as the development of the "hybrid" religious forms embodied in their rhizomatic makeup, and realized in their diffusive, elitistic, and symbiotic framework resemble the deconstruction process in post-modern aesthetics. Modern syncretism is not only present in the cults and groups that can either survive and be successful, or disappear and be aborted (the Jim Jones case in California), but it is present in our cultural post-modern condition in which every concept can be challenged, and which can be the connection for something that seems impossible.

Today, someone can choose and become the convert to Buddhism, Taoism or any other religious tradition and live the way of life that is totally incompatible with those religious practices. Syncretism is a symbol of our post-modern era and Eco's novel *Foucalt's Pendulum* is an excellent example of how we are able to create "open forms" of reality, beliefs, and sophisticated types of human practices by the complex webbing of our knowledge and experience through the rhizomatic labyrinths of the connections that open the sense of the eclectic whole and the self.

4h) *Baudolino*: Rethinking Fake, Lie, and Falsity in the Discourse of the Religious Semiosphere

In the ninth chapter of Aristotle's *Poetics* is given a very important differentiation of the poetics (*poesis*) to the historiography (historical chronicles). Aristotle states that *poises* in tragedy, comedy, or poetry relates to "what is possible to happen according to

the law of probability or necessity," unlike history that always relates only to what has

happened. In this sense, he stresses, historiography, even when written in the form of

verse. is particular and more reduced than the work of art which relates to what may

happen, giving by this virtue to the readers a universal, philosophical insight and open

worldview.[179]

This important differentiation between poetics (*poiesis*) and history is applicable

as one of the key interpretations to U. Eco's novel *Baudolino* because the whole novel

can be understood as the dialog between the poetical and historical types of

consciousness that can stand in the discourse of Eco's semiotic research as an open

interpretation of the historical *semiosphere* to the traditional interpretation based on the

rational reconstruction of the object. While the poetical consciousness is free in

connecting real with imaginative, fantastic, mythological, visionary, and religious entities

or ideas without any concern for the final closures as to the objective truth, on the

contrary, the historical consciousness tries to separate each of these two poles in order to

offer some rational explanations and add meanings to the story categorizing the

difference between the "fake" and the true.

In the novel Eco tells the story about the maverick character of Baudolino who

evolves from a little peasant from Northern Italy to the adopted son of Fredrick I

(Barbarossa). In the *Pigmalion* fashion it is presented how the great Roman ruler

transforms this illiterate and cunning boy into a young, noble, and smart scholar who

attends the best European schools, graduates from the University of Paris, and becomes

one of the leading persons in Frederick's diplomacy. Although Baudolino experiences his

"second birth" by becoming a part of the ruling class and the son of the great ruler, he

doesn't lose his essential characteristic of being inspired and entertained with his own imagination.

Baudolino as a boy impressed villagers with his visionary stories, telling them how St. Baudolino, a local saint, revealed to him future events. While his biological father hates his stories, the adopted (Frederick) father enjoys them and makes of them public sensations. Experiencing the power of his fake stories, soon, one thing has become obvious to Baudolino; he can use his imagination in a way to persuade people to believe in surreal, imaginative, impossible and miraculous things. Baudolino at the same time feels amusement, but also a shocking surprise of how it is easy to convince so many people in obvious lies.

As a young adult, Baoudlino faces a crisis. His Descartian doubt goes so deep in his consciousness that at one moment he is not sure any longer whether any moral value is left in him or is he simply a worthless liar whose only job is to manipulate people's minds in order to achieve his goals. His doubt is present even when he uses manipulation powers to achieve the final deed that is of common good; good for everybody involved in a specific situation.

Eco puts the culmination of Baudolino's middle age crises at the beginning of his novel, in the moment when Baudolino meets with Niketas Choinates in the dramatic circumstances of the sucking of Constantinople by the Crusaders. In this scene we find this famous historian of the Byzantine world who is assaulted by the Western Crusaders and Baudolino who appears out of nowhere, as a noble knight, saves the historian's life. When the immediate danger has passed, Baudolino spends some longer time with Niketas

Choinates in his summer house. There Baudolino wants to confess to Niketas Choinates his biggest sin and that is the one of him being a pathological lair.

From that moment on, there is a great logical question imposed to the reader: Is the confession story of Baudolino true or fake especially if we take into consideration the fact that he perceives himself as a lair. Niketas Choinates in Eco' story presents the consciousness of a traditional reader who tries to reconstruct the truth content and to give some final interpretations that can bring a fixed meaning to the story.

On the contrary, Baudolino stands in the novel, as an open sign for the poetic understanding of reality. The poetic interpretation opens the range of possible truths on what had happened, which historiography as the strict, one dimensional, and rational reconstruction of the temporal past events cannot accept it. Baudolino represents such a poetic consciousness that develops a *rhizomatic* mapping of the main cultural codes such as myths, supernatural agencies, Middle Age utopian geographical places accounted as real, existing spaces (the search for the paradise or the country of Preseter John), human beliefs (from animism or simple devotions to theology and philosophy of religion), literature, science, and history.

To give example of Eco's methodology of poetisation of the history it would be interesting to use the most dramatic example from the book which reveals the truth about the mystery regarding the death of Frederick I, who died on his way to the Third Crusades but drowns in the river while swimming. The great mystery is underlined by Baudolino's main question: Who killed Frederick I? Niketas is surprised that this would be a question, because it is a known historical fact that Frederick simply drowned. Baudolino gives some new knowledge to Niketas saying that the night before he was

drowned in the river, he slept alone in the tower of his friend's castle and no one was around Frederick except him and his friends. In the morning, said Baudolino, they found Frederick dead, and they threw him into the river so his death would appear as an accident. Niketas Choinates asks the Byzantine scientist to help solve the mystery and to try to reconstruct the real cause of the Frederick's death. The scientist said that Frederick was poisoned by carbon monoxide, happenstancially, because he was locked in the round room placed in the middle of the tower with the fire place and without any windows. Baudolino then faces a great shock because he understands that he killed his adopted and beloved father out of ignorance, throwing him, who was still alive but poisoned, into the cold river. Consequently, Frederick I, of course, drowned.

During the investigation of Frederick's death Niketas Choinates represents the consciousness of inquiry while being eager to find the truth behind the great mystery. But as a historian, Niketas is in a difficult situation facing a great doubt: can he, as a good historian, change the known historical facts? If he changes the historical records, what impact will this have on the world? He debates with himself and his close intellectual friends should he write in his chronicles the whole truth about Frederick and uses Baudolino's story as a relevant source. Facing these doubts, Niketas finally decides not to change the history, because then he might change the effects of history on the future.

The very fact that Niketas has to decide is he going to change the historical records of Frederick underlies the point that Niketas cannot be any longer a historian who is telling a simple historical truth. Niketas' profession is deeply challenged. Desperate, he asks his companion, a rational philosopher and scientists Paphnutius, what to do: to include as a writer of history Baudolino's testimony, or simply to disregard it? Niketas

Choinates posits to his friend the line of questions: Can he present the historical events in a way that they are sometimes contingent? Does the contingency challenge the idea of Christian God and its omniscience? How to justify God and the prime example of suffering of Jesus if history is just a "bunk"? Furthermore, if Baudolino says that he is a pathological liar, is his story anyway totally a fake?

His companion Papnutius responds to Niketas' doubts by suggesting to him to take some parts while to disregard others from Baudolino's story. He tells Niketas to say that some Venetians told him the story about Frederick's death, and he continuous:

'Yes, I know it's not the truth, but in a great history little truths can be altered so that the greater truth emerges. You must tell the true story of the empire of the Romans, not a little adventure that was born in a far-off swamp, in barbarian lands, among barbarian peoples. And, further, would you like to put into the heads of your future readers the notion that a Grasal exists, up there amid the snow and ice, and the kingdom of Prester John in the remote lands? Who knows how many lunatics would start wandering endlessly, for centuries and centuries?'

'It was a beautiful story. Too bad no one will find out about it.'

'You surely don't believe you're the only writer of stories in this world. Sooner or later, someone—a greater liar than Baudolino—will tell it.' Umberto Eco, 2002, p. 521.

Analyzing the motif of the lie that is the main corner stone of the novel we can nicely demonstrates Eco's favorite methodology. It is an example of the post-modern poetics of a deconstruction. A known historical fact is put in the maze of new circumstances, which can then give various abilities for the final interpretation. The

presented unit in the novel now becomes a *semiosis*, an open sign that requires of the reader to choose sides and argumentations given by the characters in the novel. Eco's experimental methodology can be defined in the following way: Instead that the reader conforms to the content of the novel presented in its story line, actually the story line conforms to the readers' interpretation. The characters of the novel, in this sense, present the possible optional arguments that reader can follow as a thread in the labyrinth of possibilities. This labyrinth of possibilities is given to the reader by an enormous amount of the independent (essayistic) units which make the discourse encyclopedically complex and open for further connections that might appear from the reader itself.

4i) <u>The Position of the Lie and Fake in the Semiosophere</u>

In the beginning of the novel, Baudolino began to unfold his adventures presenting a line of picturesque episodes as a confession of his life-story to Niketas of being a "pathological" liar. At the end of the novel it is really questionable to a reader who is actually a liar: Baudolino, whose confession seems truthful even when talking honestly to Niketas about the lies he used to create in order to achieve some good deed or motivate people to achieve some positive political solutions; Or is a liar Niketas, who cannot re-write the history when a new fact comes to play because it opposes to the very ideology of that time established by the Christian orthodoxy. For instance, in the novel it is given the list of new historical discoveries that Niketas decides to omit from the historical records:

1. Trade of the fake saints' relics including the "heads" of St. John the Baptist;

2. The context of Frederick's death by which the great emperor died as the result of the confusion and contingency;

3. Frederick's motif to organize the Third Crusades; he believed that some Muslim areas could be reintegrated in the Christendom if he would be able to make an alliance with the Christian kingdom of Prester John. The problem was that Prester John's kingdom didn't exist. It was an imaginative place described as the country that is neighboring the paradise;

4. People should not know that Frederic never believed in the visions of Baudolino, but he used them as the marvelous tactic to push the masses in his direction.

As usual, Eco the writer is as well Eco the theoretician, and Eco the post-modern thinker who accepts the aesthetics of the "open" work. He has not written a book for a reader to listen and follow the story line of the omniscient narrator, but he has prepared the line of underlying questions and problems for the reader forcing him to actively participate in the interpretation of the story. The reader finds him/her self in a role of a post-modern deconstructionist who is co-creator with the author. Eco's text is a combination of larger units (chapters) as the main architectonic basis of the work, sequences (independent episodes), and discursive parts (theoretical, ethical, and moral questions) that are interconnected by the story line and characters. It seems that Eco writes his novels acquiring the perfect ratio of the architectonic parts and sequences with the discursive open questions. This methodology of building the open work puts the reader into a peculiar position in which the reader has to move through the semantic

spaces of the novel and to interpret discursive parts in order to achieve cumulative understanding to move on to the next part. The communicative value of the text is the dominant requirement. This makes the work infinite and open for new possibilities, interpretations, and focuses on different aspects of the work.[180]

Expressing the ironic view of the omniscient narrator, Paphnutius, a character that represents a rational philosopher in the novel, suggests that ones, this story will be written by a greater liar than Baudolino. The point that Eco has made at the end of his fascinating novel is that there is no time in the human history when the decisions were created as the result of the exclusively historical rational reasoning. Eco's main point is that legends, the power of myth and religion, the beliefs in the imaginative characters, or fake places is equally present in the historical motivation as the power of the politically, legally, or military rationalized reasoning. It is a fact that modern historians and scholars still find fascinating stories about the Holy Grail, history of the Templars, and other popular legends that become the part of Western cultural heritage. The question here is how to interpret these popular legends, myths, and stories? Is a Grasal a big lie as a legend, or the story of Grasal had some real influence on the Medieval English worldview and even reflections to the historical development of English aristocracy?

To make the point more plausible it is possible to find the examples from the present time. For instance, is the appearance of the Virgin Mary in Medjugorje only a lie of bunch of little children who witnessed Virgin Mary (described at first by local children as a beautiful lady with "red cheeks" and long dark hair, talking in native language) in 1982, or a fact, which in few further years became a relevant accepted cultural fact for the depressive area of Hercegovina (99.9% of people never heard of Hercegovina, let alone

Medjugorje before this event), that in many of ways altered the social, political, and economic structure of this hillbilly area? How should this event be framed in historical books? Is it common for the areas that are far from the main religious, political, and economic centers--where history happens every day,-- to use another methodology to became recognizable as a micro-center that can offer something different and alternative view to the world? Finally, how can these events, based on the "mythological reasoning," really happen today when the technology, scientific methodology, and rationalism is dominant global cultural mainstream?

Some of the answers can be, perhaps, offer via the semiotic theory of culture by Yuri Lotman and Umberto Eco, that was developed on the basis of a long tradition of structural semiotics of language and literature, and then grasped on the cultural research between minorities and the mainstream culture adding the elements of nonstructural semiotics such as Peirce's pragmati(ci)sm. One of the main points of this approach is that every single event, religious movement, beliefs, scientific discovery, political system, or any literary realm are equally important and interconnected by the same frame of reference, which is called the semiosphere. In his book *Universe of the Mind: The Semiotic Theory of Culture* (1990), Yuri M. Lotman gave the description and definition of the semiosphere:

> "Imagine a museum hall where exhibits from different periods are on display, along with inscriptions in known and unknown languages, and instructions for decoding them; there are also the explanations composed by the museum staff, plans for tours and rules for the behavior of the visitors.

Imagine also in this hall tour-leaders and visitor and imagine all this as a single mechanism. This is an image of the semiosphere. Then we have to remember that all elements of the semiosphere are in dynamic, not static, correlations whose terms are constantly changing. We notice this especially at traditional moments which have come down to us from the past." (Lotman, 1990, pp.126, 127)

First of all, the semiosphere takes into the consideration all periods of time, all disciplines developed in the course of time (history, literature, science, ethics, philosophy, etc.), and all events known as relevant for the culture which denotes all humanized nature. Semiotics does not propose the hierarchy of cultural spheres, do not theorized, or discriminate by the virtue of rationality, common sense, ideology, theology or any other mental devices.

Every discipline whether religion, science, or philosophy, represents one set of rules with "pre-fixed" socialized codes that members of culture follow, but even if one would have the knowledge of all codes of rules in one culture, it would not mean that this person would achieve infallible or absolute knowledge. According to Lotman and Eco everybody can experience "a semiotic position" in which they are aware that one cultural reality is relative to the other or that chosen set of rules would work only for one system of knowledge, but not for another. The best example is, perhaps, Hume's skepticism expressed by the opposing the scientific and common sense knowledge as to the path of sun: according to common sense knowledge sun always rises on the East, and declines on the West; but according to scientific knowledge that is not true at all. Common sense knowledge is only a habitual knowledge evolved on the base of our perceptive ability.

Hume had a hard time to reconcile these two oppositions in our mind, while Lotman or Eco would not have this problem at all. For semiotics, both of systems—the scientific, and the common sense knowledge--exist as two separate codes of rules that a person would alternate according to the intent of him being a referent. To present how the new sphere of different, culturally postulated, codes of rule co-exist, Lotman compares the semiosphere to the role of the biosphere to all living beings defined by Verdansky as "all life-clusters are intimately bound to each other."

Using the analogy between the semiosphere and biosphere Lotman stresses that cultures develop their own spaces and boundaries under the same condition of the "semiosphere i.e., humanized nature" that are then surrounded by the language, cultural history, religion, literature, art and identity, but also they are in constant interaction because they make the comparison between different semiotic spaces (read cultures) via binary and asymmetrical references to their boundaries.

Eco and Lotman agree that every possible thing, being, system, or thought in the semiosphere is a sign that stands open for interpretation to any possible codes of rules, which then condition every possible entity to be framed in a specific interpretation. In this type of the rhyzomatic maze everything is connected with everything—a religion equally with science, and science equally with literature if the referent makes these connections. In the semiosphere there is no center, only one semiotic space can make them through the available codes or systems of rules.

Semiotic as a discipline that refers to the semiosphere is a "reconstruction of reality," but not reality that is perceived as an independent object of cognition as it was in

a traditional Western rational and idealistic philosophy. The reality is conditioned by the set of rules chosen for its construct.

Semiotics in many of ways represents the reconstruction of the traditional object of cognition in a sense to overcome the Kantian antinomy/chasm. For Kant, the object of cognition is on a one hand "humanized' as the result of time-space framework relevant as the a-priori conditions for the human existence, on the other hand, as a total independent object (object as such), it is an X about which we do not know anything. Lotman's concept of the semiosphere reduces the object only on the humanized nature conditions and makes it possible to be interpreted through available systems of codes. Every object can become the representant of the multiple worlds existing in the semiosphere, and for this reason, every object of knowledge is equally tentative as well as fallible, and further on, it is not the expression of the one truth, but the expression of the possible truths, possible realities, which makes that object poetical (in Aristotelian sense) or dynamic (in Peirce's sense) rather than objective and final. This object than is a sign or a symbol that stands conditioned by its very nature of interpretation intensions.

4j) <u>Why Religion is Not a Lie</u>

The final question is: what is a lie in the semiosphere and does it exist at all? Of course, lie exists, but only and only, as the boundary fringe element or discourse of the code system that is used for the interpretation. Religion is the best example we can use to explain the point. Does the God exist? Does the Virgin Mary exist? Did Judeo-Christian God create Earth in 7 days? Of course that exists for the believers and doesn't for atheists, for atheists the existence of God, Virgin Mary or seven days creation represent

obvious lies, but for believers these are statements of belief that has deep meaning for them.

There is a more comprehensive question: if for the Christian a God, the Virgin Mary, and the Holy Ghost do exist, then can they also accept that the unicorn exists, or can they accept that any deceased ancestor is a spirit which comes back and cause the problems for leaving people of that family; or for instance can all Christians accept that the Holy Grail exist? It is obvious that at one point every Christian, especially the fundamentalist, will not accept the possibilities that for him all superhuman agencies really exist.

Further implications of this discussion can be drawn in two separate questions:

1. Does it mean for the Christians, for instance, that the Yoruba woman who beliefs in ancestral spirits, is actually a liar?

and

2. Does the semiosphere concept of reality simply justify every lie, even when someone lies to your face?

The first discourse: Both, Eco, and Lotman would disagree with the underlying implications posed in these two questions. First of all modern Christians do not really believe that a Yoruba woman is a liar because she has a different belief system. It is OK that she thinks that her ancestors are spirits who can cause some misfortunes in everyday life if they are not treated properly via the strict observances, but as well they cannot accept to believe in the same thing as she does. This point, one more time stresses, that people today are in some extent aware of the presence of the semiosphere and they would

say: "I have my religion, she has her religion!" We do not interfere with each other as far as we have our cultural identity as the cultural space that doesn't overlap. But in the case of the Voodoo, where the cultural spaces overlap, we might find a person who is a Christian, but also beliefs in ancestral spirits in a way the Yoruba woman does.

The second discourse: Laying to someone's' face that you didn't steal the money but you did is still a lie as omission of the truth, diversion of the truth, or escape from the truth simply because both parties refer to the same code of rules in which human relationships are based on honesty and mutual respect so, stealing is a bad human deed. A lie here is simply defined as the bad morality in human relationships. In this sense the Aristotelian inference of "historical consciousness"—it important what really has happened-- is required as the main rule in such situation, and a poetical inference is dismissed.

An interesting question related to problem of lying would definitely be one of the most interesting questions related to religion. How to take someone who tells you that he/she has visions? Talk with a saint? What is someone tells you to talk directly to God? Or the one who tells you that God talks to him/her? These kinds of statements are very fringe, because it is not clear to which of the code of references (rules) they belong to. It seems that each of these statements can become a simple lie and can be morally banished, or it can become more than a lie—a material from which the new sub-structure in the code rule of religion will be developed. Sounds odd, but very true.

Let's take one more time the example from U. Eco's *Baudolino*. When Baudolino begins his story of his childhood, the first thing he confesses is that the reverence of being alone in the woods that tricked his imagination because he felt free from any

bounds and rules at that moment. He imagined talking with St. Baudolino, seeing the unicorn, but then, he talked about these imaginative impressions as they were part of him and he presented them as true. He said at home that he spoke to St. Baudolino, and community of people in his house became necessary the interpretants: while mother accepted Baudolino's confession as true and really believed that something of this story is true, the father complaint:

> ʿO Lord this had to happen to me, a son who sees things and cant even
> milk a cow either I bust his head with my stick or I give him to one of
> those men who visit the fairs making an African monky dance and my
> sainted mother shouted at me Goodfornothing you're the worst all what
> have I done to make the Lord give me a son who sees saints and my father
> Galiaudo said its not true he sees saints hes a wors liar than Judass and he
> makes things up to get out of working.' U. Eco, Baudolino, 2002, p. 5.[181]

Baudolino continued to tell lies, because people sometimes liked it to hear. One foggy night he met a stranger, some "Alman" noble, and told him that he has visions as well as gift of tongues like Apostles. The stranger lost in the woods asked him what did St. Baudolino say about Terdona, and offers him two coins for his prediction. A boy, tells to a stranger that a king Frederick with a red beard is going to conquer Terdona, not knowing that this is Frederick I. King itself likes little Baudolino's imagination and way or reasoning, so finally he adopts him as a son. Finally, in Baudolino's story confession we learn that Frederick I didn't believe that little boy really spoke with St. Baudolino, but recognized that other people would like these stories which eventually would help him in

conquering Italian cities, so Baudolino became Frederick's "footman" and "vox populi," as Niketas put it.

The problem of religious imagination is the main light-motif of Eco's novel. Baudolino is the representant of the Medieval culture and the semiotic space of that culture could be described, as Eco put it in the Introduction to Lotman's *Universe of Mind* as follows: "Everything signifies a higher reality and objects themselves are important not for their physical nature or their function, but rather in so much as they signify something else." (Lotman, 1990, p. xi) Baudolino is presented as a person who learned how to use in the best way his religious imagination. In one of his episodes, Baudolino wanted to save a Civitas Nouva, a New City (which became later Allessandria, where his friends and family lived) from the furious destruction of Frederick I by staging a person who is to appear on the horse in front of Allessandrians and Frederick's army as St. Peter, thinking that Frederick's soldiers would interpret what they see as a miracle and coming of St. Peter. Unfortunately, the miracle didn't work, because Frederick's soldiers didn't believe that this is St. Peter and he can be on the horse, while Allessandrians perceived the staging person on the horse as a savior. This episode from the novel *Baudolino* shows that Eco sees religious statements as those which are always at the stake of probation and on disposition of community of believers to decide to accept them or not.

4k) Peirce's Semiotics: The Key Interpretation for "Religious Lies"

Let us go to real life and take some historical cases while leaving for a moment the vast of Eco's fiction. Can the same rule be applied for the religious imagination (visions, talking to Gods, Gods talking to a person, seeing superhuman agencies and

spirits)—that can be put to the test, and by the community, either aborted or adopted--as it is presented in Eco's *Baudolino*? The first historical example can be the case of the Witches of Salem, the other the Virgin Mary of Medjugorje.

In both cases, the marginal representatives of the society have visions: in the case of Witches of Salem two young girls, Betty Parris & Abigail Williams, fell into trances where they pronounced it as witchcraft and accused other members of the community as witches in Salem Village, Massachusetts, where soon nineteen people had been hanged (Albanese, 1999, p. 260).[182]

In this case it is obvious, the community of believers had to deal with the fringe boundary element of visions of girls and their "unconscious" trances. The test of time was needed for the community of believers to decide whether these visions are "true" or a "Lie." Finally, a community of believers decided that the girls' trances were not authentic voice of God, and therefore a lie.

On the contrary, the Medjugorje case showed that people accepted and adopted the fringe element of children's (five to nine years old) testimony of seeing the Virgin Mary, but also the community of believers needed some critical time for testing and evaluating the authenticity of the visions. According to a good research of Dr. Ljudevit Rupčić, a local Franciscan priest fra Jozo Zovko made at the very beginning of the case a recorded investigation with six children in which he asked each of them to describe what they had seen when they said the Virgin Mary appeared first time.[183] Rupčić then used these sources to continue the investigation in which he presented how children in the course of time changed the testimonies and from visual representations went on presenting vision as the mental state and mental space. Rupčić also stressed that he

thought that, perhaps, fra Jozo Zovko as a local priest was a suggestive person who might made an enormous influence on the children. This argument failed, because fra Jozo Zovko had just become recently a priest in this area, and after few weeks the Communist authorities began an investigation and imprisoned him for three and half years. The Communist authorities at that time were very harsh to Catholic priests and they were trying to convince the children that they had rather some imaginary visions, then the real experiences of the Virgin Mary's presence. More than this, children's parents and close family didn't believe the children for a long time, and they were making jokes of their testimonies. It seems that the persistence of the children to continue almost every day and later every week with the same story moved more and more children of this area to believe in it, and soon the little witnesses also had great support among the local nuns.

The priesthood and the official authorities of the Catholic Church in Croatia as well as the Franciscan authorities had been very reserved throughout the whole early stage of the development of this case. The two priests, fra Tomislav Pervan and fra Tomislav Vlašić, also documented throughout of this case diverse conversations with the children, trying to convince them that they had not really see the Virgin Mary. Although the all church and politico-social establishment made everything to oppose to the reality of children's visions, believers itself (children, women, and old persons) accepted it as the authentic case, today the whole area has been changed with the popularity of the place where the Virgin Mary was believed to have appeared.

It is obvious that Peirce's semiotic theory is applicable to these cases more than any other theory. Eco, who analyzed diverse aspects of Peirce's semiotic theory, and then

accepted it to develop his moderate position as to the radical postmodern theory of deconstruction offered by Derrida and Rorty would agree with this choice.

Eco explains in his book *The Limits of Interpretation* (1986) that Derrida challenges the texts because they present "the idea of a definite, final, and authorized meaning." Derrida also stresses that the text cannot "incorporate an absolute univocal meaning," because there is no "transcendental signified, and the signifier is not co-present with a signified," so signified is continually deferred and delayed in *ad infinitum* position.

Eco stays that Derrida's position is the one that would lead toward the absolute deconstruction of authority, but it would definitely stand on a side of absolute relativism. Eco opposes to the concept of the absolute relativism, and accepts the moderate position as to deconstruction accepting Peirce's pragmaticism.

For Peirce, any object of knowledge denotes the semiotic experience—"a sign is anything which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer to an object to which itself refers in the same way, this interpretant becoming in turn a sign, and so on ad infinitum."—obviously Peirces' statement can be compared in line with the deconstruction methodology. If we apply Peirce's idea of unlimited semiosis to our two cases, the vision as a sign of a new event in the religious semiosphere (in this case religious system of Christianity) can be perceived as the dynamic object (dynamic object is for Peirce any mental construct) and not as a truth or a lie, but as the interpretants possibility to pursue some investigations, rejections, acceptance, comments, etc. He would also say that all knowledge is fallible because human beings, according to their perceptive abilities build the sense of continuity and determination, which is not the mode

of absolute/whole reality. The necessity for the semiotic experience comes from the illusion that there are possible only a definite number of solutions as the answer to the world, while there is actually always the indefinite numbers of solutions as well as perceptants and their interpretations. Knowledge than needs contextual reference, and finally is created as a habit. Habit as knowledge has correlates in modern semiotic theory the term "code of rules," that is often used by semioticians.

For Peirce, whenever we have a situation that some unlimited semiosis is socially, scientifically, politically, or religiously interpreted and translated as a code or mode in society is a proof that a community of interpreters adopted and accepted a "transcendental" idea of that community, which then becomes a higher instance of transcendental authority. A habit, as a knowledge is a "disposition to act upon the world," and its "transcendental instance" that the intersubjective meaning is "spelled out" as the agreement of community.

In that sense, the cases such as the Witches from Salem, or the Virigin Mary of Medjugorje for Derrida or Rorty are still relative to the possibility to be truth or lie, while for Peirce, Eco, or Habermas these cases are solved either as a truth or as a lie as to the community of believers who intersubjectivelly brought up the meaning of how they communicate the ideas of superhuman agencies. Even if we talk about unbelievers who refer to the two cases (Salem, Medjugorje), it is impossible that they would or could dismiss the meaning and opinion of that community.

Eco, in his *Baudolino*, refers to the semantic dimension of the story: should story simply be told as it is or should be modified in order to reach a valuable and rich meaning

that can act out of its illocutionary framework in the future? At one point Baudolino, who

tells his life story to Niketas Choinates says:

> "But maybe my story has no meaning."—alluding to the problem that parts of
> his story are going to present imaginative experiences, utopian places, and
> superhuman agencies.

Niketeas responds:

> 'There are no stories without a meaning. And I am one of those men who can
> find it even where other fail to see it. Afterwards the story becomes the book
> of the living, like a blaring trumpet that raises from the tomb those who have
> been dust for centuries.... Still it takes time, you have to consider the events,
> arrange them in order, find the connections, even the least visible ones.' Eco,
> *Baudolino*, 2002, p. 12.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The semiosphere can be defined as the cultural organism which resembles to the continuous thought process that creates the spheres by generating the experiences and individual lives of people, and than translating them into the semiotic and semantic meta-linguistic spaces. The reality that exists in one's culture is not static and is in continuous process of testing and redefining its own borders. This semiotic space with its borderline resembles more to the membrane, than to the definite line of division.

Religion is the one of the most important meta-linguistic structures of the semiotic space. Religion is a system of beliefs and practices, where every person is engaged in the semiotic process—transformation of the ideas into the practical symbolic actions, and further, the transformation of the semantic potentials into the complex space of the semiosphere to which a person relates to.

In the modern semiosphere of the Western civilization, the private with the subjectivism and the public with the instrumental objectivism tend to be more radicalized than ever. Modern semiospheric space of the Western civilization is predominantly transformed into the secular. Religion seems to be a relic from the past, an interesting personal journey and search, and so the semantic materials of religion are today transferred from the collective consciousness of the group to the private actions of the personal faith. That religion is a personal choice creates in the West religious pluralism— from religious traditionalism, orthodoxy, rigorism (obedience cults) and fundamentalism, to new religious movements, modern religious syncretism, or new spirituality.

The religious revivalism puts the question mark on the secularization processes. This appears in a form of the dialectics between a new religiosity and spirituality and rising fundamentalism with the tendency to enchant again what was once disenchanted. The concept of the semiosphere is important to open enough room for the interpretation of religious processes that are distinct and different from the mainstream, but also to cross-culturally explain and compare possibilities of overlapping between different traditions.

This dissertation has given the main outline of the concepts and ideas existent in the modern semiotic theory of C. S. Peirce, U. Eco, J. Habermas, and Y. Lotman and to apply those concepts building at the same time a new methodology of semiotic theory of religion in the modern study of comparative religion. This dissertation project is the foundation of the semiotic theory of religion which will bring enrichment in the research with the application of the concepts such as dynamic religious signs, unlimited semiosis, and putting religion in the contextualization of the semiosphere.

Also, this dissertation sees an enormous value of J. Habermas' work which concentrates on the rescuing semantic religious potentials and transforming them into the secular sphere. The second great value of the semiotic theory of religion is that it is necessary to understand the functioning of the contemporary semiosphere in which we live and interact today. There is a substantial differentiation of the semiotic space that is secularized and functions in a way to offer a person the alternative competing worldviews, and the semiotic space that is enclosed in the unified system, without alternative worldviews and different "truths" about reality. The semiotic theory offers a way to understand the connection between nature, culture, religion, science, and complex

socio-political reality in a new way, offering the methodology of semiotic and semantic analyses of modernity and critically investigating the functioning and destiny of the post-secular society, which has brought a surprising wave of new religious revivalism.

It is almost impossible to simply interpret religion in one-dimension, as only cultural, social, political, historical, or theological event. The semiotic theory of religion offers a new definition of religion, where religion acts as the most important meta-linguistic structure of the semiotic space. Religion is a system of the conceptual ideas that involve the natural ability of the human mind to engage itself into the process of unlimited semiosis that is transformed into the semiotic space by symbolic signification processes that are developed within in-group community, which maintain its important meta-linguistic and semiotic space through the authority of the religious institutions, exegesis, and the canon as long as it is possible to maintain the communicative praxis that re-in-acts the collective consciousness and the strength of the semantic, religious and symbolic, potentials.

To understand and interpret today's modern religious pluralism and multifaceted forms of religious consciousness and practices there is also a need for a proper cultural theory that is not based only on the slippery ground of cultural relativism, but rather one that is systematic, functional, and critical in explaining the changes that occurred within the world-religions. Yuri Lotman's concept of the semiosphere seems to be functional in the application to religious pluralism, but also critical when explaining the roots of the conversion processes throughout the diachronic time-line. Lotman shows that there is a vicious struggle for the dominance and preservation of the semiotic/linguistic space, which emerges as the dominant in competition to the other linguistic and cultural reality.

Also, Lotman concentrates with the great precision on the diverse synchronic developments in the culture that explain at the same time the shifting of the religious consciousness into the aesthetical subjectivism and freedom of expression.

Concentrating often on the analysis of C. S. Peirce's production process of unlimited semiosis, and investigating with the curiosity the new interpretation of U. Eco's dynamic sings and unlimited semiosis it seems that nothing is more amazing to a mind than going back to the sources of cognitive and aesthetic abilities of the human mind, where often resides the source of the religious itself. This dissertation in its final instance, wants to open this awareness for a reader and to go in this investigation even beyond the expected, into the post-modern realm, where the limits of knowledge expands with the surprising flexibility, openness, and maze of connections which may bring together worlds of imagination and reality together.

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END NOTES

[1] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics,* (Trans. Wade Baskin, London: Fontana/Collins, 1974.) pp. 15-16. "It is possible to conceive of a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. It would form part of social psychology, and hence of general psychology. We shall call it semiology (from the Greek *semeîon*, 'sign'). It would investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them. Since it does not yet exist, one cannot say for certain that it will exist. But it has a right to exist, a place ready for it in advance. Linguistics is only one branch of this general science. The laws which semiology will discover will be laws applicable in linguistics, and linguistics will thus be assigned to a clearly defined place in the field of human knowledge."

[2] Ibid. p. 68. For Saussure, language as a system of signs outlines "anthropoSemiotics" i.e., predominantly a Semiotics of culture. Unlike Morris or Peirce, Saussure takes out comparison with the human and animal worlds of communication, and he is not concern with a sign as a phenomena in the epistemological sense as it is Peirce. The arbitrariness of the sign is explained as the result of convention: "Signs that are wholly arbitrary realize better than the others the ideal of the semiological process."

[3] Ibid. That a sign is a mental space is one of the most important ideas in Semiotics. Saussure explains a linguistic sign in the following way: "A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept (signified) and a sound pattern (signifier). The sound patter is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound patter is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a "material" element only in that is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept.

[4] J. Alberto Coffa, *The Semantic Tradition from Kant to Carnap,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[5] Winfried Nöth, *Handbook of Semiotics,* (Bloomingon & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995.) "Peirce defended a pansemiotic view of the universe. In his view, signs are not a class of phenomena besides other nonsemiotic objects: 'The entire universe is perfused with signs, it is not composed, exclusively of signs (Ph. 5.448, fn.). Smiotics in this interpretation turns out to be a universal science....'

[6] Umberto Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 148.

[7] Ibid. pp. 10, 11, 12.

[8] Ibid. The fourth chapter called *Symbols* is the best part where Eco gives the differentiation of symbols on one that are metaphors or are engaged in the allegory.

[9] In the book by E. Thomas Lawson & Robert N. McCauley, *Rethinking Religion: Connecting Cognition and Culture*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), Lawson defines religion in the following way: "For the purposes of theorizing we construe a religious system as a symbolic-cultural system of ritual acts accompanied by an extensive and largely shared conceptual scheme that includes culturally postulated superhuman agents. (....) That conceptual scheme can be exemplified in oral traditions, sacred texts, devotional materials, theological essays etc." p. 5. Also, Pascal Boyer inspired by Lawson's cognitive theory of religion discusses a problem of highly theological ideas that are often in opposition to the religious conceptual spontaneity in his book *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religion*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1994).

[10] For the interpretation of the story check Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity*, (New York: Zone Book, 2005), pp. 15-36.

[11] The consequences of the Nag Hammadi discovery at the Jabal al-Tarif mountain where Muhammand Ali al-Samman discovered a jar filled with papyrus (scholars were able to identify more than fifty-two texts) and texts such as Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Philip definitely changed the views on Early Christianity. The consequences of this discovery were described in details in Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, Vintage Books: A Division of Random House, INC., New York, 1989. In association with this discovery another problems are discussed such as the true biography and identity of Jesus. John Dominic Crossan in his two books *Jesus: A Revolution y Biography*, Harper Collins Publisher, San Francisco, 1994., and *Who Killed Jesus* Harper Collins Publisher, San Francisco ,1995., argues that Jesus presented in the Gospels' and Paul's writings if highly "theologized" and "mythologized" rather tan historicized. Crossan tries to apply the standards of the modern comparative anthropological research on Jesus, deconstructing the story presented in the Synoptic Gospels as the theological concepts rather than possible truth. Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince in their extraordinary eclectic work about the connection between the Priory of Sion and Early Christianity, *The Templar Revelation: Secret Guardians of the True Identity of Christ*, A Touchstone Book (Simon & Shuster), New York, 1997. pp. 303-324, give in the chapter fourteen "John Christ" the detailed overview of possible connections of John the Baptist with the Egyptian and Jewish mysticism and mystery cults.

[12] Parousia is a term that denotes the Second Coming or appearance of Christ, his return to judge the world, punish sinners, and redeem those who are seved. The comes from the Greek, which in translation means "being with," "being with presence." See "Glossary of New Testament Terms and Concepts" in Stephen L. Harris, *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction* (4th edition, McGraw Hill, International Edition, USA, 2002),p. 445.

[13] Robert W. Funk, R.W. Hoover, The Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels*, (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993), pp. 470-471.

[14] John Dominic Crossan in the Prologue of his book *Who Killed Jesus?* discusses the elements of prophecy historicized in a way that Jesus life is interpreted through the Jewish prophecy. This kind of methodology opens a critical question of the real mission of Jesus in his life-time. More than this, Crossan thinks that the purpose of applying prophecies to Jesus' life was purposively done by the writers of Gospels to present Jewish establishment as "sinful," money oriented, and opportunists—especially in the role of Judas Issacariot, which methodology has given in the recent history a possibility for using Gospels for the Anti-Semitic feelings. J.D. Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus: Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus*, (Harper Collins Publishers, San Francisco, 1996) pp. 1-38.

[15] Elaine Pagels, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas*, (New York: Random House, 2005).

[16] Stephen L. Harris, *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction* (4th edition, McGraw Hill, International Edition, USA, 2002), pp. 244-255: "The tradition that Jesus reserved "secret" teachings for his innermost circle of disciples—information denied the general public who heard him speak exclusively in parables—is firmly embedded in the Synoptic Gospels. (...) That Jesus disclosed "secrets" or "mysteries" to specially privileged intimates was typical of philosophers and other teachers in the ancient world."

[17]Ibid. p. 245: "Upon rising form the tomb, "the young men looked at Jesus, loved him, and began to beg to be with him (Secret Mark vs. 8). Six days later, Jesus summons the young man, "dressed only in a linen cloth," to (spend) the night with him," during which Jesus "taught him the mystery of God's domain"....)

[18] Ibid. pp. 246-248. The Infancy Gospel of Thomas is presented in details in Stephen L. Harris chapter "The Other Gospels," where he also discussed about the Infancy Gospel of James.

[19] Howard Clark Kee, E. Albu, C. Lindberg, J. W. Frost, D. L. Robert, (ed.), *Christianity: A Social and Cultural History* (second ed., Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New York, 19980, pp. 92- 95, text "Which are the Authoritative Scriptures?"

[20] Michael Baigent, *The Jesus Papers: Exposing the Greatest Cover-Up in History ,*(San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006), pp. 237-239. Baigent talks about the importance of Gospel of Thomas and that probably this Gospel should be included in the New Testament texts, as Harvard scholar Helmut Koester argued too. The new discovery shows that Gospel of Thomas was the result of Egyptian Christianity, so that, as Baigent states, (p. 238) "At Easter in A.D. 367. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, declared that all noncanonical books in Egypt should be destroyed," therefore Gospel of Thomas didn't make it to the Christian canon.

[21] Stephen L. Harris, *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction* (4th edition), McGraw Hill, International Edition, USA, 2002., p 50, Harris gives a detailed parallels between Dionysus and Jesus of Nazareth (Box 3.2).

[22] Ibid. pp. 40-55.

[23] http://www.pantheon.org/articles/e/eleusis.html, (accessed June 5, 2006).

[24] Grant, F.C., ed. *Hellenistic Religion: The Age of Syncretism,* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), a collection of Greco-Roman religious writing.

[25] Stephen L. Harris, *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction* (4th edition), McGraw Hill, International, USA, 2003., pp. 80-85.

[26] Wilson, A. N., *Jesus,* Sinclair-Stevenson, London, 1992., p. 102: "...John the Baptist religion (and we know there was one) had become the dominant cult of the Mediterranean rather than the Jesus religion..."

[27] Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q & Christian Origins,* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publisher, 1993), p. 41. "Biblical scholar always assume a community behind their texts. And New Testament scholars have always thought that the earliest followers of Jesus immediately formed a Christian congregation. That is what Luke reports, and Matthew and John. Mark's ending seems to allow for it. And

Paul's letter to the Galatians tells us that Cephas and James were residing in Jerusalem as "pillars" of some group of Jesus people in the mid 50s C.E. It is the importance of Jesus was his role in starting the Christian religion, or so the reasoning has been, the first followers must have been Christians. It may not have been easy to start a new religion with fishermen and such, especially when the large-scale plan required coming to see Jesus was the Christ who came to transform the world by dying for it."

[28] Rodny Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997); John Dominic Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus: Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1996).

[29] Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, Henry Lincoln, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, A Dell Book, New York, 1983. pp. 11-269. They constructed an idea that the Priory of Sion is a secret society in Europe, established back in 1090 and the purpose of the society is to restore the Merovingian dynasty. Massimo Introvigin in his book *Beyond Da Vinci Code* states that The Priory of Sion is an esoteric order established in France much later in 1956 by Pierre Plantard, but he also shows that Plantard claimed their connections with the old society. There is also a theory by Robert Anton Wilson that Priory of Sion is a Hoax invented by surrealists in France. http://wwwAmuseyourself.com/goodreads/leonardodavicni (accessed June 2, 2006).

[30] Lynn Picknett, *Mary Magdalene*, Carroll & Graf Publishers, New York, 2004.pp. 47-71, Picknett discusses how Mary Magdalene was misrepresented by the Gospel's writers, and that there are strong possibilities that she was Jesus' disciple, but also she was associated with the mystery cult through which Jesus probably experienced the initiation into the Divine Love.

[31] Ibid. p.191. "While only the more extreme skeptics would deny that miracles do occasionally happen—although, it must be said, rarely—even many of the relatively unsophisticated people of the first century Roman Empire had their dobuts about the alleged powers of Jesus Christ. Like the Jewish Talmud, the Babylonian Talmud describes him unambiguously as an 'Egyptian sorcerer' who was 'to be stoned because he practiced magic and incited Jews to worship alien gods and as a false prophet, led Israel astray.'

[32] Lynn Picknett & Clive Prince, *The Templar Revelation: Secret Guardians of the True Identity of Christ*, A Touchstone Book: Simon & Shuster, New York, 1997, chapter 14 "John Christ," pp. 303-324.

[33] Daniel C. Scavone, The Book Review: "The Turin Shroud: In Whose Image?"http://www.shroud.com/scavone.htm (accessed June 6, 2006).

[34] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Priory_of_Sion pp. 1-10.

[35] Charles S. Peirce (ed. Philip P. Wiener), *Selected Writings*, New York: Dower Publications, INC, 1958. pp. 91-113 in the text "The Fixation of Belief."

[36] Charles S. Peirce (ed. Philip P. Wiener), *Selected Writings*, (New York: Dower Publications, INC, 1958). One of the most interesting texts in this collection is Peirce's criticism on David Hume's argument against miracles. See. pp. 289-321.

[37] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press), 1888. p. 252: "The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. There is properly no simplicity in it at any one time, nor identity in different; whatever natural propensity we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity."

[38] Ibid, p. 252 "For my part, when I enter most intimately in what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception. When my perceptions are remov'd for any time, as by a sound sleep; so long am I insensible of myself, and may truly be said not to exist."

[39] David Hume, *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Eric Stainberg, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1977., pp. 15-16: "All the objects of human reason or enquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, Relations of Ideas and Matter of Fact. Of the first kind are the sciences of Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic, and in short every affirmation which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain. (.....) Matters of Fact, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner; nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is till possible; because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality."

[40] Ibid. p. 16 "That the sun will not rise to-morrow is no less intelligible a proposition, and implies no more contradiction, than the affirmation, that it will rise. We should in vain, therefore, attempt to demonstrate its falsehood. Were it demonstratively false, it would imply a contradiction, and could never be distinctly conceived by the mind."

[41] Charles S. Peirce, *Selected Writings,* ed. Philip P. Wiener, (New York: Dover Publications, INC., 1958). p. 310: "The objection to Hume's conception of a Law of Nature is that it supposes the universe to be utterly unintelligible, while, in truth, the only warrant for an hypothesis must be that it renders phenomena intelligible. The Humists are very fond of representing their conceptions of a law of nature as a scientific result; but unfortunately metaphysics has not yet reached the scientific stage, and when it shall at length be so far matured, every indication today is that it will be a metaphysics, as far as possible from this fourteenth-century Ockhamism."

[42] Ibid. p. 311 'The treatises on probabilities, which are written exclusively in the interest of the mathematical developments, and are weak upon their logical side, treat testimonies as "evidences" to be balanced along with and against one another. That is to say, they think that the character of a witness, etc., will in itself afford an absolute assurance that he will falsify just once in so often, neither more nor less. This seems to me absurd. ..... I may mention, however, among the objections t that method, that it confounds two totally different things; objective probabilities, which are statistical facts, such as form the basis of the insurance business; and subjective probabilities, or likelihoods, which are nothing more than the expression of our preconceived notions."

[43] James Hoopes, *Peirce on Signs,* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991). See "How to Make Our Ideas Clear?" p. 166.

[44] Ibid, p. 256

[45] Ibid p. 107: "Why should we not attain the desired end, by talking as answer to a question any we may fancy, and constantly reiterating it to ourselves, dwelling on all which may conduce to that belief, and learning to turn with contempt and hatred from anything that might disturb it?"

[46] Ibid. p. 158

[47] Ibid. "How to Make Our Ideas Clear?" p. 166: "The essence of belief is the establishment of a habit, and different beliefs are distinguished by the different modes of action to which they give rise."

[48] Ibid. p.156-157.

[49] Umberto Eco, *Serendipities: Language & Lunacy*, Trans. William Weaver, (San Diego, New York, London: A harvest Book Harcourt Brace & Company 1998).

[50] Ibid. pp.1-23.

[51] Umberto Eco, *Semiotics and Philosophy of Language*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. pp. 146-147.

[52] http://www.sacredheart.com/SaintMargaretMaryAlacoque.htm Biography of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, (accessed May 05, 2005).

[53] http://www.ewtn.com/library/ENCYC/P12HAURI.HTM (accessed May 25, 2005), see: *Haurietis Aquas (On Devotion to The Sacred Heart)*. Pope's Pius XII encyclical promulgated on May 15, 1956. See number 14 part of the Encyclical.

[54] Ibid. p. 1

[55] Eric R. Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: a Mexican National Symbol" in David Hicks (ed.), *Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion*, (International Edition: McGraw Hill, second edition, 2002), pp. 354-359.

[56] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, transl. Garrett Barden and John Cumming, (New York: The Seabury Press 1975).

[57] Ibid. p.167.

[58] Ibid. pp. 235-236.

[59] Thea Sabin, *Fundamentals of Philosophy & Practice: Wicca for Beginners*, (Woodbury, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 2006).

[60] Carl G. Jung, "The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious" in *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2nd ed. 1968), pp. 387-90.

[61] Immanuel Kant, "The Judgment of Beautiful, The Judgment of Sublime" in http://www.iep.utm.edu/k/kantaest.htm (accessed March 18, 2004).

[62] Umberto Eco, *Kant and the Platypus: Essays on Language and Cognition*, transl. Alastair McEwen, (New York, Sand Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, London, 2000), p. 35 "It tells us (the hermeneutics) that precisely by destroying our consolidated certainties, by reminding us to consider things from an unusual point of view, by inviting us to submit to the encounter with the concrete and to the impact with an individual in which the fragile framework of our universals crumbles. Through this continuous reinvention of language, the Poets are inviting us to take up again the task of questioning and reconstructing the World and the horizon of the entities in which we calmly and continuously thought we lived, without anxieties, without reservations, without any further reappearance (as Peirce would have put it) of curious facts that cannot be ascribed to known laws. In this case the experience of art is not something

radically different from the experience of talking about Something, in philosophy, in science, in everyday discourse."

[63] Carl G. Jung & M. L. von Franz (ed.), *Man and His Symbols*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company Inc, 1964. p. 213.

[64] See basic description of the Navajo healing mandalas. http://www.navajo-coop.org/sandpaintings.htm (accessed March 23, 2004).

[65] Jürgen Habermas, *The Liberating Power of Symbols: Philosophical Essays,* (trans. Peter Dews, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001) In "The Liberating Power of Symbols: Ernst Cassirer's Humanistic Legacy and the Warburg Library," p. 3.

[66] His new theories are presented in two volume books: Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, (trans. Thomas McCarthy, Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason,* (transl. Thomas McCarthy, Beacon Press: Boston, 1985).

[67] Rudolf J. Siebert, *The Critical Theory of Religion: The Frankfurt School,* (Lanham, Maryland and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2001), p. 268. "Habermas reconstructed the category of reification (619). Habermas's reconstructed historical materialism aims at a new form of the negation of reification in terms of a theory of communicative praxis and of a universal communicative ethics, possibly one without redemption."

[68] Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms,* (transl. William Rehg, Cambridge, Massachusetts:The MIT Press, 2001), pp. 80-81.

[69] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking,* (trans. William Mark Hohengarten, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989), p. 188 "The projection of the unlimited communication community is backed up by the structure of language itself. Just at the 'I' of the 'I think' occupies a key role for the philosophy of the subject, so the first person singular also occupies a key role in the successor to this philosophy, communication theory."

[70] James Thrower, *Religion: The Classical Theories*, (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1999), pp. 99-108 in chapter "Religion as Primitive Error."

[71] Lucien Lévi-Bruhl, *How Natives Think*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1926).

[72] The technological development, Habermas thinks, is the result of scientific reasoning and the final stage of this reasoning is in the "straight-line instrumentalism," which is the opposite development to the communicative praxis, which main power is in emancipation of a person, rather than making of a person means for other purposes. See, J. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests,* trans. Jeremy Shapiro, Boston: Beacon Press, 1970, pp. 309-310.

[73] Habermas explains Judaism and Christianity as religions of mastery of the world, which main dimension of rationalization is ethical. For Habermas, the Western civilization is also influenced by the cognitive rationality of the Greek philosophy, which is the main source of the scientific development in the

West. All of these concepts are derived in Habermas' philosophy from Max Weber and his interpretation of the world religions. See: J. Habermas, *The Communicative Action*, vol. 3, trans. Thomas McCarthy, Boston: Beacon Press, 1987, pp. 201-215. The concept of the faith as the personal and private concept is an idea derived from Horkheimer who defines faith as the transcendental concept. See: ibidem, pp. 347-349.

[74] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1 Translation: Thomas McCarthy, Boston: Beacon Press, 1987., see "max Weber's Theory of Rationalization pp. 102-243.

[75] Ibidem, p. 202

[76] ibidem., pp. 203-207

[77] ibidem. pp.204-211.

[78] Ibidem., pp. 208-211

[79] ibidem., p. 209, "This suggests that the rationalization potential of these traditions might have been studied first of all from the standpoint of cognitive and not of ethical rationalization --- all the more so, as Greek philosophy, which shares with the cosmological ethic of the Chinese a world-affirming attitude, also advanced the rationalization of worldviews more in the direction of theoreticizaiton."

[80] ibidem., p. 209.

[81] Ibidem., p. 209.

[82] Tong Shijung, *The Dialectis of Modernization: Haberams and the Chinese Discourse of Modernization*, Sydney: Wild Peony, The University of Sydney, East Asian Series No. 13, 2002, p. 168.

[83] P. Berger, Hsin-Huan, M. Hsiao (ed.), *In Search of an East Asian Development Model*, New Brunswick (USA) & Oxford (UK), New Jersey: Transaction books, 1988.

[84] Rudolf J. Siebert developed the critical theory of religion summarizing points of the greatest disputes of the Frankfurt School. His critical theory of religion tries to mediate the views of the first generation of the Frankfurt School (Horkheimer, Adorno) and the third generation followers such as J. Habermas. Siebert defines critical theory of religion in the following way: "It is my thesis that more is to be rescued from the traditional religious-metaphysical and mystical systems of interpretation and orientation than the practical communicative rationality underlying them and a corresponding universal communicative ethics, expressed, e.g., in the golden rule, intrinsic to all presently alive world religions." Rudolf J. Siebert, *The Critical Theory of Religion: The Frankfurt School*, Lanham, Maryland and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2001, p. xi.

[85] http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org, 06/04/2006 Rudolf J. Siebert, *The Critical Theory of Religion*, pp. 1 &8. see parts "Causes" and "Inverse Theology."

[86] Jürgen Habermas, *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics*, (trans. Ciaran P. Cronin, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press, 1993), p. 134. Habermas comments on Horkehimer praises that the dark writers of the bourgeoisie were impossible to derive from reason any fundamental argument against murder in the following way: "I have to admit that this remark

irritates me now no less than it did almost four decades ago when I first read it. I have never been altogether convinced of the cogency of the skepticism concerning reason underlying Horkheimer's ambivalence toward religion. The idea that it is vain to strive for unconditional meaning without God betrays not just a metaphysical need; the remark is itself and instance of the metaphysics that not only philosophers but even theologians themselves must today get along without." In the essay "To Seek to Salvage an Unconditional meaning Without God is a Futile Undertaking: Reflections on a Remark of Max Horkheimer,"

[87] Jürgen Habermas, *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics,* (trans. Ciaran P. Cronin, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press 1993), p. 47. Habermas explains the transformation of the religious into the secular in the following way: "In traditional societies, moral norms are indeed so closely bound up with religious worldviews and shared forms of life that individuals learn what it means to enjoy the status of membership in a community thus founded through identification with the contents of this established concrete ethical life. But in modern societies, moral norms must detach themselves from the concrete contents of the plurality of attitudes toward life that now manifest themselves; they are grounded solely in an abstract social identity that is henceforth circumscribed only buy the status of membership in some society, not in this particular society. This explains the two salient features of a secularized morality that has transcended the context of an overarching social ethos. A morality that rests only on the normative content of universal conditions of coexistence in a society (founded on mutual respect for persons) in general must be universalistic and egalitarian in respect of the validity and sphere of application of these norms; at the same time, it is formal and empty in the content of its norms."

[88] ." J. Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms,* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001), pp. 366-367: "What is mean by "civil society" today, in contrast to its usage in the Marxist tradition, no longer includes the economy as constituted by private law and steered through markets in labor, capital, and commodities. Rather, its institutional core comprises those nongovernmental and non-economic connections and voluntary associations that anchor the communication structures of the public sphere in the society component of the lifeworld. Civil society is composed of those more or less spontaneously emergent associations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in the private life spheres, distill and transmit such reactions in amplified from to the public sphere (...) the most conspicuous element of a public sphere dominated by mass media and large agencies, observed by market and opinion research, and inundated by the public relations work, propaganda, and advertising of political parties and groups." J. Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms,* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001.

[89] Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals,* (trans. Hames W. Elingotn, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), p. 59.

[90] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality,* (ed. Eduardo Mendieta, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002), pp. 67-95.

[91] E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande,* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1937) pp. 195-195: "There is no incentive to agnosticism. All their beliefs hang together, and were a Zande to give up faith in witch-dcotorhood, he would have to surrender equally his faith in witchcraft and oracles (...) In this web of belief, every strand depends upon every other strand, and a Zande cannot get out of its meshes because it is the only world he knows. The web is not an external structure in which he is enclosed. It is the texture of his thought and he cannot think that his thought is wrong." (. . .) "Nevertheless, (Zande) beliefs are not absolutely set but are variable and fluctuating to allow for different situations and to permit empirical observations and even doubts."

[92] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, (trans. William Mark Hohengarten Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The MIT Press, 1992).

[93] Ed. S. Marc Cohen, Patricia Curd, and C.D.C. Reeve, *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle*, pp. 42-47.

[94] "We are free and tolerant in our private lives; but in public affairs we keep to the law. This is because it commands our deep respect. " (......) "We do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all......" (

[95] Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, 2d ed., (trans. G.M.A. Grube: Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. 1975). "A man who really fights for justice must lead a private, not a public, life if he is to survive for even a short time. I shall give you great proofs of this, not words but what you esteem, deeds. Listen to what happened to me, that you may know that I will not yield to any man contrary to what is right, for fear of death, even if I should die at once for not yielding. (....) I have never held any other office in the city, but I served as a member of the Council, and our tribe Antiochis was presiding at the time when you wanted to try as a body the ten generals who had failed to pick up the survivors of the naval battle. This was illegal, as you all recognized later. I was the only member of the presiding committee to oppose your doing something contrary to the laws, and I voted against it." Here Socrates refers to the battle of Arginusae (south of Lesbos) in 406 B.C.E. the last Athenian victory of the war. The Athenian generals couldn't rescue their survivors because of the terrible storm. All of these generals are than tried I Athens and sentenced to death by the assembly. They were tried as a group, not as individuals, and to this Socrates objected it. Six generals who were in Athens were executed.

[96] G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy: Greek Philosophy to Plato, Vol. 1*, (University of Nebraska Press, Omaha, USA, 1995), pp. 384-448.

[97] W.K.C. Guthrie, *Socrates* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 4-9.

[98] John McManners: "Enlightenment: Secular and Christian: 1600 – 1800," in John McManners: *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 267: "But it is reasonable to say that a Christian civilization had arisen ahead of all possible processes of individual conversion, and in its shelter, human individuality and freedom had been evolving. Religion was on its way to becoming a matter of intense personal decision: if there was a single message and driving force behind Reformation and Counter-Reformation, it was this. Secularization was the inevitable counterpart, the opposite side of the coin, the reaction of human nature to a demand almost too intense to bear. The idea of Christianity as some huge galleon blown on the rocks then pounded by the seas and plundered by coastal predators in an age of reason and materialism is mistaken. Christianity was itself evolving in ethos and doctrine, finding new emphases, new inspirations, appealing in new ways to new classes of people, even as the world changed around it—and, indeed, contributing to and forcing on that change. European life was being secularized; religion was becoming personalized, individualized: the two things went together, and were interdependent."

[99] Colin Morris: "Christian Civilization: 1050 – 1400" in John McManners: *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 196. "The ordinary affairs of men could only be upheld by the intervention of God: government depended on the king anointed in his name, justice was guaranteed by the ordeals which recorded a divine decision, and healing was bestowed by the power of the saints and the charms of healers. It was the task of monks and priests to pray, and of laymen to sustain them by their alms."

[100] Patrick Collinson, "The Late Medieval Church and its Reformation: 1400 – 1600" in John McManners: *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 245: "In France, England, and the Netherlands, hundreds of common people women as well as men, were content to be burnt alive for their newly acquired Protestant beliefs. The Reformation had a cast of thousands. It was made in society, not imposed upon it."

[101] Adrian Hastings (ed.), *A World History of Christianity*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000). "In some parts of Europe up to 10 per cent of the population were members of the institutional Church; collectively the Church was Europe's biggest landowner. The clergy played a vital role in the lives of all late medieval communities, as dispensers of sacraments, managers of hospitals and schools and providers of vital services such as writing and literacy. No European rulers could ignore the Church in their political calculations: the Pope was a major political force in his won right and a constant fixture in the strategic alliances of the day. No one could have anticipated that the Church was about to be faced by a challenge which would shake it to its foundations, and leave it, two centuries later, permanently divided."

[102] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, (trans. Frederick G. Lawrence, The MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2000), p. 7. "A present that understands itself from the horizon of the modern age as the actuality of the most recent period has to recapitulate the break brought about with the past as a *continuous renewal*. The dynamic concepts that either emerged together with the expression "modern age" or "new age" in the eighteen century or acquired then a new meaning that remains valid down to our day are adapted to this – words such as revolution, progress, emancipation, development, crisis, and *Zeitgeist*."

[103] In his *The Philosophy of History*, (trans. J. Sabree, New York: Dover Publications, 1956), pp. 3-4, G.W.F. Hegel says that "Passion is regarded as a thing of sinister aspect, as more or less immoral. Man is required to have no passions. Passion, it is true is not quite the suitable word for what I wish to express. I mean here nothing more than the human activity as resulting from private interests—special, or if you will, self-seeking designs—with this qualification, that the whole energy of will and characters is devoted to their attainment; that other interests (which would in themselves constitute attractive aims) or rather all things else, are sacrificed to them." It seems that Hegel is not quit satisfied with the word "passion," in his text, so he offers an explanation in what way the "passion" is rather the concept of the human motivational side of nature.

[104] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

[105] G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 1., (trans, E.S. Haldane, Lincoln, Nebraska & London, UK: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), pp. 50-51.

[106] Friedriech Nietzsche, *The Will To Power* in *The Complete Works of Nietzsche*, O. Levy, ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1924), pp. 200 -203.

[107] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, (trans. Frederick G. Lawrence, : Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000), p. 7: "Modernity can and will no longer borrow the criteria by which it takes its orientation from the models supplied by another epoch: *it has to create its normativity out of itself.* Modernity sees itself cast back upon itself without any possibility of escape. This explains the sensitiveness of its self-understanding, the dynamism of the attempt, carried forward incessantly down to our time, to "pin itself down."

[108] J. Habermas, *Des gespaltene Western*, Frankfurt/Main, Suhrkamp, 2004.

[109] Giovanna Borradori, ed., *Philosophy in a Time of Terror,* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003) dialog with J. Habermas and J. Derrida. "... I consider Bush's decision to call for a "war against terrorism" a serious mistake, both normatively and pragmatically. Normatively, he is elevating these criminals to the status of war enemies; and pragmatically one cannot lead a war against a 'network' if the term 'war' is to retain any definite meaning."

[110] This work was presented as the lecture at an international conference on "Philosophy and Religion" at Poland's Lodz University.

[111] A good review of the classical theory of religion is given in book by James Trower, *Religion: The Classical Theories,* Georgetown University Press: Washington, D.C. 1999.

[112] Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christinatiy,* (trans. George Eliot, New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. 13: "All divine attributes, all the attributes which make God God, are attributes of the species – attributes with in the individual are limited, but the limits of which are abolished in the essence of the species." p. 33 "Religion is disuniting of man from himself; he sets God before him as the antithesis of himself. God is not what man is – man is not what God is. God is the infinite, man the finite being; God is prefect, man imperfect; God eternal, man temporal; it is the absolutely positive, the sum of all realities; man is the absolutely negative, comprehending all negations." p.184. "We have reduced the superhuman, supernatural nature of God to the elements of human nature and its fundamental elements. Our process of analysis has brought us again to the position with which we set out. The beginning, middle and end of religion is MAN."

[113] One of the best Marx's analysis of the relationship between the state and religion is given in his *On the Jewish Question* (1843) where he made a famous critical analysis of the modern legislation in different European and American Constitutions, stressing that religious freedom means that religion is becoming a private matter, and that further secularization processes will result in abolition of any religion of the state. This text is dedicated to the Jewish scholar and Hegelian, Bruno Bauer, who struggled for the Jewish emancipation rights in a modern German state. See: Karl Marx, *Early Writings,* (translation: Rodney Livingstone & Gregor Benton), Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, London, 1992., pp. 211-243.

[114] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* in *Early Writings,* (trans. Rodney Livingstone & Gregor Benton, London: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1992), p. 244: "The foundation of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man. Religion is indeed the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself or has already lost himself again. But man is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Mans is the world of man, state society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an inverted consciousness of the world, because they are an inverted world."

[115] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* in *Early Writings,* (translation: Rodney Livingstone & Gregor Benton), Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, London, 1992. pp. 244 – 145: "Religious suffering is at the same time the expression of real suffering and the protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." (. . .) "Thus the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law, and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics."

[116] Cliford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in *Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays,* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. 90: "Religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of

existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic."

[117] Max Horkheimer & Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, (trans. John Cumming, New York: Continuum, 1986) p. 3: "In the most general sense of progressive thought, the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty."

[118] One of the most compelling interpretations on Hegel's philosophy of religion is given by Rudolf J. Siebert, *The Critical Theory of Religion: The Frankfurt School,* (Lanham, Maryland, and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2001). See "Absolute Presence", pp. 110 - 115.

[119] "When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.— We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The original text of the *Declaration of the Independence* was taken from the book *Five Centuries in America*. Donald F. Drummond, Dorothy M. Fraser, ed., (New York, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Dallas, Millbrae: American book Company, 1964).

[120] Mark A. Noll, *The Work We Have to Do: A History of Protestants in America*, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), See: "Protestants in Colonial America, 1607-1789" pp. 15-30.

[121] Catherine L. Albanese, *America Religions and Religion*, 3rd edition, (Belmont, CA, International Edition: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999), See: "The Reformation in the English Colonies," pp. 109-119.

[122] Ibid., p. 123.

[123] Ibid., pp.123-124: "Deism was carried through the colonies within the Freemasonic lodges. Indeed, as brother Masons, deists played a key role in the political process that brought the new nation into being. (....) Enshrined in the Freemasonic lodges, deism existed cordially beside Protestant Christianity and by so doing mobbed Protestant Masonic brothers in liberal direction."

[124] Ben Klassen in http://www.rahowa.com/ (accessed May 5, 2005).

[125] Charles S. Peirce was raised as an Unitarian, and he accepted the idea that the universe/nature is manifestation of God. In 1903 lecture he wrote: "The universe is a book written for man's reading." (CP 5. 119). Also, Peirce understood religion as a "deep mystery expressed," and that mystery for him meant "a religion of science." (CP 6 432-433)

[126] "Man's highest developments are social; and religion, thought it begins in a seminal, individual inspiration, only comes to full flower in a great church coextensive with a civilization. This is true of every religion, but supereminently so of the religion of love." Charles S. Peirce, CP 6. 433.

[127] Francis Schüssler Fiorenza & Don S. Browing ed., *Habermas, Modernity, and Public Theology*, (New York: Crossroad, 1992). See Habermas' text "Transcendence from Within, Transcendence in this World," pp. 226 – 2541.

[128] Ibid. p. 233. "This problematization unavoidably occurs when theontic, normative, and expressive aspects of validity, which must reamin fused together in the conception of the creator and redeemer God, of theodicy, and of the event of salvation, are separated analytically from one another."

[129] Jüregen Habermas, Eduardo Mendieta (ed.): *Religion and Rationality: Essays on Reason, God, and Modernity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002. See the interview "A Conversation about God and the World."

[130] Ibid. See the text *To Seek to Salvage an Unconditional Meaning Without God is a Futile Undertaking: Reflections on a Remark of Max Horheimer, pp.* 95-109.

[131] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, (trans, Joseph Ward Swain, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), pp. 415-419. The definition of religion proposed by E. Durkehim is given as follows: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them. (. . .) The idea of religion is inseparable from that of the Church, it makes it clear that religion should be an eminently collective thing."

[132] J. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1, trans. Thomas McCarthy, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984). See Chapter 1, part II "Some Characteristics of the Mythical and the Modern Ways of Understanding the World," the unit on "Some Characteristics of the Mythical and the Modern Ways of Understanding World," pp. 43-77.

[133] Genesis 1: 28, "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, cattle, and all the animals that crawl on the earth."

[134] Chief Seattle Reply to U.S. Government was translated by Henry A. Smith and this speech was delivered in 1853 in a village that became Seattle, Washington. Chief Seattle was chief and in 1854 Governor Isaac Stevens, Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Washington territories arranged with the Indians that 2 million acres of Indian territory becomes the property of the US Government.

[135] James Sterba, *Three Challenges to Ethics: Environmentalism, Feminism, and Multiculturalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 82: "Is there, then, something that we in Western culture can learn from these non-Western cultures? At the very least, an appreciation for these cultures should lead us to consider whether we have legitimate grounds for failing to constrain our own interests for the sake of nonhuman nature. In Western culture, people tend to think of themselves as radically separate from and superior to non-human nature, so as to allow for domination over it."

[136] Ibid. p. 87

[137] For these population numbers James Sterba used sources given in David Stannard, *American Holocaust*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) and Lenore Stiffarm with Phil Lane Jr., "The Demography of Native North America," in *The State of Native America*, ed., Annette Jaimes, (Boston: South End Press, 1992).

[138] Umberto Eco, *Kant and the Platypus*, (trans. Alastair McEwen, New York, San Diego, London: Harcourt brace & Company, 2000), p. 3.

[139] Ibid., p. 15.

[140] Ibid., p. 10-15.

[141] Ibid., p. 13

[142] Ibid., p. 14

[143] Yuri M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000). See Umberto Eco's introduction pp. vii – xiii.

[144] http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/sem-gloss.html#U (accessed June 2, 2006). See Jakob von Uexküll and Thomas A. Sebeok.

[145] Edna Andrews, *Conversations with Lotman: Cultural Semiotics in Language, Literature, and Cognition,* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2003), pp. 14, 15.

[146] Yuri Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: a Semiotic Theory of Culture,* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), p. xi.

[147] "Hence, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, can be conceived not to exist, it is not that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. But this is an irreconcilable contradiction." S.N. Deane (ed. and translator), La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1962. *Proslogium* 3.

[148] "We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that they achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God." Anton C. Pegis, *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas,* (London: Random House, Inc, 1957), p.67.

[149] [149] Yuri Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000). See Introduction, p. xii.

[150] Gustav René Hocke, *Die welt als Labyrinth: Manier und Manie in der europäischen Kunst Von 1520 bis 1650 und in der Gegenwart* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Tschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1977).

[151] Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1967).

[152] Gustav René Hocke, *Die welt als Labyrinth: Manier and Manie in der europäischen Kunst Von 1520 bis 1650 und in der Gegenwart* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Tschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1977), p. 9.

[153] Umberto Eco (ed.), *History of Beauty* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2004), p. 220: "By apparently imitating the models of Classical Beauty, the Mannerists dissolved its rules. Classical Beauty is perceived as empty, soulless."

[154] Yuri Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000)., p. 191-202.

[155] Ibid. p. 134: "The avant-garde started life as a "rebellious fringe", then It became a phenomenon of the centre, dictating its laws to the period and trying to impose its colours on the whole semiosphere, and then, when it in fact had become set in its ways, it became the object of intense theorizing on the metacultural level."

[156] Ibid., p. 13 "There is an amazing similarity, even between civilizations which have no contact with each other, in the expressions they use to describe the world beyond the boundary. The eleventh-century Kievan chronicler-monk, describing the life of other eastern Slav tribes who were still pagan, wrote: 'The Drevlyans lived like animals, like cattle; they killed each other, ate unclean foods, had no marriage, but abducted girls at the waterside. While the Radimichi, Vyatichi, and northern tribes shared the same custom: they lived in the forest like wild beasts, ate unclean food and used foul language in front of fathers and female relatives, and they had no marriages, but held games between villages and gathered at these games for dancing and all kinds of devilish songs.'

[157] Ibid., pp. 131-134

[158] David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the New World* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press 1992).

[159] *Wisdom and Freedom* produced by World Newsstand Copyright © 1999. "The Annihilation of Native Americans: Media Weapon", http://www.wealth4freedom.com/truth/1/indian4.htm (accessed April 4, 2005).

[160] Ibid., pp. 2-3 (accessed April 4, 2005).

[161] Yuri Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), pp. 36-38,

[162] Joel W. Martin, *The Land Looks After Us: A History of Native American Religion* ,(Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 68-69

[163] The whole story about Catharine Brown was thoroughly presented in Joel W. Martin's book *The Land Looks After Us: A History of Native American Religion,* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). See in the chapter *Native and Christian,* pp. 68-76.

[164] Joel W. Martin, *The Land Looks After Us: A History of Native American Religion,* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York, 2001), pp. 80-81.

[165] Yuri Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), pp.136-137,

[166] Joel W. Martin, *The Land Looks After Us: A History of Native American Religion,* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 63.

[167] Sources given for Sterba's research are substantiated from: Sharon O'Brien, *American Tribal Governments* (Norman: Unviersity of Iklahoma Press, 1989), David Stannard, *American Holocaust* (New York: Oxford Unviersity Press, 1992), and Lenore Stiffarm with Phil Lane Jr., "The Demography of Native North America," in *The State of Native America,* ed. , Annette Jaimes, (Boston: south End Press, 1992).

[168] Yuri Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), p. 179.

[169] Ibid., pp. 171-204.

[170] Ibid., pp. 134-135.

[171] Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, (New Yrok: Robert Howard Russell, Copyright, 1900), Illustrated edition by the brothers Louis and Frederick Rhead.

[172] Edna Andrews, *Conversations with Lotman*, (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2003), pp. 42-44.

[173] Ibid., p. 33.

[174] Umberto Eco, *Foucalut's Pendulum*, (New York: Ballantine Book, 1989), p. 511. Eco's quotation used from Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, (London: Rutledge, 1969), iv, p. 123.

[175] M. Magre, *Magicians, Seers, and Mystics*, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co, 1932), pp. 111-127.

[176] David Hicks, *Ritual and Belief*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2000) .See chapter 11, pp. 444 – 478, "Agents of Change."

[177] Ibid., see the text by Peter Worsley: "Revitalization Movements," pp. 455 –468.

[178] Jonathan Z. Smith, William Scott Green, ed., *The Harper Collins Dictionary of Religion*, (San Francisco: Harper, 1989). Umbanda: the Brazilian new religion developed by native Brazilian African spirits and Christian traditions, led by ritual priestesses and priests who belief in the possession of the disembodied spirits in order to enhance personal spiritual developments.

[179] Aristotle, *Poetics*, (trans. S.H. Butcher, Englewood, CO: Hyper Text Presentation, Procyon Publishing, 1995), chapter IX, p. 6 "It is, moreover evident from what has been said, that it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen—what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The world of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with meter no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry (*poiesis*), therefore, is mach more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular.".

[180] U. Eco, *The Role of the Reader*, (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1984), p. 163. "We have, therefore, seen that (i) "open" works, insofar as they are *in movement*, are characterized by the invitation to *make the work* together with the author and that (ii) on a wider level (as a sub*genus* in the *species* "work in movement") there exist works which, tough organically completed, are "open" to a continuous generation of internal relations with the addressee must uncover and select in his act of perceiving the totality of incoming stimuli. (iii) *Every* work of art, even though it is produced by following and explicit or implicit poetics of necessity, is effectively open to a virtually unlimited range of possible readings, each of which causes the work to acquire new vitality in terms of one particular taste, or perspective or personal *performance*."

[181] The text here is written in this manner in U.Eco's novel, where the author tried to imitate how would one write in original Frascheta language. This text is also the first writing of Baudolino, which still didn't learn how to properly write.

[182] ." Catherine L. Albanese, *America Religions and religion*, (Wadsworth Publishing Company: International, US, 1999), "events at Salem Village (later Danvers), in the Massachusetts Bay colony began with Betty Parris, daughter of the town minister, and her cousin Abigail Williams. The two girls, one nine and the other eleven years old, spent many hours with Tituba, a slave from the West Indies, who apparently taught the children something of the magical traditions she had learned. The magic lore attracted other girls in the village, many of them teenagers. Then, when Betty parries and subsequently Abigail Williams fell into trances, creaming, crying, barking like dogs, and moving on all fours, the diagnosis of witchcraft was pronounced. Neither doctors nor ministers could help, and so events moved to the local courthouse. In a gradual series of escalations, more and more witches were named by the afflicted girls. There was Tituba and then Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne. Before the trials ended, nineteen witches had been hanged, and one, a man, had been pressed to death."

[183] Dr. Ljudevit Rupčić, *Gospina Ukazanja u Medjugorju*, Samobor: Tisak A.G. Matoš, 1983.