

THEORY, RELIGION, IDEOLOGY

Kjell Magnusson

Theoretical Perspectives in Yugoslav Sociology of Religion

Edited by Aleksandra Pavićević

НАУКА, РЕЛИГИЈА, ИДЕОЛОГИЈА

Шел Магнусон

Теоријске перспективе југословенске социологије религије

Приредила: Александра Павићевић

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Author's Preface (to the English Edition)

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, I spent several years in various parts of Yugoslavia studying language, culture and society. Having finished my education in Slavic Philology, Comparative Religion, and Sociology at Uppsala University, in the mid-1970s I was preparing a doctoral thesis on the process of secularization in Yugoslav society, based on empirical research and theoretical discussions within a new Marxist sociology of religion. The plan was to defend the thesis in 1976 or 1977, but due to illness, the project was abandoned.

Instead, in 1986, I received my doctorate in sociology, dealing with Yugoslav immigration to Sweden. At the same time, I prepared a treatise that would have been part of the original thesis: *Theoretical Perspectives in Yugoslav Sociology of Religion*. This is the text that is now being published in its original English version.

It should be noted that this is not a comprehensive survey of theoretical currents in Yugoslav sociology of religion. I am dealing with the first generation of sociologists of religion in the 1960s and early 1970s, following their work until the 1980s. Therefore, some scholars who played an important role in the new sociology of religion have been omitted, as have authors outside the Marxist tradition.

The aim of the study is to show how sociology of religion in Yugoslavia, starting from a Marxist-Leninist perspective of the Soviet type, developed in different directions. The dominant tendency in empirical research and theoretical discourse was the understanding of religion as an expression of alienation. This was a consequence of currents within Yugoslav philosophy and sociology, related to political change. Also, in the new social climate, party and government officials needed reliable information on religious matters, similar to the rationale behind church sociology in Western Europe.

Certain shortcomings of the new sociology of religion, notably a lack of cognitive perspective and appreciation of the social mechanisms which maintain religion, led to contradictory interpretations of empirical data. This dilemma may be encountered in the otherwise

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

interesting and non-dogmatic positions of scholars like Esad Ćimić, Štefica Bahtijarević or Srđan Vrcan.

A similar problem was faced by adherents to the second perspective, also primarily philosophical, although influenced by existentialist views on the human condition. This approach was advocated by Branko Bošnjak, Spomenka Hribar and Tine Hribar.

An original alternative was developed by the Ljubljana sociologist Marko Kerševan. His aim was to remain within a Marxist framework, but to assimilate classical phenomenology of religion, as well as sociology and social psychology influenced by interactionist and phenomenological theories. The goal was to understand the unique character of religion, that is, to comprehend a specific experience of reality, which cannot be reduced to "false consciousness" or existential distress. Kerševan was able to show that a Marxist view of religion, based on Althusser's understanding of praxis, may be compatible with a non-Marxist study of religion. Relevant parts of this perspective were adopted by Zdenko Roter, in his research on relations between state and church.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the scholars mentioned in the text. Kindly, and with interest, they received a young doctoral student from a distant country and generously shared their knowledge and experience. In addition, I am particularly indebted to Dr. Aleksandra Pavićević, who, besides translating my text to Serbian, wrote an accompanying essay. Finally, I wish to convey my sincere thanks to the Ethnographic Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, for publishing the book in both Serbian and English.

Kjell Magnusson
Uppsala, January 20th, 2025

In lieu of a Preface:*

Theory, Religion, Ideology.¹

Contributions to a Critical History of *our*

Sociology of Religion.² Part I

Beginning of the Journey

The year is 2011. Late autumn. As usual, I start my workday by checking the e-mail. Once again, a letter has arrived from an unknown address and sender. I have already deleted such a message several times, thinking it must be “spam”. However, this time I open it. I find an invitation to serve as Faculty Opponent of a doctoral thesis – *The Shadows of the Past: A Study of Life-World and Identity of Serbian Youth after the Milošević Regime* – written by anthropologist Jelena Spasenić at Uppsala University (Sweden). Based on empirical research conducted in Serbia, and an extraordinary integration of

¹*This book is the result of work in the Institute of Ethnography SASA, which is financed by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia, and based on the Agreement on the Realisation and Financing of Scientific Research Work of a Scientific Research Organisation in 2025 number: 451-03-136/2025-03/ 200173, од 04.02.2025

Magnusson thesis was originally written in English. I translated it in Serbian and wrote accompanying essay. The title “Theory, Religion, Ideology” was its point of departure. It suggests an interpretative frame in which the study by Kjell Magnusson, based on research undertaken in the 1970s, may be explored today. A literal translation of Serbian version *Наука, религија, идеологија* would be *Science, Religion, Ideology*. However, this may be misleading, since “science” in English usually refers to the natural sciences. That is why Kjell Magnusson who translated this preface into English opted for *theory* instead of *science*.

² The term “our” sociology of religion refers to the fact that the reader of the text will encounter authors who belong to the Yugoslav history of sociology of religion, but also to the history of the discipline in the former federal republics. It is “our” in the sense that the tradition as such is reflected in contemporary sociology of religion in the South Slav Region. How else should we “locate”, for example, Esad Ćimić or Đuro Šušnjić, who pursued their academic careers in several cities and universities in former Yugoslavia, having a lasting impact on the whole of Yugoslav sociology of religion.

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anthropological, psychological, sociological and cultural theories, Jelena discusses identity, politics, nationalism, religion, and values of young people (Spasenić 2011). I was recommended for the role of opponent by a text about the death and funeral of Slobodan Milošević. Its focus was an anthropological and political analysis of religious patterns appearing at funerals of public figures in Yugoslavia and Serbia during the last decades of the 20th and the first decade of the 21st century, regardless of their a/anti/religious orientation and beliefs. Different ideologies activated prototypical patterns of religious concepts, using them for a postmortem promotion of the ideas of deceased political leaders (Pavićević 2008). Religion is, thus, a symbolic language employed by rituals – whether religious or secular.

During my stay at Uppsala University, I also met Kjell Magnusson, who had wholeheartedly assisted Jelena Spasenić while working on her thesis. Kjell has an excellent knowledge of the languages of former Yugoslavia and is an expert on geopolitical events and turmoil in the region. After my return to Belgrade, we continued to maintain contact, exchanging thoughts, texts, poetry and music. In that correspondence, I received Kjell's manuscript "Theoretical Perspectives in Yugoslav Sociology of Religion", originally planned to be part of a dissertation in East European Studies. In my judgement, it is beyond doubt a contribution not only to the study of sociology of religion in former Yugoslavia, but also a testimony to a particular time and a specific relationship between scholarship and socio-historical and political reality.

The study was the result of the research project "Religion, Socialism and Secularization. The Study of Religion and the Sociology of Religion in Post-War Yugoslavia", supported by the Bank of Sweden's Tercentenary Foundation. It was preceded by Magnusson's extensive work, published in Swedish: *The Role of Religion in Yugoslav Society*, which provided information on relations between state and religion, and a new sociology of religion, as well as empirical research on religiosity in Yugoslavia (Magnusson 1973). As Magnusson notes, the revival of sociology in Yugoslavia, was mirrored by similar developments in Eastern Europe. This was a

reliable indicator that serious change was taking place in this part of the world, not only concerning religion, but in society at large, which obviously aroused the interest of foreign researchers and institutions

The particular character of Yugoslav socialism shaped the processes of atheization and secularization in a distinct manner, and influenced subsequent developments related to the de-secularization and revitalization of religion and religious institutions in the early 1990s.

Development of the Sociology of Religion vs. Society, Culture, Religion, Politics

Much has already been written in the scholarly literature about the status of religion and religious communities in Yugoslavia during socialism (Radić 2002). There is a large body of historiographical and anthropological studies, as well as empirical research in sociology, which testifies, on the one hand, to processes of atheization and secularization, and on the other, to the tenacity of religious beliefs, illustrating the variability and adaptability of their forms and expressions. It is also true that in Yugoslavia, for the most part, there were no violent or direct efforts to make people atheists, as was the case in other socialist countries, but attempts were made to limit the influence of religious worldviews through the legal system, and, above all, cultural and educational policies. The legal and economic position of churches and religious communities, especially in traditionally Orthodox environments, was unresolved for years, and the state implemented a gradual but thorough secularization of society through a whole set of interventions: from those linked to the transformation of traditional forms of family and association, through strict control of the content of socialization and educational processes, to the usurpation and alteration of symbolic capital related to the identity of community and individuals (e.g. interventions in the holiday calendar, etc.). It should be emphasized, however, that the target of these strategies was not popular piety, but Christianity, or rather the church (here I am thinking primarily of the Serbian

Orthodox and Roman Catholic Church), since its historical significance and social influence were considered a danger on the path to achieving the higher goals of socialist society. This contributed to the preservation of traditional religiosity, and the emergence of a type of believers Dragoljub B. Đorđević calls "believers of the four rites". It was precisely this kind of religiosity, characterized by non-church affiliation and dogmatic ignorance, that was a fertile ground for the growth of nationalist sentiments in the late 1980s. In the words of Esad Ćimić: "[...] the emphasis on national consciousness in Yugoslav society is partly the result of [...] restricted freedoms in the field of religious life" (Ćimić 1969:17).

In academic literature, as well as among concerned individuals, nationalism has often, but incorrectly, been interpreted as a consequence of the revitalization of religious views. Several factors contributed to this: the absence of an interdisciplinary approach in the social sciences and humanities at the time. Rich, qualitative ethnographic results are completely absent from sociological analysis, while both sociology and anthropology are characterized by a lack of interest in theological knowledge and vice versa – theology rarely engages in dialogue with "secular" disciplines (Jukić 1981:124). As Blagoje Pantelić argues, "the Christian heritage in socialist Yugoslavia was excluded from school curricula and many post-war generations were ignorant, even on an elementary level, or were as a rule informed by ardent propaganda articles, only rarely by philosophical (i.e. Marxist) criticism of higher quality" (Pantelić 2019). I also dare to argue that interpretations of the reappearance of religion and the return to religion have long been one-sided and superficial, partly due to the lack of critical distance towards the intellectual legacy of the previous period, strongly marked by an almost dogmatic positivism and a Marxist paradigm within which religion was viewed exclusively as a socio-historical construct and, in essence, a negative phenomenon that is both the cause and reflection of unfreedom.

As Zrinščak writes, speaking about sociology of religion in Croatia, which may be applied to the entire territory of Yugoslavia: "Marxism and atheism are the real points of departure of Croatian

sociology of religion [...] the development of sociology (both theoretically and empirically) was therefore significantly linked to the promotion of a humanistic critical Marxism, and to the development of post-Marxist and other theoretical approaches, the elaboration of which enabled the development of critical and empirically oriented disciplines in the social sciences" (Zrinščak 1999: 163-164).

Magnusson points out that his research covered the development of sociology of religion from the 1960s to the 1980s, that is, authors who, in one way or another, belong to the Marxist tradition. This implies the omission of authors who, as we learn from later studies on the development of sociology of religion in Yugoslavia and in some of its republics, were very important for the development of the discipline. Thus, in Magnusson's text, Yugoslav sociology of religion is presented through the work and creativity of the first generation of Marxist sociologists of religion: Esad Ćimić, Srđan Vrcan, Štefica Bahtijarević, Branko Bošnjak, Spomenka and Tine Hribar, Zdenko Roter and Marko Kerševan. Siniša Zrinščak, in his *Sociology of Religion*, which focuses on the Croatian experience, also includes some of the aforementioned authors: Štefica Bahtijarević, Esad Ćimić, Srđan Vrcan, but he also places Nikola Dugandžija, Jakov Jukić, Ljudevit Pljačko, Nikola Skledar and Đuro Šušnjić alongside them. Dragoljub B. Đorđević also contributes to this regional history of the discipline with his book *Role Models and Friends*, where he again presents Štefica Bahtijarević, Srđan Vrcan, Marko Kerševan, Esad Ćimić, Nikola Dugandžija, Jakov Jukić, Nikola Skledar, Đuro Šušnjić, but also Sergej Flere and Ivan Cvitković (Đorđević 2008).

The development of sociology of religion in Yugoslavia, the first empirical research, the themes and theories, and the teaching of the subject at universities, was discussed in 1994 by Sergej Flere in the journal *Social Compass*. He also emphasizes that the discipline was based on the Marxist paradigm, which later spread in several directions (Đorđević 2008).

However, it is not our intention to retell these studies. We only want to briefly point out the connection between sociology of religion, i.e. its developmental phases, and the historical-social-political

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context and cultural climate.

According to Srđan Vrcan it is characteristic that during the first decade after the Second World War, a pronounced stagnation of sociological interest in religion occurred in a number of countries (Vrcan 1986:5). Perhaps this is logical. Who was still interested in religion after the suffering brought about by the war? Society, and therefore inevitably, sociology, turned to new values, renewal, construction and unquestionable civilizational and human progress, with the conviction that the madness of war should never be repeated. The ideological commitment of the Yugoslav leadership went a step further. Religion and the church were seen as an obstacle to social progress, which was also in line with the Enlightenment criticism of religion, woven into the intellectual heritage of the social sciences and humanities. The general secularization of European thought that occurred throughout the 19th century was fertile ground for the intellectual trends that marked the 20th century, especially its second half (Vrcan 1986:6).

Allow me to make a small, but I believe useful, digression. Since I have been engaged in the ethnology and anthropology of death for almost a decade and a half, I cannot resist looking for additional arguments explaining the secularization of culture in general. In fact, the idea of a secularization of culture implies its separation from cult, from the symbolic system in which the (*arche*) knowledge, experience and intuition of generations is summarized. This symbolic system speaks through ritual, which in turn allows community and individuals to determine their place in time and eternity. At the centre of cult (and thus culture) is death, that is, knowledge about death and instructions for its domestication. The contemporary, postmodern post-human being is largely deprived of such symbolic strategies. His goal is to prolong life indefinitely, and the strategy is to forget death. The fear of death is suppressed; and when it screams from the depths of the unconscious, destruction is inevitable - whether directed at oneself or others.

Focusing on secularization as a diagnosis related to religious worldviews, many authors, sociologists and anthropologists, have

shown that it does not imply the disappearance of religion, but rather a reduction of religious influence on everyday life, as well as on individual and collective choice; above all, a reduction of its influence on the understanding of death. The secularization of society and culture, their "liberation" from an all-pervading religious worldview, is a process that ran parallel to changing attitudes towards death. Therefore, the secularization of European intellectual thought, mentioned by Vrcan, also implied a decreasing interest in the role of religion, and later – when it was evident that God is not dead – made it difficult to critically examine the heritage of the Enlightenment, on which the views of the social and human sciences largely rest today, appearing as an implicit ideology. We believe that one of the benefits of the study by Magnusson is precisely this – to offer attentive readers and future researchers additional, knowledgeable, concise material that will be an invitation to qualitative and constructive self-reflection.

In line with the above, Magnusson writes that the first period of post-war sociology of religion in Yugoslavia was marked by a sharp criticism of Christianity and religion in general. Essentially it was a "popularization of the thoughts of Marx, Engels and Lenin, rather than an independent contribution written from a Marxist perspective", and the ultimate goal was to overcome religion. There were also open and harsh attacks on religion, and authors who advocated systematic anti-religious propaganda. At some points, it even seems that the struggle against religion was understood as a major task of the socialist state. Zdenko Roter notes that such a strong anti-religious stance is typical of states which themselves have a religious character. And this is generally well-known. However, it is alarming that scholars themselves failed to resist the ideological matrix!

Zrinščak believes that the main problem was the long-standing dominance of a political mode of thinking, that is, the fact that religion was approached exclusively as a political element – both by the state and by the academic community (Zrinščak 1999:198) In fact, scholarship was in the service of ideology, and the ideological use of empirical research was particularly questionable.

With the arrival on the intellectual scene of Marxist-oriented

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theorists of the philosophy of practice, the so-called *Praksisovci* – i.e. members of the group around the journal *Praxis* – whose goal was to restore and utilise the creative potential of Marxism and promote a critical discussion of Yugoslav socialism, religion gained somewhat more space and possibilities for interpretation. It was important not to treat religion as a political fact or ideological issue, but as a socio-historical phenomenon, with its own evolution and role in the life of communities and individuals. The greatest progress compared to previous understandings was the recognition that religion is a consequence, not a cause, of alienation, but some authors still believed that the need for religion would disappear when the full potential of the socialist social order was achieved.

This shift, according to Magnusson, was possible first of all thanks to the break with the USSR, followed by the economic and political decentralization of Yugoslavia beginning in the 1950s. In cultural life, there was a relative autonomy of literature and art (which were important sites of social criticism). The party's interest in data on fundamental social processes helped sociology to strive for autonomy and a new sociology of religion, which began to develop in the 1960s, was institutionalized. Empirical studies were carried out within research institutes, and sociology of religion was taught at institutions of higher education. However, in addition to providing creators of cultural and social policies with accurate data on the prevalence of religion in Yugoslav society, sociology also sought to influence the improvement of policies and the advancement of society as a whole. In step with this development, there was a renaissance of empirical sociology, an improvement in the relationship between state and church, and a more advanced theoretical discussion within philosophy, which was of paramount importance for the development of a new sociology of religion. Philosophers such as Andrija Krešić, Ljubomir Tadić, and Miladin Životić stress an understanding of religion as a consequence, rather than a source of alienation. The influence of sociology of religion on general social and political trends was greater in Slovenia and Croatia than in Serbia, and this also characterized the level of development of the discipline itself

(Blagojević 2019:45). In Croatia, even the draft law on religion was based on guidelines by sociologists of religion. This state of affairs may be explained by the historically greater social influence, engagement, and presence in everyday life of the Roman Catholic Church, compared to the Serbian Orthodox Church. After all, many authors, including Magnusson, have noted that the degree of secularization in traditionally Orthodox environments was higher than in Catholic areas (Đorđević 1994:9; Blagojević 1994:214).

However, due to a reappearance of political restrictions, in the early 1970s a stagnation began within the discipline. Empirical research was declining, and if conducted, it was under the supervision of republican central committees. The results were sometimes not even published, and they certainly remained outside the realm of public discourse.

In the 1980s conditions again changed significantly, and Magnusson notes: "The situation is at present radically different. The serious economic, social, and political crisis affecting Yugoslavia since the end of the 1970s - beginning of the 1980s has resulted in an unprecedented vitality of cultural life. In all areas of society the difficult problems plaguing Yugoslavia are openly discussed, and what is perhaps most interesting is the creation of a new discourse: social issues are treated in a direct and critical language. In this situation the humanistic and social sciences are again articulating the basic problems of Yugoslav society. With the support of liberal politicians sociological research and theoretical discussion is undergoing a renaissance, and the professional associations of sociologists, are, like similar institutions among writers, economists, or historians, acting as independent bodies. An important role is in this respect played by editors of publishing houses, academic journals, and mass media, who contribute to the spread of new ideas and empirical findings.

These developments have had tangible effects on sociology of religion. An increasing number of scholarly articles and reports are being published, and the issues are given a prominent place in the media. New empirical data are becoming available, and more comprehensive research projects (also on a Yugoslav level) are being

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started. There is a second generation of sociologists of religion, who during the seventies studied with the scholars discussed here and are now doing independent research and participate in the theoretical discussion. Both in Ljubljana and, perhaps especially, in Zagreb, there is a renewed interest in sociology of religion. And in Serbia the discipline is developing.”³

This was Magnusson’s last reflection on the issues he discussed in his study. Soon after, Yugoslavia disappeared in the flames of war.

In a text from 1986, Sergej Flere wrote that “irreligion may be the only common Yugoslav worldview”. Within the multinational and multi-confessional state that was the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, religion was perceived as a permanent threat to survival. Whether it was religion itself or its abuse is an important question. Certainly, the results of empirical research defied this claim. Religion survived and had multiple roles in the life of the Yugoslav population. One of them was the role of national-confessional identification, which in the early 1990s proved to be an area for serious political manipulations, with tragic and far-reaching consequences.

Who is to blame for these developments? Is there any point in looking for the culprit? The role of external interests and geopolitical strategies was great. But what was our own part? To what extent was the Yugoslav government at the time responsible for not consulting more seriously with historians, sociologists, anthropologists, theologians...? To what extent were religious communities and institutions to blame, for not proselytizing enough or in the right way among their believers? Finally –did the scholarly community bear part of the responsibility, being unaware of methodological limitations, and at the same time too focused on solving theoretical dilemmas, missing the opportunity to notice and warn of the coming danger in time? Boško Kovačević even raises the question of the effect of sociology of religion in the disintegration of Yugoslavia (Đorđević 2008:45). I

³ In a conference paper (Magnusson 1985) these developments were discussed in more detail under the heading *Secularization of Ideology*, published in the collection *Symbols of Power* (Magnusson 1987).

would not go that far. My question is simply: is it possible to be part of a cultural milieu and at the same time be aware of and critical of it? Let everyone give their own answer.

Theoretical Perspectives

The new generation of sociologists referred to by Magnuson will be the subject of the second part of this accompanying study (at the end of the book), and here we will only recapitulate the main perspectives of Yugoslav sociology of religion, representing the theoretical heritage available to that generation, when undertaking its own research.

Magnuson classifies the views of the authors he discusses into three groups. The first category includes those who advocate the theory of religion as alienation. These are Esad Ćimić, Srđan Vrcan, and Štefica Bahtijarević. They believe that religion will not be necessary in a truly socialist society. The second category is the existentialist perspective, including Spomenka and Tine Hribar, and Branko Bošnjak. For them, religion is not a mistake or a failure, but an emotional and existential need. In the third category, the structuralists, Magnusson places Marko Kerševan and Zdenko Roter, who insist that research must take into account religion as it actually exists, not theoretical constructs about the religious phenomenon. As he himself emphasized in his introductory remarks, all of these authors belonged to the Marxist philosophical tradition, attempting to rehabilitate authentic Marxist thought and to critically examine its ideological use. Vrcan emphasized that Marx did not view religion as something entirely negative. For him, it was a human product and an object of study, a social phenomenon related to the human condition in the world, a historical phenomenon that changes in relation to social changes. Religion is an expression, not a cause, of alienation, but it is also a false consciousness.

This essentially evolutionary understanding contrasts religion with modernity and has found its particular expression in the dominant theoretical paradigm of the modern sociology of religion,

namely the thesis of secularization. This theoretical model may be considered the umbrella structure of thinking about religion in our country until the last decade of the 20th century. It also includes authors who are not dealt with in Magnusson's study but were included by Zrinščak and Đorđević in their reviews of the development of sociology of religion. Vrcan notes the paradox that "in terms of content, the strongest impetus for the development of newer schools of sociology of religion and their theoretical and empirical-research dimensions came from the well-known thesis about the secularization of modern societies" (Vrcan 1986:8). Zrinščak writes that secularization was one of the key concepts in sociology of religion in the 1960s and 1970s, both in the world and in our country (Zrinščak 1999:78). The understanding of secularization was particularly marked by a functionalist approach to religion that recognized its social role but consistently emphasized religion as a phenomenon opposed to modern rationality. (Zrinščak 1999:207) "In contrast, authors who were more restrained or completely reserved towards the concept of secularization simultaneously promoted a more differentiated approach to religion, i.e. [...] the inclusion of religion in all its richness" (Zrinščak 1999:207). In addition to Đuro Šušnjić, there was also Jakov Jukić, a Croatian Catholic sociologist of religion, of phenomenological orientation, whom Dragoljub B. Đorđević considers the most influential Yugoslav sociologist of religion, along with Šušnjić and Vrcan (Đorđević 2008:53). Jukić acknowledged the symptoms of de-Christianization, but he also observed new forms of religiosity. At the same time, he warned that sociology of religion, by insisting on secularization, might forget the object of its interest – religion (Zrinščak 1999:207, 95). Jukić distinguished several types of secularization, and it is important to mention that he also wrote about the internal secularization of Christianity (Jukić 1981:116).

Secularization theory has long been considered the "revealed wisdom of sociology of religion" (Đorđević 1994:9). It implies a more or less irreversible, one-way process of religious decline, and, ultimately, the disappearance of religion as a social phenomenon. Nevertheless, reality contradicts this. Its functions and manifestations

may have altered, but religion has not disappeared. However, as we have already mentioned, it is evident that its influence on everyday life is less than it used to be (at least when it comes to Christian civilization). Therefore, it might be worth considering what Jakov Jukić predicts: "It seems that a time is coming when religion will be purer and more sincere or will not exist at all" (Jukić 1981:129). Dystopian literature, which our reality increasingly resembles, speaks precisely of societies without religion, that is, without religion as we know it. However, experience suggests that even non-religion easily becomes religion. So, in conclusion, a philosophical, but I think important issue should perhaps be kept in mind in future studies of religion and religiosity: will a new age – the post-truth age, with its transhuman tendencies – really challenge man as a believing creature, or will this characteristic prove to be an inalienable property which defines and determines man, regardless of historical, social, cultural and all other conditions?

Dr. Aleksandra Pavićević
[translation from Serbian: Kjell Magnusson]

Preface

The purpose of this report is to discuss the main theoretical perspectives in post-war Yugoslav sociology of religion. The emphasis is on the first generation of sociologists interested in religious matters, who began their empirical and theoretical studies in the 1960s. The subject has so far received little attention. Apart from an introductory text (Oršolić1971) and a few more or less polemic articles (Vušković & Vrcan 1980, Kerševan 1981, 1984, Đorđević1985), there is only one Yugoslav study, a doctoral thesis on the philosophical background of Yugoslav sociology of religion, written by the Slovene theologian Tone Stres (1977). Outside Yugoslavia practically nothing has been done, except for an article on Christian-Marxist dialogue (Mojsez 1972). Some of the Yugoslav sociologists have, however, published in scholarly journals abroad or participated in international conferences (Bahtijarević1971b, Ćimić1971, Kerševan 1975d, 1982, Roter 1971, Vrcan 1971, 1977, 1981b).

The present study differs from that of Stres (1977) in two respects. First, there is no detailed discussion of the classics of Marxism. Second, certain aspects of contemporary Yugoslav sociology of religion are treated more thoroughly, notably from a sociological perspective. The general purpose is to show how, in a specific sociocultural and political context, a traditional Marxist approach to the study of religion was succeeded by three main perspectives, differing from each other in important respects. They represent different ways of resolving certain dilemmas facing a Marxist study of religion, and some of the ideas put forward might be of general interest.

After a short introduction, the second chapter deals with the early period of Yugoslav sociology of religion and is followed by a chapter focusing on the major reasons behind the growth of new theoretical perspectives. In the remaining chapters the leading representatives of Yugoslav sociology of religion are discussed, and the chapter headings are supposed to reflect the dominant interests or characteristics of the authors concerned.

The report has been written within the framework of the research project "Religion, Socialism, Secularisation. A Study of Religion and Sociology of Religion in Post-War Yugoslavia", supported by The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation.

Quotations from Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Macedonian and Russian texts have been translated by the author.

Uppsala, April 1986
Kjell Magnusson

Introduction

In addition to the inspiration from Marxism, modern social research in Yugoslavia originated in an indigenous tradition within the fields of ethnology, linguistics, history and geography, going back to the national and cultural renaissance of the 19th century.⁴ The search for a national identity, and, as a consequence, the growing interest in history and the South Slav cultural tradition, gave rise to a research trying to describe and analyse various aspects of a rich and original folk culture. The academies of sciences in Zagreb and Belgrade initiated a great number of field studies, and a comprehensive material was gathered concerning the socio-economic situation as well as attitudes and customs of the peasant population. The first to engage seriously in this kind of work was the Serbian scholar and language reformer Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787-1864), whose studies inspired research in a number of areas. Among the pioneers should also be mentioned Valtazar Bogišić (1834-1908), who studied customary law in Montenegro. Perhaps the most well-known of these early social scientists is the Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927), whose studies of the Balkans earned him a reputation abroad as well.⁵ With Cvijić and his contemporary, the Croatian scholar and politician Antun Radić (1868-1919), the earlier folkloric study developed into a more sociological type of research, and during the 1930s institutes of sociology were established in both Zagreb and Belgrade, concentrating their interest on the social and cultural changes in the Yugoslav village.

A good part of the early ethnological work dealt with religious attitudes and behaviour, and, by analysing the still existing tradition, some scholars tried to reconstruct the main characteristics of an original South Slav religion. Major figures in this area of scholarship are

⁴ For a discussion of early Yugoslav sociology and further references see the book by Mitrović (1982) on Yugoslav pre-war sociology.

⁵ Cvijić was for some time professor in Paris, where his major work, *La Peninsule balkanique*, was published 1918.

Natko Nodilo (1834-1912), Veselin Čajkanović and Tihomir Đorđević (1868-1944), who, by publishing empirical studies and theoretical discussions, laid the foundations of a modern phenomenology of religion (Čajkanović 1941, Đorđević 1958, and Nodilo 1885). As pointed out by Marko Oršolić (1971), this scholarly tradition, in spite of its potentially great importance for understanding the present socioreligious situation, has had very little influence on the development of Yugoslav sociology of religion.

Besides historical and ethnological studies there were also attempts to discuss religion from a psychological/sociological perspective. In 1945 Slobodan Žarković published a book on sociology of religion, which to a large extent built on the theories of Durkheim. Another introductory text had appeared in 1938, based on lectures by Slobodan Jovanović, one of the founders of Serbian sociology. The later well-known scholar Wilhelm Keilbach (professor in Munich) wrote a book on psychology of religion (1951), and a textbook in the same field was published by Borislav Lorenc in Belgrade 1939. However, it was not until after the Second World War that one could speak of a modern sociology of religion in the proper sense. Although conditions in socialist Yugoslavia, like in the rest of Eastern Europe, at first meant a break with an empirical research tradition, both the Marxist orientation and the pragmatic needs of the socialist state for knowledge about the religious situation, would result in a study of religion and its social role that was to be on a much larger scale than before.

Yugoslav post-war sociology of religion could be divided into two main periods. The first lasts to the middle of the sixties and is above all distinguished by its theoretical character and its reliance on a unified, rather stereotypical discourse. During the second period a relatively large number of empirical studies are carried out, but there is also a theoretical reorientation, where sociologists, without abandoning the Marxist frame of reference, express a more relaxed attitude towards the classics and are trying to assimilate various orientations in West-European and American sociology of religion. This new sociology of religion is in a way a parallel to the church-

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oriented sociology of religion common in West-European countries (Matthes 1969), that is, it started as a research closely affiliated with institutions having a clearly stated ideological goal and practical needs of description of a factual situation. This resulted in similarities in research style and perhaps also in the relation between sociologists and their employers.

However, once institutionalized, Yugoslav sociology of religion tends to become an autonomous factor, formulating its topics of research, and, in varying degrees, influencing the official policy vis-à-vis religion and church. In comparison to the rest of Eastern Europe, Yugoslav sociology of religion was breaking new ground.

The early period: 1945-1960

In a sense it would perhaps be more accurate to characterize the literature of the first period as criticism of Christianity, or as philosophy of religion, rather than sociology. What was being written does belong, however, to a specific sociological tradition, even though there were no empirical investigations undertaken.

Moreover, the theories put forward constitute the foundation of later Yugoslav sociology of religion, so there is every reason to treat this literature here. Another reason is the actual agreement, on a more general level, between the two periods, in spite of all differences, something that will be discussed later on.

Of central interest during this period were topics such as the essence of religion, the origin, development and function of religion, the role of religion in capitalist and socialist societies, and the problem of what attitude the socialist movement and the socialist state should adopt towards religious communities and individual believers.

Evidently, these are the problems that preoccupied the classics of Marxism, in so far as they paid attention to religion⁶, and much of what was written may be classified as explication and popularisation

⁶ On Marxism and religion see Desroche (1973), Kadenbach (1970), Post (1969), McKown (1975), and Thrower (1983). Compilations of relevant sources are Marx & Engels (1975) and Lenin (1972).

of the thoughts of Marx, Engels and Lenin, rather than independent contributions written from a Marxist perspective or using Marxist methodology.

The theoretical level of these early writings is of varying quality, and some of the books and articles are marked by a definite propagandistic and dogmatic tone. Another characteristic feature is that the dependence on the classics often means that, regardless of the specific problem at hand, the author feels obliged to treat, at least superficially, most of the topics just mentioned, which gives the texts a certain uniformity. The main purpose often is, and this is true of most authors, to contribute to a critical explanation of the role of religion and point out means by which it could be overcome.

The Origin of Religion

The starting-point for a scientific study of religion is, according to the Yugoslav scholars, that religion, contrary to the teachings of the church, could not be looked upon as something inborn, something which is inherent in human nature, or part of the human condition in general (see e.g. Fiamengo 1957a:9, Barjaktarević1956:5, or Redžić1951:6). Instead religion is a historical phenomenon, and it is therefore of the utmost importance to explain how and why it has come to exist.

That is, the task of the sociological study of religion, referred to as sociology of religion, is to study and describe the two fundamental aspects of religion, that is, at first, to explore why in the history of human consciousness and social practice this fantastic way of reflecting exterior reality arose, and what was the purpose and social meaning of the religious relation towards reality, and secondly, to describe the general logico-gnoseological, psychological and practical characteristics of this religious relation and consciousness. (Živković1960: 422)

From this point of view, an explanation of the origin of religion is in fact a necessary precondition for understanding how re-

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ligion is maintained in different types of societies, and why it will ultimately disappear. One often speaks, in this connection, of the "roots", or the "sources" of religion, and following Engels' *Anti-Dühring*, usually two general causes are singled out: the natural factors and the social factors. That is, man's relation to nature and society, more specifically the discrepancy between his ability and the demands of the environment, gives rise to religion. As the most important cause in a historical perspective one should stress the relationship towards nature, while in the course of society's development, social conditions are becoming more important as roots of religion (e.g. Fiamengo 1958a, 1958b, Bulajić1957, Goričar 1952, Cecić1959, Krešić1958, Mandić1957). In this there is a peculiarly unhistorical attitude: the importance of tradition is usually overlooked and instead it is maintained that religion in a very concrete way is bound to specific social conditions and is thus eternally "born again". This way of thinking is a direct consequence of the lack of a Marxist psychology, something we will return to later.

The Yugoslav scholars generally agree that man in early history had no capacity to understand natural phenomena and therefore embraced religion as a way of establishing order and security. There are actually two versions of the theory, or at least two accents, which can be recognized more or less clearly in the literature. On one hand, it is maintained that the inadequate knowledge about natural phenomena gave rise, directly, to more or less fantastic conceptions of the world (Mandić1956a: 12, Ribar 1956, Bulajić1957: 4, Barjaktarević1956: 8, Nikčević1953: 13, Životić1957: 15, Taškovski 1955:9-14, Taškovski 1958:6-10, Redžić1951: 8, Cecić1959: 37), on the other hand, it is claimed that insufficient knowledge resulted in a sense of fear, impotence and dependence, and then in a need of religion (Fiamengo 1957a: 10, Fiamengo 1958b:12-15, Mandić1957, Ribar 1951:20, Ribar 1953:9, Ribar 1956, Bulajić1957:3-4, Barjaktarević1956:8, Krešić1958:24, Životić1957, Taškovski 1949:10, 1955:13, 1958:10-12). In the latter case it is thus postulated that man is conscious of his situation.

Lost in ignorance and barbarity, primitive man believes that his life is not related to nature or society, but to the will of god, saints, angels and that dark army of evil spirits, which the primitive intellect in its ignorance has created in its mind.

Not understanding nature and its laws, people created a totally magic world, which served as the basis of their hopes and sufferings. (Taškovski 1955:9)

Because of the low level of development of the means of production, men in primitive society cannot have a correct perception of nature and society. Their ideas will have to be fantastic, religious. Primitive man had to regard all natural phenomena as supernatural, spiritual forces, as they were mysterious to him, as he could not penetrate their essence. (Nikčević1953: 13)

That is, the low level of the means of production, and the undeveloped socio-economic base, contributed to the lack of knowledge about forces of nature and social relations, and to non-scientific and limited ideas, as well as impotence, insecurity, subjugation and fear of the forces of nature. All this was the foundation, the basis of, the growth and birth of religious prejudice, and of belief in spirits inhabiting various objects and phenomena. (Fiamengo 1950:15)

On of the fundamental psychological components of religiosity is the feeling of fear. This feeling is the result of consciousness of dependency or impotence vis-a-vis the forces attributed to the god.

His real dependence on nature and social environment, the regularities of which were unknown and not mastered, man experienced as the Unknown, Mysterious, Omnipotent, Something, and this experienced being was given different sensuous forms in different socio-historical conditions. (Krešić1958: 24)

Some of the authors, however, explicitly deny the thesis of

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inadequate knowledge as the main source of religion and instead emphasize the undeveloped *praxis* of man (Redžić1951: 9, Ribar 1953:10). A majority, though, hold that the knowledge factor is decisive, which, if not otherwise, is clearly seen in their discussion on the decline of religion.

Some authors in this connection dwell at length on the question of religion as a form of "false consciousness" and express the opinion that men of earlier ages in fundamental ways were different from ourselves, especially when it comes to the experience of the world. Primitive man is thus not able to understand the relation between cause and effect. His sense of ego is undeveloped and he cannot experience himself as an individual, as being different from his environment. He is like a child and reality is experienced as a mystic totality (Fiamengo 1957a: 10, Životić1957: 15-18, Bulajić1957: 3-4, Nikčević1953: 8-13, Taškovski 1955:14,24, 1958:10, Redžić11-12, Gertner 1957:18-25, Ribar 1953:9).

Exactly this kind of negative economic conditions is the first and most basic reason for the origin of religion in society. And with these economic conditions corresponded the extremely undeveloped consciousness of primitive man, who could not understand even the simplest phenomena in nature or daily life. (Bulajić1957: 4)

Scientists are claiming that the barbarian, different from contemporary, cultured man, is a child without experience and knowledge. He is a child who, not understanding the paths of natural evolution, has lost himself in the web of natural phenomena. Moreover, according to science, the intellect of primitive man is very different from that of civilized man. (...) From this follows that all phenomena and objects of his fantasy are intertwined and unclear. It is logical, that with such an intellect it is impossible to understand the essence of phenomena. In order to do that it is not sufficient to look at things from the outside; one must also use logical thinking, which on that stage of development does not exist. (Taškovski 1958:11)

This insufficiency in man's perceptual and cognitive apparatus is due to social factors, but sometimes it is discussed not only as a misinterpretation or false representation of the reality mediated by the senses, but it is claimed that there are physiological differences between humans living in different historical periods. The sense organs and the brain are in the early cultures simply undeveloped. The interesting point here is that the examples given do not refer to history only, but to the "Malayans", "Negroes" etc of today, and in some cases even the Yugoslav rural population is included in this category of primitive peoples.

The gnoseological roots (of religion) have to do with human perception. It is natural that man's cognitive abilities are not unchangeable, and that contemporary man's intellectual ability is very different from that of men living in the primitive epoch. This fact convincingly illustrates the very profound relationship between human perception and social-historical development.

Nations on a high level of civilization possess a highly developed science, art and general culture, which is not the case with nations on the threshold of civilization. The intellectual abilities of the Malaysians, Indians and some other nations of today are far behind the level of for example Frenchmen, Germans etc. This also means that their cognitive apparatus is much less developed than that of highly civilized peoples. (Redžić1951: 10-11).

Between the child's approach to the world and that of primitive man, there are certain similarities. This similarity is a result of the inability to think rationally. Or in scientific language: It is a result of the subdevelopment of some parts of the brain, of the cerebral cortex; exactly those parts which in the history of mankind and the individual are developed at the last stages, and which control the intellectual, cognitive and conscious activities of man. (Gertner 1957:25).

The Essence of Religion

The answer given by the Yugoslav scholars to the question of what religion really is could be summarized as follows: Religion is a reflection of socio-economic conditions, religion is a false reflection of such conditions, religion is a lie, an undeveloped science, a personification of forces in nature and society, an expression of practice, a false consciousness, illogical thought, mystic fantasies, and a special feeling of dependence.

The point of departure in defining religion is often Marx's words (from the Introduction to Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law) about religion as an expression of, and protest against, the "distress", i.e. the important thing is to get at the "essence" of religion, which is then usually further explained by one or more of the formulas above.

Besides an essentialist definition and one stressing the place of religion in the relation between "base" and "superstructure", the main emphasis is often on religious ideas. What distinguishes religion from other aspects of the superstructure is simply its illusory character, i.e. the false consciousness of reality, the belief in the existence of non-existent forces controlling man and society.

It is one of the forms of social consciousness, but different from other forms, religion is a particular, illusory, and fantastic reflection in human consciousness of the power of natural and social forces. In religion the natural and social forces are personified and represented in fantastic forms as a result of a distortion of reality. (Taškovski 1949:5)

Religion is a false, incorrect, fantastic reflection of reality in our heads, whereas science is a more or less accurate, correct and true reflection of reality. (Nikčević 1953: 37)

Religion is part of the ideological superstructure rising above the economic basis in a given social system. It constitutes one of the forms of social ideology. There are several such forms: philoso-

phy, religion, moral, law, science, art etc. All these ideological forms are different types of social consciousness, constituting a reflection of social being in the minds of men. This reflection of social being - that is, the productive relations of material life - and generally of natural forces, of the objective material world in the consciousness of men (a reflection that, of course, is not mechanical, direct, immediate, but is characterized by intermediate stages - social-political order, the psyche of social man), could be correct, more or less exact, adequate or distorted, fantastic or incorrect. In the manner by which it reflects objective reality - society or nature - religion is totally different from other forms of ideological superstructure. (Fiamengo 1950:8)

This means, that the picture of the world given to us by religion, is not a scientific description of the world, a religious world-view is not a scientific world-view. It does not provide a correct picture of the regularity of natural and societal processes of evolution, but a false, fabricated, imaginary one. Scientific is that world-view which correctly reflects objective reality, which gives an adequate picture of natural and social laws. (Fiamengo 1950:9)

The Evolution of Religion

In the light of the definition of religion and the view of the origin of religion, religious evolution is described as a consequence of social changes that are in their turn conditioned by the development of the forces of production. According to this view religious ideas are reaching an increasingly higher level of abstraction, and usually the scholars follow the well-known scheme of animism, magic, totemism, polytheism and monotheism (although some authors claim that animism is preceded by totemism: Mandić 1956a: 20-39, Ribar 1956:21, Taškovski 1949:7). In a relatively simple and mechanical way this evolutionary scheme is linked to various social formations and phases in historical development. Hunters are totemists, agriculturalists worship the earth, and at a certain level of social differentiation

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polytheism arises, while monotheism is developed in monarchies (Fiamengo 1957a, Mandić1956b, 1956c, 1957, Redžić1951, Ribar 1956, Barjaktarević1956, Paligorić1958). As for the earliest forms of religion, there is no detailed explanation, it is simply referred to the fact that man as a result of the development of the forces of production stops believing in spirits or starts worshipping gods. The more differentiated Marxist analysis is actually saved for Christianity. Christianity is moreover looked upon as the highest, most developed stage of religious evolution, while the "highest form" of Christianity is Protestantism, which eventually gives way to idealistic philosophy (Ribar 1956, Paligorić1958, Živković1960, Gertner 1957).

Some authors also discuss the non-European religions (Mandić1956b, 1956d, Žuljević1953, Taškovski 1955, 1958), but they have, as in the case of early forms of religion, difficulties in performing a Marxist analysis, and are for the most part content with a more or less detailed description of religious ideas and customs. Sometimes general statements are used such as "Islam arose in the misery of the 6th century Arabian peninsula" (Taškovski 1958:69).

The Function of Religion

The question of the function of religion is apparently very important. The discussion of the origin, evolution and essence of religion, as well as its importance in socialism and capitalism, originates in the notion of function. The purpose is always to define the role religion *actually* plays in the lives of men and societies.

On one hand religion by its moral norms, beliefs and rituals offers patterns ordering the life of man and a possibility of comfort in the difficulties of life (Ribar 1951:23, Mandić1957: 9, 1958:6, Fiamengo 1958a:8). That is, religion, on a psychological level, serves a clearly compensatory function. (At the same time as this compensation is defined as insufficient, due to the illusory character of religion.) This psychological role of religion means, on the other hand, that in a sociological perspective religion strengthens the position of the ruling classes and thus contributes to the global stability of society

(Ribar 1951:40, Fiamengo 1958a: 8, 1958b: 19-21, Mandić1956d: 10, Bulajić1957: 17-27, Nikčević1953: 61-63, Goričar 1952:24, Krešić1958, Taškovski 1949:16, 1958:96, Redžić1951: 28, Živković1960: 445-446). The authors of the first period usually quote the well-known words about religion as "opium for (of) the people" and many of them have a tendency to interpret this formula as if the ruling strata had relatively large possibilities of manipulating religious ideas (Ribar 1951:91, Fiamengo 1958a: 23, 1958b: 24, Bulajić1957: 17-27, Živković1957: 37, Taškovski 1949:6, 1958:82, Šprljan1950: 35, Cević1959: 56, Živković1960: 446).

As long as there exist social conditions in which one social class lives from the work of other social classes and exploited masses, there exists an objective ground on which religion is formed and used by the exploiting class, as a means of spiritual stupefaction of the working masses. (Redžić1951: 58).

The essence of religion is that it represents "the opium of the people" (Marx), lulling men to sleep, making them unfit for the struggle against oppressors and exploiters. (Redžić1951: 72)

On that ground the classics of Marxism constantly warned that religion is opium for the people. In other words, religion has the same effects on the masses as opium on whoever uses it. The use of opium makes people sleepy, creates dreams of bliss without end and illusions about reality. It dulls the consciousness and emotions of man.

It is the same with religion's influence on the dominated masses. It showers the religious masses with various frauds, promises of a better life in the other world, awaiting them in return for all the hardship and suffering experienced in this world. (Bulajić1957: 19)

This means that the ruling classes are using religion as a weapon, as opium for the people, by means of which they spread ignorance and superstition, and thus strengthen and prolong

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the exploitation of superstitious and religious people. In a class society religion is, consequently, necessary. In the new classless, communist society, religion becomes unnecessary. Not only is it not necessary, it is harmful. It becomes in fact impossible. (Nikčević1953: 65)

Religion is thus, due to its psychological and sociological functions, a social necessity, except in socialist and communist society. Even though religion, because of socio-economic development, at a certain stage might have lost its force, in a class-society it is succeeded by new forms of religion.

As far as the evaluation of religion is concerned, the authors have somewhat differing points of view, in the sense that some of them view religion as a completely negative phenomenon (Redžić1951, Bulajić1957, Nikčević1953), whereas others admit the possibility that religion in certain historical circumstances could have positive effects.

Christianity

What has been said above could be illustrated by the description of the origin and history of Christianity. On the whole the explanations given amount to the fact that the situation at the time was such that something was bound to happen. There was a discrepancy between base and superstructure, and the social and economic crisis of Ancient society, in itself a result of the development of the forces of production, meant that the existing religions were not able to express the needs of the masses in an adequate way. In this situation arises Christianity, which is capable of satisfying the psychological needs in a more efficient manner than earlier religions. Thereby it also corresponds to the needs of both the ruling strata and society as a whole.

There are certain differences among the Yugoslav authors as to the description of this process. Some of them stress the crisis in the Roman Empire (Fiamengo 1950, 1952, Mandić1956e, 1956f, Taškovski 1953, 1958, Barjaktarević1953, Cecić1959), whereas others emphasize the new developments (Ribar 1951, 1953, Pečujlić 1958, Paligorić1958). There are also different views as to whether Jesus ex-

isted as a historical person or not (Taškovski 1955,1958 and Fiamengo 1950 deny his existence), and there are different judgments when it comes to the value of Christianity and the role played by the ruling classes in its development. While some scholars view Christianity as totally and from the beginning reactionary (Taškovski 1949, 1955, 1958, Šprljan1950, Redžić1951, Fiamengo 1950, Mandić1956f), others point out the important role played by the new religion for a progressive development, partly because it elevated class conflicts to a higher and more dynamic level, partly by its universal character and more modern attitude to work (Ribar 1951,1953,1956), Paligorić1958, Pečujlić 1958, Životić1957). In the same way certain authors are of the opinion that the ruling strata of society took an active part in the creation of Christian theology and ecclesiastical organization and consciously tried to deceive the rest of the population (Mandić1956e, 1956f, Fiamengo 1950, Šprljan1950, Gertner 1957), while others have a more sociological perspective and emphasize the social and economic changes that occurred.

Of special interest is the approach of Veljko Ribar (1951, 1953, 1956). His views are different, in the sense, that, even though he agrees with other scholars about the negative aspects of religion in general, he nevertheless, looks upon the rise of Christianity as a positive social process. In his opinion, Christianity should be understood as a movement of liberation, serving as an ideology of change, and bringing about the transformation of slave society into feudal society. By its emphasis on equality and the importance of the individual as a human being, as well as by its work ethics, Christianity played a both progressive and necessary role. Had it been a totally negative and reactionary phenomenon, it would have perished with Ancient society.

Ribar's views are based on certain methodological premises, which are interesting, and to some extent resemble those of later sociologists of religion. He is the first to remark that much of what has been written about religion, from Kautsky to Yugoslav authors like Fiamengo or Redžić, is a criticism from the position of the Enlightenment, rather than Marxism. Instead of using quotations

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from the classics in a more or less mechanical way, one must, according to Ribar, start from the fundamental aspects of Marxism, that is, its understanding of ideology and consciousness as socially determined (i.e. by the productive relations). From this point of view, religion can never be explained as depending on intellectual shortcomings. It was never a theoretical explanation of the world, but a practical, emotional, or volitional relation to the world.

As far as the later history of Christianity is concerned, however, all the authors agree on its negative character, that the church has been a serious obstacle to change. This is above all true of the Catholic Church and especially of its role in Yugoslavia during the Second World War.⁷

It is interesting, though, that there is actually no detailed analysis of the role of religion in the Yugoslav lands⁸, no attempt to explain for example the social role of Orthodoxy or Islam in Marxist terms. It is simply concluded that the Orthodox and Catholic versions of Christianity represent a less developed form of religion than Protestantism (Ribar 1956:59).

Religion in Bourgeois Society

The concentration on the concept of function is especially noticeable in the discussion of the religious situation in bourgeois and socialist society. Religion is thus defined as a necessary complement to capitalist social structure. Due to the alienating character of capitalist society, something like religion would have to exist. The working people are in need of consolation, because of the miserable conditions in which they are forced to live. The ruling class, on its part, has a

⁷ . These aspects are discussed by many authors, e.g. Redžić1951, Paligorić1958, Šprljan1950, 1953, Mandić1956f, Taškovski 1949, 1955, 1958, Cecić1959, Fiamengo 1950, 1958a, 1958b. However, there are also books specifically devoted to the problem: Barbieri 1956, Stanić1948, Stefanović1953, and, especially, "Magnum Crimen" by Novak (1948).

⁸ One author says, incidentally, that Yugoslav history unfortunately does not offer as easily grasped examples of the negative role of religion as do other countries (Bakovljević 1952:82-93).

very great interest in maintaining religious illusions, and the social system as such would not function without religion (Živković1960, Ribar 1951, Bulajić1957, Nikčević1953, Goričar 1952, Krešić1958, Fiamengo 1950, Taškovski 1949, 1955, 1958, Redžić1951, Cecić1959, Životić1961). Fiamengo expresses this in the following way:

In capitalist society man is in the power of the economic and social forces of capitalism. They control individuals and society as a whole like some kind of accidental force. (...) Capitalist society is completely helpless in front of these social phenomena. Out of this helplessness, uncertainty, and insecurity, religious ideas are born. It is a well-known fact that religiosity is strengthened both in the capitalist class and in social strata outside the influence of the revolutionary proletariat and communist party, especially in times of war and revolution. In such circumstances are massively brought to light various types of superstition, all kinds of mystic ideas, spiritism, sorcery, prayers, astrological prognoses etc. (Fiamengo 1950:102)

It is true that some authors call attention to the fact that men in capitalist societies, as a result of technological development, in many ways have freed themselves from the bonds of religion (Fiamengo 1958a,b, Gertner 1957). However, the real social conditions giving rise to religion are still in force and the general conclusion is that, in capitalism, either religion is becoming more important, or, according to another version, ultimate liberation from religion will never be achieved.

Even a more subtle analysis, such as that of Fiamengo in his later writings (1958a, 1958b, 1962), on the whole supports this view. Fiamengo concludes that today the factors of nature are not very important for the origin of religion. Of importance are instead social and psychological factors. But also the "gnoseological" factors, those having to do with knowledge and perception of reality, are in capitalist society of a type that promotes religiosity. In fact, the perception of the world in this kind of society tends, for immanent reasons, to be false. Fiamengo furthermore claims, as do some of the other authors that the great majority of people in capitalist society

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are intellectually on a very low level, which in itself is a source of religiosity.

The heavy reliance on the Marxist classics, or rather on specific quotations from their works, is clearly evident, and that is perhaps why there are so many inconsequences in the description of the religious situation today. It is moreover characteristic that in order to explain the general character of contemporary capitalism the authors use quotations of Engels or Lenin.

Religion in Socialist Society

Most authors agree that religion, as a result of the socialist revolution, has suffered a serious blow, but they also conclude that religion, in spite of this, has not disappeared.

This conclusion leads to different positions as to how important religion is, and how it should be looked upon from the standpoint of Marxist theory. The predominant view during this first period of Yugoslav sociology of religion is that religion is a "survival". That is, it does not really fulfil any function in socialist society but continues to exist because of the time lag between changes in base and superstructure.

No ideology is born only from social and economic conditions but is to a greater or smaller degree related to previous ideologies. A certain ideology does not disappear immediately after the disappearance of the socio-economic factors of which it is a reflection but is maintained for a rather long time in men's consciousness. Therefore a new ideology, product of new socio-economic conditions will by necessity also contain survivals of the old ideology. (Redžić 1951: 34).

In socialist conditions this backward form of consciousness is essentially not a direct reflection of objective socialist reality, but a reflection of obsolete class relations, an expression of outlived social forces, which are in contradiction with socialist reality. (Taškovski 1949:3)

Since the working class assumed power the basic sources and roots of religious errors are slowly disappearing. However, in spite of this, the survivals of religion in men's consciousness, in religious traditions and customs, are very tough and resistant. Hence the need for a constant, resolute and many-sided enlightenment of the people. (Bulajić1957: 27)

The continuing existence of religion is above all due to human ignorance, which in itself is a consequence of the fact that the superstructure develops more slowly than the base. A great part of the rural population is still living in conditions of widespread superstition; they are still bound to nature and have not properly understood the social changes occurred. Above all, however, they lack basic scientific and philosophical insights (Ribar 1951, 1956, Janković 1952, Bakovljević 1952, Bulajić1957, Barjaktarević1956, Cecić1959, Taškovski 1949, 1955, 1958, Redžić1951, Nikčević1953, Fiamengo 1950, Goričar 1952).

The existence of religion in socialist society is viewed as something utterly negative. Partly because it forces man to remain on a lower level of intellectual and emotional development, partly because it prevents, in various ways, the development of society.

An interesting variant, which definitely points ahead, is the position of Fiamengo (1958a, 1958b, 1962). In his earlier writings he expresses the attitude just referred to, but with time he changes his view. Fiamengo admits that religion even in socialist society must be dependent on factors within the social system and cannot be looked upon as a mere survival. He concludes at first that many of the factors giving birth to religion in bourgeois society do not exist anymore. Religion cannot for example be characterized as opium for the people, as there is no class interested in using religion for its own purposes. That is, social factors are no longer producing religion. Nor is society as such - in contrast to capitalist society - dependent on religion for its existence. Further, the process of acquiring knowledge - the perception of reality - has changed in the sense that false consciousness is not as easily established. This is a direct consequence of the positive function of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

On the other hand, psychological factors are still influential.

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There are certain defects in socialist society, which in some individuals will generate new religiosity, and, consequently, delay the process of secularisation. The most important example given by Fiamengo is the insufficient fulfilment of the social plan. He also mentions bureaucracy and other negative social phenomena as causes of religion. That is, the continuing existence of religion is due to its psychological functions, to its correspondence with unsatisfied needs and helplessness.

The Decline of Religion

In view of the concept of religion prevalent among Yugoslav authors of this period, it is natural that an intensified enlightenment of the population is looked upon as the most important factor promoting the end of religion (Fiamengo 1950, 1958b, 1962, Bulajić 1957, Barjaktarević 1956, Nikčević 1953, Goričar 1952, Pečujlić 1958, Taškovski 1949, 1955, 1958, Redžić 1951, Gertner 1957, Cecić 1959, Ribar 1953). It is true that social and economic conditions are taken into account, but then only in relation to enlightenment-propaganda. It is for example claimed that the revolution has created the prerequisites of an effective anti-religious propaganda, or that the economic development makes possible a more efficient civilizing action (Fiamengo 1958a: 6, Ribar 1951:92).

It is further interesting to note the special role assigned to philosophers from the classical period of Enlightenment (Žuljević 1958a, 1959, 1960, Cecić 1959). They should be translated, their ideas disseminated and in every way given attention to. This is valid for the indigenous atheist tradition as well (Ernjaković 1953, Janković 1952, Bakovljević 1952). Writers like Dositej Obradović (1742-1811) or Vasa Pelagić (1838-1899) are popularised and set up as models.⁹

⁹ Dositej Obradović was the prototype of the first generation of modern Balkan intellectuals. He left the monastery where he had received his training and travelled widely in the West. On his return he played a major role in Serbian cultural life. His "Life and Adventures", describing his experience of the contrasts between the Balkans and European civilization, is

As far as the relation of party and state toward religion is concerned, one can sometimes observe a certain ambiguity. On one hand the point of departure is the famous Leninist slogan about the neutrality of the state - but not of the party - towards religion (Cecić1959, Ribar 1953, Gertner 1957, Redžić1951, Taškovski 1949, Bulajić1957, Fiamengo 1962, Janković1952, Bakovljević 1952), on the other hand much is said about an "active" policy towards religion, a policy which however must be pursued with some moderation and tact (Bulajić1957, Nikčević1953, Goričar 1952, Krešić1958, Pečujlić1958, Redžić1951, Taškovski 1949, Gertner 1957).

What is not clear is how far one is prepared to go in using coercive measures. Most authors advocate caution but nevertheless write about the necessity of an active antireligious propaganda from the part of the state, or that it is the duty of society to educate people in a "scientific world view".

From this follows that the working class and its party rejects all religious errors and religious ideas, in its resolute struggle against the influence of the church on its ranks and on the other working masses, who will be demobilized in their historical mission of building socialist society. The rejection of religion and religious errors is one of the essential conditions of the success and victory of the working class and its party on its historical road. (Bulajić1957: 22)

Therefore a Marxist workers' party cannot treat religion as an individual's private affair. It cannot remain indifferent towards religious intoxication and deception from the part of the priests; it must in principle and without compromise wage a struggle of ideas against a religion leading backwards, as it is a party of social progress.

a classic. Vasa Pelagić was Archimandrite, and rector of a theological seminary, who broke with religion, in order to devote himself to the enlightenment of his people. He served as supervisor of education in Montenegro, took part in the Bosnian uprising, and spent several terms in prison. His book "The Use of Practical Reason", an attack on religion, was printed again in 1950.

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To leave the workers and the other working masses to the spiritual oppression of religion would in practice mean disarmament in the struggle for socialism. Therefore a truly Marxist party must, as regards religion, fight against both anarchistic-atheist phraseology and the unprincipled position of opportunists. (Redžić1951: 119-120)

It is obvious that the proletariat could not make compromises with this kind of consciousness, being a subjective expression of the interests of outlived forces but will actively struggle to liberate people from the cobweb of this illusory form of consciousness. (Taškovski 1949:45)

It follows from all this that even in conditions of socialism, religion will not die of itself. The theory of spontaneous decline is and has always been essentially an opportunistic theory. (...) We must, says Lenin, fight against religion, That is the ABC of the whole of materialism. And consequently of Marxism. The party should and must wage an active struggle against religion, naturally within the framework of class struggle, as a part of that struggle. The party has to fight religious prejudice, as it is foreign to communism and represents, in contemporary conditions, an obstacle to the construction of socialism. (Taškovski 1949:50)

The party could not look upon religion as some kind of "private affair". On the contrary, the party should and must fight against religion, so that it becomes a private affair from the point of view of the state, but not of the party. (Taškovski 1949:54)

A special position is taken by Bakovljević (1952) and Janković (1952), whose writings represent a very harsh attack on religion, pleading for a systematic anti-religious propaganda in all areas of society. Sometimes this even seems to be the main task of socialist society as such.

A major role is to be played by the school system and detailed suggestions are given how to achieve positive results. The pupils must be categorized according to religiosity, one should influence

their parents both directly and indirectly and not shrink back from various types of punishments. Vacations from school should not coincide with religious holidays, youth activities should be made compulsory, so that there is no time left for religious instruction etc.

The most important task of our school is the uncompromising struggle against any religious attitudes, and the introduction of the pupils to dialectic materialism, which brings up militant atheists and guarantees a really scientific education. (Janković 1952:36)

Education must confront religion, look for conflicts, and orient teaching and other aspects towards an opposition of idealism and mysticism, which have their most faithful collaborator in religion. (Bakovljević 1952:9)

The whole educational activity must be filled with constant opposition against the truths of religion; we must always be conscious of the fact that we want to build a man not only free from religious prejudice, but an antireligious man, a man-atheist. The goal of our education is socialist man. And he is such a man only if he is a resolute fighter against everything outmoded, against every kind of ignorance, including religion. (Bakovljević 1952:10)

By a well-conceived plan, cautiously and with educational tact, one should work individually with those children who visit the church and manifest religious inclinations. Such children should be assigned to choir-, drama-, rhythm-, music- and nature circles and in this way be estranged from the church.

In parents' meetings it is necessary to speak of the harm done by religious superstition, of the incompatibility between school, science, and teaching program with religious dogmas. The religious feelings of the parents must not be offended, but one should simply explain that in our school pure science is taught, that in our country antireligious upbringing is reigning at school and that it would be contrary to the assignment of our school if they would bring up their children in a religious direction. (Janković 1952: 49)

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It is important to see to it that the winter and spring holidays do not coincide with Christmas or Easter. It is also important, and from an educational point of view justified, to organize compulsory, and for the children very interesting amusements, excursions and similar recreations, on the days of church holidays directed especially to children (Willow Day etc). (Bakovljev 1952:73)

Of special importance is that no holidays whatsoever are celebrated in the family, not even those with a minimum of religious character. (Not even "slava", St Georges wake etc). This so called family religiosity, supposedly without any specific religious content, is, in fact, the greatest danger to atheist upbringing. Everything that is attractive in these holidays can and should be transferred to national holidays and special family celebrations (birthday and various jubilees) as here there is really no religious aspect involved (nice food, cakes, new year's tree, visits, presents, absence from work). Only in this way freed of religious forms will these elements represent a positive happiness of the child. (Bakovljev 1952:126)

The authors are, however, pessimistic about the present situation. They complain about indifferent teachers and parents, they point out the difficulties in using Yugoslav church history as illustrations of a Marxist view of religion, or the ambiguities of the Yugoslav cultural traditions. (Some novelists and poets, but above all the famous folk songs, which for literary and national reasons must be given a prominent place in school, constitute risks or possibilities of indirect religious propaganda.)

There are some scholars who indicate a new way of looking at religion by stressing not enlightenment, but cultural and economic development, and, above all, the improvement of the system of self-management (within the framework of a planned economy). They point out, more clearly than Fiamengo, that religion is arising out of conditions in socialist society itself. And that special educational and anti-religious measures are probably useless. The authors concerned,

Andrija Krešić, Ljubomir Tadić and Miladin Životić, belonged to what was later to be known as the Praxis-group, and especially Životić (1961) in many ways resemble later views on religion. That is, religion is an effect, rather than a source of alienation, and will disappear by itself if real socialism is developed.

From this stems the difficulty in waging a rationalist struggle against religion. The believer might with his reason understand the groundless character of religion, which however does not mean that he automatically is liberated from his religious emotions. These emotions will disappear only to the extent that man's power in the practical control of nature and social environment is augmented: the consciousness of his own power and the enjoyment of the glory of his deeds will effectively suppress religious emotions. (Krešić1958: 27)

But, if criticism of religion is a *conditio sine qua non* of every real critique, by itself it does not constitute a complete criticism of all the misfortunes which exert their pressure on society, and on which religion itself rests. Such a criticism is only a theoretical negation of social misery, from atheist positions. To atheist criticism must be added revolutionary practice, which will change social conditions; otherwise criticism will be without results. If we look at the problem from our contemporary perspective, the adoption of the proletarian and Marxist principles concerning the disappearance of the state, which are contrary to every religious-theological idea that all authority originates in god (and in that way is eternal) is more convincing than mere propaganda negating god's existence. (Tadić1954: 272)

The reconstruction of our country and bringing the population out of economic backwardness must be the primary activity not only of the most conscious forces of society, but of the whole of society. Antireligious propaganda is only of secondary importance. (Tadić1954: 272)

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Ideological and political struggle against religion could in our time only be a complement to those efforts, which are oriented to the realization of a general social transformation. (Tadić1954: 273)

That is, religion is impossible to abolish if it is just negated. It is necessary to activate the social factors, to bring about a real transformation of existing reality. (Tadić1954: 276)

Religion will exist as long as man is not in the position to control his social environment. All objective or subjective factors, making impossible or preventing the realization of man's self-managing relation towards social reality are today sources of religion. (Životić1962: 31).

There is also a criticism of East European bureaucratic communism, which is seen as less effective in promoting the end of religion. And there are those who openly speak of Stalinism as a new form of religion.

Under the direct leadership of Stalin, the Soviet revisionists uprooted from Marxism its revolutionary soul, transformed it into a dogma, and Stalin, building state-monopolistic capitalism, usurped the monopoly of passing judgement and condemning everything happening in the USSR, in the "socialist camp" or in the whole world, the domination of which the Soviet power holders aspire. On his request, the ruling bureaucracy declares him "great", "wise", "dear", "father", "first" on the fronts of philosophy, the "primary" builder of communism, the "best kolhoznik", the "greatest strategist and leader of war", "the one called upon" to pass judgements in music or linguistics, in one word, the "fore-runner" of everything. There is no superlative used by religious fanatics to describe god that is not mentioned together with Stalin's name. (Redžić1951: 125-126)

They believe that they can abolish superstition with the help of education, as if it would be the result of weaknesses in the Soviet educational system, and not the consequence of state-capitalist

social relations dominant in the USSR, which cause both religion and educational shortcomings. Religion remains over there because people find themselves dominated by exploiting social relations, and here there are no differences of principle between USSR and other capitalist countries. Both here and there religion has the same foundation: capitalism. (Redžić1951: 127)

The basic tone of this loud propaganda orchestra is the name of the ruler, which is always used in connection with compulsory attributes of greatness and genius and which is connected with all real and unreal accomplishments. If the ruler should find himself in the dangerous position that his mistakes will be made public, the regime in time sees to it that they are attributed to somebody else who will be destroyed, whereas the ruler will again be the saviour of his people, and an unerring one. (Krešić1958: 31)

When speaking of contemporary manifestations of religious influence, one should point out a phenomenon, which is increasingly to be seen in the countries where state capitalism has reached its culmination. The transformation of the state into a "power above society" meant that the already abandoned authority of god and church was replaced by the authority of the state and the most distinguished political personalities, raised to a divine pedestal. The most typical examples of such a divinisation of the state and cult of personality are to be found in the Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany. (Tadić1954: 279)

Conclusion

What has been said thus far could be summarized as follows: Religion represents a form of false consciousness originating in, and maintained by, man's inadequate understanding of nature and the social conditions in which he lives. It constitutes an illusory compensation and prevents the evolution of man and society. It develops by changes in the economic base of society and is a reflection of social

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conditions. It serves the interests of the ruling classes and preserves the stability of society. In socialism religion will disappear, as it no longer fulfils any social function. It is, however, as a survival from bourgeois society, capable of satisfying certain psychological needs, but in time, and with the assistance of an active policy of enlightenment, it will become superfluous. It is, finally, the duty of all progressive forces to work for its disappearance.

It is not our purpose to investigate in detail whether the earlier Yugoslav sociology of religion represents a "correct" or "true" Marxist perspective on religion. It is obviously difficult to establish such a perspective, partly because of the character of the classical texts dealing with religion, partly because of ambiguities concerning vital aspects of Marxist theory and method in general. It could, however, be said that this, without doubt, is a traditional Marxist interpretation of religion, still dominant among scholars in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Gustafsson 1977, Thrower 1983). When references are made they concern the "classical" literature. All the well-known writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin usually mentioned are quoted. There are further references to Kautsky, Plehanov and Stalin, as well as to modern Soviet statements and certain French or Italian works.

What is striking in these books and articles is their evolutionist character and strong belief in enlightenment. These aspects could of course be looked upon as part of the Marxist tradition, and it is typical how important enlightenment-propaganda is considered in the Soviet Union of today ("scientific atheism"). This basic attitude is however shared by other philosophical and scientific positions and it is characteristic that the Yugoslav scholars apart from quotations from Marx, Engels and so on, also refer to the classical evolutionist tradition in the history of religions, represented by, for example, Frazer, Tylor or Levy-Bruhl.¹⁰

Neither this way of thinking nor the sometimes very aggressive attitude towards religion is therefore necessarily something brought to Yugoslavia by Marxism. There is, as pointed out elsewhere

¹⁰ For a discussion of evolutionist theories in the study of religion see De Vries (1961) and Widengren (1963).

(Magnusson 1982), in Serbian cultural history, a very strong influence from French enlightenment philosophy, and at the turn of the century an evolutionary-rationalist view of religion dominated in intellectual circles and was as a rule coupled with strong anticlerical sentiments. The authors of the early period of Yugoslav sociology of religion rely on this tradition as well. Besides new translations of well-known atheist and anticlerical French writings¹¹, here were reprints of the indigenous atheist tradition, and the continuity of atheist attitudes was emphasized. The orientation which later Yugoslav sociology would criticize as "false interpretations" of Marxism was thus to a large extent part of a Yugoslav cultural tradition.

One could in this connection ask whether the evolutionary optimism is not the basic aspect of Marxism as it exists on a popular level in southern Yugoslavia, and if not this ideological complex was then legitimised and given scientific status by a schematic interpretation of Marx. One should also remember that these views on religion coincide with tense relations between state and church, and that they are part of a general criticism of religion and traditional culture manifest in different areas of society.

As the discussion is usually on a rather general level it is not easy to discover an evolution towards a "milder" criticism, or to correlate certain books or articles with parallel developments in other spheres of society. Some obvious tendencies are to be noted, however, such as the fact that quotations by Stalin are seldom used after the Cominform conflict, or that after the break with Eastern Europe it was possible to describe the socialism of these countries as a pseudo-religion, and also that the most aggressive writings belong to the earlier years of the period. There are, moreover, some views indicating a new way of looking at religion such as Ribar's judgement of Christianity, or Fiamengo's views, and especially those of Krešić, Tadić and Životić, on the function of religion in socialist society.

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of this period is the discussion of the role of religion in socialism, a result of the lack of an empirical Marxist sociology and the view of socialist society in

¹¹ Diderot, Voltaire, Holbach were translated in the fifties (Stres 1977:88). t

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general. Apart from a few exceptions, there is actually no sociological explanation of why religion continues to exist. It is a survival, a sign of ignorance, a consequence of activities pursued by enemies of the state or perhaps the result of certain psychological problems.

On one hand this has to do with the understanding of socialist society as basically without conflicts, but also with the fact that perception of reality did not constitute a psychological or sociological problem in the naive realism of ideological Marxism.

A New Sociology of Religion

Origins

There are six interrelated factors giving rise to the new sociology of religion: The economic and political decentralization of Yugoslav society beginning in the 1950s, the relative autonomy of literature and the arts, the considerable openness to influences from Western society and culture, the theoretical discussions within philosophy, the renaissance of empirical sociology, and, finally, the improved relations between church and socialist society.

Ultimately these developments are the result of the one decisive event in post-war Yugoslav history¹², the break with the Soviet Union and other East European countries in 1948.

Political and Ideological Change

The Cominform dispute meant that Yugoslavia, until the middle of the fifties, was subject to a massive economic and political boycott, combined with military pressure. This led to a re-orientation of foreign policy and economic relations, involving cooperation with, as well as support from, the major Western powers, at the same time as Yugoslavia assumed the role of leader among the non-aligned countries in the Third World.

An important consequence of this situation was a re-evaluation of basic tenets in the dominant (Soviet) version of Marxist ideology, culminating in the party program of 1958 and the institutional changes of the 1960s. The Stalinist version of Marxism-Leninism was branded as state-capitalism or etatisme, representing a distortion of the teachings of Marx/Engels and Lenin. As an alternative the Yugoslav party, or League of Communists, formulated its theory of socialist self-management, based on the idea that the workers themselves, not the state, should control the factories and the surplus

¹² On social and political development in post-war Yugoslavia see Rusinow (1977)

value generated in the process of labour. Another important aspect was the role assigned to the party, which, according to Yugoslav doctrine, would not participate directly in the government of society. In fact, the Yugoslavs claimed that their institutional system was the beginning of the "withering away of the state" and the formation of a classless society ruled by free associations of workers.

A logical outcome of this model was the autonomy of enterprises, which could not be ensured unless a socialist market-economy was introduced. Without going into details, this proved to be one of the most controversial aspects of the Yugoslav reforms, and it continues to be an important political issue, as it is bound to have effects on the party's influence in society.

Bearing in mind that it is debatable to what extent Yugoslavia really constitutes a market-economy, and being aware of oscillations in political development, one could, nevertheless, argue that Yugoslavia, in comparison to other socialist states in Eastern Europe, is characterized by a fairly high degree of economic and political decentralization.

That is, even though the party ultimately controls the self-governing institutions, the fact that not only industrial or commercial enterprises, but also various government agencies and institutions were organized according to the principle of self-management, did have important consequences.

At first, the system meant that the strictly hierarchical structure was modified, that there were more institutions and levels involved in formulation and implementation of policy. That is, even if the party was in control in every single case, the possible arenas of autonomous decision-making were increased, which meant that, within the power-elite itself there developed different interests and alliances. (Perhaps Yugoslavia more than other East European states could be understood by the concept of interest-group, so much discussed in the study of socialist countries (Skilling 1983).

Secondly, by relying on the constitutional principles of the system, it was in some cases possible to pursue policies not preferred or foreseen by the political leadership on higher levels. This has been

illustrated by, for example, the situation at the universities of Zagreb and Belgrade, or Pristina.

The point is, then, that the political system, at least to some degree, gave rise to autonomous social institutions, and a specific type of pluralism.

Trends in Literature and the Arts

The first area of culture to experience a more relaxed attitude from the side of the party was literature.¹³ The era of socialist realism was in Yugoslavia comparatively short, and the concept never pervaded literary life entirely. As early as 1949, the first proposals in the direction of a free literature were made, and in the beginning of the fifties there were heated polemics in the literary magazines between the Yugoslav version of "Zhdanovism" and more liberal currents. 1952, at the Third congress of Yugoslav authors in Ljubljana, the basic tenets of socialist realism were attacked by the well-known Croatian writer Miroslav Krleža, and since the mid-fifties the party only occasionally interfered directly in literary affairs.

The price paid for autonomy was that literature was confined strictly to art, and Yugoslav literature of the sixties has been described as "socialist aestheticism", that is, a literature very much oriented to art for art's sake. This meant that the new literary climate found its most interesting expressions in a rich and vital poetry, with modernist poets of very high quality, such as Vasko Popa or Miodrag Pavlović. A new prose, oriented towards Yugoslav contemporary reality would not really appear until the end of the seventies.

Nevertheless, the autonomy of literature was extremely important as a model, and it played a great cultural role, as a means of communication with abroad, and as an instrument of reflection vis-a-vis the indigenous cultural tradition.

The reorientation of foreign policy had two important consequences in the field of culture. On one hand, Yugoslavia was a comparatively open society, and in the 1960s the Yugoslavs could

¹³ On literary life in post-war Yugoslavia, see Lukić (1968)

freely leave their country, albeit to seek employment they could not find at home, but even before the labour migrations, it was possible to study abroad, participate in conferences etc.

Another aspect was the availability of foreign press and literature, and above all, a unique and outstanding policy of translation. Not only the most important modern classics in fiction were translated, but also major works in psychology, linguistics, semiotics, literary theory, sociology, political science, and religion.

Compared with for example his colleague in Sweden, a Yugoslav intellectual would have more (and earlier) access in his own language to authors like Max Weber, Durkheim, Heidegger, Freud, Bahtin, Luria, Saussure, etc.

The Renaissance of Empirical Sociology

In the cultural and social climate created by the political and ideological re-orientation, it was natural that sociology would re-appear.¹⁴ Having been banned as a "bourgeois" science, sociology was introduced again in the late fifties. A Yugoslav association of philosophy and sociology was formed 1956, which two years later evolved into independent associations of sociology and philosophy. In the academic year of 1959/60 departments of sociology were established within the universities of Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana. At the same time autonomous social science research institutes started to function in the major cities of most Yugoslav republics. The first generation of students got their diplomas in 1963, and master and doctoral programs in sociology were started.

A major event was the philosophical conference of Bled 1960, where "Humanist Marxism" appeared as the leading force in Yugoslav philosophy, the consequences of which we will discuss below.

In 1971 sections for various sociological sub disciplines, including sociology of religion, were formed within the Yugoslav sociological association. A number of sociological journals were

¹⁴ There exists no comprehensive history of Yugoslav post-war sociology. For an introduction see Tomović (1968) and articles by Kostić (1978), Radovanović (1972, 1976), Deutsch (1977), and Golubović (1976).

published by the association and its republican branches: Sociologija (Sociology), the organ of the Yugoslav association, Sociologija sela (Rural Sociology, published by the Zagreb institute of Rural sociology), Revija za sociologiju (Sociological Review, Zagreb), Sociološki pregled (Sociological Review, Belgrade), Kultura (Culture, Belgrade). In addition many other journals published articles in sociology or neighbouring fields: Teorija in praksa (Theory and Practice, Ljubljana), Pogledi (Opinions, Split), Naše teme (Our themes, Zagreb), Pregled (Review, Sarajevo), Gledišta (Viewpoints, Belgrade), Politička Misao (Political Thought, Zagreb), and, of course, Praxis (Zagreb). In these journals were published both theoretical and empirical studies, as well as discussions concerning vital social problems.

By the end of the sixties sociology was, thus, established as an academic discipline and social institution, investigating, and commenting on, various aspects of socialist society. An idea about the profile of Yugoslav sociology is given by the figures below referring to items in a bibliography covering the period 1959-1969 (Radovanović 1972:539). (It should be added that stenciled reports are not included):

Rural and urban sociology	199
Sociological theory	187
Sociology of politics and law	123
Family sociology	105
Sociology of self-management	102
Sociology of culture (including religion)	97
Other areas	98

The reasons behind this rapid development are described in the following manner by a Yugoslav sociologist:

Socialist society is above all the conscious organized and planned direction of society, requiring rational steering (racionalno upravljanje), self-management and harmonious development of socio-economic, and other (socio-political, ideological-cultural, scientific, socio-professional and others) activities, processes and relations. (Radovanović 1976:118)

A decisive role was of course played by the party itself and its interest in data on fundamental social processes and attitudinal structures among the population:

The Communist Party, respectively the LCY, does not any more have, nor wishes to have all power in its hands and directly be involved in all spheres, processes and forms of concrete social life. And the party itself is relying on sociological investigations and scientific analysis as a basis of its own action. (Radovanović 1976:118)

If we disregard some of the formulations and concepts used by Radovanović, it is clear that these attitudes were not unique to the Yugoslav party. All over Eastern Europe, including the USSR, sociology was reintroduced at about the same time (Jonsson 1975). There was a general feeling that society, in a modern situation, needed the kind of knowledge provided by sociology, and there was a widespread belief, not only in Eastern Europe, in the possibility of rational government based on the social sciences. Alvin Gouldner (1970) has pointed out that the basic assumptions, as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches, were very similar between Soviet sociology and Anglo-American functionalist social science.

If it is true, then, that the rebirth of sociology could not be explained exclusively by the specific features of Yugoslav society, it is nevertheless the case, that the further development of sociology in Yugoslavia was to have some unique characteristics not to be found in other socialist countries. These aspects are a direct consequence of the institutional structure and the political and ideological changes in Yugoslavia.

As was mentioned in the introduction, there was already a sociological tradition in Yugoslavia, originating in the modernization process of the 19th century, and institutionalized in the 1930s. The pre-war sociology¹⁵ had especially devoted itself to the problems caused by changes in the countryside but had also discussed political aspects of the national question, as well as the characteristic features of different South-Slav cultural traditions.

¹⁵ For a detailed history of Yugoslav pre-war sociology, see Mitrović (1982)

Some sociologists, but by no means all, had been of a Marxist orientation. Moreover, those closely affiliated with the communist movement had not been involved in independent research on any larger scale. This was after all the period of Stalinism and ideological struggle.

The majority of pre-war sociologists began to study society from a more or less explicit Marxist frame of reference, whereas others continued their earlier approach. The important point is, that, among the first generations of post-war sociologists, there were those who had direct links to an earlier indigenous tradition.

Of importance is also the fact that the first generation of doctors of sociology received their basic training in disciplines like philosophy, history, law or economics. This gave Yugoslav sociology a typical "scholarly" character, in terms of theoretical "style", and in some centres, such as in Belgrade, sociology was dominated by philosophical discourse.

There is as yet no comprehensive history of Yugoslav post-war sociology, and different periodisations are used by different scholars.

The first period lasting up to the sixties, which corresponds to our "early period" of Yugoslav sociology of religion, is for example called "ideological-partisan" (Radovanović 1976:121) and is characterised by the domination of "histomat" (Adam 1984), or the theoretical discussions about the relationship between historical/dialectical materialism and sociology (Milošević 1984).

The sixties is the period of institutionalisation of sociology as an academic discipline (Milošević 1984) and has also been referred to as the period of empiricism/positivism and critical sociology (Radovanović 1976:121). On one hand there was a great interest in pure description of attitudes and social structure, on the other hand, there was a reinterpretation of Marxism in terms of its applicability to Yugoslav society.

Although there was a difference between the research institutes and the universities in this respect, there was never a total split between a more pragmatically oriented "opinion-polling" and a theoretical sociology, as university professors were active in the institutes.

To some authors the relationship empirical-theoretical was equivalent to a conflict between functionalism and humanism, which is not entirely accurate. We will come back to this issue in more detail when discussing Yugoslav sociology of religion.

The Philosophy of Praxis

Of crucial importance for later events was the development within philosophy.¹⁶ The break with the Soviet Union, and the criticism of Soviet society fairly soon led to a re-evaluation of hitherto unanimously accepted truths in the dominant (Soviet) version of Marxist philosophy.

This involved a general criticism of Stalinism, and an attempt to revive what was referred to as the "authentic" Marx, based on the study of his early works. It should be pointed out that this process was not really started by the party leadership, not being too interested in theoretical matters, but was instead the result of discussions among younger philosophers and social scientists in Zagreb and Belgrade. In 1953 the *Rani radovi* (Early works) by Marx and Engels were published in Serbo-Croatian, under the editorship of the later well-known philosophers Predrag Vranicki, Branko Bošnjak, and Gajo Petrović. The volume contained parts of the "Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher", the "Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts" of 1844, (including the "Theses on Feuerbach"), the "German Ideology" as well as other, minor, studies.

The importance of this volume is not to be underestimated. It arrived during a period of ideological bewilderment and reassessment. The first steps towards self-management had been taken; the party had changed its name into the symbolical "League of Communists", but it was still an open question where to go from here.

In the preface to the second edition (1960) professor Vranicki says:

¹⁶ On Yugoslav post-war philosophy, especially the dominant, humanist current, see Petrović (1972), Marković & Cohen (1975), Sher (1977) and Gruenwald (1983). A different (dialectical-materialist) view is represented by Stojković (1974).

The first edition of these works was published 1953, in the prime of the efforts of Yugoslav Marxists and all our nations, to give the socialist movement in our country a needed humanist content, and thereby overcoming the first phases of socialist development, as well as the bureaucratic-etatiste conception of socialism, until this day widely spread all over the world. Socialism is essentially a process of liberation from various kinds of human alienation, also those expressed in etatist/hired-labour relations, disregarding type of society.

Exactly for this reason these works are so important for an understanding of the problems concerned, and because of that they were positively received by all those in our country who are more intensely and profoundly interested not only in the economic and political, but also in the philosophical basis and meaning of the struggle for socialism and a new man. (Marx & Engels 1973:31).

During the fifties, this loosely connected circle of like-minded philosophers devoted themselves to the laborious study of the origins of Marxism and the formation of the Marxist tradition. They were, eventually, convinced of a fundamental unity in the works of Marx, based on the humanist ideas expressed in the concept of alienation.

Another aspect of their work was the intense preoccupation with contemporary philosophy, Marxist as well as non-Marxist. In this respect there were certain differences between the intellectual centres in Yugoslavia. In Belgrade philosophers especially studied Anglo-Saxon logical positivism, semantics, and pragmatism, whereas in Zagreb and Ljubljana the interest concentrated on German and French philosophy, phenomenology, existentialism, personalism.

An important role for the later institutionalisation of the new ideas in philosophy was played by the journal *Pogledi* (Viewpoints) edited by the Zagreb sociologist Rudi Supek. It was started in the aftermath of Krleža's speech at the authors' congress in 1952 and was supposed to be a forum for new trends in cultural life. Many of the well-known intellectuals from the 1960s were among the collaborators. The journal was, however, closed down in 1954 as a

result of the general atmosphere following the downfall of Djilas.¹⁷

Towards the end of the fifties it was clear that there were, notwithstanding internal differences, two major camps in Yugoslav philosophy: those who had abandoned Stalinism (including important ideas of Engels and Lenin) and those who, while critical of some aspects of Stalinist philosophy, were not prepared to throw away fundamental tenets of dialectical materialism.

These discussions culminated in the confrontation at a philosophical conference held in Bled (Slovenia) 1960, which resulted in a victory of what was to be known as the Humanist Marxism of Yugoslavia. The main issue at this conference, symbolizing the cleavage, were different views on the *teorija odraza*, or "theory of reflection".¹⁸ On one hand, there were those claiming the primacy of the "base" in relation to the "superstructure", and understanding human perception of the world as a direct reflection of an existing, true, reality. On the other hand, there were those rejecting these ideas, understanding man as an active being of "praxis". The debate is described in the following way by Mihajlo Marković, one of the active participants:

During this lively, and at moments dramatic debate, orthodox Marxists tried to save the theory of reflection, the corner stone of the epistemology developed by Soviet dialectical materialists and the Bulgarian philosopher Todor Pavlov. The main objections addressed to this theory were: first, it ignores the whole experience of German classical philosophy and goes back to eighteenth century dualism of a material object *in itself* and a spiritual subject; second, there is an implicit dogmatism in the view that reflection is the essential property of all consciousness - how challenge products of mind which by definition are

¹⁷ Actually, Djilas had branded "Pogledi" as representing rightist ideas, shortly before he himself was ousted (!) According to Sher (1977:28) as an attempt to enlist the support of Krleža on behalf of his own unorthodox views. In the end, with Djilas gone, Krleža helped to stop the journal.

¹⁸ The discussions at the conference are printed in Pavičević et al (1960). For an overview in English, see Sher (1977).

reflections of reality, i.e. true? Third, the theory is false because, as a matter of fact, consciousness, far from passively accompanying and copying material processes, very often anticipates and projects not-yet-existent material objects. The attempt to define the theory of reflection by saying that in such cases we deal with "creative reflections" made the impression of an *ad hoc* convention by which the concept of reflection was expanded in such a way as to become totally uninformative.

During this debate the view prevailed that the central category of Marx's philosophy was free, human, creative activity - practice. Dualism of matter and mind, object and subject was superseded by showing how these categories can be derived from the notion of *practice*. Objects we speak meaningfully about are not just given in themselves, they are objects of a historic human world, transformed by our practical activity, mediated by our previous knowledge, language, needs and indeed the whole of human culture at a given historical moment. The subject is not just a locus of reflection of external reality, but a complex historical being, which not only observes and infers, but also projects what is not yet there, yet might develop. Only within this context does the category of reflection become meaningful, only when it has been practically established that certain products of mind have their antecedent correlates in physical reality may they be considered reflections. (Marković & Cohen 1975:22-23)

This event was the official beginning of humanist Marxism in Yugoslavia, having important consequences for the development of sociology.

The group of philosophers, (and sociologists), criticizing the "theory of reflection" had by now established themselves as the leading representatives of Yugoslav philosophy. They dominated the philosophical associations in Croatia and Serbia and occupied important positions at the universities.

In 1963 the circle started a "philosophical summer school" on the island of Korčula, near Dubrovnik, which was held annually

until 1973. In 1964 they founded the journal "Praxis", published in Zagreb by the philosophical association of Croatia. Praxis very soon was to be known all over the academic world, and the Yugoslav philosophers and social scientists managed to establish intimate contacts with a whole range of well-known, more or less Marxist-oriented philosophers and sociologists/psychologists. Members of the editorial council of Praxis, which appeared both in a Yugoslav and international edition, were people like: Zygmunt Baumann, Thomas Bottomore, Erich Fromm, Lucien Goldmann, Jürgen Habermas, Agnes Heller, Leszek Kolakowski, David Riesman and others.

The phenomenon of "Praxis" had both direct and indirect effects on the sociology of religion. At first, the mere fact that the journal had managed to establish itself was of great importance. It symbolized a new tone, a new cultural climate, which was described in the following way by Gajo Petrovic (1972) in his "Why Praxis?" (Čemu praksis), admittedly a partisan view, but largely accurate:

The renewed undogmatic Marxist thought brought back trust not only in Marxism, but also in philosophy itself. Philosophy started to preoccupy writers, artists, scientists, experts, workers, civil servants, "ordinary people", in short all those who, regardless of profession or place of work, tended to think about the fundamental issues of their lives, and of the society in which they lived. The openness, determination and steadfastness by which our philosophy confronted the fateful problems of the contemporary world and our Yugoslav society, won enormous respect among the general public. The word "philosopher" almost became synonymous with a pure and uncompromising fighter for truth, with an intellectual who did not withdraw himself in his ivory tower, but, sharing with his people all difficulties and hardships, was prepared to struggle for a freer life and for more human relations between peoples. (Petrović 1972:63).

Praxis also influenced the new sociology of religion more directly. Of the prominent discussants at the Bled conference, Branko Bošnjak, philosopher of religion and member of the editorial board

of Praxis, was one of the founders of sociology of religion at the university of Zagreb.¹⁹

On the "loosing" side were among others Veljko Ribar and Ljubomir Živković, who belonged to the "least" dogmatic scholars of the early period. Another was Vuko Pavičević, professor of ethics in Belgrade, who, however, wrote the first, rather balanced, introduction to sociology of religion, relying on contemporary authors (Pavičević 1970).

Although Bošnjak was the only one closely related with "Praxis", some of the representatives of the "new school" published articles in the journal. They and their colleagues were not "Praksisti", as the term was used by official spokesmen, but the general ideas of humanist Marxism, with its emphasis on the concept of alienation, were to influence the majority of the sociologists of religion.

Besides, the journal published articles on, and by, non-Marxist thinkers discussing religion, and thus contributed to the internationalisation of Yugoslav cultural life as far as the study of religion is concerned.

Church-State Relations

Of great importance, finally, for the development of a new sociology of religion, was the change in the relationship between church²⁰ and state.

Yugoslav post-war history could be described as a continuous process of de-escalation and de-ideologization of church-state relations, with temporary reversals of the general trend. According

¹⁹ It should be noted that affiliated with "Praxis" were also Ljuba Tadić, Miladin Životić, and Andrija Krešić, whom we discussed in chapter 2, and who could be said to represent an intermediate stage between the old and new Yugoslav sociology of religion. Except for Krešić, who wrote a philosophy of religion (1981) they did not show any great interest in religious issues.

²⁰ The term "church" is used as a short form for "religious communities", the author being aware that there are more than one church in Yugoslavia, and that Islam, the third major religious group, does not constitute a "church".

to Paul Mojsez (1972) the character of church-state relations could be categorized as follows:

"all out conflict": 1945-1953

"de-escalation": 1953-1962

"suspension of hostilities and de-escalation": 1962-1967

"constructive rapprochement and dialogue": 1967-1972

This periodization corresponds to the findings of Alexander (1979) and to Yugoslav views on the subject.²¹ (It should be noted that in official versions, like e.g. Lazić (1970, 1981), the continuity of the party's policy since the war is emphasized).

Immediately after the war the situation was somewhat unclear. According to some sources the new government was prepared to reach some kind of agreement with the church. Whatever the case may be, it soon turned out that relations deteriorated. On one hand the party acted harshly towards those clergymen who had been real, or alleged, collaborators with the enemy. On the other hand, there was fairly soon a more or less systematic anti-religious policy, which on a local level resulted in persecution of both priests and believers.

What is fully clear, is that the socialist state tried to abolish all privileges that religious communities might have benefited from earlier and consciously tried to circumscribe the social and cultural position of the church. The purpose was to undermine the church as a public institution, influencing the (moral and political) attitudes of believers.

Usually this is referred to as a logical step by a state wishing to be neutral vis-a-vis religion – and of course it is, but there is no point in denying that the party, on ideological grounds, was hostile, or at least suspicious, towards the church and religion. This was a traditional attitude in the Communist movement (corresponding to the very strong anti-communist ideas in the church-hierarchies) and it was reinforced by events during the war. This, however, meant that also ordinary people were encouraged to sever the bonds with

²¹ See for example Roter 1976. 1972 starts a new period of conflict lasting until 1974/1975 (Magnusson 1974, 1978). After a period of good or satisfactory relations there is a (relatively short) crisis in 1981 (Magnusson 1982).

the church. As we have already seen there were conscious efforts to re-educate especially young people.

All religious communities experienced difficulties to varying degrees, with priests and bishops being imprisoned or harassed in public. The conflict was most serious between the Catholic Church and the socialist state and reached a climax with the trial of the archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Stepinac in 1946.²²

Gradually, as a consequence of the general political climate, relations were improved towards the end of the 1950s. The process of normalization started with the Muslims and the Orthodox, and in 1966 the Vatican and Yugoslavia signed a "Protocol" regulating the position of the Catholic Church.

Religious affairs were now more clearly regulated by law, and on a republican or federal level relations were on the whole satisfactory.

In the new situation the church had greater possibilities to manoeuvre, and very soon the Catholic church started an intensive activity in fields like publishing, religious instruction, or education of clergy. In the sixties the Catholic weekly and bimonthly papers had larger editions than the official dailies in Slovenia or Croatia. New churches were built or older restored, and large number of believers was gathering on traditional festive occasions. The same tendencies, but to a lesser degree, were noticeable among the Orthodox and Muslims.

One area where the Catholic church was particularly active, is what in Yugoslavia is sometimes referred to as "non-church activities", that is, various social programs initiated by the church: kindergartens, charity towards the old and disabled, homes for orphans, or sports- and other youth activities.

These developments were not unanimously greeted as positive by party members. There was a fear that the church would become

²² Stepinac was accused of collaboration with the fascist Ustasha-state, in particular of having agreed to the forced baptism of Serbs. According to Falconi (1970) this is not entirely correct. On the other hand he emphasizes the ambiguous position adopted by the Archbishop, who could, at best, be described as politically naive. From the point of view of the church in Croatia Stepinac is innocent and is the object of massive devotion. From time to time the issue strains relations between state and church (Magnusson 1982).

too dominant, and there were those who believed that religion as such was increasing in importance, especially among young people.

The socialist state thus had a need of more precise knowledge about various aspects of the religious situation, from developments and ideological currents within religious organizations, to attitudes and behaviour of ordinary people/believers.

Therefore, with the renaissance of empirical sociology, it was natural that religion too would be investigated in a sociological manner. As a consequence, at the universities of Zagreb and Ljubljana there were formed, in the mid-sixties, institutes or centres for the study of religion and atheism. Many of the surveys undertaken were sponsored by the Socialist Alliance, the front-organization coordinating, among other things, the policy vis-a-vis the religious communities.

Within the framework of these research centres, there were also developed masters- and doctoral programs in sociology of religion, to satisfy the needs both of scholars at the universities, and of administrators on various levels, competent to handle religious matters in a more sophisticated way.

Apart from Ljubljana and Zagreb, "informal" centres or research groups developed around sociologists with special interest in religion. Such was the case in Split and Sarajevo.

It is, however, symptomatic, that sociology of religion was not actively promoted in the Orthodox areas of Yugoslavia. Although research was conducted in Belgrade and Skopje, this was on a much smaller scale and could not be compared to the situation in Catholic Croatia or Slovenia. This was logical, for several reasons. At first, the Catholic Church was, in most respects, the strongest religious organization in Yugoslavia. It was international; it was characterized by a specific, highly hierarchical structure, with a comparatively large number of (unmarried) religious functionaries. The clergy was more educated and well organized, and more able to counter the official ideology on a philosophical level. Moreover, religious observance (participation in rituals, religious instruction etc.) was traditionally very high in Catholic areas. The situation in the Muslim

and Orthodox parts of Yugoslavia was, in varying degrees different, and religion was generally not perceived as a political problem, unless the national question was involved, as in the multinational/multiconfessional areas of Bosnia or Macedonia.

Another difference was that religion in the Catholic areas, in spite of tendencies to secularisation, managed to keep its influence also among considerable parts of the urban population. Islam and Orthodoxy were much more part of an agrarian, traditional culture and faced more problems when trying to adapt to a modern situation. As a consequence the number of Catholic intellectuals were far greater than their Orthodox or Muslim counterparts.

In Croatia and Slovenia the cultural role of the church in contemporary society, was thus more important. In two respects. At first, there was the already mentioned existence of a Catholic intelligentsia. In Slovenia, for example, a strong Christian Socialist movement had during the war played an important role in the liberation of the country. The leader of the Christian socialists, Edvard Kocbek, was not only a respected politician of moral integrity; he was also the most eminent poet of Slovenia, perhaps of all Yugoslavia.

In another sense, this meant that religion, as a cultural phenomenon was of interest also to those not believing. Or at least something that could not be ignored. In general, therefore, there was a greater understanding for religion among Marxist intellectuals, and, notwithstanding certain conflictual periods, more tolerance.

In the Orthodox areas the relationship was simpler. There was a general positivist-radical atmosphere, where religion was looked upon as a more or less reactionary phenomenon. By definition an intellectual was at least irreligious, if not hostile towards religion.

In conclusion then, for various reasons, there was much more concern about religion within the party organizations in Slovenia and Croatia. And it was natural that sociology of religion would be more developed in these republics.

Secularisation of Ideology

To be complete, our discussion of the origin of Yugoslav sociology of religion would have to say something about the general socio-cultural situation and political atmosphere in the 1960s. Besides the political and ideological transformations referred to earlier, Yugoslavia was subject to far-reaching social changes.²³

As measured by usual indicators the country was undergoing a period of rapid modernization. From being a predominantly agrarian society, Yugoslavia was on its way to become an industrialized, urbanized country. About 200 000 persons annually left their villages to find employment in the towns and cities. The rate of growth was one of the highest in the world. Education and social services were spreading to the villages, as did communications and mass media. The standard of living was rising, and Yugoslavia in some respects began to look like a consumer society of the Western type.

This meant that large numbers of people were confronted with other values and cultural patterns than those dominant in the patriarchal village. It was a two-way process, however; the atmosphere in both village and town changed. At the same time as modern life was reaching the countryside, the migrants brought with them attitudes and behavioural patterns still very traditional. Yugoslav sociologists use the expression "urbanization of the village and ruralisation of the town", to describe the new cultural blend typical of many parts of Yugoslavia.

However, the rapid economic growth, and certain shortcomings of a planned economy, resulted in balance problems leading to the economic reforms of the early sixties, culminating in 1965. One consequence of the new policies was the closing down of non-profitable enterprises, resulting in mass unemployment and great difficulties to absorb the constant labour surplus provided by the villages and the educational system. This in turn led to the large migrations to Western Europe, where towards the end of the sixties around one million Yugoslavs were employed.

²³ For sources on the social, cultural and ideological situation discussed on the following pages, see Magnusson (1986).

In short, social change, as well as institutional reforms, resulted in large and visible differences in standard of living and style of life between different strata of society. This occurred in a situation where economic development had not really reduced regional differences or the inequalities between urban and rural areas. In spite of the impressive results, Yugoslavia was in many ways a developing country, where the social distance between the haves and have-nots was very great, at least in a European perspective.

The introduction of self-management, and the attempts during the sixties to create a socialist market economy, was, moreover, accompanied by changes in the official symbolic system. Whereas the Yugoslav communist party had earlier promoted the values traditionally associated with socialism, that is: central planning, a strong state, economic and social equality, and solidarity, now the accent was instead on efficiency, individualism, and differential salaries. It was a distinctly "modern" symbol system, appealing to the new middle class of technicians, managers and administrators.

However, especially in the Balkan areas of Yugoslavia the indigenous tradition was more compatible with the "traditional" version of socialism. And many party-members had difficulties to adapt to the new situation, which intuitively seemed contrary to basic aspects of socialism.

A situation like this, created tensions and conflicts on many levels: social, cultural, political, ethnic and religious. Conflicts between modern and patriarchal society were reinforced by (potential) conflicts between the elite/ middle class and the majority of the population. And were further aggravated by national issues.

Yugoslav socialism was thus undergoing a crisis of legitimacy, or a process of "routinisation of charisma". On one hand, the glorious victories during the war and the heroic times of "socialist reconstruction" were now far away, and, on the other hand, the shifts in policy and ideological style, coupled with social and cultural processes of a more general kind, which the political system did not - and could not - completely control, all this led to an ideological crisis, noticeable in different ways.

It was in this situation that Yugoslav sociology was reborn and consolidated. What started as a pragmatic instrument to be used by the state became an independent, or semi-independent social institution. It is outside Yugoslavia often forgotten or ignored that Yugoslav sociology cannot be reduced to "Humanist Marxism" only. It played an important role as creator of an intellectual-cultural model. But it is hard to imagine that the situation would have been the same, if there had not been an empirical social science.

The point is, that Yugoslav sociology, sometimes almost by accident, started to provide the general public with a more comprehensive picture of society, different from the one officially promoted.

This had effects on sociology itself. The sociology of self-management grew into a political sociology, discussing the power relations in Yugoslavia, on the basis of empirical data on the real structures of influence in enterprises, political assemblies or party organizations.

In the same way, sociology of culture was able to show the dramatic differences in ways of life between the middle classes and a semi-proletarian class of unskilled workers and peasant-workers.

Sociology thus acted as an instrument of self-reflection and provided arguments for the philosophical and ideological criticism formulated in "Praxis" and other journals.

A key area of research was sociology of youth. First, the general socio-economic position of young people was a source of concern. Second, and perhaps even more worrying were the ideological attitudes of Yugoslav youth. It was revealed in sociological studies that large segments of the young generation were estranged from the official ideology. It was difficult to make them enthusiastic about Marxism, partly because it was hard to understand, partly because social reality seemed to contradict the ideal version taught at school.

It is in this context the new sociology of religion is institutionalized. From the point of view of state and party, the purpose was to get an accurate picture of the salience of religious attitudes. How strong were religious beliefs? To what extent was the church successful in furthering

its teaching? Was the number of believers increasing? What about the strength of religion compared to that of socialist ideology?

These were the questions the politicians wanted answered. However, like other branches of social research, sociology of religion tended to become autonomous, in the sense that it began to formulate its problems independently, in relation to sociological tradition and/or to the contemporary social and cultural situation in Yugoslavia.

This also meant that the empirical studies of religion, even those providing only data, without any more comprehensive discussion, started a life of their own, as it were. They could be used, for example, also by the "other" side, in discussions concerning the position of the church or believers. In a situation where the press was becoming more independent, and where the social and political institutions created started to function according to their own dynamics, it was indeed difficult to control sociology.

Empirical Studies and Problem Areas

In a relatively short period of time several large investigations were conducted, concerning various aspects of religious life.

Unfortunately there are not many studies devoted to Yugoslavia as a whole. The institute of social sciences in Belgrade published one such investigation in 1964 (Bačević 1964). There was another study four years later, about which, however very little is known. There is though, a report based on the Yugoslav census of 1953, where belief is discussed according to religious tradition, ethnic and republican affiliation, sex, age and urban/rural background (Fiamengo 1957b).

Instead we have relatively detailed knowledge about the situation in Slovenia and Croatia, where it is also possible to study changes over time.

There are several studies concerning the religious situation in the Zagreb area²⁴ as well as in Slovenia²⁵

²⁴ (Bošnjak & Bahtijarević 1969, Bošnjak & Bahtijarević 1970, Bahtijarević 1969, Bahtijarević & Vrcan 1975a, 1975b, see also Vrcan 1975a, 1975b, 1976)

²⁵ .(Odnos...(1968), (Ne)religioznost...(1972), Roter (1968a, 1968b, 1970c, 1971a, 1978,

There are also investigations of Christians and Muslims in the rural areas of Bosnia (Ćimić 1970a) and Macedonia (Kostovski (1972), and of the religious situation in Belgrade (Pantić 1967, 1974; Kaljević-Bogdanović 1972).

Many studies are devoted to religious attitudes and behaviour among youth from various parts of the country: Zagreb²⁶, the Croatian countryside²⁷, Split, on the Dalmatian coast²⁸, Istria²⁹, Bosnia³⁰ and Slovenia.³¹ These studies concern pupils in elementary and high school, as well as students, young workers and village youth.

There were also investigations of the attitudes to religion among teachers (Mejak 1972), members of the Communist party (Pelhan 1970), and soldiers in the Yugoslav People's Army (Hajdić 1969, Samardžić 1973).

Another topic of research was the recruitment and general situation of Catholic priests (Curin 1969, Makovec 1971, Mlivončić 1971, Pljačko 1973).

The results of these investigations are discussed elsewhere, but a few remarks should be made. In general religion is still important in Yugoslavia and a majority of the population identifies itself as belonging to a religious tradition. Probably 60-80 % of the Yugoslavs could be regarded as religious, depending on definition. There are, however, characteristic differences between the three major traditions: Orthodox, Catholics, and Muslims. On the whole, the Catholics and Muslims are, according to usual indicators, more religious than the Orthodox. There is, further, the already mentioned

1980), Kerševan (1970a, 1970c, 1971a), Roter & Kerševan (1982)

²⁶ Bahtijarević (1970, 1971, 1972a, 1975c)

²⁷ Bahtijarević (1975a)

²⁸ Vrcan (1969b, 1969c, 1973b) Rosić (1973)

²⁹ Petrić (1973)

³⁰ Cvitković (1972a),

³¹ Hribar (1970a, 1970b, 1971, 1972a, 1972b), Kerševan (1969), Jogan (1970), Ivančič (1981), Kerševan & Ivančič (1981).

difference between Catholics and Orthodox in terms of urbanization and religiosity. Whereas the Orthodox in the villages are keeping the religious tradition, those living in cities are rapidly losing contact with the church, which is not the case in Catholic areas. This is to be explained by differences in religious style and historical experience. Anyhow, church-oriented religiosity, such as participation in ritual and religious instruction, is much higher among Catholics. The Muslims in urban areas are showing a behaviour similar to the Orthodox, but not to that extent. Moreover, there are, like in other Muslim countries tendencies to a religious revival.

As far as the social position of religion is concerned the situation is both similar to and different from that in Western Europe. On one hand there is the same difference between urban and rural areas, although it might be greater in Yugoslavia. On the other hand, Yugoslav workers are much more religious than their counterparts in other industrialized countries. Finally, the middle class is not religious, but identifies, more than other groups, with socialist ideology.

Besides survey-research, the Yugoslav scholars have produced (qualitative) content analyses and historical studies, as well as political and legal analyses.

Of central interest were changes in the theological, philosophical, and socio-political orientation of the Vatican and the international Catholic Church³² as well as the inner relations and conflicts within the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia.³³ Another area was the legal situation of religious communities in Yugoslavia and the attitude of the state towards religion and church.³⁴ There were also studies of

³² Čvrlje 1980, 1981, Čvrlje, Dugandžija & Unković 1976, Kavčič 1967, Maštruko 1976, Mikecin 1969, Mlivončić 1969b, Roter 1970b, Roter 1972, Roter 1973, Vrcan 1981, Vušković & Vrcan 1980,

³³ Ćimić 1975a, Frid 1970, 1971, 1976, Kavčič 1967, Mlivončić 1969a, Petrinović 1969, Popin 1972, Roter 1970a, Roter 1970b, Roter 1976, Roter 1979, Roter 1982, Šegvić 1970, 1971, 1972a, 1972b, Suljević 1972, Vrcan 1972, Vrcan 1981, Vušković 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, Vušković & Vrcan 1980, Žanko 1968, 1969.

³⁴ Berlot 1981b, Ceranić 1970, Ćimić 1969a, 1969c, 1970b, 1970f, Ćimić 1972b, 1975a,

the Catholic press³⁵ and the problems concerning school and religion, and Catholic education.³⁶

Theoretical Issues

The theoretical problems dealt with by the new generation of sociologists of religion, were, to a large extent, those that had been in focus during the earlier period. That is, questions like: The character and function of religion, religious change (or decline), the role of religion in socialist society, and, finally, the attitude of party and state towards religion. One area that received very little attention, though, was the historical evolution of religion.

However, even if the main problems were the same, the approach was different. Influenced by Humanist Marxism, and confronted with other sociological perspectives, as well as with empirical research (both from the West and Yugoslavia), and acting within the specific socio-cultural context of the sixties, sociologists had to ask their questions differently.

At first, the character of religion: was it really true that the essence of religion was accounted for by the expression "false consciousness", as understood by earlier sociology? Could the existence of religion be explained referring to lack of knowledge, and could religion be overcome by means of education?

And was it true that religion was to be considered a totally negative phenomenon? After all, there was the modern, "immoral" type of irreligion, and also religious-like phenomena such as nationalism or Stalinism.

Drakić 1982, Frid 1967, 1969a, 1969b, 1970, 1971, Kerševan 1975a, 1976, 1977, 1979, Kušej 1972, Lazić 1967, 1969, 1970, 1976, 1981, Mandić 1969, Novaković 1972, Petrović 1972, Roter 1967, 1970d, 1971a, 1976, 1979, 1982, Suljević 1972, Vrcan 1972, Vušković & Vrcan 1980.

³⁵ (Frid 1972, Pleše 1981, Rogić 1969, Šter 1972)

³⁶ .Bahtijarević 1972a, Brkić 1969b, Ćimić 1967b, 1969b, 1969e, 1971a, 1971c, 1973, 1981, Cvitković 1972, 1974, Erl 1969, Hribar 1972, Jerman 1972, Modič 1972, Pažanin 1969, Mejak 1969, Ujević 1969, Vrcan 1971a, 1969a, 1974b.

A second problem was how to explain the continuing existence of religion in socialist society. Should one not, more than before, recognise the possibility that religion was not just a survival, but even from a Marxist point of view, an integral part of socialist reality? Moreover, what about the fact that religion in some cases seemed to be even more common in socialist, than in capitalist society? Yugoslav workers, for example, were in most respects more religious than their colleagues in France or Italy.

As for the question of religious policy, it seemed obvious that the measures being used in socialist countries were very often counterproductive. And were they at all needed?

The answers given to these questions would depend on the views on Marxism, on sociology in general, and on how "bourgeois" sociology was related to the Marxist tradition. What is interesting in the Yugoslav case is that the earlier sociology was replaced by several theoretical perspectives, which were, however, logical outcomes depending on how certain basic problems were resolved. Generally, the earlier rationalism with its origin in the Enlightenment was rejected by most representatives of the new sociology of religion. Another point in common was the greater understanding, and tolerance, shown towards the religious phenomenon, coupled with a more critical attitude towards various aspects of socialist society. There were, however, important differences in other respects, which will be clear as we proceed. To some extent the problems facing the sociologists of religion were specific, but at the same time there were certain fundamental issues shared by all sociological disciplines. The main problem concerned the possibility of a sociological analysis of socialist society. How, and with what categories, should this society be described? To what extent were the concepts used by Marx and the other classics applicable in the Yugoslav situation? Was socialist society essentially a harmonious social system, or were there major social conflicts of the type existing in other societies? More specific, was the concept of "class" relevant in socialism?

These issues were part of the more general problem of the relationship between Marxist social theory and sociology. When

sociology of religion was introduced the discussions of the nature of (Marxist) sociology had solved the problem in principle, although there were slightly different views on the subject.³⁷ Sociology had achieved legitimacy as an intellectual pursuit and was considered worth while by those in power.

However, the problem remained in the sense that there were different views on the goals of social science. The dominant view, influenced by the Praxis-circle, argued that sociology must be critical, that the ultimate purpose of social science is to change the world, create a new man. In other words, the concept of alienation was central to the practice of sociology.

There were others, less philosophically inclined, to whom alienation never was of prime importance. These sociologists were, in general, more empirically oriented, but also identified themselves as Marxist sociologists.

During the sixties Yugoslav sociology had started to discuss both the classical sociological tradition and contemporary schools. Representative anthologies, and later major works by Weber, Durkheim, Simmel etc, were translated and introduced. And there were reviews and discussions of major theorists and methodological approaches in the sociological journals.³⁸

At this time there was, as in other parts of Eastern Europe a great interest in functionalism, and very often Yugoslav sociology of the 1960s has been described in terms of an opposition between functionalism and critical sociology, where the latter perspective accentuated the conflictual aspects of society, and the former tended

³⁷ This is illustrated by the views represented by the three most common handbooks of sociology used at Yugoslav universities. Whereas Goričar (1970) is of the opinion that historical materialism is synonymous with general sociology, Mandić (1969b) argues that historical materialism is sociology on a more abstract level. That is, historical materialism studies general laws, and sociology specific laws. Lukić (1972) however, maintains that historical materialism is not the same as general sociology. The theories of historical materialism are to be considered as a point of departure, or hypothesis, that must be further investigated by sociology.

³⁸ See the bibliographies of Gasparović (1971, 1976) and Zaječaranović (1971) and bibliographical sections in the main sociological journals.

to be conservative, oriented to social integration.

It has recently been shown in an important article that this is a somewhat simplified version of what was at issue. Davidović (1985) argues that those who criticized the functionalist orientation (i.e. those being members of or inspired by the Praxis-circle) were not always fair in their criticism. They failed to see that some of those branded as "functionalists" (a concept often used as a synonym of "technocracy" or "Stalinism") simply wanted to use a scientific language free of ideology. That is, to describe society as objectively as possible. And that such a wish should be understood as a reaction to an earlier ideologized sociology.

One could perhaps add that it is true that there existed a kind of functionalism which was conservative in the sense that it more or less directly defended status quo. However, the question is how important this current was in sociology proper. There is in Yugoslavia also a "quasi-sociology", represented by spokesmen of the official ideology. Its most typical examples are to be found in various party documents analysing or describing Yugoslav development, or some specific social (crisis) situation. Now, with the advance of sociological discourse, and techniques, politicians and some political scientists, lawyers or sociologists, closely affiliated with the political bodies, would produce "sociology" that was functionalist in this sense.

On the other hand, it could be argued that even those critical of functionalism, were themselves functionalists, because of certain basic properties of the Praxis/Alienation Paradigm. As we will see, various aspects of these issues were of importance for the theoretical discussion of religion, and for the emergence of different "schools" of sociology of religion.

Religion as Alienation: Esad Ćimić

As the first of the new sociologists of religion should be mentioned Esad Ćimić, who started his career at the university of Sarajevo and is now professor at the philosophical faculty of the university in Belgrade. In contrast to most of the sociologists of religion he belongs to the Bosnian cultural milieu and has himself a Muslim background.³⁹ Ćimić began to develop his views on religion in the early sixties and in 1966 his doctoral thesis was published as a book, "Socialist Society and Religion" (Ćimić 1970a), the first Yugoslav dissertation in the field of sociology of religion.

Ćimić has taken part in both the scholarly and political discussion, and for many, not the least the believers, he has come to symbolize a new way of looking at religion. He has tried to show that it is possible, within the framework of what he considers a more genuine understanding of Marxism, to treat religion both in a more relaxed way, and with more principle. Ćimić was also the first scholar to undertake a detailed empirical and in the true sense sociological study of religion. His thesis is apart from a review of Marxist literature on religion and a discussion of the role of religion in present-day Yugoslavia, also a report on an empirical study among Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Basic to Ćimić's approach, what he considers most important in Marx, and what accordingly should be the guiding principle in both theoretical discussions and political action is the concept of alienation. Perhaps more than other Yugoslav sociologists of religion, Ćimić has emphasized this aspect of the Marxian heritage and claimed that the theory of alienation provides a deeper understanding of the role of religion in socialist society - and more generally of this society itself

³⁹ Ćimić identifies himself as a Croat, though. Moreover, he to some extent criticized, or at least expressed some doubts as to the appropriateness of the formation of a *Muslim* nationality among the Serbo-Croatian speaking Muslims in Bosnia (Ćimić 1969f, 1974). For these and other reasons he was forced to leave his post as professor in Sarajevo. He later wrote a book (causing some scandal) about his conflict with the party: "Politics as Fate: A Contribution to the Phenomenology of Political Victimization" (Ćimić 1983).

- at the same time as it would result in political solutions other than those traditionally advocated.

Ćimić was the first scholar who tried to assimilate western sociology with the Marxist frame of reference and in this he served as a model for others. On the whole he has been an inspiration to other sociologists of religion belonging to the new school, at the same time, as he has been open to ideas from his colleagues.

Ćimić's intensive work has sometimes led to a tendency to repetition, but also that the same problem has been discussed from various points of view. Even if it is thus possible to discern an evolution of his theoretical ideas, the core of his sociology remains the same.

Another feature of Ćimić's writings is a tendency sometimes to refer to thoughts and ideas without a thorough discussion or to make relatively brief and expressive statements.⁴⁰ This is of course not unusual in the Marxist tradition,⁴¹ But it could mean that interesting ideas are left unanalysed. And in many cases other sociologists have further discussed ideas referred to by Ćimić. In fact Ćimić has in one way or another touched upon most of the problems dealt with by the new sociology of religion.

The Character of Religion - The Problem of Definition

Ćimić never formulates a clear definition of the religious phenomenon. Although he says that belief in the supernatural is the "minimal definition" of religion (Ćimić 1971a: 16), his point of departure in the thesis and elsewhere is the concept of consciousness:

By religiosity we understand a form of social consciousness arising from the dependence on personified social and natural forces not controlled by man (Ćimić 1970a: 91).

⁴⁰ Such as: "If opium is religion, then religion is opium. I think the thesis that opium has become religion is today more important, than the other way round" (Ćimić 1973:86).

⁴¹ This aspect of Marx' own writings has been discussed by Kadenbach 1970:9-15.

But at the same time he emphasizes that perhaps the most important aspect of religion is the emotional dimension:

One of the mistakes made by earlier theories, was to emphasize the intellectual aspect of religion, and neglect its ritual aspect. These theories continuously discuss the problem whether religious beliefs are true or not; if they are not - how could they be maintained? That question is, on the whole, of secondary importance. Religious beliefs are not, of course, true in the scientific sense, but their social role does not exclusively depend on their truthfulness. In fact, their untruthfulness - the fact that they go beyond experience - often gives the main key to their social function. They are effective exactly because they are not to be proved scientifically. (Ćimić 1969a: 9)

The rationalist view of religion is open to many objections. It does not succeed in realizing that the non-rational (emotional) character of religion performs a function both for society and individual, and because of that could not be overcome by simply replacing religious explanations of the universe with scientific ones. (Ćimić 1969a: 10)

The Origin and Evolution of Religion

Another usual way of describing religion is to stress that it is a "human or social product" historically determined. As far as details in the history of religions are concerned Ćimić has however very little to say, and when he discusses the matter it is evident that he on the whole agrees with the earlier sociology of religion (Ćimić 1970a: 36-45). That is, it is possible to speak of the origin of religion and the understanding of this problem will have consequences for the general approach to religion as a phenomenon. From this point of view religion in its most general form is an expression of human impotence, an inability to grasp and change the world:

As is well known, at a primitive stage of the evolution of society, the world was outside the range of man's restricted intellectual

ability, and man was almost totally within the power of nature. All, or almost all, natural events seemed to be mysterious, unexpected, and unforeseeable. He was constantly in the web of insecurity. In the hands of natural forces, man mystified his situation. (Ćimić 1969d: 25)

Following Engels, Ćimić sees man's relation to nature as decisive for earlier forms of religion, while social conditions become more important for the further development of religion. We will deal later on with the role of religion in contemporary society, but it could be added here that Ćimić argues that man's relation to nature in some situations might still be important for the existence of religion. This is another point in common with the earlier sociology of religion (Ćimić 1970a: 47-48).

The Essence of Religion

Even though Ćimić is using the concepts of consciousness and false consciousness, he downplays the rational dimension of religion. One should, says Ćimić, in the spirit of Marx, primarily see religion as a practical attitude towards reality, as a special way of solving the problems inherent in the human condition. Religion thus becomes an answer to, and an expression of, the fundamental insecurity that for most of history has characterized the situation of man. It is primarily a relation, that is, what is most important is not the attitude or consciousness as such, but its relation to and dependence on social and economic reality.

The sources of religion are to be found in man's social being; that is, religion is man's practical relation towards the world and himself. (Ćimić 1969d: 11)

If we decide to follow Marx's way of thinking, we are advised to treat religion primarily as a *relation*, and secondarily as *consciousness* (a secondary, derivative illusion) which - in the last instance - in spite of its autonomous functioning, will, after it has arisen, be determined by this relation. (Ćimić 1970f: 35)

This view of man's powerlessness means that religion is given a compensatory function. It helps man to live. Ćimić does not see this as something wholly negative. He emphasizes that religion facilitates the integration of both individual and society, and points to the fact that it in a unique way supplies mechanisms contributing to the unity of life. Religion brings the different stages of life together, gives stability to the life of individuals, and joins the present to past and future.

Finally, religion gives to the individual a feeling of meaning and security. As if it widens his ego, making his soul important for the universe, and the universe important for him. When changing his status - when for example approaching puberty, when marrying, having a child, when becoming widower or when approaching old age - the expression of religious sentiments by ritual communication with holy things helps man to orient himself in a new situation, to be content with change, if its sad, to grasp its importance if favourable. .

In that sense, religion helps to integrate personality (But like all medicines, it will sometimes have negative effects. There are many neuroses and psychoses having a religious background). (Ćimić 1971a: 33).

Religious structures exist in every society, and perform, among other things, also the function of social continuity. It provides the individual with an institutional "reservoir" of hope and certainty. It offers a higher order, an area where man will have the opportunity to be treated more positively than in this world. (Ćimić 1969d: 7)

In another sense (and here Ćimić relies on Yinger 1970) religion is to be seen as an answer to questions about the *ultimate meaning* of existence, as a solution to the insecurity that arises in border situations.

By its inner essence, religion is, however, a typical form of alienation, though not the only one. Due to the character of human

existence, there is a need of a "mediator" between man and his "essence", and this is provided by religion. Ćimić differs from earlier sociology of religion, however, by understanding religion more as an expression than as a cause of alienation.

By religiosity we understand a form of social consciousness, which arises because of the dependence on personified social and natural forces which man does not control. More specifically, religion is a form of alienation of man, which expresses itself as endorsement of religious dogmas, in performance of religious rites and implementation of religious moral norms. (Ćimić 1970a: 91)

Allowing for the important transformations of the religious phenomenon, and in spite of them, religion is characterized by that essential, inner kernel, which makes possible its definition. Religion is even today - and will remain so - a form of alienation, which at the same time bears witness of man's *ideal* power and *real* powerlessness to realize himself as man; the time and place for his self-realization is assigned to a supernatural sphere. (Ćimić 1969a: 4)

As an expression of individual emotions, activity and experience, religion is born on the soil of human loneliness, and constitutes man's *escape* from himself, at the same time as it is a . *protest* against such an escape. Religion could be defined as a spiritual crystallization of human *imaginary* power and *real powerlessness* within a certain historical epoch. Man on the religious level alienates his being, because he is, on a worldly level, already alienated and estranged from himself. Religion is the expression of a more profound split; it represents the illusory control of a reality torn apart; it tells about man's unsuccessful attempt to raise himself above his own situation. (Ćimić 1970a: 37)

The fact that religions exists, shows that men are striving to live in better conditions, nearer to man, more worthy of human nature. Therefore, religion is not just an expression of alienation,

but also an attempt, in the circumstances given, to overcome, in a specific way, alienation. (Ćimić 1970a: 253)

Besides his view of religion as a form of alienated consciousness, Ćimić has another approach, which is traditional in comparative religion and sociology of religion. In this perspective religion is defined as a relation to the "Holy", as man's interaction with the "radically different", a "relationship of great intimacy".

Ćimić discusses the religious phenomenon from yet another point of view: religion is a system of symbols ordering reality. It constitutes an integrated part of culture, of those cultural patterns transmitted from one generation to another in the process of socialization.

Religion is a part of culture and the ways religion could be integrated in culture are manifold. Religion is dependent on, and conditions, other aspects of culture. Religion is the common property of the group. It is an integrated part of the culture in which a child is born. Before the child was born the group had decided what to worship and how to worship. In the same way an atheist group insists on the value system constituting its foundation. Every society has created models and expects from its members to behave according to these models. (Ćimić 1969d: 45-46).

Man's ability to create culture (and religion) and to transmit culture (and religion) is dependent on another human characteristic: man is a creative being of practice and is able to engage in symbolic interaction. Meaning is a social product and symbols, including religious symbols, have the meaning given to them by men. If the definition of symbolic meaning were a strictly individual matter, social communication would be very limited, if not impossible. (Ćimić 1969d: 46)

In this connection Ćimić relies on Glenn Vernon (1962), whom he quotes with approval, even if he does not wholly accept his views. Ćimić does however not discuss in any detail the interesting question how this perspective could be combined with the Marxist approach, and in the following quotation there is also noticeable a

certain scepticism towards symbolic interactionism:

What is determining individual action - the characteristics of phenomena themselves, or the definitions assigned to them by man? According to Vernon man's behaviour is mostly determined by the definitions residing in consciousness. Man is, in fact, acting on the basis of his definition of a situation. It is important to have in mind that definitions are always *real* to those who accept them; it is, however, another matter whether they correspond to reality. To this should be added that men most often determine the characteristics of a certain object and then defines it in harmony with these characteristics. Nobody will deny that there exists an opposite case: From the definition of a phenomenon, men draw conclusions about its characteristics. It is difficult to accept, however, Vernon's idea that this latter case is predominant. (Ćimić 1971a: 11-12).

Ćimić has thus three approaches. At first, religion can be looked upon as a form of social consciousness, or a practical relation to reality, distinguished by its emotional character. Second it can be viewed as an expression of alienation, and third, as a system of symbols rooted in culture and transmitted in social interaction.

Of these three perspectives the theory of alienation is the most important, which is evident from Ćimić's discussion of the function of religion, and from his views on the role of religion in modern society.

The Dimensions of Religion

In his doctoral thesis Ćimić (1970a) claims that religion manifests itself differently according to the personality structures of religious individuals, and that one in a wide sense can understand religious attitudes in the light of the categories extroversion - introversion. Religion can further be described as consisting of three components: an intellectual, an emotional and a ritual dimension. In history one can, therefore, notice both on an individual and societal level, different religious types or styles, and often one is culturally predominant (Ćimić 1970a: 92-94).

In the introduction to his empirical study Ćimić elaborates the concept of religiosity in a Yugoslav context. He speaks of a hypothetical scale consisting of: "theologically convinced believers", "traditional believers", "undecided", "emotional atheists" and, finally, "rational atheists". The categories are then operationalised in the usual way as belief in dogmas and participation in rituals (Ćimić 1970a: 97-100). Obviously these types do exist in the material gathered by Ćimić, and he especially draws the attention to the emotional atheists (about this later on), but it is probably doubtful whether one could speak of a scale. Is the theologically convinced "more religious" than the traditional believer? ⁴² And shouldn't there be a religious equivalent of the emotional atheist? It seems as if Ćimić, in spite of his outlook, is influenced by the earlier view of religion as a predominantly rational phenomenon.

According to Ćimić the intellectual dimension could be divided further in terms of content or area: the "philosophical-historical", the "cosmological", the "anthropological", the "practical-ethical" and the "national-mythic" area (Ćimić 1970a: 96, 1971a: 73-94).

Apart from these major types, there are also exceptions. There is, for example, an atheism and a religiosity, which only appears to be what it claims to be. And there is also a more indifferent type of religiosity or atheism. The former attitudes are in Ćimić's view the result of conformity or defiance.

In another context (in the book "The Drama of Atheization"), Ćimić (1971a) in detail describes Vernon's ideas concerning the dimensionality of religion, that is, religion is constituted by: belief in the supernatural, the holy, a system of ideas and customs, and moral definitions (Ćimić 1971a: 9-20). In the same book Ćimić also refers to three types of religious consciousness: superstition, traditional-confessional religion and atheist religiosity, which would be particularly widespread in present-day Yugoslavia (Ćimić 1971:73-74).

⁴² Ćimić gives, among others, the following example of a *traditional* believer: "Everything tells me that God exists, like this little stone". (Muslim peasant, 78 years old, no school). One would tend to think that this is an expression of a profound religious attitude, rather than a passive acceptance of faith. (Ćimić 1970a: 137).

Religious and Atheist Morality

Ćimić is very interested in the practical-ethical aspect of religion and assumes that there is a functional relation between religion/atheism and morality.

The main characteristic of the moral behaviour of religious man is, according to Ćimić, its origin in a sense of dependence. There is no conscious choice made by the individual, and this kind of morality is generally associated with pessimism, passivity and a feeling of dependence.

Atheist morality, on the other hand, is characterized by independence, by an active attitude towards the world, and will lead to the implementation of "real humanism".

At the same time it is clear that these are ideal types. It is not always the case that the believer represents a "religious morality" or the non-believer an "atheist morality". Religion, however, according to Ćimić, in most instances contributes to the creation of certain attitudes towards reality and basically prevents the development of a complete and free personality. (Ćimić 1970e, 1967b: 47-50, 1969d: 37-45)

Autonomous Religiosity.

In spite of what Ćimić has to say about the essence of religion or religious morality, there are in his writings tendencies to a different view of religion. Even if it thus far seems that Ćimić by religion means what other authors, like Fromm (1967), Allport (1962), or Sundén (1961), look upon as *one* possible form of religion, the "immature" or "negative" religion, there are passages that imply that the positive equivalents of these negative phenomena are at least a theoretical possibility. In his discussion of atheist and religious morality, Ćimić admits that atheism in itself is no guarantee of higher moral standards. And there are signs that we are approaching a society where an indifferent attitude to life is becoming more common. At the same time one could find examples of moral behaviour, which is grounded

in religion, or could exist side by side with a religious attitude (Ćimić 1967b, 1970d). But Ćimić goes further than that:

Among atheists, however, god is theoretically, and often in practice, replaced by man as an absolute. And I cannot think of a society without mediator. Would not such a society especially in the moral sphere, constitute a form of empirical mystic unity? Is it not in harmony with Marx' vision of the world to think of future society as a society in which the alienating mediators between man and man are abolished, but not mediators as such. Therefore, I mention this as a possibility, if religion or any other phenomenon (science, philosophy, art) manages to constitute itself in such a way that it ceases to be an alienating force, then it will have a splendid future. (Ćimić 1973:80)

When social conditions are changed - religion will disappear, but that does not at all mean that religiosity also disappears. Into what it will be transformed, sublimated, flow, whether it will dissolve - all those questions are still open. (Ćimić 1969d: 21)

It is thus possible to think of a religiosity, which is not the expression of alienation, which does not force man to live in a state of alienation. And such a religion would exist also in a future society.

The Function of Religion

According to Ćimić the inner essence of religion is manifest in its compensatory-integrative function (e.g. Ćimić 1970a, 1969a,d, 1971a). Religion is thus both negative and positive. It could be positive in a historical perspective, or from the standpoint of specific social groups or individuals. On the other hand it is essentially negative as it ultimately prevents the development of a free individual. There is, further, a functional relationship between religion and certain types of society, and in a given situation religion is a necessity, as neither society nor individual would function normally without it.

Religion exists as a social factor as long as there are socio-eco-

nomic conditions urging man to turn to religion for a solution to his human dilemmas. That means that religion in this form will continue to exist until men, by their individual and common actions change the social milieu in such a radical way that the need for religion as a "spiritual complement" is disappearing. As a subjective fact, religion is an individual, theologised consciousness, adequately expressing dependence, not violating but on the contrary endorsing it. (Ćimić 1969a:8)

Evidently, Ćimić is very close to both Anglo-Saxon functionalist sociology and certain existentialist ways of thinking. This is perhaps most clearly seen in his discussion of the process of secularisation.

Religion in Capitalist and Socialist Society

Ćimić discusses the role of religion in both Western and Eastern Europe, as well as in Yugoslavia. His views on the process of secularisation are somewhat ambiguous, and he describes the religious situation of today as contradictory. On one hand he represents the evolutionist perspective which existed in earlier Yugoslav sociology of religion and which could be said to be part of a general Yugoslav (or Balkan) frame of reference. On the other hand his Marxism and existential psychology are, in a sense, unhistorical.

Ćimić is of the opinion that man, in the course of history, has managed to liberate himself from his dependence on natural and, to some extent, societal forces. Industrialization, technological development, education and science, the general modernization of society, have resulted in a decline of church oriented religion. Many of man's aspirations have, in fact, been realized in capitalist society. Man has made himself the master of nature and has overcome superstition and blind faith. In this sense he has gone relatively far in the direction of human liberation. At the same time the system of ownership and the organization of society in classes, are sources of alienation and, consequently, religion. They preserve traditional religion but also give birth to (new forms of) religiosity. In a highly industrialized and urbanized society human life is split up in a

multitude of roles and types of activities, which leads to isolation and loneliness, and as a result people turn to religion for support and consolation.

In contemporary society, the need for religion on a social-psychological level arises because intellectual factors, as far as interaction between people is concerned, are subordinated to emotional. The more or less cruel social conditions in which contemporary man lives, the fact that negative relations in society often affects him, strengthens his feeling of inner imperfection, - and here is rooted the complex of inferiority which induces a religious reflex. Persons who manage, more or less successfully, to act rationally in contemporary society, often feel terribly isolated suffer from lack of human relations and communications, and which is especially important, the non-existence of a clearly determined future. Rational persons, confronted with an irrational world, experience many conflicts, the result of which most often is religion. (Ćimić 1967b: 33)

The development of a comprehensive personality is today in crisis. Contemporary technology demands an increasingly higher level of specialization. It makes the personality of today one-sided and represents a serious social danger: the more one-dimensional man is, the more will his demands be of a *private* nature. Besides, his indifference towards the whole conceals the danger emanating from the monopolization of power. The specialists becomes irrational in social matters, often gives in to forces outside himself, and believes in some kind of higher forces, or will interpret the social whole in terms of his specialist limitations. As a consequence, man is split into a man producing in society, and a man who from time to time participates in political life, feeling increasingly impotent and inefficient. Therefore, he retires into private life, where he feels freer, and where he is able to accomplish at least some of his dreams. And loneliness and religion go hand in hand. (Ćimić 1970a: 69)

Man today feels increasingly powerless, almost worthless confronted with a gigantic societal apparatus, in the face of the great spirits hailed by contemporary humanity. In a technological world that fragmentize man, the only way out for society is the creation of true, sincere human communities. Only thus will human personality develop in harmony with human needs and influence its evolution. Only thus will man escape bureaucratisation, arbitrariness, and manifest his human dignity. (Ćimić 1970a: 48)

In the socialist countries of Eastern Europe the socio-economic conditions are totally different, but instead there are system-specific factors contributing to the strength of religion. At first, there are the conscious actions undertaken against religion, actions that will only increase men's fears and thereby their need of religion!

All this confirms the view that the power of atheism always rested on the degree of realization of man's social freedom, or on the social conditions of human freedom. A society which is not free, or where human freedom is minimal will never, in spite of its proclaiming itself atheist, attain an atheism of that kind. Furthermore, in certain stages of the socialist revolution, when basic human freedom, for one reason or the other, is circumscribed, it is followed by an extraordinary intensification of religious consciousness. (Ćimić 1970d: 390-391).

If it is sincere and deep, religious consciousness is able to endure even the hardest blows from outside. More than that: if it is the object of external pressure, the believer's feeling of insecurity, anxiety and powerlessness, will increase. If it so decides, society will force religious man into a zone of illegal piety, which will only *seem* to be an atheist metamorphosis. (Ćimić 1970a: 22)

Second, there is a bureaucratic state apparatus treating people like objects. Further, there is in these societies a genuinely religious phenomenon, namely "atheist religion" or "religious atheism", in the form of an ideology and cult, which has no doubt replaced religion.

A great deal of the irreligiosity in the socialist countries is according to Ćimić in fact characterized by its quasi-religious nature, what he calls "emotional atheism". And he emphasizes the direct parallels in cult, organization and ideology between the party-controlled state and the church-dominated society (1969d, 1970d).

As far as Yugoslavia is concerned, Ćimić is of the opinion that the factors mentioned are, more or less, influential. On one hand there is in the village a traditional folk religion, which Ćimić sees as a result of the role played by nature in the lives of the peasants. In the modern sectors of Yugoslav society, on the other hand, one can detect the same tendencies as in Western Europe: an urban way of life promoting isolation and alienation. One can also find, in spite of self-management, the same elements as in Eastern Europe, although to a lesser degree: bureaucracy and a religiously coloured atheism.

In our society as well there exists a certain type of secular religion ("atheist religion" or "religious atheism") where the negation of religion takes the form of religion. That thereby the object of belief is transformed - does not change anything, so long as man's relation to the transformed object is characterized by dependence, irrationality, while looking for and expecting to find supernatural support. (Ćimić 1970d: 393)

The new type of society Yugoslavia wants to create as an alternative to both East and West has not yet been realized on a large scale, and generally the country must be looked upon as an alienated society, which gives birth to new religiosity. Another factor of importance is the enthusiasm created during the war years and the period of reconstruction immediately following the war. It has not been possible to satisfy the expectations generated and the resulting disappointment and discontent is again another source of religion.

According to Ćimić there are thus two tendencies in modern society, partly working in opposite directions. On one hand there is a continuous liberation of man from the bonds of nature and society. On the other hand there is a fragmentation and bureaucratisation of society leading to frustration and loneliness. To Ćimić, then, religion in its various forms, in both East and West, is a sign that

these societies have not provided conditions for the birth of a free man. In Yugoslavia there is the embryo of such a development, but there is still a long way to go.

In his views on religion in contemporary society Ćimić is a functionalist. The social situation will by necessity cause religiosity, of one kind or the other. Ćimić does not mean, however, that traditional religiosity is increasing, at least there is no large increase. Instead religion manifests itself in other forms, for example as the devotion of film stars or pop-musicians.

What is problematic in Ćimić's ideas is of course that it is very difficult to formulate an empirical theory of secularisation on this basis. How are the different factors and developments joined together and what is most important? Is there a general process of modernization, which to be complete, demands a truly classless society, or is the historical-social development not that important? Is this development, in turn, dependent on a more profound change in the "essence of society"? It is not quite clear what Ćimić has in mind. Is, for example, Sweden a less religious society than the Soviet Union, or France in comparison with Yugoslavia? Has, in fact, secularisation reached its highest level in self-managing Yugoslavia?

Youth and Religion

Closely connected with the question of secularisation in East and West is the problem of youth and religion, in which Ćimić, like other Yugoslav sociologists, has taken a great interest (Ćimić 1967b, 1969b, 1969d, 1971a, 1971c, 1973). He discusses the various factors that can be thought of as influencing the religious attitudes of young people, such as school, family, or religious instruction, and on several occasions he speaks of the great importance of the family, how the child is socialized into a religious environment and how the example of the parents is more important than a rationally designed education, whether it is for or against religion.

Youth in contemporary society, especially those of young age most often learn religious beliefs unconsciously, by participation

in religious groups or by associating with individuals following certain habits. As a consequence, atheism among young people is more the result of an absence of such traditions and models, than the existence of a conscious atheist alternative. (Ćimić 1969d: 45).

On one hand Yugoslav youth is touched by the same processes, as are young people in Western Europe. In urban settings they are to a large extent atheists. This atheism, however, is either an emotional atheism inherited from the parents, or a generally indifferent attitude to life. The latter alternative is to Ćimić something utterly suspect and he raises fears that a general moral cynicism might spread in Yugoslav society (Ćimić 1967b: 111, 1973:88-89)

In this connection he discusses the alternatives to religion provided by socialist society and says that very often society is empty-handed (Ćimić 67b: 112). Sometimes children are indoctrinated in a more or less neurotic atheism, coupled with a dogmatic version of Marxism, which is not compatible with the Marxian ideals. In other cases the parental generation in words and deeds openly show their contempt for the principles of an ideology they otherwise endorse, a double standard having serious consequences for Marxist upbringing.

Is a certain decline in political ideals one of the characteristic aspects of the contemporary generation of young people? Even if we accepted the idea, we could not say that this is immanent of youth. On the contrary, the lack of ideals, very often is a consequence of the identification with the grown-ups, when they express insecurity, even disbelief in what they themselves are preaching. The discrepancy between words and deeds, between declaration and practice, often leads to a certain superficial apolitical attitude. If on the top of that, in the formal associations of young people an instrumental approach is developed, then youth becomes fed up with declarations, resolutions and grey-ness. (Ćimić 1971a: 128)

Young people in Yugoslavia are not irritated by the fact that there is a difference between ideals and reality, but they are sceptical when this discrepancy is so great that reality in no way resembles

the ideals. Perhaps there is nothing more harmful in educational work, than urging young people to implement imaginary goals. (Ćimić 1971a: 131)

In Ćimić's view this, not religion, is the greatest threat to the evolution of humanist morals and a free human being. He thinks the church is often very able in channelling the youthful idealism not being made use of by the state.

Ćimić is familiar with Jung and sometimes one gets the impression that he agrees with Jung's view of modern society. That is, modern man has somehow lost the balance between spiritual and material in his striving to leave an outmoded and inhuman religion behind. In this situation there arise all kinds of sects and cults having as the object of their devotion symbols belonging to modern mass culture (Ćimić 1960:28, 1971:33-34). Structurally and functionally this new religiosity is however the same type of phenomenon as the earlier church-oriented Christianity.

According to Ćimić man needs to feel that he belongs to something greater than himself. This is expressed in his view of the importance of ritual, as in his opinion that nationalism thrives in situations where religion is not given the opportunity to satisfy human needs.

Whenever religion is not in the position to affirm itself universally-socially, it tends to hide behind the nation. The right to nationality is the historical legitimacy of religion. The salience of national consciousness and national feelings in Yugoslav society is partly a result of the extension of social freedom, partly a frustration in terms of the future, and partly - later on - an indirect satisfaction of a curtailed freedom in the field of religious life. In our country it seems as if there is a mystified affirmation of religion in the sense that on a surface level society relates the *affirmation* of nation to the *negation* of religion, without realizing the intimate relationship between those two phenomena. (Ćimić 1969a: 17)

The basic idea in Ćimić's view of religion in socialist society is, thus, that it constitutes an expression of alienation and that it should

not and could not be dealt with by propaganda. For various reasons it is not advisable to try to get rid of religion prematurely. In the first place it is immoral doing this to people without having anything else to offer, second, it is dysfunctional from the point of view of society, which does need religion during a period of transition.

Cruel and violent amputation of religion is not possible - in any culture - without important losses in the psychological structure adapted to a given cultural model. Ćimić 1970e: 38).

The main thesis of Ćimić is that religion will exist as long as there is a need for it, that is, until social relations have created a harmonious and free man. He believes that the Yugoslav system of self-management is the embryo of such a social organization and that people by actively taking part in the system will develop a socialist humanism, which in time will lead to the disappearance of religion.

Religious Renaissance? Srđan Vrcan

Srđan Vrcan is professor at the University of Split, in Dalmatia. He has especially devoted himself to the study of youth and religion, both in his empirical investigations and theoretical work. Like Ćimić he has taken part in the political debate and he has, with deep commitment and concern, emphasized the ideological and moral dilemma facing socialist society: On one hand the will to infuse youth with socialist consciousness, on the other the danger that Marxist ideology will become a closed, dogmatic system, and the risk of a serious gap arising between ideals and reality, having consequences for the world-view and life-orientation of young people.

The theory of alienation is very important for Vrcan as well, and he criticizes the earlier sociology of religion, which defined the religious phenomenon as a survival, but above all he argues against its consensus-view of society and pleads for a conflictual sociology, where Marxist categories are to be used also in the study of contemporary Yugoslavia. Vrcan claims that socialist society, due to basic social inequality and divergent interests, is the arena of conflicts of many kinds, that there is both disappointment and disillusion, meaning that religion even in socialism must be considered a natural phenomenon, and, moreover, under certain conditions would increase in importance.

Vrcan is one of the most well-known sociologists in Yugoslavia, and has contributed not only to sociology of religion, but discussed general problems concerning social structure and stratification. (At the moment he is president of the Yugoslav sociological association).

He has perhaps more than other Yugoslav sociologists of religion participated in the activities of the international scholarly community and is one of the members of the editorial board of *Social Compass*.

Religion and Sociology of Religion

In an article from 1969 Vrcan has reviewed the motives behind a sociology of religion based on the original Marx. He apparently

wants to put right what he looks upon as certain simplifications and distortions of Marx's view of religion, at the same time as he wants to defend the legitimacy of an empirically oriented Marxist sociology of religion (Vrcan 1969d).

At first, says Vrcan, religion is according to Marx a human product, which can be the object of study. Second, religion is a social phenomenon having to do with man's general situation in the world. Marx here differs both from those sociologists who stress the individual aspects of religion, and from those who understand religion exclusively as a marginal phenomenon, or as a bundle of mystifications and misunderstandings of reality.

Religion is according to Marx, both as to its causes and function, an objective phenomenon, having its background and basis in certain fundamental characteristics of man's social existence, out of which it is constantly born and renewed, in one form or another. (Vrcan 1969d: 47)

Therefore, religion cannot be abolished by means of some kind of popular enlightenment, or by decrees or violence, which was, as a matter of fact, pointed out by Marx and Engels themselves.

Fourth, religion is a historical phenomenon, that is, it changes over time and in relation to changes in the social structure as a whole. Vrcan points out that one could not, from a Marxist point of view, see religion as determining social development, or as an autonomous phenomenon with an evolution of its own. (Here Vrcan criticizes Weber and Parsons). Religion is instead always in a concrete way characterized by its epoch and by the existing class relations.

Marx further sees religion as to some extent a necessity, related to fundamental human shortcomings. "In fact, religion is always both the deepest and most obvious symptom and expression of man's existential limitations" (Vrcan 1969d: 49). In this sense, there is, says Vrcan, in Marx a certain similarity with tendencies in modern theology (in spite of all differences), but in contrast to theologians, Marx views existential problems as historical and possible to tackle.

Sixth, this existential limitation is no coincidence, but depends on structural features of organized society, which means that man

in most historical periods has lived in a state of profound alienation. Such social situations are functionally related to religion:

And where such conditions prevail, according to Marx, religion and religiosity, in some form, and to some extent, must exist. And conversely, where religion and religiosity exists on a large scale, this is a sign that such conditions obtain, even though they might be seemingly hidden. Therefore, to Marx, the most fundamental cause of religion is not the ignorance of natural and societal forces, of the regularities of nature or social life, but the problematic aspects of a reality which is wrong and which is dominated by real misery and lack of freedom, by subjugation and human helplessness in front of the relations and structures determining this reality - in one word, the real inability of men to influence such conditions by rational-experiential means, in order to change and abolish them. The more drastic the situation, the more merciless, the more completely it closes the horizon of human existence, the more unavoidably deep, rich in content, and firm will be religiosity, whether it is manifested predominantly as a mystified reflection, a sort of "theoretical" motivation or justification and ideal complement, or predominantly as some kind of, and in the given circumstances often the only, "realistic" way of expressing the human needs suppressed by the conditions, as well as the human aspirations to transcend them. (Vrcan 1969d: 50)

Religion is thus inevitable in an alienated situation; its existence actually being the proof of alienating social relations.

Vrcan emphasizes, however, that even in cases where man manifests himself through religion, he is a creative being. Religion is a specific type of production and is thereby expressing human needs and human strength, although in a "mystified" way.

Marx, finally, is of the opinion that religion is an erroneous consciousness, an ideology. This does however not mean that religion simply is to be equated with superstition, false thinking or empty words. Even in this perspective religion expresses fundamental human and social relations.

Vrcan then discusses the function of religion, and he points out that it is an obvious simplification to summarize Marx's opinion in the thesis of "opium for the people". Marx in fact believes that religion is part of very complex functional relationships. One cannot see religion as the dominating force in history, but religion does perform a function in making man's world meaningful, and thereby influencing social action, promoting stability and human endurance.

According to Vrcan Marx mainly deals with three functions upheld by religion. It provides a theoretical explanation of reality, at the same time as it justifies it. (The extreme case being those situations in history where religion and the ideology of the ruling classes coincide. For the dominated classes religion is then a source of comfort and a way of adapting themselves to reality). A second function is when religion contributes to the development of a special group of religious functionaries and will represent their interests. A third function, finally, are those cases where religion opposes the social system and serves as an instrument of resistance, plays a revolutionary role. Marx did not, according to Vrcan, look upon religion as something wholly negative.

Vrcan further claims, that Marx's view of religion is preferable because of its broadness in scope. Different from, for example, Durkheim or Parsons, Marx looked upon religion as both a psychological and sociological phenomenon, and in contrast to these sociologists, Marx does not only concentrate on the integrative aspects of religion but emphasizes its role in social conflicts.

Finally, Vrcan is of the opinion that there are apparent methodological advantages in the Marxian perspective, having to do with the fact that Marx is, on one hand, concentrating on the concrete situation, and, on the other, is looking for the essence of religion in a deeper sense. His perspective allows for a study of the real situation of man, at the same time as it reveals the latent and manifest functions of religion:

Thereby, in the focus of interest are on one hand those aspects of the historical situation and characteristics of a social organiza-

tion that are most problematic and neuralgic for men's position in life and for their fate, and on the other hand, social classes, strata and groups, the purpose being to establish how these very aspects of a historical situation, position in life, needs, interests and aspirations of different social classes and strata are expressed in religion. Finally, this theory requests that the social functions of religion are investigated, having in mind the functional complexity, and the relation between manifest and latent functions of religion, not studying its social functions only within the framework of the existing social system. (Vrcan 1969d: 55)

In summary, then, to Vrcan religion is an expression of human alienation and performs a compensatory function. But it also makes the life of individuals meaningful, and on the social level it might be a stabilizing factor, as well as a revolutionary force. It is further to Marx's credit that he has explained religion as a social and historical phenomenon, and only the Marxian method is capable of discussing religion in all its complexity.

It is evident from what has been said above that Vrcan is critical of functionalist sociology. On the other hand, his own approach is functional, and in the end the difference is perhaps not that great. In various contexts, moreover, he quotes approvingly not just Yinger or Glock & Stark, but also Parsons (Vrcan 1974a).

Generally, Vrcan is well acquainted with the international literature treating the role of religion in modern society and often quotes French, Italian or German sociologists of religion. As far as empirical research is concerned he has been influenced by the ideas of Glock and Stark on the dimensionality of religion.

Vrcan is, however, critical of certain attempts to explain the contemporary religious situation, especially some theories dealing with the process of secularisation. We will return to this issue and first discuss his attitude to the sociological tradition represented by, for example, Berger and Luckmann (1967), or symbolic interactionism. Vrcan develops his views in an article written as an answer to a proposal for a dynamic theory of religion presented at the congress of sociology of religion in The Hague (Vrcan 1973a).

Vrcan's criticism amounts to the fact that "social interaction" is too abstract a term to be able to give a true picture of social life. It is, moreover, almost morally suspect, as it, using the same terminology, treats both trivial situations and cases of utmost human suffering. To Vrcan the interactionist perspective in a way obscures reality, makes us blind to the fact that in certain cases a course of action is self-evident. The term is thus both superfluous and ill suited.

This is, it would seem, a promising way of theorizing, very close to Marx's well known formulations in his discussions of religion. However, the key concept used in this context - "social interaction" - seems too general and too abstract to be of any great help in grasping the complex and dramatic tensions characterizing every process of religious change, particularly those present in the contemporary drama of religious changes.

It should be admitted that the term "social interaction" is common in many contemporary sociological publications. And it is often used as the key concept of sociological terminology. At the same time it is evident that it is a rather polite concept, which could be used without reservation in any possible context and as a description of any possible human situation. But exactly its abstract nature and decency seems harmful to sociological analysis. That is, this term is often used as a general term covering every kind of social phenomenon, making the complexity of society more beautiful and decent than it sometimes is. In a way everything becomes social interaction, all is reduced to social interaction: both what is occurring in a heavy and exhausting work situation and during dull hours of leisure, both drastic want and poverty, as well as real abundance, both war and peace, conflict and harmony, exploitation and cooperation on equal terms, hate and love, adoration and profaneness etc. Men are just interacting. Everywhere and always. They are engaged in interaction - also when they subjugate others, when they are dominated by their rulers, when people are trampled down and exploited, tortured, mutilated, killed, starved, humiliated, or hurt, when living in

happiness and dying in despair and pain. (Vrcan 1973a: 16-17)

The quotations illustrate how Vrcan, from his Marxist point of view considers the experience of reality as in itself unproblematic; we are able, independently of group allegiance and inherited cultural patterns, to grasp reality directly, and therefore the important thing in sociological analysis is man's relation to the sociological macro level, and to his "concrete" situation as an individual.

The same type of criticism recurs in the section treating "ultimate concern". On the one hand, religion, according to this view, says Vrcan, creates and forms men's understanding of their situation and, on the other hand, there is no difference between the religious and profane equivalents⁴³, whereby the special function of religion becomes obsolete.

The Marxist view instead emphasizes what is specific in religion, that is, its ability to interpret the world in an illusory way, and above all, its capability to resolve existential problems in a specific manner.

Secularisation or Religious Revival?

Vrcan's methodology is of special importance in his discussion of the role of religion in contemporary society, both socialist and capitalist, and in his treatment of the question of youth and religion. In several contexts, in discussions of empirical investigations as well as in theoretical studies, Vrcan deals with the problem of secularisation. He describes how religion in modern society, as a result of industrialization and urbanization, is undergoing a crisis, and how an increasing number of persons, even those who consider themselves to be religious, express religious attitudes differing from the teachings of the church. At the same time he concludes that there are in contemporary society existential problems, which provide religion with new possibilities. In other words, there is a potential religiosity, which could be triggered off by the general circumstances prevalent in industrial society.

⁴³ That is, in terms of alienation.

Vrcan has expressed his views on secularisation in articles treating traditional religion, as well in his studies of young workers and students in Split (Vrcan 1969b, 1969c, 1973b). In the article "Religion as a form of traditional consciousness", Vrcan (1974a) studies the religious situation in Yugoslavia, and in particular discusses the consequences of the fact that religion in Yugoslavia is of a traditional character. He defines the concept of tradition in accordance with Mannheim and Adorno. In that perspective tradition does not only refer to cultural patterns transmitted from one generation to another, but is a specific attitude characterized by a "reification of the well-known", a "sanctification of tradition", which must be considered negative. Traditional in this sense is, for example, the syndrome investigated in the studies of the Authoritarian Personality. Vrcan admits that religion does not have to be traditional in this way. There are also prophetic and innovative dimensions in religion. However, he claims that religion in Europe during the last two or three centuries in most instances is traditional in the negative meaning of the word. He further says that this definition of religion in the Yugoslav case is not problematic, as the religious forms, which were and are dominant in Yugoslavia clearly are traditional and in many ways integrated with folk-culture.

The question is, then, whether this kind of religion could be considered relevant today. Vrcan claims that religious credibility has a "deeper anthropological basis", and that men are either potentially religious or potentially irreligious. The ability to experience reality in a religious way is thus given, and the credibility of religion today is not in principle different from that of earlier historical periods. There have always been people standing outside the religious community, and ideas about a "sacralised" man are untenable, as man is equally characterized by his capacity to "profanise". According to Vrcan, the idea of an earlier culturally homogeneous society, where most people are religious is not true. It is a mistake to assume that the validity of religion is questioned only in the industrialized, pluralistic society of the modern world.

Vrcan is arguing against four different types of explanations of the religious crisis in contemporary society. He thus dismisses Greeley's

ideas of a crisis in the family as being insufficient. He further claims that Sorokin's and related theories about a cyclical development of society are metaphysical. He also criticizes various Marxist perspectives (and particularly singles out the Soviet sociologist Levada) speaking of the inevitable disappearance of religion. His most detailed criticism, however, concerns the theoretical discussions of Luckmann and Bellah, and it could be interesting to follow his arguments:

Another attempt tries to confine the contemporary crisis of religious credibility in industrial society to the crisis of a traditional, church-oriented, institutionalized religion and refers to the coming of a new, transformed, religion and religiosity adapted to the contemporary world. The present crisis of religious credibility on a world scale is sometimes interpreted only as the crisis of a religion which was compatible with the traditional world of rural and agrarian society, or which generally functioned as one of the most important institutionalized mechanisms of social control and regulation. Only that kind of religion - it is claimed - is in crisis, only its credibility is declining. In this direction is developed also Luckmann's famous discussion of an invisible religion. According to Luckmann, traditional church religion is today in crisis and is confronted with a dilemma where neither of two alternatives seems to offer much. That is, traditional religion is confronted with the dilemma of either joining forces with the most traditional parts of society, and in that way try to survive in an industrial society, or it will succumb to the dominant mechanisms of industrial society and transform itself into only one of the legitimising institutions of that society, thereby losing its religious sense and societal importance. (quote Luckmann) The resolution of the dilemma is for Luckmann the invisible, non-church and non-institutionalised religion, rooted in individual religiosity and manifesting itself in the sphere of private life, articulating its autonomy. In a similar vein, but with a different result, the contemporary credibility crisis is discussed by R. Bellah.

(...) However, it is obvious that Luckmann's and Bellah's attempt to manage the present crisis of religion and the evident loss of credibility of religious contents, is to be counted among the attempts to reinterpret the empirical facts of the contemporary religious situation, which is experienced as abnormal, by somehow normalizing this abnormality, making it bearable for all those to whom man is, in principle, a religious being and cannot be otherwise. (Vrcan 1974a: 219-220)

Luckmann and Bellah are thus according to Vrcan apologets, which is hardly correct, at least as far as Luckmann is concerned. It seems that Vrcan has read Luckmann on a rather superficial level, which undoubtedly has to do with his views on symbolic interactionism. Nowhere does Luckmann (1972) discuss the problem, as if religion were a necessity. On the contrary, he shows that religion, as it is traditionally understood in the West, is disappearing, due to the structural changes that have occurred in modern society.

Vrcan then presents his own alternative. His point of departure is the situation in Yugoslav society (which he considers to be of special interest for sociology of religion, being a kind of laboratory where it is possible to study many of the most important issues in sociology of religion). He lists the factors, which would contribute to a religious renaissance, and in particular points out that traditional religion is common everywhere in Yugoslavia. Even if there has been a process of change during the post-war period, many environments are still predominantly traditional. Furthermore, the intensive migration to urban areas has transformed the character of Yugoslav cities, which are now a peculiar blend of modern and traditional elements. These are the basic conditions of a religious revival. Another factor is the lack of schooling and the fairly high rate of illiteracy. Yet another is the democratisation of Yugoslav society. After a period of strong ideological control and indoctrination the situation today is more relaxed, which means that religious communities operate more easily in society.

Among the causes directly contributing to an increase in religiosity, Vrcan on one hand points to factors common to all

industrial societies, i.e. increasing isolation and loneliness, originating with the growth of large bureaucratic structures, on the other to those factors typical of socialist societies. Such as special forms of bureaucratisation, and high levels of expectations not being realized. In the Yugoslav case there are the social problems connected with rapid development, and the social inequality caused by the process of modernization. Finally, the socialist movement in general is affected by "the routinisation of charisma" and other crisis phenomena. All this taken together is a basis of alienation, which should result in an increase of religiosity.

In his discussion of traditional religion Vrcan is thus mainly referring to what has been called the "immature" religion (Allport 1962), a religious perspective closely connected with a general authoritarian attitude. He is reasoning in a psychodynamic way: in a situation of crisis men are returning to a potential, primitive religion, which is the adequate answer in a situation of stress. Vrcan is looking upon nationalism in the same way; the pressure affecting society could lead either to nationalism, Stalinism or a re-actualisation of traditional religiosity.

We see again how Vrcan, while discussing tradition, does not actually explain how this tradition is transmitted, why it is still alive. It just seems to "be there", to be revived at a moment when peoples' needs demand such a re-actualisation. That is, the credibility of religion seems to depend on a kind of rational, fundamentalist interpretation of religion, or the idea that such an attitude is common among ordinary people. The belief in, for example, the divinity of Jesus or the reality of miracles, would be salient only when society or the individual is confronted with a problematic situation. In such a situation beliefs that otherwise do not seem credible, will be identified as true.

Sometimes Vrcan apparently assumes very rapid changes in the spiritual climate. He describes how a socialist consciousness and a revolutionary spirit were very strong during the war years and the years immediately after the war. These progressive ideas were, however, as a result of the consolidation in capitalist countries

and the actual defeat of socialism in Eastern Europe, including the revelations about Stalinism, superseded by a general mode of resignation, where religion, in many ways renewed, presents a real alternative.

In focus of Vrcan's studies and engagement is the question of why religiosity in several capitalist countries, particularly among the workers, is definitely less common than in socialist countries. This constitutes according to Vrcan a dilemma for a Marxist study of religion, which must be resolved. He mentions two alternatives:

Therefore, the Marxist approach is faced with the dilemma: either to go on insisting that religion is a symptom of alienation, historically and socially rooted in the most problematic aspects of human existence, in the most drastic of human deprivations and humiliations on a massive scale, which is continuously created by the existence of a world of class society and the daily functioning of class structures, and then as a consequence question the radical character of the revolutionary transformation, as well as the supposedly non-class character of dominant social institutions and structures, and the extent to which class- and human emancipation has been realized; or accept as an assumption the radical character of the revolutionary changes and the elimination of alienating class structures, and then forget, in fact, the fundamental principles of Marx's approach to religion and religiosity. (Vrcan 1971b: 7)

Vrcan's own position is clear. Both on theoretical grounds and confronted with empirical facts, one has to reject the idea that the existence of religion in socialist society could be explained merely as a result of the survival of tradition. Such a view is wrong, as it postulates a schematic and essentially non-Marxian understanding of man and society.

There exists a way of answering this question which was formulated long ago and is well known in our country. It is the attitude which understands religion in socialist society as essentially only a kind of survival from the past, having no deeper roots or

function in contemporary socialism. This way of thinking is no longer seeking its theoretical ground in Marx's theory of religion, but in a mechanically perceived relationship between the social basis and superstructure, social being and social consciousness. That is, it is assumed that in the nature of things social essence and social basis are the only sources of social development, so that every real social tendency always begins in the basis and is later transferred to superstructure and consciousness. That is, social consciousness is always behind social essence. The massive existence of religion in socialist society is explained by this natural discrepancy between the developmental level of the social basis, essence and consciousness and by the unavoidable inertia characterizing social consciousness, which in some way or other is always late and behind. Religion is consequently, maintained and renewed only through the past existing in consciousness as a tradition that exerts its pressure and is difficult to get rid of. (Vrcan 1969d: 55)

It is also wrong, however, as it gives a distorted picture of social reality. Yugoslavia and other socialist countries are no less conflictual than other contemporary societies. One must be aware of this, especially when discussing ideological currents among young people.

At first, we should finally and resolutely leave the outlook on society, which regards our society as a basically harmonious whole, in which there exists general agreement, a general harmony of interests, and where more or less all parts of society occupy basically the same, equal social position. It is on the contrary a very complex and internally differentiated society, where the various parts of society find themselves in very different life situations and general social positions, having very different needs, interests and aspirations, and with differing degrees of success are able to affirm these needs and interests in the social sphere, and consequently in different ways make their own life and social position meaningful. In this society, therefore, there are interests, which are against and in conflict with each other and there are, constantly, created arenas of social conflicts of whatever form or however serious they might be.

Second, one should leave the tendency to idealization of some aspects of our own society - a tendency to believe that all drastic forms of social misery and poverty, human subjugation, helplessness and alienation have been abolished from our society.

Third, we should leave behind some illusions about our social system, its real structures and their daily functioning. Above all we should stop believing that our present social system is, in fact, (by definition) a perfect social machinery that always behaves in the best possible way and that it in situations of crisis without mistakes will find the best possible solutions, or, again, that it always, in more or less the same way, is considering the needs, interests and aspirations of all parts of society, and that it always manages to satisfy them in an acceptable manner.

(Finally), we should stop thinking that the contemporary generation of youth lives in a specific social vacuum, believing that the upbringing of this generation is possible to handle in a special socially completely "isolated and disinfected" atmosphere. Young people are, on the contrary, an integral part of our society, in the full meaning of the word. They live, develop and act in this society, and in their daily lives they are plunged into the living reality and real currents of social life. They are therefore subjected to all tensions and crises that appear in our social environment and to all those influences and currents that are present in our society, also when they are not officially recognized underground currents of public opinion. (...) For example, if there exists a certain disappointment and disorientation, if apathy and scepticism is spreading, if there are manifestations of technocratic and bureaucratic attitudes, if there is a renaissance of nationalism and chauvinism etc, all this will be expressed, in one way or another, among young people. (Vrcan 1969b: 29-31)

If Marxist theory is valid, it must therefore, according to Vrcan, account for the existence of religion in socialist society as well, and it must do this using the same conceptual and theoretical apparatus.

This, evidently means, that it is possible to remain within Marx's theoretical perspective only on the condition that the changing credibility of religion in the modern world, especially in socialist society, must always be seen as above all a mystified expression of real social conditions and problems in contemporary society and of modern collective and individual life of the great masses of people, with all that is manifest as utterly problematic in their concrete existential situations and affects their way and quality of life (Vrcan 1974a: 222).

Religion as Identification and Participation: Štefica Bahtijarević

Štefica Bahtijarević, a psychologist and sociologist from Zagreb, took part in the organization of the Institute for the study of religion and atheism at the University of Zagreb. She has made several empirical investigations of the religious situation in Croatia and Zagreb, dealing with problems such as the character and dimensions of religiosity, the issue of secularisation, and, especially, the attitudes towards church and religion among young people. Štefica Bahtijarević's views on religion resemble those of both Vrcan and Čimić, but one can also detect the influence of Marko Kerševan (whom we will discuss in chapter 10). In her doctoral thesis "Religious Affiliation in Conditions of Secularisation" (1975c), the central concepts are "identification" and "participation", and she has in particular discussed the importance of the process of socialization.

Religion

Religion is to Bahtijarević a specific type of understanding of, or relation towards, reality. She emphasizes its "historical" character and defines it as a "human and social product", which is constantly changing, and which is related to fundamental human needs. It provides answers to questions that are not resolved by other types of social practice.

Religion is, thus, a human product and a human practice, an aspect of man's world, not born once and for all, but constantly being created: now, earlier, and as long as man is in need of this and no other form of practice, in resolving the enigmas, ambivalence, and contradictions of the human predicament. (Bahtijarević 1975c: 33).

Religion is a social phenomenon, a social product, consisting of a specific type of belief and definition of reality, as well as

behaviour and association; a form of practice, by which society, controlling reality (rendering it meaningful and understandable), affirms (produces) strange forces, supernatural and sacred, enlarging their power to include nature and man, whereby religion, in its social-psychological function (satisfaction of needs) becomes a specific way of life. (Bahtijarević 1975c: 58)

On the psychological level, religion, or religiosity, is a multidimensional experience or attitude:

Religiosity is a subjective experience, an individual attitude arising through the assimilation of religious beliefs, definitions of reality, forms of behaviour and association, and is thus a complex psychological state - a psychological construct - of which the most important components are the cognitive, emotional and action-motivational dimensions. (Bahtijarević 1975c: 58)

Like Esad Ćimić, Štefica Bahtijarević, represents a view on the origin and history of religion, which more or less agrees with that of the earlier sociology. One could, however, according to Bahtijarević, not claim that there are any specific causes of religiosity, in the sense understood by earlier Marxist students of religion. Like every human activity religion is a result of "necessity", that is, human practice, (of which religion is but one aspect), developing in the constant struggle for control and domination of the natural and social environment (Bahtijarević 1975c:40).

Nature does not, however, always play the same role for the rise of religion. In a traditional manner Bahtijarević sees the role of nature as being restricted to early history, while society and social contradictions are of major importance in later historical periods (Bahtijarević 1975c: 30).

Man's situation in early history is characterized by, on one hand, the fact that collective norms were much more important than today. During this period one cannot speak about individualism or autonomy, which does not mean, however, that early society is completely homogeneous. Another important aspect is that primitive man to a much larger extent than ourselves was governed by emotions and instincts.

Religion is in its early stages part of a totality, an undifferentiated sacred cosmos, which only later grows into different practices. One cannot, therefore, speak about a religious practice of the kind we know from modern society. In this connection Bahtijarević is of the opinion that totemism, which should be regarded as a kind of animism, is the least developed form of religion (Bahtijarević 1975c: 10-12, 1976a: 136-139).

Štefica Bahtijarević has a positive opinion of early Christianity. The new religion expressed strivings for equality and true commitment, for "complete participation". As time goes by, both religion and state are stratified, Christianity becomes a state religion, and there is a development leading to an increasingly formal participation (Bahtijarević 1975c: 13-20, 1976a: 139-144).

Bahtijarević is generally sceptical about the idea of a unitary Christian culture. There was always freethinking and scepticism. Allowing for this, the Middle Ages constitute a relatively unitary religious period compared to the culture originating with Protestantism. The latter movement should be understood as a protest against a hollow and formal religiosity, a protest in religious clothes, but at the same time representing a growing religious disintegration, the beginning of the end of religion (Bahtijarević 1975c: 18).

Bahtijarević emphasizes the role of tradition. Tradition is extraordinarily important in "determining our ways of action" and Bahtijarević here refers to both Marx and Durkheim. Tradition is supporting man, but could also be understood as a barrier, preventing the realization of human potentials. History is a process where tradition is constantly changing, as man is a creative being not totally determined by the demands of tradition (Bahtijarević 1975c: 27-30).

Participation-Identification

An important aspect of the religious phenomenon is its role as practice, as an instrument in "mastering the world". But, says Bahtijarević, "human practice seen as a totality is not only the master-

ing of nature or the creation of material conditions of life, it is also rendering meaningful the world in which man lives". The purpose of practice, especially religious practice, is thus to provide man with an identity.

Bahtijarević uses the concept "participation", one of the main concepts of her thesis, in such a way that it means both participation in a religious or church community and practice in the wide sense of the word. Participation thus has a philosophical-existentialist meaning, it unites man with the world, makes the world human (Bahtijarević 1975c: 41).

The second key concept, "identification," has also both a more concrete and a wider signification. It refers on one hand to a psychological process in the strict sense, but is on the other hand a philosophical category, denoting an interpretation of the human condition in its totality, uniting the present with past and future. That is, identification is a component of all practice, including the religious.

Identification would have to be understood above all as a process of interpretation of (man's) total situation, and as a means of self-definition, not only in relation to present and past, but also in relation to goals and purposes of action, that is, a process of attitude-formation, on a cognitive, affective and instinctual basis, which is visible on an individual level (=rendering individual existence meaningful - providing its why, how, in what way, for what purpose) as well as on a social level (the aspirations, structure, dynamics, integration and utility of action and behaviour) and is expressed in various ways (participation and activity) in relation to social reality, along a continuum of passivity - activity, representing not only varying degrees of intensity, but also various forms of social identification (and consequently, ideologies). (Bahtijarević 1975c: 42)

One could perhaps understand identification and participation, the way Bahtijarević uses the concepts, as fundamentally the same process, where the former constitutes the psychological, and the latter

the social, aspects of those actions and processes that are connected with the origin and maintenance of a personal/social identity.

Religious practice thus makes the world human, helps man to see the world from his own point of view. At the same time it offers a possibility of identification with the "radically different", that which is not yet controlled.

Bahtijarević asks why there is a religious practice and how this practice is to be distinguished from other kinds of practice. There are, after all, other ways of explaining, integrating and changing the world.

The reason is to be found in the fact that religion, different from science, is able to provide answers to basic questions of life. There is in history a continuous development where science takes over area after area from religion. At the same time man is not, due to the character of science, satisfied by its explanations of important human issues. That is, man's existential situation as such is a cause of religious practice (Bahtijarević 1975c: 43-55).

Another point is that the meaning of religion is not to be found so much on a speculative, as on an emotional level. There seems to be an irrational component in man's psyche, which apart from his existential situation is another source of religion (Bahtijarević 1975c: 46-47).

To Bahtijarević one of the most important features of religion is its ethical-moral aspect, which in her own terms is the same as the compensatory function of religion. This function is in turn a product of the human situation and a perhaps inborn irrationality.

According to Bahtijarević another important characteristic of religion is its authoritarian and conservative dimension, and she further claims that religion is related to a pessimistic outlook on life (Bahtijarević 1975c: 48).

Religion, which arises to give support and stability to an otherwise precarious existence, is thus something ambivalent. It could mean an integration of personality, security in life; provide solutions to inner worries and doubts. At the same time it could mean submission and lack of freedom, lead to a conservation of a traditional view towards

life and society, thereby preventing creativity and revolutionary innovations.

Religion is, finally, part of culture and tradition, and supplies models of identification. Bahtijarević points out, however, that there is seldom a total identification (of the individual "I" with the social "Me", Bahtijarević 1975c: 53).

Religion thus facilitates twofold identification, partly with the religious group, partly with a supernatural being. And Bahtijarević is, like Ćimić, of the opinion that beliefs in the supernatural represent the "minimal" definition of religion (Bahtijarević 1976b: 151).

The Process of Socialization

Bahtijarević often emphasizes the great importance of the family in the transmission of a religious tradition. Children identify with the attitudes and behaviour of their parents; they internalise in social interaction the patterns of culture valid in their society.

Already from early childhood, and later throughout life, man will have to take over the values, norms and types of behaviour of his group, or the environment in which he lives. Therefore, if a child is born into a religious environment, it will adopt religious values, norms and models of behaviour, in order to be accepted by its environment, to feel secure in it (not to mention the fact that there is no way of resisting, as the child does not have neither knowledge, nor alternative, personal, experience). That is, depending on the social environment, the child will, during the process of socialization, adopt certain attitudes, which at the same time means that the religious life of the child to a high degree is influenced by its parents. The family is the main preserver of faith. Above all because it is here that direct socialization is taking place and because the family provides the child with its first model of identification - which is the more important, as we know that religious attitudes are developing relatively early (from age 7 to 14). (Bahtijarević 1976b: 24)

This quotation implies a view on the process of socialization, which is very similar to that of symbolic interactionism, or sociology of knowledge. That is, an individual's worldview is dependent on what Berger and Luckmann (1967) would call a "plausibility structure": ideas and attitudes are reinforced in social interaction, especially by the influence of "significant others". And Bahtijarević speaks about the concept of "reference group" in a similar manner:

Reference groups could be those an individual belongs to or wishes to belong to. They are of fundamental importance for the analysis of human behaviour, as men live under the influence of the dominant values created by or endorsed by their reference groups. (...) Already from early childhood the grown-ups (parents) show the child how to behave, what is desirable and what is not - they transmit the values of the culture to which the child belongs and form its idea about the "ideal I".

Such is the case with religious characteristics as well - they are learned, assimilated in interaction with others, in the identification with others who are for the individual either reference individuals or reference groups. (Bahtijarević 1975c: 94-95)

On the other hand, Bahtijarević notes that the individual is relatively independent of his social environment or cultural tradition.

He is a creative being and no process of socialization can "discipline" or "tame him" completely, as he not only "receives" influences from the environment, but also influences the environment himself. (Bahtijarević 1975c: 53)

This fact, which is a consequence of the reflexivity of the human mind (Berger & Luckmann 1967), means that a cultural tradition is always subject to change. However, Bahtijarević seems to refer to something else, when speaking of the individual's independence in relation to tradition. What is decisive for the possible religiosity of children are the living conditions of the family, not the cultural patterns transmitted from the parents in the process of socialization. Or

to be more specific: the individual will not identify with the religious tradition in which he is brought up, unless his "concrete situation" is such that he is in need of religion.

A question very often arising in an analysis of this kind is whether the religiosity of young people is a result of religious training in the family, and consequently only a survival of the past transmitted by upbringing. This question could immediately be answered in the negative: The roots of religion and religiosity are impossible to attribute to tradition only, among other things also because religion and attachment to the church does not appear in the same form among all social strata. Moreover, even if some strata in our region still remain bound to the traditional form and content of religion and relationship with the church, rooted in the framework of religion, neither among them could the roots of religion be attributed only to tradition and sources in the past. We are, in fact, obliged to confront our empirical data with a Marxist conception and understanding of religion, and conclude that it is born, renewed, and brought to the fore by human and social conditions in contemporary reality. (Bahtijarević 1976b: 26-27)

The generational transmission of earlier experiences and attitudes would not cause for example specific religious notions (of the holy, powerful, mysterious, of god or gods, spirit or spirits, the supernatural etc), or religious experiences, were it not for a corresponding social-cultural context, with social conditions or real problems (natural, psychological or socially conditioned) confronting individuals. These earlier experiences and interpretations will influence men's behaviour, that is, will perform a certain function only when the resolution of problems confronting men concern real (and not earlier) problems. In that case ideas, concepts, symbols and types of behaviour could be transmitted and assimilated, because for a given social stratum or culture, for a given level of development, they will also perform the function of mastering certain concrete situations, as well as the function

(evaluative) of interpretation of and rendering meaningful the existing problematic situations. (Bahtijarević 1978:2344)

It is obvious, then, that only if religion performs a function it will exist as a social phenomenon. It is not completely clear, however, whether Bahtijarević is of the opinion that religiosity born in specific social circumstances, once transmitted, cannot be abandoned, or whether the conditions themselves, irrespective of tradition, generate new religiosity.

What is important is thus, in the end, the individual's intellectual understanding of his situation. Religion will be accepted as "logical", only if it provides a satisfactory explanation of a specific situation. Or, alternatively, religion will be convincing if the individual, due to his predicament, is not in the position to deal with his unconscious need of religion. Like the other sociologists we have discussed, the perception of reality is for Bahtijarević unproblematic. There is a reality, existing and possible to grasp, if only we liberate ourselves from the ideologies causing a misinterpretation of this reality.

The Process of Secularisation

Bahtijarević is of the opinion that the factors behind the process of secularisation are to be sought on the one hand, in the French revolution and the development of bourgeois society, and, on the other, in the social and economic changes brought about by industrialization and urbanization (Bahtijarević 1976b: 147-150).

Her description of the character of the process rests on French, Italian, and Yugoslav (both Marxist and Catholic) authors. She points out that the church as an institution today occupies a different position in society, that an increasing number of people stops going to church or believing in religious dogmas, adhering to religious norms. At the same time, and this is not the least important aspect, there is a process of secularisation within the church itself, to the effect that believers very often have other views than those endorsed by the church in religious-philosophical, as well as in moral and political matters. The believers, moreover, are highly inconsistent in both

their attitudes and behaviour.

Bahtijarević mentions a number of factors contributing to secularisation: the classification of the world into holy and profane, the divorce between church and state, the intensive industrialization destroying old traditions and favouring a democratic spirit, as well as and man's consciousness of his own strength, the changes in economic structures, the development of technology (which has led to a demographic explosion and geographic mobility) the process of urbanization liberating man from nature, the fact that primary groups are influencing individuals to a lesser degree, proletarianization, social activism, the improvement of the standard of living (the development of economy, health and culture which have consequences for creativity and mentality) political development, differences between developed and non-developed countries, the birth of a socialist society, the diminishing prestige of the church, solidarity between nations, cultural change; that is, secularisation is the result of the growth of a technical and progressive mentality and a democratic, pluralist-ecumenical and secular attitude (Bahtijarević 1975c:60-78, 1976b:158-161).

These are explanations more or less common also in western sociology of religion. Bahtijarević for example mentions how industrialization and urbanization have eroded traditions, or how the importance of primary groups has diminished. At the same time, however, Bahtijarević's perspective to a large extent concentrates on existential life situations, rather than on structural conditions. The process of industrialization has made man "conscious of his creativity", it has contributed to the genesis of a "technological and progressive mentality", "liberation from nature", a "democratic attitude" and so on, aspects which are said to be contrary to the demands of religion.

Bahtijarević thus understands the process of secularisation as a movement towards an ever-increasing human freedom. Religion, therefore, simply does not correspond to the essential spirit of modern society:

What is to be said about the causes of the present crisis of reli-

gion? They are not few and should not be reduced to just one; neither are they new, hitherto unknown to man; they are only accumulated and strengthened in the total complex of urban and industrial life. Through changes in way of life and economy, religion becomes non-functional and inadequate, not only because man would have new needs, but also because he understands reality in a different way and is thus able to satisfy also the "old" needs in a more functional and adequate manner. (Bahtijarević 1975b: 491)

The process of secularization has consequently resulted in a lessened importance of identification and participation with the religious sphere. In other words, religious identification has, because of social and cultural evolution, become obsolete.

The two basic processes - *identification* and *participation* - are evidently declining. On one hand contemporary society offers man new possibilities of satisfying the need for identification, and on the other hand there is a psychological mechanism working: man is able to identify with that (individual or group) which satisfies his needs. Religion is both socially (by the autonomy of other forms of integration, practice and action) and individually (being dysfunctional and inadequate in satisfying needs) called into question and brought to the margins of social life. (Bahtijarević 1975b: 497)

Instead conditions have been created for a social and national identification (Bahtijarević 1976b: 162).⁴⁴ That is, man himself, "without mediator", is now able to create a world of his own, to realize his inner potentials in a more adequate way. At the same time, there are several factors in social reality working against the process of secularization, as traditional society has not completely disappeared and as there are aspects of the new structures that could give birth to new religiosity.

⁴⁴ It is interesting that national identification as discussed by Ćimić is something negative, something that arises when religion is suppressed, whereas here it is something positive, a phenomenon on a higher level in terms of social and cultural development.

The fundamental social changes (the revolutionary transformation of the political and economic organization of society, and the rapid process of industrialization and urbanization) have to an important extent undermined and weakened the broad traditional and cultural foundation on which religion, in its most orthodox forms and contents, had rested for centuries. However, in spite of that, traditional ways of thinking and traditional values have not disappeared from our contemporary world; Moreover, there is a certain tendency to an amalgamation of modern and traditional, or an actual spread of traditional values in highly industrial and technological environments. Apart from that, due to various reasons (difficulties appearing in the process of change and activation of all areas of social life, the discrepancy between what has been proclaimed and what is realized, etc), conditions are created, or restored, making possible a renaissance of traditional values, contents and behavioural patterns. (Bahtijarević 1975a: 139)

One could, perhaps, get the impression that Bahtijarević is reasoning in a sociological manner, but it is evident that for her the important thing, that which generates religion, is the concrete, existential situation of certain social groups, rather than the identification with a given frame of reference.

For the most part the believers are women, elderly people, housewives (followed by peasants, workers with the lowest degree of qualification - unqualified and semi qualified workers), those with the lowest educational level, and those born in the village. That is, we have to do with social and class determinants of religiosity and religious identification. These are people about whom we might say that they are rooted in traditional life (and consequently in the church and the church's extra ecclesial activities). Their way of life, the social framework and conditions, as well as the needs born in such a situation also influence (together with the kind of intellectual level that is at all attainable in such circumstances) the way in which these needs are satisfied. For these people, then, the power of god is necessary, as they are

themselves impotent; for them religion still represents the most suitable explanation, and it provides even today the most acceptable, if not the only, meaning. (Bahtijarević 1976b: 23)

These people simply live in conditions, which prevent a liberation from religion. The same stress on material and existential conditions as being fundamental recurs in other contexts. Bahtijarević for example describes contemporary society as torn by different contradictions. These contradictions in their turn create a social-psychological need of a new religion or re-actualises an older religious system.

The complexity is inherent in the dynamics of revolutionary change: in these rapid and comprehensive changes of men's lives, in the constant change of life's institutional, cultural and existential frameworks, many values are again problematic; constantly frames of orientations are created in concrete situations as are new definitions of interpersonal relations. This might lead to a longing for, and a resort to, something stable, constant - and if these constants are not to be found in social reality and in men's own personality, then support will be looked for in tradition, in those problem-solving models provided by religion. (Bahtijeravic 1978:2349)

This means however, at the same time, that in the present stage of our societal development, there still exist human situations and some of those social circumstances, which are causing mass religiosity. Consequently, there are still, on a massive scale, people to whom religion - from a psychological or sociological point of view - is the only, or most suitable answer to their life situation. (Bahtijarević 1978:2350)

This functionalist perspective is quite logical, as Bahtijarević, like Ćimić and Vrcan, understands religion as an expression of alienation.

The existence of religion is, according to Marx, a symptom of a social situation where (on a large scale) possibilities in life are limited, and where human subjugation, alienation and misery are prevailing. (Bahtijarević 1975a: 140).

Religion in Socialism and Capitalism

According to Bahtijarević there are both similarities and differences between socialist and capitalist society as to the character of the process of secularization. On one hand certain general processes, like industrialization and urbanization, in both types of society seem to result in a decline of religion. On the other hand there are structural characteristics in both socialism and capitalism leading to loneliness and alienation. However there are also system-specific factors. In the Yugoslav case, the process of modernization has led to disturbances in the social order. There is also a tendency to bureaucratisation, of putting men in an alienated position. Another important factor is the frustration caused by high expectations, which have not been satisfied.

Bahtijarević however thinks that socialist society can achieve a more "complete secularization" than its capitalist counterpart, partly because some of the basic causes of religion have been dealt with, partly because social self-management fosters a new type of social activity which alone could lead to a general liberation of man and thereby to the end of religion (Bahtijarević 1975c: 192-200, 1976a, 1976b: 164-172).

Bahtijarević is, as far as the problem of secularization is concerned, closer to Ćimić than to Vrcan. The questions asked reading these authors have, however, not been answered by Bahtijarević, although she much more than Ćimić or Vrcan has discussed the process of secularization in general sociological and psychological terms. The discussion is somehow left un-finished, as the general theories are not integrated with the Marxist perspective. One could for example ask about the status of the theory of socialization if the transmitted patterns are of minor importance compared to the "concrete" situation. In a way, therefore, Bahtijarević does not explain sociologically how religion is maintained. She attaches much importance to catechism, probably more than it really deserves, and is of the opinion that the school ought to reform its teaching on religion (Bahtijarević 1970). Her approach (shared with Vrcan and Ćimić) also makes one ask

whether there is one social psychology, or social science in general, valid in capitalist society, and another one at work in socialist countries. As if those mechanisms responsible for the transmission and maintenance of perceptual schemes or values would somehow disappear in socialist society, as if men (or some men) in this kind of society were able to grasp reality directly, in all its complexity, as it really is. Such a position is however more philosophical than sociological.

Like Ćimić or Vrcan, Bahtijarević represents an approach, which might be classified as functionalist. That is, religion is mainly understood and analysed according to the social or psychological functions it performs. Bahtijarević is further of the opinion that the positive aspect of the process of secularization, as manifest in socialist society, is also related to the assimilation of a Materialist-Marxist world-view:

Even though, as said earlier, secularization started and continues in capitalism, it will, as has been pointed out by Varga, have a new dimension in socialism: a massive tendency to accept a conscious materialist (scientific) world view. An atheism which is united with this dimension in the process of secularization, and which will result in the liberation of man, will therefore possess a new and specific value, not just be a structural dimension. *Such an atheism means the complete identification of man with himself in the concrete social and cultural environment.* This means that a complete secularization is not possible in a situation of alienation, as the process of desacralization of the world and the de-alienation of man is a process of human liberation. (Bahtijarević 1975c: 78)

In a way, then, Bahtijarević represents a blend of new and old ideas. And the main problem is not resolved: How to integrate elements from a general social psychology (and sociology) with Marxist theory?

Fear of Death: Branko Bošnjak

We have seen that the concern of Yugoslav sociology of religion with the problem of alienation means that religion is being discussed in a way, which is highly similar to that of psychoanalysis or various existentialist currents. This made for example Vrcan postulate that under certain conditions there will be an increase of religion in socialist society. An author who through his views on alienation goes even further is Branko Bošnjak, professor of philosophy at the university of Zagreb, one of the founders of the journal "Praxis".

Bošnjak has discussed religion mainly from a philosophical point of view but has also dealt with the relationship between religion and society in post-war Yugoslavia. He has been an active participant in the dialogue between Marxists and Christians and (together with the Belgrade professor Vuko Pavičević) he has taken part in the meetings organized by the Paulusgesellschaft.⁴⁵

Also in Yugoslavia Bošnjak has been involved in such discussions. A very well-known occasion was the debate 1969 at the philosophical faculty in Zagreb between himself and father Mijo Škvorc Assistant Bishop of Dr Kuharić, the Archbishop of Zagreb (Bošnjak & Škvorc 1969). In that dialogue Bošnjak represented a rationalist criticism of religion but also opposed Christianity on ethical grounds.

In the interest of dialogue, Bošnjak sometimes lectured at the Catholic Faculty, and, in the same way, theology professors were invited to give lectures to students of sociology of religion.

Bošnjak was, furthermore, one of the organizers of the institute of religion and atheism in Zagreb, and he was the leader of those research projects where Štefica Bahtijarević made her first empirical studies.

Bošnjak's main work in the area is "Philosophy and Christianity" (Bošnjak 1966), a voluminous book of 600 pages consisting of six major parts. In the first part Bošnjak deals in general with the philosophical

⁴⁵ See "Zum Sinn des Unglaubens" in Marxistisches und Christliches Weltverständnis. Wien/Freiburg 1966; and "Der Mensch als Mysterium. in Christliche und Marxistische Zukunft. Dokumente der Paulus-Gesellschaft, Freilassing, 1965.

criticism of Christianity, its character and main problem areas. In the second part he discusses the relationship between modern biblical scholarship and New Testament texts and analyses its consequences for religion. In the third he examines Christian dogmatism and concentrates on concepts such as trinity, love, or truth. In the fourth is discussed the treatment of Christianity in 19th-century philosophy: Hegel, Schleiermacher, Kant, Feuerbach and Kierkegaard. In the fifth part Bošnjak writes about liberal theology and demythologisation, and how these currents should be considered in a Marxist perspective. The sixth part, finally, is devoted to socialism and religion. Here Bošnjak at first considers the attitude to religion of utopian socialism and then reviews the criticism of religion by authors like Bauer, Hess and Nietzsche. Finally, he describes, with long quotations, the attitude to religion of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Plehanov, Mehring, Lafargue and Kautsky.

Bošnjak tries as faithfully as possible to present and interpret the texts and refrains from a critical discussion. His own views are saved for the last chapter of the book, which discusses the problem posed by religion's continuing existence in socialist society. Before we go into that matter, we will however present Bošnjak's general point of view.

Bošnjak is of the opinion, as are the sociologists we have discussed up to now, that religion could be understood as a type of erroneous consciousness and an expression of alienation:

Religion is a form of alienated consciousness and thinking. Religious man is not free in his relation to being and history. He is conditional, as he experiences himself, as subject to circumstances he has not created himself. No religion could exist without eschatology, without adding a world beyond earthly existence. To ensure this future eschatological existence man must do everything in this life to realize the idea of god. The church maintains that it is necessary for man's totality that he always, in thought and actions, lives in god. By that the idea of man's independent social and historical action is undermined. Socialism is the opposite of this view, because it is striving to realize man exactly

through his free and creative activity. For man there is only man: everything else is an illusion. The idea of a religious relation is basically incompatible with the humanist theory of Marxism. (Bošnjak 1966:480)

Bošnjak then asks when, and in what circumstances, a religious world-view will disappear, and emphasizes the importance of rational societal relations, as well as a rational attitude in general:

According to Marx it is necessary to ensure two things: 1) everyday practice, human coexistence, must be characterized by unambiguous and rational relations. 2) such rational relations are achieved by a socialization of the forces of production. This is the socio-economic and logical basis. It is clear that this cannot be realized without human ethical qualities. The development of socialism is as much dependent on an ethical attitude as on changes in the socio-economic structure. The second condition for the disappearance of the religious illusion is that man takes a rational stance towards nature as well. Society and nature perceived in a rational way will, then, liberate man from all illusions. (Bošnjak 1966:484)

In this there is however a problem: Institutional changes are not enough. We know from experience that there are tendencies in socialist society preventing the realization of the very goals of socialism.

Socialist society is not some kind of enchanted institution, which will at once abolish the contradictions of society and history. The changed social and economic circumstances could create objective conditions for a humanization of men's relations with each other. But this is not something that will follow by itself or by necessity. Even if private ownership is abolished this is no guarantee that there will not arise a bureaucracy, as soulless as private capitalists. Even socialist society could therefore produce its own forms of alienation. Socialism is an historical possibility to humanize history, but this humanization cannot be achieved by declarations. For this process to be real there must be ensured complete freedom, that is, a critical attitude towards the whole

of social reality. This was not the case with Stalinist practice. That is why there arose a socialist mystique, a deification of personality. This deification can be looked upon as parousia in a Christian sense, that is, god has come to the earth. Within this mysticism was demanded a religious attitude, that is a faith, not a critical attitude towards the leaders of party and state. These institutions became non-fallible in the same sense as the pope in the Catholic Church. The party purges were imitations of the work and methods of the Holy Inquisition. Therefore, under the banner of socialism, flourished not criticism, but a new religion and cult of personality. This pseudo-religion (that is a religious, uncritical attitude to reality) is generally a great danger for socialism. (Bošnjak 1966:573)

It is obvious that Bošnjak, in the same way as Vrcan and Ćimić, is of the opinion that socialist society can give rise to alienation, and also to a new type of pseudo-religion, which fundamentally is a phenomenon of the same kind as traditional religion.

Bošnjak, however, goes one step further. At the same time as he accepts a traditional Marxist view of the character and function of religion, he claims that there is an important psychological, or emotional, cause of religion, having to do with man's constitution and existential situation. In a profound sense the essence of all religion is its answer to the eschatological problem. At heart man is religious because he cannot stand the idea that life will eventually come to an end. For Bošnjak the central dimension of religion, therefore, is fear of death. This has important consequences for his view of atheism and religiosity:

The relationship to eschatology and totality could be of two kinds. If man sees himself as a being of nature, he is liberated from all illusions about a life after death. The history of atheism shows that there were always besides theists also atheists. Those believing in god do so because they are unable to accept death as a natural phenomenon, as an end to their own existence. Precisely because man is mortal, an eschatological wish could arise and remain independent of the social system. (Bošnjak 1966:577)

The decline of religion, therefore, does not automatically follow from changed social conditions. This is due to the function performed by religion, but also to its character.

Even if the religious phenomenon belongs to the sphere of superstructure, religion, nevertheless, has its specific features, which makes it different from other forms of ideology. In the same way as there, within one historical period, and in the same objective conditions, might arise different kinds of philosophy, meaning that the form of the superstructure is variable, the religious phenomenon itself can develop in various directions. Through changes in the economic and social basis and through the general spirit of the time, there are changes in the interpretation of religious ideas, which however does not mean that religion, as a whole will disappear. If religion would not be dependent on the individual-existential relation to being, changes in the basics would result in complete changes in forms of consciousness, in the same way as in law... Precisely because of its dogma, religion defends itself against historical influences and social change. Its content to a large extent transcends reality and is therefore not changed by developments in the basis. For the believer, the religious content, therefore even in future is the "only road to salvation" and the only "eschatological attitude". The fact that religion in its totality could not be translated into or traced back to historical changes implies that its development is immanent. This means that religion as a form of ideology is relatively independent and is able to defend itself against life's real structure. The belief in resurrection is thus an eschatological fact having no relation to the economy of a society. From the time when St Paul preached to the believers in Corinth that all will be resurrected and that there is no doubt that good Christians as well as the godless would die, until today's space-travels, the existential wish to resurrect cannot, if it is real for the believers, be neglected by historical reality. This should be born in mind when discussing the superstructure or else the problem is simplified. That religion continues to exist is no proof of its truth, but a sign of the will

of those who want to escape natural processes in the hope for eternal life. (Bošnjak 1966:575)

Bošnjak thus claims that religion really has a history, something that will have consequences for its role in society and for the problem of its decline. According to Bošnjak the eschatological dimension is to a high degree independent of social reality. This is evident in many parts of his book and sometimes in ways that would seem surprising in view of his general point of departure.

The question of the decline of religion cannot be reduced to the character of economic and social relations only. In history church and religion have played very different roles in class conflicts. Having abolished its social position there is still the individual problem of relating to death, that is, the wish for eternity: As long as there is fear of death (and a longing for eternity) religion will exist (despite any possible modus or system in which it will be manifest). (Bošnjak 1966:578)

If atheism as a rational reality were to be realized, one would have to transform thinking from the level of religion to the level of Marxist philosophy, which teaches us that the problem of atheism is not solved if it is seen as a matter of theory only. It must be looked upon as a content of social practice. However, emotions can be an obstacle to logic. No changes whatsoever in the social structure or in human relations are sufficient if one wishes to abolish eschatological voluntarism, because this voluntarism is irrationally structured. Therefore the problem of the decline of religion could not be treated as a question of social relations or theoretical analysis. The striving for eternal life does not recognize logic of any kind. (Bošnjak 1966:583)

Here Bošnjak differs from both the earlier sociology of religion and the most common interpretations of the theory of alienation. However, he has a tendency to apprehend religion in a way reminiscent of the earlier perspective. A rational attitude towards nature and reality in its totality, which is a precondition for the decline of

religion, can be influenced by logical arguments or philosophical insight. Quite different from Vrcan or Ćimić, philosophy is for Bošnjak on the individual level a means of acquiring a true understanding of the nature of reality.

In reality religion can survive even after a society's social revolution. It is illusory to believe that religion one day will die of itself. A condition for the death of religion is a wholly rational relation to being. Such a relation is achieved by the development of thought, consciousness and practice. (Bošnjak 1966:506)

A dialogue about religion could only be undertaken on a scientific level. One has to approach the problem with patience, systematically and scholarly. If this is not done, socialist society will not be at pace with itself. Its ideas will not correspond to its reality. It is not possible to unite these aspects if they are left to chance. (Bošnjak 1966:519)

The dialogue about atheism must aim at changing each person individually. The content of consciousness of a community or society in a certain epoch must also become a personal conviction. Only then is the principal level expressed as an individual relation in social or historical development. Therefore the problem of atheism is not only social but individual as well. These two areas constitute the unity of personality. In such circumstances practice could be only that which is conceived of in thought. The demand for theory is the only way to render reality meaningful. (Bošnjak 1966:531)

At the same time not all people are able to arrive at this conclusion.

The eclipse of god or man's return to himself are rationally based within a social and historical frame. In history these possibilities are variable. The purpose of rational philosophy is to return illusory being to its natural determination. Philosophy thus becomes a necessary catharsis. If religious man is to become a natural man he must liberate himself from those weaknesses,

which are the origin of this illusion. Atheism demands strong personalities. Open talk about truth expresses will and strength. Atheism means the abolition of egoism. Man knows and accepts his mortality as the final end. (Bošnjak 1966:413)

A rational relation towards society and being will abolish the need of religion and mystical relationships. Thereby religion will lose its attraction for those existing on such a level of consciousness and practice. Religion has died in their eyes. It does not follow however that this principal level will be common consciousness. It is possible, in a society organized according to the principles of science and criticism, for religion to preserve its importance for all those who would rather stay with their wishes and illusions about heaven and a life after this one, than accept independent thought. This possibility which means that religion has disappeared from society as society and in that sense has disappeared from the standpoint of the socialist state, points to the fact that an emotional attitude implies the negation of every logic. Therefore, the continuing existence of religion is not due to its character or truth, but only to the human wish to go on living after death. Pushed away from life and reality, what is left for religion is the area of death. Religion stays on only as a theory of the world beyond, about which anybody can dream as it suits him. (Bošnjak 1966:488)

This attitude to the importance of enlightenment recurs in Bošnjak's views on the position of religion in school curricula, or in his views on the dialogue between Marxists and Christians (Bošnjak 1967, 1969). In a way here is revived, in a more refined manner, the idea that some people are not capable of liberating themselves from religion, and that this is an important factor explaining the continuing existence of the religious phenomenon.

Behind Bošnjak's attitude there is a deep conviction that religion, even though it is possible to understand why it exists, and even though one should not condemn religious people as human beings, as to its inner nature is something negative. It prevents the development

of true humanist relations in society by making man a spiritual prisoner. The religious individual is deceiving himself, and the only thing one could do, as a human being is to accept one's tragic fate and nobly refrain from illusory comforts.

Bošnjak believes that religion and atheism, or rather atheism, can arise in any historical epoch. In his later book (Bošnjak 1971) he wants to show how Greek philosophical criticism of Christianity serves as a model, and how in antiquity too, there are different ways of approaching reality.

The precondition for the decline of religion is the creation of rational relations, both towards nature and social life. Bošnjak is giving the concept of nature a wider connotation than is usual in Yugoslav discussions. It has to do not only with man's impotence confronted with various natural phenomena or catastrophic situations, that is, the nature in which man lives and on which he is dependent. Nature is to Bošnjak also man himself, including his existential situation, and, consequently, the most concrete problem of nature is death.

Bošnjak accepts the traditional view that man's position in class society leads to alienation. This is due both the position of the church in class-society, and to the professional and class-like power of the clergy, but also to the role of religious ideology.

With the socialist revolution all this is changed. Man's exploitation of man is put to an end by the abolition of class-relations. Further, religious institutions now perform a different function and are not able to use their influence without opposition.

In this situation religion is, according to traditional Marxist theory, an anomaly, a survival that in time will disappear. As we have seen, man's relation to nature is however not only a function of general social and economic progress. In socialist society men will be liberated to varying degrees, but there will always be at least some people who are not willing to accept death as the final thing. These people demand more. They cling to wishes and dreams of eternal life. The fear of death, then, is to be understood as an eternal category, and due to human weakness religion will always exist, irrespectively of societal type.

At the same time as he expresses this view of religion, Bošnjak thinks, however, that alienation in principle is abolished from socialist society, and that this society in itself does not give rise to religion. He also maintains that the process of social change is an insufficient condition for the decline of religion. What is demanded, then, is, if not a traditional propagandistic enlightenment, or anti-religious education, at least philosophical reflection.

Escape from Nothingness: Spomenka and Tine Hribar

Like Branko Bošnjak, Spomenka and Tine Hribar analyse religion mainly from a philosophical perspective. And perhaps it could be said that, in comparison with others referred to in this study, they use a specific, "very philosophical" style, when discussing religious matters. Tine Hribar is a philosopher, cultural historian and critic, who has played a prominent and sometimes controversial role in Slovenian cultural life, while Spomenka Hribar is working as a sociologist at the University of Ljubljana. She has conducted several interesting investigations concerning the attitudes of Slovenian youth towards religion and philosophical-existential issues. Both authors have been engaged in explaining contemporary man's changed relationship towards the world, and the consequences this will have for the social and psychological role of religion.

The Hribars are influenced, like others in Slovenia, by phenomenological and existentialist philosophy, especially that of Heidegger, and their general point of departure is that contemporary man in his attitude to reality is acting like a subject, as the master of society and nature:

Characteristic of contemporary man is that he wishes to be a subject. This wish does not, however, mean that he has already become one.... Man manages to become a subject only to the extent that he incessantly asserts himself as such, affirms himself as the basis of his own existence, and that during this process he reaches increasingly higher degrees of fulfilment. That contemporary man wishes to be a subject thus means nothing else than that he always wants to become more of a subject, always a more complete subject. (Hribar 1969:5).

Everything that exists must serve him, for he has become the master of nature and its laws and is also becoming the master of social laws. This means that he is himself in control of his

world and destiny. He has claimed the right to formulate his goals, to realize and to go beyond them. More than that. He has also the right to alter goals already posited, to change them in the course of action. Therefore, it is not primarily important whether man realizes his aspirations or not, but that he has at all given himself the right to formulate them, to be the central motive behind everything that happens. If, namely, man is the only one formulating goals, he is also the only one who causes, or directs, the mutual effects or relations between social and natural forces. (Hribar 1969:6).

Science performs a major function in contemporary society, being the "most important means of production" of the modern world. The innermost meaning of science is to search for itself, and in this respect it is similar to modern man. But the similarity is even greater, as science itself is a human product, a human way of grasping reality (Hribar 1969:12).

Modern man, therefore, contrasts with what Tine Hribar calls mythical, undifferentiated man, living in a world where everything is "natural", where there are no contradictions, nothing hidden. During that period of human history everything is, is "words", or myth, and nobody asks why these words exist. Social and natural environment is simply taken for granted.

It could be observed that this way of discussing the situation of so called "primitive man", differs from what is otherwise common in Yugoslav sociology of religion, and is, in fact, close to the picture of archaic societies given by international research in comparative religion. That is, the life of "primitive" man is not, supposedly in contrast to ours, characterized by some kind of fundamental fear or ignorance, compelling him to seek comfort in magic and religion.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ This basic idea of Marx and Engels is, incidentally, seen by McKown (1975:66-67) as one of the major flaws of Marxist theory of religion, both on factual and logical grounds. "It was an egregious error to presume, as both Marx and Engels did, that primitive man becomes religious when he first recognized his helplessness in the presence of rampant nature. It was equally mistaken to think that primitive man next became religious, when he recognized his vulnerability to threatening social forces...Since the individual who confronts nature as

The development of modern science, as well as man's social position and self-understanding, means that traditional religion in a very basic sense has outlived itself. Even though certain phenomena in contemporary society at first sight seem to indicate that there exists an intensive religious life, this should not deceive us, as modern man's attitude towards reality is fundamentally different from that of religious man:

As we have seen, contemporary man and contemporary science are of the same essence: A self-regulating will that desires only itself. This means that not only are science and religion mutually incompatible, but man and religion exclude each other as well. Furthermore, man is the one that excludes, not religion. In the contemporary world, where man is a subject, religion is thus dead. Is not this conclusion premature? Aren't there enough phenomena indicating the opposite? Are not the churches always full; are there not always pilgrimages, pilgrimages of a contemporary kind, using modern means of transportation? These facts seem to be irrefutable. There is, however, nothing in them negating the proposition that religion is dead. Above all, the death of religion does not mean that it does not exist. It does exist but is dead. There is religion, but there is no life within it. What makes life into life has moved elsewhere. It has been taken over and transformed by modern science, by contemporary man's scientific-productive relationship towards being. The modern world is a world of living science and dead religion. (Hribar 1969:28).

It should be noted, that Hribar is arguing differently from the scholars of the earlier period. It is not man's knowledge which is incompatible with religion, but his basic *attitude* towards the world, his belief in his own powers, and his lack of reverence vis-a-vis reality. The author then asks about the moral consequences of this situation:

Perhaps the death of religion is also the death of man's humanity? Perhaps the growth of science and the concentration on his

nature is already a socialized being, it is nonsensical to provide a temporal schema for the appearance of those environmental conditions to which men in fear respond religiously".

own will, which is so characteristic of modern man, has meant that man has forgotten who he really is, and what it means to BE. In short, perhaps man, while rejecting religion, has also rejected himself (Hribar 1969:28).

To get an answer, one must ask oneself what is specific about faith and typical of man:

If I understand myself as a subject, the essence of which is a clear and distinct understanding and representation of reality, then faith as faith is not important anymore. To the extent that I perceive god clearly and distinctly, the truth about god is totally evident, to the extent that god exists in my consciousness as my own representation, god has become my object. For me as a subject god is then one of a multitude of different objects. It would differ from every other object in the sense that it is always object, my object, myself being a subject. The object is ob-ject, something at hand, which I easily put in front of me, easily imagine. The ob-ject as representation I can easily analyse. Moreover, if I want to experience it clearly and distinctly, I will have to analyse it in a methodical manner (Hribar 1969:37).

It is thus not only the case that religion and science are incompatible; man, in fact, doesn't need religion anymore.⁴⁷

This situation is different from that of earlier historical periods, and in this connection Hribar discusses religion in a more traditional Marxist way, which is maybe contrary to what was said above about archaic society.

Traditional religiosity could be described as erroneous consciousness, in Marx's sense, as it presupposes that man is ultimately dependent on something outside himself. This is not the case in the contemporary world:

⁴⁷ What Hribar is referring to is, in other words, the process of secularization, or what Buber (1962) has characterized as the growth of the "Welt der Es-Beziehung". That is, with the rise of modern society, there is a strong tendency for one of the two possible modes of relating to reality ("Ich-Es" or "Ich-Du") to dominate. The, in itself, necessary utilitarian or instrumental attitude towards the world tends to be used in areas where it does not belong, as it were. The divine, in this case, is experienced as an object.

god exists also according to Marx, but only in relation to man. His essence is only faulty perception, until man stands on his own legs. Then god will lose his essence of faulty perception as well and will become totally absent. In a world objectified by man's action, there is no place for god (Hribar 1969:47).

Marx, like Nietzsche, thus perceives the contemporary world as a world where god is absent, a world where god is dead. A man of absolute subjectivity, and a man of work and will to power is such a man, is against everything that constrains and prevents his desire of absolute freedom, and he has made himself the master of both his own fate and the world. His will is concentrated on himself only. Except for himself he does not need anything, least of all a god in front of whom he would be docile and obedient (Hribar 1969:48).

According to Hribar there is congruence, in spite of the differences, between philosophy and modern theology. Both look upon man as responsible for his own fate (Hribar 1969:56).

Religion arises because man is constrained by his temporality. And like Bošnjak, Tine and Spomenka Hribar understand death as an obstacle to man's self-realization. The highest expression of humanity is "love of being", which *inter alia* manifests itself in the love of other human beings. There is then, a real, courageous love of life and the world, different from religious love or faith, with its distance between reality/god and man; that relation is not a state of freedom, but is characterized by commandments and demands for obedience, which if not followed will lead to punishment. In such a situation man could not realize himself (Hribar 1969:59-70).

The answer to the moral question asked by Tine Hribar, is, thus, that although modern man might not have become a real subject, religion is no solution to his tragic predicament.

Spomenka Hribar has investigated the attitudes of pupils in high school and elementary school towards religion (Hribar 1970a, 1970b, 1971, 1972b). In her reports she uses a highly philosophical language and is sometimes convinced that philosophy is more able

than sociology to grasp the important aspects of contemporary man's life and relation to reality. (One of her books (1972b) is actually called "The Limits of Sociology"). In the surveys she asked questions like: What does death signify, do you believe in a life after death, how is god experienced, would you sacrifice your life for an idea?

The answers to these questions will be discussed in more detail elsewhere, but according to Hribar, who analyses the responses in an existentialist phenomenological way; they reflect the fact that man today is acting as an autonomous subject. Another finding is that differences between believers and non-believers are not that significant. In both cases it is typical to concentrate on one's own needs, that is, reality is confronted in the capacity of a subject. This means that believers today are characterized by an attitude very far from that of an earlier situation, when faith was an uncontested and self-evident truth.

The truth of man's life is in itself a value, one among several values; a value, however, which is obtained by comparison with other truths, other values. Religion as an independent reality, as the foundation of the world, as the truth about the world, and the only way to lead one's life, does not exist anymore. Religion is but one of the truths available. That is the characteristic aspect of truth today. How to characterize, then, faith as the essence of religion? It is also a value, one of the existing values, nothing else. By saying nothing else, we mean that faith as the only truth about human existence is no more. That type of faith is dead (Hribar 1970b: 127).

The same is valid for god. The moment god became a value, he died, disappeared as an independent being (Hribar 1970b: 128).

Generally one should, according to Spomenka Hribar, speak of a crisis of world-views. The outlook on the world does not any more govern men's actions and there are in fact many overlapping elements between seemingly contradicting world-views. Among believers, religion is just one of the ideologies, and non-believers generally act towards reality in a similar way. What is typical, then,

of the contemporary religious situation, is that man does not any more experience the divine with an attitude of reverence and piety.

God is no longer absolute. He is no longer approached in fearful reverence, as the only being, but has become conditional in the eyes of man as subject. God is thus an object of man's need. Man at first analyses himself, and in himself he finds the need for god, recognizes god - or doesn't. Today man experiences god, god is the object of experience. In this experience and recognition resides today god's only existence (Hribar 1970b: 131).

Instead God has become the partner of man ⁴⁸

In a way reminding of Bošnjak, Hribar (speaking in terms of needs, like the other sociologists) sees death as an important source of man's need of a faith:

Why does man at all need god? Because man in his essence understands himself as one being among beings, as finality among finalities; he sees himself in time and does not understand himself outside the time inherent in life. How is this expressed? It is expressed therein, that man sees his death as the end of his time, time as a sequence of presents, and explains his being from the being of everything else that exists, Man found his dwelling in being and is only oriented towards being (Hribar 1970b: 135).

The same structure within which man presents himself and desires himself, is also the reason for his longing for the absolute: as mortal he longs for immortality, as part-individual he longs for totality-generalality, as finite he aspires to infiniteness, as existence yearns for essence. The *same* structure of understanding gives rise to a need for transcendence for "victory over oneself", for

⁴⁸ Here one could ask if that is correct, or if this manner of speaking is well chosen. In a certain sense God has always been the partner of the pious. Cf Buber's philosophy of dialogue or Sundén (1961), who uses the term God's partner, to describe the ideal-typical religious experience. Apparently Hribar understands "partner" in the sense that it expresses a certain distance, or an instrumental and manipulative attitude towards the divine, which seems contrary to "true" religion.

absoluteness. Human absoluteness. God is man's absoluteness; god is absolute man (Hribar 1970b: 136).

In a deeper sense the fear of death is only one aspect of man's tendency to escape his situation in the world. He constantly fears nothingness, and, therefore, tries to create a world he could recognize, and this is where religion becomes important.⁴⁹ Contemporary man, however, primarily seeks himself, and from this point of view there is really no difference between religion and other belief-systems:

This seeking oneself is however grounded in the very escape from nothingness, and therefore strives, again and again, to be a difference from nothingness (Hribar 1971:44).

The name of this belief in the possibility of an absolute difference from nothingness is of secondary importance. Its object could be god, science, mankind, anything. All these possible faiths constitute one single faith: the belief in the possibility of an absolute difference from nothingness, or the belief in the absolute possibility of a difference from nothingness. That is the essence of contemporary faith, whatever its name (Hribar 1971:47).

To summarize: Spomenka and Tine Hribar are looking at the human condition from an existentialist perspective. Their view on religion is in one sense similar to that of the authors discussed earlier. That is, religious faith is a form of alienation. However, today alienation is to be found in any type of belief. And atheism by itself is no guarantee of liberation.

The Hribars have thus tried to extend conventional Marxist thinking on alienation, by not only, like Bošnjak, referring to death, but by focusing on the human predicament as such.

Religion exists because it makes life meaningful, it tries to provide an escape from the terror of emptiness. Once this was made possible without reflection. In the contemporary situation, however, man through his relation to science is able to replace god by himself.

⁴⁹ This is similar to Berger's (1969) discussion of religion as a creator of "nomos", meaningful order.

This does not a priori have to be a positive development, as it could lead to general indifference and lack of interest in human values. But basically it is a positive development, as only man as a subject is able to establish a truly human relationship to reality and thus overcome alienation.

Church and State in Socialist Society: Zdenko Roter

Zdenko Roter belongs to the "Ljubljana-School" of Yugoslav sociology of religion. He is professor at the Faculty of sociology, political science and journalism in Ljubljana, and has also been politically active in the Socialist Alliance and assemblies on different levels. Among other things Roter has led the studies of religion undertaken almost every year since the end of the sixties, within the framework of the large Slovenian opinion surveys. He also took part in the formation of a centre for the study of atheism and religion at the faculty, and he has participated in the political discussions of the role of church and believers in socialist society.

Zdenko Roter has written articles and books on many subjects, but his main area of interest is the study of the Catholic Church, both its role as an international organization and, especially, its position in Yugoslavia. His work concerns, for example, the changes in the church following the Vatican Council, particularly its relation to Marxism and socialism. Or the attitudes of believers towards the mission and organization of the church. In 1976 he published his doctoral thesis: "The Catholic Church and the State in Yugoslavia 1945-1973". We will here mainly discuss Rooter's conception of these relations, and only in general touch upon his views on other sociology-of-religion issues.

The subtitle of Rooter's thesis is "Sociological Perspectives and a Model of Investigation". That is, the book is primarily a review of different theories about state-church relations in general and their possible application in a Yugoslav context. His approach is typological, and he has tried to describe the relations between the state and the religious communities as various typical attitudes and modes of action, without going into a detailed chronological analysis. This could be regretted, in view of the author's knowledge of the situation and access to documents of interest, but it is also true that there was a need of a treatise handling the problems in this way, and in a Yugoslav perspective the book must be characterized as

very valuable, as it makes an audience of sociologists and other social scientists, as well as politicians, familiar with the international research tradition in church-state relations.

The book consists of five chapters. In the introduction is discussed the author's general position, and there is a thorough conceptual analysis. In the second chapter is treated the differences between what Roter calls folk religion and universal religion. In the third chapter are described different types of state religion and different attitudes of the state towards the church, such as support, opposition or neutrality.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the factors that, according to the author, are important for an understanding of the relationship between state and church in post-war Yugoslavia. Here Roter deals with the policy of party and state organs vis-a-vis the church, as well as the attitudes of the church towards society.

In the final chapter Roter discusses the post-war period from a partly chronological perspective and distinguishes between two periods: a period of conflict and a period of compromise. He also puts forward his ideas on the possible alternatives in the future.

Religion

Roter emphasizes the complexity of the religious phenomenon and points out that scholars often refer to religion as a multidimensional concept. It is possible to see religion with the eyes of classical Marxism as a "form of consciousness", but with certain important qualifications:

Religion is a relatively autonomous and structured phenomenon; the relation between the elements of this structure differs according to various cultural-historical types of religion, and religion as such is part of the social structure. Other forms of social activity (consciousness and behaviour) are influencing the structure of religion and vice versa (Roter 1976:27).

The idea that religion is a form of social consciousness could be

accepted to the extent that it will help us methodologically to answer the question of the nature of religion, if we understand this "social consciousness" not primarily as a reflection of changes in the "base", over which man has no control, but instead as social action, human activity, production in the Marxian sense: "Religion, state, family, law, morals, science, art etc are only specific forms of production and are subsumed under its general law" (Roter 1976:30).

Here, as on several other occasions, it is possible to detect an influence from the Slovene sociologist Marko Kerševan. Roter, for example, points out that in Marxist discourse religion is often denied legitimate existence, in contrast to other parts of the "superstructure", or other aspects of "social consciousness".

Roter discusses two well-known quotations from Marx and Engels,⁵⁰ where religion is described as a fantastic reflection of the base and characterized as opium of the people. He is of the opinion that they do not help us to understand what is specific about religion. The function of opium, the "fantastic" quality of religion etc, is equally valid for other social phenomena. According to Roter the characteristic feature of religion is the tendency to classify the world in two areas or dimensions, making man conscious of a difference between sacred and profane. But this is not enough. There is also a relationship of "mutual expectation". Every religious object is characterized by being something "hidden", by representing "power", and by the fact that it is possible for man to communicate with this unknown. The religious object is a priori turned towards man, and the most typical expression of this is prayer. It is this mutual relationship, this consciousness of a "religious object" with whom man communicates, that is characteristic of religion (Roter 1976:25-32). (It is evident that Roter's view is very close to the classical approach in the scholarly study of religion. In Yugoslavia such ideas have been developed by Marko Kerševan, whose model we will discuss in the next chapter.)

⁵⁰ "Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Theory of Law" and "Anti-Dühring".

It is, according to Roter, possible to divide religion into two major categories: on one hand folk religions (*narodne religije*), on the other universal religions (*univerzalne religije*). This division is the classification common in comparative religion between the religion of illiterate peoples and the religion of high cultures, even if Roter's description is not completely the usual one. Folk religion exists in so called primitive society characterized by an undifferentiated culture. In history there is a development towards a more specific religious concept, and characteristic of universal religion is that it presupposes individual autonomy, a personal relationship between the individual and the divine. Religion is, furthermore, in such cases an independent institution in relation to other areas of society (Roter 1976:32-37).

Another distinction made by Roter is the one between church religion and popular religion (Roter is thus distinguishing between "*Ijudska*" and "*narodna*" that is between folk/popular and folk/national religion). There are further different types of universal religion: mystical and prophetic, and here Roter relies on Mensching (Roter 1976:38-40).

In popular religion there are to be found elements of an earlier religious tradition, as well as new forms of religion. What matters is that it is different from the normative elite-religion of the church.

Roter is thus advocating a more dynamic view of religion as a social phenomenon. He has a basic Marxian perspective, but as far as details or specifications are concerned, he relies on the classical European research on religion from the turn of the century onwards. He discusses, for example, the various typologies put forward in the international research on religious organizations: the problem of church and sect as understood by Weber, Troeltsch, Wach and others (Roter 1976:54-62). It is also interesting to note that he, different from traditional Marxists, refers to a history of religion, which is a consequence of his thesis of the relative autonomy of the religious phenomenon:

We are inclined to believe in the interpretative hypothesis that social and political, "external", factors are primarily influencing specific forms of organization in the universal religions, but that

"deeper" aspects of universal religion have to do with the nature of religion as such (Roter 1976:54).

This is, apparently, a standpoint differing from the usual Marxist view. Instead of postulating a priesthood, which with more or less wicked intentions is trying to further its own interests, Roter relates the existence and behaviour of the clergy to objective conditions in the ecclesiastical organization.

Roter's ideas about the process of secularization are similar to some of the authors discussed above, but he has perhaps come out with a more pregnant formulation. A perspective is suggested which takes into account the complexity of the present religious situation, especially in a society of the Yugoslav type, where old and new is existing side by side in a very tangible way.

Expressed in another way: People in modern society are estranged from the church, several sociological studies point to this fact. The transformed men of modern society constitute a new quality, which is the result of technification, industrialization, urbanization and other social processes in industrial and post-industrial society. We have thus to do with two types of people: traditional and modern, living side by side, taking different positions in social and thereby in religious life. Characteristic of modern men is that tradition is strange to them, that they are lacking religion in the ordinary sense of the word, and that, which we particularly would like to emphasize, their interests are on the whole oriented towards this world (and not the world beyond) towards everyday life, towards what could be called the state of God on earth. But even among these people there is, in our view, a transformed popular religion expressing itself in profane manifestations, in devotion, longing and other para-religious practice (Roter 1976:68).

State and Church

A main thesis of Roter's is that the Catholic Church and the socialist state have a special relationship, due to the fact that the

Catholic Church is the most developed ecclesiastic institution. This relationship will however, at least to some extent, influence the relations between the state and other religious communities (Roter 1976:117).

Roter objects to two extreme points of view concerning the position of religious communities in socialist society:

According to one of them the socialist state is a priori anti-religious and anti-church oriented, and one should from that quarter expect nothing but antireligious and anti-church struggle. Gestures of reconciliation by such a state should only be seen as tactical manoeuvres, subordinate to the one goal: the suppression and extinction of church and religion. According to the other stereotypes the Catholic church, if not every church, is a priori an antisocialist, politically reactionary institution, of which one would expect only anti-socialist and reactionary political behaviour, oriented against the socialist socio-political system. Gestures of reconciliation from the part of the Catholic church should be understood as tactical manoeuvres, subordinated the one goal: destruction of the socialist social system and the socialist state (Roter 1976:119).

Instead he suggests the following point of departure (Roter 1976:120):

The insight that the Catholic Church and the socialist state are relatively autonomous institutions.

There is an interaction between different social institutions; church and state cannot live completely separate lives; they are influencing each other.

Church and religion are related; the church is dependent on the position of religion as a part of the cultural system.

The problem of church and state arose when both institutions were emancipated, that is, when universal religion evolved into something more than folk religion.

The church is the most developed religious institution and has an intensive interaction with the state.

The same is valid for the degree of development of the state: the

higher it is, the more likely are conflicts.

With a new type of state the relation towards the church is radicalised.

The relationship between church and state could be changed.

Roter then mentions four major types of attitudes towards the religious communities, as expressed by the socialist state: state religion, state support, hostility, and neutrality. He claims that there is no society, which is completely neutral towards religion, and he also seems to question such a possibility, because of the complex relations between the two institutions in a developed society.

As far as the antireligious state is concerned, Roter is of the opinion that such an attitude is most common in societies where the state itself is of a religious character:

The more the state, with all its institutions, acquires a religious character (being secret, untouchable, unexplainable, arbitrary, authoritarian, the object of veneration, the incarnation of purity, righteousness, rewarding good works and punishing evil) the more anything that might prevent the perfection of the state, preventing its "religious" ambitions, must, due to competition, be turn aside (Roter 1976:133).

In a totalitarian system there is thus an inevitable competition between state and religion. According to Roter the most characteristic example of this kind was Nazi-Germany. It is on the other hand doubtful if one could place socialist societies in this category. That is, Roter does not give a definite answer and leaves the question to future research. He further emphasizes the role of religious organizations in the conflicts that arose in East European states, having in mind the situation between the wars and during the Second World War. According to Roter the conflicts were caused by "empirical" situations and had no deeper theoretical grounds (Roter 1976:125-155).

It is of course doubtful whether Roter is correct. It could be argued that the Soviet Union was at least as hostile to religion as Hitler's Germany, and allowing for the role certain leaders (such as Stalin) might have played, it is obvious that the steps taken by the state have been ideologically legitimated. What is typical of

these societies is exactly the comparatively important role assigned to ideology in social and cultural affairs. The situation in Eastern Europe thus seems to fit rather well to the description of the kind of situation giving rise to conflicts, and Roter is apparently too cautious in his discussion. It follows, however, from his own description of the concrete reasons behind conflictual relations that he might have been thinking of the socialist states in Eastern Europe:

The more there is in socialist society an identity between state and communist party (which are completely identified) an identity between society and party, the greater is the possibility to constitute a unitary state ideology which excludes every other ideology, including religion.

If in Marxism religion is defined as the opium of the people and this relation is understood as a theoretical axiom, then as a consequence there is a negation of religion and a repressive attitude towards religion from the part of the socialist state (Roter 1976:135).

Roter is discussing in terms of "a", but what he says has been characteristic of the USSR and other socialist states for most of their existence.

One should, says Roter, when discussing religion, be aware of two types of factors: primary and secondary. By the former is meant type of socio-economic formation, type of global society, cultural type, religious type, type of state and the status of religion in society. These factors are acting together with the secondary factors, that is, are influenced by developments within the social institutions concerned (Roter 1976:152-54, 171-72).

State and Church in Yugoslavia

From this position Roter discusses the situation in Yugoslavia. He deals with the character of the relations during different periods, discusses the most important explanatory variables, and puts forward a tentative periodization, but refrains from a detailed chronology.

At first Roter points out that there has really been a change in Yugoslavia, that the political structure is socialist, presupposing a different relationship between state and church than before. He is of the opinion that the policy pursued by the state and party on the whole has been the same during the post-war period (or rather since the war years) and that it is codified in the party program of 1958.

This, however, does not mean that one cannot discern different types of relations. As far as the state is concerned, Roter speaks about three different positions: the administrative, the pragmatic, and the cooperative. In his view the third attitude has been dominant (Roter 1976:187-192).

It is clear from Rooter's account (1976:183-187) that western description (see Magnusson 1973, Alexander 1979) of the relationship state-party-religion during the first so called administrative period is largely shared by Yugoslav scholars. The administrative policy defines religion as harmful, and it tries in various ways to prevent institutions and their representatives, as well as citizen, from performing religious activities. Those expressing the pragmatic position, on the other hand, are positive towards cooperation with the religious institutions, not because of a positive attitude towards religion as such, but because they want to use religion for their own purposes. The cooperative policy, finally, is characterized by a rapprochement between state and church, which however does not mean that the state would give the church a monopoly on representing the spiritual interests of citizen.

Roter declares that even within the framework of this policy there is opposition to religion:

The opposition is expressed by delaying the implementation of various demands, proposals or suggestions made by the church and based on constitution and law. It is further to be noted that in such cases where the rights of the church have been given facultatively by law, they are not handled in a way that would benefit the church. An integral aspect of this policy is a special type of propaganda from the part of the state organs, which in that way are trying to create an animosity towards the church as an institution (Roter 1976:191).

He admits that the consistency he would like to see in the policy towards religion has not always been there in practice:

An empirical investigation would show, this is our hypothesis, that the complete and practical realization of these values as constitutive aspects of the policy of the state has not been undertaken at once, especially not in specific areas and phases of the relation between state and church (Roter 1976:183).

Of particular interest is what Roter has to say about persecutions of clergy and laymen:

In this context we have to mention that certain political effects (which certainly have influenced the relations between church and state) have been brought about by the behaviour of various non-government groups or individuals, who, convinced that they were acting in accordance with state policy or maintaining that this policy was not consistent enough, provoked certain events having to do with the (Catholic) church and religion. We have in mind all the "excessoid" or incidental examples, which in the history of the relations between the state and the Catholic Church have played a definite role. Not only in the above meaning, but also in the way in which state organs were acting (Roter 1976:185).

As an example of such behaviour or incident Roter especially points to the attempt to burn Bishop Vovk to death, which at the time (1952) was condemned by the political leadership, including President Tito personally (Roter 1976:185, cf. Alexander 1979:89).

Roter also claims that an important aspect of church-state relations in Yugoslavia are differences existing between political levels in handling ecclesiastical and religious matters:

We must add that on the higher societal levels there was generally a greater consistency in carrying through a "pure" and consistent policy towards the church, which is evident from the correct legislation and other expressions of policy. Greater inconsistency, differences and contradictions have to a higher degree been

manifest on lower levels, especially in decisions of a concrete nature and concerning local circumstances (Roter 1976:187).

Roter emphasizes that his typology of the state's position towards religion is based on the behaviour of these lower state organs.

In Rooter's opinion the Catholic Church itself has played an important role for the development of the relations in Yugoslavia. He especially mentions the militant anti-communism during the pre-war, war- and post-war years, and in particular draws attention to the Pastoral Letter of the Croatian bishops in 1945.

According to Roter, it is possible to distinguish between four typical attitudes: anti-communism, militant Catholicism, opposition and accommodation. He does not give any exact dates, but he apparently draws the line between period 2 and 3 in 1960, when the Catholic bishops wrote their letter (of reconciliation), and perhaps between types 3 and 4 in 1971, with Tito's visit to the Vatican (Roter 1976:192-220).

In Rooter's opinion the policy of the party could be divided into two areas or types: the territorial and the ideological. In each type there are three subtypes: pragmatic, excessive, or administrative, and enlightenment, institutionalized atheism, or militant political atheism.

As the three most important secondary factors influencing the relations between state and church, Roter thus mentions: the policy of the party, the policy of the state, and the policy of the Catholic Church. He is of the opinion that it is possible to discern a difference between the policy of party and state (Roter 1976:221-240).

One could argue that in Yugoslavia there is, in a way, a type of political pluralism, but, nevertheless, it seems that the important decisions are made in the party apparatus. It is also obvious that important changes in the policy towards religion are the result of interventions from party leaderships. (Roter himself speaks of the Socialist Alliance as a non-independent political factor). Moreover, state bodies as a rule are recruiting their personnel among party-members.

In conclusion then, one could according to Roter speak of two

periods of Yugoslav policy towards religion: the period of conflict and the period of compromise. Roter claims that the different types of policy he discusses to varying degrees are present in both periods, and that it is impossible to formulate absolute temporal limits. His categories only state what climate has been predominant.

When Roter published his book the relations between state and church were again strained since a few years. He points to the conflicts of interests and suggests that a change for the better would presuppose both less power to the church hierarchy and a de-professionalisation of political life.

Marxism and the Holy: Marko Kerševan

Introduction

Marko Kerševan is professor at the philosophical faculty of the university in Ljubljana but has also been affiliated with the Faculty of sociology, political science and journalism. He has undertaken several empirical investigations and is the Yugoslav scholar who has discussed most thoroughly the theoretical problems of sociology of religion. More than other sociologists he has tried to *integrate* the general science of religion with the Marxist frame of reference, and in many ways Kerševan must be looked upon as an innovator in the Marxist study of religion. This is especially true of his emphasis on the concept of religious experience, and the discussion of this experience from a synthesis of Marxist sociology, structuralism, semiotics, and classical phenomenology of religion.

A point of departure in the study of Kerševan's views on religion could be an article written in 1967: "Some controversial issues in Marxist theory of religion" (Kerševan 1967a). Here is outlined much of what was written elsewhere (Kerševan 1969b, 1970b, 1971b, 1972b, 1972c, 1974, 1975b) and later summarized in the doctoral thesis "Religion as a Social Phenomenon" (1975c).

Kerševan begins by pointing out that quite a few modern theologians have been influenced by Marx's view of religion. This is true of for example the idea of religion as a social protest, but also the view that religion sometimes could be "the opium of the people". At the same time, continues Kerševan, those having a positive attitude to certain aspects of the Marxian heritage, argue that Marxism, somehow, has not been able to give a fair description of religion. It has not succeeded in discovering what is specific about religion, what distinguishes it from other social phenomena. Kerševan's discussion is devoted to a clarification of this problem, and his article is to be seen as a basis for formulating a more comprehensive Marxist theory of religion.

In his article Kerševan criticizes the idea of "the roots of religion", a concept which is unable to explain the distinctive qualities of religion. In the Marxist tradition the rational aspects of religion have been one-sidedly stressed, religion has been understood primarily as a philosophical system. Another aspect of the Marxist approach is that religion has been, wrongly, referred to as "opium for the people", which has led to a concentration on only the negative aspects of religion and its social function. According to Kerševan, the negative function of religion is always latently present (and in this he does not differ very much from, for example, Peter Berger 1969), but it has to be admitted, he says, that religion can also play a positive role in society. Both Marxism and psychoanalysis tend to analyse religion from a reductionist position, regarding it as a compensation or projection, which could not be the whole truth. There does seem to exist a religiosity, which is not possible to explain in that way. Therefore, a Marxist theory of religion, must try within its conceptual system to account for the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" and the God met by the great mystics of all religious traditions and historical periods. One must, then, study religion as it really manifests itself among the believers, even if this at first seems to be inconsistent with a traditional Marxist explanation.

In the same article Kerševan also puts forward the idea that the "mystical function" could become "autonomous", that is, appear independently of a specific religious context, and that this process might have started already, developing parallel to the "process of desacralization".

Finally Kerševan points out that there is in modern society an "irreligion" that might be classified as negative, a development which Marx did not foresee, and that this negative irreligion due to its disregard for humanist and spiritual values from a general point of view does not represent a better alternative than the "mediator" of traditional religion.

On the following pages we will discuss in more detail Kerševan's view of religion, as it is presented in his thesis and other works.

The Classics of Marxism and Religion

Marx and Engels

Kerševan reminds us that Marx and Engels did not write any comprehensive study devoted to religion only, as they did not write general surveys of art, science, or literature. As far as religion is concerned, however, they wrote comparatively much, although the texts are scattered throughout their opus.

Before Kerševan discusses the classics he comments briefly on their personal attitudes toward religion. He claims that the sources do not leave any doubt that for Marx and Engels religion is something utterly negative. Every attempt in the name of dialogue to detect a positive attitude is, according to Kerševan, bound to fail. One should remember that Marx and Engels were, after all, children of the Enlightenment, that they were fighting religion from a definite political position, clashing with the social views of the church. It is quite clear that they perceived both the church and religion as such as obstacles to their revolutionary work (Kerševan 1975c: 14-28).

Kerševan (1975c: 28-29) proposes that a reading of the classics will result in the following list of ideas about, or definitions of religion:

- Religion as a human product, or as a product of social (historical) man, ultimately a social product.
- Religion as a form of social consciousness and ideology. .
- Religion as a source and expression of (self)alienation. .
- Religion as a phenomenon without distinctive properties of its own, a reflection of social relations.
- Religion as a representation of social characteristics. .
- Religion as a personification of (or) a fantastic reflection of really existing forces in nature and society. .
- Religion as an extension of the existing world (religion as compensation)
- Religion as legitimation of an existing social order. .
- Religion as an expression of, and protest against, poverty (misery). .

- Religion as the human need of a mediator. . Religion as a specific mode of apprehending (experiencing) the world

Kerševan goes on to discuss each of these definitions or ideas.

Religion as Human and Social Product

Kerševan is of the opinion that Marx's and Engels' declarations are made in two directions. On one hand they are directed against those understanding religion as being of divine origin, on the other hand against those who see religion primarily as an individual-psychological problem. He points out that to the extent that one understands religion from the perspective of a general science of religion, there are nowadays no objections to the first thesis. Any scientific study of religion is based on "methodological" atheism. Even a religious scholar adheres to this principle in his work.

In this sense, therefore, Marx is not controversial. It is true that he meant that religion was nothing but a human product. This is, however, from a scientific point of view irrelevant, as it is a problem not discussed in the study of religion.

The idea of religion as a social product, on the other hand, is still of interest for the science of religion, as theories understanding religion exclusively as an individual phenomenon are not satisfactory (Kerševan 1975c: 30-33).

Religion as Ideology

Religion is regarded by Marx and Engels as a form of ideology, sharing the properties common to all ideologies. According to Kerševan such an approach does not, however, capture the specific quality of religion, and is therefore of less interest. In this respect Kerševan objects to the treatment generally given to religion in Marxist textbooks. Although religion is considered to be a form of "social consciousness", it is for example asked how and why religion has come to exist, questions never asked in relation to other ideologies. The legitimacy of religion as a social phenomenon, its right to exist, as it were, is thereby negated from the very beginning (Kerševan 1975c: 33-35).

Religion as Reflection

In the works of both Marx and Engels one comes across the idea that religion in some way is a reflection of other social phenomena. It is however not quite clear whether religion is to be understood only as a reflection. Most of the relevant passages in the sources tend to point in that direction, however. At the same time Kerševan observes that this attitude is not unique to Marx and Engels; there are authors outside the Marxist tradition with a similar approach.

It is evident, though, that the definition of the classics is too narrow; we know this from contemporary sociology, if nothing else. Most problematic is, again, the negation of the specific quality of religion, which means that the study of this phenomenon usually concerns aspects having only an external relation to religion, while religion itself as an object of study is neglected.

Kerševan further claims that the theory has been criticized on purely logical grounds, and rightly so. What is being reflected must, after all, have something to reflect, it must possess a structure, specific qualities and, consequently, an autonomous existence.

In fact, the theory does presuppose a reciprocal relationship between social factors, which has not been the usual interpretation in Marxist literature. And in this context one must object to the biologist view expressed in many of the statements made by Engels.

The concept of reflection could perhaps be used by a general theory of religion, if it was understood as a reciprocal relationship, if religion was not regarded as a passive entity only.

Kerševan to some extent discusses the history of the concept and assumes that it is directed against those aiming at a supernatural explanation of the religious phenomenon. One should also remember that Marx in his scientific and revolutionary work was primarily interested in the "base" and treated religion only in relation to its importance for social development in general. Engels, however, seems to have had more far-reaching theoretical ambitions. He speaks of religion as a fantastic reflection, an idea that is rejected by Kerševan. It is not possible to refer to the specific quality of religion as a fantasy. The important thing is that religion is a particular

relationship to reality, which Engels himself, as a matter of fact, also noted (Kerševan 1975cc: 35-43).

Kerševan is thus critical of the classics on this point. It is not enough in the analysis of religion to discover "the earthly kernel of religious ideas". One has to show how this phenomenon is brought about and study its distinctive features. And Kerševan says:

If in our analysis of social relations we are interested in the resemblance between real relations and their religious expression or form, we are in the study of religion interested in capturing the distinctive quality of the "supernatural" in its various appearances (Kerševan 1975c: 43).

Religion as Legitimation and Compensation

Kerševan notes that Marx in the well-known passage of the "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Theory of Law" mentions two basic functions of religion, later discussed by sociology of religion, that is, the legitimising and compensatory role of religion.

He goes on to say that this, however, does not mean that only religion will perform this function, or that all possible social and psychological functions of religion would thereby be accounted for. This is evident already in the analyses made by Engels of the role of religion and church in various societies and historical periods.

One should, further, not understand Marx's words in the "Introduction" as a comprehensive definition of religion, and one cannot accept the idea that religion is the "opium of the people", in the sense that someone consciously is trying to deceive people, or that religion would be only that.

Such a view is contrary to the evidence of history, where religion has played both a positive and a negative role. Kerševan also refers to Marx's understanding of religion as a protest, which logically means that it is not necessarily an illusory protest, something usually assumed.

Kerševan thus strongly declares that the "opium function" is a latent possibility and that as a concept it cannot give a satisfactory

answer to the question of what religion really is. In every concrete case the social function of religion must be investigated (Kerševan 1975c: 43-46).

Religion as Alienation

Kerševan at first points out that throughout the whole opus of Marx recurs the idea that religion is a form of alienation, if not *the* expression of alienation. The concept can be understood, though, on two levels: as 1) self-alienation and as 2) alienated product. On one hand it refers to man's alienated consciousness, on the other to the fact that religion, a human product, is appearing to man as an autonomous force in control of his life.

Kerševan finds the same weakness in the Marxist view of religion as alienation, as in the way the classics treat religion in general. It is hard to accept a proposition like religion = alienation, or that this is what distinguishes religion from other phenomena. Alienation manifests itself also in connection with concepts like family, labour, law, state, etc. And one should note that Marx in his later writings hardly uses the term, and that when doing so, he gives it a concrete meaning, anchors it to a sociological or historical context.

That is, even though Marx could be said to deal with the problem of alienation in his later work, he does so only in a descriptive manner. And Kerševan agrees with Althusser, that the mature Marx does not use "alienation" as a basic theoretical category, linked to concepts like "subject" or "human essence".

One could, then, either keep the concept and extend its meaning to include also the later works, or one could, like Marx, refrain from using it, with the assumption that it is accounted for by other central concepts. Kerševan prefers the latter option (Kerševan 1975c: 46-51).

By not using the concept of alienation as a tool for understanding the religious phenomenon, Kerševan differs from most other Yugoslav sociologists of religion. As we will see he develops a radically different theory, centring on the concept of practice, in that way trying both to be true to the Marxist tradition, and to resolve the problems inherent in the dominant alienation-paradigm.

Religion as a Specific Way of Apprehending the World

Kerševan quotes a passage from the "Grundrisse", where Marx refers to different modes of cognition, or apprehension of reality, and distinguishes between rational thought and "practical spiritual" modes, such as art or religion. Kerševan is of the opinion that this idea, in contrast to the concept of reflection, would be constructive in the analysis of religion. It could serve as a bridge between the view of religion as a form of social consciousness and the alternative view of religion as a social product. On one hand it is emphasized that religion is a *specific* way of experiencing and relating to the world, on the other hand, religion is, like art, different from rational thought (Kerševan 1975c: 51). Kerševan summarizes his views of Marx and Engels in the following way:

None of these definitions or characterizations could, in themselves, be valid as a sufficiently general definition of religion, as they either do not define what is specific about religion in comparison to other phenomena or are too narrow to capture the complexity of the religious phenomenon. It is true that single definitions describe the general nature of religion as a phenomenon in the human world, within a Marxist understanding of society (religion as a human and social product, as a form of social consciousness, as a way of apprehending the world); (or describe) its relation to other social phenomena (religion as a reflection and form of social content), and excellently show some important functions of religion (legitimatising and compensatory), besides providing a rich material for empirical study of religion and its role in concrete socio-historical contexts. On the whole, however, Marx' and Engels' texts explicitly dealing with religion do not represent a comprehensive (Marxist) theory of religion. Above all, there is no precise or exhaustive definition of what is specific about religion; in particular, however, - apart from general statements that religion is a human and social product - there is no explanation of *how* man, or society, produce this specific

product and its effects, how the specific religious apprehension of the world is brought about. .

Nor is it possible to formulate a comprehensive theory of religion as a specific social phenomenon, based only on the explicit statements the classics have made about religion, although - which we have shown - one cannot ignore them. A comprehensive Marxist theory of religion is something that, on the basis of Marx' and Engels' concepts, yet has to be constructed. Our task would be a contribution to such a project - concentrating especially on those aspects to which the classics have given the least attention. The fundamental methodological principle would have to be this: to discuss religion from the perspective, and using the methods, that the classics developed in their analysis of society and social phenomena; to consider and evaluate, within this frame of reference, their explicit statements about religion made in different contexts. (Not the other way round, however: to reduce perspective and methods of analysis to the explicit statements of the classics, or to combinations of them). Within such a framework it is possible, and necessary, to consider and assess contributions from other directions in the study of religion. .

As the central concept in our attempt at such a discussion of religion, we would choose the concept of practice - production. Several fortunate circumstances are, in our view, coinciding. The analysis of explicit statements has shown, that while in principle understanding religion as a human (social) production or product, the classics have not discussed the specific manner of production. The concept of practice is, further, one of the key concepts used by Marx, both in his early works, as well as in his most comprehensive work in the area which he most thoroughly studied (and was to establish as an area of research) the *Capital*, where he analysed the functioning of capitalist society and its economic base. (Kerševan 1975c: 51-52).

In conclusion then, Kerševan is critical of most of the Marxist

interpretations of religion as a phenomenon and is of the opinion that the problems are caused by weaknesses in Marx's own approach to religion. Kerševan actually does not seem to accept any of the traditional ways of analysing religion, at least not as absolute, once and for all valid approaches. His main criticism is that Marx did not realize that one has to concentrate on the fact that religion is a special mode of perceiving and experiencing the world. What is fruitful, therefore, in the Marxist heritage, are Marx's words about religion as a specific practice.

Lenin's View of Religion

While Marx and Engels have left behind an unsatisfactory ground for a (Marxist) sociology of religion, this is even more the case with Lenin. In a preface to a new issue of "Lenin on religion" Kerševan (1976) says in the beginning that Lenin's texts on religion are today problematic for a Marxist and communist. They can only provoke an atmosphere of embarrassment by their one-sidedness and vulgarity, and they, in fact, discredit a Marxist science of religion. This is especially the case, when there are efforts to promote some kind of cooperation between Christians and Marxists.

Lenin's treatment of religion is full of contradictions and ideological overtones, and the texts are for the most part on a rather low philosophical and scholarly level. One should bear in mind, though, that Lenin primarily is a strategist and theorist of the revolution, that he is not interested in formulating a general theory of religion. From Lenin's texts one gets the impression that for him the main thing is class struggle and not policy vis-à-vis religion or fight against religion in general. At the same time, it must be noted that he shows great sympathy for the pre-Marxian religious criticism that Marx himself opposed.

According to Kerševan it is meaningless to ask what is primary in Lenin: the Enlightenment-influenced struggle against religion or the Marxian attitude, as both of them are to be found in the texts.

One should therefore not even try, while reading Lenin, to look for a theory of religion, or a recipe for practical action in religious

matters, as he is not being consistent. Instead one should stress the fact that Lenin in his concrete actions seems to have been influenced by the Marxian perspective of religion. That is, Kerševan is of the opinion that Lenin was factually wrong in his writings about religion in general and that it is impossible to accept his style. Only to the extent that his positions were the expression of a Marxian understanding could they be accepted. What this amounts to is probably that Lenin in Kerševan's view in his practical policy concentrated on class struggle and that this should be the main orientation of contemporary Marxists as well. At the same time as one is conscious of the fact that social relations in many respects are different today. It seems as if Kerševan has found a way to argue for a more relaxed policy towards religion, which at the same time is anchored to the basic ideological literature (see Kerševan 1977). We will return to this question later on.

On the following pages we will instead present the theory of religion put forward by Kerševan as an alternative to the traditional Marxist discourse on religion.

Kerševan's Model of religion

How then, is Marxian analysis of religion to be developed? Kerševan's points of departure are certain ideas and concepts of Althusser, although he does not follow Althusser all the way. A fundamental idea is that one should distinguish between science and ideology, or between scientific and moral-philosophical discourse. The social sciences cannot have as their object of study "total man", and Kerševan implicitly criticizes the anthropological perspective so common in Yugoslav social sciences and dominating in the new sociology of religion. At first, his use of "practice" is not the usual one:

The concept of practice, as we will use it, is not and cannot be identifiable with the concept of practice (praxis) as a conscious totality of human activity - creativity, practice as man's being etc. That concept of practice is inseparably related to the philosophical idea of man as the free source of this practice, man as subject. The notion of man as free subject - source, is, however, by definition incompatible with scientific discourse, which is based on

the use of categories like determination and causality (however flexible they might be conceived) Such a concept is impossible to use as a theoretical concept, as a means of explication within the framework of scientific discourse (Kerševan 1975c: 54).

This view does not necessarily mean that man as such is reified, dehumanised or understood as a passive entity, but simply that in the *kind* of language used by science we are not referring to Man, or to Human Practice. In the discourse of science Man is given to us not in his totality but representing different kinds of practice. And we should be careful not to think of science as an *absolute* truth.

Science is only one possible way of perceiving the world, only one social practice, only one discourse. The purpose of science is to produce knowledge, which is not possible unless we use the logic immanent to scientific activity. (...) The concept of man as subject has no place in scientific discourse, as it (as an ideological concept) is incompatible with science (Kerševan 1975c: 59).

It is true that the social scientist is related to ideology in a specific way, but there is nevertheless, an area, which could constitute the basis of objectivity. This is, says Kerševan, of great importance for a Marxist science of religion, having in mind Marx's own negative attitude towards the religious phenomenon, and the fact that it is exactly on this point that sociologists have tried to be most true to Marx. This would be correct if Marx had tried to formulate a general theory of religion and if the negative attitude were an indispensable dimension of such a theory, or if the theory of religion constituted an integral part of a general Marxist social science.

The Concept of Practice

The concept of "social practice", understood in an Althusserian way, serves as the general framework, or basis of Kerševan's theoretical construction. Practice, or human action, is to be found in all areas of the social world: economy, politics, ideology, science, art etc. Every social practice in this sense is characterized by certain structural relations: At first there is its object or *materia prima*, that which is

transformed by practice. Further there are the means (of production) that are used in this process, the (productive) relations constituting the framework of the practice concerned, and finally the product, or effect, of practice. Various types of practice, or human activity, differ from each other in these respects and they are independent vis-à-vis each other in the sense that different law-like relations are internally valid for each practice. At the same time they are related to each other and influence each other (Kerševan 1975c: 61-69).

The task Kerševan has set for himself, is to analyse religion against this background, that is to determine the object of religion, how and in what circumstances religion is produced, and what is more specifically characteristic of the religious product.

The Object of Religion

It is possible to divide social practice into two general classes on the basis of the characteristic features of their form and content. On one hand there are those kinds of practice transforming an object in the world, a material object, for example production in the narrow sense, and, on the other hand, those changing a "thought" object, like science, ideology or art. Religion belongs to the second category, and is in this sense a "specific practice", as it "acquires" or experiences the world in a specific way or mode. It apprehends the "real object" by way of a "thought object". The "thought object" is thus a product of the practice of thought, constituted when transforming the "materia prima".

Kerševan further points out that ideology, as understood by Althusser, is characterized by certain properties. Most important is that ideology is an "eternal category" in the same way as is for example the subconscious in Freudian theory. It has to do with man's relation to the world in general, to the world as a totality, and its function is to handle the existential demands of life. Kerševan is using the concept in a manner that makes it similar to what other sociologists call "value orientations".

Typical of religion is that it deals with "ultimate questions". Kerševan points out that this means a relativisation of sorts, and

that what is important in a religious context is variable. Common to all such phenomena is however that they in one way or another represent that which is different from man, something that man cannot make his own, or render human in any other way than by religion.

All empirically existing objects of religious practice seem to have in common the fact that they are objects, which at a given point in time and in a certain culture very clearly "confirm a power different from man". That is, these are objects which are unreachable, in front of which man is impotent, objects which man cannot by using his other practices - the material-technical, the scientific or artistic - render human in a satisfactory manner (Kerševan 1975c: 71).

These phenomena "which we do not control but in some way still have to control" exist in both nature and social life, as well as in the human psyche. They thus represent both those aspects of reality, which are of basic importance for our ordinary lives, and those, which might threaten our lives.⁵¹

It is, however, says Kerševan, wrong to understand the religious object as constituting the origin of religion in the sense of classical Marxism. If you look at religion as a specifically structured practice, then, in fact, the need to discuss its origin becomes obsolete⁵²:

It is meaningless to say that religion arises from man's insufficient knowledge, his impotence, from misery, alienation and so on, or from the wish to at least in an illusory way overcome such a situation. This does not mean that situations like that do not have any relation to religion. It is wrong, though, to assume that one has thereby solved one of the basic questions in the treatment of religion. If one in the same way asks about the origin of science, one would end up with the same conclusion: it was born out of man's impotence vis-à-vis nature and the wish to overcome

⁵¹ This is similar to Luckmann's (1972) discussion.

⁵² William James, one of the authors Kerševan refers to, has incidentally used this argument.

this situation. While studying science or art these questions are however seldom asked (Kerševan 1975c: 77).

The Result of Religious Practice: Religious Experience.

Kerševan describes in the following way the result of religious praxis:

The religious effect represents a specific way of apprehending the real object. In accordance with what has been said about ideological practice in general, the real object is unaffected. The religious effect arises in consciousness. It transforms consciousness so that the real object can be experienced in a human manner. (When we speak of consciousness - I once again emphasize this - we do not mean a reflecting thought, or being conscious, but rather man's experience in its totality - in contrast to the real process of life however it may be experienced). The experience thus includes thought, ideas and emotions. The common language used in describing religious experience is thus - contrary to the rational philosophical reflection - wholly in accordance with the general meaning of ideology (as "experience" in general), it is only more emphasized in religion (Kerševan 1975c: 78).

The result, or effect, of religious practice, is thus what is otherwise generally called religious experience. And in his discussion Kerševan to a large extent relies on traditional phenomenology of religion. He is of the opinion that a Marxist science of religion cannot exclude authors like Otto, Mensching, van der Leeuw, Eliade, Wach or Söderblom, and claims that the concept of religious experience is indispensable for an understanding of religion. Kerševan consequently uses the term "the holy" and describes it in a traditional manner, relying on Rudolf Otto, as that which is strange to man ("radically different"), but yet near, and with which man stands in a reciprocal relationship.

It is the experience of a reciprocal interpersonal relation, a "meeting" with what is hidden, with the radically different, the holy,

or in short an experience of participating in a radically different world (Kerševan 1975c: 82).

Kerševan maintains that whether one speaks of the holy as something absolute, something in front of which man feels dependent, or like Buber emphasizes the I-Thou relationship, one is referring to the same type of experience, which could be subsumed under the phrase man's relation to the world as a totality.

Man thus succeeds, by experiencing the radically different, by making it his own, in interpreting border situations of life as meaningful, something which otherwise would not be the case.

In spite of his positive attitude to the phenomenological tradition, Kerševan is of the opinion that there is something problematic in its attitude to religion, namely the tendency to downplay the socio-historical context, and to understand religion as a psychological apriori, but there is, nevertheless, an area which could constitute the basis of objectivity.

This is, says Kerševan, of great importance for a Marxist science of religion, having in mind Marx's own negative attitude towards the religious phenomenon, and the fact that it is exactly on this point that sociologists have tried to be most true to Marx. This would be correct if Marx had tried to formulate a general theory of religion and if the negative attitude were an indispensable dimension of such a theory, or if the theory of religion constituted an integral part of a general Marxist social science.

Kerševan points out that religion must be understood as a typical example of what Althusser calls ideology, because it helps man to experience himself as a subject in relation to another subject.

As far as the difference between religion and other types of ideology is concerned, one could according to Kerševan say that the religious object by its nature is something "hidden", and also that the intensity of the experience of reciprocity is much more profound in religion. Characteristic of religion is that man experiences the divine as existing outside himself, as an active being, not as something brought forward by himself, existing in his mind (as is the case with other ideologies). (Kerševan 1975c: 87-88).

The religious attitude can however develop into a rational attitude, a complex of evaluations or philosophical statements about reality, similar to other ideologies. This should not be looked upon as religion in the proper sense, though. Real religion is according to Kerševan the religion of experience.

This means that there is on one hand continuity between religion and ideology in a more general sense, but on the other hand that there is a qualitative difference. That is, religion in its "general function" is "replaceable", whereas its specific function is not (Kerševan 1975c: 89-90).

Kerševan finally concludes that religious experience is the characteristic feature without which one cannot speak of religious practice. "Only that system producing a religious effect is functioning as a religious system" (Kerševan 1975c: 90).

Religious Practice

Religious practice as a form of ideological practice affects directly only men's consciousness. It perceives the real object and transforms it, creating a specific religious object, which means that man assimilates the real object as apprehended in a specific (religious) way. (Kerševan 1975c: 90).

The basis for a religious experience, the "religious objects" do not however consist only of

Those objects described above (basic and threatening phenomena in the human world) and the concomitant emotions: from the sense of impotence, dependence or fear to distrust, but also of elevation, enthusiasm, reverence (Kerševan 1975c: 90).

Kerševan particularly notes that religious objects consist of our general representations of reality, on all levels and in all areas, and of the emotions belonging to these representations. That is, everything that exists in reality, as described and given to us by language, could be the foundation of a religious object.

The *Means of Production* of Religious Practice

It is usually assumed that religion is a system of feelings, ideas and behaviour. Every religion could furthermore be said to have its "religious things", that is, "materialized religious symbols" such as holy space, buildings, pictures, or texts. Religion constitutes, in other words, a specific semiotic structure, or system of signs and symbols.

Kerševan emphasizes that the religious "means of production" (symbolic systems) are located outside the individual, are objectively given. Religion is a social phenomenon, otherwise it could not be understood except from a non-religious perspective:

Individual religiosity is not some kind of mystic ability of an isolated individual, helping him to transform fear into courage, nonsense to sense, or to communicate with god etc., but is the fruit - to use this rather undefined, metaphoric expression - of the working of a socially constituted and objectively existing religion. If not - then all concrete religions and churches in history and today would be phenomena without any particular meaning and function, something unexplainable, or explainable only in relation to *nonreligious* causes and functions. (Kerševan 1975c: 95).

The Structure of the Religious System

All types of religion have according to Kerševan the following aspects in common

- A collection (or system) of statements, narratives (oral or written) about the supernatural (gods, spirits, forces, phenomena) and their relation to the world and to man. Or expressed otherwise: statements about man and the world in relation to the supernatural.
- A set of religious actions. .
- Materialized religious symbols. .

In his discussion of symbols, Kerševan refers to de Saussure, Barthes and Jacobson, as well as to the semiotic tradition in the Soviet Union. (The latter indirectly, via Levada 1965).

His main point is that words or expressions, which have one meaning in everyday language, can have a different meaning in the language of religious symbols. That is, religious experience is facilitated by the fact that linguistic expressions on different structural levels could be given meanings, which are more comprehensive than in everyday use.

All the three aspects of religion: dogma, ritual and symbols are to be understood as symbols in this sense. (Kerševan is here very close to the concept of "secondary modelling systems" used by Soviet semioticians. That is, the different aspects of culture could be understood, in a certain way, as languages, or "culture texts", on different levels; see "Soviet Semiotics" and Winner & Winner 1976).

In contrast to other symbols, however, the religious symbols do not signify anything concrete. They speak of something that exists, but do not state what that is. The word God is thus something, which cannot be expressed in any other way; it is by itself already a symbol.

Kerševan further declares that ritual and "materialized symbolism" are meaningful only in relation to a dogma or a myth, and that symbol and ritual are connected in the same manner. That is, the religious system consists of several subsystems dependent on each other.

It is Kerševan's opinion that religion could not exist without a system of symbols (=materialization) or without a special way of handling the symbols. As an example he discusses the category God, a religious concept referring to the radically different, but that in time developed into a category within European philosophy. It is therefore very important to distinguish between the "God of the philosophers and the God of faith". The latter could not exist without prayer. And here there is a paradox. Belief in God or religious faith can only be expressed in and by ritual (Kerševan 1975c: 95-108).

The Origin of the Religious Object

The "materia prima" of religious practice is constituted by the ideas, experiences, emotions (of impotence, fear, but also of elevation etc) related to phenomena grounding or threatening man's

world. The system of religious symbols transforms "materia prima" by apprehending it in a specific way. The basic logic of this process should be understood in the following way: A phenomenon grounding or threatening the human world (or rather the idea of, and experience of this phenomenon) is apprehended as an expression, a sign of (the presence of) another world. Thereby the other world is connected to the phenomenon, and is itself signified by it (signified however, in the sense referred to above, in an analogical, imprecise, but yet the only possible way). The "other world" is never completely determined or signified by human language or other means of expression, even though it is given only in that way. .

The phenomenon itself, or again its symbols, is thus becoming symbols of another reality; as such it is integrated in ritual as a means of communication with the other world, indirectly manipulating it. Such transformed representations are an integrated aspect of "religion". They act towards other or new objects as part of the means of production. One could, in order to distinguish "religion" as "pure" means of production, from "religion" as already enclosed ideas about various phenomena in man and world, use the expression "sacred cosmos". The "sacred cosmos" is a religious object which has arisen and which arises through the assimilation of ideas related to phenomena in the human world (as signs in some primary language) with a religious system of symbols in a narrow sense. This difference is however only of a methodological nature. There are no "pure" religious symbol-systems, without already existing ideas about man and the world. This has to do with the already mentioned specific quality of religion as a symbol system. The "other", God and similar phenomena, which have to be materialized (symbolized), could only become symbols by the help of phenomena in the human world, that is, by the help of symbols somehow related to the other world, which are understood as such, not being exhausted or assigned a meaning within the human world, but pointing, beyond themselves, to the existence of the other world.

Every religious system of symbols constitutes a sacred cosmos (religious object) in the meaning above. On the other hand every sacred cosmos is acting in relation to other, not yet assimilated phenomena, as a means of production, which encloses and transforms new ideas in a more comprehensive religious object or sacred cosmos (Kerševan 1975c: 109-110).

As to the question of the religious effect of a religious object produced in that way, we are interested in the relationship individual - sacred cosmos. The individual is enclosed in a given sacred cosmos, when adopting certain ideas about the supernatural, the world or man, when meeting the materialized religious symbols, and when participating in the symbol system and its corresponding ritual performances. The effect of this incorporation into a given sacred cosmos - into the structure of a concrete religion - is (if it exists) a specific religious product, an experience of the existence of (presence of, meeting with - due to the intensity of the experience) a radically different world, being powerful and at least potentially caring for man, as well as man's experience of himself as a subject dependent on, and responsible to this world. The religious experience within the frame of a given sacred cosmos as a rule means that one experiences one's own concrete situation, one's suffering, limitations, power, and so on as integrated in a sacred cosmos (Kerševan 1975c: 112).

When performing the rite appropriate to his situation, for example, meditation, prayer, sacrifice, the individual (or group) *experiences* this concrete situation as participation in a radically different world, as a space and means in which, and by which, God or the supernatural world speaks to him, turns to him directly. The individual thus *experiences* his concrete situation, within the frame of a given sacred cosmos, as a meeting with the numinous, the holy. Depending on the manner, in which a given object or situation is integrated in the sacred cosmos, a concrete situation might be experienced as reward, punishment, warning, hope, temptations forgiven if the individual succeeds in controlling

them, an expression of particular attention from the part of the other world towards the individual (Kerševan 1975c: 113).

Evidently, Kerševan's discussion is in many ways similar to Berger's (1971) description (in the book "The Rumour of Angels") of how man communicates with the divine. Various phenomena or situations become "signs of transcendence" pointing to another reality. Also Luckmann's (1972) discussion about the "sacred universe" and the hierarchical structure of the world-view has influenced Kerševan. On the other hand there is much of Glock's and Stark's (1966) description of the religious experience: the various degrees of intensity of the experience, its classification in terms of character and content.

Above all, however, it seems that there are many points in common with the theory of religious experience formulated by the Swedish psychologist of religion Hjalmar Sundén (1961). (Although there is no question of direct influence). What Kerševan refers to as "religiozni objekt", functioning as "the means of production" causing a religious effect, could be described as corresponding to Sundén's concepts of "frames of reference" and "roles". That is, the religious object, or the sacred cosmos, exists on a cultural level, as a religious tradition, consisting of orally or literary⁵³ codified situations where the divine is meeting man and his world. By identifying with the human personalities acting in these typified situations, the individual will, by the process of role-taking, enter into a dyadic relationship with the divine, and will, like the prototypical role-figures of the tradition, experience reality in a religious manner. It is an open system, which makes possible new experiences within the framework of the sacred cosmos, thereby constantly renewing and enriching tradition.

The religious experience, or "religiozni učinek", exists only on an individual level and is actually the test of whether a religion is alive. This is also very close to Sundén's idea of a distinction between the "religion of roles" and the "religion of doctrine".

⁵³ For example The Bible, the Koran, Chassidic legends, the Lives of Saints, or orally transmitted equivalents such as the great Myths or Epics of the world.

Kerševan further writes that everything is possible to experience in a religious manner. This could be understood in the sense that the world of religious experience is constantly being supplemented, but also in a way more akin to Sundén, that is, the world as such can in principle be perceived either in a religious or a profane way.

On yet another point there is some correspondence. Both scholars understand religion, generated by specific patterns of perception, as a relation to reality in its totality, a relation that, moreover, is of a dual character, constituting a "meeting", or dialogue, with the divine.

Kerševan has furthermore, when discussing the differences between the "productive" and other aspects of the religious structure, made the same observation as does Sundén: Due to the fact that religion is both doctrine and experience, there is a tendency for the religion of experience to become routinised into a rational formula, or ideology/philosophy. That is, the belief, or trust in God is replaced by a belief that God exists. Here Kerševan is actually more rigorous than Sundén, as he is not referring to the "religion-only-thought" as religion in the proper sense.⁵⁴

According to Kerševan there are two basic types of communication with the holy: On the one hand cases where a threatening situation, a given problem, is resolved in the contact with the holy. On the other hand, an individual might establish contact with the holy through ritual, and thus, by the symbolic mechanisms of ritual language (symbols), be able to interpret his life in religious terms (Kerševan 1975c: 115).

One could therefore speak of two types of religion. In the first case, the divine represents a means of resolving crisis-situations. In the second, the main emphasis is on the religious experience as such. Whether religion will also be of help, is in this context of secondary importance.

Kerševan also discusses, in an interesting way, and relying on Bastide, the possible autonomy of the "mystic function", something that historically is a rather rare phenomenon.

⁵⁴ It is a minor difference. Although Sundén speaks about two kinds of religion, the religion of experience is for him as well the ideal-typical religion.

Kerševan strongly emphasizes that it is impossible to single out specific experiences or emotions as being per se of a religious character. There is no specific "religious feeling". One can only speak of basic psychological processes which, when operating in conjunction with a sacred cosmos, will have a religious character, or perform a religious function (Kerševan 1975c: 116).

Second, the specific psychological configuration of individuals means that events within the same religious system will have different effects on the personal level. There will be various types of religious experiences, in terms of intensity, emotional character, or degree of orthodoxy (Kerševan 1975c: 116).

Kerševan also mentions the fact that men to varying degrees have access to the religious cosmos, and that it is possible to classify religion according to the extent to which a given tradition is differentiated and socially distributed, for example, in terms of the opposition between popular- and universal religion.

In this context Kerševan also refers to the question of sect and church, which he discusses in a way otherwise usual in sociology of religion. He also notes that a religious hierarchy could represent different social interests, and that by the establishment of a church, there will be developed a church-ideology, relatively autonomous vis-à-vis the religious system as such (Kerševan 1975c: 117-123).

Religion and Social Practice

Kerševan claims that it is important to note that social phenomena are influencing each other, and that it is impossible, once and for all, to decide which is dominant. From this follows that religion is not a passive reflection of some more basic structure, an epiphenomenon, but that religion instead must be seen as a relatively autonomous structure. This requires a methodology allowing for a dynamic correspondence between different types of practice.

Another important point is that the rules governing various subsystems in the social structure will affect religion. That is, religious experience is influenced by those conditions affecting all psychological phenomena, the religious system of symbols is subject

to linguistic laws, the church will acquire certain traits common to all types of social organisation, and in the same way, ideology is dependent on the regularities governing thought in general.

Kerševan finally notes, that the base, according to Marx, is ultimately of decisive importance for the rest of social structure. This does however not mean that the economic level is always, in every situation, most important. Marx's expression must be interpreted in the sense, that there is a constant process of change, where various subsystems differ in relative importance, or domination of the system as a whole. And that in a general way social and cultural phenomena are dependent on a material base for their functioning (Kerševan 1975c: 123-127).

Religion as a Psychological Phenomenon

Kerševan discusses various attempts to look at religion as a primarily psychological phenomenon.⁵⁵ Religion is then usually interpreted as a sense of dependence, as an I-Thou relationship, a feeling of union and unity with everything that exists, a relation to the absolute etc (Kerševan 1975c: 129).

According to Kerševan the weakness of this approach arises mainly from the fact that only one aspect of religion (one that is not to be underestimated, though) is studied. Kerševan's criticism is of the same type as his criticism of traditional Marxism, that is, these are hypotheses, that could be true, but do not exhaust the phenomenon as such.

Another, more principal, weakness is, that such psychological states are of a type that could be discovered among atheists as well, who would then, with such a definition, be looked upon as religious people (Kerševan 1975c: 129).

Kerševan also, in relation to Freud and Fromm, discusses the question of religion as compensation, the religious dimensions of the sense of ego, and the problem of rational and irrational belief. He points out that a distinction should be made between the

⁵⁵ See also Kerševan 1974.

psychological foundation of religion and its socially formed and expressed practice. The "cause" of religion should be looked for in a specific social practice, a specific semiotic system, which in itself is dependent on psychological functions, that, in a manner of speaking, make religious experience possible (Kerševan 1975:130).

Of importance in this context are three phenomena: Man's capacity of abstraction, man's capacity to create symbols and, finally, man's tendency to make nature anthropomorphic, to project human characteristics to the environment (Kerševan 1975c: 130-132).

Yet another phenomenon of importance is the influence of selective perception on men's experience of reality.

Another point is the process discussed by social psychology, the fact that men's attitudes influence perception, by selection of information, and direction of attention only to some facts, by deformation or exaggeration of some and underestimation of other phenomena. Certainly these processes play a role also in religion, although it would be wrong to understand them - the influence of attitudes, desires and will on the construction of a deformed picture of reality - as the basis and framework of religious imagination. In that case, religion would again be reduced only to a form of more or less conscious self-deception (Kerševan 1975c: 133).

One could observe here a slight tendency to see the selectivity of perception as something negative, as the creator of prejudice, not of attitudes in general. This is an important point that we will return to later.

Kerševan also deals with Levy-Bruhl's idea about a sense of participation, and Erikson's discussion of religion and the relationship mother-child and claims that this shows how religion is "using" processes belonging to other contexts as well (Kerševan 1975c: 134-136).

Other authors mentioned by Kerševan are Mensching, Otto, William James, and the Soviet sociologist Jurij Levada. It is true, he says, that religion is an individual phenomenon in the sense that it builds on men's psychological constitution, but at the same time there

would be no religion without a religious tradition. The term religious feeling is often equated with religious experience, and emotion is referred to as the most prominent religious dimension.

Kerševan rejects this way of reasoning. To him religious experience is the result of a religious system and of religious practice. In his opinion this approach does justice to both the sociological and psychological aspects of religion, and is, furthermore, in line with Althusser's ideas about the individual's relation to ideology (Kerševan 1975c: 136-145).

Of great interest is the favourable view of Levada (1965). Jurij Levada was one of the eminent sociologists in the Soviet Union during the 1960s, occupying influential positions, but forced to leave in what Zinoviev has called the "pogrom on the sociologists". Levada's book "Socijal'naja priroda religii" ("The Social Nature of Religion") has apparently meant very much to Kerševan. In his book Levada rejects, as does Kerševan, many traditional Marxist arguments concerning religion, especially the theory of alienation. Above all, however, he advocates the semiotic approach further developed by Kerševan. According to Levada religious experience is brought about by symbolic patterns existing in a religious tradition. He points out the special role of ritual, not as much as Kerševan though, and his views on the role of religion in modern society are different. (It is evident that Levada represented a new, potentially very fruitful current in Soviet sociology of religion, inspired by the original semiotics of culture developed by Ivanov, Toporov, Lotman and others, which, however, when dealing with a sensitive topic like contemporary religiosity, was unfortunately not allowed to develop further).

The Problem of Definition

Both in his thesis and elsewhere (1969, 1972b,c, 1974) Kerševan discusses positive and negative aspects of a functional versus a substantive definition of religion.

There are according to Kerševan two reasons for a functional definition: At first, social science should, in dealing with its subject

matter, concentrate more upon functional relationships, than upon the exact description of its character or essence (This is, again, an implicit criticism of the dominant Marxist current in Yugoslav sociology of religion). Second, substantive definitions are often ethnocentric (Kerševan 1975c: 146).

In functional analysis there are two possible approaches. On one hand one could look for the basic functions of a society, those without which it would not exist, and then investigate the role of religion. One could then by definition view anything fulfilling this role as religion. Such an approach will however be problematic when one is discussing similarities and differences between social phenomena performing this function. One example is, according to Kerševan, Luckmann's definition of religion and the difficulty to decide the relationship between a religion thus described and classical religiosity. Kerševan admits that Luckmann has tried to solve the problem by using the concept of sacred cosmos, but notes that Luckmann, in spite of his comparatively successful analysis, ultimately must fall back on a substantive definition (Kerševan 1975c: 147-149).

A different approach would be to analyse various historically existing religions and their functions, looking for common aspects. This, however, actually leads to the same dilemma as in the former case. Either one is concentrating too much on general functions, or one is forced into a narrow definition of religion, which will lead to a discussion of manifest or latent religious systems.

One could of course speak of religion and its functional equivalents or, like Glock & Stark or Kluckhohn, use the concept of "value orientations". However, whether one defines religion as the one of two types of a more general phenomenon, or speaks about two kinds of religion, one is left with a dilemma (Kerševan 1975c: 150).

The basic problem, then, with a functional definition is, according to Kerševan, 1) the difficulty to distinguish between various types of religion or value orientations; 2) that different phenomena will fulfil the same function (Kerševan 1975c: 151).

In what way then is Kerševan's own approach "religion is a

specific practice" to be preferred? At first, it leaves open the question of the future existence of religion; secondly, it claims that there are no functions immanent to religion. Kerševan again points out that what is important in his definition is not the object of religion, but the manner in which religion apprehends the world, because "ultimate concerns" are not given once and for all:

The decisive moment in the production (creation) of a religious object is the existence of specific means "of production", that is, a specific system of symbols, dogmas, rituals and material symbols. One could speak of religion in the proper sense only when there exists a *specific* system of symbols for the generation of a religious object and a religious effect. Such a system will be *religious*, will function as a real religious system, only if its products will give a religious result, if it produces (makes possible) individual experiences of the holy. If the symbolic system does not manage to produce such an effect, it is *dead* as a *religious* system. (Kerševan 1975c: 154)

A possible criticism would be that Kerševan in a way excludes a fairly large group of people, who, in ordinary language, and by themselves, are identified as religious. In that perspective the approach of Sundén and others is perhaps more reasonable. However, Kerševan's discussion is of special importance in an environment where religion is easily looked upon as an epiphenomenon, and where a sociological/functionalist and/or existentialist/anthropological interpretation has been dominant.

The Function of Religion

Kerševan is careful to stress that it is impossible, once and for all, to determine the function of religion. It varies from period to period, from society to society. Moreover, the functions usually ascribed to religion (such as providing meaning in life, answers to ultimate questions, consolation in distress, stability or legitimation of social order) could in any given situation be performed by other phenomena, both on a psychological and social level. Religion could,

therefore, never be *explained* by reference to its "functions". One can only study relationships between religion and other phenomena. .

Religion, as religion, does not exist outside its effect, which is a result of the functioning of the religious system in its totality... If we are interested in the social function of religion we must formulate a question in the following way: what are the consequences of individual religious experience for various social phenomena, or to be more specific, for the behaviour of individuals in relation to different social phenomena and society in general. (Kerševan 1975c: 159)

It is clear that Kerševan's perspective is very different from the functionalist approach of those sociologists using the alienation-paradigm.

Kerševan emphasizes the fact that religion produces a distinction between sacred and profane, and that there are large differences between societies as to the degree of sacralisation. (Following Weber, he notes the specific character of Christianity in this respect (Kerševan 1975c: 159-165).

Typologies of Religion

In his thesis Kerševan discusses three important oppositions in the religious sphere (Kerševan 1975c: 166-176): magic - religion, where his approach is the traditional one used in the comparative study of religion (That is, he does not express the evolutionary and rationalist attitude otherwise common among Yugoslav scholars), mysticism - religion, and folk - universal religion.

It is possible to distinguish between two basic types of religion: mystic religiosity and popular piety. Kerševan is of the opinion that mysticism constitutes religion in its "most pure form", (which follows from his definition of religion), but also is to be seen as a rather static phenomenon. He goes on to say that mysticism, the more it leaves the framework of a concrete institutionalized religion, will be similar to what is sometimes referred to as spontaneous religious experience. It is also possible to discern a continuing process of autonomisation

of the "mystical function".

In spite of the similarities between folk religion and mysticism, there is a decisive difference. Folk religion is centred on the unity of the individual with his tribe, whereas the "object" of both popular piety and mysticism is individual religious experience (a phenomenon that is to be distinguished from a religiosity primarily looking for help and comfort).

Religion in Contemporary Society

In his discussion of the present religious situation, Kerševan mentions four theoretical currents. At first there are those, the most typical representative being Acquaviva⁵⁶ who refer to the "eclipse of the sacred", that is, the tendency of religion to disappear with the advance of modern society (Kerševan 1975c: 178, 1975b: 453-454). Another theory is put forward by those who view the secularization thesis as false, or only partly correct. They often claim that we do not know enough about either the society of today or of yesterday, as far as religion is concerned. Here could be mentioned Martin and Greeley⁵⁷ (Kerševan 1975c: 178-179, 1975b: 454-455). A third type of theory is where the hypothesis of secularization is partly endorsed; it is admitted that the holy is on the decline, but at the same time it is stated that this does not affect Christianity, as Christian *values* are affecting all areas of society. To this category Kerševan refers sociologists like Parsons (1967) and Savramis (1967), or theologians like Bonhoeffer (Kerševan 1975c: 181, 1975b: 455-458). Finally, there is a school of thought arguing that religion together with society at large has passed through radical changes. A typical representative is Thomas Luckmann (1972) with his theory about an "invisible reli-

⁵⁶ Kerševan refers to *L'eclissi del sacro nella civiltà industriale*, Milano 1961, 1968. See Acquaviva (1979).

⁵⁷ Kerševan refers to Greeley (1969) *Religion in the Year 2000*, and Martin (1969) *The Religious and the Secular*. Since then Martin (1978) has formulated a comprehensive theory of secularization which, while considering general structural properties of modern society, also takes into account specific cultural traditions and institutional characteristics of individual societies, or areas.

gion" and the existence of specific religious themes typical of modern culture (Kerševan 1975c: 184, 1975b: 459).

Kerševan also discusses Shiner's (1967) classification of different theories of secularization and claims that they could be reduced to three major types: the idea of the decline of the holy, the idea of a mature Christianity, and the thesis of a changed function of religion (Kerševan 1975b: 460).

In the end Kerševan argues that it is possible in the study of contemporary religion to use any one of the theoretical perspectives as a point of departure, one should only make clear the purpose of the investigation at hand. And there is nothing preventing a combination of perspectives (Kerševan 1975c: 185, 1975b: 461-465).

Kerševan tries, within the framework of his model of religion, and taking into account the interrelations between social structure and various types of ideological practice, to analyse the "ultimate questions" of the modern world.

In his description of the characteristic aspects of contemporary society, he refers to religion in a way, which is very similar to what Luckmann calls "the invisible religion". There are also, however, points in common with Tine and Spomenka Hribar.

People in modern society experience themselves as subjects, as masters of their own destiny. We all live in a culture where a humanist ideology is dominant, where man is always assigned a primary position.⁵⁸ This aspect of modern culture is, according to Kerševan, due to various factors, such as a capitalist economy, political democracy, a high degree of abstraction, and the idea of man as subject. Further, modern society is characterized by the fact that the spheres of society are autonomous, that man exists primarily as the occupant of a great number of different roles. Technology and science are important, and on the whole today's society and culture is dominated by a problem-solving orientation (Kerševan 1975c: 191-194).

According to Kerševan, most of this is valid for socialist society as well, as it has been constructed on the foundations of an earlier capitalist system.

⁵⁸ See also Kerševan 1972b:19-40, 1972c:34-39.

He also points out that this general atmosphere has had its effects even on theology, where scholars like Bonhoeffer or Bultmann speak of "mature" man, as different from "religious" man. The paradox of this new theology is that God, by definition, has to be radically different. In modern society, with its emphasis on Man, he can therefore, like in a primitive society, only be a distant god, as an active god, too "interested" in man, would threaten man's position. On the other hand, as god must exist, there arises a worship of abstract man, as otherwise individual beings, phenomena or institutions would have to be sacralised (Kerševan 1975c: 180-181, 196-197).

Of far-reaching importance is the role played by the private sphere. In modern society it represents the centre of life; everything else becomes means by which man realizes himself in the sphere of privacy. It might thus perform the function sometimes maintained by traditional religion, that is, provide compensation. Part of this complex is the myth of the autonomous, free individual, supported by the content and character of mass media (Kerševan 1975c: 200-203).

In this context Kerševan refers to Luckmann's discussion of new religious themes. He states that all ideas about man as a subject, emphasizing autonomy and freedom, become the "raw material" for religion, and will present themselves as "radically different". There does not have to be an explicit cult; various manifestations of these themes are found in, for example, art or popular culture, and produce experiences of the holy. This explains, says Kerševan, why those are wrong who claim that the new themes of religion are banal, or that there must be "higher", more comprehensive values, in order to make life meaningful (Kerševan 1975c: 204-206).

Kerševan describes, further, in the same way as Luckmann, how elements from different existing religions, for example Eastern, are connected with fragments from the Judaeo-Christian tradition and maintained by small groups. Or, again, how one can notice a re-actualisation of explicit church religion in the private sphere. At last, but not least, there grows in modern society a new kind of superstition, as humanist ideology is not able to take care of unhappiness, illness or, especially, death (Kerševan 1975c: 206-208).

Secular Ideologies as Religion

Kerševan is of the opinion that there is much to say for Durkheim's idea that religion is responsible for integration of a social system but adds that this role has in modern society been taken over by other ideologies, for example various types of national ideas (Kerševan 1975c: 209).⁵⁹

In some cases, such as in Ireland, or in Poland and Croatia, national ideology is fused with traditional church-oriented religion, but Kerševan points out that national ideology of this kind, in contrast to the new religious themes, to a large extent is compatible with traditional religion. He further claims that national ideology, in the case it is connected to a humanist ideology, could not become a secular religion, as the humanist perspective emphasizes the individual, not the collective (Kerševan 1975c: 210-212).

Here it seems that Kerševan has taken a stand concomitant with the dominant atmosphere in his country, but which, at least in our view, seems to be inconsistent with his own ideas. Because what could be a more direct example of a man-centred ideology, or of an equivalent to religion of the kind Kerševan discusses, than institutionalized Marxism? Particularly in Yugoslavia, where Marxism is fused with the other dominant current today, national ideology.

However, Marxism, according to Kerševan, cannot function as a religion, as it does not "make its goal absolute". He uses here the terms "rational-irrational ideology" as understood by Fromm.

In Kerševan's discourse there are thus two meanings of the word humanism. On one hand there is the real humanism, which is free of any tendencies to vulgarisation, or of becoming a "religion". On the other hand, there is an ever-present "humanism", focusing on man (in a narcissist way) and expressing itself in the most various forms.

⁵⁹ It is interesting to note that Kerševan, contrary to sociologists like Ćimić, Vrcan or Bahtijarević (who describe the situation in terms of anomie/alienation) but similar to sociologists like Fenn (1972) or Luhmann (1977) is of the opinion that religion is not needed as (or cannot be) a legitimising ideology in modern capitalist society.

For this reason only, however, it would be strange if Marxism were not, like any other system of ideas, affected by this phenomenon. Kerševan indirectly admits that this is the case, when in one context he does deny that Marxism in itself is a religion or a pseudo-religion, but remarks that there are degenerate forms, such as Stalinism, which could be treated as quasi-religious phenomena.

In his discussion of atheism (understood as the non-existence of belief in God, not as a positive ideology), Kerševan deals with the concept of world-view. By this term he refers to a hierarch ally ordered system of ideas, emotions and norms, concerning the world as a whole. It is different from philosophy, by not being an intellectual creation only, and from ideology by its object. Therefore it is possible to distinguish between religious and irreligious world-views. A religious world-view, on the other hand, is distinguished from religion by both its content and psychological character (Kerševan 1975c: 227-228).

Characteristic of the worldviews of today is their incoherence. The declarative ideologies of modern society, whether they are Christian or atheist, are all based on a common humanist ideology, anchored in human consciousness in a relatively superficial way. This is, according to Kerševan, confirmed by tendencies in the socialist states. However ideology is explicitly formulated, or whatever people would answer in a survey, there are no major differences between East and West, as far as the basic attitude towards reality is concerned (Kerševan 1975c: 231-232).

Kerševan finally discusses atheism and the Marxist movement. Marxism could serve as the basis of a comprehensive worldview by its humanism, scientific character and materialism. It does, indeed, have all the ingredients of a new ideology, but its main import is to be found on another level. Marxism is, first of all, a social political movement, and a theory of revolutionary praxis. Due to various historical reasons it found itself in conflict with religion and started to define itself as atheist. In Eastern Europe, therefore, (but contrary to its theoretical tradition), Marxism, as a unitary worldview, has competed with, and tried to exclude religion (Kerševan 1975c: 232-235).

There are two reasons for this. At first the need to educate new generations.⁶⁰ Secondly, Kerševan says, we are speaking of situations where there for various reasons was a cultural and ideological stagnation; where revolutionary pathos had disappeared and where, therefore, secondary aspects of Marxism were to play a major role. .

A Marxism not functioning as a theory and ideology of revolutionary social practice, can be reduced to an atheist or "scientific" "world-view", and as such be constituted in men's consciousness (Kerševan 1975c: 235).

Kerševan has developed the idea elsewhere (Kerševan 1975a, 1980a: 236-278). He claims that Marxism as an ideology should leave open the question of worldview. It is mistaken to propagate spiritual uniformity, by Marx himself regarded as less important. There is a risk that people are led to believe that this, and not the struggle for social change, is the kernel of Marxism.

Conclusion

It is evident that Kerševan, through his synthesis of Marxist sociology, structuralist thinking in the social sciences, and concepts from phenomenology of religion, as well as certain ideas from sociology of knowledge, has created a unique frame of reference for the study of religion, in fundamental ways different from other Marxist approaches.

From an orthodox, dialectic-materialist point of view, Kerševan could of course be accused of having left Marx behind. More interesting, however, is his relationship to the existential-anthropological aspects of the Marxian heritage, which are so important to the majority of Yugoslav scholars and generally understood as the characteristic feature of a Marxist sociology of religion.

⁶⁰ Kerševan leaves the question open whether the idea behind this need (the idea of the "empty space") is correct. He has in fact in other contexts maintained that this is not the case. It is to be noted as well, that his explanation is very close to the ideas of Berger and Luckmann (1967) of the evolution and legitimation of theoretical systems.

Kerševan thus makes a distinction between ideology and science, and objects to the "critical" perspective on methodological grounds. He wants to go beyond the philosophical discourse and ideological influences from the Enlightenment. Instead, he concentrates on, and suggests as a basis for further study, Marx's conception of different types of practice. That is, religious practice is something specific, to which Marx himself has not done justice, but which, nevertheless, could be analysed within a Marxist frame of reference.

In this way Kerševan manages to assign a more sophisticated meaning to concepts like "ideology" or "social consciousness". He does not neglect the problem of ideology, but points out that ideology is different from religion, even though religion could also manifest itself as ideology.

From this follows, which is very important, that it is not necessary to formulate in advance any hypothesis of the functionality of religion.

Finally, Kerševan's views on the relationship between base and superstructure are different from classical Marxist sociology of religion, but in line with the views of other Yugoslav sociologists. It should be noted, however, that, in contrast to some of those who subscribe to the alienation paradigm and are critical of the "theory of reflection", he is more consistent in considering religion, like any other sociocultural phenomenon, as relatively autonomous.

As we have seen, Kerševan's theoretical model is in important respects similar to theories formulated by Western sociologists and psychologists of religion. One could perhaps say that he has created a terminology, which could serve as a bridge between traditional sociology of religion and its Marxist counterpart. He has shown that through such a translation Marxist sociology would be able to use and integrate the findings of the general science of religion, without necessarily losing its identity. By this methodology, it would be possible, not only to arrive at a common view of the empirical situation, as far as religion is concerned, but perhaps, also to find certain concepts that could be used both in a Marxist and non-Marxist perspective.

Instead of a Conclusion

Three Perspectives

The new sociology of religion developing in the 1960s, was faced with the general problem of how to study religion from a Marxist point of view, and at the same time account for an empirical situation, both in Yugoslavia and elsewhere, which seemed to contradict important aspects of a traditional Marxist understanding of religion.

The basic issues confronting Yugoslav sociologists concerned the character and role of religion, the problem of secularization, and the question of what position the socialist state and the communist party should adopt towards religion.

The acquaintance with international research, as well as the concrete situation in Yugoslavia, led to doubts about the validity and fruitfulness of the general ideas behind the approach of early Yugoslav, and Soviet, sociology of religion. The continuing existence of religion in socialist society apparently called for a reassessment of generally accepted truths.

The main questions that would have to be answered were the following: Is it really true that religion is to be understood primarily as "false consciousness", that is, as a more or less rational explanation of the world, albeit incorrect? Is it true that religion is the result of ignorance, and that consequently the decline of religion presupposes active educational measures, including anti-religious propaganda? That is, should one go on understanding religion merely as a survival, which is not related to fundamental aspects of socialist society? Is it, finally, true, that the means usually employed in socialist states vis-a-vis church and religion, are successful? Or at all necessary?

These questions were answered differently by Yugoslav sociologists, mainly depending on their views on Marxism and on the relationship between Marxism and sociology. As we have seen, there are three main perspectives in contemporary Yugoslav sociology of religion, differing from each other, more or less clearly, on these issues.

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

The general point of departure of the first perspective is the theory of alienation. Religion is understood as a reflection, or expression, of basic human, and in the end, social shortcomings. It is a sign of alienation, both on a psychological and social level. That is, the existence of religion is the ultimate proof that socialist society has not yet created conditions where man will live as a free human being. Religion is, therefore, still necessary in socialist society. It will eventually vanish, but not until a truly self-managing society has been created, in which man controls his fate, and is no longer in need of the compensation provided by religion.

The second perspective, which might be called the existentialist, has some aspects in common with the alienation paradigm. However, it broadens the Marxist frame of reference, by pointing out that there are some fundamental features of the human condition that will always generate religion, regardless of social and political system. In other words, the existence of death, and the problem of meaning, will even in socialist society give rise to religious attitudes. In a way, then, this perspective is similar to the theory of survival, by allowing for the existence of religion in a society, which is not alienated. The important difference being that religion is not explained as some kind of intellectual failure, but as a result of emotional-existential needs.

The third perspective is in fundamental respects different from the other two, although it shares some ideas with (one version of) the existential model. It denies the relevance of the concept of alienation as a tool for analysing religion - or society in general. The theory is considered unscientific and methodologically problematic. Furthermore, contrary to at least some of the proponents of the alienation-paradigm, this perspective accepts that the classics of Marxism were indeed hostile to religion, and did not describe the religious phenomenon in a satisfactory manner. It holds that it will lead nowhere to just quote what Marx or Engels themselves wrote about religion. The classics never formulated a comprehensive theory, and what they did have to say, is in many ways insufficient as the basis of a (Marxist) theory of religion. Instead, one must use concepts that are central to Marxist theory in general, and in that

way try to formulate a theory, which is able, to account for religion as it really exists as a social and cultural phenomenon. According to Marko Kerševan, this is possible by relying on the concepts of practice and ideology. That is, religion should be understood as a specific way of apprehending reality, different from other kinds of practice. By doing that, it is moreover possible to integrate the theoretical and empirical findings of *Religionsgeschichte*, or phenomenology of religion, with a Marxist perspective.

We could thus classify the authors discussed in this study in the following way:

Paradigm	Authors
Alienation	Ćimić, Vrcan, Bahtijarević
Existentialist	Hribar, Hribar, Bošnjak
Structuralist	Kerševan, Roter

This classification is slightly different from others that have been made. For example, the Slovene theologian, Tone Stres (1977), discusses in his thesis on the philosophical background of Yugoslav sociology of religion, two main perspectives: The Humanist-Marxist, and the Structuralist-Functionalist. To the first category belongs both the alienation and existentialist paradigm, to the second the structuralist. For several reasons, we would prefer not to categorize Kerševan's approach as structural-functional. It is at least for a sociologist misleading, and a better term would be structural-phenomenological, or socio-semiotic.

Kerševan (1984) himself also refers to three general perspectives. The first, emphasizing the concept of alienation, is considered a traditional Marxist theory of religion. The second is his own, whereas the third is our existentialist perspective. However, no specific labels are used, and Kerševan does not go into details as to who belongs to what school, but it is mainly the same classification as used here. One difference is that Ćimić is counted as, at least partly, a member of what is here referred to as the existential perspective. (Which to some extent is true, see chapter 3).

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

Dorđević (1985), belonging to the "second generation" of Yugoslav sociologists of religion discusses two general orientations, where Ćimić, Vrcan and others belong to the first, and Kerševan, Bahtijarević and others belong to the second. His argument is that Bahtijarević uses the concept of "specific practice". However, as is obvious from our discussion, this is not accurate, as Bahtijarević understands "specific practice", not like Kerševan, but in a traditional manner, similar to Vrcan.⁶¹

Religion as a Social Phenomenon

The alienation-paradigm understands religion essentially as a negative phenomenon. Although it shows more tolerance and understanding than the dialectical-materialist perspective, it shares its view of religion as an obstacle to human liberation. It is true that religion is primarily understood as an expression of alienation, and not as a cause that would have to be combated by specific anti-religious measures. Above all, the cognitive aspects are considered relatively unimportant, and the existence of religion is seen as a function of basic features of society itself. In this sense there is a clear difference.

One could perhaps say, that, whereas the earlier sociology emphasized the views of Engels and Lenin, sociologists like Vrcan

⁶¹ Kerševan speaks of religion as a specific practice, that apprehends the world in a unique manner. (He uses the verb "prisvojiti", as a translation of "anneigen"). It is true that this is described as an "affirmation of a power different from man" "in front of which man is powerless", "which is inaccessible - by means of other types of practice" (1975c: 71). Bahtijarević interprets this in the traditional manner as something, which is *not yet* accessible. That is, what is typical of specific (practice) is man's impotence, or the fact that it is an "illusory" apprehension of the world. Kerševan, however, explicitly states that one should not understand religious practice as originating in "man's ignorance, social misery, alienation etc, or from the wish to, at least in an illusory way, overcome such situations" (1975c: 77). What is important is that religious practice represents a specific *manner* in which the world is perceived, which is *different* from that of science, philosophy, art etc. Moreover, Kerševan, like Luckmann emphasizes that religion renders meaningful both extraordinary *and* ordinary aspects of the world (1975c: 72). Finally, and most important, such an experience is "produced" by specific semiotic structures or culturally given mechanisms (the religious tradition), otherwise it doesn't exist.

or Ćimić base their arguments on Marx. This implies a difference between Engels/Lenin and Marx, that the students of Marxism and religion seem to agree upon (McKown 1975, Desroche 1973, Thrower 1983, Kolakowski 1978).

Thrower (1983:48), McKown (1975:69), as well as Kolakowski (1978:398) quote a passage from Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* which is marked by an unmistakably evolutionist attitude common to 19th century views on religion, ultimately dependent on the ideas of the Enlightenment.

From the very early times when men, still completely ignorant of their own bodies, under the stimulus of dream apparitions came to believe that their thinking and sensation were not activities of their bodies, but of a distinct soul which inhabits the body and leaves it at death - from this time men have been driven to reflect about the relation between this soul and the outside world. If upon death it took leave of the body and lived on, there was no occasion to invent yet another distinct death for it. Thus arose the idea of its immortality... Not religious desire for consolation, but the quandary, arising from universal ignorance, of what to do with this soul, once its existence had been accepted, after the death of the body, led to the empty notion of personal immortality. In exactly the same way the first gods arose through the personification of natural forces and, as religion developed, assumed more and more an extra-mundane form. (*Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy, II*) (Kolakowski 1978:398)

It has been pointed out that this passage is a comparatively accurate summary of Tylor's famous "Primitive Culture", and it is also clear that both Marx and Engels were familiar with the book (McKown 1975:66-70, Thrower 1983:47-48).

According to Kolakowski these ideas are clearly at variance with Marx's theory of religion, a view shared by McKown and Thrower.

⁶² Obviously this view of religion is the one generally professed by

⁶² "Engels, after the fashion of the Enlightenment thinkers, saw religion as the fruit of ignorance or want of understanding. He thus abandoned the Marxian view of religion as sec-

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Yugoslav sociologists of the earlier period, and it is characteristic that in most of the works referred to in chapter two of the present study the quotations from Engels, followed by those from Lenin and/or Levy-Bruhl, Frazer etc are far more common than those from Marx.

When, for example, Goričar (1952) at the end of his book makes a list of further readings, he refers to Anti-Dühring, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy, by Engels, and to Lenin's Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, as "works that contain the theoretical richness, which could not be neglected, by those who wish to study the problem of religion as a form of social consciousness".

It is of course true that the "Early Works" were not published until 1953, but even when Marx is referred to directly (for example The Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's Theory of Law) he is interpreted in the light of Engels and Lenin. Compare the following statements by Fiamengo (1958) and Ćimić (1973):

That is, the basis of true humanism, the ideological ground of a community based on humanism, could only be atheism, not

ondary alienation due to alienation of labour, in favour of an intellectualist explanation. In this respect he also shared the ideas of nineteenth-century evolutionism as to the origin and nature of religion". (Kolakowski 1978:398). .

"Engels, however, not only mentioned *Primitive Culture* but also expressed some of its most famous conclusions as if they were his own, without bothering to acknowledge their source...The surprising element is that Engels adopted Tylor's view on the origin of religion as if they were not only compatible with his own opinions but also with those of Marx. Although Tylor's aetiology of religion does not contradict Marx's position in all respects, the two viewpoints tend to be mutually exclusive" (McKown 1975:72). (...)

"The question, then, is whether or not Marx's aetiology of religion with its strongly socio-morphic orientation, involving class structure, socio-economic contradictions, and ideology, can include cosmogonic and etiological myths and religious conceptions based on biomorphic and psychomorphic models. I judge that Marxism cannot be reconciled with Tylor's animism without losing its most distinctive characteristics" (McKown 1975:70). "This highly intellectualist theory marks a quite considerable departure from the view that religion arose from instinctual fear of the forces of nature and developed as a "reflex echo" of man's real life process, for here religion is grounded in primitive man's intellectual reflections - as reconstructed by nineteenth century anthropologists. Engels, unfortunately, did not relate his new theory to his earlier theory and we can only guess that he saw the two theories as complementary" (Thrower 1983:48).

religion. Because every human liberation means a return of man to himself from alienation, from the surrender to exterior, either real or fabricated forces. In this sense one should understand Marx's idea that atheism, meaning the abolition of god, is a basis for theoretical humanism, and that a positive, human and real humanism demands, on one hand, the abolition of private property which causes economic alienation, and, on the other, the abolition of religious alienation, as the alienation of human self-consciousness, of human spiritual being. Only by abolishing these two kinds of alienation, man will be the yardstick of everything, will be the kernel of life and processes; only then will be created the practical and theoretical precondition for real humanism (Fiamengo 1958b: 42).

I have never been inclined to interpret Marx's idea that the criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism, in the sense that religion is to be verbally challenged. On the contrary: one should radically change the world, abolish a society in which there exists exploitation. In that way we will be certain that the kind of religion that supports *such* a society, will be transformed, or will even disappear. That is, the abolition of religion is not a precondition for the construction of a humanized society, but a humanized society will lead to the disappearance of religion as a form of alienation (Ćimić 1973:86).

It is also obvious, that the more or less openly hostile attitude to religion, the sometimes harsh language, and the tendency to discuss religion as if its decline would be one of the most important tasks of Socialism, is indebted to Lenin.

Thrower (1983:89-124) has pointed out, that the Leninist attitude must be understood against the background of social and cultural life in 19th-century Russia.

Now, as a matter of fact, parts of Yugoslavia represented a similar cultural milieu, and ideas of the Enlightenment were received in more or less the same manner. It has already been pointed out that there was an indigenous atheist tradition in Serbia, originating in French criticism of religion.

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However, there is also a direct line of early Russian influence. Some of the important cultural personalities in 19th-century Serbia had studied in Russia and were thus exposed to the same cultural climate and ideas, as was Lenin.

This explains the affinity with, and the ease, by which Lenin and Engels' ideas were assimilated.

Without doubt, then, here is a general difference between the two periods of sociology of religion, expressed in the reliance on different aspects of the Marxist heritage, but also in different interpretations of the same basic texts.

However, as mentioned in the introduction to this study, in spite of the differences, there are, on a more general level important similarities, having to do with the problem of functionalism.

We have seen that Vrcan, for instance, is highly critical of the functionalist paradigm, and pleads for a conflictual sociology based on Marx. However, in a fundamental respect, the critical sociology of Humanist Marxism must, as far as I can see, be understood as functionalism, exactly because of basic aspects of the alienation-paradigm.

In her article on post-war sociology and different views on Yugoslav social structure, Davidović (1985) argues that critical sociology in Yugoslavia largely overtook western criticism of functionalism, rather than perform any independent or detailed study of its relation to Marxist sociology. One is bound to agree with Davidović, if one looks at the arguments used.⁶³ Functionalism was understood as a sociology stressing integration, conservative in nature, and defending status quo. Its opposite was Marxism, especially the humanist version being developed in Eastern Europe as an alternative to Stalinism. It was often stated that Parsons etc were very similar to official Soviet sociology, a point made in the criticism of Yugoslav sociologists who were not adherents to the critical paradigm. However, it is also true, as remarked earlier (chapter 3), that there was a functionalist "quasi-sociology" resembling classical

⁶³ For a comprehensive list of references see Davidović (1975). Two articles (in German and English) by Golubović (1973, 1976) express the main points.

functionalism by its stress on equilibrium and common values.

Gouldner (1970) notes the similarities between academic sociology in Eastern Europe and functionalism and explains them in a traditional sociology-of-knowledge manner. That is, the social situation in general, the growing complexity of society, the (partial) recognition of potential conflicts, the interest of the ruling elite in social and political stability, were important in promoting this kind of sociology.

Although there is very much to be said for this, my thesis is that even the critical sociology is functionalist. Moreover, it has to be functionalist, due to its inability to account for the problem of "reality construction". That is, it subscribes - like the earlier sociology - to the principle of naive realism.

Why is this so? When Vrcan and Ćimić are discussing the problem of religion, their point of departure is, that the existence of religion must somehow be explained. The main difference between their approach and that of an earlier sociology is, that instead of concentrating on the intellectual aspects, the emphasis is on emotional/existential aspects. This is illustrated by the understanding of the concepts of illusion or illusory. When reading the famous passages about religion as "illusory happiness" or "the demands to give up a state of affairs which needs illusions" the earlier sociologists in a very straightforward manner interpreted this (in the Engels-Lenin fashion) as if men really could not understand their situation. Due to intellectual shortcomings and as a result of the religion-as-opium instrument used by the ruling classes. When contemporary Yugoslav sociologists discuss the matter, they understand "illusion" in a more or less psychoanalytical way. That is, due to the difficulties in life, unable to handle the serious and tragic aspects of human existence, people will unconsciously escape into religion, the illusory "haven in a heartless world".

Alienation is thus interpreted on an individual-psychological level. It is true of course, that man's situation is related to specific socio-economic and institutional conditions, but, generally speaking, it is a social-psychological type of explanation very much influenced

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by Frommian ideas.⁶⁴ Religion is, consequently, referred to as part of the "authoritarian syndrome". It is, in other words, connected with a pessimistic outlook on life, it is authoritarian in character, and caused by anxiety and insecurity. These dimensions are also supposed to characterize traditional culture, or, to arise in the confrontation between traditional and modern culture so typical of Yugoslav society.

It is thus postulated that religion has to exist in such a situation, that it will not disappear unless its compensatory function is becoming obsolete. That is, the existence of religion is explained exclusively in terms of its function. As Kerševan (1984) points out, the difference between this paradigm and that of "dialectical materialism" is, that the alienation-variant recognizes that society itself is alienated.

One could also say that the only difference with the perspective in sociology of religion usually referred to as functionalist is that the alienation-paradigm suggests that it is only in capitalist, or not-yet-completely socialist society, that religion serves a function. However, this is not unequivocally true. Bahtijarević, for example, is of the opinion, like the old sociology, that religion will be replaced by a secular ideology. That is, by a "functional equivalent" of religion (of the kind discussed by Yinger 1970, or Glock & Stark 1966), the purpose of which is to provide psychological meaning and social stability. Even Vrcan is reasoning in a similar way, when discussing the role of religion and Marxism in Yugoslav schools. (See below).

It should be emphasized, that functionalism is inherent in (this kind of) Marxism. What is important when referring to a theory or an attitude as functionalist is not its defence of status quo, or its conservative bias. Nor necessarily its emphasis on equilibrium. These are just (possible) consequences of the decisive idea that only those social phenomena that perform some kind of function will exist.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Erich Fromm was a member of the editorial board of *Praxis* and played an important role in Yugoslav intellectual life. Most of his books were translated and were enthusiastically reviewed. On the problem of Fromm-reception in Yugoslavia see Trebješanin (1985). His article is one of several in Nr 68-69 of *Kultura*, devoted to "Erich Fromm and his Work".

⁶⁵ "Functional analysis examines social phenomena in terms of their consequences for the

And it is clear that the Marxist tradition tends to explain reality in this way. Things are not what they seem to be. Worldviews and religions are always related to someone's interests, or to some other kind of function, either on a societal level, or on the level of groups or individuals. And in a curiously "idealistic" way the necessity of shared sentiments and values is very much emphasized. The Yugoslav constitution, for example, states that in order for societal cohesion to prevail, there must exist certain social institutions (the party and its auxiliaries) as well as a common ideology, shared by everyone and transmitted by the educational system.

It could be objected, that it is exactly against this kind of functionalism that Vrcan or the Praxis-sociologists are arguing. An ideology, and sociology, trying to hide the conflictual aspects of socialist society. This is true, but on the other hand, what is actually criticized is the fact that a societal elite has occupied, as it were, a theory, and uses it according to its own interests. The theory is not wrong; it should only be applied in a different manner. And, in the end, it boils down to the question of how to define "socialist society", or, whether Yugoslavia is to be considered as such. That is, what is criticized is the "conservatism" (as understood from a specific political point of view), not functionalism itself. Not only is religion discussed in terms of functions, but the ultimate goal of societal development is still the fulfilled individual, living in a harmonious society without conflicts.

The functionalist approach is logical, because, if you want to explain the existence of a cultural phenomenon, and you have a naive-realist view of man's relation to sociocultural reality, then you

broader society. What does a kinship system do for society? What does a religious ritual do for society? What are the "functions" of government, of poverty, of classes, or of any social phenomenon?" (Turner & Maryanski 1979:xi). This is the basic question of functionalism. Turner & Maryanski (1979:129) have tried to summarize what is common to different versions of functionalism in the following way: "1. The social world tends to be ordered into systems composed of interrelated parts. 2. If these systems are to persist and survive, certain problems confronting their constituent members, their subsystems, and their overall structure must be resolved. 3. 'Understanding' of the social world is therefore facilitated when knowledge about how a structure operates, or fails to operate, to resolve these problems is secured."

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will have to reason like this. Because there is nothing else that could explain why something (like religion) should exist at all.

From the point of view of sociology of knowledge, as represented by Berger and Luckmann, or again, from the Marxist perspective used by Kerševan, the existence of a cultural phenomenon does not really constitute a problem. Its existence is taken for granted, which does not at all mean that it is "eternal" (in contrast to "historical").

However, the most problematic aspect of the alienation-paradigm is that it is difficult to use as an explanatory model. If you, for example, discuss religion in a Yugoslav context from this standpoint, you are faced with serious contradictions.

Let us return to the way Bahtijarević, Ćimić and Vrcan reason. Religion exists in Yugoslavia, because it is an alienated society, that is, it does not (yet) provide institutional solutions guaranteeing that man controls his destiny. Therefore, due to the difficulties and problems arising in such a situation, men will tend to embrace religion. Now, empirically, those most religious in Yugoslav society are, according to usual indicators, the peasants and the workers, especially those with low qualifications, still more or less integrated in rural society. (That is, the first urban generation, or those still commuting from the villages). They are religious, because their general situation is such that they need the kind of comfort provided by religion. On the other hand, the urban environment is creating an anonymous, isolated individual, who is equally alienated, and therefore also tends to be religious.

There are several problems with this kind of explanation. At first, why is it that religion is so clearly related to certain sociocultural groups? If society is alienated, then, after all, others as well would be religious. Strictly speaking, there should not be non-religious persons at all.⁶⁶ That is, the Yugoslav middle class should also embrace religion, which it clearly doesn't. One could solve this problem in two ways. Either you explain religion, as did the old sociology, namely, religion is due to ignorance. And after all, one variable related to

⁶⁶ The difficulty of the alienation-paradigm to account for non-religious persons has been noted by Kerševan (1975a: 889).

religion in the Yugoslav context is education. Now, if you would like to stick to the alienation-paradigm, this is unacceptable, so you will say that the others are also religious. Either they are "emotional atheists" embracing socialism/Marxism in a religious way, as an "ideology". Or, they are religious in a modern way, their object of devotion being film stars and football players, or other elements from popular culture.

This might at first seem to be a satisfactory solution. However, we must not forget, that the alienation paradigm is primarily a theory to explain religion in general, in particular in the alienated capitalist society. Its use in a socialist context is only derivative, an innovation, meaning that socialist society is also alienated.

When we extend our discussion to Western Europe, there is a problem, though. Because, as is well known from empirical research, the workers in most West European countries are less religious than the middle classes (Mol 1972). What is more, they are less religious than workers in Yugoslavia (and some other socialist countries). The implication being, of course, that capitalist Sweden, or France, or Italy, are less alienated than is socialist Yugoslavia, with its specific societal system designed to overcome the alienation existing in both West and East. You might object, that these are countries where a modern alienated mass-culture is very widespread, but if so, religion is not the proof of alienation. And the logical consequence would be, as many psychologists of religion argue, that there are two basic types of religion, the "mature"/positive and the "immature"/negative. Which contradicts the basic premises of the whole theory. Moreover, the alienation-paradigm is in its own eyes a sociological explanation.

In all fairness, then, it seems that the theory is problematic, and very difficult to use as an instrument for prediction and explanation.

The objection from a Marxist point of view is that the theory will have to agree, in the end, that it is impossible not to use the same yardstick (alienation) on art or other areas of culture (as Freud did). That is, it is meaningless to single out religion as being caused by alienated social conditions.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ This was pointed out by Kerševan (1975c: 47-49, 77).

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Before this is done, one must show how religion is brought about, show that it really exists as an alternative.⁶⁸ Both Bahtijarević and Vrcan maintain that "tradition" is not enough to explain the existence of religion. Unless men's situation is very difficult, they will not turn to religion. This seems a bit odd, in view of the age-old problem of theodicy. Why should anybody in trouble turn to the comfort of religion, if he otherwise doesn't care very much for its truth? One would tend to think that the opposite situation is more likely, namely, that the hardships of life strain the religious explanation to the utmost. It is true, that there are cases, when people suddenly have a profound religious experience in times of distress. However, this is not what is usually referred to.⁶⁹ On the contrary, the rural population in, let's say Croatia, is religious, because of the problems and difficulties of daily life. Were it not for these circumstances they would not "turn to" religion.

In general, this idea must, in the light of present knowledge, be refuted as unlikely, as man does not experience reality directly. In order to experience reality in a given manner, one has to be socialized in a group where the world-view concerned is "normal", and its "normality" must be continually reinforced by social interaction. Neither hardship nor suffering is experienced directly, but given, or rather "lived" according to a cultural model, or perspective.

⁶⁸ Common to these views is that they, in one way or another postulate a relation between religious phenomena and some kind of limitation in man's practice or knowledge, that is, "human impotence". It is incorrect and unscientific however to *deduce* religion from "impotence", and on that basis proclaim religion as the inevitable complement to human cognition and action (Levada 1965:66).

If we understand such a "limitation" in a purely negative way - as incapability, ignorance, impotence, inadequacy of any kind (control of nature, utilization of creativity, abstract thinking etc) we still know nothing of the social basis of the "mechanism" of religious transformation (Levada 1965:94).

Not a single experience, not a single emotion could by itself, outside a corresponding, socially (constructed and) confirmed meaning system, be characterized as religious; it will be religious only to the extent that it belongs to a certain system of religious (cult-) relations; (Levada 1965:64).

⁶⁹ Moreover, such experiences are in most cases preceded by a period of "preparation", that is, the individual concerned has already assimilated a religious tradition. This has been extensively discussed by Sundén (1961).

One could argue in dissonance-theory terms that this is not always the case. There are situations where the usual model is breaking down, because it is contradicted. This, again, however is the problem of theodicy, and there are several different reactions possible, from the increased belief in a truth that is refuted, to the change of perspective. This has been showed many times, from the early history of religious movements to Festinger's "experiment".

In addition to these objections, there are empirical data from Yugoslav investigations supporting some kind of "interactionism", however it is formulated. It has been shown that an environment such as the Yugoslav school, which is not neutral in world-view matters, is not producing the expected results. Not only does a majority of religious students keep the faith in which they have been socialized, but those embracing the "alternative faith", that is, Marxist ideology, tend to come from homes where one or both parents are already party members. There is a third group of students, which, although they in most cases received religious instruction by the church, are not committed to religion, as it was never very important in their family. They are also rather sceptical about Marxism, as they are confronted with it mostly as a school-subject, not as a living reality in their immediate home environment (Bahtijarević 1970, 1975c, Kerševan 1969, Kerševan & Ivančič 1981, Petrič 1973).

There is, on the other hand, nothing in these investigations that makes credible the hypothesis that those committed to religion, are religious because they are in need of it. If alienation is interpreted, as it has been in the Yugoslav theoretical discussion, on an individual psychological level, there is no real difference between religious and non-religious persons, in terms of psychological problems or general "adaptation".

It is to avoid problems of this kind, that Kerševan (and Levada) so strongly emphasize that religion must be understood as a specific practice or way of apprehending reality. And that religion could simply not be explained unless it is described as an experience generated by some kind of sociocultural mechanism, or semiotic system. It must be emphasized again, that this does not mean that

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religion is an "eternal" phenomenon, something inborn. It is "historical" in a double sense. At first it is generated by a specific (historically evolved) religious tradition, and secondly, there exist many different types of such traditions. That is, this kind of explanation is not apologetic; it could never be used to prove the "functionality" of any single religious tradition.⁷⁰

These are, then, some of the objections to the theory of alienation, and they explain why it can hardly be considered a parsimonious theory. The alternative is probably to keep it as a philosophical or existential position, a meta-theoretical view not really explaining social or cultural phenomena, but an idea that could serve as a basis for action or personal conviction.

Consequences

It is already clear, then, that the three perspectives result in different understandings of the process of secularization. Whereas the structuralist perspective is of the opinion that there are no really important differences between socialist and capitalist society, the alienation-paradigm to some extent foresees a revitalization of religion, and in general understands secularization in (a truly) socialist society as characterized by a dimension lacking in capitalism. That is, socialism is able to provide answers to the anomie or alienation typical of modern society. At present it might not do this, but ultimately, only a self-managing socialist society will achieve "complete" secularization. It is not quite clear, however, whether this presupposes a new comprehensive world-view or not.

As far as the policy of the state or party towards religion is concerned, there are both similarities and differences between the perspectives. At first, all of them agree that one should try to

⁷⁰ This can however be done from the alienation-perspective! There is a "mirror-image" of the kind of Marxist theory we are discussing, very popular among psychologically interested clergymen, namely the view that (a healthy) *religion* will bring alienation to an end. And there seems to be no (scientific) way of deciding who is right, the Humanist-Marxist or the Parson-Counsellor.

avoid politicising religion. The state should recognize the legitimate existence of religious communities, and, in contrast to earlier sociology, nobody is really advocating any type of specific anti-religious measures.

It is pointed out that such measures are most often counterproductive. By treating the church as an enemy, one is actually producing a rallying-point for would-be opponents of socialism, whether religious or not. It has also been argued that a more relaxed attitude towards the church is of help in combating nationalist tendencies. Therefore, all types of harassments and interferences in the normal activity of the church (such as not allowing construction of churches or preventing religious instruction) should be avoided. As long as the church is not trying to get directly involved in politics, one should not bother too much about its behaviour.

Above all, politics vis-a-vis religion should be characterized by clarity and logical consequence. Although it might be tempting to use religion for secular purposes, such "cooperation" on pragmatic grounds should also be avoided.

As far as the believers are concerned, it is argued that one should stop classifying citizen in terms of religion. The majority of Yugoslavs are religious, and nothing will be gained by making an issue of religion. From the point of view of the state, the important thing is that people are basically loyal to society in general, and not to certain ideas. By making atheism a condition for social activism, one is estranging those that would otherwise take part in the construction of socialism (Čimić 1967b, 1969a, 1969d, 1970a, 1970f; Vrcan 1972, 1974; Roter 1969, 1970d, 1976, 1979; Kerševan 1969, 1975a, 1979, 1984b).

Moreover, although traditionally an anti-religious attitude was considered synonymous with Marxism, experience has shown that this is a very superficial view. On the contrary, very often militant atheists are equally hostile to the fundamental principles of self-management and democracy.

The antagonistic attitude towards religion and religious people is probably the last stronghold of a bureaucratic mentality which in this domain manifests itself in its authentic form, and does not

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provoke social sanctions, like in other areas, as long as religion is looked upon as an evil which should be abolished, but which - because of its strength, is tolerated; the contemporary coexistence and cooperation is not well-conceived and could at any moment be turned into its opposite (Ćimić 1969d:64).

The idea, then, is that one should encourage believers to take part in social affairs more actively, and it is pointed out, for example by Ćimić (1969a,d), that one reason for political abstention among religious citizen is the fact that leading functionaries of the Socialist Alliance are as a rule party members, to whom atheism is a test of political loyalty.

So, from the point of view of the party, the best thing would be to leave the church and the believers alone. Religion will eventually disappear as a result of general development and a truly realized system of self-management.

A more sensitive question is the party's attitude to expressions of religiosity among its own members. Although it is recognized that according to party statutes, membership in the LCY is not compatible with religion, it is pointed out by sociologists of religion that this is not the only possible solution. Sometimes the case of Italy is mentioned. And it is at least hinted that the problem could be solved differently in the future (Ćimić 1970f, 1969d, Kerševan1984b).

However, even in the case the party decides to keep its views on this matter, this does not necessarily mean that there could not be exceptions. On one hand, under certain conditions it would be possible to recruit religious people, even clergymen as members.⁷¹

On the other hand, it would at least be reasonable to allow participation in religious rituals. Ćimić (1969a) points out that in parts of Yugoslavia the non-participation in certain types of rituals would harm the global interests of the party. And one should, therefore,

⁷¹ This was apparently done. Taškovski (1949:57) explicitly refers to the fact that certain priests in Macedonia for important reasons (probably the creation of a Macedonian Orthodox Church) were accepted as members. It is confirmed by Todo Kurtović (1977:23-26), one of the high-ranking politicians dealing with religious issues, that the party has, and is accepting believers as members.

distinguish between faith as a personal conviction, and religion as outward behaviour, based on family- or other loyalties.

The arguments used in discussions of this sort differ, however. Whereas the proponents of the alienation-paradigm usually refer to the fact that only a truly humanized society will be free of religion, and that, consequently, the prime interest must be to develop socialism, (at the same time as it is taken for granted that Marxism is atheist in terms of politics and world-view), Kerševan bases his view on a slightly different theoretical standpoint. According to him, communists should stop being preoccupied by religion, because religion does not really constitute a problem on a theoretical level. Marxism does not deal with world-views in the sense usually understood. It does not provide answers to questions of man's existence but is a theory of class struggle and transformation of social relations (Kerševan 1975a, 1980a).

The problem is that religion traditionally has been considered one of the main obstacles to socialism, and even though it was always stated that individual believers were not the targets of party-policies, there was, nevertheless, an ambiguity vis-a-vis believers themselves:

The organised socialist forces (the communist parties), in the name and interest of socialism, have to fight against religion. There were always, it is true, distinctions and guarantees: the struggle against religion does not mean a struggle against believers; the believers must not, due to their faith, be discriminated against, neither in terms of rights nor duties; the struggle against religion is one of ideas, not a political or administrative struggle; the struggle is in the end a struggle to liberate men. Religion is treated as a kind of illness: people are, it is true, not punished, as they are ill, but at the same time one has to fight illness. This means a special concern with sick people, and in particular that measures are taken to prevent the illness from spreading. The comparison with alcoholism is not out of place: It is allowed, people are allowed to drink alcohol, but not allowed to propagate its use, especially not among young people; alcoholics are not to be trusted with certain jobs that they, otherwise, as citizen are

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entitled to; they should be helped to liberate themselves from their dependence on alcohol, and they should agree to treatment.

Allowing for qualifications and guarantees, such a policy in the end politicises the question of religion. Although believers must not be discriminated against, they are not to be entrusted with certain social functions, sensitive for the development of socialism (membership in the party, certain services in the state apparatus, or in the educational system: with the same rights, the believers therefore, have less possibilities).

The a priori theoretical disqualification of religion is by necessity expressed as a disqualification of believers and religious communities. The more so if it is related to political differences and interests. Among believers and in the church there is a political reaction: why should believers engage themselves in socialism, if in its future developed stage there will be no room for religion, or if there is already discrimination or at least suspicion towards believers.

Such a politization leads exactly to what is unacceptable to a workers' movement: disunity among workers in matters concerning this world, due to disunity concerning matters in the next world. (Kerševan 1984: 20)

One would expect, says Kerševan, that as far as the need of de-politicization is concerned, there would not be any great differences between the three perspectives in sociology of religion. However, the question of *atheism* logically results in different attitudes:

In the second orientation (structuralism) atheism is represented simply by the non-existence of religious practice, religious apprehension of the world; In the third orientation (existentialism) atheism is one of the alternative answers to existential questions, and its superiority is not guaranteed in advance. Neither the first orientation, interpreting religion as alienation, does in fact explain atheism; it explains only the existence of religion.

However, exactly because of its non-explanation, it provides the atheists or non-religious with the self-consciousness of an elite. Thinking of themselves as of people who are ahead of their time, who are beyond a still religious situation (or as in the Soviet version, atheism reflects essential, and not marginal, already overcome, social conditions). The second and third orientation does not provide such a (self) consciousness of superiority, or does that to a less degree, in a roundabout way of enlightenment. (Kerševan1984: 23)

The trouble with the first perspective is thus that it bases its arguments on certain ideological values, and, like dialectical materialism, conceives of religion as an ultimately negative phenomenon. Although Kerševan is here speaking as a partisan (involved in a dispute with the alienation paradigm, see below) he nevertheless seems at least partly right. Although, as we have shown, the alienation-paradigm is different in tone, and in measures advocated, it still subscribes to the idea of a critical sociology, the purpose of which is to change man and the world. This is illustrated by its views on how religion should be treated at school. At first, both Ćimić and Vrcan are critical of the earlier, utterly anti-religious school. If nothing else, it will have negative effects. In the same way both of them criticize the concept of a *state ideology* promoted by a state controlled school. The alternative is the school of "self-management", that is, a school free in its relation to the state. The consequences are however not entirely obvious.

On one hand, Ćimić is very clear on the important point of religious teachers, an issue that was never really resolved; from time to time it is reported that teachers are in trouble due to their religiosity, and there have been different positions taken officially, depending on the general climate.

In the same way one should oppose ideas (such practice, fortunately doesn't exist) that those teachers who believe should be banned from the schools. This is a very delicate matter. We could not disqualify those of our citizen who are believers (of which in Yugoslavia there are 70-75 %) from the teaching profession.

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They should be prevented from bringing religious elements into their teaching; after school it is their *private* affair, whether they visit the temple or not. (Ćimić 1969a: 34)

Ćimić is also very clear on another sensitive point, namely that of religious instruction, in the particular way it is being conducted in rural areas with a Muslim population:

When, for example, girls from Muslim families participate in religious instruction, but are not allowed by their parents to visit school, one should not, as some activists wish, prevent them from participating in religious instruction, but *force* them to go to school. It's a greater problem that children don't visit school, than that they are involved in catechism. One gets the impression, however, that the Socialist Alliance in some environments does not care very much whether children are at school or not but is very worried that they might receive religious instruction. Which is wrong. (Ćimić 1969a: 34-35)

However, he is not quite as clear when it comes to the general problem of religious upbringing. Although very different in tone, there is a reminiscence of earlier sociology in this statement:

In the end it is necessary to exercise an indirect influence on the family, not by making speeches about religion, and even less against religion, but by promoting human relations, spreading knowledge concerning general education etc. The moment parents will ask themselves what the use of an upbringing is tearing the child apart, as it is subject to different, contrasting influences (while the school influences in one - atheist - direction, the family influences in another - religious - direction), the basic condition of an educational result has been achieved. (Ćimić 1969a: 37)

That is, the possible conflicts arising are the result, not of two world-views competing with each other, but of the fact that parents in their upbringing are representing an older cultural model, which happens to be in conflict with a new (correct) model.

This attitude is even more pronounced in Vrcan's discussion.

Religion should be treated at school in an objective, but critical, way. As self-management society cannot remain neutral to existing world-views, it will have to promote those that are progressive and functional in terms of what is expected from citizen in self-management society.

As an important phenomenon in the human world, religion must in such a school be a subject about which is talked and discussed ...in the most objective and critical way. This means, however, that the school of self-management is not, and cannot be, a neutral school, because there is not and cannot be a neutral school. What is referred to, as a neutral school would actually be a school, which by definition refrains from every formative function, every organized influence on the development of basic ideas and value orientations of the pupils, every moral formation of young people. (Vrcan 1974b: 26)

And with deeply felt conviction, Vrcan argues that Marxism, and a Marxist view on religion, is taught in Yugoslav schools, not because it is an official ideology, but because it is the only *true* teaching about reality.

The goal is to influence the formation of an intellectually highly developed, emotionally rich, morally firm and mature, autonomous and free personality, who is able to orient himself independently in various life-situations, who will be able to undertake, not only highly specialized social roles, but also the complex role of self-manager and citizen of self-management society, and, finally, who will be able not only to preserve and reproduce that which exists in social and cultural reality as given, or in the existing societal system as functioning institutions, but also to change existing reality in a creative way. create something new. (...) This also presupposes a personality who will know how to meet the crises created and allotted by life to everyone, who will endure as free and autonomous personality in moments of difficult temptations, serious disappointments, real setbacks, and painful defeats, of which nobody can be saved, and to do this

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without need and hope for an otherworldly compensation or consolation. (Vrcan 1975b: 29).

In this respect the Marxist preference of the school in self-management society is not a consequence of the fact that in our society Marxism is raised to the level of official and ruling ideology, but follows from the conviction that original and true Marxism offers exceptionally favourable possibilities to understand and explain the contemporary world and man's position in that world, and to render meaningful man's life and direct human activity towards a real humanization of the human world, life and practice. (Vrcan 1974b: 31)

At the same time Vrcan is aware of the danger that ideology would again be a dogmatic system, and he is at pains to point out that it should *not* be the old kind of militant atheism inspired by the Enlightenment (Vrcan 1974b: 32).

Marxism and Sociology

Kerševan has been criticized for not being a Marxist. In a lengthy article Vrcan (Vušković & Vrcan 1980:133-182) argues that the religious model formulated by Kerševan misses the whole point of Marxist sociology. At first it does not properly describe what is characteristic of religion, namely its ultimately negative nature, second, it is not a critical sociology. In a reply Kerševan (1981) restates his arguments and in particular points out that the alienation-paradigm is unable to explain how religion is socially maintained and adds that his model in no way excludes criticism, although that is not its purpose.

What about this criticism? It seems that Vrcan is right in saying that Marx's personal view of religion is closer to his own thinking. This seems to be the general conclusion drawn by Kolakowski (1978), Desroche (1973), McKown (1975) or Thrower (1983). This is however not denied by Kerševan. On the contrary, he explicitly admits that this is the case. It is even hinted that some of the interpretations of

Marxism (based on the theory of alienation) are perhaps describing Marx's attitude towards religion in too rosy colours.

On the other hand, there is the difficult problem of whether the standpoint represented by Kerševan, that is, to de-emphasise the humanist aspects in Marxism, and like Althusser, concentrate on the scientific character of the theory, is correct, or could be accepted.⁷²

Those studying Marxism and religion argue that there is a unity in Marx's work, and that the basic feature of the theory is its humanist character, regardless of the use of terminology in the later works.

However, in a way, Kerševan does not deny this either. What he says is that Marx's theory is undeveloped and insufficient as a basis for a theory of religion. The general idea is, instead, that if Marx's legacy is to be of value in sociology, it must be formulated in a scientific language. If one wants to develop Marxism as a theoretical perspective, it is impossible to be literary true to Marx by the use of quotations.

Whether it is possible to do this, and still remain a Marxist is an open question, and this brings us to the problem of Marxism's relationship to general sociology.

As we have seen, those working within the alienation paradigm were not very successful when trying to integrate theoretical ideas (and empirical facts) from other traditions. The relationships between concepts like "symbol", "process of socialization", or "social interaction" and basic categories of Marxism was never made clear, and the inherent contradictions were never spelled out.

In the same way the process of secularization was interpreted in a rather straightforward manner. Although, phenomena like urbanization and industrialization were referred to, they were not discussed in terms of structural changes influencing man's relation to society and culture, but in a rather non-sociological and partisan

⁷² Fogelklou (1978:132) points out that Althusser's view of a rupture in Marx's work is "rather unique" and hardly tenable. On the other hand he regards the structural perspective as fruitful and truer to reality, when discussing the relationship base-superstructure (Fogelklou: 195). Kolakowski (1978b: 483-486) is highly critical of Althusser and is of the opinion that he has not really contributed to the development of Marxist thought. Whereas Assiter (1984) claims that Marxism and structuralism are impossible to combine.

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way interpreted as important aspects of a progressive evolution towards human liberation.

That is, there was no distance to the object of study, but an implicit polemics with religion. Due to the unsophisticated understanding of human perception of reality, the discussion remained on the same level as theological discourse, being concerned with "truth".

According to Davidović (1985) it is a general feature of Marxist sociology in Yugoslavia that it has either tried to assimilate perspectives and concepts from other sociological traditions, without really doing it, or, it has lost its Marxist identity. And she argues that this is the result of the theory's "critical", but basically unscientific character. (By scientific is understood an attitude primarily interested in description and theoretical analysis based on empirical research).

Looking at the three perspectives of Yugoslav sociology of religion, this seems to be the case. On the other hand, implicit in this view, is that Marxist sociology is synonymous with explicit statements made by the classics of Marxism.

Kerševan's alternative has been to define the subject matter of Marxist sociology differently (Kerševan 1980a,b). According to him it is fruitless trying to formulate a general Marxist sociology of the kind represented by, for example, Yugoslav textbooks. Marxist sociology deals with the study of class relations and social transformation, not with family research or religion. However, by using central concepts, like ideology or practice, it should be possible to look at such problems in a way that is at least not incompatible with a Marxist orientation. This implicitly means that Marx is treated in a manner similar to Weber or Durkheim.

The present author sympathizes with Kerševan's solution. It seems to be the only way to avoid the contradictions referred to earlier. An alternative solution would be to formulate an explicit social psychological theory of alienation, which is de facto being used already. That is, alienation is understood as a specific configuration of attitudes and behaviour in relation to social reality; a certain tendency to experience reality in an "alienated" manner. It would then however not be characteristic of religion only, but of any type of "practice". In

that way one could for example integrate Ćimić's idea of religious and atheist religion within the same theoretical framework. The question is of course, again, how Marxist such a solution would be. It seems very similar to Rokeach's (1960) model of the "open" and "closed" mind. Moreover, it would be a strictly empirical question in what degree such an attitude is related to specific social conditions.

However, it could be maintained that those in favour of the alienation-paradigm are already using it as a meta-theoretical device. When for example discussing empirical data, categories like sex, age, rural/urban background or profession, are related to religion in a rather conventional way. Then, perhaps, the fact that working class youth is religious is interpreted in terms of alienation.

What about the relation of Yugoslav sociologists to general sociology of religion? On the whole, the authors referred to in this study are well acquainted with both classical and modern literature concerning theoretical and empirical aspects of the religious phenomenon. They are quoting German, French and Anglo-Saxon literature of the type quoted in for example Scandinavia. In addition to that, however, they are familiar with Soviet and East European sociology of religion, and in some cases with the Italian literature.

The range of possible influence is thus quite wide. There are some typical differences, however, between the authors. Whereas the alienation-paradigm frequently refers to scholars like Vernon, Yinger, Glock & Stark, Parsons, Fromm, Freud, or Maslow, Kerševan is quoting Berger and Luckmann, German sociology of religion, semiotics (French and Russian) and the tradition of phenomenology of religion.

This is of course logical in view of general orientations. Although from the part of the alienation-paradigm there might be explicit criticism of functionalism, there is an affinity with authors like Glock & Stark (1966), seeing religion as an answer to relative deprivation⁷³

⁷³ It should be noted however that Stark has observed the problem discussed in this study, namely the fact that in order for religion to perform a function in such conditions, it must exist as a socially given option: "In order for economic deprivation to result in certain kinds of religious commitment it is necessary first that a religious perspective is a plausible option

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or Yinger (1970), who understands religion as a function of basic existential problems. Furthermore, these authors stress the functional necessity of religion, or speak of functional equivalents of religion, which is in line with the general orientation of the alienation-paradigm.

It is curious, though, that the Yugoslav authors quote Vernon with approval, as he stresses the fact that reality could be perceived only by means of symbols, and that, sociologically speaking, there is no reality outside symbolic reality (Vernon 1962:27).

As far as the issue of secularization is concerned, it is interesting to note that Vrcan's ideas of the resurgence of tradition is similar to Wuthnow's (1976) later discussion on the reversibility of the process of secularization. It is also characteristic that Vrcan quotes Mary Douglas and Greeley (who argue that the concept of secularization is wrong, there has always been religion and irreligion). On the other hand, their point of view seems to contradict Vrcan's assertion that religion is not "eternal".

There is a certain lack of clarity, then, in the sense that the Yugoslav authors from their Marxist point of view are discussing the problem of secularization in a way, which is both similar to, and different from Anglo-Saxon functionalism. As far as capitalist society is concerned, there is not much difference. Neither in the treatment of socialism, actually. The main difference is the liberation from religion, postulated by the Yugoslavs, which will occur in the specific context of mature socialism.

Kerševan's point of view is more in line with the general secularization-paradigm. His position is similar to that of Berger, Luckmann, and others. His approach is however original in the sense that he has taken into account the semiotic aspects, in a way not usually done in sociology of religion.

for the deprived persons in question. If they have retained some minimal connection with religious perspectives, then it seems to follow that poverty and failure will motivate persons to seek the comforts of faith. But the fact remains that the economically deprived are those for whom religious options are least likely to be relevant. In society generally, economic deprivation operates mainly to shut persons off from religion rather than to drive them into faith as a means of compensation (Stark 1972:500).

An interesting problem is, finally, what Yugoslav sociology has added to our understanding of religion in socialist society, or of this society in general.

Apart from important empirical data, which will have consequences for our views on the role of ideology in socialism, there are two or three points where the Yugoslav discussion is of special interest. At first, it is clear that, fundamentally, as far as religiosity is concerned, there are not that many differences (this is the view also of the alienation-paradigm, if we look at the present situation only). Religion is in socialism, essentially, of the same character as in other secularising societies. There is to be found the same incoherent religiosity, and the same dissimilarities between official and popular religion as in Western Europe. An important difference is, of course, the social profile of religious people, e.g. the high number of religious workers, a result of the fairly recent onset of modernization.

Second, although socialist society is characterized by a higher degree of laicisation, the process of secularization might slow down, due to the fact that religion, by the ideological attitude of the state, is made more salient than in a corresponding western situation. And long before "Solidarity" it was pointed out that the existence of a religious working class and an atheist elite, might, in certain conditions, have important political consequences.

Sociology of Religion and Politics

It is difficult to assess the political influence of Yugoslav sociology of religion, and a detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this study. However, some general remarks could be made.

At first, it is clear that the new approach in the study of religion was supported by relatively strong forces inside the party. Like other aspects of cultural life it developed rapidly after the fall of Aleksandar Ranković (the powerful minister of interior and Tito's would-be heir) in 1966. Sociology of religion was thus part of the general liberal currents in the late sixties. Without this support it would hardly have been established.

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Moreover, empirical research made in Slovenia showed that this policy was representative of dominant groups within the party. That is, when Ćimić speaks of a "last stronghold of a bureaucratic mentality" he is right. Those in favour of a more relaxed attitude were the young, well-educated urban strata, which began to take over the party at this time (Kerševan 1968, Pelhan 1970).

In a sense, therefore, it could be said that sociology of religion was used by those who wanted to depoliticise the issue of religion. Its role was, besides research, to educate party members on a local level, who often used the "old methods" and were responsible for the "excesses" straining relations with the church and embarrassing higher party functionaries.

The sociologists thus took part at conferences and seminars with party activists, teachers and others. And, as already mentioned, there were post-graduate courses in sociology of religion to fill new posts within the administration or the Socialist Alliance.

In some instances the government administration worked in close cooperation with the sociologists, the most typical example being the minister of religious affairs in Croatia, Zlatko Frid.

Another example is that journals closely affiliated with the Social Alliance or the party devoted considerable space to religious issues. In other cases, the interest in religion in scholarly publications and mass media was an effect of the more liberal cultural climate, where editors became more or less independent in relation to political bodies.

The party's interest in these matters, also on a federal level, is illustrated by the fact that "Komunist" printed Ćimić's rather unorthodox essay "The League of Communists and Religion" (1969a), to be distributed among party members.

It should be pointed out that the leading sociologists of religion became rather well known; they participated in public discussions, drawing large audiences and being widely reported in the media.

Moreover, some of the sociologists were politically active. Roter was a member of the Slovenian parliament, Bahtijarević was active in the Socialist Alliance, and is now member of the federal parliament

in Belgrade. Their views should, at least to some extent, have been influential.

It is also interesting to note that sociologists of religion were involved in the discussions concerning the new laws of religion that were drafted when these matters as a result of the constitutional reforms were transferred to republican jurisdiction ⁷⁴

Without access to documents it is difficult to say anything definite. However it seems, on the basis of press reports, that the influence of sociology of religion was greater in Slovenia than in, for example Croatia. If we look at the present situation this is most probably the case. Relations between state and church are generally more relaxed in Slovenia than in Croatia. ⁷⁵

There are several reasons for this. At first Slovenia is a comparatively small country and those involved in research had contacts among the politicians, sometimes going back to the war. On the other hand it could be argued that the position of sociology of religion was just another aspect of the general cultural and political climate, or that, which is important, the church in Slovenia was less militant than the Croatian church. One must also take into account the strong tradition of Christian socialism. Moreover, the fact that Slovenia, to some extent, is linguistically isolated from other parts of Yugoslavia, and has more intimate relations with Western Europe is of importance.

The political situation in Croatia is, on the other hand, complicated by the fact that there is a large Serbian minority, which is overrepresented in the Communist party and in certain state agencies. As Serbs and Croats belong to different religious traditions, the issue of ethnicity and religion is potentially very sensitive. There is also the legacy of the Second World War, and the serious conflicts after the war.

⁷⁴ See the report "Socio-political and legal position of religious communities in Yugoslavia" [*Društveno-politički položaj i pravni režim verskih zajednica u Jugoslaviji*. Institut za savremenu istoriju, Beograd].

⁷⁵ On the other hand, they are more relaxed in Serbia as well, where sociology of religion was not as important as in the Catholic areas.

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As pointed out earlier, the relations between church and state in Yugoslavia have oscillated between conflict and appeasement, although there is a general trend towards more relaxed relations. In some situations the views of sociologists seem to have had effects. One such case was the formulation, in the late seventies, of a new law of religion in Croatia. The outline of the law was rather strict. It aimed at curtailing the "non-religious" activities of the church in areas like social work, education or mass media. However, there began an unprecedented public discussion, in which not only the church, but also individual believers took part. And the draft-law was in the end amended and re-written. Along lines that had been advocated by sociologists of religion (Magnusson 1978).

Another occasion was the deterioration of state-church relations in 1981-82. The formerly influential Croatian politician Jakov Blažević, who had been prosecutor in the trial of Archbishop Stepinac, suddenly started a campaign against the church, which, however, was terminated comparatively soon, and, except for Bosnia, did not have effects outside Croatia (Magnusson 1982).

Common to both cases (notwithstanding important differences in cultural and political atmosphere) was that politicians could not afford serious conflicts with church and believers.

In general then, sociology of religion was very much dependent on both the prevailing cultural/political climate and the relations between state and church. The possibilities of sociology of religion to manoeuvre or to give advice were, not surprisingly, greater in times of a generally relaxed atmosphere. Perhaps it could be said that the possible influence of sociology of religion on politics is a long-term process. The institutionalisation of the new discipline starting in the 1960s was only a beginning.

Stagnation and Renaissance

Sociology of religion shares the fate of the rest of Yugoslav sociology. After initial success and a sometimes very important social role, the early 1970s mark the beginning of a period of stagnation.

By its research and theoretical discussion, as well as its participation in political debates, sociology had contributed to increased knowledge of social processes. Or, rather, it articulated in plain words a situation that was obvious to many. It revealed or made the general public conscious of the inequality existing in Yugoslav society, in terms of standard of living, culture, lifestyles, economic and political power. It also showed that ordinary people to a considerable extent were indifferent towards official ideology.

In this respect sociology of religion was part of a general process of demystification of social life. On one hand it provided a more accurate picture of the religious situation in Yugoslavia. As to the worries among certain politicians, it was able to show that, although large segments of the population were religious, one could not speak of a dramatic increase of religion. Neither was it true that "clericalist" sentiments were common among the believers. On the other hand, it was evident that socialist ideology shared some of the problems facing institutional religion.

Around 1970 Yugoslavia was troubled by serious economic and political problems, as well as ideological conflicts. On one hand there was a strong current of liberalization, on the other, parallel to this development, there were demands for republican autonomy. The general climate resulted in political unrest and tensions both along social and ethnic dimensions. Especially in Croatia there were strong feelings in favour of increased autonomy, sometimes expressed in a more or less nationalist vocabulary, creating worries and anxiety among the Serbs, both within and outside Croatia. In the autumn of 1971 the Croatian leaders seemed to have lost control and were forced to resign.

The Croatian crisis was experienced at the time as a symptom of escalating nationalism. Apparently there were such tendencies. However, later events showed that the conflict was also one between liberal ideas and more traditional views on socialism. It was, furthermore, to an important degree a conflict of power between the new leaderships on a republican level, and the "old guard" around President Tito. The party leaderships in almost all parts of Yugoslavia

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were ousted in the years following the Croatian crisis, accused of nationalism, technocracy or liberalism.

After the shake-up there was again a period of stress on ideological purity. The party was deeply concerned with the general indifference among young people, or with the fact that, more often than not, those interested in politics were influenced by "foreign" ideas. The solution to this problem was the strengthening of Marxism. A campaign started to reintroduce Marxism as a subject at school and university, and an extensive literature was produced on the question of ideology and youth. Religion was again a political issue, and relations between state and church deteriorated.

In the general climate of political and cultural uniformity that was a consequence of the crisis, the position of sociology was drastically changed. Empirical research declined, and when investigations were undertaken, they were often conducted within the framework of social science institutes directly affiliated with the central committees of the republican parties. Sometimes the results were not made public or were referred to only in summary fashion by the media.

Theoretical discussions with implicit or explicit political consequences were not desirable and measures were taken to stop them. The most well-known examples outside Yugoslavia were, of course, the closing down of "Praxis" and the case of the "Belgrade Eight" who were forced to leave their teaching positions at the university.

The social sciences were dominated by a strong tendency to "exegesis", or interpretations on a very abstract level of basic tenets in the official ideology. The institutional system was analysed predominantly from a normative perspective, sometimes very far from reality.

It has been pointed out by Yugoslav sociologists that the situation was not one of specific measures directed at individual scholars, but concerned sociology - and science in general:

Administrative (repressive) measures (suspensions) and other means of political control (the emphasis of the ideological aspect, the impossibility of relations on a Yugoslav level) were not so

much directed against individuals, as against (the danger) that sociology would become an independent and professionally profiled discipline (Adam 1984:96).

This situation of course affected sociology of religion as well. There were, though, some empirical studies made; theoretical work was continuing, and articles published from time to time. However, the earlier vitality was gone. It was, above all, in Slovenia that sociology of religion remained relatively strong, although the stagnation was visible there too.

The situation is at present radically different. The serious economic, social and political crisis affecting Yugoslavia since the end of the 1970s - beginning of the 1980s has resulted in an unprecedented vitality of cultural life. In all areas of society the difficult problems plaguing Yugoslavia are openly discussed, and what is perhaps most interesting is the creation of a new discourse: social issues are treated in a direct and critical language. In this situation the humanistic and social sciences are again articulating the basic problems of Yugoslav society. With the support of liberal politicians sociological research and theoretical discussion is undergoing a renaissance, and the professional associations of sociologists, are, like similar institutions among writers, economists or historians, acting as independent bodies. An important role is in this respect played by editors of publishing houses, academic journals and mass media, who contribute to the spread of new ideas and empirical findings (Magnusson 1985).

These developments have had tangible effects on sociology of religion. An increasing number of scholarly articles and reports are being published, and the issues are given a prominent place in the media. New empirical data are becoming available, and more comprehensive research projects (also on a Yugoslav level) are being started. There is a "second" generation of sociologists of religion, who during the seventies studied with the scholars discussed here and are now doing independent research and participate in the theoretical discussion. Both in Ljubljana and, perhaps especially, in Zagreb, there is a renewed interest in sociology of religion. And in Serbia

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the discipline is developing.⁷⁶

This means that there are an increasing number of studies permitting longitudinal comparisons. One still has to wait, however, for comparative data on the global situation. Studies involving different socioreligious contexts (republics) would be, to say the least, very fruitful for the theoretical discussion, as there are important differences between the major traditions as to character, dimensionality and institutionalisation of religion.

What is perhaps most interesting in the new situation is that topics treated only in passing by the first generation of sociologists are now in the focus of interest. One area, that earlier received surprisingly little attention is religion and nationalism. This problem was recently treated in detail by the Zagreb sociologist Nikola Dugandžija (1983). The same author also wrote an interesting study on the subject of "secular religion" (Dugandžija 1980a), which had been discussed only to some extent by Ćimić, Vrcan, Roter, and Kerševan. This field of study is apparently of great interest to Yugoslav scholars, and the subject has recently been treated by literary theorists, philosophers, political scientists and sociologists (e.g. Inić 1984, Matić 1984, Milošević 1985).

There are also interesting developments in ethnology and semiotics that are of more or less direct interest to sociology of religion.⁷⁷

What is common to these currents is that the concept of religion is related to ideology and symbolic systems in general. Another

⁷⁶ See e.g. Dugandžija (1980a,b, c, 1983; Goja, Pljačko & Šušnjić 1980, Šušnjić 1979, Ivančić 1981, Kerševan & Ivančić 1981, Đorđević 1983, 1984, 1985, as well as the bibliography by Ljuboja (1984).

⁷⁷ "From formalism to semiotics" by Novica Petković (1984) is an interesting contribution to semiotic theory. Examples of ethnological literature of interest are: "Semiology of Ritual" by Ivan Kovačević (1985) analysing Serbian folklore, and "Wild Literature" by Ivan Čolović (1985) discussing "folk-religious" or mythological elements in para-literature (epitaphs, obituaries, "new folk songs", and "football stories").

important aspect of the new trends seems to be that the concept of alienation is losing ground. That is, the way society and culture was discussed by the "revisionists" of the Praxis-circle (the protestants of Marxism, as it were) is being replaced by a new discourse, transcending Marxism, or explicitly making it an object of study, treating it in the same way as any other system of symbols.

These developments, and the general vitality of Yugoslav culture, will most probably result in new and interesting theoretical syntheses.

Contributions to a Critical History of our Sociology of Religion. Part II

The original intention of this accompanying study – an exploration of the intellectual heritage of contemporary sociology of religion in Serbia – turned out to be too ambitious for the purposes of preface and afterword to Kjell Magnusson's book. It was intended to provide an analytical and critical summary of the eighty-year-long, content-rich and complex history of a discipline to which, incidentally, I do not belong. Although, as a student of ethnology and anthropology, I read some of the classics of sociology as part of my required syllabus, this work demanded a thorough re-reading, as well as a good knowledge of the considerable oeuvre of those "domestic" authors who may be considered the founders and main actors of the new sociology of religion, especially the works published after Magnusson completed his research. It was soon clear that this was a topic for a doctoral thesis and a separate study, not for this occasion and certainly not for me.

Modern Serbian ethnology and anthropology developed according to very different theoretical and methodological principles than sociology. In the 1980s the discipline went through a paradigm shift – from ethnography and ethnology (defined as the study of people and customs) to anthropology (which redefined and expanded the subject of research) – and some authors began to apply functionalist and structuralist approaches in interpreting research results. As far as the study of religion is concerned, I will mention only Professor Dušan Bandić, whose concepts of folk religion and folk Orthodoxy strongly marked the study of religion in Serbian ethnology during the last decades of the 20th century. The Serbian Orthodox Church and Christianity, as well as other traditional religious communities, were hardly addressed. Like sociology of religion, anthropology has seen a proliferation of topics and perspectives since the 1990s. The collapse of the state, wars, the awakening of nationalism, the re-actualization of the social role of the church and religious communities, de-secularization processes, social and economic crisis,

mass migrations and persecutions, have called on scholars to turn to empirical research (although ethnology has always been far more concerned with qualitative, empirical research than with theoretical polemics). On the other hand, the so-called "cultural turn" –post-modern anthropological and philosophical theories of culture, and self-reflexive interpretative approaches – over time led to an "atomization" within the discipline, which today makes it difficult to speak of Serbian anthropology of religion as a homogeneous system. Only a few specialists have been studying the religious phenomenon relatively consistently and over a longer period of time (Lidija Radulović, Danijel Sinani, Ivica Todorović, Biljana Anđelković, Marko Pišev, Aleksandra Pavićević), but without major syntheses; at least for now. Anthropology approaches religion as culture and part of both collective and personal identity. That is why works dealing with identity, ethnicity, migration, but also popular culture, rituals and customs, spectacles... and many other topics, often refer to religion, even though this may not be their main focus. The symbolic systems of contemporary culture, which are the focus of anthropology, are closely connected to cult, that is, to some kind of religious worldview.

With this in mind, sociology of religion is, by its character, more of a distinct discipline than is anthropology of religion. On the other hand, perhaps a long-term "burden" with theoretical definitions of basic concepts, as well as certain methodological shortcomings of sociology (of religion), mentioned by influential authors (e.g. Đuro Šušnjić, Jakov Jukić, Esad Ćimić), has isolated the discipline from "real" life longer than necessary. And although some sociologists define themselves with a certain superiority vis-à-vis the anthropological study of religion, in contemporary sociology of religion, qualitative empirical approaches, similar to anthropological research, are increasingly being applied. The bottom-up perspective of anthropology may provide a new interpretive framework for sociological observations of social phenomena.⁷⁸ The main cultural actors and creators of society are always individuals, and, therefore,

⁷⁸ On the differences between the anthropological and sociological approaches to religion, see: Šušnjić, Đuro (2005: 110)

multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives are becoming an imperative both in the social sciences and humanities.

But let us return to our topic – the development of sociology of religion since the 1980s, with the note that this is only an outline of a more comprehensive study, which, I hope, will be written by a future generation of sociologists. I will present the basic trends of sociological thought in the given period, mainly through the work of the most prominent sociologists of religion who were active (and still are) in Serbia: Đuro Šušnjić, Dragoljub Brka Đorđević, Milan Vukomanović, Mirko Blagojević, Zorica Kuburić, Dragan Todorović, Danijela Gavrilović and Dragana Ćiparizović.⁷⁹

Major Paradigms

When, in the 1980s, the first serious empirical research on religion and religiosity was undertaken in Serbia, the prevailing view in the academic community, as well as in political opinion, was that religion as a phenomenon was socially irrelevant. It was believed that religion was slowly vanishing from the historical scene and sinking into oblivion. It was precisely during this period that Dragoljub Brka Đorđević, who may rightly be regarded the *deus ex machina* of contemporary Serbian sociology of religion, undertook to write and later publish his doctoral thesis, which he dedicated to the study of religion and atheism. It was the first doctorate in sociology of religion at the University of Belgrade. The title of his study, *Escape from the Church*, published in 1984, based on the thesis *Social Preconditions and Character of the Process of Secularization in the Niš Region*, became an important part of the conceptual foundation of the discipline, and the study itself an indispensable sociological account. (Todorović 2019: 14) It testifies not only to the religious situation in Serbia at the time, but also, albeit indirectly, to the long-term, almost chronic

⁷⁹ Around 2021 and 2022, I conducted interviews with the authors (except Đuro Šušnjić). I take this opportunity to thank them for their willingness to participate in my research in this way.

preoccupation of domestic sociology of religion with the secularization paradigm.

The thesis of secularization, as Milan Vukomanović argues, gave "a certain momentum to sociology of religion as a sociological sub-discipline. However, in the second half of the 20th century, sociology of religion was increasingly isolated within its parental discipline. On the one hand, contemporary sociology somehow began to ignore religious issues, while on the other, scholars studying religion increasingly withdrew from more general sociological debates and considerations. Today, however, the interest in religion within sociology is given a new impetus within the framework of the "cultural turn." Also, there are new theoretical and methodological premises of an interdisciplinary character in different scholarly fields (history of religions, anthropology of religion, cultural and gender studies, international studies, etc.) which have undergone a very dynamic development in the past few decades." (Vukomanović 2022:122). In addition, Vukomanović believes that the development of religious studies is possible only in scholarly environments in which it is "quite legitimate to create a certain distance to one's own native religious tradition" (Vukomanović 2022: 15). However, this might also be applied to the possibility of distancing oneself from one's own ideological position (whether it concerns personal or collective beliefs, scholarly or political ideologies). Was sociology of religion, and even the study of religion in general, in Yugoslavia, and later in Serbia, to a certain extent marked by the inability and resistance to perceive the real religious situation? The reasons would be, on the one hand, a traditionally close connection and involvement of religion in identity issues, and on the other, the existence of strong political and cultural, but also academic ideologies.

As has been mentioned several times, the most powerful influence on the development of sociology of religion during the second half of the 20th century was the theory of secularization. Its influence on the interpretation of empirical research did not wane even when, in the 1980s and especially in the 1990s, clear signs of de-secularization processes became apparent. That is why this perspective has

been given a lot of space in sociological discussions, even too much, it seems. The theory of secularization was, among other things, related to another dominant theoretical approach - Marxism (and to some extent derived from it). When speaking about the Croatian experience, Zrinščak writes that "Croatian sociology of religion until 1990 was strongly marked by an obvious effort to overcome the Marxist approach to religion, especially its thematic and methodological approach. However, with the exception of Jakov Jukić (and Đuro Šušnjić, to the extent in which his work was related to the development of sociology of religion in Croatia), Marxism in its various and often soft varieties remains the frame of reference. This is particularly visible in how combinations of Marxist functionalism and the dominant secularization paradigm was used to explain religious change. This approach remained a frame of reference for various interpretative trends (for example, Vrcan's influential thesis on the crisis of religion and the religion of crisis). However, and perhaps paradoxically, what actually happened during communism under the pressure of scholarly legitimation, in a post-communist perspective becomes or remains a question only within the 'family', that is, in an academic research strongly characterized by communist ideology". (Zrinščak 2008: 29). It seems that some ideologies are firmly woven into the scientific and scholarly image of the world.

Mirko Blagojević also believes that the secularisation thesis was the point of departure of Yugoslav Marxist sociology of religion. "Dogmatic Marxist thought considered the existence of religion as something condemned to irreversible withering away and disappearance. This standpoint was essentially based on the Enlightenment treatment of religion as a delusion and illusion, which would disappear with the progress of science and the improvement of living conditions" (Blagojević 1994: 210). Blagojević argues that Yugoslav sociology abandoned this approach as early as the 1950s, ceasing to interpret religion through the theory of reflection and opening up to ontological-psychological perspectives. However, the fact is that the latter did not necessarily have to be in contradiction with processes of secularization, and later discussions in sociology during the 1990s

testify to the undiminished influence of the secularization paradigm.

For some authors, processes of secularization are not in the least questioned by the revitalization of religion taking place during the last decades of the second millennium, not only in former Yugoslavia, but throughout Europe. Zrinščak even notes that as much as the phrase "religion and society" describes sociology of religion, it may be argued that secularization and revitalization are synonyms of contemporary trends. (Zrinščak 1999). However, one should always keep in mind Vukomanović's remark that the legacy of modernity, with which secularization is associated, "has not taken deeper root in most Asian, African, and especially Muslim countries" (Vukomanović 2002:137) Therefore, secularization is related to the Christian civilization and does not describe a global state of religion and religiosity, nor the religious phenomenon in general.

Danijela Gavrilović points out that despite the widespread perception that modernization necessarily leads to secularization, religion does not actually have to be in conflict with modernity at all. "You can be completely modern and completely religious" (Gavrilović 2010:6).

And while historical circumstances called for, if not rejection, but a redefinition of the process of secularization, in our (and not only our) sociology of religion there was (and still is) an evident division between secularists and anti-secularists. The former believed that there was a continuous and inevitable trend of religious change with roots in the Enlightenment, while the latter argued that this was a myth and an ideological concept (Blagojević 2005:18). One of the most consistent advocates of secularization theory in contemporary Serbian sociology of religion is certainly Dragoljub B. Đorđević, who believes that "critical sociology is unthinkable without a theory of secularization, just as, according to Marx, the critique of religion is the prerequisite of every other critique. Therefore, secularization remains an immovable feature of contemporary sociology. "Sociology is the interpreter of the process of modernization, which implies secularization, but sociology is also one of the manifestations of that process." (Đorđević 1994:10)

The embodiment of this debate is a study dedicated to the issues of secularization and de-secularization, published in 1994 under the title *The Return of the Sacred?* It is actually a collection of works by "leading secularists and anti-secularists" in sociology of religion. Thanks to the efforts of the editor and compiler Dragoljub B. Đorđević, the publication also includes texts by influential foreign scholars such as: Oliver Channen, Larry Shiner, Roll Wallis, Steve Bruce, Brian Wilson, Thomas Luckman, Roland Robertson, David Martin, Robert Wutnow... In the introductory text, Đorđević advocates the thesis of continuous secularization processes, relying on the definition of Enrico Rusconi, as well as on the definitions attributed to these processes by Branko Bošnjak and Štefica Bahtijarević. He interprets secularization as "a set of changes in values and the symbolic universe, in expressive and operational instruments, in collective consciousness and collective behavior, which coincide with structural changes that occurred with the emergence and development of capitalist society". It also implies a change in "the content of religious consciousness (which takes on all the qualities of earthly elements) and religious behaviour (conformism grows, that is, religious practice motivated by tradition grows)" (Đorđević 1994:13).

Although he was the first author in Serbia to point out the breadth of the concept of confessional Orthodox identification and its relationship to personal religiosity, Đorđević has remained a secularist to this day. In a polemic with Mirko Blagojević, regarding the religiosity of the Serbian population, he claims that "a dissolution of religious consciousness is taking place among Serbs. They do not believe in essential elements of the teachings of Orthodox Christianity, they only identify themselves by religion, are formally religious and believe in God only in a general sense. The Serbs have not experienced an eschatological change of heart, and the question is whether and when they will!" (Blagojević 2019: 49). The counterarguments put forward by Blagojević refer to empirical evidence of an increase in religiosity, according to various indicators.

Vukomanović points to the problem of defining basic concepts (which is obvious from the polemics), but the question is whether he

is entirely right when arguing that today "in sociology of religion, the understanding of [de]secularization largely depends on the concept and definition of religion. Authors who use a functional definition of religion will, as a rule, reject the thesis of secularization, while those who prefer a substantive definition support it" (Vukomanović 2022:119). In any case, this debate is no longer the focus of contemporary sociology of religion. However, it may still be present as an implicit framework for interpreting research results, and it is necessary to distinguish between when it is undeniably a question of secularization processes and when it is a question of scholarly ideology.

A recipe for a critical attitude towards the intellectual heritage of the discipline and the ideologies that may be hidden within it can perhaps be found in the work of Đuro Šušnjić - an author who connects different generations of Yugoslav sociologists. "His work" - writes Zrinščak - "rehabilitates religion as a subject of scholarly interest, emphasizes that it is neither ignorance nor delusion, nor a meaningless fact, nor opium, nor an illusion [...] religion can neither be confirmed nor denied by science with its method [...]. He formulates a critique of the dominant theories of sociology of religion, their weaknesses and limitations. The motivation for this critique is actually the challenge of Enlightenment rationalism and positivism in the approach to religion. Therefore, not only functionalist and structuralist theory will be challenged, but above all Marxist theory, since it explains religion as social and because it is much more influenced by the Enlightenment than by original Marxism [...]. With his theoretical analyses, Šušnjić made a significant departure not only from the dominant theoretical paradigm in sociology but also from sociology itself" (Zrinščak 1999:186, 188).

Certainly, over the last thirty years or so, reality has suggested that the processes of secularization and de-secularization do not necessarily have to be opposites. The increased interest in religion, religious teachings and various religious practices, as well as the growing importance of the church and religious communities in both private and public life of Serbian society, does not mean the end of secularization. Religious worldviews are far more fluid and flexible than before, the church and religious communities are adapting to

modern way of life in one way or another, and what is perhaps most telling is the fact that religious beliefs have less and less influence on the daily lives of believers (Pavićević 2012). It is necessary to mention, however, that the liturgical renewal, which implied the re-establishment of a connection with the liturgical order and original tradition of the Christian/Orthodox Church, which was an integral part of the return to religion, has largely remained "under the radar" of sociological and anthropological research. Whether this was because it included a relatively small number of church-affiliated believers or because of the inability of researchers to exclude themselves from prevailing scholarly paradigms... remains to be investigated.

New topics and important events: associations, gatherings, publications

The processes of de-secularization have also led to the formulation of new themes and new tendencies within sociology of religion. Researchers deal with issues of the relationship between religion and the political system, religion and youth, new religious movements, the religion of smaller religious and ethnic communities, solidarity, reconciliation, religious pluralism, the relationship between religion and crisis, religion and identity, religion and nation, religion and science, church and state, secular and invisible religion, church religiosity versus folk or popular piety, etc (Zrinščak 1999; Bogomilova 2020; Đorđević 2008; Gavrilović 2010; Blagojević 2008)

One of the perhaps most significant events in the development of contemporary sociology of religion in Serbia was the establishment of professional associations, or societies, and the publication of journals and collections of papers. First of all, we should mention the establishment of the *Yugoslav Association for the Scientific Study of Religion (JUNIR)* in 1993, for which the credit again goes to Dragoljub B. Đorđević. In the period from its establishment to the present day, the association has organized over twenty conferences with international participation. These were accompanied by thematic collections of papers published in the JUNIR edition, i.e. in the edition *Religion*

and Society.

In 2001, on the initiative of Zorica Kuburić, the *Center for Empirical Research in Religion* was founded in Novi Sad, which, in addition to conducting research projects, publishes the journal *Religion and Tolerance*. To date, 41 issues of the journal have been published.

At the *Institute of Social Sciences* in Belgrade, Mirko Blagojević launched the *Forum for Religious Issues (FOREL)*, which since 2013, in cooperation with the *Konrad Adenauer Foundation*, has been conducting numerous research projects and participated in the organization of scholarly conferences and publication of collections of papers. What particularly distinguishes *FOREL*'s contribution to the study of contemporary religion and religiosity is the fact that theologians of various religious affiliations appear as indispensable interlocutors and authors at scientific conferences and in publications. There has been cooperation with theologians before, and also within the framework of JUNIR's ventures, but to a lesser extent.

The majority of polemics, thematic discussions and results of empirical research have been published in collections of papers.

In addition, it is important to mention the larger syntheses that emerged after 1991 as a result of extensive empirical research, but also skilful comparative analysis. I will highlight only a few here. In 1995, Mirko Blagojević published the study *Approaching Orthodoxy*, which undoubtedly represents a pioneering undertaking in the study of the process of revitalization of the Orthodox faith and church in Serbia. In 1999, Dragan Todorović, together with Dragoljub Đorđević, wrote the book *Youth, Religion, Catechism* in response to the introduction of religious education in schools. Zorica Kuburić, otherwise a psychologist by education, summarized her many years of research in the book *Religion and the Mental Health of Believers* in 2021. After diverse thematic contributions to contemporary sociology of religion, Dragana Radisavljević Ćiparizović published a monograph in 2016 on a very specific, but also very current topic: *Pilgrimages in the 21st Century: Case Studies of Three Shrines in Serbia*.

Here I would like to highlight two, I would say capital studies, based on thorough knowledge of comparative empirical evidence

on the state of religion and religiosity in the contemporary world, which manage to transcend empiricism, offering the reader what in the art of photography is called the total. These are Đuro Šušnjić's two-volume *Religion* and Milan Vukomanović's *Mapping the Sacred. Studying Religion in a Comparative Perspective*. Due to their content, literary style and erudition, these books also function as textbooks (Šušnjić 1998; Vukomanović 2022).⁸⁰

In 2020, Nonka Bogomilova published a text summarizing the key points in the development of the discipline until the middle of the second decade of the 21st century. In her short study, she includes the most influential authors, professional associations and publications, as well as research and higher educational institutions teaching sociology of religion in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

It is important to mention that a large number of conferences and seminars in religious studies held after the collapse of the SFRY managed to bring together leading scholars from all former Yugoslav republics, which indicates the important role of scholarly communities, in this case sociologists, in establishing dialogue after the crisis caused by the awakening of nationalism at the end of the second millennium. In addition to scholars from the region, renowned foreign specialists also participated in some conferences, and in certain thematic collections of papers contributions by classic figures in contemporary sociology of religion also appeared.

In addition, about ten years after its publication in English, the book *Desecularization of the World. The Revival of Religion and World Politics* edited by Peter L. Berger. was translated into Serbian.

All in all, as Magnusson notes in his study, sociology of religion, neither in Yugoslavia nor in the republics emerging after its collapse, lagged behind sociology of religion in Western European countries, which, it may be argued, had far less intense conflicts to cope with.

⁸⁰ In order to avoid turning this text into a bibliographic review of Serbian sociology of religion, I have listed only the narrowest selection of titles here.

Personalities

In contemporary anthropology of religion, similarly to sociology, authors have shown different attitudes towards the phenomenon of religious revitalization. While some authors, through empirical studies sought to establish what was actually happening, others – mainly through analyses of secondary sources, such as content of press and electronic media – focused on public manifestations of a "new religiosity" and the increased social influence of religious communities, most notably the Serbian Orthodox Church. Their initial hypotheses, but also personal attitudes, determined the directions of their research. Following the scholarly production related to these phenomena, I have wondered, at first, whether and in what sense, the [non-]religiosity of an anthropologist influences choice of arguments and interpretation of data, and, secondly, what topics to deal with - for example, whether to explore the intimate world of a converted believer or analyse clericalization of the state and nationalist rhetoric of representatives of the Church. In 2009, in the journal of the University of Niš, *Teme*, which at that time was edited by Dragoljub B. Đorđević, my text *Is an anthropologist obliged to be [non]religious* was published. Then, and now, I believe that neither is obligatory, but I also note (which was argued in the article) that a personal attitude towards religion might significantly colour the tone and message of a text.

The question has also been raised in contemporary sociology of religion, shedding light, perhaps for the first time in the history of the discipline, on the personality of the researcher. Why this has not occurred before could perhaps be explained by the somewhat rigid methodological determinism of sociology. Thus, Dragan Todorović, in an interview we conducted for the purposes of this study, emphasizes that "sociology of religion is not interested in individual cases of conversion, no matter how representative and paradigmatic they may be; it is far more interested in determining whether this phenomenon is common or why it is spread to certain groups, according to class, ethnicity, religious background, culture, language..."

Dragoljub B. Đorđević, also in an interview, maintains that sociology of religion treats religion in the same manner that it studies other types of human practice or any other manifestation of the human spirit, like art, philosophy, science, ideology. This understanding is very different from anthropology, which in its foundations shows a built-in interest in ritual and cult as essential features of human culture, and as acts through which an individual and a community conceives of reality. So, again – a bottom-up perspective! In a sense, sociology of religion does not actually study religion, but its relationship to society. These ontological and anthropological implications have only recently entered the field of sociological research; and from these new perspectives logically arises the question of the ideological, religious, or any other position of the researcher. Đuro Šušnjić believes that "anyone who studies religion using the sociological method places all social categories before religious ones, because this is required by the sociological way of observing reality: methodological determinism! [...] By doing so, he does not deny the independent development of any religious tradition, he only tries to see this development in connection with the development of a society where a certain tradition forms an integral part of its culture" (see in: Đorđević 2009:102).

Đorđević even explicitly asks the question: "Does a sociologist of religion have to be religious?" (Đorđević 2009: 102) His answer is negative. "We regard the methodological dilemma imposed by the phenomenologist of religion, according to which only religious people may grasp the essence of religion and speak meaningfully about it, as a quasi-methodological issue. Nevertheless, the sociologist of religion should be concerned with his own [non-] religious attitude and its possible influence on the study of religion, as suggested by Jakov Jukić: "That is why the sociologist is exposed to an internal personal rift: he must at the same time be impartial and deeply empathetic with the religiosity of the believers he is studying. If he hates or despises religion, he will understand nothing, if he respects it too much, he will not benefit from the results of his research.'" (Jukić 1981: 116).

On the other hand (but not in opposition to the above) Đuro Šušnjić unhesitatingly confides to the reader his personal attitude towards what he is writing about: "Truth is a matter that concerns not only the content but also the manner in which truth is expressed. My style is only the external form of my opinion: a personal handwriting that can be recognized in every one of my sentences" (Šušnjić 1998:14).

Not so much related to the issue of the scholar's [non-]religiousness as to an understanding of the importance of man in the creation of society or culture, Vukomanović's review of Eliade might serve as a solid guide for future research (I don't think that the fact that he is not a sociologist changes the value of the message): "He seems to go against all the aspirations of the humanities of his time. On the one hand, unlike many, Eliade does not confirm his contribution by deconstruction and fragmentation of analysis, but on the contrary, creates a huge synthesis of culture based not on history but on insight into the metahistorical concept of reality, i.e. human ideas and beliefs, which constitute the insight itself, and a definition of culture, which understands man as a creative being" (Vukomanović 2022:22).

When asked about their personal religiosity, the influential contemporary sociologists of religion whom I interviewed, declared themselves in different ways: as church believers (Orthodox), non-religious, agnostics, Orthodox in a confessional sense, believers of the four rites. Tentatively speaking, they are divided, as mentioned earlier, into secularists (Dragoljub B. Đorđević and Dragan Todorović) and de-secularists (Mirko Blagojević, Zorica Kuburić, Dragana Ćiparizović). In their studies of religion, they rely on secularization theory, phenomenological, anthropological and psychological perspectives (this is especially true of Zorica Kuburić, who is a psychologist among sociologists), but also on comparative approaches. Their influences and role models are numerous. Among foreign authors are mentioned: Mircea Eliade, Paul Ricoeur, Antonio Gramsci, Umberto Eco, Karl Levitt, Thomas Bremer, Grace Davy, Daniel Hervier Léger, Peter Berger, Charles Taylor, Thomas Luckman...

Domestic authors whose research experiences they have relied

on, were: Esad Ćimić, Štefica Bahtijarević, Đuro Šušnjić, Srđan Vrcan, Jakov Jukić, Sergej Flere, Dragoljub B. Đorđević, Radovan Bigović. Otherwise, within the group of Yugoslav and Serbian sociologists, there is an internal division into "Jukić's" (Dragoljub Đorđević includes Esad Ćimić, Đuro Šušnjić, Nikola Skledar, Zorica Kuburić, Dragana Ćiparizović and Danijela Gavrilović) and "Vrcan's" (Štefica Bahtijarević, Sergej Flere, Ivan Cvitković, Mirko Blagojević, Dragan Todorović and Dragoljub B. Đorđević).

All the influences referred to, as well as the "classifications", are reflected in the manner in which these scholars interpret the contemporary religious phenomenon. Here, for the sake of illustration, we will present only parts of the interviews conducted, while interested readers and researchers have at their disposal extensive bibliographies of contemporary Serbian sociologists of religion.

Milan Vukomanović defines religion as "a system of symbols that implies: a discourse, the meaning of which, but also its origin, transcends the domain of the human, temporal and transient; a practice (set of practices) with the aim of creating the world and human society in the way it is formulated in the discourses on which these practices are based; a community, whose members construct their identity by referring to appropriate discourse and practice; an institution, which regulates religious discourse, practice and community through reproduction or (as needed) modification, thereby affirming their eternal validity and transcendental value. To be religious means that all the constitutive elements listed above have a direct impact on one's daily life and experience."

Dragan Todorović believes that religion in Serbia today is marked by a "paradigm of conflict". With responsible social engagement that would imply a response to the problems of the contemporary world, "religion could take on the role of a 'reservoir' of social capital that functions in accordance with the nature of civil society. In this way, it would leave behind the history of religious-ethnic conflicts, characteristic of the previous period and move from the paradigm of conflict to the paradigm of cooperation".

Dragana Ćiparizović reminds us that "it is very difficult to give

a definition of religion that would be broad enough to encompass all its diversity, without including phenomena that we do not consider to be religious. There are over a hundred definitions of religion, and the difficulties in defining it arise from the object of religion, the subject of religion and the method of research. Defining religion in most cases depends on the research task. Religiosity is an original and fundamental human need. Some believe that the universal need for faith, *homo religiosus*, may be regarded as an archetype, and that believers realize it as faith in God, while others, agnostics, atheists, in a different way. In our empirical research, we have defined religiosity as a social-psychological state, inherent in the believer, with three dimensions: cognition, affect, and activity. It is based on the unity of belief, feeling and practice, accompanied by religious experience.

To Dragoljub Đorđević, religion is a "sociological fact" and, as has been stated several times, he interprets it within the framework of secularization theory. In our conversation, he conveys his position, formulated long ago: "Religion is a human, cultural-historical fact, a system of ideas, beliefs and practices, a specific form of a practical attitude towards the world, nature, society and man. As such a system, it is completely equal to other forms of the human spirit: art, philosophy, science, ideology, etc. In contrast to them, there is a lot of controversy around it – it is understood, defined, valued in different ways, sometimes it is in political favour, sometimes not. It follows the course of epochal events, and in a certain, favorable era, or a fragment of an era, it gains primacy, becomes dominant and colours a period, only to lose its primacy, discard its originality and descend below the level of civilization it has achieved. It is true that the appearance of *homo religiosus* is followed by *homo areligiosus*; the latter is not the 'successor' of the former - they are "contemporaries".

They say that religion is the first question of our youth and the last question of our old age" - Mirko Blagojević answers my question. "I have finished with the first, and I am just beginning with the second. Now I am looking for different answers. The phenomenon of death no longer interests me as it did when I was twenty. Today I am more interested in aspects related to culture, geopolitics... my mind

is connected to sociological-political sciences and thinking about the world, rather than to some existentialist topics. My understandings have not fundamentally changed over time in a theoretical sense, but they have in an ideological sense. In the 1990s, I started with the thesis that the revitalization of religion is of an instrumental nature and that no serious change of mind is involved, but that religion had an enormous significance for identity during the conflicts on the territory of Yugoslavia and that it performed certain social functions. Later, things changed and I saw that functions also existed on the level of individuals. Now I notice that in the face of tense social circumstances, religion once again has great identity significance. In my opinion, the religious factor will certainly be significant, at least as far as the social sciences are concerned, and I don't think these factors are irrelevant (those I deal with - factors of identity, confessional affiliation, self-perception of religiosity). The Islamic factor will not be weaker than it is; what will happen to the Ukrainian, Montenegrin, Macedonian churches... and what will be their relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate... these are all questions that will be resolved and endure. All this does not lead to secularization, but the opposite. Here I accept Vrcan's thesis about reversibility. Nothing guarantees that religion will not retreat and reappear."

Zorica Kuburić states that there is a rivalry between psychology and religion. "Both are interested in the soul. Almost no one in psychology deals with the issue of religion. Research on religiosity has shown that psychologists are the least religious. I have studied religious families. They are more demanding, boundaries are clearer. It is a lifestyle. Religion influences children through the family. A religious family and a non-religious family differ in their moral attitudes. The religious family expects higher standards from itself. I think that religion has great influence and power, and I see its importance for the individual. A person matures through religion".

Danijela Gavrilović interprets religion as a system of norms. "Norms are a function of the community, and a sociologist observes society through norms. If people adopt the same norms, they belong to the same community or society. Norms are a window for

sociological analysis. Religion has strong emotional legitimacy and is politically very useful. In Serbia we are traditionally religious. The function of religion on the public stage is to serve the needs of other segments of society. The influence of religion in everyday life is one of the most important indicators of religiosity. According to some indicators, we are a deeply religious society. When other indicators are included, the picture becomes a little more complicated. We have to do in-depth interviews and case studies to understand whether religiosity means something to life. One student did research on the morality of religious and non-religious people and found that there was no significant difference differences. Where there is a clear discourse of the Serbian Orthodox Church regarding certain issues - for example, abortion, there are differences. Where the church has no discourse at all, e.g. when it comes to work ethics - there is no correlation with religion."

The End of the Journey - Continuing Research

We conclude in the hope that, by translating Kjell Magnusson's manuscript into Serbian, and with this accompanying study, we have provided at least a cursory overview of developments in Yugoslav and Serbian sociology of religion over the last eighty years. In addition, we believe that we have opened many questions, pointed to possible directions for future research, initiated reflections, and inspired new critical self-reflections.

The new era, or, as some call it - the post-era or post-truth era, has led to a certain weakening of the influence of "great ideologies", including traditional religion, on everyday life. Both the social sciences and the humanities are to a large extent lacking firm and binding theoretical concepts, as well as political influence. However, one should not take this "freedom" of thought lightly. The idea of a constant re-examination is characterized by an almost complete ephemerality of research results when designing social and cultural policies. What is the point of freedom of speech and writing when the spoken or written word is lost in a flood of contemporary events?

What is current is often not even relevant! Neoliberal agendas of efficiency, quantification, and utility, challenge the right to philosophize, which is the essence of both the social sciences and the humanities. However, just like religion, cultural patterns change, disappear, and reappear... at present, it seems that culture is driven by creative and enthusiastic individuals, rather than teams, institutions, collectives, or shared ideas. And that in itself does not have to be a problem, as long as individuals cultivate a spirit of imagination, self-awareness, and self-criticism.

Dr. Aleksandra Pavićević
[translated from Serbian: Kjell Magnusson]

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Сажетак

НАУКА, РЕЛИГИЈА, ИДЕОЛОГИЈА

Теоријске перспективе у југословенској социологији религије

Шел Магнусон је филолог – слависта и социолог, дугогодишњи истраживач у Институту Хуго Валентин, ванредни професор и предавач на Универзитету у Упсали. Његова ерудиција и познавање гео-политичких и историјских прилика на Балкану, а изнад свега његова окренутост ка научном, а не идеолошком сагледавању ствари, чине га једним од најугледнијих европских стручњака за Источну Европу, односно за Југославију и државе које су из ње изникле. Рукопис који се налази испред читалаца је завршен 1986. године и требало је да буде део докторске тезе у оквиру студија источне Европе. Теза је писана на енглеском језику, а преведена је и на српски 2024. године.

Књига је настала као резултат непосредног истраживања која је Магнусон спровео у Београду, Загребу и Сарајеву, крајем седамдесетих и почетком осамдесетих година 20. века. Истраживање је обављено у оквиру пројекта: „Религија, социјализам, секуларизација. Проучавање религије у послератној Југославији“, који је подржала Фондација тристогодишњег јубилеја Шведске банке. Будући да је био (а и данас је) течни говорник српско-хрватског језика, није му представљало проблем да „савлада“ релевантну литературу из области социологије религије и да обави разговоре са еминентним истраживачима религије (махом социолозима) тога времена.

У уводном делу студије, он даје преглед историјских, етнолошких и социолошких истраживања религије пре Другог светског рата, да би затим прешао на аналитички опис друштвено-политичког контекста у којем се рађала нова социологија религије. У првој, послератној фази, њу је

одликовало присуство и ослањање на марксистичко наслеђе, те његова, готово догматска примена. Друга, фаза развоја социологије религије била је повезана за установљавањем института за социолошка истраживања у Београду и Загребу, те сагледавањем марксистичког наслеђа у критичком кључу. Ово је резултирало проширивањем теоријско-методолошких оквира, те интерпретацијом религије и религиозности у Југославији у складу са реалном ситуацијом и емпиријским истраживањима, спровођеним током касних шездесетих и седамдесетих година 20. века. Но, и у овом периоду, социологија религије задржава идеју о свом друштвеном ангажману, те већи број аутора латентно промовише секуларизациону теорију, односно религију тумачи као израз људске неслободе и као негативни феномен по себи.

Након што објашњава важан обрт у социологији религије, Магнусон већи део студије посвећује ауторима као што су: Есад Ћимић, Срђан Врцан, Штефица Бахтијаревић, Бранко Бошњак, Споменка и Тине Хрибар, Зденко Ротер, Марко Кершеван, аналитички презентујући њихова теоријска усмерења, теме којима су се бавили и кључ у којем су тумачили комплексни феномен религије.

У последњем делу студије, аутор интерпретира резултате истраживања смештајући их опет у специфичан друштвено-политички контекст, те преиспитује улогу коју је социологија религије имала на пољу креирања друштвених политика тадашње државе.

Студија је значајна из неколико разлога. Прво, она представља сажето и до сада сасвим дефицитарно штиво о проучавању религије у социјалистичкој Југославији. Треба напоменути да је развој социологије религије у СФРЈ предњачио у односу на друге источноевропске земље, те је на изванредан начин одсликавао и тип социјалистичког друштвеног уређења које је у овој држави владало и које је било отвореније према западноевропским академским традицијама. Друго, студија је и значајан документ о развоју социологије религије у Југославији, те олакшава разумевање савремених трендова и тенденција

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у проучавању религије. Ово је посебно важно с обзиром на чињеницу повећаног значаја религије у бившим југословенским републикама и друштвима, те на улогу коју је религија имала у гео-политичким превирањима на њиховим теориторијама деведесетих година 20. века. Религија и данас игра значајну улогу у идентитетским стратегијама читавог јужнословенског простора, те је од великог значаја разумевање посебних историјских, културних, антрополошких и социолошких посебности који на то утичу. И на крају, за разлику од социологије религије у Хрватској, која је током проучаваног периода предњачила и по броју аутора и по тематској разноврсности њиховог ангажмана и која је у новије време добила значајна критичка сажимања сопственог интелектуалног наслеђа, у Србији не постоји оваква врста, истовремено и прегледне и критичке студије.

Књигу прати и студија о проучавању религије у Србији након осамдесетих година 20. века, у којој преводилац и приређивач српског и овог издања, А. Павићевић, грађу коју доноси Магнусонова студија ставља у контекст специфичног односа науке, религије и идеологије.

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THEORY, RELIGION, IDEOLOGY

Theoretical Perspectives in Yugoslav Sociology of Religion

Kjell Magnusson is a philologist – Slavist and sociologist, long-term researcher at the Hugo Valentin Institute and a retired Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer at the University of Uppsala. His erudition and knowledge of geo-political and historical conditions in the Balkans, and above all his orientation towards a scientific rather than an ideological view of things, make him one of the most respected European experts on Eastern Europe, that is on Yugoslavia and the states that emerged from it. The manuscript in front of the reader was

finalized in 1986 and originally meant to be part of a doctoral thesis in East European Studies. The text was written in English and translated into Serbian in 2024. The book was created as a result of direct research that Magnuson conducted in Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana and Sarajevo, in the late seventies and early eighties of the 20th century. The research was carried out within the project: "Religion, socialism, secularization. Study of religion in post-war Yugoslavia", which was supported by the Swedish Bank Tercentennial Foundation. Since he was (and still is) a fluent speaker of the Serbo-Croatian language, it was not a problem for him to "master" the relevant literature in the field of sociology of religion and to have conversation with eminent religious researchers (mainly sociologists) of that time.

In the introductory part of the study, he provides an overview of historical, ethnological and sociological research on religion before the Second World War and then moves on to an analytical description of the socio-political context in which the new sociology of religion was born. In the first, post-war phase, it was characterized by the presence and reliance on Marxist heritage, and it's almost dogmatic application. The second, phase of the development of social religion was connected with the establishment of the institutes for sociological researches in Belgrade and Zagreb and with a critical examination of the Marxist legacy. This resulted in the expansion of theoretical-methodological frameworks, and the interpretation of religion and religiosity in Yugoslavia in accordance with the real situation and empirical research conducted during the late sixties and seventies of the 20th century. However, even in this period, the sociology of religion retains the idea of its social involvement, and a larger number of authors latently promote the secularization theory that is, they interpret religion as an expression of human unfreedom and as a negative phenomenon itself.

After explaining an important turning point in sociology of religion, Magnuson devotes a large point of the study to authors such as: Esad Ćimić, Srđan Vrcan, Štefica Bahtijarević, Branko Bošnjak, Spomenka and Tine Hribar, Zdenko Roter, Marko Kerševan, analytically presenting their theoretical orientations, topics they dealt with

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and also the key in which they interpreted the complex phenomenon of religion.

In the last part of the study, the author interprets the results of the research, placing them again in the specific socio-political context, and re-examines the role that sociology of religion played in the field of creating social policies of the state of that time.

The study is significant for several reasons. First, it presents a concise and so far quite deficient reading on the study of religion in socialist Yugoslavia. It should be mentioned that the development of the sociology of religion in the SFRY was ahead of the Eastern European countries, and in a certain way reflected the type of socialist social order that prevailed in this country and was more open to Western European academic traditions. Second, the study is also a significant document on the development of the sociology of religion in Yugoslavia and facilitates the understanding of contemporary trends and tendencies in the study of religion. This is especially important considering the fact of the increased importance of religion in the former Yugoslav republics and societies, and the role that religion played in the geo-political turmoil in their territories in the nineties of the 20th century. Even today, religion plays a significant role in the identity strategies of the entire South Slavic area, and it is of great importance to understand the specific historical, cultural, anthropological and sociological peculiarities that influence it. And finally, in contrast to the sociology of religion in Croatia, which during the studied period was at the forefront both in terms of the number of authors and the thematic variety of their engagement and which in recent times has received significant critical summaries of its own intellectual heritage, there is no such type in Serbia, at the same time both review and critical studies.

Magnusson's manuscript is accompanied by a study of research on religion in Serbia after the eighties of the 20th century in which the translator and editor of Serbian and this edition, A. Pavićević, puts the material brought by Magnusson's study into the context of the specific relationship between theory, religion and ideology.

Key words: sociology of religion, SFR Yugoslavia, Serbia, secularization paradigm, ideology

