



Post-religional paradigm: between a crisis and a good news

Paradigma post-religional: entre una crisis y una buena noticia

Paradigma pós-religional: entre crise e boa notícia

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Post-Religional, what does that mean? There are many who wonder about this topic. The word and the concept are new; they mean a new attempt to name and understand, in a new way, this old reality, menacing and mysterious, defiant and rebellious, waiting to be set more precisely in our analysis. And it is not easy, especially if we are wanting to find an explanation "right", global and unique

In this present world abound the most diverse religious signs, even contradictories, that would give reason to the more inconsistent and opposite diagnoses. You could say that religion is growing, and that is changing, or that it is decreasing. And the three things are true, but also these three statements may be denied. In this chaotic human society, with its dynamism, its increasing communication, its inter-fertilization mutual in "noospheric" growth, we can say that everything happens. And the same happens in relation to religion. The emergence and development of the "post-Religional" is not the "only thing that happens", nor perhaps the main event, let alone the one that explains everything. It's a transformation that is there, and that can not be denied, and raises different reactions in the wide range of current religious society.

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If we start looking at the base of society, is perhaps where there is more active this transformation, albeit in a completely silent and irreflexo mode. Are truly crowds that are affected by it: people everywhere - especially the youth - feel and live the religious in a new, more secular, more layman with a certain detachment or indifference. The religious, that is, rites, beliefs, religious practices, dogmas, for example, all that is felt with a dwindling significance, or stranger, less plausible, like other times. This experience is everywhere - along with contrary experiences, let us not forget -; is in civil society, where the "religious unaffiliated" - in the words of US PEW Center -, or those "without religion" - in the words of the Brazilian IBGE - reach every year percentage higher: something never seen, as the current 16% of humanity. In the West and in the First World that large pool is made up of people who came out of the established religious backgrounds, the great religions, including Christianity, largely. But even the practitioners people who remain at the bottom of the institutions, they nevertheless experience a transformation "post-Religional" in their religiosity. The phenomenon is slow and subtle, but almost universally observed.

At the institutional level, the situation is very different: the religions offer resistance to this perspective. Even though they may look at this phenomenon in their ranks, the theme is not contemplated in its agenda, nor their study is incorporated into academic affairs. This is logical because in your first impression the "post-Religional" is psychologically connected to the negativity of the end of the religion itself. Religious institutions have great difficulty in overcoming the negative appearance of post-Religional; look at it as if it were their own *harakiri*; can not see what the post-Religional brings to them in possibilities of change, restart of resurrection. Even theology, when linked to the institution, has a strong reluctance in taking the theme of post-Religional; not in vain, the theme of "post-Religional" would require a complete re-reading the theological field.

But in the sciences of religion and free thought in general, the theme is there, minoritarian, but clearly perceived, but raising an increasing interest. Just visit the bookstores and specialized magazines, or the new world library,

the internet, to see clearly the increase of this new thinking, increasingly deepened. *Why Christianity Must Change or Die, Toward a secular spirituality, The Death of Religion and the Rebirth of the Spirit, Christianity After Religion, Otro es posible Christianity, A New Christianity for a New World, Aunque in haya un Dios ahí arriba, Emergence Chrstianity...* are only a few titles among the many that are at this very moment in the window of this "store" virtual. We can say that there is already a long reflection in this new post-religional theme.

As we say: the post-Religional is not the only phenomenon that is being reflected, is not the only explanation for these various transformations, but, really, it is something that is actually happening, and this reflection, well drafted, is growing and maturing. Deserves so much attention.

Even if, as we say, this reflection is growing and maturing, in fact it is still in a development stage. The big questions about the overall understanding of the phenomenon, are still waiting for a more comprehensive vision that can give ground. We do not have a complete theory, a "whole theory" that can give this global basis. And there are many perspectives that can be developed. In the level of the daily facts of religious life, post-Religional is easily observable; is there, on a day-to-day of the humanity; what we can not capture is the profound meaning, or rather, the broader significance of the phenomenon.

Since the vein of the earth and life sciences - within which everything is more and more "oiko-centered", i.e., more contemplated from the perspective of the development of life, which is evolving, both material and spiritual - the post-religional shall be understood as a new stage for which we walk. What can be said at the domestic level of religions, can not contradict what can be said from a global perspective centered on the vision of the evolutionary development of life. The post-Religional would not be a simple fact located in the small level, in the current situation of the basis of religions, but something set in a broader setting, the same level of evolution of the Earth and Humanity. The post-Religional is not an issue of religion, but something that has to do with the transformation of humanity, with the process of human evolution, the evolution

of life on Earth. *Homo sapiens* is growing, evolving, self transforming and, specifically at this time, intensifies its move to a new level of consciousness. We are crossing the threshold of this new human level of life and consciousness, and that is why the old religious forms that accompanied us during this step currently being closed, are withering, and will be waived and abandoned in favor of other, more appropriated to this new Humanity's consciousness stage. Has much still to be deepened in this vein.

The field of epistemology is also participating with his speech. He testifies that there is a radical change: the mythical epistemology, that ancient one, that ancestral form working in human knowledge within the agrarian religions, from the Neolithic period - the period in which were generated those we know today as the "great religions" - is deciduous. It is now reserved for literary creation fundamentally and similar uses, but is no longer accepted in the field of fundamental needs of sense of modern man (let's stress, "modern", for the pre-modern, for example, remains valid). It happens that the mythical epistemology was the fundamental epistemology in the process of formation of religions, and to this day has not been replaced. Here is one of the reasons for the malaise that feels modern culture against religions, which is expressed, among other events, in the large post-religious exile.

Back to light that anthropological-cultural concept coined by Karl Jaspers, the "axial time". That first axial time we have lived all the time since then, but he does not seem able to continue to be the basis for a new spiritual configuration of the human being. Are we entering in a "second axial time"? Is this what is behind the post-religious phenomenon? The concept and the term became already absolutely known and are in the midst of the tip reflection on the theme.

The reflection and the debate must continue. With patience, and pluralistic attitude, because, as said, many other things happen, even contrary, in this convulsed noosphere in which we live, grow and evolve. In any case, we need to overcome this first negative reaction of prejudice that the subject raises for many: it is not an end of anything, but only the end of a stage, that pones te

way to another stage fuller, longer. The post-religional does not mean the end of religion, but his epochal transformation, his evolutionary metamorphose, in the development of human evolution, the emergence of a new spirituality configuration, for that profound dimension of the human being, for this new stage of humanity, for this new stage of consciousness, fot its new epistemology, for this new historic compromise with the Earth, with the cosmos, with nature, with Life and its depth. That is why the post-religional, in addition to help us to understand a crisis... it is also a good news!