New Frontiers and Relations between Religion, Culture and Politics in Western Europe

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Abstract

The societies of Western Europe, following the territorial delimitation of the corresponding State, have gone through different historical processes of internal homogenization. After the Peace of Westphalia (1648) the application of the principle *cuius regio eius religio* induced the religious homogenization of the population. Then, due to the ethnic diversity of its population, the State tried to homogenize it from the cultural point of view; it was the process of nationalization and democratization of the State. This process lead to the separation of religion from politics and from culture. After the two world wars, national reconstruction needed a foreign population: this need for labor was filled in the most developed countries by population of the countries that were least (Portuguese, Spanish, Italian ...) and also by population flows coming from the old colonies. The cultural and religious homogeneity of these countries began to lose force. With the oil crisis of the 1970s, a period of major economic fluctuations began in Europe. In those years, the second generation of the population of immigrant origin began to go to a job market that was not in good health. The religion and culture of their predecessors became autonomous resources for the reconstruction of their identity and to achieve a personal and social esteem. This process is necessarily leading States to rethink the relations between politics, culture and religion.

Key words

religion; culture; politics; differentiation; historical process; Western European countries

Sociology as a science was born undertaking to analyse the process of transformation that led Western European countries to become modern societies during the 19th and 20th Centuries. Sociology analysed and theorised this process of transformation. The analysis of this process carried several assumptions that need to be highlighted to understand the great transformations that are taking place nowadays. Sociology as a discipline exceeded the limits of its analysis on specific historical realities. It became the predictive machinery of the processes that other realities would necessarily undergo in the future. It exceeded its own analytical character and contributed to form the idea of what the world in general would come to be. Sociologists forgot the historical character of the social reality and the historical character of their concepts and analytical instruments.

A sociology of sociology allows us to take a glimpse at its birth, and realise that this science was not only an instrument of knowledge, but also a political instrument. For Albrow (1997, 200), one of the characteristics of the project of modernity was that the state was its fundamental agency. This involved very high doses of reflexivity and a certain predictability of the process. It can be said that the social science was one of the elements that contributed to give a reflexive character to this political project: the

construction of the state's internal architecture and a society as a culturally homogeneous social reality within the state's territory.

Nowadays, to understand the processes that blur the political and social results of modernisation, we should not disregard that early sociology; we should rather recover the historical and analytical character of the sociological notions and theories, restore their strictly historical sense, and set aside their prophetical character. I am going to avail of a very valuable resource that sociologists have: historical sociology. I am going to use a work by Tilly (1990) in which he establishes two laws that describe the historical process since the Peace of Westphalia; as we will see, that was a fundamental milestone until the end of the 20th Century. The first law is that of the progressive internal homogenization of each European state, the second refers to the progressive heterogenization among states.

The process of cultural homogenization of the population takes place, firstly, with regard to the ethnic diversity of the population living within the state's territory. The national education system, the communications network, compulsory military service, would be, among others, important mechanisms of extension of a national culture and language. Afterwards, the process would seek to integrate communities from international immigration.

When sociology started to analyse the process of modernisation of Western European countries, most countries had their state's objective aspects fully formed: power over a physically defined territory was concentrated in a political centre, and that centre had exclusive access to the means of violence; territory and a centre of power are the state's elements that have an objective character. The state exists objectively. The state's subjective dimension has to do with its legitimacy and, in the long term, its outcome through stability.

On the state's subjective dimension, according to Weber (1978, 1057) we can say that the legitimacy of power is not an intrinsic characteristic of a power, but refers to the generalised psychological disposition of acceptance of this power by the population: legitimacy refers to the "reasons for internal justification". The social symbolic element according to which the population accepts power has changed historically: tradition, religion, the legitimate capacity of a leader to rise up against a power seen as unfair… In the historical moments in which the state's objective elements were definitively established, religion was probably an essential element to legitimise power that extended to populations with different traditions and cultures. Religious homogenization became thus relevant; this is how the application of the principle *cuius regio eius religio* at a given historical moment was fundamental, as we will later see. Later on, the idea of the *divine right of kings* would prevail to justify their absolute power. However, at the time sociology begins, the legitimacy of power is already changing radically: the origin of power over people does not reside in God or the king, as God's representative, but in the people themselves, the nation.

Modern nations have been constructed in a different way to that explained by their official history. Their origins are not lost in the mists of time, in the dark ages described by the first chapters of national histories. Neither is the slow constitution of territories in random conquests and alliances the genesis of nations: it is rather the boisterous histories of principalities and kingdoms. The truthful birth of a nation is when a handful of individuals declare that the nation exists and start trying to prove it. The first examples go back no earlier

than the 18th Century. Before that, there is no nation in the modern meaning, that is, political. This idea falls within an ideological revolution. The nation is conceived as a broad community, bound together by ties other than being subject to the same sovereign or belonging to the same religion (...). The entire process of identity construction consists in determining the assets of each nation, in disseminating its cult. (Thiesse, 1999: 11-12)

Monarchies had to be overthrown or subject to the nation's political control. Churches had to be removed from the political sphere; their monopoly over truth and the ethical evaluation of the world had to be replaced by the will of people, generally expressed in the law.

The sciences, sociology among them, and the arts became the creating force of the new collective culture and identity. The educational system, especially public schools, was the great disseminator. Historians carried out the task of explaining the history of the construction of the state as the history of the nation, as if the latter were previous and had finally managed at that moment in history to provide itself with a differentiated political structure. Nietzsche was well aware of the role of history in the construction of myths; for him, the purpose of knowledge resided in the destruction of such myths that feed man. As Foucault states, for Nietzsche, history is effective; that is, a destroyer of myths, as long as it introduces discontinuity inside our being: at the beginning of a history there isn't an original, preserved identity, but the discord of the other things, folly (Foucault, 1992). However, a nation's history is usually taught as Sacred History, idolized, to prevent the mental manipulation of our origins, which are arbitrary or, as Nietzsche would say, are the discord of the other things, folly, conflict... The legitimating function of history consists in affirming the existence since the origin of that which is only a product, a historical result; according to this, nation would exist since the origin and in the democratic modernity, it would manage to provide itself with a representative political structure. Nevertheless, the nation is a modern historical product. The successful or less successful dissemination of this idea of nation will result in the emergence or resurgence of peripheral nationalisms, of collectives that launch the idea of another nation against that state. For these reasons, Nisbet has been able to clearly state that "the nation is the offspring of the state" (Nisbet, 1973, 164)[1]. This is, broadly speaking, the ideal model of state built in the modernisation of Western Europe: the democratic national State. Nation did not exist; the state had to build it through various social mechanisms: the national educational system that transformed illiterates in their mother tongue into literate in the national language, foreign wars, compulsory military service.

The process of historical construction of these types of states cannot be understood without a process of industrialization that involves applying systematically all the scientific and technological achievements to factory production. This implied the emergence of a new social sector, which was the first *national* class in history (Marx, 1972, 71). From the private sphere, this new sector gradually developed a new public sphere in front of the king's public political sphere. To this end, a series of specific social mechanisms were gradually established (*salons*, *cafés*, *newspapers and political*

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[1] The two European exceptions where the national idea is prior to their unification, Germany and Italy, would very likely not have been possible without a European context marked by the construction of the idea that a state's population was its nation; and by the state's dissemination of the national idea and sentiment throughout the territory.

parties) through which a new way of thinking about social reality was gradually developing (Habermas, 1981). This is how the idea of *society* emerges as a complementary but substantive element; the idea that politics has a social reality called society as its object. For the first time, politics is thought of as the exercise of the king's *patrimonial* power. It is the beginning of how in this modern time we think about and try to regulate the social reality. Not all the social reality constitutes a society in a strict sense. This social form has not existed forever. As Albrow (1997) realised, this implies a political project, making it necessary to conquer the state: this was the democratisation of the state.

The empirical reality shows us that the elements that conform the ideal model are gradually achieved at different historical times, and even in a different order in the different States; the degree of achievement of each element may vary too. It is clear that in the prototypical model I announced, the construction of a state's borders was not done following cultural and linguistic homogeneity criteria. The borders were rather the historical result of wars, peace treaties, and marriages. That is why the accumulation of military power within the territory was a core process to reach domestic peace and prevent the penetration of a foreign power. Logically, the result of this process is a closed territory with an internal cultural and language diversity. The process of democratisation of this state in subsequent moments in history will require a dissemination of a common culture and a single language within its borders that we usually come to call national language and culture. This process of state nationalisation, of general dissemination of the idea of nation, of the idea of a common national history, the genesis of a sentiment of common belonging to a social entity that originally holds the power, is a process that needs the state to put into operation several aforementioned social mechanisms.

Social differentiation.

From my point of view, the sociological theory of social differentiation, as part of the modernisation theory, has suffered two forms of stultification. The first could be represented by Parsons' work (1951) and especially *The Social System,* an attempt to describe the set of differentiated structures integrated in a given society that define its operation. The second form of stultification would be to consider such a theory to describe the processes of change of societies. Luhmann would be a good example of this tendency, as for him "the description of contemporary society as highly differentiated forms was the hinge that mediated past and future." (1990, 413).

However, I think that the development of Luhmann's theory is useful to construct a more analytical form of the theory of social differentiation itself. The fundamental reason behind this attempt is that both forms of stultification participate in a prophetic vision of modernity, as if a social form and the process to access it were prefixed for any future society. The general theory of modernisation, and within it the theory of social differentiation have been a valuable way of analysing historical social processes in some specific societies, rather than a way of predicting the process (one could say progress) of any society in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to recover the theory's analytical side, both to analyse what goes on in other societies and to try and find out what's going on in those societies that were analysed by the theory of modernisation at a time after what we call the global era. At the present time, we find that some non-

western societies have accessed forms of economic development very comparable to those of western countries without, at least yet, developing similar social and political forms. Moreover, in the new era certain aspects that used to define modern western countries specifically have disappeared from their reality; for example, the progressive cultural homogeneity, especially since the gradual dissemination of national cultures and identities. In addition, we can observe increasingly extensive dissemination of modern values in societies that have not undergone similar processes to those followed by Western European countries; let us remember the interpenetration of symbolic aspects in societies with different economic levels and different types of political organisation. In a recent article about the new political trends of Spanish youth I was pointing out this phenomenon when talking about the factors that gave rise to the indignants' movement during this decade: the last factor was global and epidemic: "the Arab Spring, a series of movements of political protest that had started in Tunis on December 17th 2010. The events in the Arab countries, and later in other countries with different socio-political situations, contained however, a series of common features: the social sector motor for each movement consisted of young educated people with difficulties integrating into the labour market; the core objective was to obtain or to improve a representative democracy that resolved the people's problems; the new communication technologies were used; a significant square was occupied in a big city; and finally, there was concern for horizontal relations, not emanating from a centre of power." (Pérez-Agote, 2017, 106).

Luhmann alleges that four processes have proven efficient in social evolution: segmentary difference (equality of subsystems), the difference centre-periphery, stratificatory difference (rank inequality amongst subsystems) and functional difference (role inequality, rank equality). Luhmann sees segmentary difference as the first differentiation yet still egalitarian; later, social reality would evolve from equality to inequality, until reaching greater difference when the unity of the system is reached through a system of differentiation (Luhmann, 1990, pp. 423-425), which is equivalent to saying, through labour division. Luhmann (1977) devoted one of his works to the theoretical integration of the systems theory and the theory of evolution. This is a good example of the evolutionist and universalising character of the differentiation theory. As a solid example of universalization, see number 1964 of the American Sociological Review. In it, Parsons (1964) published *Evolutionary Universals in Sociology*; and under his umbrella were two articles Bellah's (1964), *Religious Evolution* and Eisenstadt's (1964), *Social Change, Differentiation and Evolution*. An interesting aspect of the evolutionary view was highlighted by Voegelin (1956) as he claimed that societies evolve from compact symbolic forms into differentiated forms, a concept utilized later by Bellah in the aforementioned article. Voegelin's idea is highly interesting to understand the process of modernisation of Western European countries; expressing criticism over its universalising and evolutionary character does by no means involve underappreciating its analytical value and capacity. Disassembling this universalising tendency started with the interesting idea that no matter how differentiated a society is, there are times where there is a re-enchantment, a religious moment of fusion or a political revolution. Edward Tiryakian (1985, 1994, 2009) is one of the great constructors of the theory of these processes of *de-differentiation*, anticipating thus the return to the mechanical solidarity. Other interesting ideas to criticize the evolutionary and universalising vision of social differentiation can be found in the cited work by Alexander and Colomy that groups together works about the de-universalization of the differentiation theory. These authors express in the preface:

"Whereas the initial formulation of differentiation theory rested upon the identification of a master trend of change toward a greater institutional specialization, the current volume supplements the master trend with the backlash movements against differentiation. (…) The benign assessment of the consequences of differentiation, which stress adaptative upgrading and greater efficiency, is balanced by the recognition that differentiation often generates discontents." (Alexander and Colomy, 1990, xiii)

The state as differentiation

In terms of the theory of differentiation, the historical construction of the state's objective elements (centre of power with the monopoly on violence and a territory with fixed boundaries) is the process of differentiation of a social reality with respect to its social context. In the case of Western Europe, it is the clear differentiation of each state with regard to the adjacent states. This implies at the same time another process of differentiation that takes place within the state's territory, that of a centre of power on the periphery; that is, a process of power centralisation within the territory. The great transformation of the military made it possible to create an army capable of imposing the internal monopoly on violence (internal peace) and preventing external forces from taking internal action.

Historically, the Christian religion had totally spread among the western European population. The ultimate foundation of the legitimacy of things in general and power in particular was still in God, within the religious symbolic universe controlled by the church, until the Reformation. In the 16th Century, with the "doctrine of free examination" (*God speaks directly to the people*) the Protestant Reformation marked the beginning of the legitimate possibility for each person to think, although still within a religious symbolic universe. It also involved the inversion of the existing hierarchy between the sacred and the profane reality. All of it involved a necessary condition for the free development of reason and science that would be a core element of the future European modernity.

However, this religious subversion produced by the church from within, gave rise to a deep internal division of the political landscape from a religious point of view. The different dynasties, noble houses and religious affirmations produced very dramatic consequences due to maladjustment between religion and politics in the different European territories. Thus, the old principle *cuius regio eius religio* had to be applied after the Reformation, in order to produce the religious unification of the population under the sovereign's religion. The law of internal cultural homogenization of Western European states (Tilly, 1990) was thus being fulfilled within the religious arena, although in some States more deeply than in others.

The Peace of Westphalia (1648) was a key moment in the foundational process of the European states system. In terms of differentiation, each state was established in its objective elements: each state is differentiated from the other states around it. This foundational moment takes place because there is a military power accumulated by a king who can thus maintain internal peace (defeating other possible military powers) and defend the borders. Tilly (1990, 103-107) explains very well the importance of the changes in the military sphere for the king to accumulate power within the territory. At

these early stages, the state is essentially the army. With the separation between state and the surrounding, there has also been in internal differentiation: the clear separation between the king and the rest of the population inhabiting the state's closed territory.

In this process of concentration of military-political power in the king, the court's genesis has a central position as a concentration mechanism. In *The court society*, Norbert Elias (1982) perfectly describes the mechanisms by which European monarchs end up suctioning the power of nobles. Nobles gradually lose power in terms of territorial possessions and gradually acquire power in terms of their degree of closeness with the king and with the court. The king was the political public sphere and his dominion over the kingdom was patrimonial. The subjects existed but nobody saw them as a political unit.

The differentiation of the civil society from the state

In the process of democratization-nationalization following the state's creation, the idea of nation as the collective identity where power resides was needed as a replacement of the idea of the kings' Divine right. This is the stage when the state needs to find its autonomy from religion and the church, as the fundamental idea is that power does not come from God anymore; it belongs in the community, the people and the nation. The idea of secularism was at the core of this question.

In the second half of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th Century the world sees what Tiryakian (1989: 143-149) came to call the first wave of nationalism, that took place in nation-states in Europe and in the United States of America. A process started where the national history, culture and language are constructed and spread based on some existing cultural elements. It meant implementing several standardising mechanisms within the State, the new national culture.

Habermas (1978) showed the historical emergence of the possibility of thinking society. From a private sphere of life, a series of social groups progressively think about the public and society; about the progressive replacement of an absolute order where the public sphere was the court, by a bourgeois order in which society conveys itself and criticizes the politics of power.

Thus, the public sphere ceases to be something simple and becomes something complex formed by the public sphere of political power, and the public sphere generated by the civil society from the private sphere. For this to happen, a series of social mechanisms emerged through which certain social sectors conceived this idea of society as the target of politics. After that, the hierarchical order of the two spheres would gradually reverse until reaching the idea that the power resides in the people: national sovereignty. Following with the differentiation theory, the totalization of society is a political operation. When society is thought of as the totality, the object of politics, the political sphere is thought of as representing society. Voegelin (1968) is right: politics generates this totality that sociologists have come to name society.

Habermas describes very well how the mechanisms that will give rise to a structure of communication between the public sphere and civil society, between representatives and represented, emerge from the private sphere. First, there were the *salons* – managed generally by women from high society and frequented by certain

cultured sectors of aristocracy and bourgeoisie-, where literary criticism was frequently changed into political criticism. Then the *cafés* had a similar transition from literary to political matters. Not forgetting about *secret societies*, later the *periodical press* and finally the *political parties,* as core social channels of communication. (Habermas, 1978, chap. 2).

Habermas, outlines two generations of nations within Western Europe. The first generation, corresponding to Northern and Western Europe, consists of the nations that emerged within previously established territorial states. The nation in this case would be, in Nisbet's words "the state's offspring" (Nisbet, 1973,164). The second generation would consist of Germany and Italy: these would be the nations in search of a state (Habermas, 1999, 81). In the more general case that the state exists prior to the national community (the pattern I utilised to talk about the process of modernisation) one of its basic tasks will be the cultural homogenization of all the ethnic groups within the state territory: this is the state nationalization and the constitution of a nation (Pérez-Agote, 2006, chap. 2).

The differentiation church-state

The separation between the national state as institution and the predominant church within the state's territory was carried out in the different countries following different strategies, resulting in very diverse forms of differentiation. Let us think about France, England, Spain[2]... Different models, different speeds, absolute radicality in the fight among institutions or total lack of it, but always leading to the secularisation of the legitimacy of political power: power resides in the national community.

The separation between church and state is central since the first moment of the secularization process. It was a difficult and long process, and it can be said that in general it was more dramatic in catholic countries, since where the Protestant Reformation triumphed, the church started to have less direct control over social life, largely due to the doctrine of *free examination* reducing the role of this institution as administrator of the truth. This had an important role in the free development of science, but it also meant the loss of social and political power for the reformed churches, compared to that held the Catholic Church in the countries where it was the dominant religion.

The differentiation religion-culture

In addition – during the construction and, above all, the democratization and nationalization of Western European states– another less dramatic and less politically

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[2] The case of Spain, for instance, exemplifies how the described model is ideal. Well into the 20th Century, the Spanish state has a monarchy that still thinks of itself as absolute, and is seen as such by a strong landowning aristocracy and a high catholic hierarchy of pseudo-civil servants at the service of the monarchy. The industrial and financial bourgeoisies emerge in two peripheral areas with regard to that central state. The left-wing forces and the new modernising bourgeoisies achieve the democratic establishment of a republic; the forces that held the old core of power would rise militarily against it: that was the 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War. After that war, General Franco's dictatorship was installed, that came to be defined by historians as *Nationalcatholicism*. Spanish bishops talked about the war as a *Crusade*. Franco dies in 1975 and the 1978 democratic regime was established. In spite of happening so late (starting in the 1960s) the process of subjective secularisation of the population has been the hastiest and deepest in the whole of Europe (Pérez-Agote, 2014). However, Spanish democracy still vastly funds private religious education (Pérez-Agote 2012a and 2012 b; Dobbelaere and Pérez-Agote, 2015)

transcendent process of differentiation takes place in the Western world. It is the process of differentiation between religion and culture. This was a slow, complicated and less visible and less relevant process from the political point of view than the separation between the church and the state. It was not so much about a differentiation between institutions, as a differentiation between spheres: between a deeply institutionalized symbolic sphere in the Western countries, the religious sphere, and culture, a very weakly institutionalised sphere back then, like now. When culture detaches itself from religion, no specific institution emerges for its maintenance and control. I am not going to delve into what is culture, doubtlessly one of the most discussed issues in social sciences. Using the term culture in a flat sense, as the meaning shared by the population, I just want to point out that fact that there is no specific institution for the general control of culture, in charge of appointing what is orthodox and who sanctions heterodoxy in a negative way (like the church does in the religious field) or a positive way (like sometimes, not always, happens in the field of science). Culture in general is maintained by its use by actors and changes because other cultural forms gain prestige and normality. Of course there are many types of controls and negative or positive sanctions on repetition and innovation; but it is also clear that these sanctions are not in the hands of a unique differentiated institution.

In the different European countries a separation between religion and culture has taken place historically, in which culture has detached itself from the church's tutorship first, and then from its conformation. Religion is gradually losing influence in the different social spheres, namely the political and cultural, in which we are interested. Since the main support of culture, in the sense I am using here, is its use by the social actors, the process of individual secularization has been a central dimension of this process of separation of spheres. Danièle Hervieu-Léger mentions an initial period of "*décatholicisation*" of the French population, in which France changes from being a catholic religion country to being a catholic culture country, through the continued decrease of religious practice and belief. The church's capacity to control the behaviour of actors is equally decreasing. However, for a long time religion has done an important job in culture, becoming one of its fundamental roots. But later on, in a process that the author comes to call "exculturation", culture is losing its religious roots and incorporating other sources like science and politics. (Hervieu-Léger, 2003, 90-98).

Nevertheless, this long historical process of Western European societies -in which there is a separation between culture and religion, and the latter withdraws from the private and even intimate sphere- is deeply altered in our days. The separation between culture, religion and politics is being deeply revised.

The contemporary crisis of cultural and religious homogeneity

It is logical to think of a certain internal homogenization before Westphalia, especially in those states whose objective elements were well defined much earlier, like Spain[3]. In general, the establishment of a clear centre of power over a territory involves a relative cultural homogenization. However, the historical period where this homogeneity clearly

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[3] Spain unifies its territory in 1492, with the conquest of Granada, under a unique centre of power, that of the Catholic Monarchs. Moreover, the unification under this centre of power implied the religious homogenization of the population. The decrees of expulsion of Jews and Moslems, on the one hand, and the concession of a special tribunal of Inquisition on the other, were the fundamental instruments for this end. However, the later national political homogenization was so inefficient that in our days the acceptance of Spanish identity is still a problem among the population in various parts of the state.

becomes the state political goal is during the state nationalization period. The form of power legitimacy has changed; people are not subjects any more, they have become citizens.

A new stage of homogenization begins in function of the immigration flows that some societies start to receive after the First World War and especially after the Second World War. This massive process first began from poor or overpopulated to wealthy European countries[4], and then to the metropolis of the old colonies. After the wars, industrialised countries needed a workforce; so accommodating an immigrant population was relatively easy from an economic labour point of view. For a long time, the social situation of the immigrant population was not envisaged with the same acrimony as after the 1970s crisis, the so-called oil crisis, and the disturbance it caused in the labour market. In the 1990s, the fall of the Iron Curtain opened up another strong migration flow from Eastern to Western Europe.

The attempts of absolute or relative homogenisation of immigrant population made by the different political models in different countries have been a complete failure. This became apparent towards the end of the 1970s and especially the 1980s. The second generation of the population of immigrant origin, after having passed through the national education system, try to enter the labor market and encounter insurmountable difficulties that, in many cases, end in exclusion. The social conflicts of this young generation were not long in coming.

Since the 1970s crisis a contrast emerges between the weaknesses of the European labour markets on the one hand, and the maintenance of structural conditions in countries with a tendency to emigration, together with largely settled social networks for that end, on the other. This contrast has been leading to two fundamental consequences in the field of international migrations. The first is composed of the restrictive measures of European administrations that have resulted in the growth of risks undertaken by populations willing to emigrate and the growth of illegal immigration in receiving countries. The second consequence is taking place within the new generations of immigrant population settled in the developed countries. The second generation are confronting a different situation from that of their parents in relation to the main mechanisms of social integration. The public mechanisms are the education system and the closely related labour market. No great general assumptions can be made about the situation of the education system, but unless the labour market is in very good health, these new generations will face problems integrating into the society, acquiring a social identity and according themselves a positive self-esteem. Moreover, the quintessentially private social mechanism, the family, is also in a problematic situation. The first generation had an instrumental adaptative behaviour, and therefore its members designed an adaptative strategy for the education of their children. The deterioration of the public mechanisms of integration provokes some effects: the appearance of conflicts between young people and the receiving society; the search of a social identity and of new sources of self-esteem, given the difficulties encountered to join the labour market; the resulting revaluation of their original language and culture. This last effect may in turn result in making intergenerational relations ambivalent within the family. Their parents had given priority to the language and culture of the receiving society and they turn their gaze to their original society. The relationship

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[4] Spain: At the beginning of this century, several countries that, like Spain, had traditionally seen emigration until the 1970s start to receive large-scale immigration of African, Latin American, and Eastern European population.

between them becomes ambivalent as, on the one hand, they hold a grudge towards their parents for having relegated their original language and culture, and on the other hand they feel connected to them through ties of affection and because their parents represent precisely their original language and culture. The difficulties in labour integration of young people cause them to look for other sources of social identity, self and social esteem, such as the original culture and religion. Religion becomes an option rather than an inheritance.

For immigrants in general, religion offers a social benefit in terms of social refuge and source of identity, self-esteem and pragmatic solidarity. The less effective the public social mechanisms of integration (education system, labour market and a good connection between them) the greater the need to gain self and social esteem through their own resources. As Olivier Roy (2005) reminds us, Islam is today a European religion. This in turn raises the problem evoked by Roy: the return of these young people in France to an Islamic religion by choice (Tietze, 2002), after having been previously de-Arabized and de-Islamized by the republican school, before their labour market rejection. It is the going back to a religion after being devoid of the general cultural coating it had with their ancestors; this de-cultured religion is more prone to the letter than the spirit, and more prone, therefore, of leading to fundamentalist proposals (Khosrokhavar, 1994: 130-131). It would thus be a drastic, dramatic and traumatic process of functional differentiation, of separation between the Islamic culture and religion.

New migratory flows lead to the religious heterogenisation of our societies. Immigrant populations have not –at least to the same extent as in Europe– undergone a process of differentiation of religion in relation to other spheres such as culture and politics. This difference in the level of differentiation of religion has on many occasions been –and continues to be– a source of socio-cultural conflict. We can recall the controversy over the Islamic veil in France and the Stasi report of 2003, which recommends the prohibition in schools of "tenues et signes religieux" (Stasi, 2003, 68). The report's only mention of the significance of the veil is that it may conceal "différentes significations. Ce peut être un choix personnel ou au contraire une contrainte…." (Stasi, 2003, 57). It is evident that the Stasi Commission reached its conclusions from a single viewpoint, that of the autochthonous French population, which holds the veil to be a religious symbol. From a different cultural perspective in which there is no clear separation between culture and religion, and where there is no differentiated religion, the veil is a religious-cultural-family symbol, and on certain occasions can also even be said to be political. The commission took an ethnocentric stance based on the belief that France was a culturally homogeneous society, and by 2003 it already clearly was not.

European democratic societies are no longer culturally homogeneous. They and yet maintains a dominant religious tradition, the separation between Church and state can be approached differently[5]. At the end of a recent work I concluded: "European

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[5] There are other ways to approach this question. Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor promoted a new idea of "open secularity" in a report commissioned by the Prime Minister of Québec. These two authors consider the most fundamental of the four principles of secularity to be the moral equality of people and the freedom of conscience and religion. The other two have become open to interpretation: the principle of separation of Church and state and the neutrality of the state in relation to religions and deeply-held secular beliefs (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008, 135-136).

societies have been relatively[6] homogeneous from the religious point of view. Today however a sector of their population, with immigrant origins but by now largely national, professes religious confessions other than the historically dominant ones. For this segment religion plays an important role in the social integration of the community (…); these religious groups also clearly need economic and political support to conduct their religious activities. This is even more so when the labour market –the fundamental mechanism for social integration– is becoming ever more disengaged from state control due to the globalisation of the economy. Attention is beginning to focus on the issue of the separation of Church and state, although still timidly in Europe for the time being" (Pérez-Agote, 2016, 111).

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[6] Relatively, because there are non-religious and anti-religious forms; although we also need to consider the transformation of a country with a Catholic religion into one with a Catholic culture (such as France and Spain). This is equivalent to saying that religious pluralism does not predominate historically.

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