

FUNDA GÜNSOY¹ | Uludağ University, Turcja
MARIUSZ TUROWSKI | Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Polska

The Antagonism between Secular Elites and Refugees in the context of “Theological-Political Predicament”: The Case of Turkey

Antagonizm między świeckimi elitami a uchodźcami w kontekście „Problemu teologiczno-politycznego”. Sprawa Turcji

Streszczenie

Obecność uchodźców syryjskich w czteromilionowej populacji Turcji skłoniła działaczy lewicy/sekularystów/kemalistów do skoncentrowania się wokół dyskursu mówiącego o tym, że „staliśmy się obywatelami drugiej kategorii w naszej własnej ojczyźnie”. Uchodźcy oferujący swym gospodarzom możliwość wyeksponowania tureckiej gościnności wobec niewinnych ludzi, którym udało się uciec przed wojną, i którzy z tego samego powodu narażeni są na upokorzenie, zostali zinstrumentalizowani jako „zdarzenie” (Badiou) lub „wyjątek” (Schmitt) celem przekształcenia istniejącego status quo na arenie politycznej przez całe polityczne spektrum. W niniejszym artykule argumentujemy, że uchodźcy stanowią podstawowe źródło niepewności w procesie „normalizacji (i normizacji) wyjątku” poprzez rozmycie granic lub poszerzenie zakresu postrzegania zagrożenia w kontekście przyjaciela-wroga. Jednocześnie wykorzystuje się ich jako broń uzasadniającą interwencje władz, które przekształcają obecny kryzys w sytuację permanentną. W przypadku Turcji determinantem zarówno antagonizmu, jak i przyjaźni wobec syryjskich uchodźców jest ich tożsamość, która jest tożsamością arabskich *muzułmanów*. W tym kontekście będziemy argumentować, że niechęć kręgów sekularystów/kemalistów wobec syryjskich uchodźców można traktować jako przykład odwiecznego problemu w świetle konceptu „teologiczno-politycznego problemu” Straussa.

Słowa kluczowe: Leo Strauss, Carl Schmitt, Alain Badiou, Turcja, sekularyzm, religia

¹ The paper was prepared, written, developed and completed thanks to support provided by TUBITAK (Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu) (Program 2119, scholarship no 1059B191501954).

Abstract

The presence of Syrian refugees within the 4-million population in Turkey has led the left/secularist/Kemalist wingers to be interlocked around the discourse that “we are turned into second class citizens in our own homeland”. The refugees who offer to their hosts the opportunity to expose the Turkish hospitality towards innocent people who escaped the war and due to the same reason are treated as the object of humiliation have been instrumentalized as an *event* (Badiou) or an *exception* (Schmitt) to transform the given in the political arena by the entire political spectrum. In this paper, we argue that the refugees serve as the founding uncertainty within the process of “normalization (and normization) of the exception” through non-spatialization or broadening of the perception of threat in accordance with friend-enemy distinction. At the same time, they are used as a weapon that makes legitimate interventions by the sovereign who converts the current crisis into a permanent situation. In the case of Turkey, the determinant in both the antagonism and the friendship towards Syrian refugees is their identity based on a property of being Arabian *Muslims*. In this framework, we will argue that the resentments towards Syrian refugees by secularist/Kemalist circles can be treated as an example of the eternal problem in the context of Straussian concept of the “theological-political predicament”.

Keywords: Leo Strauss, Carl Schmitt, Alain Badiou, Turkey, Secularism, Religion

Introduction

According to phenomenological dictum, every genuine philosophical investigation should originate from factual-actual human experience – from the phenomenon itself, in order to understand ordinary life as such. Yet, what is a phenomenon? In the line of thought from Descartes to Kant and positivism, phenomenon has been understood as a physical object which can be experienced thanks to its property of extension or spatiality. To the contrary, the noumenal, because of its unknowable and unpredictable character – that, which, in the tradition of modern thought, is located at the margins of human experience – can only have a secondary existential status, as in Wittgenstein’s remark: “a nothing would do as well as a something about which nothing can be said”. (Rorty 2009; Scruton 1997, pp. 50–52). Within this ramification, phenomenon as “the subject of possible experience” opposed to the metaphysical speculations, ideals and abstractions, has been understood as representing facts which can be conceptualized within a “rationalist scheme”.

Carl Schmitt has claimed that modern rationalism compresses all spheres of life into a conceptual framework and rationalizes them by “hiding the existential rootlessness of all human thought”. This way he has showed that the notion of phenomenon which emerges in the “complete spiritual emptiness and absolute dynamics” of life should be understood in reference to the concept of exception which involves concrete event, decision with a sovereign as the proper subject of the whole process in its nature and structure. The exception that appears as an event in the sphere of immanence, like the theological concept of the miracle, “comes from nothingness” and has a potential to break down the absolute sovereignty of immanence (Schmitt 1985, p. 15; Günsoy 2010, p. 318). It is a miraculous energy that changes and shakes the order of the ordinary

one. Like Badiou's concept of the event (Badiou 2005a, pp. xii-xiii; 2005b: 100), the exception emerges as the concrete that at the same time damages the rationalist and immanent scheme described above. As the irrational and vitalist dimension of "pure life" which resists all conceptualizations and neutralizations, it can be examined at the moment of its emergence but it cannot be foreseen. Since it is not known when, where, and how it comes into existence, the exception as the concrete event creates a rupture or a gap in the contemporary political-legal order, leaving it entirely outside of its original rational system. It can be conceived as the founding capacity and the freedom to create new forms (Schmitt 1985, pp. 13, 15, 37; Ojakangas 2005, pp. 28–32).

On the other hand, following Negri's criticism of Badiou's concept of the event, we can say that all the exceptions constituting rupture and break in the rational order are by necessity neither processes devoid of subjectivity and history nor they have an emancipatory character. There is no event exempted from interpretations and misunderstandings by its recipients and intentions of subjects who are its creators. (Negri 2010, pp. 10–11) To purify the exception as the event from its subjects and creators is to de- or unhistoricise and to leave it completely in the shade of irrationality so it cannot be conceptualized. That is to say, locating it outside the experience of everyday life (referred to as "the ecstatic and sovereign moments of rupture that are totally alien to ordinary everyday experience") (Ojakangas 2005, p. 42), has introduced in the center of political life a quest for a mythical order, a mythical picture of an authentic past and a heroic image of an omnipotent character who would bring control and stability by transcending the ordinary. Precisely in this context, when Carl Schmitt has argued that "sovereign is he who decides on the exception", he has also emphasized that because sovereign has the power of decision, he must create the exceptions. Following Benjamin (1969, p. 257) and Agamben (2005, p. 1–32), we can say that the event or the exceptional as the created/artificial crisis (crises) is a technique of political management and the indispensable mean for creating exclusive identity. Although politics is the ability to restore the rule of law which depends on the power and influence of the event, the appeal for the exceptional that is accompanied by the promise of the return to the golden age in the past (as well as in the future) has gained such a legitimizing function in the case of political leadership that it cannot be compared with any earlier period in history. So, if the exception has become the rule, then we should learn how to separate the real exception from the artificial/created one.

In this paper we are arguing that the refugee serves as the founding uncertainty within the process of "normalization (and normization) of the exception" through non-spatialization or broadening of the perception of threat in accordance with friend-enemy distinction. On one hand, the refugee has represented for us the limit of our perception of the humanity by his/her presence which is based on 'differentness' and 'inequality'. On the other hand, the continuity of the perception of threat related to the presence of the refugee who can never be known fully and entirely, has rendered the social and legal order fragile and open to intervention from the sovereign who makes the crisis a permanent situation. In this framework the term 'refugee' refers to an exception or the event negating the rule, it denotes a troublemaker, an arsonist against the order and at the same time a legitimizing factor for the leadership equipped with extraordinary prerogatives.

Simultaneously to the above claim we would like to link it – “relocating” it to the context of Turkey – with a reflection about position of well educated-secular ‘intellectuals’ who have felt themselves as ‘refugees’ in their own society, becoming distorting strangers and outsiders of the state of permanence. Their “resistance” concerned with religion or race of the refugees has regenerated the figure of a sovereign who resists/counteracts terrorist enormity and reestablished the concept of society which owes its existence to the sovereign. Any possibility of humanizing – emancipatory and empowering – politics is in this way effectively and consistently ruled out. Below I would like to discuss the point of view of hardliner, tough-minded secularist circles in relation to the “refugee problem” in Turkey through their relationship with the Turkish society. Secularists stimulate the process of building up the identity of this society in the process of increasing sense of antagonism and sometimes even hostility towards the Christian West and its “allies” who are easily regarded as ‘traitors’ and ‘terrorists’, even against the original intentions. Such perception mobilizes national sensitivities and the potent myth of homogenizing Sunni-Turk nation. On the other hand the point of view of secular intellectuals related to the problem of Syrian refugees has been shaped to large extent by their peculiar understanding of religion, especially Islam, and a specific type of “self-Islamophobia”.

The refugee problem in the context of “theological-political predicament”

The recent history of Turkey is filled with a number of social, legal and political shock-experiences that make the distinction between order and chaos, rule and exception, peace and war quite unclear, due to the intensity of the expectation of “realizing the impossible”. The continuation and normalization of the events that are thought to be temporary, accidental and exceptional have made the crises artificial but constitutive and forceful political mechanism. Definitions of normality and the rule has been postponed to an enduringly ambiguous future. They are more and more often treated as indistinct by the society reflecting about its own future, becoming part of its collective memory. This way they have opened the door to the spread of exclusivist identity politics established around the heroic discourses, inhibiting any possibility and opportunity created and offered usually by political activity in ordinary circumstances.

Within this framework, the elections of 1 November 2015 show up as one of the biggest “events” of political experience in the entire political history of Turkey. Firstly, the elections and the whole debate centered around them which took place before and after them, has crystallized as an event a problem that is not only political but also theological or – using Leo Strauss’s phrase – a “theological-political predicament” related to notions such as “power”, “authority”, “legitimacy”, “dominance”, “democracy”, “representation”, “public” and “order”. Secondly, they have uncovered the essence of the relation between political theology and political ontology, order and change, stability and “the groundlessness of the ground”, decision and undecidability, consensus and disagreement (dissensus). And lastly, the concrete character of this “event” which has emerged, at the very time, in this specific context can deepen our understanding

of the relationship between secularization as an unfinished process and prospects of providing political grounds for theological legitimacy.

As we have asserted above, the problematic nature of relationship – emerged in the specific context (in Turkey), understood as a pure political phenomenon – of the secular intellectual to his/her own society which he/she thinks to be non-secular is in fact an instance of Straussian “theological-political predicament”. Leo Strauss, German political philosopher of Jewish descent, had noted in 1932 that the problem of Jews trying to preserve and sustain their religion and traditions, that is to say their specific way of life in a geography which was non-Jewish and even hostile to Jews (the “Jewish Question”), was not unique to the Jewish society. He had claimed that the “theological-political predicament” (called also “theological-political problem”) is as broad as to include modern humanity in its entirety. From the Straussian perspective dilemmas such as “To be or not to be Jewish in Germany” or “Jewishness vs Enlightenment” or “the Chosen Society vs the problem of Universal Humanity” are in fact layers and aspects of one and the same problem which continues to exist enduringly in the form of oppositions between Reason and Revelation, Philosophy and Religion, Athens and Jerusalem, Greek and Holy Bible, orthodoxy and atheism, faith and faithlessness etc. (Strauss 1997, pp. 1–31; Zank 2002, p. 12, 17, 18).

While the “predicament” had first come to the fore in the specific context, the relationship of the educated, secular minority with the non-secular mass of ignorant, “illiterate” people, on one hand has reawakened the question of identity of the demos we have to live together with – which requires a minimum degree of mutual understanding and consensus – and the nature of democracy, and has inspired the project of multiculturalism and the integration of identities rooted in religion, sects and ethnicity within the Western societies, on the other hand. We argue that the theological predicament – claims that the truth of religions cannot be epistemologically falsified nor verified – has brought about the political dilemma highlighted by the fact that people who have lived in multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-faith society face both a duty of respect and toleration for diversity and protection of their own culture and identity.

The story seems to be simple. One of the leading Kemalist, laicist newspapers publishes a headline that reads “do not forget to take it when you go to the election polls” next to a picture of a brain. This group which calls themselves laicist, educated, democratic and dauntless defenders of Kemalist republic, reawakens the problem of the relation between secular intellectuals and the non-secular society, as a purely political problem by saying after the elections: “people who think with 100 words have defeated people who think with 1000 words”. Moreover after the election, this secular, laicist and republican fraction, starts to discuss the question of how millions of voters have changed their choice so radically in a period as short as five months. On the other hand, the opposing side, which acts with an aim to defend its Islamic identity, states that they see the Kemalist elites as the ones, who – assuming for themselves the supreme duty of modernizing and enlightening not only the state but also society – are at the same time representatives of a sinister history claiming that religion should be altogether privatized by the state, compressed into the consciences and relegated under the control of the state. But according to them, the republican elites which they

entitled as seculars and Jacobins, should learn to respect the national will because society has decided so and respect to this will is absolutely superior, beyond everything else.

This ideological conflict between tough-minded secularists and those who describe themselves in relation to Sunni-Muslim identity is transmitted also to the problem concerning Syrian refugees whose official figure in the Turkish society is close to 4 million. First, Kemalists feel resentful towards them because they have cowardly escaped the war and have become dishonored by choosing to be parasites and beggars in the country where they are strangers instead of fighting for their own country and becoming heroes, risking death on their own soil. Such resentments have been increased further as a result of the news that the Turkish soldiers had been martyred while fighting against the IS in Syria. Especially in social media some photos which show that while Syrian refugees in Turkey rest quietly, Turkish soldiers are fighting for the integrity of Syria, are used to support the anti-refugees campaign. The second objection, which is expressed mostly by other groups, relates to injustice of using economic resources, which are not fairly enough distributed among the people in the “hosting country”, to accommodate increasing numbers of refugees coming day by day who at the same time are turning into cheap labor, generating additional tensions and hostilities in society. The third criticism is based on security concerns. It is feared that Turkey will transform into “second Syria” because refugees who had been made a subject of diplomatic negotiations between Turkey and the EU and are used as a standby force for ideological purposes within internal politics (such as the dispute on citizenship rights for Syrian refugees, the placement of Arab Sunni Syrian Muslims in Alevi settlements etc.) are unrestrainedly accepted into the country.

Bonds built in religious fellowships, neighborhoods and even kinships, always have to face a betrayal story (a cliché often repeated story referring to the revolt of Arabs against the Turkish Caliph at the end of the World War I). In this case it is a humiliating figure and image of a “miserable Arab”. As Tanıl Bora says, “in the discourse of ‘civic’, ‘educated’, ‘secular white Turk’ and in the Kemalistic and liberal dialects of Turkish nationalism articulated in this discourse... ‘Arab’ serves as an alien component identical with backwardness transmitted to the modern Turkishness trying to get rid of itself, of the past incapable of being modernized, of the fanatical/bigoted ‘form’ of Islam (Bora 2002). So history comes full circle – from the Arabs who betrayed Turks and decided to fight their own revolution for independence from the Ottoman Empire to contemporary Arab invaders during the late Republican period.

As in the case of discussions about the headscarf problem in the universities and in the public sphere and interpretations of the voters’ political preferences, the same opposition of progressive-modern versus reactionist-religious has made the refugee issue an excuse to humiliate rather than to see through rational, humanitarian and truly political (as opposed to purely ideological-propagandist-agitating) eyes. However, from a wider perspective, we would like to argue that the debate that has risen not only in the Turkish public opinion but also in the European and global ones, about the refugee problem, reveals one of the aspects of an old/ancient and still valid and authoritative problem – the question of political meaning of hierarchy between minority treated as capable of ruling and the ignorant multitude that deserves to be ruled because of the lack of knowledge. It is a question about the nature of democracy – how the other, the alien, the stranger

(in regard to religion, language, culture or lifestyle) can become a member of the state as a political union? What are the prospects of transcending series of exclusions, denials and marginalization inherent in the modern notion of citizenship?

In fact, the ideal of society related to ambitions of “embracing equally all human beings” or to “universal league of free and equal nations” which is “consisting of free and equal men and women” or to the dream of “universal society”, appeared firstly as the concrete event – the crisis and the experience of shock of Holocaust which caused the rupture in the rationality discourse of modernity (Strauss 1964, p. 3). In this respect, the organization of knowledge versus the organized ignorance about the refugee problem can be seen as a partial failure of the idea of modern rationalization. Main aim of the rationalization process was to design rationally social and political life by objective/impersonal mechanism of law in order to establish a political and legal order composed of enlightened citizens through the public use of reason. In a system where duties and tasks are carried out on the basis of impersonal, calculable and pre-set rules, where all incalculable, personal and irrational elements such as love and hate can be eliminated or maximally limited, oppositions are transformed into poetic and productive dialogue between parties of an endless conversation. In this way pluralistic, rational and non-discriminatory consensus politics can be born as a truly progressive, democratic project.

However, in accordance with Benhabib’s observation, modern societies have witnessed concurrently identity politics based on race, ethnicity and religion which has tended towards hegemonic colonization of the existing identity of political structure and current forms of sovereignty/power configurations, and social movements such as LGBTI or feminism arguing that different gender orientations and experiences of femininity/masculinity should be equally represented and deliberated on in the public sphere. In other words, liberal democracies have hosted both “those who insist on the experience of alterity, otherness, heterogeneity, dissonance, and resistance” and those who fall back upon the totalizing logic of uniformity against heterogeneity. (Benhabib 1996, p. 5) This means that non-discriminatory consensus politics or radical democracy which transforms antagonism into agonism in the manner suggested by Chantal Mouffe (1999, pp. 752–755), have already presupposed the presence of democratic ethos. In the last instance, the concept of the political sphere which is focused on the competition between forms of individualism that overlaps with democratic values, tends to consider the political community as a large system composed of friends who are antagonists, simultaneously suggesting that antagonism should not be eliminated but repositioned in the name of pluralistic democracy. This system depends on the identity of *demos* and its “interpretatory”, discursive capacities to increase the possibility of living together despite antagonism between its elements.

Nevertheless, even though modernization has an aim to organize the collective life according to the guidance of reason instead of religion and it was believed that peace, progress and freedom in society are possible thanks to criticism of religion from the point of view of reason, wars and conflicts are held around the world in the name of ethnic, national, religious or cultural “differences”. Religion and identity as a source of political life can be analyzed from the same perspective as the problem that has been highlighted above: how can ‘living together’ based on the mutual respect, cooperation

and the shared expectations of future between “people who think with 100 words” and “people who think with 1000 words” be established in the country and out of country? This is precisely what Leo Strauss calls the “theological-political problem”.

“Theological-political problem” is not the problem which has arisen from the quarrel between reason and belief or science and religion. Because, as Simon Critchley has pointed out, “those who cannot believe still require religious truth and a framework of ritual in which they can believe” (Critchley 2012, p. 3), we can say that the “theological-political problem” is rooted in a conflict between the faith that is not based on epistemological justification and the faith that is not yet aware that it is a faith in itself. From a Straussian perspective, the “theological-political problem” is a “theological-political aporia” in one respect, because the wrongness of religious beliefs cannot be demonstrated using “human ways”. Religion rests on the possibility of “God declaring itself to human being” and this possibility cannot be falsified by “secular” means available for human beings (Strauss 1965, pp. 6–7). “Theological-political problem” can still be *politically* resolved, as the question of “God” is also the question of the “political”, although the whole dilemma is not *theoretically* resolvable.

Liberalism versus The Returning to Orthodoxy

During the Weimar Republic, the German Jewish bourgeoisie advocated that *Deutschtum* (German) and *Judentum* (Judaism) were not opposites and that the Jews were part of the German nation. The German Jews who advocated assimilation felt that they belonged to Western cultures that embodied the “enlightened”, universal and rational values, but at the same time they argued that poor immigrant Jews could not integrate with German cultural life and that this triggered hostility towards Jews. Orthodox Jewish communities have exalted their commitment to culture, tradition and authority, as opposed to reformist groups who believed that liberalism and secularization would enable the cultural integration of German Jews (La Vopa 1993, p. 676; Rabinbach 1997, p. 27). In this way, there were two fundamental alternatives in front of the Jews, namely cultural integration or return to orthodoxy.

Opposition “liberalism versus return to orthodoxy” seems to represent two contradictory sides of the question about the status of “differences” from *inside* and from *outside*. Liberalism is based upon a separation of religion-state, private sphere-public sphere and the idea of civil equality. The separation of private sphere and public sphere, which arises in accordance with the first differentiation – the one about the assurance that a laic state distances itself equally from all religions – requires privatization of religion or transferring it to the *objective* world of experience of an individual as his/her faith. (Strauss 1965, pp. 6–7; Smith 2007, p. 149; Morgan 1981, pp. 348–349) But, as Elsa Ray noticed in the context of discussion about Islamophobia, tolerance, inter-religious dialogue and *private character of religion*,

Religious belief is a part of your identity, and you cannot ask a human being to leave a part of their identity at home. It's like asking someone not to be black in public. It's not possible!

The problem is not in displaying our religious beliefs in public spaces, the problem is how modern European societies can make sure that every citizen can live together in peace, without regard to their race, gender, sexual preferences, religious beliefs, etc. (Ray 2015)

During the process of privatization, religion which has a *public* essence, undergoes a semantic reduction and loses its distinctive, original character. To make this possible, a *Jew* or a *Muslim* who obtains his/her social identity and “formation” by his/her belonging to a community existing thanks to religious-moral links and interconnections, has to become an individual who is a cosmopolitan and a member of the family of universal humanity. In other words, religion should transform into a rational ethics that everyone can obey and which is obligatory and authoritative. Hermann Cohen, who is a follower of the humanistic ideal of *Bildung*, proposes a version of the liberal doctrine of religion as ethics. For that, firstly we must give up the idea that the ten commandments of the Holy Bible are irrational or – even worse – against-reason. Secondly, the revelation has to be understood as the embodiment of universal morality common to all humanity (Strauss 1983, pp. 244–246).

If we cannot ask people to be Muslim or Jewish at home, but not to be Muslim or Jewish in the street – as in the liberal solution – should they then turn to Orthodoxy as a better alternative than liberalism? First of all, preserving religious Orthodoxy in the modern world means to agree to be treated as a stranger *par excellence* in the country of residence. If, to quote Kymlicka, “those who voluntarily choose to leave their own country in order to make a new and better life in another” want to live in peace with other citizens, they “have a duty to integrate into that country” (Modood 2013, p. 30). Returning to Orthodoxy in the country of residence means ghettoization instead of integration. For the same reason, Jews’ (or Muslims’) attainment of equality, honor and respect they deserve in the modern arena of nation states depends on the similarities among the states when it comes to their foundation and constitution. Spiritual independence is possible only after securing independent political existence.

However, returning to Orthodoxy is paradoxically possible according to the Zionist idea that is rejected by the Orthodox Jewishness because this purely political solution is based on a belief that salvation will come not because of Messiah but by purely human ways and means as a result of Jews’ own efforts. The only thing which is necessary is the emergence of national consciousness as the assurance and affirmation of independence and solidarity. To be deprived of boundaries which bearing all signs of political unity is undoubtedly to be an object of a deep prejudice and hatred, in accordance with the general law which assert „no people, generally speaking, has any predilection for foreigners”. On the other hand, as Carl Schmitt has shown, being a *modern* state means being a new *God* that reveal antagonism as the overwhelming ontological dimension of human being can be intensified or diminished but never annihilated and defines itself as the „sovereign political decision” that has power to repress the antagonism inherent in human nature, can compete with old God not by virtue of its feature of justice or wisdom but its feature of power. Therefore

he who seeks the salvation of the soul, of his own and of others, should not seek it along the avenue of politics, for the quite different tasks of politics can only be solved

by violence. The genius or demon of politics lives in an inner tension with the god of love, as well as with the Christian God as expressed by the church. (Weber 1948, p. 126)

Religion in the state requires a political body. Undoubtedly, a soul which has no body lacks the crucial quality of existence. Likewise, a body without a head/soul loses its direction, orientation and content. However, modern state comes into existence at the moment of creation out of nothingness as both a body and a soul. It is, as Carl Schmitt puts it, the “God on earth”. It does not terminate the existence of God – on the contrary, it brings it into existence by appropriating the divine power and “clothing” it in a body, a form. Human being, now, has a dual existence – as a believer and citizen. Being a believer, he or she is at the same time a citizen as long as he or she worships the existence, perpetuity and power of the state to create unity and order. To die for the state as the “God on earth” is to reach the level of martyrdom, killing in the name of the state is an act of heroism. This is just as Emilio Gentile has called as the sacralization of politics.

a political movement confers a sacred status on an earthly entity (the nation, the country, the state, humanity, society, race, proletariat, history, liberty, or revolution) and renders it an absolute principle of collective existence, considers it the main source of values for individual and mass behaviour, and exalts it as the supreme ethical precept of public life. It thus becomes an object for veneration and dedication, even to the point of self-sacrifice. (Gentile & Mallett 2000, pp. 18–19)

However, as a matter of fact, also this “solution” turns into “theological-political predicament”. Because the truth claims of religion are not provable by philosophy or science, the mysterious notion of God which stands behind all theses of religion and all theses of religion that “confers a sacred status on an earthly entity” and serves as “the main source of values for individual and mass behaviour” by organizing collective existence cannot be “validated” neither on the ontological nor epistemological basis.

Conclusion

As we have tried to show, “emancipation” from religion is only possible by way of refutation – on the ontological and epistemological basis – of the mysterious character of God, which is the fundamental notion of all religious doctrines. Since religious claims about truth are not refutable philosophically or scientifically, to be or not to be a Jew (just like to be or not to be a Muslim or Christian) is not a matter of individual choice – it is a destiny. Within this framework, the liberal solution, which confines religious faith to the private sphere of the individual and which denies the presence and visibility of this faith in the public space is not a *theological* solution. On the other hand, the second alternative: returning to Orthodoxy, on the *theological* basis, is not a solution neither. Theological dimension is critical, because, as we know, the entire political order is based on metaphysical/theological foundation. Each political dimension

contains a struggle between theological positions and all turning points in history and major historical-political events can be approached by reflection about changes that took place in the theological domain. As Simon Critchley has noticed:

if political life is to arrest a slide into demotivated cynicism, then it would seem to require a motivating and authorizing faith which, while not reducible to a specific context, might be capable of forming solidarity in a locality, a site, a region... (Critchley 2012, p. 4)

Correspondingly, when Schmitt says – against frequently heard claims of secularization – that all crucial concepts of modern state theory are secularized theological concepts, he does not maintain that theology is only a model which shapes and directs law and politics. Firstly, he confronts the assertions that modern political theories are based on empirical facts, arguing that an element of uncertainty/undecidability (indecisiveness) is immanent to human rationality and that every political-legal order necessarily contains metaphysical dimension. Secondly, by saying that all key concepts of modern state theory are transferred from theology to the science of law and politics as secularized versions of theological concepts, he reveals an important dimension of the secularization process which mostly goes unnoticed. We have to give up looking at the secularization process, in the usual definition of the term, as a secular process. Beyond this process, which cancels all forms of transcendence, there is a political theology which works in an opposite direction. In this regard, secularization itself is far from being something secular, because it is rooted in

the idea of the faith of faithless and the belief of unbelievers, a faith which does not give up on the idea of truth, but transfigures its meaning. (Critchley 2012, p. 3)

Despite the fact that the theological dilemma is impossible to solve – because of the lack of ultimate epistemological justification for the faith on the basis of right or wrong concepts – does not mean that we are faced with a completely irresolvable political dilemma as well. First of all, the secular elites must be aware that even if “God as the highest reality of the old metaphysics” was overthrown, the idea of holiness has not been demolished; on the contrary, this dethronization has created new sanctities with faith which forms the faithfulness also in the case of “Republican regime” or “Kemalism”. At the same time, they must be aware of the fact that the new antagonisms which are brought out by the opposition they established induced by the presence of the refugees, have not set off a collective *event* that can develop and flourish the culture of living together but rather accelerated the outbreak of artificial *events* that reinforce the absolute sanctity of the state as the power of decision over “differences”. Political, social and economic instabilities in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria after the Arab Spring should be considered as a warning indicator that the forms of imported social oppositions deepen rather than solve the economic and political crisis. So much so that, when the aspects that should be regarded as manifestations of democracy are defined by the name of „crisis”, the interventions of the sovereign are taken in stride and equipped with the armor of legitimacy before the *demos* who on the other hand have been assimilated by the sovereignty. Liberation in the true sense

can only take place in the periphery of a true/real *event* and can be carried out only by true/real political actors.

However, we must remember that in the multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies, any claim based on identity that leaves no room for struggles over recognition of others cannot be seen as legitimate on neither theological nor political grounds. Every assertion of identity which denounces itself through antagonisms and which – rather than expanding the scope of the culture of living together – tends to restrain and exclude the representation of other identity claims in the public sphere sooner or later realizes that each of its movement and assault resulting in the refusal of equality is hazardous and that it will render today’s persecutor the oppressed/victim of the future.

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Funda Günsoy

assoc. prof. dr
Department of Philosophy, Uludag University
Nilüfer-Bursa 16059, Turcja
fundagk@uludag.edu.tr

Mariusz Turowski

dr hab., filozofia społeczna, krytyka polityczna, teorii cywilizacji
Uniwersytet Wrocławski
ul. Koszorzowa 3, 51-154 Wrocław
mariusz.turowski@uwr.edu.pl