Dogma and the Desire to Express Mystery

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La controverse entre D. Stăniloae et L. Blaga est l'entrer de l'Eglise en dialogue avec la culture roumaine, le dialogue qui était jusque-là un froid et sans vie. L'un des thèmes sur lesquels il portait ce dialogue a été celle d'expliquer comment l'homme parle de divinité, formules qui captent le trancendent et il le révèle, le dogme comme un moyen de supreindere du mystère. À propos de cette question est l'article proposé ici.

Mots-clés: révèlation divine. polemique, D. Stăniloae, L. Blaga.

Christian dogma as a form of closing and securing the truth, once asserted, can not be interpreted only into heresy. But only dogma does the same? When a philosopher is building himself a system is he not closed by that into itself?

Blaga considered by excellence dogma as a metaphysical process designed to determine a mystery. "He (Lucian Blaga) defines dogma as an intellectual formula that, being radically in disagreement with understanding, keeps transcending logic is delimiting itself by the nature of its conflict from the regular functions of the intellect (...); dogmas being transfigured antinomies may at some point be a mystery"[1].

By sensitive knowledge Blaga reaches a qualitative concealment of the object, that the opportunity of the objective knowledge is absolutely denied to the human being, because that appears dangerous to humans because, once entered the truth, in its depth, the spirit would be condemned to a perpetual inaction, unable to create something. Dangers would accompany the spirit everywhere, that might emancipate permanently and that emancipation could not support it, the known object could be endlessly destroyed and recreated, existential balance being perturbed in general. Just the idea of mystery saves this balance, mystery being provided by transcendental censorship. "After Blaga, the idea of mystery closes a great way to knowledge that reckons it the most complete in the dispute of the supremacy in the human spirit"[2].

There was no wonder if someone possessed absolute knowledge, according to Blaga's conception. The answer was positive, but he who holds it is no one but the

[1] L. Pătrăşcanu, *Curente şi tendinţe în filosofia romanească*, Bucureşti, 1971, p. 120.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 125.

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Great Anonymous, that who knows the absolute. But the Great Anonymous does not appear called with the name of God, nor with any other name, leaving it somewhat free spirit for the possibility of conception according to your own desires.

According to Lucian Blaga transsubjective reality can not be known; although he expresses the desire for knowledge of this reality through effort, man comes just to imagine that he has reached the knowledge of reality. Father Stăniloae asks a very natural question in front of the gnoseologic theory supported by Blaga*: what's the point of understanding that which is not knowledge, which is essentially only an illusion?* "Lucian Blaga does not speak of a progress of knowledge but he only recognizes that we know nothing (...); Mr. Lucian Blaga's "design is a kind of agnosticism, extremely different from the classic agnosticism, with emphasis put on the mystery and ont the creative sense of knowledge"[3]. Lucian Blaga's epistemology in The Transcendent Censura emerges from the conception of the Great Anonymous, seen as jealous and fearful by the man who wants to know; we can speak here about an obvious agnosticism because man is forbidden the positive knowledge, focusing on mystery and creative sense of ignorance.

Lucian Blaga's report of philosophy with the Orthodox Christianity

Lucian Blaga's report of philosophy with the Christianity is generally seen by Father Stăniloae as being in an articulate and forceful opposition, as the philosopher did not admit the possibility of the divine revelation in the world. The Theologian Stăniloae justifies his theological reaction taken against Lucian Blaga's philosophy through a comparison: when someone links by my house where I lived with the my parents, trying to collapse it, or to convince me and all my folks about its lack of foundation, so indirectly to leave it, that would be strange as that to complain if I'm forced to go notice and to look to him the evil that he wants to do to me or to prove the falsity of his belief"[4]. However, in the matter of an approach of the philosopher Lucian Blaga with Christianity, Father Stăniloae allows it, but for historical and social reality of Christianity, but with the misconception of style and rejection of the idea of revelation. The error identified by Stăniloae in Blaga's system of thinking, in relation to Christianity, is the primary attention given to the surface elements of the different Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism) at the expense of Christianity. Lucian Blaga gave the same value and the same level to all religions and that was not supported by Stăniloae who challenged the superiority of Christian morality to Greco-Roman polytheism, believing that Blaga held a theory contrary to all evidence, because religions, as well as all things of the same kind, are equal in qualitative report. (the definition given to religion by Blaga in *Religion and spirit,* p. 178).

Lucian Blaga identifies religion with metaphysics, with one difference: In religion, man tends with his whole being to the last coordinated of the existence,

[3] Stăniloae D., *Poziţia domnului Lucian Blaga faţă de creştinism şi Ortodoxie*, Bucureşti, 1997, p. 29; cf. idem, *Noţiunea dogmei,* în „Studii Teologice", anul XVI, nr. 9-10, 1964, p. 534-571.

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 32; cf. idem, *Despre Dogmă*, în „Gândirea'', nr. 3-4, anul XX, 1941, p. 174-181.

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while through metaphysics, man is carried out only through knowledge. The latter one lacks, says Father Stăniloae, elements that religion has.

1. The certainty of an ultimate reality;
2. The quality of this reality of claiming the man.

Regarding the first element, it stands human faith. By faith, knowledge gets certainty, being present as a factor of existence in any religion.

L. Blaga's support of existence in defining religion have sought in Hindu and Chinese religion, Blaga eliminating the element of "faith", making himself his opponent. The other element of religion, the belief that ultimate reality can claim the man, but not only has that capacity, but also exercises it, expresses a feature that draws this reality from indifference and automatism manifested to man in a personal and different way from case to case. It is about the personal nature of the ultimate reality. Automatism and pure passivity can not be associated to the ultimate reality.

Between the divine and the natural environment there is a fundamental, qualitative difference, the latter receiving the existence and the order of the deity. Another essential and specific element of religion is the faith in the self revelation of the divine reality. Lucian Blaga recognizes that all religions claim the divine revelation, but none accepts it, considering that none possess it. Father Stăniloae uses as argument the omnipresence of idea of revelation in the world, regardless of religion, to prove that all mankind is religious. Then he adds to the the four previous elements existing simultaneously with religion the expectation, the hope of the believer in his continued existence, "universal human conscience and believe in a waiting rescue of man from the grinder power of nature or of evil forces in an uprising of his fate over the transitory destiny of things in nature"[5].

Lucian Blaga stated that man cannot know anything from the transcendent reality, but that is there without having to break into, primarily in the essence of this mystery. Instead, religions provide (that's right, more or less) a personal data the ultimate Reality that cares for humanity, showing positive interest towards it. But Baga does not prove that the transcendence of which he talks about is real. He substantiates this admission of the transsubjective reality only on the testimony of conscience. On Lucian Blaga, the myth of the Great Anonymous is not animated by any positive interest towards man. The feeling that is characteristic it's only of fear. Humanity has the unanimous conviction of a personal deity, a belief that is of a religious nature and something should correspond in the objective reality to this internal belief. By religion, the human spirit has the strongest anchor in reality. Father Stăniloae assigns to the objective reality the action of movement, of work on the human spirit, that leads to the awareness of his existence. "This consciousness has a religious nature and it gives the man the possibility to achieve that this ultimate Reality reveals itself in order to take care of him. Although he possesses in his consciousness the desire to reach out and touch this reality, the man can not

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 76; cf. idem, *Dogmele creştine şi apostolice*, în „Ortodoxia", nr. 1-2, 1992.

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materialize it if the reality is not open, So, if it is not revealed, religion undertake the human entirely, just as he acknowledged it, as proof that within it, the human being has truly the experience of transsubjective reality, as in philosophy can not have"[6].

Lucian Blaga does not accept that this reality claims the man, remaining shrouded in mystery, mystery causing to the human to be in a perpetual state of anxiety and tension.

Father Stăniloae identifies the element that prints the character of superiority of Christianity compared to other religions: it is the movement of Divinity to man, coming in her most intimate proximity with humans. Instead, through myth, the man interprets subjectively a religious truth, reducing it to an image based on fantasy. Myths are an expression of weakening the divine revelation: Christianity affirms an increase of the divine revelation through the discovery not only of doctrine, but of God Himself, making a perfect and direct communion with us. Divine revelation is fulfilled until the its last measure in plenary. Blaga believes that man is accomplished through knowledge, showing some kind of grudge against Christianity.

Christianity remains superior to other religions through two elements:

1. Full revelation of Divinity

2. Personal manifestation of divinity, both made the dogma of the hypostatic union. In the absence of a full revelation that claims him, human manifests selfishness and pride, slipping under the power of God.

Christianity feels nearly Divinity, but not as a passive force, but as a passive being, but a being who cares for them and makes their will known.Therefore, a Christian can not accept that Divinity is just a myth, Father Stăniloae considering these myths childish paintings of the human mind. Hence, Lucian Blaga's philosophy is seen as being very low in relation to Christianity, for it is based on illusions. Through Jesus Christ, Divinity becomes accessible to humans, being known historically by those who surrounded him, that then they gave witness testimony and they confirmed this even at the cost of their lives.

By myth, faith is destroyed, for it no longer finding the place, it was replaced with selfish pride. With myth, human imagines different creations, not having as a starting point communion, the common faith, through myth people dividing themselves. Divine Revelation reveals God as reality close to man. By myth, God is not seen as a god, but as an idol, as a material element with an equivalent in the world, that human associated divine qualities with. Lucian Blaga does nothing more than to fit in the trends of the world to achieve gods according to human imaginings and and to replace with shadows a historical reality that no man ever departed. With Blaga, religion appears as a result of the human mind, of his fantasy, of the human report with himself, where faith has no place.

[6] *Ibidem*, p. 107.

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Father Stăniloae condemns the reaction of Lucian Blaga's philosophy fans who see this philosophy as a positive and generous philosophy against religion. In fact, this philosophy is seen by the academic theologian as a combination of his conception and Spencer Feurbach. Lucian Blaga's great contradiction is that, 'on the one hand he says that religion is an essential part of human culture (...), and on the other he seeks to eliminate any possibility of the existence of religion, therefore an essential function of the human spirit"[7].

After balancing the various elements of Romanian Orthodoxy with elements of Orthodoxy in general and the myth of Lucian Blaga, Dumitru Stăniloae recognizes in the pages of „Mioritic Area" (*Spaţiul mioritic)* authentic Romanian items, where it found its place even love for Orthodoxy, in addition to love for the Romanian ethnic specificity. However Orthodoxy was regarded only as a style. Lucian Blaga's philosophical system was dominated by shallow ambitions of originality and an overwhelming admiration for foreign things. In the vision of Lucian Blaga, the transcendent goes down, man not having to do anything, because the action is strictly reserved to the deity. Father Stăniloae shows that man is not seen by Orthodoxy as waiting, but as one who strives to become fit to receive it. It is a preparation to receive the deity, that was transposed into the ascetic efforts of purification specific to the Orthodox East. In Lucian Blaga's philosophy does not appear the communion (Grand Anonymous-human), it does not know freedom, sin and virtue, duty and responsibility. Lucian Blaga's vision is seen as approaching of Protestantism and German philosophy, as in Protestantism there is the pessimistic idea, moreover, that man, no matter what he does, he can not partake of divine grace, for sin has destroyed everything that was connected with divinity, leaving nothing good in mankind.

Father Stăniloae says about this philosophy only this: it is interesting, but does not reflect the Romanian spirit in a genuine way. Religion, unlike culture can not exist without the belief about objectivity, it is not a free game of spirit, an exercise that one has to do it just to keep alive the consciousness of the spirit.The person of Jesus Christ is seen by Lucian Blaga only as a mythical product of Messianic expectation. Superhuman strength, however, recognized in Jesus Christ is nothing more than a simple enhancement in the human limits, but not something particularly radical.

Lucian Blaga has created a universe and his own style, wanting to transfigure by essence, through increased exigency primarily with himself. He will manifest himself between tradition and the need for renewal, as a necessity of reinterpreting the terms, according to the dialectics of the philosophical thinking and the evolution of the receptor sensitivity[8].

[7] *Ibidem*, p. 47.

[8] L. Blaga, *Poeme*, bilingual Romanian-Greek translation made by Didimos Renids-Ravanis, preface by Aurel Martin, Minerva Publishing House, Bucharest, 1981, p. 17.

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His philosophical system will be marked by the idea of the mystery, the limit of knowledge, awareness, Luciferian knowledge, transcendental censorship, magical thinking, opinionated eon, national specific, anthropological consciousness.

The ineffable tempts Blaga, trying to conceptualize the idea or feeling, this ineffable being metaphysical, permanent dialogue partner, his metaphysical universe often bearing the imprint of sadness, perhaps because of desire, not always fulfilled, to learn in his continuously search the understanding of the structure and meaning of the world. This by an attempt of knowledge through intuition. "Abstracting the concrete, he materializes the abstract"[9].

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[9] *Ibidem*, p. 21.

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