Between Ruah and Pneuma*

by Alexandru GAFTON

The communication between different spiritualities, the generation on this way of some perceptible and mutually intelligible as well as of some conceptual common concepts could constitute, after the Babel scission, a paradox of the Humanity. It is possible that some monogenetic explanations previous to the polygenetic ones – still present – to derive not only from a subconscious longing towards the unity, or from its very intuition but also from the fact that the respective spiritualities, in their self-containment, were originating themselves, at least at the very beginning, as unique and primordial. But this fact may therefore stand for the imperfections of the singularities of the civilizations incapacity to surpass their way towards universality. The isolation does not imply a peculiarity of great spiritualities and there are no isolated entities, lacking corresponding matches which does not necessarily entail imitations or superior assimilations. Among all these spiritualities - the Indian, the Jewish, the Islam and the Christian Occidental ones – the Indian spirituality is probably the most generous, the most comprehensive even if it had been proved that the elements it borrowed from other cultures and civilizations were conventionally or distortedly adopted. It is not about a permanent misinterpretation but about the destiny of a part split up from the whole. Any element of a culture, once assimilated by another one will develop itself – if it will – in accordance with the laws of the evolution that are valid there, will be assimilated by the new organism and of course, this phenomenon takes place in agreement with the nature of the essence in which it will include itself – nature that constitutes not only an ex-primordial giving but also a future form. Therefore there some steps here. At a primitive level the elements assimilations of other cultures can occur easier in one viewpoint but they act mostly as quantitative accumulations. At a medium level when quite a lot of elements have consolidated, able to individualize the form of a culture, gradually the degree of individuality of that very culture increases when confronted with the elements that could come from another culture. Although essentially this personality could remain at a low level and when a culture has reached its maturity the borrowed elements from another culture risk less to get deformed as they are the results of a selection based on affinities and compatibilities between these elements and the essence of the culture that receives them. Within the transfer process they undergo a formal change of identity having the chance to be organically adopted. On the other hand beyond the diversities generated by space, there is an eternal unity, noticeable in its historical evolution in time that generates the very elements that can be put in a common conceptual content. However it can be acknowledged that usually the great spiritualities are in their inner nature solitary and what brings them together is rather a pre-Babel heritage perpetuated

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and continuously regenerated under different forms till nowadays; the little spiritualities – if we can name them *spiritualities* – can mostly form conglomerates where conjectural, useful elements are eclectically grafted on their narrow substance.

The Indian spirituality seems to be closer to the Jewish one than that of the Occident. One particularity of the way in which the integration to the Universe and the relationship with it is thought of consists in conceiving the Nature a spiritualized medium by a Unique Reality. Unlike the occidental conception and nearer to the Jewishness the man is not seen as different from a hostile, unattached nature nevertheless it is stressed his inner kinship with the environment which the man is congenerous with. It is also considered here that the nature does not accept artificial orders – those created by man who therefore breaks its laws – that's why, conceiving nature as a relationship part-whole with the man is strongly reflected in the human activity. Hence it is easier to understand why the Indians' or the Jews' route is not a one way direction between goal and man, but an integrant part of it that educated the man preparing him for the final meeting with his aim, with the new identity – something similar might be found at Oedipus who assimilates in his soul every blow but the taking upon himself is not complete as his purpose lies in getting a kind of invulnerability with the same effect of a vaccine. In his relationship with the Universe the man will learn its laws and he will integrate, he will use them in the benefit of both of them, the man's discovery of the laws, of the whole, of the Universe being a form of manifestation of the harmony between the reason and the reality of the world, a way to understand life, as the man's thoughts are fulfilled in this Universe and in accordance with it and his deeds should follow the same direction. The Jews consider creation harmoniously too; he who brings about lack of balance is to bear the consequences. Anthropocentrically the Judaism turns the Jew into a being who understands the objective laws of the nature adding them a cultural dimension – he is a man of order in conformity with the moral values and a cultivated spirit unlike the Greeks, namely the Europeans, where the Man is the systematic spirit as all the laws lie within himself. The Western Europeans cultivate the anthropocentrism by the „obedience" of both the matter and nature and furthermore all the laws live inside the man who is the measure of all things, the world understanding starting from the man's conscious activity upon the nature under the control of the goddess Harmonia. The Jews see the truth as a humanly way of understanding life although we will not find here the triad Good-Truth-Beauty or a bed of Procrustes as the Protagoras. This religion is the path of the evolution – not accidentally it is considered here that he who lives the present does not become, he actually is – not an ideal in the European meaning whose supreme goal is the man, seen as an individual of the community but the moral man; consequently, it is not only a way of moral development but mostly a moral existential one. The religion imposes responsibilities both on the social and human plan almost everywhere, but mostly regarding the Jews and the more rigid Islam, the separation between laic and spiritual – an artificial one, that has at its basis an unilateral conception that afterwards

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generated „interference" reactions and a much greater segregation – being rather formal and generated by some contextual pretexts. Consequently, the confusion created by the concepts 'moral' and 'right' that the Semites make can be relevant in their way of understanding the world unlike the Romanians where the community establishes what „it's right" from what „it's wrong" referring to a Christian moral which is also a „law".

Considering the present as an outcome of past actions and therefore determining the future, the Indian spirituality conceives destiny as a sum of elements selected in accordance with certain laws proper to each human being's karma. The lower he places himself and thus his will become less involved in his activity governed by his desire the more he gives up to the tendencies which his destiny burdens him with. Necessity operates now whereas his power of will increases – as a result of his evolution towards wisdom hence a decrease of desire – that leads to augmented degrees of liberty. At one end there is destiny a state who leaves the man reasonless and as a consequence of his actions under the impulses of his desires, being at the mercy of any natural laws, at the other hand, there is his reason when the human being annihilated his karma freed himself off his destiny stepping in his sagacity into the unique Reality. This conception reminds of Jacob's ladder that stands for the symbolic relationship between Man and God, the way of the human destiny, as at one of its ends the man becomes aware of his material nature and at its other of its spiritual one. This intuition that turns into reason leads to the sacralization of the telluric, but the existence of this bridge between divinity and man is not sufficient – only necessary – to fulfill the human destiny; he must fight in order to realize his connection with the Divinity. All these take place because in accordance with the Judaism, life is dynamic however between words and facts there shouldn't be a gap. The Indians reach it by liberating themselves of all desire considering the ego identical with the Universe, unseparated from it because the desire obstructs the access to the superior levels while the will does not. That's why the art, the philosophy and the religion – creations of the human spirit – are the means by which consciousness acquires profundity and vastness on its way towards knowledge of the unity. Seeing himself in a larger perspective where he lives in and becoming aware of his moral nature, the man aims for the good, his will – a high instinct – taking the desire's place. By this form, the man, a being that separates good from evil in a moral plan and values the first on an axiologic scale of his deeds, takes care of the future – gathers treasures on the Earth to benefit in Heaven from – building it in accordance with the creation. Similarly and in the measure in which his will does not impose itself brutally upon the reality, the human being's creation becomes a form of manifestation of the flow of the universal fluxes through natural channels, a form of manifestation of the whole entelechy. On the other hand, the Divinity compels nothing, freeing the man of any obligation, leaving him the possibility of choice through which he could attain his goal – idea that was adopted by Christianity as well. The Islam unlike the Mosaic reduces the role of the individual's will, who integrates himself obediently, synergetically in the believers' mass. On the contrary,

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the Indian conception where there is freedom too, in this case it seems to exist only at the intersection – unless the divine will involves. The contradiction appears when dealing with the Occident as well. Socrates showed that, once he has reached the understanding and the knowledge of the good, the man does no longer want to do something evil, he is not tempted to do it – he cannot do it because he does not think that way any more. It seems that the Islam considers this way of thinking coming from the divine will as the man's duty is to obediently and consciously dedicate all his existence to Allah, unfaithfulness being a consequence of the ignorance – similar to Socrates' – of not knowing Allah.

The way in which the relationship with the other develops within these spiritualities is illustrative for the manner of understanding the human destiny and the man's place in the Universe. The Jewish spirituality considers that the moral convictions lie in every man's inner soul but he can get there through the other, who is reached through communication, which leads to the conclusion that the lack of communication forbids the access to knowledge. Everyman's formation is connected with the other, hence the corollary that the opposition is both creative and identity source. The communication educates the creative power, the essence of the language being the responsibility – here, it appears the demiurgic force of the word brought into the world and therefore of the created potentiality for the future. Through the dialogue the difference turns into positive value in the man's evolution. The Jewish receptivity for the other goes beyond the thirst for dialogue – which does not imply a constraint of his opinion by all means, but listening to and acquiescence for utilization of the other's as well. Our fellow can be helped if he is understood not as he but as I – hence understanding is possible, the deep meaning of the word appears not through a logical explanation but through its very existence. A fundamental characteristic of both Judaism and Indian spirituality derives from here that can be met in the Oriental Christianity unlike the Occidental one, namely the belief in the human capacity of communication and understanding from the narrow space of the community to that of the Universe which suggests that the lack of relationships has annihilating properties. (1) The dialogue which any person who is not an Occidental is prepared for has its function in the evolution, namely to evaluate and self-evaluate, to develop thinking, the one another receptiveness, the capacity to correct errors, to rediscover one's soul, to identify the best way to follow. The dialogue is chosen as the written idea is death-subjected while speaking is hermeneutically dynamic and psycho-pompous. There is too little of all these in the Occidental spirituality that is mainly ludic closer to the Byzantine scholars or by the polarity in Raphael's paintings. Finally, the severe proselytism that represents a form of manifestation of the incapacity to accept otherness and which derives from misunderstanding it and of the possibilities of the existence of several ways does not make up an existential aspect of the Jewish spirituality, the Oriental Christian or the Indian one but this is a characteristic of other spiritualities. A pattern of that kind can

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therefore be found in the Oriental Christianism. Probably the way in which the relationship with the other reflects itself is not separated from the social categories, which is peculiar to Christianity. Without losing a certain exclusivism the Orthodox Christianism is more generous, lacking the missionary activity, fanaticism and mostly, does not serve as a pretext to any activity which it may come into conflict with. That's way, in this case, the other one is our fellow man, a fact that fully reflects the way in which the relationship with the Divinity is conceived, that is closer to the man than in the Occidental Christianism. (2)

Contemplation being a means and not a purpose, the Indian philosophy considers that speculation establishes a preliminary moment only, the good thought having as natural extension – and fulfillment as well – the good deed. The purpose is the very realization of the essential identity. The apparent paradox is that although every cell comprises the whole Universe once these cells are put together – that otherwise lose their „proper" Universe, the universal plenitude is reached. To be means to act, action should develop in the unifying direction – lack of desire is needed therefore springing from unselfishness, an isolated insight upon the cell seen as essenceless, because „to be good means to live everyone's life" (Tagore). Like in mysteries and in a veiled form, the Christianism considers that only he who dies could follow the way towards unity. The Oriental Christianism distinguishes itself from this viewpoint once again as in the absence of the Purgatory, his chances to absolution depend exclusively on the manner in which he consolidates his relationship with God, here on the Earth. This is an advantage since without hoping in a penitence process and a future indulgence that he could not influence anymore, the man becomes conscious of the role of his life on the Earth, of the plenitude of his force and of his will that God trusted him with from the beginning. Hence, through his actions, the free man will seek to fulfill his destiny, to totally value this unique chance included in the soteriologic plan of the Divinity. That's why, periodically, the Jews renew their eternal oath with Yahweh through a great celebration with an acute perception of the time – their memory being constantly strengthened as a condition for obtaining access from the space world into the time world as well. (3) The conscious insight – Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement means to repent for one's sins-elements that destroy the moral equilibrium – represents everyone's duty, since *nobody* is sinless. The Indians, as well as the Jews, consider sin as the victory of the desire upon the will, the victory of the part upon the whole that's why it does not emerge from an isolated action but from the appliance of the conception which accordingly states that the man is ephemeral. Sin means activity not contemplation, he who contemplates does not commit sin and one cannot sin if one contemplates although contemplation is not the true way in man's life. Accordingly taking into account the man's destiny and without exaggerating, contemplation may be considered a sin. Certainly the good cannot be reached without sin.

As it can be noticed the differences from the Occident are quite important. The conscious assuming of a destiny is „a fatalistic technique" that appears neither in Judaism

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nor at the Indians namely in the so-called pragmatic spiritualities. That's why both Oedipus and Job can be considered as models. Oedipus is a desideratum, finally he is a loser, a man who torn, estranged – the estrangement through culture being an Occidental discovery, even an Occidental ideal – triumphantly raises his hollow eyes towards the gods who had never even noticed him and dies inadapted in a world which he cannot and does not know to bear creatively. In his attempt to build his own world, his choice goes not against the forces of the irrational but against the agents of the universal cosmic force. Oedipus loses the real world and gets those possible ones – the roots of the utopia – an artificial creation which leads to misunderstanding – Occidental country. (4) The Greek prophet unlike the Jewish one is blind, he cannot see the world, and he cannot see the Divinity either, looking for its perfection within himself. Overcoming himself, Job is a winner and after he has refused the oedipal way, he offers a lesson of modesty and he shows a total submission to the Almighty God. The two models do not affirm that the fight against it is absurd from the very beginning when the man's goal is his education and existence at a superior level; the Oedipal „victory" does not even represent a beautiful defeat while Job's experience constitutes a lesson of self-consciousness, dignity and wisdom. Job's friends' reaction is an Oedipal one. But Oedipus does not distinguish himself among the other Greek heroes who blame the gods and the destiny, who wrongly consider themselves as puppets in a world where, by no means paradoxical, the hubris is a high-honoured sin, a „perspective error" widening like a red carpet that alluringly waits for Agamemnon. Oedipus comes into being in a civilization that tries to get rid of its tensions lying in a predestined environment and geographical space. Driven by circumstances he lacks Job's capacity to escape – a real master of the destiny that belongs only to the spirituality endowed with memory, that lives in time and which has the time to think – consequently he does nothing else, but through his reactions, he enters into a game of forces where the only blind natural force is himself. That's why Job's will seeks God's reasons in his deeds and he won't try to interpret them himself deforming them through a reason that is not proper to them. This conception explains why the Judaism has no saints and no heroes seen as overskilled creatures who die for an idea, regularly in spite of any universal laws. Although there are heroes and saints in the Oriental Christianism, most of the time, they represent the individual of the collectivity and not the one above it. While in the synagogue, the Jew arises from the Jews, he is an individuality, however unseparated from the community that has generated him.

Even as a human being with his own personality he is connected with his community, a characteristic element belonging to the whole. The Indians, the Islam and the Oriental Christianism see things in a similar way. The Occident has always represented a tendency to generate individuals, isolated from the mass while on the other side there are no masses but communities. Standing aside a civilizer hero such as Aeneas, Moses sets out from some disadvantageous premises. He had to deal with rebellious, grumpy, and anxious individuals worrying about the eternity, eager to evolve, inquisitive

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in their attempt to find out the good. The Latin hero has always been *Pater Aeneas* never confronted with Koreh or bearing his people's accumulating weaknesses, ruling for ever as an enlightened despot.

Unlike the way it was usually been considered, we think that the Orient does not request a moral ecstasy but, on the contrary, moral deeds. The Greeks stuck in their narrow environment, contemplate and interpret the reality while the Jews adjust their thoughts to the reality, which also happens in the Oriental Christianism where the dichotomy laic/religious is sensibly blurred in comparison with the Occident. The Torah offers support without hindering the evolution of the community and of the Judaism (die goldene keit – the golden chain of generations and of the belief in the Torah makes the Jew feel himself as a cell in a body, in a historical community), as well as the homilies offer the way towards the Divinity indicating the daily progress of the community in exchange for a sacrifice. (6) The Greeks broke off and started to wonder about the man and his capacities. They perfected the theoretical means for their own sake and looking for the abstract they did not bother to find out and follow the way. Considering that the logic is used for argumentation and less for knowledge, the Jews who think that knowledge has a practical value, where there are no ascetics as they look for a full life instead of a redeeming death, they treat this discovery as an accessory instrument. Hence the Judaism is a religion that promotes the moral values which educate the man and not the ritual obligations turning into knowledge of both life and mind.

Time – what is time – is not judged in accordance with the standards of an epoch as the destiny belongs to the mankind and not to a species or to an individual. Oedipus did not help the Greeks, on the contrary he remained an image – not a model to contemplate – while Job opened the way of the evolution for the people. In fact, the purpose is to morally change the man and not physically the nature. The education of the irrational, the finding out of a recipient for intuitive forms and their cultivation, the spirit that gives life to the matter without denying it – although the spirit cannot deny since it has creative powers – seem to be the desiderata that enliven both the Orient and the Protestant Occident as well, in a paradoxical way. Taking into consideration these final aspects, the Protestantism represents a form of the spiritual evolution much closer to the Jewish philosophy than the Catholicism, which it drew apart from. The dynamic characteristic of the Jewish tradition – the Haskalah – can be compared not only with the Catholic aggiornamento but also with the reforming spirit of the Germans hindered by the Meridional Catholicism. Similar to the Jew who invents and creates but does not discover and passively accepts, the Jew who values knowledge and information for the sake of their practical use, the Protestants creatively and dynamically accepted Adam's anathema. Lacking the Earth richness and the meridional warmth, the German accepted this protest, which undoubtedly meant the beginning of a new order in the evolution of the human spirit. It is natural that within a culture where the unutterable stands for the failure of the human spirit – like in the case of the Jews – the self-development through

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work and the changement it carries about becomes the defining way towards the fulfillment of the destiny.

Notes

1. Thus the circumcision in the Semite world does not represent an isolation, an adiabatic delimitation but a material break away – through sign – and a throbbing towards the spiritual. The well-reasoned explanations are wrong – the physical good is just a simple consequence and not a purpose for the Jews generally speaking – as the role of the spirit is ignored in the modeling of the matter.

2. There are relevant, in this way, the diminutives used by the ordinary people when speaking about the Supreme Divinity unacceptable in the Occident, the architecture of churches and cathedrals, being much discussed of. Even the anthropomorphic way in their conceiving the Malefic Spirit and their accidental relationship are one way examples that indicate the man's destiny in the world and implicitly his relationship with the otherness.

3. This very important aspect reveals itself when talking about Ulysses who driven away from his cosmic anonymity – only through his self-preservation instinct that makes him leave his utopic island – after he went through the anxieties of his life comes back home on his unchanged island where he will spend the rest of all his life. Moses, unlike Ulysses leaves the utopic stability and begins a new life, and he permanently gathers new experiences that change him and his followers and, if God won't put him to sleep for his sins through living, he will carry on his eternal work even today.

4. Trying to understand and assimilate the Christianism with his Oriental essence, the Latin-Greek spirit generates the Middle Ages with its heretics plethora proper to the misunderstanding and the confusion of the Christian concepts of the epoch. This misunderstanding is significant as all the crises of the Occident as well as the utopias that appeared like the snake in the desert are nothing else but revivals on other levels of the same ways that generated them. The awkward excuse for the best possible world comes into being as a limitation of the Occidental philosophy, in fact a defeat that Prometheus always admits after he eagle has left him.

5. There are few individual heroes, the people replaces them (Fichol is the speaker for all of them) the Judaism has no saints, no knights, no hermits to guide it but some individuals sent by God who lead the people of the God; the difference is fundamental, as it is not following a leader whose vanity and merits are strengthened by a mob, on the contrary it seeks the good for the people of the God, through its representative, the man seen as an instrument.

6. The Romanian word for homily is *cazanie* related with the significance of the word *caznă* coming from the Indo-European word meaning 'torment, pain' in Romanian. It is also related with the verb *a pedepsi* meaning 'to punish', word that has a Greek origin in the Romanian language. Hence punishment had less a punitive purpose rather

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than a kind of correction that was meant to teach what is good; therefore is was taking place in a way that, at a phenomenal level, could be unpleasant.

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