

FOREWORD

WHY A NEW RELIGION?

It is true that many of our contemporaries have recently distanced themselves from religion, mainly in the countries of Western Europe, and especially with regard to the Christian religion that has dominated Europe for centuries. However, this distance does not seem to be total: some doubts about the nature of life and the universe persist. Indeed, deep down in many individuals, questions arise about the birth of life, the dynamics of the universe, the link with death, the meaning of existence and the deep reason why we live as human beings.

While a growing portion of Western civilization is freeing itself from religious constraints, much of the world's population remains ardently attached to a religion and generally rejects atheism, often accusing this emancipated society of being materialistic, spiritually inferior, and unable to compete with sacred texts.

Our time is not exempt from spiritual research, quite the contrary. But confusion reigns, minds wade through traditions and extremism becomes more and more intense, even violent.

Recently, I attended a debate between scientists and Catholics about whether the Big Bang was generated by God or not. The debate has turned to the multiverses and superuniverses. Scientists focused on studying the facts, albeit hypothetical, while the priest returned almost obsessively to the concept of God.

But the question still allowed the debate. What is regrettable is the lack of imagination, on both sides, to try to become aware of the divine phenomenon, that is to say the profound mystery linked to the existence of the universe. The priest, obsessed with God as he has been presented for centuries, and the others, simply preferring to avoid the subject. So let's try to clarify the question and come up with some answers.

Our universe exists as we know it, with so-called "universal" physical, chemical and gravitational laws, but we can imagine that in other universes, these "universal" laws are different. What caused the Big Bang in our universe is unknown, but could be one of the universes in our multiverse. Or, according to the priest, a transcendent force that cannot be other than God. Neither side can prove anything, because for the moment, the answer is beyond the human capacity for objective investigation.

Our conception of God is based on the will of a transcendent being to realize his creation. What for? Because this is the conception that we have always known, generation after generation, now rooted in our minds, reinforced by the punishments inflicted on the "rebels". We have the idea of a father who governs our life and death, who protects and punishes us. But we could imagine, for example, that it is the only creature in all universes, born alone without having been begotten, that grows, forms and transforms, where the creator merges with his own creation, and where his will is nothing but the pure energy present in all universes, at least in our immense little universe.

Moreover, in these dynamics and in some parts of these multiverses, life was born. A part of this life allows him to become aware at every moment of a part of his creation, because it expresses itself as consciousness of the present moment. The set of past, present and future conscious forms

constitutes his consciousness: the universal consciousness. It is free from any moral judgment because it is itself the product of chance, while also being its producer. If we were, especially ourselves, the human race, but also all the other forms of consciousness present in all the multiverses, the same forms that together form the universal consciousness, wouldn't this be a magnificent alternative way of conceiving divinity? A way of spiritually justifying the total expansion in all directions of the human community and science, without necessarily denigrating the existence of God at all costs?

The deep and fundamental reason is that each of us can probably have a correct and valid idea of the universal phenomenon related to the mystery of the birth of the universe and life on Earth. Instead of having a fixed idea of the father giving us commands, we could mentally envision multiple trajectories similar to the movements of electrons in quantum physics. And of course, there could be trajectories that don't see God. That said, we are free to give the name of God to whomever or to what we want, and if we want to: it would not be the first time! We are also free not to name it, and perhaps this is a good idea for the future.

This deep mystery is also the driving force that drives us to become ever more aware of our universe in all its aspects: it is one of the most beautiful energies we find in our deep universal nature as human beings. Mysteries are the seed of research!

Why, then, expound the idea of a new religion?

Western Europe experienced the historical phenomenon of the legal and constitutional separation of spiritual power from temporal or political power in the last century. In addition, freedom of worship and freedom to practice any religion have been firmly established. For the moment, this phenomenon is limited to Western Europe (Latin, Germanic and Scandinavian cultures), because in all other countries of the world, religion is still intrinsically linked to temporal power, or even is itself temporal and political power, as in some countries governed by Islam. In all these countries, alternative forms of religion are difficult to accept, or even forbidden. In China, we reach the other extreme where religion is actually political power.

That said, European cultures continue to inspire certain mental openings in other countries, for example LGBT issues, or the official recognition of the various monotheistic religions in the United States: "In God we trust", the currency of the US dollar, which was originally based on the Christian God.

However, and unfortunately, today, religious freedom in Western Europe focuses mainly on the Christian religion (Catholic, Protestant, Anglican, but also evangelical or Jehovah's Witnesses), on the recently imported Islam whose activists pursue jihad, peaceful or violent, in order to establish Islam as the only religion, and finally on atheism, which obviously includes convinced materialists. but also all those who have simply distanced themselves from religion. A few small spaces still exist for other faiths: Buddhists, Rastas, Hindus, etc., but these are minorities of no real social or political importance.

On the one hand, this religious freedom has not yet given rise to alternative new generation spiritual theories that would make it possible to confront more effectively the present and future challenges of humanity. On the other hand, however, it is a totally new fact in the planetary human community and will undoubtedly be the necessary substrate for the development and spiritual renewal of the whole world.

We are therefore at the dawn of a new religious phase, and that is why, without preamble, I wish to evoke the Third Religion.

It is important to note that religion does not necessarily include the conception of a divine entity or its prophetic revelations. This was also the case with the First Religion and it is also the case with Buddhism.

This spiritual treatise is probably one of the first expressions of a new thought, free from all prejudice, humble without being submissive, and waiting for the blossoming of other buds to form a field of "mystical flowers", a new human network for the development of the religious phenomenon, whose name of the Third Religion could find its definitive recognition in the future.

Note : In this text, the word "transcendent" is used in the sense of that which is outside of perceived and perceptible reality and which exceeds the limits of all possible experience, while the term "transcendental" is expressed to mean that which is at the origin or conditions a priori all possible experience.

CHAPTER ONE

FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD RELIGION

If I speak of a third religion, it implies that I know the first two. First of all, we should ask ourselves what a religion is. Religion is a so-called spiritual thought accompanied by a cultic activity specific to human beings, at least here on Earth. We have no sign of religiosity in animals, present or past, and we do not know what is happening elsewhere in the universe.

Thanks to archaeologists, we have discovered tombs that are about 100,000 years old, attributed to Homo Sapiens and Neanderthals. Tombs are important because they bear witness to a sensitivity to death and express the need of the living to give it meaning, so burials are a sign of the presence of the sacred in human beings.

The sacred is what allows us to give purpose to the events of life that affect us deeply, whether they are caused by intense fear or intoxicating joy, and which we cannot explain. The sacred transports us into our faculty of inner vision. This feeling is so strong that it pushes us to devote part of our lives to paying special attention to it, just as we do to nourish ourselves. The arts, for example, are a form of expression of the sacred.

Thus, if we have found human burials dating back 100,000 years, we can wonder if the feeling of the sacred existed before, since it is estimated that the genus Homo appeared about two million years ago with a species called Homo Habilis, from which Homo Erectus descended, which discovered fire and hearth. We have no archaeological evidence of religious life among these men, which does not mean that there was none. In truth, some skulls of Erectus mutilated at the base have been found, which suggests possible funerary rituals.

That said, we can say that human beings carry within them, or in their DNA, a need for sacredness, which allows me to think that this need could disappear with an evolutionarily later species that would no longer be considered human, but that would remain intimate to our condition as long as we are human.

Let us therefore begin with the first religion. It is the religion or religions practiced by prehistoric man, at least by Homo Sapiens and Neanderthals who appeared on this planet about three hundred thousand years ago, some in Africa, others in Europe, both descended, through countless ramifications, from Homo Erectus.

I have already mentioned burials, but there is also rock art, these paintings found by archaeologists in several caves in the south of France, representing scenes with animals of the time, mainly those that man hunted. These representations are considered symbols of the spirits of these animals, which thus take their place in the human sacredness expressed by his artistic faculty. Rock art is usually attributed to Homo Sapiens, that is, to ourselves, the only human species still present on Earth.

As for the Neanderthals, whose first bones were discovered in the mid-nineteenth century, long considered an inferior species, we now realize that their social life was complex, that they possessed an intelligence comparable to or even superior to ours, and that they too had a certain vision of the sacred. In this regard, the Bruniquel cave is overwhelming: it suggests ritual life among Neanderthals 170,000 years ago, through the circular arrangement of truncated stalactites and hearths constantly lit in a part far from the entrance. This cave, located in the south of France, was discovered by a child at the end of the last century. Archaeologists have examined it twice to conclude that the ring structure dates back to such an ancient time that it is therefore of Neanderthal origin.

Finally, prehistory also offers us female statuettes with generous and voluptuous shapes, suggesting fertility. They have been found in various places very far from each other, which strangely makes us think of a kind of universal religion at that time. It is extremely important to note that these statuettes were not the object of any particular cult and therefore did not have the status of deity. They are generally considered to have been a mere expression of the universal process of reproduction of life.

What was the position of man in relation to nature at that time? He lived completely immersed in nature, subject to its beneficial and harmful forces. He lived in groups, in tribes, hunted, fished, gathered fruits and plants. He feared predatory animals, because his physical faculties did not allow him to compete with them in single combats: I am thinking, for example, of cave lions, mammoths, woolly rhinoceroses, etc. Luckily for him, he had his social life, his intelligence, his weapons and tools, the fire to keep warm, cook his meals and defend himself.

It had its own spiritual life, and this prehistoric spirituality was called the era of shamanism in the mid-nineteenth century, in reference to the sorcerers of contemporary primitive peoples, who entered into a trance to dialogue with the spirits. The men of that time saw spirits everywhere in their acceptance of the sacred and therefore needed the shaman to intercede and negotiate with these spirits. The shamans were part of the group like the others, but possessed these faculties that allowed them to come into contact with the spirits.

This is what I call the first religion: it should be noted that the conception of God does not yet exist, and that a religion is therefore not necessarily linked to the idea of divinity.

About 10,000 years before our era, fundamental changes in human life led to an evolution of the concepts of the sacred. This phase of prehistory is called Neolithic, because it is also the last human period when stone was the main resource for weapons and tools.

In the Neolithic, especially in the present-day Near East, man began to cultivate the land and domesticate animals. From nomadic, it became sedentary and, little by little, villages were created. It was also the time of the discovery of metals, first copper, then iron. Men then emancipated themselves from nature, managed to shape and shape it. Writing was born with commerce, a new social life emerged, and naturally a new conception of the sacred was imposed: that of the divinity.

They are no longer spirits to negotiate with, but anthropomorphic figures who hold power over nature and whom men pray to and beg in order to obtain their benefits.

First a goddess figure appears, then this goddess finds herself seated on a bull until the birth of cities, the first kings and the first pantheons, where men take her place until they become the fathers of gods and goddesses. I am referring, among others, to Zeus or Jupiter. In the first cities, for example in the time of the Sumerians, writing was born, the wheel was used, the first calendars were established with the concept of hours divided into sixty minutes, the heavens were observed and the positions of the stars and planets were determined. Human science was also born in various forms, one of which is still used today: astrology. It should also be noted that Biblical Genesis largely repeats Sumerian legends, and that even the universal flood of the Bible is recounted in countless cultures of the three or four millennia BCE.

Alongside the cults of the deities, where the new figure of priests — professionals of rituals — and that of the sovereigns of the nation, the political and military elite, appeared, we find the ordinary people who devoted themselves, among other things, to the cult of ancestors, which can still be found today, for example in the Far East.

Towards the middle of the first millennium B.C., when the first empires were taking shape almost everywhere on the planet, the idea of the spiritual salvation of the individual through his personal relationship with the divinity was born. This is a crucial period for the rest of human history, as it is here that the first monotheistic religions are emancipated, in which the father of the gods becomes the one God, creator of heaven and earth, endowed with a power of judgment over humans, both on Earth and after death. This period also saw the birth of philosophy in Greece and the religion advocated by Buddha, based on the total awakening of human consciousness.

The two largest branches of early monotheism are Zoroastrianism and Judaism. The first emerged as a small branch of proto-monotheistic Mazdaism according to some sources around 1200 BC. Mazdaism would become the dominant religion in the Achaemenid Persian Empire (550–330 BC). Zoroastrianism was then the official religion of the Sassanid dynasty in Persia (224–651 AD), until its virtual disappearance with the Arab Muslim invasion. The second was born in Israel, in the kingdom of Judah, around 500 B.C., with the first redactions of the Bible, which would become the sacred book of the Jews and consecrate monotheism through the God Yahweh, abandoning the old polytheistic religion. This one Jewish God, however, remains an anthropomorphic figure in the sense that he addresses the humans he has created in his image, even if he loses his physical characteristics, while Zarathustra's god, Ahura Mazda, has a more spiritual or conceptual connotation (Spirit who creates by thought) and less carnal.

The rest of God's history is marked by the life of Jesus Christ, who declared himself the Son of God and introduced a revolutionary idea for his time: love of God and love as the fundamental form of human relationships. His life will be the starting point of the Christian religions.

About six hundred years later, Muhammad had the vision of the angel Gabriel, which allowed him to lay the foundations of the Qur'an, to affirm that he was the last prophet and that he received the

teachings directly from God, that is, from Allah. Islam is the most recent of the monotheistic religions.

This is what I call the second religion: the religion of the gods or of God/Yahweh/Allah. A special place could be given to Buddhism, which does not provide for a fundamental divine figure, but which is nevertheless based on absolute notions such as the total enlightenment of man, who becomes Buddha and thus embodies a kind of spiritual divinity.

But what is happening today? What era are we living in? Where is humanity in its journey?

The historical and traditional connection we had with nature is completely turned upside down. If the change of the Neolithic and the first cities was a total revolution of humanity, what should we think of our time? Can we compare, for example, the invention of writing with today's digitization accompanied by global and immediate communication? Can we compare the use of the wheel as a means of transport with the sending of robotic probes throughout the solar system?

Agriculture and livestock farming have led men to design new social and religious forms. What about the new philosophical ideas of the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, at least in Europe? I am thinking in particular of Marxism.

Even more: if Neolithic men were just beginning to appropriate nature, what can be said of today's world where men have become almost total masters of this same nature, to the point of inventing and living the word "Artificial" in opposition to the word "Natural"?

If men have passed from spirits to gods, then what is the future of religions in this new world that is opening up before us?

The current situation sees on the one hand a new mentality in which religion has almost no place. A secular world is born, where human rights, freedom of expression and above all trust in science become sacred. Contemporary science is radically different from that of the past, because it takes the form of experimental, verifiable, shareable, and theoretically developable research — what is commonly referred to as the scientific method. This part of humanity, rather than believing in God, places its trust in science, which reaches levels of knowledge unimaginable if we compare them to the time of the birth of the gods, which makes them less important in this new society.

On the other hand, traditional and historical beliefs are still very strong in certain circles of today's society, in certain geographical and political cultures. In addition, some religions are giving rise to a new social impulse — I am thinking here above all of Christian evangelicals, Salafist Islam and Hindu nationalism — which seem to project a spiritual path for the future of humanity.

One of the current social problems is that secular states, which have detached themselves from religious organizations — as here in Europe, for example in relation to the Catholic Church — are obliged to tolerate, even to consecrate, the religions of the second religion, since this secularism can only present human laws in the face of the divine laws peremptorily proclaimed by the religious authorities.

This is where what I call the third religion comes in. First, is it true that this new agnostic or atheist layer of society is completely materialistic? These secular people no longer believe in God, of course, but do they no longer ask themselves questions about death? On the meaning of life?

On the very existence of reality?

Don't they have a form of confidence in science and technology? Does this man of our time no longer know spirituality?

Second, how is it that some scientists can declare, for example in the case of climate change, that the point of no return has been reached and that, unfortunately, humanity must prepare for its fatal fate of extinction? Is this not an absolute position in which man holds a universal power of knowledge, leaving no possibility of salvation? Is this not proof of an underlying search for a way out, for a faith?

Can we not simply note that we are in a new religious phase, which no longer needs the gods, but which still understands that man has not solved all the mysteries of the universe and of reality? And that his time has not necessarily come?

A new religion, which I also like to call techno-shamanic, because it is no longer necessary to have deities, prophets, priests and rituals. A religion that looks at reality with the tools of today's science and technology, but with the same humility that our ancestors of the first religion could have had when negotiating with spirits. A new religion in which no one has a higher vision than others, but simply where some people have the pleasure of expressing and sharing their spiritual opinions. A third religion closer to the first than to the second, because often the grandchildren feel closer

I would like to point out, however, that in the rest of this writing, I will often refer — for the sake of simplicity on the one hand, and in contrast to previous religions on the other — to the third religion as such. The reader must understand that this is in reality a simple personal opinion, which is part of that contemporary phenomenon opening up to new spiritual conceptions, and to which I have given the name of the third religion.

It is therefore not certain that all "techno-shamans" — that is, people who wish to express their opinion on this subject — follow exactly the same path as me, except that of novelty and alternative to the religions of the second epoch.

It is therefore a pleasure for me to introduce the reader to my humble vision of this new religion.