« Vers une fédération européenne: avec, contre ou sans Dieu?"

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1. European federalism and the nation-state.

European integration and the proposal to build a federal Europe were a reaction to the dominance of the modern European nation-state. Before, during and after the Second World War, many in the European movement believed that nation-state nationalism had been responsible for the three major wars that had divided Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries (the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War, and the two World Wars). Among the aims of the European Movement, the origins of which go back to the 19th century with statesmen such as Koudenhove-Kalergi, was the attempt to overcome this legacy of nationalism. The founding fathers of the European Community, such as Schuman, Adenauer and Degasperi, all Christian Democrats, shared this opinion, as did Jean Monnet who, although not a politician, spoke also of a 'United States of Europe'.

European federalists were united in their rejection of nation-state nationalism. There were, however, different strands of federalist thought each of which proposed a different federal model. They may be divided into two main groups: the 'moderates' such as Schuman and his colleagues; and the 'radicals', associated with personalist philosophy. These included philosophers, political theorists such as Jacques Maritain, Alexandre Marc, Raymond Dandieu and theologians such as the Jesuit Henri de Lubac and the Dominican Yves Congar. The 'moderates' were sometimes called 'Hamiltonian Federalists' as they were strongly influenced by the US model of federalism; while the position of the 'radicals' was known as '*le fédéralisme intégral*' as they conceived federalism in more holistic, philosophical terms. Both strands of federalism sought to overcome the legacy of nation-state nationalism but adopted different approaches to achieve this. The 'Hamiltonians' were more pragmatic and recognized that it was utopian to believe that the modern European nation-states would give up their sovereignty to join a United States of Europe as the thirteen American colonies had done in forming the United States of America. Their approach, therefore, was to recognize the continued existence of the nation-state as the basic unit of a future federation but to constrain it with new institutions of a supranational character. The 'radicals', however, wished to adopt a 'big bang' approach in which a European-wide Convention would draw up a Constitution, which would then be ratified in a referendum of the peoples of Europe. In this scenario, the existing nation-states would disappear to be replaced by a federal state of which the sub-federal units would be more 'natural' units such as 'regions' (Denis de Rougement) or '*ethnies*' (Guy Héraud).

We know today that the utopian scheme of the latter group we not adopted while the more pragmatic approach of the moderates was, with the help of technocrats such as Jean Monnet. However, what interests me in this paper is the fact that members of both federalist movements were Christian and especially Catholic. Schuman, De Gasperi, and Adenauer were all Catholics and Christian Democrats. The personalist movement was largely of Christian and especially Catholic inspiration although there were some Protestants (De Rougement) involved. Both traditions looked askance at the tradition of the liberal democratic nation-state and the nationalism which emanated

from it. Both traditions thought of themselves as rooted in an older European tradition which they were seeking to update. I am not suggesting that they wished to return in a reactionary kind of way to the Middle Ages. Their aim, rather, was to update the social doctrine of the Church and to overcome what they regarded as some of the negative aspects of modernity including the legacy of the secular nation-state.

Not all European federalists were Christian, Catholic or even religious. The Belgian Paul-Henri Spaak, a graduate of this distinguished university and a representative of the *tradition laique* was certainly not. And many non-Christian Socialists in Germany, France and Italy supported the European movement. Nevertheless, the Christian dimension was strong because of the influence of Christian Democracy.

2. The religious origins of the European nation-state system

European federalists and others thus opposed the modern secular nation-state and saw European integration at the very least as constraining its worst aspects. The irony is that the modern European state, sometimes called the Westphalian state, which is today regarded as the epitome of secularism, was itself the product of religious factors, that is, the Wars of Religion of the 16th and 17th centuries. The 1648 Treaty of Westphalia endorsed the principle *cuius regio eius religio* (the religion of the ruler will be the religion of the state) defined in 1555 by the Peace of Augsburg ended these wars and created what were in effect *confessional* states. At first these were the Catholic and Lutheran states of the Holy Roman Empire but later the principle was extended to Calvinist states such as the Netherlands. Basically, what we today call the 'Westphalian State' in international relations refers to just one aspect of this settlement: the principle of non-intervention. Catholic rulers would not interfere in the affairs of Protestant states and vice versa and this principle of non-inervention is still a feature of modern international relations. What is sometimes forgotten is that the new confessional states were strongly influenced by *theological concepts.* Luther, Calvin, and their followers, Anglican divines in England and their Catholic opponents such as the Jesuits and Dominicans all developed political theories rooted in different theological presuppositions. Each of these theological traditions conceived the nature of the Church, its sacraments, priesthood, etc., and its relations with the civil authorities and, later, the state, in quite distinctive ways. Luther, for example, thought the Church, as an organization in the world should *not* engage in good works but that these should be left to the civil authorities. Furthermore, he thought that these same civil authorities should exercise discipline over the Church itself even in certain doctrinal matters on the understanding, of course, that they were themselves composed of Lutherans. This was in direct contrast to the mediaeval situation when the Church was usually seen as a political power in its own right which claimed jurisdiction over the civil authorities. The ongoing disputes between the Emperor and the Pope are an example of such conflicting claims. Luther's position led to the Church adopting an acquiescent position vis-à-vis the civil authorities and we can see the influence of this position in the subsequent histories of the Germanic and Scandinavian states. Calvin, while following much of Luther's theology, had a quite different approach to his understanding of relations between the Church and the civil authorities and, in contrast to Luther, thought the civil authorities should be subject to the Church. This reflected his ongoing conflict with the city fathers of Geneva in the 16th century.

Both Anglicanism and Catholicism were more complex in their understandings of church-state relations than either Lutheranism or Calvinism. Anglicanism was forged in a situation of fragmentation which characterised the Protestant Reformation in England (and Wales) because of the shifting theological allegiances of monarchs and rulers after the Reformation: - these varied between sympathy for aspects of Catholicism (Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, Mary Tudor, James II, and Charles II) and the Puritan tradition represented by Oliver Cromwell. At the end of these tussles, the Anglican Church emerged as a hybrid of Catholic, Puritan and 'broad' (today meaning 'liberal' both in theology and ethics) tendencies. But it remained the established Church of England (continuing in until today), in Ireland (until 1869) and in Wales (until 1920). The disestablishment in Ireland and Wales because, in those countries, the majority were not Anglican but Catholic (Ireland) or other forms of non-conformist Protestantism (Wales). Scotland, an independent state until 1603 adopted Calvinism (brought there from Geneva by John Knox who knew Calvin himself). The Calvinist Church of Scotland was established until 1920 and, after disestablishment it still remained the largest Church in that country.

The history of political Catholicism is more complex than is generally realised. First of all, within the Church itself, since the mediaeval period, there has been a debate about the nature of ecclesiology – how the Church as an organization, including its forms of organization and systems of authority, is itself understood. In the Middle Ages, there was tensions between 'conciliarists' who held that final authority was exercised through the Councils composed of bishops, and what were sometimes known as 'caesaro-papists' who thought that final authority rested with the Pope in Rome. The papacy grew in importace after the Barbarian invasions and the departure of the Emperor to Byzantium. As the Pope became a temporal as well as a spiritual ruler, this developed into the well-known rivalry between him and the Holy Roman Emperor. This rivalry lay behind the various shifting coalitions of states, cities and city-leagues in the later Middle Ages. With the Reformation, however, the role of the Pope as a political leader was seriously curtailed and the French Revolution, followed by Napoleon, dealt the same fate to the Holy Roman Emperor. The modern nation and the modern state were forged during and after the Protestant Reformation and Catholicism reconfigured itself once again with Gallicanism (the idea, found especially in France that there were 'national' Churches, albeit still in communion with Rome) being opposed to Ultramontanism (which, especially after the French Revolution, opposed loyalty to the nation-state and continued to look to Rome for ultimate authority). At the risk of oversimplification, one could say that national (Gallican) hierarchies were more sympathetic to modern nationalism (and, indeed, in Poland and Ireland Catholicism became a key element in the national identities of those countries), while Rome tended to be more critical, especially as 19th century nationalism was often associated with liberalism, anti-clericalism, and representative democracy. Within Catholicism, therefore, there has been no simple unitary position on the relations between Church and State. With the Second Vatican Council, this changed once again with the Church now officially espousing democracy, human rights and religious freedom and being an important factor in what Samuel Huntingdom called the 'Third Wave of Democracy' (that is, the spread of democracy to many developing countries after decades of authoritarian and/or military rule.

3. Laïcité, secularism and the modern State

The modern European state emerged out of the complex, at times contradictory, sometimes violent, and often confusing religious and political history outlined above. The Reformation and the Wars of

Religion that followed it shattered the underlying cultural and religious unity that had existed previously in Western Europe. It was especially the Wars of Religion and the instability and insecurity that accompanied them that led philosophers such as Hobbes and Hume to seek a political system that would dispense with religion as the foundation of political life. In any case, one of the unintended consequences of the Reformation (that is, unintended by the Reformers) was a gradual secularisation of the European state in the sense that over time ecclesiastical organizations were excluded from the processes of decision-making in most European states. Increasingly, one of the functions of the state was to control and regulate religion rather than the other way around. The 18th century Enlightenment and the rapid advances in science at that time further led to the 'secularization of the European mind' when it was felt by many *philosophes* and the burgeoning scientific movement that reason and religious faith were incompatible and the latter had to be excluded from any part in public affairs or scientific endeavours. The French Revolution accelerated these tendencies and led to tensions between new secularist movements such as nationalism (although as noted above this could also have a religious basis), liberalism and, later, socialism and communism and religious authorities. Over time, the secularization movement also affected the populations of European societies although this was much more gradual than its effect on the elites.

It would take us too far from the purpose of this brief position-paper to dwell on the entire history of secularization and the modern European state. It will suffice here to say that, by the second half of the twentieth century, and particularly from the 1960s, the movement seemed unstoppable at least in western countries and, course, in communist states. This led to the formulation of the 'secularization thesis' by sociologists such as Peter Berger and others. This argued that, as societies became more modern (that is, scientifically and rationally based), religion would eventually disappear. By the 1980s and 1990s, however, it was clear that this had not happened, at least in the United States and in other parts of the world, especially in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The rise of militant Islam also became evident both in Muslim and Arab countries such as Algeria but also among Muslim populations in Europe. Although some sociologists such as Steve Bruce maintain that the 'thesis' was being realised as predicted, others, including Peter Berger, reformulated it. The thesis now became: 'religious America, secular Europe', as secularization seemed to be advancing strongly in the heartlands of Christianity in western Europe.

One of the problems in discussing this debate is that there are various meanings are attached to the word 'secular' and its derivations 'secularization' and 'secularism'. Literally, 'secular' refers to 'this world' as opposed to the 'supernatural' although it can also mean 'this age' (*saecula*). In relation to the development of the state, which is central to our discussion in this paper, it refers to the state in so far as it is run, not by the Church, but by non-ecclesiastical authorities. There has indeed been a process of secularization from the 16th century onwards which saw the progressive removal of ecclesiastical authorities from state affairs. This occurred in both Europe and in the United States (although some of the thirteen colonies did have established churches this was not the case of the new United States). The 'secular state' came to be increasingly identified with liberalism and then with democracy: those in charge of the affairs of state should not be members of the clergy as, in a liberal democracy, the source of legitimacy of decision-making resides in the ballot-box. Thus the 'secular state' came to be seen as an essential feature of liberal representative democracy.

This does not mean that Churches have disappeared from public life. Relations between the state and churches in contemporary Europe may be presented as a spectrum with, at one end, the French

tradition of *laïcité* and, at the other end, the 'established Church of England' with 26 Anglican Bishops sitting in the House of Lords and thus involved in the legislative process. In between these two extremes we find 'separation of Church and state' (US), 'state Churches' (the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Finland – Sweden abolished this in 2000), 'special recognition' (Greece) and 'concordat arrangements' between the Holy See and other states. Furthermore, in many countries, Church-based organizations deliver a wide range of publicly-funded public services particularly in the fields of health, education and social services.

The 'secular state', however, is not identical with 'secularism', understood as a normative political ideology with roots in the European Enlightenment, which argues that 'faith' is a purely private, personal affair which should be completely excluded, not just from the 'political' sphere, but even from the 'public' sphere. This 'ideological secularism' contrasts with what we might call the 'procedural secularism' that can be seen as an essential feature of liberal democratic states. Groups espousing this kind of ideological secularism are the American Civil Liberties Union, the British Humanist Association and National Secular Society, and the various *mouvements laïques* in France and Belgium.

John Rawls's theory of justice gave expression to the idea that 'religion', as a 'comprehensive doctrine' is not amenable to public reason and should be contained within the private sphere. Although Rawls's doctrine has never been fully applied in any country, even in the United States where it is very difficult for a self-confessed atheist to be elected to public office, it has had enormous influence among academics, policy-makers and in the legal profession in many Western countries. Outside of these European and European-influenced countries, however, this is not the case.

Rawls's theory has become the default position in discussions about secularism and religion. However, it has not gone uncontested even by thinkers who are themselves atheist or non-religious. Isaiah Berlin and his followers such as John Gray, for example, have developed the theory of 'value pluralism' which argues that there are several accounts of 'the good life' which is sought by particular communities. These may simply be incommensurate with each other and it is a mistake to try to find one overarching narrative (secularism) which trumps all the others. From this perspective, Rawls's secularism is just as much a 'comprehensive doctrine' as Catholicism or Islam and deserves no special place. Gray has developed this notion of 'value pluralism' in a more contemporary setting in what he calls 'Enlightenment's Wake'. Thus, out of these reflections has developed the notion that we are in a period which is post-Enlightenment, post-modern and post-secular. That is, the high period of ideological secularism, which originated in the Enlightenment and reached its peak in the 1960s with a certain type of 'modernity', is now giving way to 'post-modernism'. Interestingly, both Jürgen Habermas and Pope Benedict XVI (when he was still Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop of Munich) held a famous dialogue on these developments and both agreed on the necessity of preserving 'Reason', as found in both the Enlightenment tradition and in the Catholic tradition of natural law, against the dangers of irrationality that are present in these post-modern trends.

Nevertheless, it does seem to be the case that the kind of ideological secularism espoused by Rawls and the various forms of secular humanism associated with it, are giving way to a more complex situation in which religion, secularity and multicultural societies are all present in the mix without any one approach being predominant over the others. Charles Taylor, in his massive work *The*

Secular Age, and others have argued that we need to rethink the meaning of the secular to retain what is valuable in it from the perspective of healthy democratic societies but also that we need to rethink the place of 'religion' or, rather, of different religious groups that are now present in most Western societies. Alfred Stepan has advanced what he calls the 'twin toleration' thesis which argues that, while the secular state is a necessary condition of liberal representative democracy, it should also 'tolerate', in the sense of accept, that religious groups are important components of civil society. His research in countries such as India showed that public recognition of religion and liberal democracy are quite compatible. But religious groups must also 'tolerate', that is, accept the norms of the secular state and democracy. He argues that the major religious groups of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism are 'multivocal', that is, composed of several distinct tendencies some of which are friendly towards democracy and others hostile to it. Catholicism, for example, was one of the key forces in the 'third wave of democracy' in the 1960s following the Second Vatican Council. But it was also a key force of reaction in Franco's Spain and in many dictatorships in Latin America. Some forces in Islam seek an accommodation with western democracy; others espouse Islamism. Stepan's argument is that the 'twin toleration' approach will encourage those groups compatible with democracy while Rawlsian secularism will encourage the anti-democratic tendencies by excluding them from public life.

4. « Avec, contre ou sans Dieu ? » : the European dimension.

You might be asking what all this has to do with the European Union and with European federalism. Well, the debates around the preamble to the Constitutional Treaty and whether God, religion, Christianity or simply nothing should be mentioned showed the continuing relevance of the question. At least part of the debate about Turkish accession to the EU is related the fact that, while it has a secular state, it is an overwhelmingly Muslim society and even the Ataturk tradition is being whittled away by Erdogan's Muslim government. We have also noted above that at least some strands of European federalism have their roots in the European Catholic personalist and Christian Democratic traditions. The relevance is also connected with the evolution of the nation-state in a European context and whether this should characterised by ideological secularism or whether this should simply be procedural secularism.

It seems to me that, just as in the nation-states that compose the EU, so in the EU itself there should be no single narrative with regard to the place of religion in public life such as seeing Rawlsian-type secularism as the default position, any more than there should be an exclusively religious or Christian perspective. Rather we should adopt a position of procedural secularism that is closer to the Stepanian twin toleration approach and which recognizes the great religious, cultural and philosophical diversity of Europe. To try to exclude religious organizations, Christian, Muslim or Jewish, from the public sphere would diminish this diversity and deprive European civil society of essential resources of strength. Furthermore, as Stepan argues, to actively marginalise religious groups would actually encourage those tendencies within them that are most inimical to democracy. It is important that the European institutions, which are largely concerned with the regulation of the single market and in policy production, connect as much as possible with the populations of Europe. To see the latter simply as consumers engaged in making choices in a vast market would be to misunderstand fundamentally the nature of civil society.

Finally, at this stage in European history, it is probably correct that there was no exclusive mention of 'God' or Christianity in the preamble to the European Constitutional Treaty. However, it is surely also correct to acknowledge that the Judaeo-Christian tradition is one of the key components of European culture and civilization alongside Greek philosophy, Roman law, and Enlightenment Humanism.