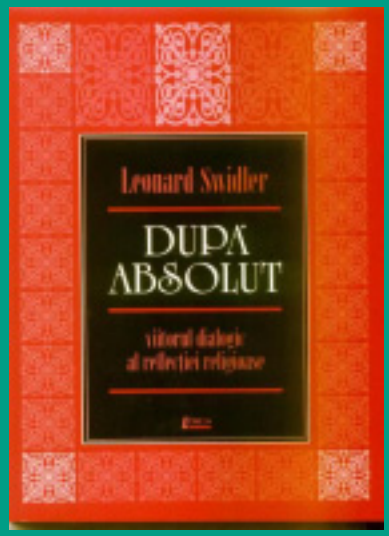


SANDU FRUNZA

Assoc. Prof., Ph.D., Dept. of Systematic Philosophy, BBU, Cluj, Romania. Author of the books: O antropologie mistica (1996), Iubirea si transcendenta (1999), Experienta religioasa în gîndirea lui Dumitru Staniloae (2001), Fundamentalismul religios si noul conflict al ideologiilor (2003)
E-mail: sfrunza@hiphi.ubbcluj.ro

Leonard Swidler, Dupa absolut. Viitorul dialogic al reflectiei religioase

Ed. Limes, Cluj, 2003

Leonard Swidler is one of the most significant thinkers and promoters of the dialogue in the context of a perpetual redefining of contemporary religious identities. He is a Professor at Temple University, Philadelphia, co-president of the *Global Dialogue Institute* and co-editor of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. He is also the author and coordinator of over 60 books among which we can mention: *Dialogue for Reunion* (1962), *Women in Judaism* (1976), *Kung in Conflict* (1981), *Yeshua: A Model for Moderns* (1993), *Theoria ? Praxis. How Jews, Christians, Muslims Can Together Move From Theory to Practice* (1998), *The Study of Religion in an Age of Global Dialogue* (2000) and many others.

The first Romanian translation of the well-known American Catholic theologian, *After the Absolute. The dialogical future of religious reflection* was published by the notable Limes Publishing House from Cluj -Napoca .The translation made by Codruta Cuceu, a conversant with Leonard Swidler's work, is to be remarked due to the harmonic literalism of the text and to the accuracy of expression. The total deciphering of the English phrase embedded in the dialogical reflection of the book was obtained by Codruta Cuceu after a thorough work and very long discussions with some of the most important scholars in the field.

One of the most original perspectives framed in *After the Absolute*, is that a religious reflection on religion's dialogical future has to go beyond the strict level of inter-confessional and inter-religious dialogue. The cultural and religious context of modern world requires the extension of the discussions of the worldviews that try to comprehend the meaning of life and to circumscribe a way of living according to the new dialogical standards.

Assuming as a standpoint a broad dialogical perspective, Leonard Swidler considers that the task of our times is to discover the necessary openness to engage in the dialog between religions and ideologies at the general level of contemporary mentality but also at the particular level of some communities' customs. In order to make possible such a dialogue, the Catholic theologian holds that the two terms –religion and ideology –have to be connected to a broader category drawn by the theological paradigm. Theology is defined by the author as a systematic religious and ideological reflection. If we accept that theology – considered as the search for the meaning of live and for the means to live accordingly – is a "worldview and way", we find ourselves confronted with a system in which the two basic categories - religion and ideology – coexist.

KEY WORDS:

Leonard Swidler, interreligious dialogue, absolute, ideology, religion

Such a "worldview and way" always includes the "four Cs": the creed as a system of beliefs, the code as an ethical system, the cult as a celebratory system, and the community as a social system.

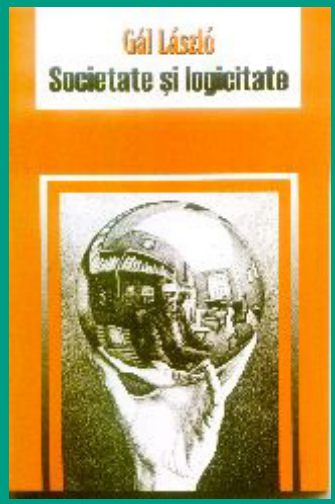
The author distinguishes between two species of theology in accordance with the place taken by transcendence. A conception based on an entity which transcends humanity and world as such, belongs to the category of *religion*. On the other hand, an explanation based only on a reality intrinsic to our world, an explanation that excludes the idea of transcendence, belongs to the category of *ideology*.

This paradigm shift assumed by the theological approach of the perspectives upon life is needed by the Catholic theologian in order to circumscribe the frameworks for advancing a dialogue not only between different confessions or Christian Churches, but also between the religious groups and those groups that take as an "explanation of the meaning of life and how to live accordingly" a perspective more or less religious or laicized and engage themselves in an inter-religious or inter-ideological dialogue.

For a traditional theological perspective it is clear that it would be difficult to accept that such an inclusion under the same category of religion and ideology is possible. The experience of ideology as a secularized religion helps us to make a clear distinction between religion and ideology and to consider theology not as a more comprehensive category, but as the most elaborate form of reflection from the standpoint of the constituted religions. It is true that ideologies, considered as the models of a reality globally constituted, presuppose constructs based on the experience of the world and on the efficient action, while theologies – themselves imaginative creations – are always the result of an assembly of structures of the sacra which belong equally to the transcendent and to the transcendental. In other words, religion, altogether with its more refined expression, theology, is the creation of an icon/incarnate which itself and its consequences surmised by the theological model of the world cannot be understood outside the biblical testimony. It is an icon which, as an original meeting constantly actualized, is strengthen by the power of an Archetype which circumscribes it to a structural figuring in an interpersonal dynamic underpinned by the immanence-transcendence unity.

But besides all prejudices concerning the nuances of the term ideology, it is clear that the option for a secularized existence reduplicated by the need of a religious renewal, which cannot be ignored by the traditional ecclesiastic institutions, are part of our experience of this century. In his effort, the remarkable American thinker manages to find an original and very efficacious compromise that is necessary for a Christian resetting of the significances and the possibilities of cohabitation in this century. Such an intellectual game has some special consequences at the level of a practical meeting between confessions, religions, and religions and ideologies. The empirical field, the cognitive field, and the spiritual one can thus find the way of a common approach.

In a systematic and very creative reflection, Leonard Swidler proposes a broad discussion of some theoretical



AUREL CODOBAN

Prof., Ph.D., Department of Systematic Philosophy, BBU, Cluj, Romania. Author of the books: Repere si prefigurari (1982), Structura semiologica a structuralismului (1984), Introducere in filosofie (1995), Sacru si ontofanie (1998), Teoria semnenlor si interpretarii (2001), Amurgul iubirii. De la iubirea pasiune la comunicarea corporala (2004).
E-mail: codoban@hiphi.ubbcluj.ro

subject-matters for dialogue that appear in the Christian context, but also of the dialogue with Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism and Hinduism or of the dialogue with Marxism. The ideal goal of the author's approach is to translate the religious reflection in an *Ecumenical Esperanto* that gives us the means needed for a real inter-religious and inter-ideological dialogue, starting with the basic of dialogue generally accepted.

Leonard Swidler's book is one of the most important appearances in Romanian culture after 1989. I believe that this book cannot be left aside, being a must both for theologians dealing with inter-religious dialogue or ecumenism, and also for scholars in political sciences, communication, philosophers and sociologists.

In times when the religious element is reaffirmed as a force within the context of globalization, the scholars from all fields of scientific and cultural research find themselves in need of searching a dialogical paradigm that avoids the conflicts bearing a religious dimension.

Aurel Codoban

Gal Laszlo, Societate si Logicitate

Ed. Cartimpex, Cluj, 2004

Aceasta carte are o tema de mare actualitate, sau cel putin mie mi se pare foarte actuala din cauza cîtorva motive importante[1]. Ma marginesc aici si acum la aceasta carte desi cunosc si teza de doctorat din care a rezultat o excelenta carte care pune în conjunctie limba si logicitatea. În ambele carti m-a interesat foarte mult continutul de idei si în numele acelui continut, am îndraznit sa ma avînt în prezentarea acestei carti, ceea ce, trebuie sa recunosc, e o dificultate pentru mine pentru ca a trecut multa vreme de cînd mi-am încercat capacitatile logice, ca student, în contextul cursurilor si examenelor si m-am temut ca lectura va fi un test de logica într-adevar solicitant. Partea de logica formala, prezenta în aceasta carte, este însa strict limitata la ceea ce este necesar, nu este în exces si este foarte clar prezentata, asa cum trebuie sa fie într-o carte, pe care oricine din publicul larg o poate citi.

Sa va explic de ce cred ca este foarte importanta si tema si cartea: În contextul logicii se întîmpla acest lucru cred, este o miscare pulsatila, adica o miscare care