

# THE PARALELISM OF THE CONTEMPORARY-MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN FANATICS AND THE SECURITY RISKS INDICATED BY THEIR OBJECTIVES

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*Religious fanaticism has manifested itself in Christian religion amid the action of religious entities whose members have not accepted individuals who have not mastered their doctrines and fanatical goals. The phenomenon was identified only with a part of the Christian confession, indifferent of the rite: Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox. The roots of unaltered fanaticism over the past millennium are clear and edifying, in the sense that all fanatics believed to fulfill the will of divinity. They also thought it was their duty to modify society according to their own confession, demonstrating special violence to achieve their goals. The partial or total destabilization of the states in which they appeared and manifested was common, and the killing of thousands of people to set up communities or even theocrats became normal. In the following I intend to point out these references from the medieval - contemporary perspective and the measures of the authorities to prevent attacks on individual life and integrity and on national or international security.*

**Keywords:** *religious fanatics, goals, Christianity, risks, medieval, contemporary*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Religious fanaticism in essence points to misinterpretations of the doctrine of any religion, because many times the basis of this phenomenon is faith in a divinity without reference to the whole complex of doctrines and religious teachings, which maintains a balance and at the average level of religious zeal as well as intolerance towards those of another denomination. Religious fanatics have objectives or develop clearly defined aspects of the actions of such persons over time and the way in which religious matters are addressed by them. These include: the Crusaders, the Protestant Reformists, members of the Inquisition, the Christian-Orthodox Sects, whether they existed eight centuries ago or manifest in contemporaneity.

The problem was and is, with these religious-fanciful entities, that they have been successful in proselytize actions, forming followers according to their own religious and political objectives, because most of these religious sects and organizations have societal-modifying goals. These fanatics have posed risks to individual and state security, which in the

modern era is known under the name of national security.

## 2. CHRISTIAN CRUSADES

These were military and religious expeditions carried out between 1096 and 1270 with the purpose of liberating Jerusalem and the Holy Land from Islamic domination. Although this is the dominant idea in the research carried out in this field, the remaining historical and archaeological testimonies point to a completely different reality. These crusades came as a reaction to the conquest of Jerusalem by soldiers of another denomination. But this religious rivalry existed for about half a millennium, amid the conquest of Jerusalem in 614 A.D. by the armies of the Persian empire of this capital symbol for Christians, and with this conquest the crucifix on which Jesus Christ was crucified was also stolen, triggering a strong antipathy to all the populations that inhabited these territories. As a reaction to the loss of the holy relic of Christianity, the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius I [1] carried out a military expedition to find the relic, "this was not simply another Roman-Persian conflict. It was a holy war, one whose object was the

retrieval of the „true cross“. In effect, it was the first Crusade" (Hill, 104).

Religious Christian fanaticism was also influenced by relations with those of other denominations, including the Islamic one. The fanatical behavior of Christians participating in the crusades was shaped by centuries of religious fervor and antipathy toward Islam. This mode of reaction and conduct of Christian fanatics was induced by single cases but with a strong impact, as was the persecution of Christians triggered at the beginning of the 11th century by al-Hakim's order, generating a counter-reaction in the Christian world, with particular emphasis in the West amid the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre, sacred place for Christians (Cahen, 7).

The revenge of Catholic Christians was no less fanatical, but rather the actions that triggered it even more, that is were, very violent. This reaction was driven by the equally fanatical actions of 1009 when the Egyptian caliph al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah ordered the destruction of churches in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, and especially the Sa'id Church.

The Crusaders wanted vengeance because they had been indoctrinated since the first crusade in 1096 to persecute and kill in the name of Jesus Christ and less to conquer and protect the religious symbols, although the latter had been triggered from the latter. Religious fanaticism made the Crusaders continue the siege on the city of Antioch although they did not get the necessary logistics and a significant part of the expedition members died of inanition. The problem, however, arises after the conquest of the fortress, in order to observe the manifestation of a ferocious religious fanaticism, aspect revealed by the fact that they massacred all the Muslims, and besides them the Orthodox Christians, guilty of not supporting them in their religious war (Paine, 41).

The exacerbation of the religious zeal of the Crusaders also turned against the confessional brethren, that is to say against the Orthodox Christians in Constantinople

and beyond, but from all the territories considered by the Catholics to be the heretical of the masses of people participating in the crusades. The appearance is revealed by the Fourth Crusade of 1202 who did not save the Holy Land because the participants never reached Jerusalem but returned to the West, which aroused a great deal on Pope Innocent III, the initiator but this was overshadowed by the joy of conquering and robbing Constantinople, the capital of Orthodoxy, a confession considered heretical by Catholics (Paine, 104). Over the last centuries, crusades have been seen as military expeditions without a concrete purpose, organized by religious leaders of the Catholic Church only from the desire for domination, aspects that reveal fanaticism because achievements have been accomplished by force by ignoring the wishes of the rest of the members of the society (Kostick, 290). The crusades had a link formed by an enthusiastic intrinsic dynamic reflecting well European society at that time, but it was just moving (Kostick, 290).

### **3. PROTESTANT REFORMISTS**

Among the many religious sects that emerged as a result of the Protestant reform initiated at the beginning of the sixteenth century are the Anabaptists. These were very active in 1534, including in mass revolt (Bergsma, 93). These fanatical-religious activities of the Anabaptists have generated counter-measures against them. Thus, the leaders of the German Principalities were forced to trigger massive repression to suppress the radical wing of religious reform after the German peasant war to create order against those who wanted to change the secular society and not just the connection that man must have with the church, as had been admitted by Martin Luther, persons known under the name of the Anabaptists (Pelz, 24).

The Anabaptists were so fanatical that they refused the authority of the state,

considering the religious community as the supreme authority to govern their interests. Also the Anabaptists, refused any cooperation between their church and the Dutch state authorities at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, which they considered to be governed by non-religious rules and based their beliefs on the Bible (Furner, 51-52).

Religious fanaticism and the way of action of Protestant followers is revealed by the multitude of religious sects and organizations resulting from the religious reform of the early 16th century, which also triggered a religious war involving the German peasantry or countries hinterland. One of the resulting religious rites is the anabaptism. James Stayer claims that the actions of the Anabaptists were a natural and logical continuation of the message of the Protestant Reformation as well as its radical form during the German Peasant War, even after its suppression (7). At the same time, the second attempt to establish a theocracy occurred between 1534-1535 by the Anabaptist religious radicals in Munster, Germany, and failed. This led the inhabitants of Munster to adopt a tolerant religious behavior towards those who did not share their radical ideas on the background of the failed experience of setting up the Anabaptist Kingdom after which they concluded that "religious fanaticism could have disastrous and far-reaching consequences" (Laqua-O'Donnell, 8-9). We can see the way in which the anabaptist fanatics operate and the consequences of these processes from the fact that, before the attempt to establish these theocrats, they have made strong efforts to implement their religious ideas with an impact on society, interaction within the community and the change of the right to property so that the cult coordinates and directs the funds.

The same Simone Laqua O'Donnell says that "in the 1530s, the city of Münster was the site of the most radical experiment in the history of German Protestantism—

the Anabaptist Kingdom, which eliminated all private property in the city, introduced polygamy, and established a king at its head" (5). The deviant behavior of the Anabaptist leaders has generated a firm counter-reaction, by which the leaders of this radical sect were decapitated after that theocracy. Jan Bockelson, one of the Abaptists leaders who led Munster in 1536, had inappropriate behavior that was interpreted either as religious fanaticism or as a hypocrisy without measure (Cohn, 268). The fanaticism and at the same time the danger of anabaptists is indicated by their belief in the apocalyptic ideas regarding the end of the world, which made them extremely unstable and unpredictable in terms of their decisions in relation to the rest of the members of society. This degree of fanaticism has come to the fact that they believed more than any present religious group that the time for the battle between God and Satan had arrived (Arthur, 3) as was foretold and recorded in the Revelation of St. John (Chapter 12, verses 7 to 12) and for this reason its leaders were executed and the bodies were exposed in cages hanging from the cathedral in the city.

Another case of religious fanaticism with major repercussions is that of the massacre of Catholic confessors and Protestants, known as Huguenoes, after which a large number of people died, an event known as the Bartholomew Massacre took place in France on the night of August 24, 1572. The passion and religious enthusiasm of the participants actually stood at the basis of the religious conflict that lasted more than 30 years. Alexandra Schäfer tells about these events that "the French Wars of Religion (1562-1598) were some of the most brutal, important and captivating confessional conflicts in the sixteenth century" (27). At the same time, in these religious wars the followers of the two parties manifested themselves with great zeal and intolerance, and the crime in the name of the divinity became justified and even obligatory, and they strongly

believed this. The causes of this long 36-year conflict were: "the religious divisions, economic difficulties, and political rivalries" (Baumgartner, 1572). It should be noted that the French King ordered the slaughter of heretics under the influence of his mother, Caterina de Medici, who appealed to the awakening of fanaticism in the soul of his son (Moran, 8). That same night, thousands of Protestant followers were killed in the name of religious beliefs.

#### **4. INQUISITION**

It was a religious order of the Catholic Church, which was responsible for identifying and eliminating deviations from Catholic faith. Although the Inquisition appeared at 1184 AD, the form known to all is the one formed in 1542 and can be called the Roman Inquisition, and it was abolished in 1860. Although it provoked terror in the name of Christ, it was venerated against the background of religious enthusiasm as a result of the attribute given to the church of liberators and anti-Islamic fighters, as happened in Spain. This is also revealed by the fact that when the rest of Europe populations rebelled against the Inquisition, the Spaniards were happy under her investigations, as well as the artistic genius developed under this religious phenomenon (Bouterwek, 105-106). This pattern of manifestation is indicative of a high degree of religious zeal amid a highly enthusiastic religiosity. Although the Spanish Inquisition has committed some of the greatest crimes in the name of faith and divinity, it has not led them to consider it abusive, as religion fanaticism was very well rooted in people's minds to think rationally was a sin of death (Bouterwek, 106).

The Inquisition has greatly used the capital punishment to complete its own investigations on behalf of the Catholic Church, which reveals the message they transmitted about those who dared to believe or think otherwise than the official

message of the leaders of the Catholic cult, on the other hand, the message they were using was noticed, avoiding saying that they were fulfilling the commandment of Jesus Christ. At the theoretical level, the Inquisition had nothing to do with the death penalty of the investigated people, the efforts being very much focused on altering the person's religious behavior and transforming it into a obedient Catholic, but eventually burning it on the ground (Leah, 97). But, as any religious cult has always taken care of its own image, the Catholic Church has not made an exception. The Inquisition never carried out the death penalty although it issued the sentence that was read by the civil authorities to avoid sending a message that it was leading this bloody campaign (Liebman, 142).

#### **5. ORTHODOX SECTS**

These Orthodox sects of origin include those that manifest themselves on the vast territory of the Russian Federation. Some of these are harmless, but many of them have a socially inappropriate behavior dubbed by religious fanaticism and becoming dangerous to those with whom they interact because it is violent and without control mechanisms. At the end of the seventeenth century, tens of thousands of apocalyptic sectarian "Old Faithful" in Russia self-burned on the background of the occurrence of collective events in monasteries amid the poor management of the tendency to resist violently the laic state influenced of demons, also revealed by the fact that one community or village burned once (Robbins, 1).

The sectarian phenomenon of former Soviet and former communist space is not new, but the present one has been regenerated with extremely strong force and many times in functional areas of society that until 28 years ago was inconceivable as the Russian or Serbian army. For example, in Russia, Nizhny Novgorod, in the village of Bolsaia Elnia,

there is a religious sect called "Renaissance of the Slavs" who worship the icons and worships Vladimir Putin, the president of this country, considering him as the Apostle Paul and King Solomon reincarnated. The members of the sect affirm that the icon with Vladimir Putin miraculously appeared one day. [2] The problem is that in 2007 the Russian authorities considered that there are between 500 and 700 such sects and have more than 800,000 followers, [2] such a large number can affect the national security of any country, either directly the manifestations within the gardens or the neighboring states but equally effectively by influencing other adherents on their territory or by establish in these countries. The fixation of religious sects in general regarding the end of the world is generally valid, whether we are speaking of Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox sects. This causes them not to abide by the rules of social conduct, ie the Anabaptists who have just established the Kingdom of Munster have the same vision of changing society as the present sects, such as those in present-day Russia who believe that the end of the world will come soon and followers have to give up their own lives to prepare for this event. The "True Orthodox Russian Orthodox Church" sect spent all the time in 2007 in a cave in southern Russia, its leader being arrested for "establishing a religious sect associated with acts of violence." [3] Another sect of Russian Orthodox origin that poses risks to the physical and mental security of men is the well-known "Church of the Body of Christ," the actions of which are not covered precisely because of violent and inhuman acts. [4]

## 6. SECURITY RISKS

The risks to national security induced by religious fanaticism are extremely complex and varied. This is also revealed by the analysis of the European Interagency Security Forum, which stated in 2014 that in most complex risk

environments there were elements of religious fanaticism, a major issue, and such fanatics are threats, which is why security agencies need to negotiate with them to have a certain degree of access (Hodgson, 24). Religious fanaticism is one of the most significant threats to the security of the population as a result of models of followers who want to create them, that is, strongly indoctrinated individuals. As a result, the United Nations, in addition to national legislation, adopted resolution no. 2178/2014, [5] which provides, among other measures to prevent terrorist acts and religious offenses, the importance of which is enshrined.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The aforementioned organizations and religious sects have several doctrinal characteristics or features and forms of manifestation that are common to them, whether they are contemporary or some five or eight centuries old. Thus, these points can be synthesized as follows: the belief that the religious entity possesses the correct religious doctrine and those who do not share it are wrong; the vision of the end of the world, which they acquire and adopt including a martyr's conduct in the name of the divinity; exacerbates religious zeal doubled by intolerance towards others; the desire to change society according to its own conception, doctrinal rules and references; the use of terrorist attentions to achieve the goals; extreme violence conduct; Satanic rejection of state-of-the-art technology: cards, chips, smartphones, state-of-the-art medical devices, even if some members die.

## ENDNOTES

[1] Born 575 AD. in Cappadocia, current Turkey - deceased 11 February 641 AD Constantinople, the Roman Empire of the East.

[2]<http://www.mediafax.ro/life-inedit/o-secta-religioasa-din-rusia-se-roaga-la-icoane-cu-vladimir-putin-2301850>.

- [3] <http://romanalibera.ro/actualitate/fapt-divers/membrii-unei-secte-din-rusia-ameninta-cu-sinuciderea-in-masa-111605>.
- [4] <https://www.efemeride.ro/sectele-silumea-tenebrelor-cele-mai-periculoase-secte-din-lume>, accesat la 09.02.2018.
- [5] <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/focus-areas/countering-violent-extremism/>.

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