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***Theology and History of Religions at University.***  
***A proposal.***

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to give our universities the total dimension of its challenge. University's function is to preserve-through traditions, libraries and multimedia nets insertion-, the rise- through research-, and the transmission –through teaching- of knowledge at the highest level.

After the Second World War universities, mainly in most educational developed countries, had a huge students expansion oriented to professional formation requirements for superior education degrees that employment market demands. This made universities massive, and consequently demanded its structure adaptation. The inner relationship between professional training and scientific research turned into professional activity preeminence as a consequence of previous changes. So, most part of universities have teaching activities predominance, because a few people are interested in science and most of them are looking for capacitating and professional qualification.

In Argentina, systematic organization of scientific research began in the late fifties with 2 foundational events: the implementation of the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) under Dr. Bernardo Houssay direction and the instauration of exclusive dedication regime in the University of Buenos Aires during Rector Risieri Frondizi administration. Exclusive dedication regime at university was only oriented to research, professors and investigators had little teaching activities and there wasn't exclusive dedication for professors dedicated to teaching only.

In those times, as one of the first members of research career in CONICET, I was concerned about the imbalance between our university's priorities referred to students' demands attention and demands related to research development, as they should come up with the ideas of Argentina's transformation and its insertion in the world. In that moment, in the late 60's, society's phenomenal metamorphosis consolidated as consequence of the transformation effect that positive sciences had on health, food, electronics, communications, robotics, etc.

The facts mentioned before, made me study harmonious relationship between student expansion and priority scientific needs for integral occupation of the country, and from this idea *New Universities plan*<sup>3</sup> emerged in 1968 and become a reality from the creation of Rio

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□ This paper has been the result of an extensive and rich dialogue and joint reflection. Compatibilities as well as different views on the issues are expressed here. There is not full agreement, however that did not prevented us from working together to achieve this conceptual unity. On the contrary, from the coincidences and the controversies we built a fruitful discussion on a common interest issue. This spirit of debate is that we desire for University: to build from differences common knowledge. Although the the work was done in co-authorship, experiences and / or personal assessments of Dr. Taquini appear in the first person to retain their original character.

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<sup>3</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2010. *Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010*. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 1 to 25 y 27 to 47.

Cuarto National University, on May 1<sup>st</sup> of 1971 and then immediately the next universities were created too, which increased the number of national Universities from 8 to 23 in 3 years.

In the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, globalization phenomenon we had analyzed in the beginning of our program<sup>4</sup>, accelerated then by internet emergence, began to change society's demands and to condition University's answer for the new coming century. Society began to notice the limits of modernity and person's restrictions about competitiveness and the employment. In the same way, due to communications and transport, social globalization is potentiated through dialogue and intercontinental, cultural, ethnic and religious exchanges.

Expectations' globalization promoted by massive information and the break between aspirations and achievement abilities produce the crisis we're going through and manifests in the whole world in different ways<sup>5</sup>.

The portentous scientific and technological development and its repercussion in our universities started to point out those failures. It became to be perceived that the fruits of science and technology weren't enough to satisfy each person's needs, and so, this challenged us to rediscover philosophy, theology and history of religion studies, deepening in them and their contributions through time to base their conceptions about transcendence. The hunger for spirit and heart reborn in the man.

Then I was concerned about positive sciences development at University, driving force of material welfare, but during the postmodern age coming I became little by little interested in social sciences, theology, and history of religion teaching and research at universities. I analyzed it, comparing our universities with the most important universities of the world, which I visited with this purpose. In this paper we're going to summarize these experienced and studied issues.

We'll approach the subject's complexity attending to its different aspects. We'll divide the paper in two sections. In the first section, integrated by several paragraphs, we introduce the proposition's fundamentals and the current situation of the problem. Then we'll develop the state of the art about faith and reason's relationship debate. In third place, we'll deepen in University's subject to, at last, present a proposition for integral development of University.

In the second section, we'll present the results of an indicative survey about the history of religion and theology studies in some of the most important secular universities of the world. From this survey emerge the shortcomings that our national and secular universities have concerning to those areas.

## FIRST PART

### 1. Foundation

The man, anthropologically, is defined as a cultural species. Symbolic production distinguishes our species as this is part of the fundamental rational activity, work. Human work is an objective reality; through work, men seek their food and welfare as they also contribute to humanity development by means of technical and science progress. As John Paul II said in *Laborem Exercens*<sup>6</sup> "work bears a particular sign of man and of humanity, the sign of the

<sup>4</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C.; Urgoiti, Enrique; Rifé, Sadi; De Cea, Rosa. 1972. *Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país, la juventud determinante del cambio por la capacitación*. Buenos Aires, Estrada, Chapter 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ídem.

active person in a community of people, this mark determines its interior characteristics and is in some way its very nature.”

Science and technology development as objectified and accumulative forms of knowledge through work, are raising today the frontiers of modernity to human condition. That’s why to understand in depth the social question, the essential thing is human work: “the gradual solution (...) must be looked for in order to <make human life more human>, so the key, human work, acquires a fundamental and decisive importance”<sup>7</sup>.

The more the man develops, with growing technicalization and specific applications of knowledge, the more work has a bigger cultural component that requires a learning specialization. Because if this we based in work and cultural production as specifically human attributes, and are able to understand the multiple dimensions of globalization. This social process becomes relevant in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it is essential to understand the idea of person. In former papers<sup>8</sup>, an interpretation line was sketched. It has as axis the person concept, from a philosophical and theological perspective.

Understanding that globalization is part of person condition, both concepts are developed in its inextricable link:

*“Globalization is born inside the man who seeks himself, comes to the inner self and only then is projected. From their immediate environment which is his family, the man opens to his people, his culture and from there to all his fellows, to build the world and feel the unity with them”<sup>9</sup>.*

*[The man] “is a being in relation to the Absolute. Thus, globalized man can never mean to deny this Absolute or try to replace it with a globalization conception purely earthly which is basically a false absolute. Globalization should then be opened to the divine dimension but it can never be deified”<sup>10</sup>.*

Social process ongoing, does not only involves changes and challenges in the objective material aspects, but also generates mixed feelings in the person, stressed between his individuality and human diversity where he is immersed. In that sense, we can think about globalization of the person, where man is able to:

*“get to know himself (...) reach the ultimate truth of existence, design his own path of fulfillment and improvement, to the imperfect limits of the person, temporal or transcendental, and try from there, from his being, to project himself towards his brothers who share the wonderful task of human realization (...) According to the creed proclaimed by the Council of Nicea in the 4th century, the zenith of this globalization is for Christians the communion of saints”<sup>11</sup>.*

<sup>6</sup> JUAN PABLO II. 1981. Carta Encíclica Laborem exercens. Available in: [http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ESL0037/\\_P5.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ESL0037/_P5.HTM)

<sup>7</sup> Ibídem

<sup>8</sup> Cf. TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2010. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación.

<sup>9</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. “Globalización, ciencia y Universidad”. In: Taquini (h), Alberto C. 2010. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 73 to 88.

<sup>10</sup> Ídem

<sup>11</sup> Cf. TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2010. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación. Pp. 73 to 88 and 149.

To fully understand the idea of globalization of the person, it is necessary to take into account human property par excellence: the otherness, being with another. As I said in 2007, "I can think about the world without men, I can think of things without men, but think of the men without the others is impossible because it cannot be configured as such. Human existence is possible only in the context of interpersonal relationships<sup>12</sup>".

From this interpersonal dimension, then we understand the human aspect of globalization and its potential for material and spiritual development:

***"Globalization understood in such way involves the growing humanization of the world, leads to the opening, without exclusion, towards the human race. Here is our hypothesis: only from the human person we could find a concept of globalization that aims to material and spiritual growth of all humanity, as only the concept of human person can overcome false reductionism stands that deny humanity, such as individualism, which closes the individual against the others turned into a mere means to serve my needs and projects; and collectivism where the person is absorbed in a dehumanizing totality<sup>13</sup>".***

Where we need answers about the human condition against the growing continuous and endless scientific and technological development, which doesn't deal with ethical limits, utilitarian reason gives us no answer. The domain of positive science and technology, in its human foundation, needs to be thought in the light of those knowledge and experiences through which men have tried to understand approach and experience the link with the transcendent. As noted by Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio*, technical development is a key as long as it leads not only to scientific and technical achievements, but above all to make human life more human:

*"If technical people are needed to carry out development, and they are needed in increasingly numbers, for this same development profound reflection thinkers are still more required, as they look for a new humanism, which will enable modern man to find himself, assuming the top values of love, friendship, prayer and contemplation. This may come true, in all its fullness, the real development, which is the step, for each and everyone from less human life conditions to more human conditions<sup>14</sup>".*

Man's knowledge has come to places that seem unthinkable to us, however issues related to transcendence and to being in the world, are an unreachable horizon: to discover the truth. The positive sciences respond to the material needs of men and universities have incorporated those demands, putting at the disposal of everybody the benefits of knowledge increase and transfer. Yet, new challenges invite us to explore the limits of reason and its relationship with faith. As quoted in previous works<sup>15</sup>, a global survey for the Third Millennium

<sup>12</sup> PALACIOS, Alberto; Mons. PONFERRADA, Gustavo E.; TAQUINI (H), Alberto C. 2007. "Persona Humana y Globalización". ENDUC IV. Available in: <http://www.acaedu.edu.ar/Estudio%2023-DVD/DVDEducacionSuperior/Para%20el%20CD/20%20Huerta%20Grande%20IV.pdf>. For a deepening of this subject, confront QUILES, Ismael.1978. *Antropología filosófica insistencial*. Buenos Aires, Editorial De Palma.

<sup>13</sup> Ídem.

<sup>14</sup> PABLO VI. 1967. Carta Encíclica *Populorum Progressio*. Available in: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_26031967\\_populorum\\_sp.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum_sp.html)

<sup>15</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. Discurso en la entrega del doctorado Honoris Causa en Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Available in: <http://www.acaedu.edu.ar/Estudio%2023-DVD/DVDEducacionSuperior/Para%20el>

by Gallup<sup>16</sup>, representative of 1,250 million people in 67 countries, found that 87% of people have religious beliefs. If we understand that the university investigates the totality, all lines of thought have to discuss in the search for truth. In this perspective and before the concrete reality of our universities I ask: "Would not correspond to the university (...) to go to the most remote places in search of truth? And, if so, should not study the transcendent truths?"<sup>17</sup>

These questions have not been addressed satisfactorily in our universities. The links between reason and faith have not been the subject of motivation and curricular development. We understand, as I said at Huerta Grande meeting in 2005, that "not to face such a challenge is as serious mistake as that one which postponed the discussion of science in the past"<sup>18</sup>.

It is perceived in youth, in many of their social behavior changes, the need for these studies and therefore its inclusion is an unresolved debt for public, private and secular university in our country. Only experience will show how we deal or not with this demand, enabling the study of History of Religion and Theology with an integral education as we review it occurs in excellence level universities in the world.

Perhaps the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the one of man's reunion with his ideas of transcendence.

## 2. Dialogues among faith and reason

To understand the fundamental assumptions of our proposal of integration of the totality of human knowledge at University, we will enquire in the theological, philosophical and sociological studies contributions that great thinkers have done about the problems of faith and reason throughout the history of ideas.

### Theological considerations

To go back to the most significant contributions regarding the relationship between reason and faith, the first reference are the parents of Hellenic philosophy that sought a rational basis for divinity belief<sup>19</sup>. However, the ideas of St. Augustine of Hippo, as noted by John Paul II in his encyclical *Fides et ratio*<sup>20</sup>, form a synthesis that "would be for centuries the highest form of philosophical and theological speculation that the West has known".<sup>21</sup> Considering the

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<sup>16</sup> Available in: <http://www.gallup-international.com/ContentFiles/millennium15.asp>. Gallup ha realizado numerosas investigaciones estadísticas que representan un aporte importante de datos empíricos para el estudio del problema. Todo el material se encuentra disponible en: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1690/religion.aspx#2>

<sup>17</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. Discurso en la entrega del doctorado Honoris Causa en Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Available in: <http://www.acaedu.edu.ar/Estudio%2023-DVD/DVDEducacionSuperior/Para%20el%20CD/21%201Honoris%20Causa-discurso.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. "Globalización, ciencia y universidad". ENDUC III. In: *Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010*. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 73 to 88.

<sup>19</sup> CARPIO, Adolfo. 2004. Principios de filosofía, una introducción a su problemática. Buenos Aires, Glauco. Second Edition.

<sup>20</sup> JUAN PABLO II. 1998. Carta Encíclica Fides et ratio. Available in:

[http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ESL0036/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ESL0036/_INDEX.HTM)

<sup>21</sup> Ídem.

relationship of collaboration and complementarity among reason and faith, he exceeded the limits of rationalism and fideism.

In the Middle Age, scholastic theology represented an effort to combine the Greco-Roman philosophy with the grounds of Christianity, reflecting the link in the first universities. St. Anselmo, the first referent of scholasticism, postulated that reason "is not called upon to express a judgment on the contents of the faith, being unable to do so because of not being suitable for this. Reason's task, rather, is to find meaning and discover the reasons that allow everyone to understand the contents of faith".<sup>22</sup> At the same time, as John Paul II said, "Reason, at the highpoint of its search, admits as necessary what faith presents"<sup>23</sup>, meaning that the limits of reasoning, necessarily project and comfort us towards and with belief.

Another referent is St. Thomas Aquinas, who pointed out the harmony between reason and faith. For St. Thomas, the light of reason and the light of faith come from God, therefore, they can not contradict each other. Thomas finds in nature a means to understand divinity:

*"Just as grace builds on nature and perfects it, so faith builds upon and perfects reason. The latter, enlightened by faith, is free from the fragility and limitations deriving from the disobedience of sin and finds the necessary strength to rise to the knowledge of the mystery of the One and Triune God"<sup>24</sup>.*

Recognizing the autonomy of philosophy and science on religion, faith and reason coexisted as indivisible parts of the totality of knowledge transmitted in the University of St. Thomas in the Middle Ages. However, as pointed out by John Paul II:

*"The legitimate distinction between the two forms of knowledge became progressively a disastrous separation. Due to the exaggerated rationalism of certain thinkers, positions grew more radical, coming to a philosophy which was separate and absolutely independent of the contents of faith"<sup>25</sup>.*

This break determined a road that signed modernity: rationalism gained ground and skepticism led to the discredit of any rational reference to faith. What the Scholastics thought conceived as a unit of knowledge, remained in ruins with the apotheosis of reason as a luminary of philosophy.

#### Philosophical considerations

In sum, we can assert that the primacy of reason over faith, the attempt to reconcile them and their final rupture led to many discussions in several stages of the history of ideas. But it is in the Renaissance, when the break occurs in the religious conceptions of the world focused on

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<sup>22</sup> Ídem.

<sup>23</sup> Ídem.

<sup>24</sup> Ídem.

<sup>25</sup> Ídem.

the divinity and the look turns towards the sensitive world and nature<sup>26</sup>.

At this stage of transition, philosophy development does not make great advances. Carpio says that "science and philosophy-which will be closely linked to the late 18th century- gain real vigor and originality, by being based on essentially new grounds, with the 17th century, which represents the maturity of the Modern Age"<sup>27</sup>.

It is in the 18th century, when Kant deeply marks the evolution of science and theories of knowledge. Kant summed up in his own intellectual development, the development of philosophy before him, especially modern philosophy, yet overcomes rationalism and empiricism as opposed theories of knowledge:

*"Rationalism holds that we can know with the only help of reason, thanks to which we set out proposals that are applied to all cases (universals) and cannot be otherwise (necessaries). The reason has the ability to get to, not the phenomena (appearances or manifestations), but the reality, things in themselves, the ultimate basis of things; it let us know, not things as appear to us, but the things such as are in themselves, the true and ultimate reality. Therefore, it is a faculty that let us know, among other things, whether God exists or not, if the soul is immortal or not, if the world is finite or infinite, if the man is free or necessarily determined in all his actions. (...)*

*Empiricism, however, holds the opposite thesis: the only legitimate knowledge, and the general basis of all knowledge, is experience, that is, the data provided by the senses. According to empiricism, we cannot know anything about things in themselves, but only the phenomena that occur in experience"<sup>28</sup>.*

The Kantian distinction founding of modern science, which separates the thinking from knowing, defines the scientific field from the metaphysical field. In this way, Kant argues that we can know scientifically what we experience (the phenomenal world), because of the combination of our understanding with the experience. What is beyond experience, and we cannot access to (the noumenal), cannot be the object of science, however it can be thought, as long as the man is endowed with reason and it is the "faculty of the unconditioned"<sup>29</sup>.

Therefore, "from the point of view of human knowledge, you can neither confirm nor deny the existence of God". According to Kant who believes:

*"God's issue is too sensitive to be entrusted to the disputes of men. (...) The issues on which traditional metaphysics concerned about at its special part -topics of the soul, the world and Go- are matters beyond knowledge, but however this does not prevent us from thinking of a noumenal world, but leads us to do so as well as the fact of moral conscience requires freedom".*

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<sup>26</sup> CARPIO, Adolfo. 2004. Principios de filosofía, una introducción a su problemática. Buenos Aires, Glauco. Second Edition.

<sup>27</sup> Ídem.

<sup>28</sup> Ídem.

<sup>29</sup> Ídem.

This is explained as transcendent issues are present in men lives, who take a position related to the idea of God, freedom, and so on. Kant proposes a solution to this dilemma outside the field of knowledge, in the moral field. In this, the ratio determines the action of man, and is "in moral consciousness, that is to say, consciousness of good and evil, of right and wrong, of what should and shouldn't do"<sup>30</sup> where the absolute is present in the man.

From Kant's conception, which does not deny the transcendent truths, but separates them from the sphere of the approachable by scientific knowledge, foundations for modern science were traced.

Moving away from Kant perspective on transcendent issues' moral relevance, some thinkers have questioned the importance of this vision, setting that above the answers they could provide men, religious systems imposed limitations to their social life. Nietzsche is a paradigmatic representative of this perspective. Although we stand out that he does not deny the relevance of religion, he suggests an affirmation of the sacred in a different place beyond predominant religions, which were the subject of his criticism<sup>31</sup>. Massuh explains his particular perspective from the idea that religion can be understood in two opposite ways:

*"As an individual and intimate relationship among man and the sacred or as an objective structure that has its metaphysics, its dogma, its worship, its church, its personal God. In the first case, the relationship is immediate, in the second mediation is institutionalized. The religious fact is, in the first, individual, in the second case is a community (...) Nietzsche's religiosity corresponds to the first meaning"<sup>32</sup>.*

For Nietzsche<sup>33</sup>, man must bear the consequences of the God's death in Western society because, as Massuh noted, he understands that "the objectified God of religion is as a brake on creative capacity"<sup>34</sup>. These consequences gravitate in the collapse of the prevailing values in society. According to the above, religion seems to be incompatible with community life in Nietzsche's work, being a man's individual experience in his solitude.

Before this individualism and relativism with regard to religion, the empirical facts show a different reality clearly. The Gallup poll mentioned before, says that 87% of the world's population has religious beliefs, billions of men and women are part of religious communities and share common values and beliefs. In Argentina, a survey carried out by a team coordinated by Dr. Fortunato Mallimacci<sup>35</sup> for CONICET, points out that 91% of Argentines believe in God.

Also, in contrast to the Nietzschean vision, Angelo Scola points that social relationship constitutes the person. This is demonstrated by the fact that "in society valuable intermediate primary corps are expressed, such as family and surrounding communities, between them are

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<sup>30</sup> Ídem.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. MASSUH, Víctor. 1969. Nietzsche y el fin de la religión. Buenos Aires, Sudamericana.

<sup>32</sup> Ídem, p.221.

<sup>33</sup> NIETZSCHE, Fredrich. 2003. Más allá del bien y del mal. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Libertador.

<sup>34</sup> MASSUH, Victor. 1969. Nietzsche y el fin de la religión. Buenos Aires, Sudamericana, p. 196.

<sup>35</sup> MALLIMACCI, Fortunato (director) et. al. 2008. Primera Encuesta sobre Creencias y Actitudes Religiosas en Argentina. CEIL-PIETTE. CONICET. Available in: <http://www.ceil-piette.gov.ar/areasinv/religion/relproy/1encrel.pdf>

highlighted those formed by religious affiliation"<sup>36</sup>. According to this perspective, we will go into social sciences contributions to understand the social nature of religion.

### Sociological considerations

With the advent of social sciences in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a new perspective about religion's approach is developed. New contributions joined theology and history of religions to understand the relevance of religion in the lives of men from sociology and anthropology. These contributions show, reaffirming our view, the potentialities and needs of research and depth of knowledge from reason to faith.

Emile Durkheim was who laid the foundations of sociology and anthropology of religion theories. The author tried to establish a model that accounts for the basal foundations of religious systems, seeking their universal elements from a perspective that considers religion as a social fact, which is to say as a real phenomenon that exists in all societies<sup>37</sup>. He defines religion as a solidarity belief system relative to sacred things, whose adherents are united in a particular moral community that is each Church. To understand the concept of religion, Durkheim's postulated dichotomy between the sacred and the profane is central. This duality, present in all religions, explains the separation of certain practices, objects and places of the sphere of the ordinary, in order to become sacred by the isolation and protection from the profane. In this dichotomy, the human issues are distinguished from the divine ones. The rituals and worship of religious systems run from this first partition, through a system of prohibitions and rules that take care of the sacred.

According to Durkheim, the universality and importance of religion for society is stem from religious systems are built by men in the image of social relations, meaning that religious structures are a collective expression of the social force that manifests over the individual. This socio-centric perspective implies the idea of a social power, that as is constructed by each person and all together, finds its boundary in human fallibility.

The anthropology of religion also is indebted to Durkheim contributions for a theorization of its study. In general, anthropology addresses the diversity of manifestations of religion in human life, describing their characteristics and establishing common nodes that make up the philosophical and anthropological aspects of it.

In synthesis, these approaches invite us to look into the different aspects of the relationship between reason and faith. Kant's proposal is limited, as it induces the approach of the transcendent through the faculty of reason, but sealing the chance to know scientifically what manifests as unconditional. The proposals of the social sciences, on the other hand, involve considering religion as a universal social fact, with objective and subjective implications in social relationships.

### The person as totality

The value of faith, its impregnable presence, gives an account of the human need to understand the world. However, purely subjective and individualistic assessment as proposed

<sup>36</sup> SCOLA, Angelo. 2007. Una nueva laicidad. Temas para una sociedad plural. Madrid, Ediciones Encuentro, p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> DURKHEIM, Emille. 2007. Las formas elementales de la vida religiosa. Madrid, Akal. Introduction.

by Nietzsche is not compatible with life in society. As Benedict XVI said in his speech at Regensburg University<sup>38</sup>, when considered as individual values,

*"Ethics and religion lose their power to create a community and become a completely personal matter. The situation created is dangerous for humanity, as can be seen in pathologies that threaten religion and reason, conditions which necessarily must exploit when the reason is reduced to such an extent that religion and ethics issues do not matter anymore. "*

The importance of a relational perspective of person we have previously explained is implicit in the ideas of Benedict XVI and his call to reassess the social dimension of religion and ethics versus individualism. Similarly, Scola argues that relational capacity from the <I> towards <you> is constitutive of individuality. The inter-individual link between identities and differences produces the social aspects and is experienced as mutual recognition. There lies the primary origin of the anthropological concept of power. Scola explains it:

*"What is the power but the power of recognition by each other based on mutual need? (...) The power in diverse degrees and in different ways lives from this recognition logic, each of us, in fact, exerts power and is the object of power. This is about a link between subjects, which cannot be avoided in any way, because it is constituent of the vital dynamism where the human person is inserted"<sup>39</sup>.*

So the idea of globalization and person we favor includes the interdependence of all <I> and <you>.

In coincidence with the critique to individualization, William Schweiker<sup>40</sup>, professor at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, argues that

*"Contemporary societies dominated by technical rationality, operate with two overlapping principles to understand the place of morality in life: that human agent is sovereign in creation of value through the exercise of power and reality is the scene for the human creation of value. A moral ontology centered in power can not specify itself whether there are limits on the exercise of power and it is also unable to provide the means to distinguish morally between creative and destructive expressions of power"<sup>41</sup>.*

The approach of the paths in the relationship between reason and faith let us share some thoughts of John Paul II<sup>42</sup>, who said:

*"Faith without reason emphasizes the feeling and the experience, so it is no longer a universal proposition. It is illusory to think that faith, before a weak reason,*

<sup>38</sup> BENEDICTO XVI. 2006. Holy father speech at Regensburg University: Faith, reason and university. Memories and thinking. Available in:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20060912\\_university-regensburg\\_sp.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg_sp.html)

<sup>39</sup> SCOLA, Angelo. 2007. Una nueva laicidad. Temas para una sociedad plural. Madrid, Ediciones Encuentro.

<sup>40</sup> SCHWEIKER, William. 1998. Power, Value, and Conviction: Theological Ethics in the Postmodern Age. Cleveland, Pilgrim Press.

<sup>41</sup> Idem.

<sup>42</sup> JUAN PABLO II. 1998. Carta Encíclica Fides et ratio. Available in: [http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ESL0036/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ESL0036/_INDEX.HTM)

*might be more penetrating; on the contrary, it falls in serious danger by being reduced to a myth or superstition. Similarly, a reason that is unrelated to an adult faith is not prompted to turn its gaze to the newness and radicalism of being. "*

Jointly, the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin<sup>43</sup> contribute to the understanding of human action as an intervention in the evolutionary process of the universe from freedom "by modifying its nature through their personal and social achievements, and integrating it into the unity of all human mankind". In our time we are called to an opening towards the "other"<sup>44</sup> and must answer the challenge of cultures encounter. As Massuh noted, communication between all voices "would lead us to an ecumenical widening of spiritual horizon, to a more fraternal conception of humanity, to the intimate insight that the whole world is the dwelling of man"<sup>45</sup>.

We therefore believe that the globalization process we live in, that integrates men together gradually and with difficulty towards unity of mankind, through the political, economic and technological means, will be legitimate and authentic, while it does not eliminate differences, preserving the individuality of each man. On the other hand, instruments of this convergence such as work, knowledge, information, communication, education, science, technology, economics, are valid as long as they are governed by ethical principles, in other words, as long as they present the respect and fulfillment of the person, understood ontologically and psychologically, as ultimate goal.

As Benedict XVI also said:

*"While we are happy about the new possibilities opened to humanity, we also see the dangers arising from these possibilities and we must ask ourselves how we can avoid them. We will succeed only if reason and faith meet again together in a new way, if we overcome the limitation, auto decreed, of reason to what can be verified by experiment, and again opened to reason its fullness. In this sense, theology, not only as a historical discipline and human science, but as authentic theology, that is, as a science that questions the reason of the faith, must find place in university and in the broader dialogue of sciences"<sup>46</sup>.*

For every man dilemma of science and faith, becomes a mystery - "very recondite or arcane thing, that cannot be understood or explained" according to the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy<sup>47</sup>. The mystery of science is used up in a new experience, the mystery of the infinite does not use up but in itself. Therefore, the person drama occurs when his spirit is interested and moved in the hopeful and eternal mystery of integrating into his existence the challenges of reason and faith.

<sup>43</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. "Globalización, ciencia y Universidad". In: Taquini (h), Alberto C. 2010. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 73 to 88.

<sup>44</sup> MASSUH, Víctor.1956. El diálogo de las culturas. Tucumán, Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, Instituto de filosofía, p. 72

<sup>45</sup> Idem.

<sup>46</sup> BENEDICTO XVI. 2006. *Discurso del santo padre en la universidad de Ratisbona: Fe, razón y universidad. Recuerdos y reflexiones.* Available in:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20060912\\_university-regensburg\\_sp.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg_sp.html)

<sup>47</sup> Available in: <http://www.rae.es/rae.html>

### 3. Evolution of these subjects at University<sup>48</sup>

Over the last 2000 years of history, the organization of knowledge delivery was changing on the same level as the needs and development of societies. Higher education as the highest instance of knowledge transfer was not immune to these changes. The concept of the university readapts according to the conjunction of historical variables that determine the social context of the period in which it is situated. To understand University configuration today, in its diversity and unity, a retrospective look at its historical setting-up lights up the approach to current issues we intend to study.

Our goal is to complete the integral formation at University so that all the sciences could be examined in it and to make such knowledge available to all students for learning. The aim is to achieve, from higher education, its projection to society to be useful to all of it. Coincidentally on "New universities..."<sup>49</sup> we have summarized historically the problem, as discussed below.

#### The emergence of the University in antiquity and its medieval flowering

The first expressions of higher education date back to 4<sup>th</sup> century b. C. in Athens, where Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum were built as centers of knowledge. Later, in Imperial Rome, the college of Arquiatras is created and there it was made the first attempt of implementation of a license to practice medicine.

After the fall of the Empire and with the rise of Christianity, appear in the early Middle Ages the first monastic schools established on the "seven pillars" of knowledge according to Cassiodorus, the seven liberal arts that would be the curriculum that constitute the European medieval universities: grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. Together with the movement of the monasteries, emerge Episcopal cathedral schools under the authority of bishops.

In the 11<sup>st</sup> century appears in Italy the first germ of the Renaissance from the perspective of teaching and higher education, the medical school of Salerno. Later appears the first Studium scholarium in Bologna, basis of the University of Bologna, a free association of scholars who hired the most illustrious teachers to give lessons to them. At the same time, in Paris, the École Notre-Dame comes up, an association of teachers who would then put the basis of the University of Paris. Gregorian chant studies would lead at that university to the Trivium<sup>50</sup>, an early high school that within the Quadrivium<sup>51</sup> (Master degree) and the doctorate as the highest degree, are the first bachelor's degrees from the University of Paris under the reign of Philip Augustus Capet.

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<sup>48</sup> The next paragraph is a reformulation of third chapter of: TAQUINI (h), Alberto C.; Urgoiti, Enrique; Rifé, Sadi; De Cea, Rosa. 1972. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país, la juventud determinante del cambio por la capacitación. Buenos Aires, Estrada

<sup>49</sup> Idem.

<sup>50</sup> The Trivium was composed essentially by grammar, rhetoric and dialectic. Cf. TAQUINI (h), Alberto C.; Urgoiti, Enrique; Rifé, Sadi; De Cea, Rosa. 1972. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país, la juventud determinante del cambio por la capacitación. Buenos Aires, Estrada. Chapter 3.

<sup>51</sup> The Quadrivium was composed by arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. Cf. TAQUINI (h), Alberto C.; Urgoiti, Enrique; Rifé, Sadi; De Cea, Rosa. 1972. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país, la juventud determinante del cambio por la capacitación. Buenos Aires, Estrada. Chapter 3.

The University establishes itself as the receiver and transmitter of the maximum levels of culture. Human knowledge begins to accumulate and teaching adapts to changing times. Thus, when the pre-renaissance comes with the decline of feudal society, feudal institutions, including University, incorporate new knowledge. The early Trivium and Quadrivium, as the sum of interdisciplinary and universal knowledge, led to the deepening of the different lines of philosophy as a science mother, thus emerging positive sciences and the corresponding division of University in faculties.

#### The modern university

The original concept of medieval university as a geographical interdisciplinary unit evolves in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Renaissance marks a defining course of human thought. From the hand of Galileo, Da Vinci, Bacon and Newton, the experimental method gave rise to the positive sciences. In a Renaissance culture where everything was art and humanism, theology and philosophy, appears the concrete, the demonstrable, the experimental.

Revolution in these two centuries meant the loss of gravity of university in the field of knowledge, with the emergence of multiple teaching and research institutes. These new centers develop the fastest progress of the period, while most universities continue its work based on classical models.

The Lutheran Reformation and the Counter reform would sign the higher education with particular orientations. While Saxon universities are marked by the development of science and technology, continental European universities are marked with a colonial and humanistic spirit.

By the times Industrial Revolution had advanced and certification of work professionalization appeared, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century scientific knowledge began to be applied systematically to industry and University had to adapt to the demands of technologists for industry and employment market, changing the traditional humanistic structure, into a scientific and technological institution.

#### The University we experience today

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the exponential growth of science and technological applications determined profound social changes and consecutively demands of training through University increased.

As we discussed above, it is manifest the decline of the influence of churches facing the growth of other activities taking place in society and in the University, remaining the latter orphan of faith, which was restricted merely to the churches by an artificial separation of the secular and the religious, carrying out implications that does not mean necessarily the absence of faith in people, but the absence of this in everyday life. This situation leads us to consider the current proposal, which has a harmonic combination of reason and faith as part of knowledge in our Universities, giving support to the relationship between religion and politics in a secular

society. The history of free-secular misunderstanding in Argentina, masks the fact that secular may also study religion. We mean, although we understand that the assertion of an autonomous and secular education in our country intended to separate the influence of the ecclesiastical institution in education and give the state its regulation, it does not imply that secular institutions do not deal with its religious issues, or that the monopoly of religion is, as in the imagination of this conflict, tied only with the Catholic Church. Today secular can be religious or not and religious join different churches creed. This split has extended even to the scientific and curriculum offer of universities shortcoming pointed in our proposal.

We say that we find religion in politics because we can verify the existence of grounds and common goals between religion and politics. This is observable, for example, in precepts such as the observance of human integrity, the common good seek, respect for differences and many other applications that refer to the ethical foundation that religions propose and in which politics waters, as practical implementation of principles thought in ethics. Social secularization based on the light of reason, difficult the opening of a serious dialogue between religion and politics in their mutual recognition of a necessarily shared beliefs substrate. The University, in this bet to dialogue, aims to provide the foundation for mutual understanding among religion and politics, necessary from an integral vision of man in a secularized society.

As we believe it's convenient to approach the integrity of University, with this paper intend to sketch some guidelines for a necessary debate in order to give harmony to University.

#### 4. Facing new challenges

A retrospective journey through the history of the university, as we have abbreviated above, let us notice certain general trends regarding the knowledge that they provide.

##### University for the XXI century

The medieval university was signed by a humanistic, philosophical and theological stamp that led, meanwhile Age of Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution, to a growing specialization in the positive sciences and technological applications that modern society demands. We saw that medieval was the philosophy and religion university, until the development of society and the new needs ran out that model and the University of the positive and social sciences, University of reason, emerged. Today the challenges settled by postmodern and globalized world point us out the limits of this model of reason University. The overcoming of false subdivisions of knowledge totality, lead us to propose the deepening of the study and research from reason and from faith, their necessary dialogue and mutual illumination.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has to tackle the whole man, watching every issue that is implied in his personal, emotional, spiritual, family, work and social life. Therefore, University has to be able to face those challenges that the future of humanity presents, looking into them to form, not merely technocrats, but integrally universalized persons.

However, universities are not prepared to adequately address these issues. Faced with the transformation of higher education in a changing world, we must think on how we understand the approach of knowledge, understanding that all aspects related to the person should be taken into account. Faith is present in millions of men lives and they seek answers to

transcendental questions, however these problems, both from its historical substrate (such as the history of religions point of view) and as a philosophical and metaphysical inquiry element (from theology) are not addressed in our university curriculum. Its development is required as part of a cross-cultural program that takes into account human needs holistically.

These issues including the challenges of higher education have been the subject of reflection and work throughout my career. I said in '72:

*"Man is the subject of society and humanity (...) this value will never be subordinated to any other one, but to accept its destruction as a principle. It is time that those responsible for youth formation, beginning with the family, going through school in its different cycles and ending with the university, realize, become aware of this fundamental postulate"<sup>52</sup>.*

In addition, we believe that progress and science development, confronts us with the frontiers of knowledge, setting ethical and moral boundaries that we should question<sup>53</sup>. Although today it seems that there are no restrictions on the growth of science for a moral reason, some current events are demonstrating us the risks of failing to warn these limits.

The irrational environment exploitation is an example of these risks. The abuse of environment carries on serious problems for man: the risks of nuclear energy; risks of the uncontrolled expansion of energy consumption; replacing the use of commodities for the use of mechanical energy and not for food; the human genome and consciousness manipulation, and so on. As explained Benedict XVI, in the Encyclical Letter *Caritas in veritate*<sup>54</sup>, we must take care of nature understanding our interdependence with it: "The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. (...) The nature, especially in our time, is so integrated into the social and cultural dynamics that is practically no longer an independent variable. "

The serious imbalances in the nature show us the need to direct development towards improving the living conditions of mankind. As Benedict XVI said<sup>55</sup>:

*"Human beings interpret and shape the natural environment through culture, which is guided by the responsible freedom, aware of the dictates of the moral law. Therefore, projects for integral human development cannot ignore the following generations, but need to be defined by solidarity and intergenerational justice, taking into account multiple aspects, including ecological, legal, economic, political and cultural ".*

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<sup>52</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C.; Urgoiti, Enrique; Rifé, Sadi; De Cea, Rosa. 1972. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país, la juventud determinante del cambio por la capacitación. Buenos Aires, Estrada. Chapter 9.

<sup>53</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C.; URGOITI, Enrique. 1987. "El individuo como protagonista". Revista del Instituto de investigaciones educativas, No. 58. Pp. 39 to 55.

<sup>54</sup> BENEDICTO XVI. 2009. Carta Encíclica Caritas in veritate. Available in: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20090629\\_caritas-in-veritate\\_sp.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_sp.html)

<sup>55</sup> Idem.

The University has a fundamental role in promoting human development, so it has to "educate a man who has to feel affections and emotions and to elucidate harmonically between what is useful, good and important, in order to be happy and solidarity compromised"<sup>56</sup>.

These problems refer us to nothing less than the ethical foundations of civil life, and hence to the basis of politic decisions. Religion can help in the debate, not only providing moral standards for men or proposing concrete solutions but, as Benedict XVI says in his speech at Westminster<sup>57</sup>:

*"Its role is rather to help purify and illuminate the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles (...) this is a two-way process. Without the correcting help of religion, the reason may be also subject to distortions, as when it is manipulated by ideology or is partially applied to the detriment of the dignity of the human person full consideration. "*

Precisely, the biases that do not address the consideration of person's integrity are the emerging of conflicts and power struggles. The partial perspective of university about knowledge today is also an expression of power struggles.

## 5. Itinerary and difficulties to overcome

We understand that universities have general purposes (the preservation, growth and transmission of culture), and also have particular purposes, and that from its independence and diversity, it is natural institutions to analyze them from their own particular principles. Thus, dialoguing from diversity, monolithic thought is battled and the intercultural discourse enriches. But there are boundaries to thinking freedom and democracy, when the autonomy of the University is severed from the power or sectarianism.

### An anthropological view of power

We have previously referred to the anthropological conception of power done by Scola<sup>58</sup>. From the author viewpoint, power originates in the mutual recognition of subjects in their link. Moreover, these links are expressed in the intermediate bodies of civil society such as the family and nearby communities. Thus, he concludes that "relation, recognition and power are the structural and constitutive dimensions of civil society, which as such have no origin in any higher power or depend on it"<sup>59</sup>. This implies that everything is settled in social relationships, with their potential and limitations that involves the imperfection that defines the man. This imperfection is manifested through the mystification of science and technology, as well as pseudo-religious manifestations as sects and the New Age.

<sup>56</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. Discurso de entrega de doctorado Honoris Causa en la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Disponible en: <http://www.acaedu.edu.ar/Estudio%2023-DVD/DVDEducacionSuperior/Para%20el%20CD/21%201Honoris%20Causa-discurso.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> BENEDICTO XVI. 2010. Discurso en el encuentro con representantes de la sociedad británica en Westminster Hall. Disponible en: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2010/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20100917\\_societa-civile\\_sp.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2010/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100917_societa-civile_sp.html)

<sup>58</sup> See the paragraph *Person as totality*.

<sup>59</sup> SCOLA , Angelo. 2007. Una nueva laicidad. Temas para una sociedad plural. Madrid, Ediciones Encuentro, p. 21

To understand the power relations that are expressed today, we set off from its anthropological matrix, in order to apprehend two dimensions of power dynamics in society: the political-economic dimension and the dimension of the reason and faith tension. We believe that understanding the dynamics of power in its complexity, is central to contextualize current apathy in relation to cultural and religious diversity in expertise centers, obstacle that this proposal seeks to overcome.

### The political economic power

Today, apparently, the power is expressed predominantly throughout the political-economic and technological domain. Trade conflicts between main countries, disputes to monopolize markets and obtain energy resources, reach its most unfortunate expression in the militarization of territorial hostilities between nations and corporations.

Financial crises are linked to power options. They reveal, as we see today in many parts of the world, budgetary disorder and inadequate economic priorities that affect multiple expressions of social conflict that appear daily throughout the world and where capital flows are just a fiction.

We will point out just one example. The multifaceted crisis in England these days reveals social and moral problems that contemporary society lives in multiple places<sup>60</sup>. Cameron and Labour party reported the magnitude of the crisis and the harmful impact that the disorder causes in the lives of citizens. Diagnosing the causes of this crisis, the Prime Minister acknowledged that the disintegration of social net expressed in the violence facts is the result of a long process that affected low-income families. Also, racial conflicts are inserted into the economic problems. But that's not all; Ed Miliband from the Labour party warns that the moral decline also affects the upper classes, as evidenced in the conflict over parliamentary expenses and the scandal of wiretapping of the press.

The split between aspiration and achievement ability breaks the social dynamics and is expressed in the moral collapse as seen in British conflicts. It is useful in this context, to return to the ethical principles that support the political morality, for which the contribution of the History of Religions proposed in our thinking perspective, is a source of inspiration and guidance regarding to the integrity of the person respect.

The emerging hegemonic and the powerful countries born in our days undermine their own domain. Today, national boundaries become increasingly blurred in front of the new territorial configurations of clusters of countries linked by trade and political agreements in order to face the hegemony of the superpowers. The commercial and criminal legal norms begin to internationalize. The ultimate expressions of this are the human rights from which human dignity emerges.

The increase in communications and transportation that connects to all men facilitates the inclusion of the wishes of everyone and everything. However, the inequality in inclusion

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<sup>60</sup> Information extracted from a journalistic article belonged to La Nación paper from Agust 16th of 2011 "Cameron promete medidas contra el colapso moral" by Elisabetta Pique. Available in: <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1398067-cameron-promete-medidas-contra-el-colapso-moral>

generates tension. The increasing globalization of human society occurs in a context where two-thirds of the participants are from underdeveloped countries. This tends to worsen in 2050, since 80% of the rate of population growth will come from them. In this sense, we understand that the struggle is for inclusion in a society that is growing exponentially and for participation on equal opportunities. The participation and prominence of discourse is central in today's economic middle class and expands to all people.

The convergences, associations and polarizations of nation states mark the increasing interdependence that characterizes globalization as social, economic and political phenomenon. In addition, current globalization concerns the role of different cultures tensioned between local and global. From that juncture, the guiding principles of human cultural production, reason and faith, appear as underlying dimensions of power conflicts in globalization. What emerges above all these dimensions is the constitutive unity of man.

### Reason and faith

Today's society seems to be dominated by science and technology, thus the conflict is raised there with avatars that accelerated development generates for humanity. However, behind the veil of appearances, we find under this conflicts, a latent tension between reason and faith. What seems to be merely a struggle for economic and political power, involves a cultural conflict, where the secular rivals unnecessarily with the religious. This false antinomy, based on the glorification of reason and faith disrepute, ignores the coexistence in the depth of the person and all its social manifestations, of convictions based on principles that obey to reason and also to specific creeds.

We have seen as obvious manifestation of this absurd rivalry, the justification of military action by condemning judgments about the Muslim religion and the simplifying of the analysis confusing the Islamic creed with fundamentalism, which acquires its current specific relevance, but is not exclusive of a particular religion. Benedict XVI says about it: *"We know that today we have a common struggle, Christianity and Islam, in defense of the great religious values, which are faith in God and obedience to God. On the other hand, the two religions have to find a common right place in modernity"*<sup>61</sup>

History has also witnessed the atrocities of political and religious genocide. The Holocaust and the Armenian genocide are examples par excellence of the aberration that intolerance can lead to. These patterns show us the emergence of religious conflicts that underlie the intercultural power struggles, though often stay overlapped in the media exposure of power struggles as secular conflicts. This latent controversial, force us to take the dialogue from the diversity of human cultural manifestations, being the religious institutions and expressions, its universal sui generis expression. We must exclude religious and sectarian religious and secular extremisms, and because they lead to conflict.

The differences are expressed in the human bond, whereas freedom is an inalienable principle, ontologically founded on the person as a social being. The integrity of human life from

<sup>61</sup> Available in: <http://freeforumzone.leonardo.it/lofi/Homilias-Mensajes-Disursos-y-Audiencias-de-Benedicto-XVI/D354605-10.html>

conception to natural death lies in this principle. When there is no freedom, human relationships become troubled by coercion and the other and the diversity are subsumed under false absolutes. Today, when the domain of political-economic-technological power appears as a false absolute, it is our task to open a dialogue among reason and faith to rebuild a totalizing view of the person and culture.

Diversity conveyed in dialogue, which expression par excellence is academic freedom and plurality, allows enriching the heterogeneous discourse. University is the privileged place for the enrichment of multiple dialogues from freedom of thought.

### The power and freedom

As a result of the discussion up here, we propose to investigate the problem of religious studies at the University, in order to build a knowledge that addresses the whole person.

Man globalization by information, as I explained in other works<sup>62</sup>, means "for each one to be part at once of everything good and bad that happens daily in the world: the advent of unity in diversity". This is a different challenge, before which University must catch up with the demands of the times, taking the reins of reason and faith in the pursuit of truth.

From my point of view, the current backwardness in the study of history of religions is due to, on one hand, there has not been militancy in the religious historical sector, which has been unfavorable in power struggles. On the other hand, the backwardness of the religious study responds to the general welfare that technological development has given us in the current period of dominance of pure reason. Postmodern society manifests many signs of failure of this paradigm, demonstrating the spiritual growth needs to provide solutions to society and educate students integrally. The inertia of the system is opposed to this.

In relation to this inequality context, we can understand that before the needs of millions of believers, expressed in that Gallup survey, University doesn't respond to a demand that society considers of vital importance to their feelings. The conditioning power imposes society, are expressed here in a conflict between kinds of knowledge that seem to be mutually exclusive: either science or faith. As a consequence, from the exercise of power, the ultimate truth for the University development is determined. The conflict between social demands and power is resolved today in favor of discrimination of knowledge of faith. And so we agree with Scola that:

*"Education Freedom measures the genuinely democratic and popular nature of a society. Therefore also judges the state's ability to perform its role of promoter and guarantor of a civil society where all individuals and intermediary bodies can exercise freely, among others, the fundamental and primary right to education and teaching"*<sup>63</sup>.

In this plot, we highlight the valuable effort of social scientists such as Mircea Eliade to continue researching about religion, understanding its centrality in society. Addressing religion

<sup>62</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2010. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 143 to 154.

<sup>63</sup> SCOLA, Angelo. 2007. Una nueva laicidad. Temas para una sociedad plural. Madrid, Ediciones Encuentro, p. 99.

from a triple method (historical, phenomenological and hermeneutical), Eliade puts his research "in the perspective of world history"<sup>64</sup> where what matters is "not to lose sight of the profound unity and indivisibility of the human spirit"<sup>65</sup>. With a great corpus of sources and profuse casuistry, Eliade greatly helped and encouraged the study of religions throughout the world.

Eliade uses the term sacred to refer holistically to this unknown domain that exceeds human understanding, he said:

*"Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, because it shows as something completely different from the profane. To call the act of manifestation of the sacred we have proposed the term hierophany, which is convenient, since it does not involve any additional details: expresses no more than what is implied in its etymological content, that is to say, something sacred that shows to us. We could argue that the history of religions, from the most primitive to the most elaborate, is constituted by an accumulation of hierophanies, by manifestations of sacred realities"*<sup>66</sup>.

The author established theoretical guidelines for understanding the specificity of the religious, from a perspective that reaffirmed the universality of the human mind<sup>67</sup>, while addressing the various religious systems in their specific complexity without establishing evolutionary hierarchies. His search, beyond the indisputable importance of his work as documentary evidence of the most diverse religious manifestations in several social-historical contexts, is based on the common denominator of the human relationship with the sacred:

*"The sacred is not a stage in the history of consciousness, but an element of the structure of the same consciousness. In the most archaic levels of culture, to live as a human being is already a religious act itself (...) the experience of the sacred is inherent to the way of being of man in the world. Without the experience of reality- and what is not- humans could not be built. From this evidence precisely, the historian of religions begins to study the diverse religious forms"*<sup>68</sup>.

Starting from the experience of the sacred, Eliade goes through the different ways in which human societies in their diversity, built rites, myths and religious systems that printed the particular vision of every culture about their experience and formed part of the construction of guidelines behavior and shared values.

Scientific contributions such as Eliade's, corroborate what we pointed out: the fundamental nature of the development of religion in universities. Our assumption has an empirical correlate in a tradition of thinkers who demonstrated the unlimited scopes of knowledge from the dialogue between reason and faith.

<sup>64</sup> GOMEZ GARCIA, Pedro. 2008. "Antropología y religión en el pensamiento de Mircea Eliade". El Genio Maligno, Revista de humanidades y ciencias sociales, No. 2. Pp. 105 to 115.

<sup>65</sup> ELIADE, Mircea. 1976. Historia de las creencias y de las ideas religiosas. I, De la prehistoria a los misterios de Eleusis. Madrid, Cristiandad.

<sup>66</sup> ELIADE, Mircea. 1998. LO SAGRADO Y LO PROFANO. Buenos Aires, Paidós. Chapter 1.

<sup>67</sup> GÓMEZ GARCÍA, Pedro. 2008. "Antropología y religión en el pensamiento de Mircea Eliade". El Genio Maligno, Revista de humanidades y ciencias sociales, No. 2, pp. 105 a 115.

<sup>68</sup> ELIADE, Mircea. 1980. La prueba del laberinto. Conversaciones con Claude Henri Rocquet. Madrid, Cristiandad.

## 6. Proposal for a comprehensive university

Best qualified secular universities in the world we have chosen as examples, such as Oxford, Heidelberg, Harvard and Chicago among other institutes and colleges are dedicated to the study of the History of Religions and Theology. These institutions are committed to research and training in these areas, carrying out activities that nurture the spirit of their universities. Thousands of men and women are educated as academics and researchers in these fields of knowledge in multiple non-confessional universities, which indicates the potential of mutual illumination between reason and faith and its effects on academic and social community.

In the light of the above, I invite our secular national and private universities to include study, research and dialogue on how to stimulate the interaction between reason and faith. I also promote the organization of research groups and individual careers on these issues to delve into the mystery that separated them from the purpose of analyzing the man and his circumstances in an integral dimension.

On previous occasions I have expressed some of my reflections on this topic. In 2005 I was honored to receive an honorary doctorate from the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, a huge distinction that means a big commitment for me to be given by the oldest university in America, in the magnificent grounds of the hall of degrees of this house of studies, tribune enriched many times by top exponents of culture. There, in a speech given at the ceremony I said, coinciding with what Ramon J. Carcano said for the University of Cordoba:

*"Universities must include religious cultural studies. Must address the beliefs of Catholics (1000 million), other Christians (800 million) and people of other religions (3185 million) and also meet the unbelievers (850 million). This will make us have a clear and comprehensive view of man. Also this is not only to educate a man who has to have feelings and emotions and to elucidate harmonically between what is useful, good and important, in order to be happy and compromised"<sup>69</sup>.*

Therefore, the dialogue between reason and faith should not only address the faith issues related to reason in religious diversity, but on the basis of diversity must address other similar academic dialogue with nonbelievers.

In the ENDUC III<sup>70</sup> meeting, in the same year, I settled the need for a university reform in order to include cultural diversity brought about by globalization.

*"The challenge now, is not to be isolated from different, so universities have to therefore, as part of their curriculum, teach<sup>71</sup> courses that enable people to know the idiosyncrasies of men in all regions and cultures of the world in all the careers. Graduates may engage in professional practice in accordance with the*

<sup>69</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. Discurso de entrega de Doctorado Honoris Causa en la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Available in: <http://www.acaedu.edu.ar/Estudio%2023-DVD/DVDEducacionSuperior/Para%20el%20CD/21%201Honoris%20Causa-discurso.pdf>

<sup>70</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2005. "Globalización, ciencia y universidad". ENDUC III. In: *Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010*. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 73 to 88.

<sup>71</sup> It means to offer particular courses to those areas and optional for the other area students.

*current real demands of diversity and integration. This requires a deep curricular reform that provides for the actions of each professional in a globalized world, which for most of us is very different from our culture. This curriculum and teaching reform should be nurtured with the contributions of interdisciplinary research institutes aimed at studying the problems of intercultural dialogue and its trend towards globalization".*

This will be a scientific contribution to the sense of the world's population mentioned above. I understand that the path to a university that holistically address the knowledge of the world and the human condition means including studies on the History of Religion and Theology at the Universities according to two fundamental aspects. On the one hand, the enquiring of a part of the totality of human knowledge that has a complexity and thematic unity which make a comprehensive training in them necessary: theology and history of religion as individual study plans. On the other hand, it is necessary take in account as content in scientific education, the contributions of faith to illuminate the ethical derivations of the fundamentals and practices of men and women trained at University as bearers of the highest knowledge of their time.

The proposal of Universities Creation and its achievement<sup>72</sup> didn't have as fundamental goal the numerical and bureaucratic multiplication of universities but to promote by them, from the knowledge, the enhancement of society. This plan, at the end of last century, had the predominant challenge of the positive sciences and its projection to material welfare. Post-modern society requires in this century, in order to reach the complete fulfillment of its members, to deepen also in the cultural aspects of global society and the individual, so this work challenges the University to complete the formation of man in all its dimensions.

As an empirical contribution to the exposition and justification of the proposal made, a survey indicating the teaching of the History of Religions and Theology in some of the world's leading universities is annexed to this paper. This is the result of previous academic experiences, personal visits to some of the universities mentioned and also a bibliographical search and mailing exchange with any of them. With this survey, we aim to illustrate and guide the effective implementation of degrees, research institutes and faculties, entirely devoted to addressing the History of Religion and Theology. These academic centers, in addition to its own unilateral activities, will also provide services to other careers, so that students interested in this area can do some credits in the curricular areas of Religion. Thus, students in careers such as medicine, engineering, physics may take courses in these areas as part of the electives credits assigned for their grade.

The annex will point out the peculiarities of academic offerings in the area of Religion in the selected universities, specifying the number of subjects and disciplines that make up the curriculum developed for undergraduate and graduate studies in each faculty or school, showing the multiple approaches from the humanities and social sciences that are effective today.

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<sup>72</sup> TAQUINI (h), Alberto C. 2010. Nuevas universidades para un nuevo país y la educación superior: 1968-2010. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación, pp. 1 to 25 and 27 to 47.

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