

# Rationalization of Contemporary Culture and Education in the Context of Religious Resistance to Violence

Olga Chistyakova

Russian State Specialized Academy of Arts  
Moscow, Russia

Department of Social Philosophy  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia  
Miklukho-Maklay str., 10/2, Moscow, Russia, 117198  
E-mail: [olgachis@yandex.ru](mailto:olgachis@yandex.ru)

**Abstract**—The article refers to the necessity of rationalization of the spheres of modern education and culture to prevent a growing range of social violence in a global world. The author notes out the importance of religion in resisting the different forms of violence and irrationality in the contemporary societies. Author underlines the significant role of enlightenment and reason, of rationalization of social and cultural interactions for comprehending a dialogue in the contemporary multicultural world. The article considers the most relevant phenomena of contemporaneity – violence and religion – in their interaction and confrontation. Violence is presented in a number of forms: power as command and subordinate relations; irrationality and destruction of impersonated mass; mimetic violence based on simulation and marking the victims. The author defines the possibilities for violence emergence in religions and emphasizes the Church's (in integer philosophical meaning) role in countering various manifestations of violence in contemporary societies. The author focuses on moral, anthropological and spiritual potential of religions to preventing violence and minimizing its effects.

**Keywords**—*rationality; education; culture; violence; non-violence; religion; power; mimesis; mass; crowd*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Human's spirituality cannot be fully comprehended by mind, taken under control or shaped by social institutions or any political practices. Because of that the religious sphere, dealing with a transcendent object and not tending to excessive structural regulation of any given individual's moral experience, completes harmoniously individual spiritual life. Despite the emerging secularization trend of social and cultural spheres, religion intensively starts stepping into individual's personal history displacing to some extent severe regulation forms of bureaucratic regulatory control, declarative political activity, endless coils of all sorts of reforms and innovations with the new "game rules" (Z. Bauman), which nobody expects and which people should

follow anyway. In fact, structurally subordinate mechanisms are the basis of society, which includes every human being; that is a "pressure" ensuring the viability of state and society. Socio-economics, politics and bureaucracy, information and media and other gears of that "mechanism" roll on implementing violence in a variety of forms, from psychological to informational, and, obviously, without violence and enforcement no state could exist.

Sacred and spiritual culture is being gradually replaced in a contemporary "spectacle" social life, in terms of Guy Debord, by trends of dissolution of unique personality traits, unification of individuals, de-institutionalization of modern institutions, society atomization, gradual loss of stability and depth of own and family lives and creation of mediatized "unreal reality" (A. Giddens), perceived by human as objective and factual reality. Under described circumstances religion inevitably occupies the field left free, i.e. the personal space of a contemporary human, lost his basis and forced to submit to both external and internal factors of a sheer being.

Awareness of the current state of social affairs reminds us that religion should not be forced out (or underestimated) from the sphere of social and cultural life, especially from the sphere of educational process of each person. Religion fills a strong place not only in transcendental but in real social life - that should be recognized even when arguing from secular or un-churched individual. However, one should be able to see positive in religion, the significant value that religion and religious belief can bring to the society development and to the cultural and educational self-identity. Religious structures, organizations and associations should be considered as a promising spiritual power to establish civilized relations in societies, as a powerful factor capable of resolution of social conflicts and, most importantly of all, as a modern social institution capable of preventing manifestations and implementations of various types of violence in culture and education of modern societies as well as to reduce its negative effects.

## II. VIOLENCE AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON OF MODERN CULTURE: PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The theme of actualization of religion and religious institutions in the context of their opposition to violence in different spheres of social life and preservation of peace is extremely important for the modern world. Worth noting that we don't mean any particular religion or a particular church as a religious organization. We are talking about religion in a philosophical sense, as a social phenomenon, which increasing significance seems obvious, and its ethically correct usage can bring positive content in solution of some humanitarian issues of our time. 21st century, unfortunately, presents the lots of facts when religion may be judged as a factor fueling wars, conflicts, acts of terror. Is it really? Does religion nurture tension, hostility towards an individual of a different ethno-culture, but not necessarily the other religious identity? What is the potential of religion opposing violence, when the latter is arranged into the powerful political institutions, army, media, and economics? Yet the fundamental question is: how religion can contribute to establishing or changing human perception about overcoming (better: anticipation) violence?

We define at once our thesis in response to the aforementioned questions. What is urgent today is the inclusion of *reason* in *religion* and explication of the latter into the social life of a modern society, into the education and spiritual culture on the rational grounds. Introducing rationality in support of countering religious violence in our secular times requires problems consideration from philosophical and anthropological perspectives; same goes for comprehending the religion's (Church as an institute) attempts to infiltrate the social, ethnic and military conflicts.

First of all, let's see how a human includes himself in the conceptual justification of *violence* in the development of socio-philosophical thought. Generally, "violence" is used in philosophy to focus on committing enforcement either over oneself or over someone else. J.P. Sartre writes about a human being re-creating oneself by exercising violence over *self*. In the works by K. Marx an individual reveals his personal basis through work and social involvement. Each and every philosophical doctrine dealing with violence supposes the existence of the *Other* - other individual or community, sometimes an entire society. French philosopher B. Jouvenel noted that an individual strengthens his feeling as a human when imposing himself to others and turning the others into tools of his will. One of the greatest French Enlightenmenters Voltaire saw the power essence in making the others do what *I* had chosen. J. Mill marked out two inclinations of the human nature: a desire to dominate over others and to exercise power over oneself. From this he drew the correlation between the will to power and the will to submission. The reverse is also possible: a strict reluctance to obey and conform is often accompanied by a strong antipathy to domination and commands. M. Weber's reflection, whose interpretation of power as a chance to proclaim one's own will despite resistance from others, is similar to C. Clausewitz' understanding of war as an act of violence to compel the enemy to do what is desirable to an enforced subject.

Obviously, such war/politics or violence/power ratio is invalid for the modern world as new weapon technologies are capable of destroying entire nations in minutes along with their sources of governmental or any other power. That is why, perhaps, American philosopher Hannah Arendt intertwines in her book "On Revolution" American political and religious spheres [1] and argues that religion should play the first hand when the spiritual revolution strikes. The key principles of this revolution are: restoration of the original spirituality, expansion of social spends, compassion to those in need, turn for the human factors etc. Arendt underlines the irony that the USA develops as the world's state but if the aforementioned goals are well-received, they will demand turning to religion [1; P. 85]. Deliverance of suffering and spiritual incompleteness could be achieved, according to Arendt, through the political actions setting religious goals as well.

Worth noting that any reflective reference to the theoretical study of violence phenomenon requires a monosemantic definition: violence is the rule of man over man. Hannah Arendt provides an insightful analysis of the relation of "power" and "violence" concepts. In her "Reflection on Violence" she argues that violence always needs implements [2; P. 19]. War in that case is a representation of violence covered by virtue of the means at its disposal. All modern warfare is based on the latest revolutionary implementation of violence - *technology*. Therefore, from H. Arendt's point of view, Clausewitz' understanding of violence, as well as the famous Mao Zedong's thesis that "power grows out of the barrel of a gun" [2; P. 21] is obsolete. We need now a different analysis of violence and means of its implementation. We should mention, that H. Arendt is interested in violence in the context of relation among "violence", "non-violence" and "power" concepts. Her approach to the problematic stays significant even nowadays despite the fact that her aforementioned work was written in the 20th century.

H. Arendt notes that such a power definition takes its roots in Greek antiquity and is still prevalent in contemporary political thought discourse. This apprehension defines the forms of power as the *rule of man over man* and the exercise of power as command-obedience relationship. H. Arendt yet claims that in a modern world "we ought to add... the latest and perhaps most formidable form of such dominion, bureaucracy or the rule by an intricate system of bureaux in which no men, neither the few nor the many, can be held responsible and which could be properly called the rule by Nobody... rule by Nobody is clearly the most tyrannical of all, since there is no one left who could even be asked to answer for what is being done" [2; P. 26].

Should be noted that even if such a person is a part of a system, then, generally, he cannot answer this question being simultaneously sure in a necessity of what's being done (no matter what - reforms, changes, new rules introduction). Franz Kafka once brilliantly showed a bureaucratic form of a government that is based more on irrationality than on reason and pragmatism. The modern bureaucracy is a power of Nobody, impersonated as to causes and results of its activities.

Analyzing the "violence" and "power" phenomena, H. Arendt concludes that they are *opposite*; violence does not appear inevitably with the exercise of power. The difference between violence and power is immense. Power is always determined by the needs of people and inevitably organizes their lives. But violence emerges when power is gone and forsaken [2]. Violence as a special, private, self-contained phenomenon can "manage" without people and without the government itself. Indicative in this context is the idea of Montesquieu that tyranny is the most violent yet the less imperious among the polities.

So what is the difference between *power* and *violence*, and is there a place for *non-violence*? According to H. Arendt, the power doesn't need justification because it is an integral essence of political structures, but power needs legitimation. The use of violence, on the contrary, may be justified but will never be legitimized in the eyes of the people. Despite the fact that power and violence are two different phenomena, they usually appear together on social and political arenas. However, power predominates and primer under some internal and external conditions the emergence of violence. Power always expresses the essence of any government, but this statement can't be attributed to violence. Violence is instrumental in its nature; it is always set from the need of absolute and total control as well from the need of self-justification. There's a legitimate question: how does violence realizes itself if it replaces power governmental structures? H. Arendt argues that violence establishes itself and provides its activities based on "super-organization" of power. Even despotism is built on that concept.

Thus, for violence to emerge, society requires once established social and political institutes to be destroyed (methods of destruction and policy of the previous power are insignificant). What is important is the excessive and exaggerated organizational structure of political and social institutions that become so unmanageable at some point that they collapse. This is exactly the process of legal capacity loss – or even destruction – of some social institutions of late modernity found nowadays in a number of countries including Russia.

Ways to implementing violence are always anti-humanistic and therefore frightening and dangerous for people of all times and all societies. Therefore, to understand violence we need to be aware of its nature and of the means and tools for its implementation. Violence bases on all artifacts created by humankind; the latest technologies and information resources are used for modern warfare, for example. A human being, opposing violence, confronts not only another human being but also a powerful force of technological, material and psychological achievements of humankind. The fact is, they will be used to destruct in case of violent acts.

### III. THE NECESSITY OF RATIONALIZATION OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Let us come back to our original thesis of *rationalization of all social spheres*, including education and spiritual

culture, usage of all possible components of modern society to return the value of *reason* into the space of *human existence* and – more importantly – to prevent or minimize the ongoing exercise of violence in the contemporary world. In our opinion, religion in its institutionalized integrity is quite a force being able to counter violence in cooperation with secular organizations. Religions' spiritual principles a priori contradict violence; they are capable of rationalizing social life basing on peaceful existence.

In the context of the Church's anxiety expression for the growing irrationality of life, the Pope Benedict XVI's lecture at Redensburg University in 2006 at a meeting with the German scientists and humanitarians is significant. Pope's lecture was dedicated to the relations between *faith* and *reason* and to the call for a return of rationality to the modern world. Benedict XVI emphasized that contemporary "...fundamental decisions made about the relationship between faith and the use of human reason are part of the faith itself" [3]. Faith and reason must come together in a new way, and if society overcomes successfully "the self-imposed limitation of reason to the empirically falsifiable" [3], then the new horizons for reason and society will be opened.

Benedict XVI tried to highlight the spiritual sphere as an actual object of rational comprehension. It may be noted that all of the aforementioned has already taken place in the history of philosophy and theology, to recall the rationalist proofs of God's existence attempted by medieval scholastics. It seems, however, that Benedict XVI intentionally attracts the attention of contemporaries to the fact that rationality remained in the distant past, *reason* as methodological theological tool and as the *basis of modern society* no longer plays a major role and lost its significance. Hence the fears of expanding the scopes of violence, conflicts, revolutions, forced actions of some nations over the others.

The Head of the Catholic Church spoke in his lecture of the need of returning theology into the universities. Theology, from his point of view, belongs to the universities and wide-range scientific dialogue in contemporary culture, but as a discipline questioning rationality of belief and interconnecting therefore a variety of cultures. Pope Benedict XVI believes that the Western world departed from the Greek rationality and from the Greek philosophizing spirit based on reason. This rationality is a world culture's achievement and should be returned to the social life.

Enlightening the modern society with reason is, in our opinion, the main point of Pope Benedict's lecture and the main goal of contemporary societies.

Dialogue and cooperation of cultures, different types of educational systems, and religions are urgent nowadays. Organizations and associations of various religions should get involved in real social and humanitarian processes happening in different states. This is a requirement of global time. Let us emphasize that we are referring to the possible churches' aid in social sphere and in the spheres where conflicts and contradictions accumulate in order to prevent them; we do not refer to the spheres of governance, federal or regional management. Rationality, deaf to what is sacred,

is unable to enter the modern intercultural dialogue. An appeal to the sacred spiritual foundations and reason of every nation is necessary due to proliferating conflicts and deepening mutual incomprehension. Modern society must find ways of expanding rationality throughout all spheres of human and social activities and carry away power and enforcement in intercultural and educational relations. *Reason is a challenge for contemporary culture, education, and modern world.*

Yet we are dealing with growing symptoms of irrationality in a society and not only stemming from the government (which we are always glad to blame for everything) but also from ourselves, communities, ethno-cultural groups, subjected to manipulative efforts based on ethnic and religious differences. In the modern world, seemingly reached a civilized development way, improving political and legal institutions for violence prevention, there is a parallel trend of the growth and expansion of conflicts and threats. Global world has a dual character: it has less violence than in previous societies, but the threats are more and more widespread and destructive (e.g. terrorism is now recognized as an international phenomenon).

#### IV. THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE IN THE RENÉ GIRARD MIMETIC THEORY OF RELIGIONS

Considering the social essence of violence, we shall not pass along *mimetic theory of religions* suggested by French philosopher René Girard. He reveals not only the mechanism of violence emergence in the depth of time and archaic religions, but also shows the nature of violence on social and anthropological levels. Girard's theory defines mimesis, imitation as a basic mechanism of violence and aggression emergence in religions. The philosopher denies the existence of violence causes in religion itself, believing that violence comes from the worshippers and thus there are no peaceful or warmongering religions. To Girard, the question of religious violence is primarily a social and anthropological question, rather than religious one [4].

According to Girard, violence originates in the mimetic rivalry process. Violence emerges when two or more partners (rivals) are trying to get ahead of each other in achieving by physical or any other means an object they strive after. The philosopher notes that in a modern science violence is generally regarded in terms of aggression. The latter, however, refers to irrational behavior, to instincts. The nature of aggression is that it has no roots in human conflicts. Basis and cause of violence and aggression is imitation or mimicry, found both in humans and animals. Girard argues: "a theory of conflict based primarily on appropriative mimicry" [5; P. 10].

R. Girard deduces his theory by comparing violence genesis in *archaic* religions to *Biblical* traditions. Archaic religions, nurtured by mythology, are unable to conceive rationally, that is why many rituals originate in universally open sacrificial offerings. The essence of sacrifice is in the "collective action of the entire community, which purifies itself of its own disorder through the unanimous immolation of a victim, but this can happen only at the paroxysm of the

ritual crisis" [5; P.11]. The French philosopher emphasizes that sacrifices occur basing on irrational mimetic process, uniting community for some time.

Girard's ideas are relevant in explaining the behavior of the masses, crowds (historical period isn't vital), united by some mythical idea, feeling of hate and thirst for sacrifice of an appointed victim. Girard explained the origin of violence in archaic religions as follows. Communities mimetically transfer their feuds and troubles to one particular victim and because of that illusion comes reconciliation for people and structured society turns into undifferentiated crowd. Gradually unanimous mimetic infection turns destructive violence of all against all into the salutary violence of all against one. Community reconciles through a single victim [4].

Blind faith in deliverance from all the troubles and misfortunes through the sacrifice of someone or something makes comparable *modern* societies and *archaic* communities. Crowd actions are irrational in both cases. The importance of sacrifice is that it summarizes and concludes ritual collective murder or expulsion of the victim and concludes mimetic crisis and ritual mimicry.

Ritual mimicry mechanism is described by R. Girard in two concepts: 1. *scapegoat as ritual* and *scapegoat as effect* [5; P.12] and 2. *the surrogate victim* [5; P. 20]. Combined into a harmonious community based on the chosen "scapegoat", a group of people shares a common goal – to warn potential victims from harming them, by expelling and destroying them. "Scapegoat" becomes an object of aggression and violence on part of communities that show a surprising unity. The consequences of "scapegoat" persecution are clear and effective in the case of mobs. Victim's destruction can make a crowd unmanageable but at the same time bring it order and tranquility. Collective belief in a result of sacrifice, according to R. Girard, is absurd, but the mob really believes in a happy outcome for itself if scapegoat is destroyed. Thus, violence is born inside the crowd's mimetic chase after the scapegoat [5; P.12]. This is a "homeland" of violence and aggressive behavior. The scapegoat mimetic model generates mimetic rivalry, where every participating one "becomes the imitator of his own imitator, just as the latter becomes the model of his own model... Violence is thus generated... Violence is mimetic rivalry itself becoming violent as the antagonist who desire the same object, keep thwarting each other and desiring the object all the more. Violence is supremely mimetic" [5; P. 12-13]. Let us stress that crowd is being formed under the effect of "mimetic rivalry".

The "surrogate victim" principle is akin to "scapegoat" ritual and its consequences. Scapegoat's place is taken by a victim, selected by crowd. R. Girard creates "surrogate victim" concept and focuses on a victim. Supposedly, communities transfer guilt and sufferings to some other person who will bear guilt and suffer instead of them. The philosopher compares this to a savage mind when it was possible to transfer troubles, problems and pain on the shoulders of another person. However, according to Girard, the situation repeats itself and the "surrogate victim" concept

is consistent with contemporary society. Moreover, it's a basic principle of a contemporary society [6]. It's important for the French philosopher to bring the modern knowledge to realize that fact.

R. Girard also uses the mimesis phenomenon to analyze Biblical religions. He argues that Biblical tradition demystifies the myth inherent in archaic religions and stops supporting "mimetic infection against a single victim" as just and sacred. On the contrary, "the biblical interpreters" resist this infection and rehabilitate the victim which is actually innocent. Biblical resistance to mimetic infection allows us to see the deceitfulness of archaic religions, prevailed violent inclinations of crowds. Thus Bible, according to Girard, reveals the causes of violence concealed once by myth and irrational crowd behavior.

R. Girard's mimetic violence concept in religion is everlasting for the contemporary times. Civilized societies do not rely anymore on violence as sacrifice, but realize their potential in other forms by creating special institutions: army, law enforcement, regulatory and governmental agencies, etc. Mimetic rivalry still permeates society in its most viable structures, for example in the fields of scientific or educational competitions, traditional and alternative medicine. Weapon races among countries, vicious forms of terrorism are also prone to progression in simulation and imitation.

Actions undertaken by crowd embraced by mimetic ideas of its leader's imitation under certain conditions, objectively and subjectively created, transform into a destructive force capable of sweeping away everything thoroughly built in mere hours. People in crowd, undifferentiated and impersonal mass, spellbound, yielding to simulation and are subjects to imitation. There is always a scapegoat in a described mimesis, at least a crowd will be told *who is* it or *who could be* it acting as a "surrogate victim". In the process of mimetic violence booming, peaceful space created by people is being destroyed. Where there is no reason there are social myths created by the leaders of the masses, being supported and hourly broadcasted by media. Myth's mimetic effect leads to the complete victory of irrationality and unreason instead of rationality. Myth entirely possesses people in crowd. Gradually emerging and expanding mass, crowd *is not capable of rational actions* being inclined to *large-scale destruction* instead. Elias Canetti in his "Crowds and Power" notes an in-depth irrationality of people caught up in crowd [7]. Intuition tells people there is something "hidden", unattainable, untold by those responsible for organizing that impersonal mass. However, as if by some magic spell, people do whatever they are prescribed and commanded by someone.

#### V. VIOLENCE, CROWD, AND COMMUNICATIVE ROLE OF RELIGION IN CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Violence implementation may be latent and not obvious. Political technologies are becoming more and more sophisticated. If enforcement or manipulative actions are applied to the mass of people, crowd, then mass doesn't often realize that the violence is being exercised against them and

such actions along with the crowd behavior may lead to unpredictable results. Hannah Arendt called the violence "a marginal phenomenon" [2; P. 33]. Shouldn't come by surprise that philosophical and sociological discourses usually treat terms "mass" and "mass society" negatively, noting that mass turns people into some amorphous integrity hiding any personality in a large-scale gathering of people for no apparent reason. Mass essence is a loss of personality and highest susceptibility to manipulation. Russian sociologist D. Chistyakov pointed out that mob is a "...massive accumulation of people with undifferentiated homogeneous content lacking the internal structure, pragmatic order and rational goals. The psychologically negative perception of current events and suggestions of local power is characterized to such kind of crowd" [8; P. 236].

*Mass* is akin to *crowd* as the latter "develops" according to the same principles and periods as impersonated mass. Obviously, in periods of social conflicts protesting crowd/mass is almost unmanageable and becomes a menacing source of violence.

We cannot, however, avoid questioning ourselves, whether religion itself is used to exercise violence?

Yes, when in the name of any given religion certain destructive actions are undertaken including those of psychological nature; or when some religious ideas are used for utilitarian purposes of certain individuals; or when religion becomes a tool promoting hatred and turns into kindling for stoking the ethnic conflicts. Unfortunately, this is a common practice. Religion has now become an epicenter of ideological speculations. Politicians try to manipulate religious believes in order to achieve their own goals, quasireligious figures and missionaries use religion as a bait, some representatives of the political elites use religion and ethnics to set people on fight causing. Misinterpreted in such purely utilitarian ways the religious ideas bring to manipulating the public consciousness and personal identity.

The problem, of course, is not in religion but in those who use religious ideas for their own purposes. Church in its highest sacred meaning has never been political institution. No actions "on behalf of God" can be of violent, destructive or terrorist nature. This is a source of a spiritual force of any church and any religion. Religion, on behalf of which people kill in the name of God, is not a religion. Facts of killings in the name of religion must be fought; and that should become a priority for religion itself. To combat terrorism, enforcement, war, murderous conflicts and all that we consider "violence", social and ethno-cultural conflicts we shall not build obstacles of official separation of state and church. This is precisely where we should not be separated!

*Religion* is considered to be a *special means of communication* by which an immense amount of people can communicate, interact and share their moral, educational, and spiritual needs and preferences. Religion carries major bonds to comprehending the meaning of life and the modern society should peruse that fact. One should not underestimate the communicative power of religion, especially inside the education and ethnic culture. We have to consider its content.

## VI. ANTROPOLOGICAL MEANING OF HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY

Church's information space can only be deeply *anthropological*, ethically just, and rational. Religion deals with people in holistic perspective and not only in soteriology but also in earthly existence. That's why individual's integrity for theology is a subject of rational comprehension. We believe that religion's *anthropological essence* with its tendency to *rationalistic principles* must now come forth for scientific and theological discourses. How to regain rationality and almost forgotten reverence for the Human being, found in medieval and Renaissance philosophical and theological teachings? The question is so comprehensive that barely anyone could give a holistic response. However history teaches us a lot and in its depth we can find texts, prompting us on what grounds shall we build our social and personal lives for people to regain the "apex of creation" status and to minimize violence.

History delivers the great works that "*speak*" with us, living today, and *question* us about the state of affairs. Each true work of art has its own "hidden voice". Original text is that has such deep-implicit, not surfaced meaning-voice. J. Derrida urged to seek that inner, hidden voice. Patristic heritage of early Christianity contains, in our opinion, aforementioned deep meanings and values. If we try to crack open the "voice" of Christian patristic creations of the IV-VII centuries, we'll see that the *essence* of these works is in *anthropologism*. So far, patristic works have only been evaluated in terms of their theological content, but the *philosophical* and *anthropological* meanings are still concealed and don't manifest itself in the contemporary culture, while the texts are *rational* in their *essence* as they show us how to combine the social and individual lives, the secular and theological spheres. Augustine of Hippo said once: "God made man without man, but He can't save a man without man". A human shall build his own existence basing on rational self-realization that is close to something Absolute, to the ideas of kindness, peace, happiness and non-violence. Holy Fathers were aimed at disclosing such absolute notions, which builds up integrity of their works. Absolute values in the patristic writings are the "hidden voice" of Reason and human support when the latter is lost.

We would like to draw some examples of philosophical and anthropological ideas of Holy Fathers (stressing the Greek-Byzantine Patristic of the IV-VII centuries), which are supposed to be the most actual, modern and suitable for the contemporary world. They contribute to the formation of cultural and educational space without of violence, conflicts, and intolerant attitude each nation to another one.

The following notion should be absolutely true even in contemporary world. This is a patristic idea about human intention to *restore* a lost *likeness* to God (isn't it a lost rationality?), which flows out of the Old Testament reflection on Man created in God's *own image* and *likeness*. The interpretations and discussions of this idea inspired to Early Christianity the *anthropological character*. The thesis

of Old Testament substantiated a Human being like a center of Universe thus a person was closely approached to God.

Holy Irinaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nissa, Afanasius of Alexandria, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian wrote on this topic. They saw the intention of person the way to recovering the lost likeness to God, the possibility of infinite spiritual self-perfection and obtaining knowledge and moral notions. This way was described as the way of *deification*, in other words, it was a method of willful perception by a person his/her best qualities, uniting the person with God. Thus, in Holy Fathers' thinking, exactly human being removes the contradictions between terrestrial world and transcendental one. Hence, in Patristic, a human was approximated to God or Absolute.

According to Holy Fathers of Early Christianity, each human being can become "God by divine grace". It was emphasized that a human desires to acquire the divine qualities by the very personal way and infinite spiritual ascent. By that desire the Human unites the terrestrial, sensible world and the transcendental, divine one. Thereby in reflection of Holy Fathers the aforementioned Old Testament Canon signified the overcoming of dualistic nature of Human being by the unity with God of personal, individual, free and rational human's nature. Worth noting the words of Holy Afanasius of Alexandria (Afanasius the Great) who wrote: "The way to God isn't far from the Human, it isn't *out of us*, quite the contrary, it is *inside us*. And the starting of this way can be possibly found out personally. What is this way? – The soul of everybody and the mind inside it; because only mind is able to contemplate and cognize the God" [9; P. 165-166].

Consequently, the religious writers elaborated the image of the only creature in the world, who was able to remove dualism of Heaven and Earth worlds and reconcile the spiritual and material beings. The cosmic aim of a Human being rose from this task: to lead the Earth imperfect world to harmony and to Divine consent. The nature of a person is directed to spiritual equality with God, and means for establishment of absolute harmony in the world of creature, earthly things.

By our persuasion, religious norms and values are able to take a role of secular ones in cultural and moral lives of people, if the values are connected to the conceiving of a Human being and contributing positively to the development of modern person and society in whole. The aforementioned Holy Fathers' ideas, viewed from the modern philosophical analyses, allow us to draw the following conclusion – a human being is the main symbol, synthesizing the whole symbolics of the Universe in his or her inner life. According to the Patristics' conceptions, human's goal and prescription is understanding and explanation of an objective world as God's symbols and creations. A person, exploring the secrets of life, bears responsibility for the world around thus binding together God and a human being, religious and mundane, spiritual and materialistic. Such reasoning, stemming from the past and being developed by the modern-day philosophy,

has humanistic meaning and could lead to pacifism in the modern societies.

## VII. CONCLUSION

We can see that the anthropological problems penetrate all historical periods. An axiological basis of human being is beginning the most significant for comprehension of existence of Man and for understanding of his relations with other people, God, state, other viewpoints. In this context philosophical-anthropological values acquired the characteristics of societal ones, are able to unit all people from different epochs and cultures. Such kinds of values always were and would be actual, important, and generally valid for society independently on religious identification, territorial location, temporal space, forms of state management, type of educational system and prevailed culture. Religious values are very important for all people that had been included in the process of education, whether they are students or teachers. This theoretical position allows to discover the Christian Patristic as one of the most important theoretical-axiological means of overcoming the violence and social conflicts in culture and education of contemporary societies throughout the world.

Early Christian ideas on mankind and humanity, spiritual ideals of the Holy Fathers are the basic ideas that could lead to moral, merciful and beneficial global peace. Exactly cultural, anthropological, and religious values, analyzed by contemporary philosophical means, are able to resist violence and to serve the establishment of humanity and peace in the global world.

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