

Bogdan POPESCU

# Church and State:

## The Symphony of the Two Kingdoms

*The relationship between Church and state has been one of the most controversial subjects in history and still remains a reason for strong controversies. I belong to an ex-Communist country and I experienced in the last years the great debates provoked by this issue. I realised that the different models proposed were not new and had strong roots, which greatly influenced history.*

### Constantine the Great: The First Score of a Byzantine Symphony

The first important pattern of relationship between Church and state, can be considered the *Byzantine cooperation*. At the beginning of the fourth century, CONSTANTINE the Great was the “ferment” who produced such a revolutionary transformation, the “minister” who celebrated the incredible “marriage” between the civil state and the Christian Church. A religion that had been persecuted and considered a dangerous sect, became *licita*, received imperial favours and was integrated into the life of the Empire. Another head was added to the Roman eagle in order to represent the new symphony of powers. The army started to fight under a Christian standard, the wars became “just”, and the emperors convoked councils of bishops and built churches.

The decisive step was made through the famous edict of Milan. In 313 CONSTANTINE and his brother in law, the emperor LICINIUS declared Christianity a free religion in the Roman Empire. This was the passport for the Christian faith, which gave free access to the Roman Empire, but it was just a meeting of two realities, a foretaste of the real symphony of powers, which followed. A good diplomat, CONSTANTINE knew that in a pagan state, a former persecuted religion could not be implemented overnight. This was just the first link in his political chain.

However, the religiosity of the emperor was not a new element for the Roman State. Under an eastern influence, AUGUSTUS Cæsar adopted the title of *pontifex maximus*, considering himself the “representative of Jove” and the “giver of every good gift”<sup>1</sup>. CONSTANTINE kept in a way this tradition but he asked the protection

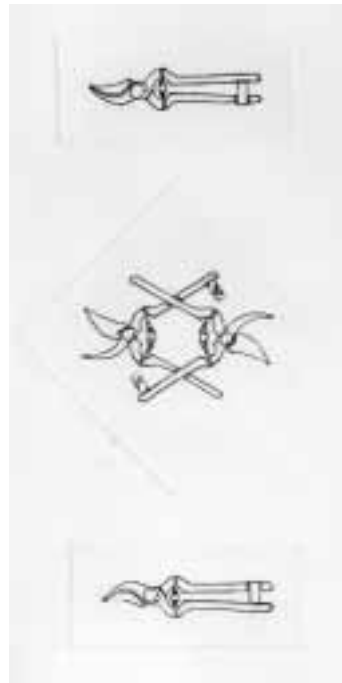
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of the Christians' God and was called "friend of God" and "interpreter of God's word"<sup>2</sup>. As a new element, the oneness of the Divinity gave the emperor the right to an autocratic rule.

In a speech for the thirtieth anniversary of CONSTANTINE's ascension, EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea showed that "monarchy far transcends every other constitution and form of government, for that democratic equality of power which is its opposite, may rather be described as anarchy and disorder. Hence there is one God, not two, or three, or more, for to assert a plurality of gods is plainly to deny the being of God at all. There is one Sovereign and His sovereign Word and Law is one..."<sup>3</sup>

But there is the condition of the faithfulness of the ruler. In order to receive this power which has its source in the unique God, the emperor must be Christian: "For how should he whose soul is impressed with a thousand absurd images of false deities, be able to exhibit a counterpart of the true and heavenly sovereignty?"<sup>4</sup> In this vision, Christianity and monarchy are the two premises of a well-organised human society.



<sup>1</sup> MICHAEL Azkoul, *Sacerdotium and Imperium*. Theological Studies 1971/3. 435.

<sup>2</sup> VICENCIO Charles Villa, *Between Christ and Caesar*. New York, 1986. 16.

<sup>3</sup> EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea, *The Speech for the Thirtieth Anniversary of Constantine's Accession*. In O'DONOVAN Oliver (ed.), *From Irenæus to Grotius. A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought*. Cambridge, 1999. 60.

The great gift that Christianity offered to the “imperium” was the idea of unity and common belonging. In a world divided by plots and civil wars and torn by political struggles, CONSTANTINE needed a strong common denominator. The conquered territories were vast and the romanisation of the different people could not follow the rhythm of the conquests.

The Greek element did not lose its strong identity and the oriental mentality was powerful. The different nations were living in an artificial state that had not a precise identity except the Roman one. CONSTANTINE understood that the Christian monotheism would bind together people belonging to different cultures and religions. The universality of the Christian message suited the desire of universality of the Roman state. “Conquer and baptise” became a slogan of the “basileous” and the religion of Christ played the role of Byzantine nationality. According to EUSEBIUS, “by the express appointment of the same God, two roots of blessing, the Roman Empire and the doctrine of Christian piety, sprang up together for the benefit of men (sic).”<sup>5</sup>

This eastern consonance was during time very differently interpreted and presented. Scholars such as AUGUSTINE of Hippo stressed that struggling to gain a temporal influence, the Church lost its Christian value. Others, like EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea, considered the Christian “imperium” of CONSTANTINE a gift of God, the beginning of the messianic kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament, the ideal form of government. Indeed there were abuses: emperors who tried to impose dogmatic formulas through the power of armies, civil wars provoked by religious misunderstandings or ministers too much involved in politics; but in the meantime, the empire facilitated the gatherings of the ecumenical councils, the spreading and the catholicity of Christianity<sup>6</sup>. Appreciated or detested, this model influenced the entire history of the world and has been adopted even after 1453, by the non-Christian conquerors of Constantinople.

### Augustine of Hippo: The Two Kingdoms

At the beginning of the fifth century, a revolution took place in political, social and religious thought in the Western part of the Roman Empire. The model of the Byzantine symphony started to be replaced by a strong dichotomy that transformed the cooperation into a severe separation. An important promoter of this different idea was the bishop of Hippo, AUGUSTINE. Influenced by ARISTOTLE and PLATO, he changed the entire perception of his contemporaries on this topic.

Instead of speaking about a holy empire and an official church, he promoted the idea of the two separate worlds: the state and the church, the city of earth and the city of heaven. AUGUSTINE considered the Christians to be aliens, pilgrims on the earth, living in ephemeral earthly states and travelling to their real destina-

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>5</sup> EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea, *The Speech on the Dedication of the Holy Sepulchre Church*, In O'DONOVAN Oliver (ed.), *From Irenæus to Grotius. A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought*. Cambridge, 1999. 58.

<sup>6</sup> MEYENDORFF John, *Unité de l'empire et divisions des Chrétiens*. Paris, 1993. 397.

tion: the kingdom of God. In his book, *The City of God*, he developed a different philosophy of history, speaking about two opposite worlds, which coexisted from the beginning of the creation.

For AUGUSTINE, the state is just a necessary evil that maintains an external peace and overcomes violence. Its purpose is not to promote a moral order but to force the citizens to avoid violent acts. The state is a non-natural institution. The law, the private property and the army are just marks of sin and do not belong to the original plan of creation. All these are consequences of the fall and bitter medicines for ill humankind, ways of preventing anarchy.<sup>7</sup>

AUGUSTINE compares the earthly kingdoms with bands of robbers. The only difference is that nobody can punish an emperor: “justice being taken away, then what are the kingdoms but great robberies? For what are the robberies themselves, but little kingdoms?” He reminds us of the answer a pirate gave to ALEXANDER the Great, being asked what he meant by keeping a hostile possession of the sea: “What meanest thou by seizing the whole earth, but because I do it with a petty ship I am called a robber, whilst thou who does it with a great fleet art styled emperor.”<sup>8</sup>

The state has to be considered, according to AUGUSTINE, a remedial instrument, which prevents greater evils. While EUSEBIUS adopted the assumption that the Christian Roman Empire could embrace the standards of the Gospel, AUGUSTINE stressed that the two cities cannot be united in a perfect Christian state. The real city does not need all the earthly institutions and it leads to the end of all the political structures.

### **Martin Luther: The Two Hands of God**

The reformers of the 16<sup>th</sup> century attempted to reshape the medieval Church but kept and developed many traditions and concepts that belonged to the western fathers. In this way the Augustinian idea of the two kingdoms survived and flourished in the writings of Martin LUTHER. The German reformer kept this dichotomous principle and adapted it to the new realities of his time. He divided the world in two kingdoms: ‘das weltliche Reich’, a realm of the fall and corruption, dominated by conflict, self love and lust of domination and ‘das geistliche Reich’, a community of love, faith and humility.

He also emphasised the existence of the two regiments, corresponding to the two kingdoms. The earthly one serves God in this world through the civil law and the sword, and prevents the anarchy of evil. The heavenly one rules over the real Christians through the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Both governments are instituted by God but their tasks and methods should not be mixed.<sup>9</sup>

The Godly kingdom is an inner one; a communion of love while the secular one needs works, fear and external formal relations. The former seeks the spiritual

<sup>7</sup> DEANE Herbert A., *The Return of Order upon Disorder*. In Dorothy Donnelly (ed.), *The City of God*. New York, 1995, 52.

<sup>8</sup> AUGUSTINE of Hippo, *The City of God*. Michigan, 1956, 66.

<sup>9</sup> O'DONOVAN Oliver and LOCKWOOD O'DONOVAN Joan, *From Irenaeus to Crotius. A Sourcebook in Political Thought*. Michigan, 1999, 582.

transformation of its citizens and the latter only maintains an order of creation through coercion. They are not opposite but complementary: the state enables the spread of the Gospel, the Church contributes to the peace and stability of society:

“Therefore care must be taken to keep these two governments distinct and both must be allowed to continue their work, the one to make people just, the other to create outward peace and prevent evil-doing. Neither is enough for the world without the other. Without the spiritual government of Christ, no one can be made just in the sight of God by the secular government... And equally where the spiritual government rules over a country and its people unaided, every sort of wickedness is let loose and every sort of knavery has free play.”<sup>10</sup>

At a first reading, this concept of LUTHER looks very similar to the thought of AUGUSTINE but there are also important differences. First of all, the secular state and its institutions are conceived very differently. The secular power is no longer considered to be a necessary evil invented by the children of this world. God is the creator of the two governments who gives the right and the authority to the earthly rulers. Luther speaks about two hands of God: the left one keeps the harmony of society through political institutions and the right one gathers the true Christians together through the message of the Gospel.<sup>11</sup>

Although the secular offices could belong to corrupt and ill-disposed people, the state remains a positive and important instrument in the fight against evil and anarchy and therefore has a divine origin: “It is better to suffer wrong from one tyrant... than from unnumbered tyrants that is from the mob.”<sup>12</sup> A preacher has the power to address the rulers when they commit mistakes but not to contest their power and may only suggest a Christian attitude.

It is very interesting to note the way LUTHER perceives the human personality in Christological terms. He promotes the idea of two identities, subsisting in one person. The Christian has a dual life, serving the two powers: a Christian lives due to the Gospel, by suffering, forgiving and loving and acts as a member of society, by obeying the law and using the sword. Life on earth is a continuous tension between these two identities. A real child of God does not need all these external institutions and restrictions but accepts them for the sake of others. In their particular life, a Christian has to suffer, to forgive, to love the enemy and to endure humiliation. But when a Christian acts on behalf of other people they have to use the secular ways and to become involved in the secular state. A Christian has no needs but has to fight for the needs of others.

LUTHER considers that the child of heaven is at the same time a “Christ-person” and a “Weltperson”<sup>13</sup>. They create a shift between the inner life and the outward. The soul obeys the commandments of God and the body is subjected to the monarch. We live in this world and our body needs the food provided by the earth

<sup>10</sup> LUTHER Martin, *On Secular Authority. To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed*. In HOPFL Harro (ed.), *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*. Cambridge, 1991. 12.

<sup>11</sup> BRAATEN Carl, *La Théologie Luthérienne*. Paris, 1996. 169.

<sup>12</sup> SANDERS Thomas, *Protestant Concepts of Church and State*. New York, 1964. 37.

<sup>13</sup> O'DONOVAN Oliver and LOCKWOOD O'DONOVAN Joan, *From Irenæus...* 583.

that belongs to the emperor. Also the protection granted by the secular sword is necessary. Therefore, we cannot be only spectators of society but have to work and fight for it. When a Christian becomes an official of the state, they does not act anymore as a child of the Gospel but as a judge, tax collector, soldier or monarch. In private life, a Christian cannot oppose the forces of evil and injustice, but as a secular person has the duty to do it.

### **Huldrych Zwingli: The Christian Government**

Cooperation was not just a Byzantine tradition. The old pattern took a different shape, suited to the new reality of the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> Century: the reformation of Zürich. The originality of this new model that belonged to Huldrych ZWINGLI was given through the important role played by the state. ZWINGLI ceased to speak about the Church as an institution, and influenced by nominalism he acknowledged only the local, concrete congregation. Leadership and organisation became tasks of the Christian government.

Christians must be equal and for this reason the clergy cannot claim any authority over the bealivers. In the treatise *Regarding Divine and Human Righteousness*, ZWINGLI rejected ecclesiastical hierarchy: "If they want to govern like princes of this world, they should not be called messengers and bishops... By contrary, if they want to be preachers, messengers and supervisors for Christ, they should not govern."<sup>14</sup> So, the reformer did not make spectacular changes in the field of Church organisation and entrusted all the power of decision to the civil authority. The civil councillors became legitimate ecclesiastical representatives and the clergy had to carry out the will of the state.

According to ZWINGLI, the government has - like the preaching office - a divine duty and God grants its authority<sup>15</sup>. Christ Himself confirmed the legitimacy of this institution, by accepting the political power of that time<sup>16</sup>. In order to defend his affirmations and to reconcile the different opinions, ZWINGLI developed the doctrine of the *two justices*. He considered the divine justice, claimed by radicals, pure and superior, but added a human justice, necessary for life in community. The precepts of the second justice have been given by God, in order to overcome the sin and anarchy of the world. Through them sinful humans can live "happy and friendly"<sup>17</sup>.

The authorities, as servants of God have to safeguard human justice and to prevent disorder. If this divine gift were lost, society would not differ from a gathering of wild beasts. The doctrine of the two justices is reminiscent of the dichotomous Augustinian thought but the purposes of the two authors were very different: while AUGUSTINE strongly condemned human justice, Zwingli defended it and used it to legitimate close cooperation with the state.

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<sup>14</sup> ZWINGLI Huldrych, *De la justice divine et de la justice humaine*. Paris, 1980. 57.

<sup>15</sup> COURVOISIER Jaques, *Zwingli, soldat de Dieu*. Genève, 1947. 95.

<sup>16</sup> STEPHENS Peter, *Zwingli le théologien*. Genève, 1999. 365.

<sup>17</sup> ZWINGLI Huldrych, *De la justice divine...* 41.

## Jean Calvin: The Reformed Cooperation

One of the most interesting patterns concerning the relation between the state and the Church, was born in Geneva, in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Jean CALVIN was the promoter of this model, which had a considerable influence on the construction of modern society. While LUTHER transformed Christianity into an inner spirituality and entrusted social relations to the secular sword, CALVIN promoted the idea of a Church involved in public life. The message of the Gospel was no longer considered a private option but rather it became the ideology of the state and a source of inspiration for the civil laws. Even though CALVIN spoke about the two kingdoms, the concept differed from the Augustinian separatism. Many scholars related his ideas to the principle of *symphony*. A protestant Byzantium was born in a fragmented Western Europe.

In his book, *Institutio Christianæ Religionis*, CALVIN promotes the idea of the two governments that are distinct but “there is no other way but to link them”<sup>18</sup>. The two realms are interdependent and cannot survive without mutual help. Theology has to influence the political system ideologically and the state must protect its source of inspiration. God is the absolute sovereign and naturally the word of God also becomes law in the political world.

CALVIN did not want to separate the social life from the spiritual one. A Calvinist participates in the public life by keeping her or his convictions and trying to apply them. The government of Geneva elaborated so much social legislation in that period that it was called by scholars “Christian socialism”. CALVIN organised loans for the poor and refugees, and called for a proper organisation of public health, granted employment for the citizens and social protection through fixed prices<sup>19</sup>.

CALVIN exercised this strong influence, however, without using secular power. He was just an employee of the state and received the title of *bourgeois* only in 1559. Like ZWINGLI, he influenced public life through preaching and counselling the government<sup>20</sup>. The Church did not constrain the state to be Christian, because this cooperation was thought to be natural and divine. CALVIN emphasised the biblical pattern of the king Saul and the prophet Samuel and showed that force was not necessary to impose this alliance, wanted by God<sup>21</sup>.

Even if he speaks about the two kingdoms, CALVIN does not accept the Augustinian idea of the state as a necessary evil. The superiority of rulers is not a consequence of sin but is sacred, being a means of God’s providence for the world. Moreover, God is present and helps them to make right decisions. For this reason CALVIN considers that “civil authority is not merely a holy and legitimate vocation, but far the most sacred and honorable of all human vocations”<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> CALVIN Jean, *Institutio Christianæ Religionis*. In HOPFL Harro (ed.), *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*. Cambridge, 1991. 47.

<sup>19</sup> MEETER Henry, *The Basic Ideas of Calvinism*. Michigan, 1990. 104-105.

<sup>20</sup> KINGDOM Robert M., *Reformation and Revolution: the Case of Geneva*. In Derek BAKER (ed.), *Church, Society and Politics*. Oxford, 1975. 215-216.

<sup>21</sup> STURZO Luigi, *Church and State*. Indiana, 1962. 202.

His opinion also differs from that of LUTHER. The latter considered the state a divine institution but divided the life of the ruler into two separate sides: the inner faith and the office. In LUTHER's view a person cannot rule following Christian principles but has to separate his personal convictions from the external secular actions. CALVIN harmonises this dichotomy, by affirming that a Christian entrusted with authority has to act according to her or his belief. Political decisions and social life can be and have to be influenced by the Christian message. Also, CALVIN does not mix the two realms but interconnects them. The world cannot be ruled only by observing the precepts of the Gospel and the state cannot remain separated from the Christian faith because it becomes inhuman.

The officials must be conscious that they represent God and therefore have to protect and act justly. Their functions are not profane but "sacred commissions." They are not allowed to behave despotically because they are "God's legates". If they neglect their duties, they sin against God, who instituted the authority and they commit a blasphemy<sup>23</sup>. A theocratic mark could easily be detected in this thought: political power is not just a secular arbitrary means but becomes a public duty.

The old patterns are still alive in our contemporary world and through an analysis of different denominations the reader could easily identify the separation of AUGUSTINE and LUTHER or the Byzantine and Calvinistic cooperation. Of course, there are different frames, different coordinates and different times but the models are the same and they could be identified in various concentrations and shapes all over the world. One important feature of a contemporary Church is the way it relates to the state and this issue still creates important conflicts and debates. After the analysis of the different models offered by history it seems that both cooperation and separation have positive and negative aspects. There are fields in which Church and state can be ideal partners but there are also cases when they have to be separate.

## A Contemporary Debate

In the case of *politics* both extremes could lead to negative results. A too close cooperation in Byzantine or Zwinglian style can create abuses and civil conflicts. A complete separation prevents the ecclesiastical partner to be present in the life of society and deprives the state from an important contribution. It is possible to speak about a politically involved Church as long as affiliations to various parties are avoided. For this reason the official presence of clergy in electoral campaigns must be prohibited. The ecclesiastical representatives must defend and serve the interests of the Church and not private purposes. Priests can also have personal political convictions but they are not allowed to recommend them as divine values. The political message must be limited to the recommendation of civil duties.

The dichotomous example of LUTHER is useful but still not perfect. Christians

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<sup>22</sup> CALVIN Jean, *Institutio Christianæ Religionis*. In HOPFL Harro (ed.), *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*, Cambridge, 1991, 52.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-55.



should not become different persons in public life because they have to influence society through their identity. Religious representatives must be present in Parliament, express their opinions and attempt to give a Christian mark to the different laws. They cannot express their feelings just through sermons and protest marches. But there are two conditions.

On the one hand, they must know exactly the limits of permitted influence, without trying to replace the civil system. History has proven that the sinful human society can not be ruled only according to the Gospel. Restrictive laws and coercion are necessary in order to prevent anarchy, but they must not be administered by the ecclesiastical structures. The Calvinistic experience of Geneva demonstrated that a strong coercive influence of the Church in society could create tensions. On the other hand, the Zwinglian attempt to transform the state into a divine representative must be avoided. The Church must have the liberty to react when its interests and Christian principles are violated.

Concerning the ideal *form of government* it is difficult to agree with the Byzantine monarchy or the attempts of LUTHER and CALVIN to emphasise the advantages of an aristocratic leadership. The democratic republic seems more suitable to Christian values.

In the field of *economy*, a total separation seems more suitable because the two institutions have very different means and purposes. Cooperation can produce in this case only conflicts and misunderstandings. Even the supporters of cooperation did not encourage it. ZWINGLI did not reject the economic levers but entrusted them to the civil government. A Church must have, however, its own economic administrative structure. Of course, there are only a few domains suited for this involvement and they must be rigorously selected. Ministers can deal with certain economic aspects as long as this concern does not prevent them from fulfilling their religious duties. A minister must administer in a proper way the goods of the church and the levers of economics are necessary in this case.

Also, in the case of *finances*, separation is a very good option. History offered many examples of emperors who used ecclesiastical funds in order to sponsor military campaigns or build palaces and of spiritual leaders who used civil money in religious affairs or personal business. A Church that is financed by the state cannot claim complete independent reactions and measures. The civil partner often has a great influence on important decisions. However, in the contemporary world, there is a clear tendency of separation in this field, even in countries with a long "symphonic" tradition.

Regarding *private property and wealth*, the Church should avoid populist sermons. Wealth is not a negative aspect if it is attained in an honest way. By contrast, exploitation and unfair practices must be criticised. The attitude of John CHRYSOSTOM, the patriarch of Constantinople who condemned the excessive Byzantine luxury, can be a good model.

The relationship between Church and *military forces* has been a very controversial issue throughout history. The examples offered by several Byzantine

emperors and later by ZWINGLI are questionable. Religious wars proved to be the most dangerous and for this reason religion should not be involved in military conflicts. Wars that started in the name of God for the sake of Christian ideas left bitter memories. On the other hand, the Augustinian rejection of the army, embraced until today by certain denominations is not a realistic approach.

The position adopted by LUTHER seems more appropriate: wars can be only defensive and any religious involvement must be left out. The idea of defensive war as an extreme but legitimate means was also well emphasised by CALVIN. Of course, ecclesiastical persons are not allowed to lead or to be part of violent clashes but cannot ignore them, either. They have an important task of mediating, using religion as a common denominator. The presence of chaplains among soldiers in some countries is a positive element. The Church cannot prevent wars through isolation but through witness and through temperate Christian pacifist preaching.

An ideal domain of cooperation is that of *social values*. The religious partner could give precious help because it is able to realise through persuasion what the state only imposes through law and coercion. History shows that religious convictions had a greater impact than external secular demands. Citizens easily overpass human restrictions but they respect divine commandments. This aspect was taken into consideration by the Roman emperors when they embraced Christianity.

The Augustinian separation and even the dichotomous thought of LUTHER lead to strange social relations. Christ did not intend to found an isolated community or to create double personalities. The social message of the Gospel is powerful and Byzantine or Calvinistic officials valued it a lot. Of course, there were abuses on both sides but also important successes. For this reason Church and state can cooperate successfully in the field of social ethics. Protection of family, social welfare, morality, protection of the oppressed, social assistance and human rights must be common goals. If the civil partner does not respect one of these values, the Church must react and the example offered by John CHRYSOSTOM is an eloquent one.

Cooperation is possible concerning *public health*. Byzantine officials and bishops founded hospitals and the reformers did the same thing, using money confiscated from monasteries. The activity of the two institutions can be in this case complementary, because care for the body must not be separated from that of the soul. In many countries, the presence of priests in hospitals gave hope and strength and the Church supported health education. Problems could arise when complementarity is transformed into substitution.

Special attention has to be given to the issue of *bioethics*, which has become very controversial and a reason of conflict between the two partners. I do not think that the intransigency of some Churches in the field is a constructive attitude. It is also not useful to operate with general terms. The different problems must be analysed in their context and with the corresponding implications. The great majority of states agree, however, with the attempts of churches to reject human cloning and euthanasia.

*Culture* can be another common denominator because there is a long tradition of cooperation and reciprocal influence. Even AUGUSTINE, who repudiated the “pagan culture”, was very much influenced by it. Often, educational institutions have ecclesiastical roots. Byzantine emperors founded civil-religious academies and the reformers initiated public schools. There is no necessary conflict between secular science and theology. Indeed, the two spheres have different goals, tasks and methodologies but do not exclude each other. A Church of the XXI<sup>st</sup> Century cannot consider secular science evil and must use modern technology. Fidelity to the Bible and respect for traditions must not mean rejection of scientific inventions.

Also, during the centuries, *art* and religion fused and gave birth to priceless masterpieces. It is not possible to study the history of art ignoring the religious element and in the meantime in some traditions art became a constitutive part of worship.

In my opinion, another important contribution that the Church can provide, concerns *international relationships*. This aspect was proved by the Byzantine history: Christian ministers became successful ambassadors and wars were avoided through ecclesiastical mediation. Today, the old pattern can be useful again, even though the Church is divided into so many bodies.

*Ecumenism* can be an important factor of stability in the world. Indeed, religion is a double-edged sword: through a wrong approach it is a source of conflicts but through constructive dialogue can be an important “bridge”. The Byzantine Empire survived for centuries and included various nations and traditions because of this fantastic power of cohesion. I am sure that contemporary cosmopolitan society can follow this example in order to solve conflicts.

There cannot be stability and civil peace without a previous inter-confessional and *inter-faith dialogue*. Recent wars show that a peace, which has no religious background, is fragile. Even in many countries that claim to be secular, churches have a great power of influence that can be used for the sake of international welfare.

History proves that the two main patterns of relationship between Church and state have advantages and disadvantages. It is not possible to speak about an infallible model. Cooperation and separation took different shapes and led to various results and the only possibility is to select the positive aspects and to avoid the extremes. We have to learn from the mistakes of the past in order to solve contemporary debates and to secure future stability. I wanted to emphasise through this paper the favourable and the dangerous fields of relationship. I hope that future spiritual and religious leaders will keep the right balance and will use the right side of the “double-edged sword”.

**Bogdan POPESCU:**

### **La Iglesia y el Estado: la sinfonía de los dos reinos**

La relación entre la Iglesia y el Estado, ha sido un tema polémico a través de los siglos. Diferentes voces han propuesto varios patrones que han influido en la historia. Mientras que en Europa del Este (oriental), la sinfonía bizantina se convirtió en el principal modelo a seguir, el pensamiento occidental fue influido por la visión dicotómica de Agustín, el Obispo de Hipona. Los patrones se mantuvieron y desarrollaron por los reformadores del siglo XVI también. Hoy, la Unión Europea es una realidad, sin embargo, aún sus miembros y candidatos sostienen diferentes actitudes respecto a las relaciones entre los “dos reinos”. ¿Cuál es el mejor patrón, y cuál ha de ser la actitud de la Iglesia referente a la política, la economía y el uso de la fuerza? ¿Cuál es la forma ideal de gobierno desde la perspectiva cristiana? ¿Es la religión una fuente de conflicto o un medio de cooperación? No podemos responder estas preguntas contemporáneas sin analizar los errores y logros del pasado.

**Bogdan POPESCU:**

### **Église et État: la symphonie des deux royaumes**

Les relations entre l'Église et l'État ont toujours été une question controversée au cours des siècles. Différentes voix ont proposé divers modèles pour ces relations, modèles qui ont influencé l'Histoire toute entière. Alors qu'en Europe orientale, la symphonie byzantine devint le modèle principal à suivre, l'Occident s'est inspiré de la vision dichotome de Saint Augustin, l'évêque d'Hippone. Ces modèles aussi ont été conservés et développés par les réformateurs du XVI siècle. De nos jours, alors même que l'Union européenne est une réalité, ses membres et candidats gardent toujours des attitudes divers vis-à-vis des «deux royaumes». Quel est le meilleur modèle et quelle attitude doit adopter l'Église par rapport à la politique, l'économie ou le recours à la force? Quelle est la forme de gouvernement idéale d'un point de vue chrétien? La religion est-elle source de conflit ou moyen de coopération? Nous ne pouvons donner réponse à ces questions contemporaines sans analyser au préalable les erreurs et les réussites du passé.