Religious Socialization and Teaching Sociology. Academic Theories and Practices

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Abstract: The practices of the university teaching of sociology in relation to religious socialization are within the geographical area of the North Atlantic, the United States of America and France*,* beyond their influence on Africa*.* Socialization unfolds itself as one of the elements in the construction of psychosocial identity. It is a process that includes, as a function of the various social, intellectual project of the Universitas, the inclusion of religion in programs, their openness to conduct and the meaning of existence in society, in addition to the mode of communication of knowledge and other formative elements. In this way socialization is built in the tension between the system and the interaction, conformity and distancing, tradition and modernity.

Keywords: socialization, psychosocial identity, university education, sociology and religion

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Introduction

The issue of socialization is complex in spite of its simplifications. My intention is not that of discussing its various meanings (Duvet & Martuccelli), although some, recalled in broad strokes, encompass the descriptions of practices of the university teaching of sociology with a view to socialization, especially religious. The latter weaves itself between conformity and distance, the system and interaction, tradition and modernity. The practices are situated in the geographical area of the Northern Atlantic, in the United States of America and France. The social status of religion is different there, which affects its role in society, regarding conduct and the meaning of life in society, the relations of religious subjects with other ones, their communication and reception. In the construction of socialization as a part of psychosocial identity university education, with ancient roots, seeks to impart knowledge to form autonomous and responsible individuals capable of detached reflection, discernment and commitment. The adjoining socialization aims to forge an identity based on a philosophy of life which open to transcendence. This training is opposed to that focused strictly on know-how, without theoretical opening or critical thinking, directed only to the immediate and instrumentalizing knowledge, among them the social sciences, with utilitarian ends of power or financial gain, in the context of university setting which is highly charged by technology and bureaucracy. The following discussion relies heavily on participant observation and highlights interaction which is a priority in the system (Turcotte, 2011).

Cultural identity, religious socialization and the teaching of sociology

The study of religion as a social-historical phenomenon varies according to countries, universities in the countries themselves and faith institutions. The variations extends themselves to the relationship between religious socialization and cultural identity (Turcotte, 1994). The double observation cannot ignore that there are different registers. The institutional status of the teaching of religion in the perspective of the social sciences belongs to another societal register, objectively speaking, than that of the place of religion in the social construction of cultural identity. The latter refers to a society as a whole, thence it crosses over the institutional distribution of

knowledge and its transmission (Turcotte, 2000, p. 12). Depending on the space given to religion in the social sciences, and from this point of view in any curriculum, the chances of overlapping with cultural socialization, including religion, in a positive or negative way, are more or less elevated. These chances are linked to subjective factors as well as purely objective ones, and the manufacturing of identity is not limited to the cognitive, in that it is just part of a process of cultural socialization. These factors include, among others, the manufacturing of student youth identity, the contextualized interplay of socio-cultural identity and religion, the insertion or deficit of teaching religious subjects in the programs of studies, their orientation, explicitly sought or refused, to identity socialization.

From the perspective of the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 47), identity is discussed in terms of the plausibility of the reality of a world, in a process which is not fusional, distinct although similar to socialization. This updates the internalization of social data which is external to consciousness by going back and forth from the concrete to the abstract, from the particular to the general, from the lived to the symbolic and vice versa. In doing so, socially structured identity is maintained or transformed as an element of subjectivity, either as a social agent constructing the reality of its world by both the internalization of meanings available in society and by the expression of personal, cultural and intersubjective attainment. In continuity and change, the construction of reality supposes at once the existence of the subject which faces the other and the learning of language. It is the task of primary and secondary socialization. Indeed, language and the capacity for abstraction allows for an understanding of social setting, to interiorize sociocultural and moral values ratified by the institutions of society, including the school, church or local government. The ability to generalize reality goes hand in hand with the formalization of knowledge and positioning vis-à-vis various social institutions.

These general traits of socialization evoke some explanation of identity, understood as a polysemic reality grasped from different angles or perspectives. From a socio-phenomenological point of view, the act of identification falls within a relational process in which the assertion of specificity, particularity or singularity seeks out social recognition. The quest gives way to a mirror image, in the mode of the said or unsaid. If there is congruence or distortion in interaction the agents involved are not immune to the determinants that are, for example, social status and socio-

psycho-historical or cultural data. For the sociologist of knowledge, the dialectic between symbolic and social exchanges is central to the understanding of identity dynamics. By symbolic we mean socially forged representations and models, by which social training, regardless of extension, establishes the rules, means and ends of the concrete exchanges that constitute it. By inserting identity in a social formation, the actor appropriates a universe of meaning, which is reinterpreted between what is given or acquired and what is to happen, which is susceptible to change.

The firmness of adherence to religious content derives, significantly, from the strength of subjective plausibility, itself secured by a set of objective data. Elements of life in society which ensure objective and subjective permanence are lost progressively, questions, doubts or rejections arise on matters previously unquestioned because they are perceived as self-evident. In addition, the degree of certainty of the subjective reality of a world is reflected by effects of the identification of the individual within a social formation. In return, identity can influence subjective plausibility and its foundations, among other ways, by its production of awareness or personal investment in activities consolidating structures of plausibility. In any case, identity is a key element of subjective plausibility without which one and the other do not overlap each other. To espouse a given position or view is in connection with the internalization of a worldview and a set of functions and relations in a social environment. A range of interactions are possible, marked by the social-historical conditions of individual and collective existence. In the process of socialization of an individual within society as a whole, variation and differentiation characterize the interaction of terms in a totality which is not mechanical.

In favor of transactions between the individual and society, psychosocial identity is shaped, and there is socialization to the degree there is correspondence between the expression of identity and the interiorization of institutional norms and values, of social and cultural rules in the various sectors of social life. Correspondence is highly restrictive if the synthesis of power, religion and culture takes on a close form to ensure cultural, if not ethnic reproduction. If the rules of exchange allow for the openness to non-conformity while ensuring against excesses and destructive excesses, socialization is produced by the changing interiorization of standards and knowledge, together with their degree of constraint. Individualization allows people to fashion their identity and

religious socialization at the junction of the institutional products offered, the credibility of their symbolic capital and contexts of insertion with multiple interactions. The sociology of religions, within the borders of variables across countries or educational institutions, teachers or researchers contributes, in different ways, to shaping psychosocial identity. Here we have operations within traditional society and modernity, without one or the other being exclusive. Besides those mentioned, other scenarios are possible with respect to the societal condition of religion and its impact on cultural identity and socialization in a universe (Turcotte, 2003, pp. 45-49).

Identity, socialization and academic education in highly complex North Atlantic societies. An overview

In the highly complex societies of the North Atlantic, processes of identity constitute individuation with the anonymity of social relations, which is in tension with the sense of being-together (Gemeinschaftung), the self-centered nature of institutional technical-bureaucratised management, the entrepreneurial spirit and the flexibility of work. These features of modernity have multiple effects on socialization and personalization which makes of the individual a subject with an assertive psychosocial identity. Tensions and difficulties in this regard are not limited to those societies, though they will be particularly emphasized. Other factors are involved, such as those specific to a class, a generation or social formation. For example, it is not uncommon to hear a young man from Quebec in his fifties confess, like many in his generation, the difficulty of asserting his masculinity on account of have been raised by a feminist mother and educated by teachers of the same gender. His junior and senior siblings do not have such problems of identity, at least with the same intensity. Observation evinces generational diversity as an element of social complexity, along with specific factors affecting, among others, the minority of Christians, especially their reading of Scripture, the members of congregations and mission of their religious orders, research centers or groups that interact with policymakers of religious denominations. The presence of these factors refer instead to the place publicly given to religion as part of the social bond.

In an illuminating essay, Richard Sennett (1998) worries about the quality of 'character'. By the word he understands the personality traits that the individual finds the most in himself or herself and through which he or she seeks to be appreciated by others. But does capitalism not threaten to erode character, with its requirements of risk in life as it plays out in the stock market? Moreover, the extension of capitalist risk does not offer an equivalent extension of profit. Decision and execution supposes a team, which consequently results in the disempowerment of the power of people. As for labor flexibility, it is evinced in the mobility that a young American, with two years of college, can expect during his or her career, having to acquire three different educational backgrounds to complement an initial one and then shift from one job to another some eleven times. Under such conditions, Sennet wonders how can one organize a life story with a structure that has some consistency? Social relationships, some people argue in a less polemical tone, do not offer more points of reference from which an identity can be built which is worthy of the name. Hence the individual and collective claims of affirming a public identity and personal creativity. Movements and groups that are clearly identified are formed to effectively support the quest for a self which seeks social integration and continuity (Laraña, Johnston & Gusfield, 1994, pp. 10-21, 28-30).

In a similar vein, the professionally technical orientation of some secondary instruction or higher education undermines critical thinking in cultural formulation. Practical or thematic instruction, certainly diverse, but strictly focused on know-how without any opening to the reflective or theoretical, is turned towards the immediate for students who must confront workplaces which are often complex and fluid. In response to this utilitarian and immediatist orientation a global movement appeared, first in North America, seeking to renew the teaching of advanced academic studies, to develop new doctoral programs, often linked to industries where the social sciences play a central or important role, both in industrial or economic production and in social affairs or religious institutions. The diversity and mobility of this world, among other things, requires expertise and reflective resources that are not only technical. Vocational training adopting this vision includes technical and reflective, pragmatic and ethical elements. To train a simple performer of actions, we know, is likely to lead to an impasse in the short term; to train individuals capable of adapting to renewal, to creation, offers a promise for the future. The importance of a formation which is intellectually framed is defended, given the free nature

of sociological thinking and philosophy, which otherwise is useless to utilitarian eyes, as an essential element of training in preparation for the inclusion of social agents. The orientation in this sense has entered social debate, as, for example, evidenced by the many articles on this subject, in the Summer of 2014 in the Montreal daily Le Devoir. The purpose of socialization in the university context is in question as that of transmitting knowledge to form self-reliant and responsible individuals capable of detached reflection, discernment and commitment.

A consistent and coherent intellectual formation, which is connected to life experience appropriate for the socialization of identity in the context of modernity, is not really new but rather fits into the scope of the universitas (TeSelle). What does this mean? In its ancient version which hearkens back to ancient Greece mediated by monastic institutions, from Syriac monasticism in the European Middle Ages, the universitas vehicles the ideation of totality under the aegis of philosophy or theology. This ideation is understood as a kind of thinking which is open to the interrelational diversity of the perception of things and objects of understanding, hence its historical reference to Greek philosophy, Christian philosophy or theology. Understood in this way, it comes in the formation and deepening, exposure and transmission of knowledge, the articulation of teachings and ways of communicating, institutional organization and the rapport between teachers and students. Greek philosophy also means the autonomy of reason in Aristotle and the tension between it and the reference to a world order of a transcendant nature, an order in which religious traits are absent as in Plato. This question which works out in two ways, was already present in medieval Europe, with the quest for intelligence in the discussion, without being substantive, on the relations between method, reference and coherence between theology, Biblical interpretation and Canon Law. Though centuries apart, it crosses through the social sciences, with variations, marked in particular by the differentiated interpretation of the Enlightenment and institutional objectives or finalities. But the figures of the university have been diversified since their first European foundations .

American sociology of religion, its context and educational challenges in socialization

The United States of America have a unique situation insofar as religion

is recognized as the foundation of society without direct state intervention in this area, and that religious institutions, which are overwhelmingly Christian, continue to play a leading role in civil society. At the same time a sociological production was marked by the ideology, which spread in the 1960s and 1970s, which stressed the inevitable loss of religion, especially of its socially imposed forms. This positioning (Warner, 1993, pp. 1044-1093 ; Berger, 1995; Swatos, 1999, pp. 209-333) has greatly decreased with the increasing number of centers and research groups in the 1980s, the establishment of institutional links with religious denominations, the theoretical enrichment of advanced studies and, more recently, attention to the resurgence of paganism, the rise of people with no religious affiliation and the social emergence of American Islam. In the past decade, major universities have invested in the study of religion to ensure a more innovative and rigorous intellectual production. The stakes are social and political, in that the available funds, having become more private in origin, tend to come from sources whose intentions are socially and religiously conservative. If the sociology of religion occupies a marginal position in academia, especially in the humanities and social sciences, it is nevertheless important for reflective training, especially cultural and for the rationale of university education (Courtney, Cadge, Levitt & Smilde, 2012).

The two thousand or so sociologists of religion, including of Christianity, not only teach in schools or social science departments, but also in institutes of religious sciences, technology or sciences. The religious phenomenon considered from the point of view of the social sciences could have been in the curriculum of a physicist or a mathematician. This teaching is part of the cultural education in post-secondary education. American sociology textbooks or textbooks introducing the social sciences of religions consider the phenomenon of religion primarily as a component of American society. Rarer are the books that show debate on secularism for example, or that are open to international perspectives, that are not directly American. At the master's and doctoral level (Spickard, 1994, pp. 313-328). research topics extend to a wide variety of issues linked to institutionalized religion: organization, ministries, legal positions in public debates, conflicts between believers dissenting minorities and more. Christianity has a privileged status as the dominant religion under scrutiny for the systematic review. At the annual meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, or the American Association for the Sociology

of Religion, the presentations centered on current situations favor the expansion of research and its fragmentary nature, alongside thematic sessions which stress thematic inter-denominational syntheses or theoretical aspects.

The cultural and institutional importance of sociology inspires a pragmatic concern in field studies which are conducted with high methodological rigor. These studies, local or national, are numerous. Professors must produce articles and books, not only teach. The observation of significant displacements leads to identifying transformations, to bringing out the logical consistency with a view to appropriate action. This approach is most often more functional than a critique of the foundations of society. Even in the case of a critical sociology of its foundations, links with religious institutions can be sought. Tensions are present, in the areas of mutual recognition. In this regard, Meredith McGuire (1990) noted the difficulty of confronting students who are concerned about religion much more directly than in Europe, and who often have relatively strong positions regarding institutions or religious issues, in addition to the constraints on addressing certain religious topics. At the same time the diversity of cultural or personal backgrounds and of professional, religious and social experiences among students, and teachers, fosters debate through the exchange of ideas and questions.

Regarding the American University, Patrick McNamara (1994) relates his experience as a Professor of Sociology of religion for a quarter of a century. It is only in the last ten years that he began correcting the weaknesses of the American University. Among other things, critics point to the lack of encouragement for personal reflection in students. This lack comes from questioning of a university formation which is reduced to the focus on professional preparation, which opens to the phenomenon of spiritual growth and social responsibility. To experience, the teaching of religion can help to reflect on the human condition, if it avoids extreme positions: either focusing attention on the values emerging from the experiences of students, or sympathizing with religion to the point of avoiding issues which deal with the compromise of religious institutions with other aspects of a particularized culture. On the one hand, it is important to learn to overcome subjective apprehension by objectivization and, on the other, awakening the critical spirit must make sense of things. From the pedagogical perspective the student is asked to explain his personal reflections on a point taught and thus to personally to grasp the

objective aspects without making them estranged from personalized questioning. In this way, students gains confidence in expressing their thoughts and, at the same time, are required to deepen their thinking about the human condition inherent to human beings.

In the educational practice analyzed by the American colleague, the requirements of sociological knowledge form the matrix of training thought connected to the human experience in which religion occupies a socially recognized place. It is a pedagogical mediation between the communication of knowledge and the transmission of a worldview of life in society, at once personalized and shared by a community in line with a tradition from there to possible effects in the process of socialization according to what is gained. Insofar as a sociological perspective is privileged, the study of religion as a social and historical phenomenon opens up to an objective and multidimensional approach, away from a pejorative or apologetic focus. Presenting clear social-historical ambivalences and specifying the characteristic features of religion, beyond the point of view or perspective, dislodges received ideas. In doing so, the student is invited to ask questions, both to question him or herself in an environment where religion is mixed with cultural or socio-political, if not economic life. In this regard, tools of analysis for understanding are provided, which may affect the personal positions related to the experience of believing and its links with religious organizations. In one way or another, the student learns an intelligent approach to the religious, which is conducted with empathy and distance, with rigor and awakening, to freedom of thought. In the end it is social life which is at stake.

This method of inclusion in socialization is not exclusive to American teaching practices and we agree that the close ties of religion and culture support its implementation. This accounts for the the experience and the similarities in this respect between US and African practices, though the latter do not know a deployment to the same scale. In both cases society provides benchmarks, objectified references, diverse as they are, which support the "work" of social identification. This work is accomplished in the tension between the entry into society through interactivity and transaction, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the internalization of social life, designed and lived as a large organic whole the components of which are interdependent or coordinated to some degree. Coordination, relative as it is, marks the psychosocial identity of the individual actor, conditioned as he or she is by the internalization of norms, values, attitudes,

roles, knowledge and know-how, which, taken globally, makes up a program to be executed more or less thereafter. If society as a whole no longer presents a unified vision of a world, which can be built more around a primary center, a 'poteau mitan' in the words of Mircea Eliade, experience indicates conduct, or individual collectives crossed by the heterogeneity of their cognitive principles and the activity of individuals who must construct the meaning and direction of their practices even within this heterogeneity. On this point contexts differ significantly, both in Africa and in America beyond their circumscribed modalities. The challenge in the process of socialization is to go beyond a conception confined to individual, ethnic or regional worlds, for this purpose to make the presentation of the complexity and through the approach, to recognize and consider the disjunctions in order to achieve cognitive and existential consistency (Turcotte, 2003, pp. 45-49).

The sociology of religion in France and its impact on African socialization

The secular state is France recognizes freedom of conscience and confines the collective expression of belief to places designated for the purpose by the government. Societal debates on religion or which integrate the religious element are rare compared to other European countries. In public higher education, the sociology of religion is a field of knowledge with circumscribed margins. The field in question represents less than a tenth of the theses sociology defended in the recent period (Juan, 2010), and in ten centers of higher education, these mainly large doctoral schools (Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales), plus a few chairs in universities which are signatories of the concordat (Alsace-Moselle) notably Strasbourg. In addition to courses in the Institutes of Political Studies, religious universities within the public education system provide extra lessons in the sociology of religion. Only the Catholic Institute of Paris includes a faculty of social sciences and economics, one of the oldest in the country (founded in 1923).

The French landscape of the sociology of religion is like a desert with its oases and palm groves. The hyper specialization of teachers and researchers is consistent with their impermeability to cognitive innovation from other contexts. The slots are aligned according to self-producing

perspectives which are rarely open to unknown perspectives, especially because the religious phenomenon is seized in itself, with no explicit link with other sectors of society or other areas of research in the social sciences. Durkheim's legacy is predominant and the valorization of theoretical production is original, as was borne out in the Group of Sociology of Religions from 1954 up to 1995. In large graduate schools, seminars are taught in the context of programs based around the research of study directors. Elsewhere religion is treated among other subjects, in classes, organized and negotiated with the directors, the frequency of which varies according to private or public institutions. In more than one case, researchers or faculty faces opposition to the study of religious phenomena. Many universities totally ignore it, and it is not uncommon for students to struggle to find a supervisor for a thesis or dissertation on religion in strictly sociological terms. In a context of scarcity of supply and a self-centered treatment, the inclusion of the teaching of the sociology of religion in the socialization process is not an institutional matter, but individualized, both for teachers and students (Turcotte, 2000. pp. 17-18).

The French situation is reflected in the former colonies, as in Africa, where the sociology of religion is marginal in university programs, though not limited to recognized institutions. This is usually a course that is allocated two credits at the most. This subject remains, nonetheless, a source of knowledge and an approach that, if necessary, joins personal and socio-cultural and even political questions. From this perspective, it contributes modestly to rationally understanding the scope of contributions and the detailed misappropriation of religious practice and institutional management. Reluctance is great at the beginning, where religion, doctrine, catechesis, catechesis and truth of authority all mix. Rejection is great in a large number of students for whom religion in the sense of religiosity is an intrinsic part of individual and collective existence, while religious authorities fear the doctrinal relativism of the social sciences, at the most allowing for ethnography and entrusting the study of religious phenomena to theology. A similar position was current among theologians and French ecclesiastics. From both sides of the great Catholic seminaries do not offer courses in sociology, including on religion, much less on Christianity, while people to teach it are available, including clerics. If a member of the clergy, a doctor in sociology and, in addition, with a degree in canon law or in economics teaches the social sciences in a major seminary he is assigned the courses in methodology but not the direction of licentiate or master's

theses which are reserved for theologians. Such a deficit is found in other Catholic institutions of higher education, while clerics, doctors in sociology, teach about the religious phenomenon at civil universities.

The instructor, faced with African reticence and ambiguity, makes the perspective of the course clear, before centring on religion as the object of study, not in its substance but in its complexity as a phenomenon in society, as an anthropological experience and as an element or factor of human development in history. Religion understood as a complex reality and highly differentiated one is already more or less seen in a number of recipients, but more often they are unable to name and explain it, to attain a command of the issue. For the purposes of greater understanding, it would be desirable that students could undertake more and more thematically focused readings. The scarcity of periodicals or books of sociology of religion in libraries and the student workload in materially adverse conditions do not favor the acquisition of additional knowledge. Moreover, there is a good chance that the environment, especially all kinds of power relations, do not allow for the public expression of independent thinking, freedom from the fear of the administration of the sacred and respectful of diverse positions. The fact that individuals carry within them the ability to have personal positions free of an unconditional conformity with the weight of society, opens the possibility to commit to a socially distanced socialization which includes religion. Discussion sessions, complementary to the lessons, provide opportunities to share knowledge of questions and, in doing so, pushes cognitive assimilation and critical self-questioning. This kind of approach requires a decision in response to an offer, a personalized positioning. It displays relations between conformity and distancing which is more sinuous than those supported by commonly accepted ideas, institutions and authorities (Turcotte, 2004).

The African perspective with regard to the French situation cannot silence the academic production about the interaction of religion, culture and the economy. From the 1980s, this production played out in essays and research and reflections articulated in field practices. It has relations with the African diaspora in Europe or the Americas. Publications in the economic and social sciences on the issue appear in connection with the critical examination of inculturation or the expansion of philosophy of reconstruction, extended in the social theology of the African renaissance. Empirical analysis is employed. A leading theoretical reference is to John Dewey, which has been called American pragmatism. Studies are strictly

sociological, even when they concern the Christian Churches, Islam in its diversity, traditional religions or syncretic religious groups. A basic position holds that Christianity and Islam are African religions and not as ones foreign to Africa. The move is important for the process of socialization and identity which included religion, as are the relations between philosophy, social theology and economic and social sciences, re-evaluated and formulated in light of different South Saharan backgrounds. Other changes of various kinds, sometimes abounding, have impacts on identity and socializing (Turcotte, 2011a, pp.1-2).

The sociology of religion in the formation of social sciences at the Catholic Institute of Paris, inclusion and its socializing reception

On the French side, among the exceptional places there is the Faculty of Social Science and Economics from the Catholic Institute of Paris. The design and practice of the intellectual project, of Jesuit affiliation, materializes the idea of the universitas in teaching from the creation of the Institute of Social Studies in 1923, which included political science and philosophy, ethnography and anthropology, sociology and economics, with elements of theology, history, law and psychoanalysis. Teaching seeks out a theoretical and empirical training which is reflexive and pragmatic; it intends to promote, in addition to the intellectual, the autonomy of judgment and responsible commitment. To this end the goal is to learn to analyze, to discern, to position oneself as a Christian, and so to articulate positions, to argue. The social teaching of the Catholic Church is on the agenda, and social, political, religious or cultural issues give rise to discussions, seminars and conferences. Tutoring in the first year, meetings between students, or between them and teachers, and other activities customize the course of training.

From 1985 to 2006 the sociology of religion was inscribed in the program of training in the social sciences. The direction of Father Louis de Vaucelles (1988-1997) consolidated the gains, following components remodeled under the direction of Father Denis Maugenest after 1985. The attention was directed to the articulation of intellectual approaches to cognition chain within a general cultural orientation in instruction in the social and economic sciences with the integration of a critical approach to religion in its various social and historical forms. It was important first to

work to get beyond the impressionistic vision of religion, a prerogative of many students, by anthropology seminars and of sociology of religion, at the same time to respond to the questioning of a number of students concerning the nature of religion, its various experiential and organizational expressions in society, according to a perspective unique to the social sciences, suddenly in complete control given the complexity of the phenomenon of religion in history and society. The answer in these terms meant especially to reread the classics of modern sociology in which religion is central, along with contextualizing the originality of each of them according to current issues. In 1996, the historical sociology of Christianity, in the line of Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, was combined with the sociology of religion, including Islam and the so-called traditional religions. The emphasis on internal differentiations, understood genetically and comparatively raised methodological problems and theorization which interested the social sciences and the analytical understanding of the process. By this route the junction between the study of religious phenomena and the sociology of education, basic and specialized was forged (Turcotte, 2012, pp. 101-105).

The content and objectives of the direction were consistent with the positions and wishes of the students with regards to the seminars on religion. Some wish to refine their knowledge of the sociological method itself: they already possess a good general knowledge and a solid philosophical formation, if not a pastoral practice in the case of the clergy from the faculties of philosophy, theology or social sciences. The vast majority, however, are interested in the sociology of religion either because they claim to be wholly ignorant of it, or because it is part of their culture and the institutional differentiations spiritual or religious memberships incentive to acquire knowledge enabling make of light, either because the thesis or dissertation has points of religion, or because the sociological training calls, especially in a Catholic university, for a deepening of religious phenomena as social fact and at the same time for the continued approach to form their mind and their command of the method of them social sciences. These positions and expectations are expressed in open seminars, which fuel personal thoughts that overlap, confront, and are illuminated during the acquisition of a particular way of approaching things in life, in addition to situating themselves with respect to a distanced understanding of the religious phenomenon from the midst of society. In courses and seminars students developed the tools to foment questioning

and challenging with a view to allowing for an intellectually stimulating understanding, and for some, giving way to field work, which, for many students, could not be carried out through religious teachings considered essentially descriptive, highly ideological or having a primarily professional function (Turcotte, 2000, p. 23).

Subjective and difficult to separate objective reasons are involved in the strong interest in a non-religious approach to religion. The need for benchmarks arises at the junction of individual questioning, deepening their own faith tradition, if this is possible, as well as the desire for a detached reflection amid fragmented media information, excesses or religious and the interrogative echo aroused by church leaders, conflicts or large gatherings of believers. Along the cognitive path, significant convergences emerge from thematic analysis or various definitions of religion. With the opening to high culture, relativization is called to identify points of convergence and position itself. Such an approach of the social sciences, the intellectual asceticism they require and the nature of the results, induces the personal identity of the subject. The analysis of the religious field results in stirring up the worldview of the actors involved in some way, even in what this worldview has which is intimate and linked to belief. The teacher's personality affects the question of identity or manufacturing through educational innovation, links between scientific training and cultural training, between basic training, specialization and field work (Turcotte, 2000. pp. 22-23).

The programs of studies described in brochures outlined knowledge set to meet the expectations of rigorous, advanced and intellectually open training. In terms of sociology and anthropology, the post-1994 curriculum includes essentially cultural and social anthropology, sociology of knowledge and religion, historical sociology, including that of Christianity, American sociology, theory and analysis, both sociological or anthropological with priority given to the phenomenological or symbolic interactionist perspective. Materials complement the student curriculum: economics, political science, law, psychoanalysis. The components of programs were designed to enrich the theoretical perspectives and practices of method, while meeting the expectations of the teaching of social sciences. The challenge proved to be double: combining historical sociology, sociology of knowledge and phenomenological sociology, on one hand, and on the other, an introduction to a heuristic approach and advanced research. The teaching, diverse in subject and approach, provided

the elements of an intellectual composition, formed through trial and unavoidable tensions. The support of the institutional direction ensured the continuity of the intellectual project. On both sides, the concern is to provide at once a basic training and specific training, general education and special training.

In seminars dealing with religious phenomena, the themes from 1994 to 2002 ranged from sociology of Christian origins to current religious issues, the relationship between secularization, pluralism and modernity religious mediations which were theorized in terms of transaction and compromise. The years 2000 to 2006, involved innovations that cultivated an intellectual project in similar terms to those of previous years, while realigning the object of study and perspective. In terms of the sociology of religion and Christianity, among the topics came first a systematic and critical review of the various theories of religious phenomena in terms of the relationship between religious experience, organized religion and society, following the classics of modern sociology. The related component specifically included various issues related to socialization and the public effects of religious representations in the context of pluralism and in connection with the relationship between tradition and modernity. Theorizing took on more importance, in interrelation with situations and problems related to the subjects of dissertations and theses being written or projected. Epistemological questions could be scrutinized in correspondence with other teaching.

Sociological and anthropological training proposed a shared perspective through various teachings centered on many objects. In this vein, a seminar on the sociology of religion is first and foremost an approach which is proper to the social sciences, not the study of religion in itself, insofar as the latter, as a social and historical phenomenon, is a particularly complex object, and in this sense a good intellectually trainer, provided, however, that it be articulated in its various aspects and, in turn, to shed light on the truth of a fact often ignored or ridiculed. The objective and multidimensional approach, away from a pejorative or apologetic focus, continues to clarify social-historical ambivalences and to specify the characteristics of religion, beyond the viewing angle or perspective. In doing so, the student is invited to question received wisdom, to question it both in an environment where religion is intertwined with cultural or socio-political, if not economic life. The understanding of social life is at stake. The tools for a comprehensive analysis are likely to have cognitive

consequences but also, if necessary, for belief, excluding indifference or abstention, such as questioning the personal positions related to the experience of believing and ties with religious organizations. Though not a directly intended effect, a common one, was the realization of a specific religious identity of a spiritual dimension of existence, thanks to a study which was objectified, empathetic and distanced all at once, of Christianity or the religious phenomenon. In one way or another, the student learns an intelligence approach to the religious phenomenon, which is conducted with empathy and distance, with rigor and awakening to freedom of thought.

Special attention, with the aim to understanding social complexity is paid to historic development at its beginning, then, and the configuration of a question or situation through the interrelation of theory and analytical and ethnological description. Such an approach aligns a multidimensional reading of social reality, including that of religion. To understand it in its various aspects allows for a concrete grasp of the operation of sociological interpretation of social reality at the different levels of the organization of imagination. The frequenting of diverse backgrounds or conversation with people from different backgrounds and cultures, takes place in a similar sense, while cultivating its vital roots and the balance between sectors and aspects of life, such as culture and science, removal and disposal, reflection and communication. In this interaction awakening and the ability to better perceive the needs and expectations of a given environment are forged, to bring this context to a higher level of awareness in order to increase the quality of social ties, which calls for moral conditions. This arouses the concern for the coherence of life and culture from its roots in the intellectual, human and spiritual. A philosophy of life is at stake, with the objective to contribute to the humanization of social relationships through awareness, to ensure that the human society can be an agent of its future, not just a player, and to find meaning in existence in relation to transcendence including the Christian vision which is confronted with other historical figures of transcendence and their mediations (Turcotte, 2012, pp. 105-119).

A conclusion

The putting into place of the universitas into a training project and its

socializing practice was rejected after 2006 in favor of training which is purely professional and technical, of the instrumentalization of knowledge and culture for purely utilitarian ends, following, in this way, a vision and modus operandi ways which is primarily functional and immediate in the French or European context. In no time the faculty became akin to a company with its financial logic, namely that of profit. The question of socialization was reduced to uncritical conformity, linked to the views and practices of society, and the presence of religion served as a mainly doctrinal presentation of the social teaching of the Catholic Church. Religion was no longer central to training in the social sciences, with the eradication of the sociology of religion in relation to Christianity. This reversal had emerged under the table as a result of the disappearance of the Jesuit leadership in late 1998, was consolidated after 2004 and had come to dominate unconditionally from 2006 to 2008. The reference of the liberal capitalist economy had served not only to redefine the purpose of the faculty, but also to provide an operational model for innovation in building by destroying, by replacing and reversing what had been a notable exception in the French context. The project of the Universitas and its adjoining socialization because it was internalized, would be continued, albeit in a piecemeal way and to varying degrees in different individuals, in a professional technical framework, including the reference to a Jesuit formation, although in a formal way which proved useful for social recognition or for higher authorities. Above all the project would continue to inspire, thanks to migrants, university programs across the world.

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