The hypocrisy – changing the vices into virtues

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on identifying and presenting the roots and consequences of hypocrisy within the hidden pathological features of the human being. Hypocrisy belongs to the hypocrite, that is, to the individual in his ontic integrity as an immortal body, spirit, and soul. In this respect this scientific discourse has its place within the religious space as well, at the *spiritual level of the perfect process of creation*, where the new spiritual individual is always active; At the empirical, scientific and material level of the human activity there is only the ideological individual, proficient or not, just like in the unfortunate case of the priest – *sacerdos in aeternum* who became professor after he jumped the fence of the house and he got into the yard of the University, with the passport in his pocket of course. We will approach the subject strictly through the paradigm of the theological-philosophical discourse, framed by the constitutive horizon of moral philosophy (philosophical ethics), which is defined as the second strand of bioethics as a modern science, according to the traditional medical ethics (1). Within this paper we will look at the following points: the formalism of religious hypocrisy; the *blindness* of the hypocrite as a pathological manifestation and finally about the *availability* as a permanent risk of hypocrisy.

KEYWORDS:

Vice, virtue, disease, [our] faith, pride.

INTRODUCTION

Being a mistake against reason, truth, a violation of a commandment, sin was called by St. Augustine “a word, deed, or desire contrary to eternal law,” to the point of self-love and contempt for God (2). This is how the wise prophets once said: „Domnul zice:

„Pentru că poporul acesta se apropie de mine cu gura și mă preamărește cu buzele, dar inima lui este departe de mine, iar teama de mine este o poruncă învățată de la oameni, de aceea, voi face din nou fapte minunate pentru acest popor, va pieri înțelepciunea celor înțelepți și priceperea celor pricepuți va

*dispărea. Vai de cei care-și ascund planul departe de Domnul, iar faptele lor sunt în întineric și zic: «Cine ne vede și cine ne cunoaște?»!» (Is 29, 13-15), [“The Lord says: “For this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me, and their fear is a commandment learned from men, therefore I will do wonders for this people again, and the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall depart. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and I say, ‘Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?’”(Is 29, 13-15)], (3). Thus, it is Jesus of Nazareth who will identify and reveal the roots and pathological consequences of hypocrisy. According to his principle that the *healthy do not need a doctor*, Jesus turned to those who represented the verticality of the spiritual life of his time, to those who at that time took the “intelligence” (4) of the time, in a word to the *teachers* of the law, the scholars and hypocrites. The central idea emphasized by Jesus was that the facts did not express the intention, the causality of the actions determining the results: the blind man unable to see the light rises as a guide. Being aware that they were blind, they deceived themselves out of a perverse desire to deceive others. Here is the edifying passage: „*Vai vouă, cărturarilor și fariseilor ipocriți! Voi dați zeciuială din mentă, din mărar și din chimion, dar lăsați la o parte ce este mai greu din Lege: judecata, îndurarea, credința.**

*Acestea trebuia să le faceți, iar pe acelea să nu le neglijați! Călăuze oarbe! Voi strecurați tântarul, dar înghițiți cămila. Vai vouă, cărturarilor și fariseilor ipocriți! Voi curățați exteriorul paharului și al farfuriei, dar în interior sunt pline de jaf și necumpătate. Fariseu orb! Curăță mai întâi interiorul paharului ca să devină curat și exteriorul lui.” [“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You tithe mint, dill, and cumin, but set aside the heaviest part of the law: judgment, mercy, faith. You had to do these, and don’t neglect those! Blind guides! You sneak in the mosquito, but swallow the camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the glass and the plate, but inside they are full of robbery and intemperance. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the glass to make it clean.”] (Mt. 23, 23-26). This is the starting point. Where did I end up today? According to our scientific opinion, it is more difficult today: our “intelligence” *translates* to us what Jesus meant!*

THE FORMALISM OF RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY

Religious hypocrisy is *not* just a lie; it is a case of psychiatric clinical study, because here we find ourselves in the field of the *pyramid apex syndrome*. The religious hypocrite deceives his neighbor to gain his esteem, with gestures, with folklore, with *lyrical moments*, with symposia, meetings, synods and councils, with congresses, be they

Eucharistic, whose intention is not at all simple, all bearing the confessional imprint. Only then will the non-Christian be able to say about Christians: this is how much they love each other! “*Promoting the REBUILDING of UNITY among all Christians is one of the main goals of the holy Second Vatican Ecumenical Council*” (5). The hypocrite, stirrer or propagandist, seems to act for God, when in fact, he acts only for himself or for the institution he represents. The formula of the *cult of personality* was abandoned and instead other formulas emerged, such as the *citizen of honor, emeritus*. The most recommended practices of Christian piety, prayer, fasting and almsgiving, are thus perverted by the concern “to be noticed”, and the media abound with examples in this regard. „*Așadar, când dai de pomană, nu trâmbița înaintea ta așa cum fac ipocriții în sinagogi și în piețe, ca să fie lăudați de oameni. Adevăr vă spun: și-au primit răsplata. Iar când vă rugați, nu faceți ca ipocriții, pentru că lor le place să se roage stând în picioare în sinagogi și la colțurile străzilor ca să se arate oamenilor! Adevăr vă spun: și-au primit răsplata. Când postiți, nu fiți triști ca ipocriții, căci ei își schimonosesc fețele ca să arate oamenilor că postesc! Adevăr vă spun: și-au primit răsplata. Toate faptele lor le fac pentru a fi văzuți de oameni: își lărgesc filacterele și își lungesc ciucurii.*” [“Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the

markets, that they may be praised of men. Truth be told: they have received their reward. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Truth be told: they have received their reward. When you fast, do not be as sad as hypocrites, for they twist their faces to show people that they are fasting! Truth be told: they have received their reward. They do all their deeds to be seen by men: they enlarge their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels.”] (Mt 6, 2.5.16; 23.5). To put a barrier between the heart and the lips this education teaches man to hide evil intentions under a honeyed air, hence the nicknames *Machiavellian, Jesuit*. Such an episode occurred when a trap was laid under the cover of a legal question for Jesus: „*Dar Isus, cunoscând răutatea lor, le-a zis: „Ipocriților, de ce mă ispitiți? Arătați-mi moneda tributului!”*. Iar ei i-au adus un dinăr. El le-a zis: „*Ale cui sunt imaginea aceasta și inscripția?*”. I-au zis: „*Ale Cezărului*”. Atunci le-a zis: „*Dați-i, așadar, Cezărului ceea ce este al Cezărului și lui Dumnezeu ceea ce este al lui Dumnezeu!*”. Când au auzit, au rămas uimiți și, lăsându-l, au plecat.” [“But Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said to them,” Why are you tempting the hypocrites? Show me the tribute coin! “And they brought him a penny. He said to them, “Whose is this image and inscription?” They said to him, “Caesar’s.” Then said he unto them, Render therefore

unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they heard this, they were astonished, and went away from him.] (Mt 22, 18-23). Nothing new under the sun would say the *Ecclesiastes* [Book of Qohelét], we have heard the story: „*Dar ei au zis: „Veniți să facem planuri împotriva lui Ieremia! Căci legea nu va pieri din lipsă de preoți, nici sfatul, din lipsă de înțelepți și nici cuvântul, din lipsă de profeți. Haideți să-l lovim cu limba și să nu ținem cont de niciunul dintre cuvintele sale!”*.” [“But they said, ‘Come and make plans against Jeremiah! For the law shall not perish from the absence of priests, nor counsel from the wisdom of wise men, nor the word from the absence of prophets. Let us smite him with the tongue, and let him not regard any of his words.’] (Ier 18, 18). Always determined to come out with a clean face and forehead up, *he didn't eat garlic – not even his mouth smells*, the hypocrite knows how to position himself between precepts or to arrange them in an intelligent casuistry, shouting loudly: I have the answer, who has the question!? And so the *sapiential dogmatists* were the ones who explained to us *how logical it is to believe*. And so the mosquito could sneak in and swallow the camel, only then could the divine teachings return in the interest of greed and self-restraint or group, since the *lie has ISBN*. We refer strictly to the rudeness of the Communist and religious confessional propagandistic ideology, which, wanting to

mask the professional incompetence of each specific competence, of many newcomers, covered the personal “availability” with the institutional mask. How to consider the unqualified, proficient? Even then, the party security “invented the *ISBN*” (6), and then the propaganda of insane hypocrites blessed and sanctified confessional television and radio stations. And the sad conclusion of the Savior who vibrates even today sends us back to the ancient wisdom: „*Ipocriților! Bine a profețit despre voi Isaia, când spunea: «Acest popor mă cinstește cu buzele, însă inima lor este departe de mine. In zadar mă cinstesc propunând învățăături care sunt doar porunci ale oamenilor»*” [“Hypocrites! Isaia prophesied well of you when she said, “This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In vain do I honor myself by proposing teachings that are only the commandments of men.”] (Mt 15,7-9).

THE BLINDNESS OF THE HYPOCRITUS AS A PATHOLOGICAL MANIFESTATION

Formalism can be treated and cured in the end, but hypocrisy with pathological manifestation certainly leads to stoning. Whitewashed graves end up swallowing everything that flies, everything that they crave, all the truth, all justice, to make others accept, to “believe”. They consider themselves the pillars of justice: „*A spus această parabolă unora care se credeau în sine dreapți și-i disprețuiau pe alții; Și*

urmărindu-l cu atenție, au trimis spioni care se prezentau ca fiind drepti, ca să-l prindă cu vreun cuvânt și să-l dea pe mâna autorității și a puterii guvernatorului” [“He told this parable to some who believed themselves righteous and despised others; And they followed him closely, and sent spies, pretending to be righteous, to take him by the word, and deliver him into the hand of the governor and to the power of the governor”] (Lk 18:9; 20:20) and become opaque to any call to conversion. Theater actors, Oscar nominees (in Greek hypocrites), hypocritical Christians continue to play their part, especially as they occupy a higher rank and their word is heard. Here is the text: *„Atunci Isus s-a adresat mulțimilor și discipolilor săi, spunând: „Cărturarilor și fariseii s-au așezat pe catedra lui Moise. Faceți și împliniți tot ce vă spun ei, dar nu faceți după faptele lor, pentru că ei spun, și nu fac!”* “ [“Then Jesus addressed his people and disciples, saying,” The scribes and the Pharisees sat down on the throne of Moses. Do and do all that they tell you, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say, and do not!”] (Mt 23, 1-3s). Here we meet all those hypocritical propagandists, who from the height of the altars turn into electoral agents, throwing the seed of discord between the parishioners, increasing confusion and duplicity. What does it matter where the money comes from! But more serious is the fact that under the pressure of public opinion, those installed in the chair of Moses send reports about the institutional

knowledge of the abominable deeds committed by those of their type. The *pain and the will not to repeat the mistakes of the past* that is not to put us in the situation of writing and presenting reports. We are the ones who demand guarantees! We are the ones who crush the broken reed, we extinguish the smoking wick! We were lied to! *„Durerea este însoțită de o privire de speranță. Pentru ca aceste fenomene nu se mai repete, avem nevoie, pe lângă norme mai eficiente, de o convertire a inimilor. Este nevoie de păstori credibili, vestitori ai Evangheliei, și trebuie să fim cu toții conștienți că acest salt este posibil numai cu ajutorul harului Duhului Sfânt, încrezători fiind în cuvintele lui Isus: Fără mine, nimic nu puteți face”* [“The pain is accompanied by a look of hope. Because these phenomena do not happen again, we need, in addition to more efficient rules, a conversion of hearts. We need credible pastors, heralds of the gospel, and we must all be aware that this leap is possible only with the grace of the Holy Spirit, trusting in the words of Jesus: Without me you can do nothing”] (7). Now we woke up from our dogmatic sleep, sorry! Exciting! It’s the night of the mind! Brotherly correction is necessary, it is healthy. But here’s the dilemma: how can the hypocrite take out the beam that prevents him from seeing, when it doesn’t even cross his head, and he has no other concern than how to take out the straw that is in the neighbor’s eye? *„Sau cum vei spune fratelui tău: «Lasă-mă să*

scot paiul din ochiul tău» și, iată, bârna este în ochiul tău? pocritule, scoate mai întâi bârna din ochiul tău și atunci vei vedea bine să scoți paiul din ochiul fratelui tău” [“Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? poor thing, take the beam out of your eye first, and then you will see to it that you take the straw out of your brother’s eye.”] (Mt 7: 4-5-5). Indeed, spiritual guides are necessary, but haven’t they already taken God’s place on earth when they replaced divine law with human traditions? Blind people who claim to lead others: *Lăsați-i, ei sunt călăuze oarbe pentru orbi! Iar dacă un orb călăuzește un alt orb, amândoi cad în groapă*” [“Leave them, they are blind guides for the blind! And if one blind man leads another blind man, they both fall into the pit”] (Mt 15:14) and their propaganda is nothing but a bad mound: *„În timp ce mulțimea se aduna cu miile, încât se călcau în picioare unii pe alții, [Isus] a început să vorbească mai întâi discipolilor: „Feriți-vă de aluatul fariseilor, care este ipocrizia, căci nu este nimic ascuns care nu va fi descoperit și nici secret care nu va fi cunoscut!”* [“While the multitude was in the thousands, so they trampled on one another, [Jesus] first began to speak to the disciples: “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, for there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed and no secret that will not be known!”] (Lk 12,1-2). This is the state of the blind, the inability to recognize the signs

of the times, that is, to reveal in Jesus of Nazareth the messenger of God. But the pride of the hypocrite has no limits and so he wants a sign from heaven: *„Iar când bate vântul dinspre miazăzi, spuneți că va fi cald și așa este. Ipocriților, aspectul pământului și al cerului știți să-l interpretați; dar de ce nu știți să interpretați timpul de față?”* [“And when the south wind blows, say that it will be warm and so it is. You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky; but why do you not know how to interpret the present tense?”] (Lk 12: 55-56); blinded by his own wickedness, the hypocrite does not need the meekness and salvation brought by Jesus Christ and invokes the methodology, the law of the Sabbath, to keep him from doing good: *„Atunci, Domnul i-a răspuns și i-a zis: „Ipocriților! Nu-și dezleagă fiecare dintre voi boul și măgarul de la iesle și-l duce la adăpat [chiar în zi de] sâmbătă? Și această fică a lui Abrahăm, care era legată de Satana de optsprezece ani, nu trebuia să fie dezlegată în zi de sâmbătă?”*. [“Then the Lord answered and said to him,” You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you untie his ox and the donkey from the manger and take it to the water [even on Saturday]? And this daughter of Abraham, who was bound to Satan for eighteen years, was not to be loosed on the Sabbath day?”] (Lk 13,15-16). The climax of the intrigue takes place the moment the hypocrite claims that Beelzebub is the instrument of Jesus’ miracles, as if we were in the Harry Potter movie series: “But when the

Pharisees heard it, they said, ‘This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the chief of the devils.’” (Mt 12,24). We are surprised, however, that they did not wonder if Jesus is a Freemason! But He is the prince of life, and in order to break down the gates of their hearts, Jesus will shame them before the community, exposing to them their hidden sin and decay: *„Vai vouă, cărturarilor și fariseilor ipocriți! Voi zidiți mormintele profeților și împodobiți monumentele dreptilor și spuneți: «Dacă eram în zilele părinților noștri, n-am fi fost complici cu ei la [vărsarea] sângelui profeților». Astfel, voi înșivă dați mărturie împotriva voastră că sunteți fiii celor ce au ucis profeții. Dar voi întreceți măsura părinților voștri.”* [“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, “If we were in the days of our fathers, we would not have been complicit with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.” Thus testify against yourselves that you are the sons of those who killed the prophets. But you surpass your parents’ measure.”] (Mt 23,29-32). And what is the end in the end? What we have to do? Here is the text: “But if that servant say in his heart, ‘My lord delayeth his coming, he waits for the hour he does not know, he will punish him severely and make him one of the unbelievers.’” (Lk 12: 45-46). Let’s wait full of zeal, wakefulness and confidence.

THE AVAILABILITY AS A PERMANENT RISK OF HYPOCRISY

Let us not deceive ourselves and think that hypocrisy belonged only to the Pharisees of Jesus’ day, and since then we have been immunized. No, the hypocrites have not disappeared. Of course, the synoptic tradition pushed the presumption of hypocrisy to all nations: *„Apoi a spus mulțimilor:[...] Ipocriților[...]*” [“Then he said to the multitudes, [...] to the hypocrites [...]”] (Lk 12: 54-56). We understand the aspect, however maybe it was good for the Savior to make a statistic, a case study, a typology something; so St. John could no longer see through the Jews the unbelievers of all times. It is within everyone’s reach to substantiate an ideology-philosophical-theological of opposites in society and to go with the sword through the world in the name of Jesus Christ. How? Has it already happened? Isn’t the problem over? Who shouts, tolerance!? The Christian! It is said that either St. Peter did not escape this danger during the Antioch episode: *„Dar, când a venit Chéfa la Antiohia, l-am înfruntat fățiș, căci era de condamnat. De fapt, înainte de a fi venit unii de la Iacób, stătea la masă cu păgânii, dar când au venit ei, s-a ferit și a stat deoparte, temându-se de cei circumciși. Împreună cu el au început să se poarte cu ipocrizie și ceilalți iudei, așa încât și Bárnaba a fost ademenit de ipocrizie. Dar când am văzut că ei nu merg drept, după adevărul evangheliei, i-am spus lui Chéfa în fața tuturor: Dacă tu, care ești*

iudeu, te porți ca un păgân și nu trăiești ca un iudeu, cum îi poți constrânge pe păgâni să trăiască asemenea iudeilor?” [“But when Chéfa came to Antioch, I openly confronted him, for he was to be condemned. In fact, before some came from Jacob, he sat at the table with the heathen, but when they came, he shunned and stood aside, fearing the circumcised. Along with him, the other Jews began to behave with hypocrisy, so that Barnabas was also seduced by hypocrisy. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Chéfa in the presence of all: live like the Jews?”] (Gal 2: 11-15); but this is already another discussion and we prefer a little reserve. Let’s go back to the clinical risks of our skidding. It didn’t take long and the hypocritical scholars, from us and not only, needed a panacea, a word to avoid the Christian criteria of performance, namely the virtues. They found this miraculous word, availability, which emerged, to our knowledge, during the disaster of the French Revolution when, after shortening almost all the country’s authority, they needed replacements. And it was difficult to tell your relative, your unqualified people, the proficient one, –so there the available relatives and totally unqualified for those positions gathered in all the key positions. And it was fine! We jump over times and history and see that nothing is new under the sun. We persevere and insist on mistakes and no one has the courage to cure themselves. In

addition we have extended ourselves with hypocrisy to the spiritual level of the perfect creation, let us turn dizzyingly to apostasy: *„De altfel, Duhul spune clar că în timpurile de pe urmă unii își vor renega credința, luându-se după duhuri înșelătoare și învățături diabolice, [seduși] de ipocrizia discursurilor false ale celor însemnați cu fierul roșu în cugetul lor”* [“In fact, the Spirit clearly says that in later times some will renounce their faith, they are deceived by evil spirits and evil teachings, [seduced] by the hypocrisy of the false speeches of those marked with red iron in their minds”] (1 Tim 4: 1-2). Where is the meaning and why cannot we apply this quality, the availability of the human after all, to the religious, theological, spiritual discourse? Without determining pretentious linguistic analyzes, we find that specialists have emphasized in the semantics of the word in question, that trait specific to the individual as a state of mind in which feelings and reason are freely manifested and in their fullness. They, precisely the Christian teaching and the customs of the whole society in mind, have established that the religious and social individual needs the discernment of the facts and the moral-religious censorship. The word I referred to is successfully used for the human empirical, material, social plan. And the remedy comes, of course, also from Jesus Christ, through the rock of the foundation of his apostles, through St. Peter in addition to the problem, strengthened and persevering for good: “Therefore, removing

all evil and all deception, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speech, as newborn babies, desire spiritual milk, pure, that you may grow through it to salvation if you have indeed tasted how good the Lord is". (1 Pet. 1-4). So, no psychiatric control.

For more than a year we have been going through the sanitary pan-madness. We all remember that at the beginning of these problems, they had to align with the sanitary requirements and the church spaces. Indeed, the leaders of the religious edifices cheered in unison. The people will follow us through the internet, through television, the media is at the service of the individual. We witnessed uplifting, emotional, funny moments, some really comical, regardless of the confession we were referring to. Later, the same religious leaders began to moan, to tell us how sad it is to see shepherds without sheep. What to do? A restart of inter-social communication is required: "Humans are social beings and need to manifest themselves as such in the simplest ways that affirm their belonging to humanity:

reason and communication. Even if most of the time the thought process is associated with the particular effort of silencing and distancing from the surrounding voices, in order to become reason, as Kant says, must be said and shared. Thinking becomes consistent only when it is brought into light and made known to others, discussed, challenged, questioned and understood, otherwise it is simply an empty exercise. The state of isolation and distancing between people has disrupted this normal movement of man throughout the world. The individual's need for humanity (to be a student, to be a child, a doctor, a researcher or anything else, to live in these times of crisis, to live, to care and educate those in need, to make discoveries, and to find the most appropriate solutions) can only be supported by effective communication, which goes beyond the barriers imposed by isolation and physical distancing. In a timely manner a responsible and informative communication is able to eliminate ambiguities while leading to understanding, knowledge and education" (8).

CONCLUSIONS

Hypocrisy belongs to the hypocrite, that is, to the individual in his ontic integrity as an immortal body, spirit, and soul. The individual lives in the community, so its first concern must be to rethink the work of sensitizing the people to the culture of life, not to the culture of waste and spoiled graves. We must also start from within the Christian communities, reversing the pyramidal structure, placing the people at the center of our concerns. With great clearness and courage to ask ourselves what type of culture we promote today in the family, in schools and universities, in research laboratories, in government forums. With clarity and determination let us discern the next steps in the service of life with all the fullness of its truth. One of these steps is, of course, to promote all environments of life in which justice and solidarity are expressed through every act and gesture of love and where the pathology has been cured.

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