

New Babylon Religion – the Religious Code for the Megalopolis Life: Common Home – Common Rules

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Abstract: The megalopolis is a unique system that offers unique opportunities for a person. But in return, this system requires respecting its rules of life, as well as creating and maintaining new social relationships. This is a very complex problem especially for religious sphere, because there are a lot of different religions representatives in megalopolis. Babylon is a symbol of megalopolis. Megalopolis problems can be called Babylon problems. New megalopolis religion (the religious rules) can be called New Babylon religion. In order to explore the religious code (rules) for the megalopolis life, this paper makes an analysis from the following three aspects: the problems existing in the religion of New Babylon; the general sources of world religion; and the relationship between religion and modern science. Finally, the conclusion is drawn that the modern life of society in a megalopolis allows individualizing not only educational, but also religious sphere, which will create the necessary feedback effect and help to solve internal conflicts of residents at their initial stage, as well as to create common religious rules for megalopolis - our common home.

Introduction

Different people live in the megalopolis. They drive different cars, but use the same traffic rules. Just to get from point A to point B, without excess problems. Different people live in the megalopolis. They pray to different gods. They should have common religious rules. Just to be happy, without excess problems.

We have to admit our world has changed. It has divided on two parts: megalopolises and the rest communities. The most important part is megalopolises, because they are source of social and cognitive development. Megalopolises create a special formation of people as well. It means all the elements of human existence, including religion, have also changed. That is why we need to search new forms of religious traditions. New Babylon religion could be one of them.

Historically our world consists of countless small social worlds, and each of them lives its own social and religious life. However the world is developing but people still prefer “to build walls instead of bridges,” in the religious sphere especially. Of course, this is an important ability mainly for isolated communities, which helps to protect their identity and safety in general. Religion defines the goals, meaning, traditions and rituals of human existence. This is vital because a unifying goal makes any system sustainable. Thus consensus/ monotheism give the community controllability and mobility. Hence any

deviation is destructive and punishable. The smaller the social group, the stronger the punishment. Historically, people still fear the nonobservance of religious traditions. It is unconscious feeling ergo difficult controlled. It is difficult for self-controlling but outside controller makes this easily. It is the perfect survival system for the hostile and fragmented world.

Obviously, we cannot give general advices to such different communities, in particular in the religious sphere. However, the gradual development of the world leads to the formation of megalopolises, which begin to conflict with the former concept of the identity protection and ethnic survival. A megalopolis is a unique system that offers unique opportunities for a person. But in return, this system requires respecting new rules of life, as well as creating and maintaining new social relationships. And this is the most painful point for a resident of a megalopolis, especially for a “convert” - a migrant. This is a very complex problem that everyone has to solve. And the main question is to accept or not accept the existing rules.

New Babylon religion – religious problems of megalopolis

As a symbol of megalopolis we can take Babylon. It was an important political, economic and cultural center of the Ancient World, one of the largest cities in the history of mankind, "the first megalopolis" [5], founded no later than the 3000 years BC. Babylon is a symbol of conjunction of various nations as well. Consequently they had the same problems as we have nowadays.

Religion is a special point among the problems of the megalopolis. This is due to the fact that religion as a system does not allow any deviations in comprehension. It has a high rigidity, which the believers themselves support. The fact is that people need guarantees and stability in our unstable and disturbing world. Religion gives you a feeling of stability. Religion is always with you. It does not need to be protected from thieves; it does not require material costs. Religion is available to people, both rich and poor. The basis of religious stability is a ritual, or strict observance of certain actions. It is a small fee for guarantee, isn't it? Thus the ritual turns into the symbol of guarantee. And then people can be alienated even so they celebrate the same holidays but on different days. Thus we observe the same uncountable communities but in the megalopolis. Therefore if we want to get consensus on some issue, we need to find united point in conflicting views. In matters of religion, these contradictions seem insoluble. However, it is not.

Religion is the language which a human being chooses for speaking to God. Yes, we speak different languages (thanks to Babylon), but we have the same views on the life and its values (As known the one language does not mean the one view on some issue.) The choice of “language” / religion is historically determined by the specific conditions of human existence, including climate. Any religion is adapted to the specifics of a particular human community. There are not requirements in the observance of customs that cannot be implemented in real conditions. But changing living conditions cause difficulties in the observance of religious requirements. Thus, conflicts arise and they should be considered in the new realities. Such conflicts are more or less common to all religions. But there are some advantages for religions with historical roots in a particular megalopolis. So, we have the first of the common problems: the need to adapt religion to changing living conditions.

The second common problem is the difficulty or impossibility of influencing the believer using methods that have been used for centuries. This is due to the accelerated intellectual and technical development of society that cannot be ignored in the megalopolis. Does this mean that the concept of God has become irrelevant? No, it doesn't. God is something that you are not able to understand completely. God is beyond your understanding of the world and the events in it. God is something you obviously cannot influence; therefore it is what certainly affects you. And this is something that you are not able to control. Thus God makes you fear, delight and admiration.

But there is good news: knowledge has no limits. It means that each person has his own frontier of knowledge with the abyss of obscurity beyond it. Someone does not understand where the Universe comes

from. Someone does not understand where the child comes from. Actually it is our life. Ignorance unites as well. Everyone prays to his own something incomprehensible, to his own God. And here is another little unifying secret: we all have our own God. He helps us, not someone else. He is worried about us. And we feel fine. Officially, this is called the omnipresence of God. Omnipresence is also a unifying feature.

However, let us return to the intellectual and technical development which gets ahead of religious traditions in the megalopolis. The traditional perception of God with human characteristics conflicts to the modern concept of the world. Anger, resentment, the desire to punish or encourage are too human qualities. Attributing them to God we automatically begin to perceive him as an archaic type that does not fit into today's dynamic life. In addition, God with a "human face" is well perceived only at an early stage of the development of a person or society. So there are two ways for an adequate perception of God: to accept God in the other quality or to impede the development of society. The latter option is strategically destructive for all participants. Therefore we turn to the first one.

General sources of the world religions

The basic idea of various religions is essentially the same. In short, there is always the One, thanks to whom we have everything that we have. Or we do not have. Further details are highly variable. Let's start with ancient fundamental philosophy - *Sāṅkhya* (it has two meanings: 'number' and 'deliberation or judgment') [1; 2; 4]. Sometimes it is called the Universal Religion. It is universal because it lacks familiar properties of "national" religions. It is fundamental because it is seen as the basis for the consequent development of other religions. Primarily, it states that the "phenomenal" ("subjective", experienced with the help of human sensory organs) world is inconstant: it is just a sequence of alterations, unsteady forms, and occurrences appearing out of nowhere and disappearing into the void. This means that such a world is not "real", because "real" presumes something "stable, definite, solid, and constant". Yet, according to Indian fundamentals, "Something cannot come from Nothing" and "Something cannot go into Nothing" [1; 4]. This means that the phenomenal universe contains something that is both the source of the experienced world and the place accepting everything that disappears from the subjective world. It was called the Universal Substance (something that is pervading space is a formative part of all bodies; "this is the nature of things, actual, live essence" as the Webster dictionary says). So, as nothing can cause it, it is The Only Limitless Cause, The Only Reality [1; 4]. Being inconceivable, it cannot be defined and cannot be named.

Nevertheless, it has a name – *Tat* (the Sanskrit word for "something that cannot have any properties, attributes, or name"). It is the source word for the English pronoun "that". This word, *Tat*, is still used to denote (not to describe) the Indian concept of the Fundamental Reality hidden from us by the phenomenal universe [1; 4]. Its equivalent terms are: God, Brahman, and Absolute. And the main thing: all the mentioned characteristics of the Fundamental Reality indicate that the entire phenomenal universe with everything it contains, including individual souls, is only a manifestation of The Only Reality, The Absolute [1; 4].

Later types of religious trends, philosophical schools, astrology, alchemy, medicine, etc. never really questioned this idea, but rather dealt with "technical" issues: how the principle of universal manifestation works, how one can maintain the connection between the soul and God, how one can harmonize the human inner world with the surrounding world. Mainly practical aspects were touched upon (which, for example, caused some people to unknowingly blame Buddhism for being atheistic).

Religion and modern science

There is a feature in the megalopolis: a lot of intellectually and technically developed people. As for them, religion can be perceived as some simplification of reality. And here we need to understand that world religious texts treasure unique scientific knowledge about the existing world. Knowledge, which is

gradually confirmed as science develops (Interestingly, universal religion is confirmed by modern physics [3; 4]). In this sense, we do not go forward to knowledge, but back to knowledge. Religion is a value that we have not yet comprehended. We need to change our attitude towards religion by uniting mystical admiration and the disciple worship before the religious knowledge. For the only limit of our knowledge are our abilities.

The most important characteristic of the Eastern world view is awareness of the unity and mutual interrelation of all things and events, the experience of all phenomena in the world as manifestations of basic oneness [3]. The Eastern traditions constantly refer to this ultimate, indivisible reality which manifests itself in all things, and of which all things are parts [3]. It is called Brahman in Hinduism, Dharmakaya in Buddhism, Tao in Taoism [3]. The basic oneness of the universe is not only the central characteristic of the mystical experience, but is also one of the most important revelations of modern physics. As we study the various models of subatomic physics we shall see that they express, in different ways, the same insight – that the constituents of matter and the basic phenomena involving them are all interconnected, interrelated and interdependent; that they cannot be understood as isolated entities, but only as integrated parts of the whole [3].

Interestingly, mathematical analysis is successfully applied when working with ancient religious texts, for example the twenty five principles of Sāṅkhya [8].

The psycho-physiological aspect of ancient religious texts has high value as well. We see the mathematical accuracy, detail and unambiguity of the definitions, as well as the absence of unnecessary words. Let's see the qualities of the soul in Sāṅkhya: “‘soul’ is without beginning, subtle, omnipresent, intelligent, without [the three] qualities [goodness, passion, darkness,] eternal, spectator, enjoyer, not agent, the knower of body, pure, not producing aught” [3]. Then each item is explained.

By the way: “The ‘bondage of ritual observance’ is the name given to that (which opposes the liberation) of those who, whether householder, student, mendicants, or anchorites, with minds vitiated by passion and delusion, bestow (on Brahmans, upon solemn or sacrificial occasions,) gifts prompted by conceit” [3]. Keep in mind that textual tradition began in the 8-6 centuries B.C.E. [6].

At last, “the origin of evil he [the author of the manuscript] regards as not having been revealed”, a lecturer wrote in 1850 [3]. It seems it was a hot topic in those days...

Conclusion

The modern life of society in a megalopolis allows individualizing not only educational, but also religious sphere. For example, personalized programs could be developed. They will take into consideration the general religious characteristics and problems specific to the megalopolis and which have described in this article. This will create the necessary feedback effect and help to solve internal conflicts at the initial stage. Because it is more important for a person to be heard than to be in the crowd: it is a place where no one hears you.

Thus might look New Babylon Religion – the Religious code for the megalopolis life.

After all that the rest way will wait for you. A human being is capable of endless development because knowledge is endless. The ancients said that a human being was born to become like God. Yes, he could be like God. But there is some difference between “like God” and God. The only thing godlike person could change is his own life. However he has the unique opportunity to influence on the world. Ancient wisdom says: "If you want to change the world change yourself." Therefore we all need God for changing ourselves – and the world – to the good.

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