MIHAELA PARASCHIVESCU

'WE THE PEOPLE' AND GOD. RELIGION AND THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mihaela Paraschivescu
Bucharest University, Department of Foreign Languages, Bucharest, Romania.
Email: mihaelap2005@gmail.com

Abstract: The religiosity of the first settlers shaped the American spirit, the essence of national traits, shared values and ideals that define the American nation. Influential in public discourse in the colonial times and beyond, religious expression has its place in contemporary American political discourse. This article is concerned not so much with the intermingling of religion and politics in the United States of America as with the religiousness that has permeated political speech. For illustration, we look for religiousness in U. S. presidential inaugural addresses and other speeches to the nation. Inspiring and a good start in our enterprise are Mircea Eliade's reflections on myth and on religiousness, which is sometimes unconscious and camouflaged without ceasing to be a constant value of humankind, or in his frequent expression, a human universal.

Key Words: religiousness, political discourse, Puritanism, U.S. Presidents, American dream, myth, Mircea Eliade

To me, as a Romanian with an ever new interest in the United States, a discussion on religion and the American society begins with Mircea Eliade, the Romanian-American historian of religions who taught at the University of Chicago, Divinity School for thirty years, until 1986. Some of his assumptions in the theory of religion and myth are relevant in the wider context of the relatedness of religion, culture, ideologies and politics in American society.

According to him, all culture was once religious but the distinction between religious and cultural phenomena has been blurred since secularization brought a fall from religion into culture and modern humanity 'fell' into history. Cultures have a religious matrix, spiritual dimensions that Eliade believes the historian of religions is in the position to recognize and interpret.[1] The creative hermeneutics, that Eliade advocated, discovers and recovers those 'lost', 'forgotten' meanings, touches consciousness and changes the way the interpreter and the modern reader view existence. "For, in short, every culture is constituted by a series of interpretations and revalorizations of its 'myths' or its specific ideologies."[2] At the dawn of humanity, everything was religious, including myth which was believed to be a true story, a product of a revelation as to how a reality came to be and as such an exemplary pattern of behavior (we do this because gods did so first). When no longer considered the result of a revelation, myth 'fell' into fable, the 'fairytale and legend.'[3]

In the United States, Eliade finds religiousness apparent in various cultural and artistic forms and even protest movements, like the hippies in the 1960s, aware or not that their acts and gestures resembled ancient rites. Although at times he was criticized for his position, Eliade saw in such examples camouflaged mythologies surviving from symbols of the past to cultural forms of the present. Eliade's view is optimistic: the future of humanity will be religious, for as long as one can see signs of spiritual quest, there is hope. "Whether one understands religion in a sense strongly connected to Christian morals or in a more general sense relating to the 'sentiment of the sacred'[4] or to the 'diffuse religious sentiment'[5] specific to contemporary religiosities," as Sandu Frunza mentions[6], speaking of the last stage of desacralization in the historical age, Eliade describes a state in which the sacred is undistinguishable from the profane, and in which, even though religion may disappear, as in Max Weber's and Marcel Gauchet's disenchanted post-religion society of the future, faith and religiousness will endure.[7]

Due to the relentless human capacity to mythicize and to the creativity of the human spirit, Eliade insists, moderns continue to have myths. Even a most secular ideology of the twentieth century like Marxism appears to be a reversed mythology, professing a golden age of complete equality placed in the future, unlike traditional mythologies

depicting 'paradise' in the beginning of time.[8] Nowadays, myth analysts look for the modern variants. "Ancient myths did not disappear. They were maculated and desacralized. Sometimes they camouflaged convincingly in the most unexpected profane versions"[9] contends Nicu Gavriluță, who employs Eliade's and Ioan Petru Culianu's hermeneutics to decode the camouflaged myths in the daily practices of recent man, like the pseudomyth of the political savior, and the myriad soteriological phantasms of popular culture. The non-historical mythical part of humanity stored in the unconscious may be 'reactivated', brought up to the level of consciousness. As Eliade notes, "often he [the Western human being] is re-entering, by means of the images and the symbols that then come into play, a paradisiac stage of primordial humanity (whatever its concrete existence may then have been; for this 'primordial man' is admittedly an archetype never fully 'realisable' in any human existence at all.)[10]

The attraction of myths and symbols continues despite their 'degraded' 'laicized,' artificial, unrecognizable, or rather too familiar shape they took to survive. Even if modern humanity despises mythologies, Eliade believes it will continue to "feed upon decayed myths and degraded images," as "the extirpation of myths and symbols is illusory." Proof of this is the fact that men and women in World War II concentration camps would give up rations to be able to listen to stories, themselves "projections of myths" [11] because "myth takes man out of his own time," "myth implies a breakaway from Time and the surrounding world," and because "merely by listening to a myth, man forgets his profane condition, his 'historical situation.'" [12]

Therefore, Eliade maintains that despite adverse conditions in desacralized societies, symbols, images and myths continue to survive disguised and degraded, in literary works and in other products of the imagination. An example he uses is that of the myth of the Earthly Paradise that took the shape of the Oceanian paradisiacal islands in the nineteenth century literature. In fact, in the human pursuit of happiness Eliade reads an ever present nostalgia and longing for Paradise, the drive to recover the unconditioned state before the Fall, the beatitude of primordial humanity[13].

It is his thesis that "symbols never disappear from the reality of the psyche,"[14] images and symbols change form, put on modern 'masks' and survive, ordinary nostalgias lead back to the image of the "Nostalgia of Paradise". To prove his point, Eliade suggests thinking about the effect of some movies or sentimental songs: "these images express the nostalgia for a mythicised past transformed into an archetype," this 'past' "expresses all that might have been but was not (...) the longing for something *altogether different* from the present instant; something in fact inaccessible or irretrievably lost: 'Paradise' itself."[15]

Taking his interpretation further in *The Quest: Paradise and Utopia*, Eliade 'reads' in modern America the first settlers' "nostalgia for the earthly paradise," the determination to build it there anew, the cult of work and of novelty, the rapid turning of landscape into a garden, the "American paradise" which "gave rise to the myth of indefinite progress and American optimism,"[16] a lasting "religious enthusiasm" despite secularization. He detects an "Adamic nostalgia" in camouflaged forms in the works of American writers especially in the nineteenth century, and sees everywhere "the result of these messianic hopes." [17] Eliade also argues that the power of the nostalgia for paradise myth and consequently the settlers' "certainty of the eschatological mission" of bringing paradise on the new land could not be easily forgotten, and more so, can be traced even today: "It is very probable that the behavior of the average American today, as well as the political and cultural ideology of the United States, still reflects the consciousness of the Puritan certitude of having been called to restore the earthly paradise."[18]

Like any space that started being organized, America was then, to borrow Eliade's terms, "susceptible to become sacred," as he says: "settling in a territory is equivalent to founding a world."[19] Assuming the responsibility of "creating" the world in which to live, the Puritans repeated the experience of the religious man in traditional societies who sanctified the small universe making it similar to the divine world. "Religious nostalgia makes man want to live in a pure and sacred Cosmos as it was when it first came out of the Creator's hands."[20] Eliade's interpretation of the reiteration of cosmogony in every consecration of space seems perfectly valid for the early construction of America[21]. The settlers' dream was to build a glorious new country by dedication, hard work and with confidence. Puritans' 'philosophy' of success left an "imprint" on the American mind. "The underlying spirit seemed a constant adaptable to each episode in the history of the United States. (...) Even if the Puritan tradition was not shared by all the immigrants, its imprint remained sufficiently strong to mark the American spirit."[22]

When did religion meet with politics in the United States? I submit that Puritan sermons were also political and that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America are also religious. The Pilgrims' 'politics' was manifested on board of the Mayflower heading to Plymouth harbor in 1620, when in the Mayflower Compact they formally agreed to observe "just and equal laws." In 1630, the leader of a new wave of immigrants, this time to Massachusetts Bay, John Winthrop, encouraged them to build "a city upon a hill" in the New World. The Puritans' Congregation was the religious and political leader of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and Winthrop was its governor.[23] As to the Declaration of Independence that was adopted by Congress in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, the second paragraph is a well-known historical landmark:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The listed "truths" and "rights" constitute the American 'values' and 'ideals' pursued by all who have chosen to go to America. In addition to the recognition due to the Creator, few are familiar with a previous draft of the Declaration and the religious emphasis intended by Thomas Jefferson, as he wrote: "We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable."[24]

The Constitution of the United States, drawn up by the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and creating the federal government system, begins with the all famous paragraph: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." At a lexical level, the word that bears a religious connotation is "Blessings," however, arguably, the respect and religiosity even, shown at all times for the American values spelled in capital letters, compelled presidents to refer to them in their discourse.

After two hundred twenty-five years, on November 7, 2012, the re-elected President Barack Obama reiterated the idea of "a more perfect Union" in the opening paragraph of his remarks on Election Night: "Tonight, more than 200 years after a former colony won the right to determine its own destiny, the task of perfecting our union moves forward." [25] The union is a main theme in President Obama's speech, the people of the American nation as one: "while each of us will pursue our own individual dreams, we are an American family, and we rise and fall together, as one nation, and as one people."[26] The recognition of Americans' sharing hopes and dreams, and the vision for the future is "that common bond" that compels self-government as a founding principle [that "government of the people, by the people, for the people" as stated by Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address[27]] and accounts for America's exceptionalism, in President Obama's words: "what makes America exceptional are the bonds that hold together the most diverse nation on Earth -- the belief that our destiny is shared."[28]

The American dream, even if not explicit, is present in the speech in the bold instance of 'founding promise' of equity and opportunity: "I believe we can keep the promise of our founding -- the idea that if you're willing to work hard, it doesn't matter who you are, or where you come from, or what you look like, or where you love -- it doesn't matter whether you're black or white, or Hispanic or Asian, or Native American, or young or old, or rich or poor, abled, disabled, gay or straight -- you can make it here in America if you're willing to try."[29]

The last segment of the discourse strengthens the idea of a united nation under God: "We are, and forever will be, the United States of America. And together, with your help, and God's grace, we will continue our journey forward, and remind the world just why it is that we live in the greatest nation on Earth. Thank you, America. God bless you. God bless these United States."[30]

President Obama continues from his 2008-elections speech the idea of 'togetherness', of an American people that is united, expressed in the very first words of the U. S. Constitution: "*We* the People" [my emphasis], as he said: "We have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of red states and blue states. We are, and always will be, the United States of America."[31]

In both speeches he reinforces the importance of the founding ideals. He said in 2008: "the true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope." The idea of oneness relates to the American dream which is part of the president's plan: "to reclaim the American dream and reaffirm that fundamental truth, that, out of many, we are one."[32]

The speech in 2012 is more than the continuation of the 2008-elections speech as it continues the tradition of his predecessors and reinforces the new Union discourse of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, and possibly goes beyond it to the very roots of myth.

We should remember that "politics is largely language,"[33] or "a form of language use"[34] and "constitutions and laws are discourse."[35] According to political discourse theory, the choice of ideas as well as the choice of words is not accidental in the political discourse. "Political actors make deliberate choices [of words]. They reflect a set of values and ideals, and hence a specific identity."[36] President Clinton said in his First Inaugural in 1993 that "each generation of Americans must define what it means to be American."[37] U.S. presidents' discourse calls on the collective memory, reflects a shared vision of America. As a discursive feature, U.S. presidential speeches reference elements of the founding fathers' discourse, and they mention God, usually either in the headline or in the conclusion, in the discourse segments which in fact generate more impact.

President George H. W. Bush started his Inaugural Address on January 20, 1989 with a prayer to 'God' for the 'people,' again the two main referents in U.S. presidential discourse: "Make us strong to do Your work, willing to heed and hear Your will, and write on our hearts these words: 'Use power to help people.' For we are given power not to advance our own purposes, nor to make a great show in the world, nor a name. There is but one just use of power, and it is to serve people. Help us remember, Lord. Amen."[38]

In his First Inaugural of January 20, 1993, President Bill Clinton chose to begin with references to the Founders and the Almighty, and conclude with a quote from the Scripture: "The Scripture says, 'And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.' From this joyful mountaintop of celebration we hear a call to service in the valley. We have heard the trumpets. We have changed the guard. And now, each in our own way and with God's help, we must answer the call. Thank you, and God bless you all."[39]

Religiousness goes both to God and to the founders. John Fitzgerald Kennedy's "City Upon a Hill" Speech of January 9, 1961 is also such an example: "But I have been guided by the standard John Winthrop set before his shipmates on the flagship Arbella three hundred and thirty-one years ago, as they, too, faced the task of building a new government on a perilous frontier. 'We must always consider,' he said, 'that we shall be as a city upon a hill – the eyes of all people are upon us.' (...) Courage – judgment – integrity – dedication, these are the historic qualities of the Bay Colony and the Bay State (...) And these are the qualities which, with God's help, this son of Massachusetts hopes will characterize our government's conduct in the four stormy years that lie ahead. Humbly I ask His help in that undertaking – but aware that on earth His will is worked by men. I ask for help and your prayers, as I embark on this new and solemn journey."[40]

"Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms. At these moments, America is carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office. We the People have remained faithful to the ideals of our forebears, and true to our founding documents,"[41] said President Obama in his Inaugural Address of January 20, 2009, voicing the American determination to not let go of the ideals of the Founding Fathers and the documents whose authors they were, the Declaration of Independence and the U. S. Constitution.

The recurrence of words/phrases also maximizes impact. Often in political discourse analysis certain key concepts are showcased for frequency as a tool to measure deliberate emphasis. The Miller Center, on whose website I have accessed the presidential speeches, operates a word count represented on the website by size of fonts – the bigger the font, the more frequent the word is used in the speech. Comparing the word count of the speeches cited in this article, and several others, I have noticed that the most frequently used word is 'our' followed by 'will'. The third place is disputed by 'you/your', 'people', 'man', 'nation', 'America/American'. Fourth comes 'World'. One immediately notices the delineation of 'us' [We the People] in the political discourse by the use of the word 'our' and the indication of willfulness for and engagement in future action by the frequent use of the word 'will'.

A similar quantitative/qualitative analysis of the political discourse is made by Alfred Fusman[42] who follows the recurring concepts in five speeches delivered by President George W. Bush in a nine-day interval after 9/11. According to his findings, we/us/our(s) and we/America represent more than half of the recurring concepts. Fusman groups the concepts that stand for "American values" into three semantic groups: God/Lord/He, pray/prayer and freedom/liberty and shows that they are one tenth of the total, with God/prayer more frequently used in the speech at the Washington National Cathedral on September 14, 2001, and freedom/liberty used more often in the speech in Congress. However, Fusman concludes: "Church and state may be separated at constitutional level but relationship with God is strong and invoked in times of crisis in a very compelling manner."[43] He examines the careful choice of lexical and syntactical devices and the legitimizing language of the speeches.

For the purpose of this article, I have not followed Alfred Fusman's analysis of the opposite delegitimizing language emphasizing the negative traits of 'the other', of those who do not share the American set of values. Instead I focused on the shared American values in the presidential speeches cited, typical of a certain religious attitude. However, I have to mention Mircea Eliade's comments on the mythical image of the constructed/ordered world and the perils surrounding it, for their relevance on a certain political discourse in our time. According to Eliade, in archaic societies the image of the world was that of a microcosm – organized, inhabited space, "Cosmos" – always at risk of death from the "forces" in the uninhabited, unknown, unshaped, "dark" space around it: "Chaos." This is how he interprets the perception of the threat against the world: "the destruction of an established order, the abolition of an archetypal image was equivalent to a regression into chaos, into the pre-formal, undifferentiated state that preceded the cosmogony."[44] As he mentions, the same expressions have persisted through modern times – have we not heard that "chaos" or "disorder" are menacing "our world"?

There is a certain linguistic choice in the political discourse that illustrates this idea. Just for the sake of exemplifying, reading the Second Inaugural Address of George W. Bush of January 20, 2005, one finds certain word choices portraying "our country", "our land", "our world", in the light of freedom and liberty, and the "darkest corners" that the light has not yet reached, and the quite effective use of the metaphor of "fire" that warms and burns at the same time (which, in a biblical sense, would be the divine fire/light): "There is only one force of history that can break the reign of hatred and resentment, and expose the pretensions of tyrants, and reward the hopes of the decent and tolerant, and that is the force of human freedom. (...) We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world. (...) Our country has accepted

obligations that are difficult to fulfill, and would be dishonorable to abandon. Yet because we have acted in the great liberating tradition of this nation, tens of millions have achieved their freedom. And as hope kindles hope, millions more will find it. By our efforts, we have lit a fire as well—a fire in the minds of men. It warms those who feel its power, it burns those who fight its progress, and one day this untamed fire of freedom will reach the darkest corners of our world."[45]

I should mention that I find President George W. Bush's speeches to be some of the most religious. For illustration, let me quote from his First Inaugural Address of January 20, 2001. At times the president makes direct reference to God, like in this passage: "And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves who creates us equal in His image."[46] (...) Some other times, the reference is indirect while the emphasis is on people's qualities, like compassion:

"Yet compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. And some needs and hurts are so deep they will only respond to a mentor's touch or a pastor's prayer. Church and charity, synagogue and mosque lend our communities their humanity, and they will have an honored place in our plans and in our laws. Many in our country do not know the pain of poverty, but we can listen to those who do. And I can pledge our nation to a goal: When we see that wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not pass to the other side."[47] In the concluding segment of the discourse, a founding document and founding fathers are mentioned in the context of a biblical story: "After the Declaration of Independence was signed, Virginia statesman John Page wrote to Thomas Jefferson: 'We know the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. Do you not think an angel rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm?' This work continues. This story goes on. And an angel still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm. God bless you all, and God bless America."[48] The 'angel' is an allusion to Michael the Archangel who led the people of Israel out of Egypt in the Old Testament.

How can a pragmatic people resonate with a discourse that has the nature of ... dream? That is quite likely because it is the American dream, the promise of success. It is in the very making of the nation that forged individuals with high (religious) ideals. It is an almost paradoxical relationship of the materialistic, pragmatic, progress-driven, technology-based society with the idealistic visions of world-model, democracy-exporter, freedom protector. There is religiousness in this legacy that has crossed centuries.

Statistics might help, if one looks at the number of religious cults and churches or temples in the unparalleled diverse American society. According to the 2010 census cited by the World Almanac and Book of Facts 2012, the total resident population of the United States was 308,745,538. Out of this total, the membership of religious groups in the

U.S., as per the latest figures in the 2011 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, also cited by the World Almanac and Book of Facts 2012, agnostics are 38,695,319 and atheists are 1,328,803, totaling 40,024,122 and leaving 268, 721,416 in members of various religions in the U.S.A.[49]

The American Values survey conducted in April 2012 by Pew Research Center for the People & the Press notes that the United States is a highly religious nation, with two-thirds of the public (67%) agreeing with each of the three religious statements: prayer is an important part of the daily life, "we will all be called before God at the Judgment Day" and never doubt the existence of God. The first such survey was conducted by Pew Center in 1987 when 68% agreed with all three statements, an indication that Americans' religiousness continues at the same level.[50]

A previous poll also by Pew Research Center in March 2012 finds mixed feelings about religious talk in political leaders' speeches. Four out of ten Americans (38%) opine there is too much religious talk by political leaders, while 30% say it is too little, with 54% demanding churches keep out of politics and 40% favoring their expressing views on social and political issues.[51]

The most recent survey, conducted on November 7, the day after this year's American elections, checked "how the faithful voted". The analysis of the poll's results concludes: "In his re-election victory, Democrat Barack Obama narrowly defeated Republican Mitt Romney in the national popular vote (50% to 48%). Obama's margin of victory was much smaller than in 2008 when he defeated John McCain by a 53% to 46% margin, and he lost ground among white evangelical Protestants and white Catholics" (according to data posted by NBCNews.com as of 10:15 a.m. on Nov. 7, 2012). As to how the faithful voted, the poll reveals that the traditionally Republican, the white evangelicals backed Romney, while the traditionally Democratic black Protestants, Hispanic Catholics, Jews and those religiously unaffiliated largely backed Obama.[52]

All the above mentioned speeches, and those not cited here, have two main referents: (we) the people/the American nation and God. Religiousness is expressed with respect to both. Americans are very religious about their nation, their history, their country. And 'faith' is both in God and in the ideals of the American nation. Was there an American president who did not say in his speech to the nation: "God bless America"?

The American 'myth' understood not as 'fable'[53] but as that powerful substratum operating "beyond the threshold of consciousness"[54], in the unconscious religiousness of modern times that motivates, justifies and legitimizes human action, sometimes of political nature. It has become something akin to a myth, the myth of the American nation, still active two hundred years since its inception. In Eliade's definition, "'myth'

means a 'true story' and, beyond that, a story that is a most precious possession because it is sacred, exemplary, significant"[55] and "it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the 'beginnings'." [56] Although the beginnings of the United States of America did not occur *in illo tempore* but have the significance of a primordial beginning that is revered by the nation, held sacred, and viewed as exemplary to the world, they share the attributes of 'myth'. "Our mission is timeless" said President Clinton in the Inaugural of 1993, meaning "to preserve America's ideals: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."[57]And timeless is the time of myth.

Notes:

[1] Mihaela Paraschivescu, "Mircea Eliade and the Quest for Religious Meaning", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 9 Issue 25 (2010): 59-68.

[2] Mircea Eliade, "Crisis and renewal" in *The Quest. History and Meaning in Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 68.

[3] Mihaela Paraschivescu, *The Critical Reception of Mircea Eliade's Works in the United States of America* (unpublished PhD dissertation defended on September 4, 2012, at the University of Bucharest), 131.

[4] Mircea Eliade, *Tratat de istorie a religiilor*, prefaţă de Georges Dumezil, Trans. Mariana Noica (Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1992).

[5] Francoise Champion, „Spirit religios difuz, eclectism şi sincretisme" in *Religiile lumii*, Jean Delumeau (coord.), (Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1996).

[6] Sandu Frunză, "Minimal Ethics and the New Configuration of the Public Space", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 11, issue 32 (Summer 2012): 4.

[7] Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth: Conversations with Claude-Henri Rocquet*, trans. Derek Coltman (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 152.

[8] Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, Transl. Willard R. Trask (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1975), 184.

[9] Nicu Gavriluţă, "Actualitatea paradigmei Eliade-Culianu în interpretarea mitologiilor contemporane", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies,* vol. 5 issue 15 (Winter 2006): 31-36.

[10] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, Transl. Philip Mairet (Kansas: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1961), 16.

[11] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, 19.

[12] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, 58.

[13] Mihaela Paraschivescu, *The Critical Reception*, 121.

[14] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, 16

[15] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, 17.

[16] Mircea Eliade, "Paradise and Utopia: Mythical Geography and Eschatology" in *The Quest. History and Meaning in Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 91.

[17] Mircea Eliade, "Paradise and Utopia: Mythical Geography and Eschatology", 99.

[18] Mircea Eliade, "Paradise and Utopia: Mythical Geography and Eschatology", 99. See also Sandu Frunză, "Elie Wiesel and Nostalgia for a Lost Paradise", *Transylvanian Review*, vol. XVIII, No. 2, (Summer 2009): 101-105.

[19] Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion*, Trans. Willard R. Trask (San Diego and New York: Harvest/Harcourt, 1987), 47.

[20] Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 65.

[21] Mihaela Paraschivescu, "The Religious American", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 5, No. 13 (2006): 148.

[22] Nicole Guétin, *Religious Ideology in American Politics: A History* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2009), 25.

[23] George Clack and Mildred Solá Neely (eds.), *Outline of U. S. History*, Revised by Alonzo I. Hamby (Washington: Bureau of International Information Programs. U. S. Department of State, 2005), 13-14.

[24] "Jefferson's 'original Rough draught' of the Declaration of Independence" from *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 1: 1760-1776* (Princeton University Press, 1950), 423. Accessed from: http://www.princeton.edu/~tjpapers/declaration/declaration.html

[25] Remarks by President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 7, 2012. Accessed from: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/07/remarks-president-election-night

[26] Remarks by President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 7, 2012.

[27] http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/index.html

[28] Remarks by the President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 7, 2012.

[29] Remarks by the President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 7, 2012.

[30] Remarks by the President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 7, 2012.

[31] Remarks by President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 4, 2008. Accessed from: http://www.america.gov/st/usg-english/2008/November/20081105101958abretnuh0.580044.html

[32] Remarks by President Barack Obama on Election Night, November 4, 2008.

[33] Paul A. Chilton and Christina Schäffner (eds.), *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discours* (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamin, 2002), 4.

[34] Teun Van Dijk A., *Discourse as Structure and Process*, Vol 1 (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1997), 5.

[35] Teun Van Dijk A., *Discourse as Structure and Process*, 5.

[36] Alfred Fusman, "Reporting 9/11: the Hard Facts of History. Political Discourse", in *Rewriting History: Negotiations of Identity in post-9/11 American Culture* (unpublished PhD Dissertation defended on March 25, 2011, at the University of Bucharest), 93.

[37] Bill Clinton, First Inaugural (January 20, 1993). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3434

[38] George H. W. Bush Inaugural Address (January 20, 1989). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3419

[39] Bill Clinton, First Inaugural (January 20, 1993). Accessed at: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3434

[40] John Fitzgerald Kennedy, "City Upon a Hill" Speech of January 9, 1961. Accessed at: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3364

[41] President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address (January 20, 2009). Accessed at: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/4453

[42] Fusman, 92-113.

[43] Fusman, 112.

[44] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, 38.

[45] George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address (January 20, 2005). Accessed from: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/21st_century/gbush2.asp

[46] George W. Bush, First Inaugural Address (January 20, 2001). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3645

[47] George W. Bush, First Inaugural Address.

[48] George W. Bush, First Inaugural Address.

[49] Sarah Janssen, M. L. Liu, Shmuel Ross and Badget Nan (eds.), *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2012* (New York: Infobase Learning, 2011), 607 and 698.

[50] http://www.pewforum.org/Politics-and-Elections/Americans'-Religious-Values.aspx

[51] http://www.pewforum.org/Politics-and-Elections/more-see-too-much-religious-talk-by-politicians.aspx

[52] http://www.pewforum.org/Politics-and-Elections/How-the-Faithful-Voted-2012-Preliminary-Exit-Poll-Analysis.aspx

[53] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, Transl. Willard R. Trask (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1975), 1.

[54] David G. Butt, Annabelle Lukin, and Christian M.I.M. Matthiessen, "Grammar–the first covert operation of war", *Discourse & Society*, 15, no. 2-3 (2004): 267-290. Examining the first speech by President Bush after 9/11, the study emphasizes the power of grammar, namely of lexical and syntactic choice, that impacts the audience not always consciously.

[55] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, 1.

[56] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality* 5.

[57] Bill Clinton, First Inaugural (January 20, 1993). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3434

References:

Bush, George H. W. Inaugural Address (January 20, 1989). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3419

Bush, George W. First Inaugural Address (January 20, 2001). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3645

Bush, George. W. Second Inaugural Address (January 20, 2005). Accessed from: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/21st_century/gbush2.asp

Butt, David G., Annabelle Lukin, and Christian M.I.M. Matthiessen. "Grammar–the first covert operation of war". *Discourse & Society*. 15, no. 2-3 (2004): 267-290.

Chilton, Paul A. and Christina Schäffner. eds. *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse.* Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamin, 2002.

Chilton, Paul. *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice.* London, New York: Routledge, 2004.

Clack, George and Mildred Solá Neely eds. *Outline of U. S. History*. Revised by Alonzo I. Hamby. Washington: Bureau of International Information Programs. U. S. Department of State, 2005 (1945-1950).

Clinton, Bill. First Inaugural (January 20, 1993). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3434

Eliade,Mircea. "Crisis and renewal". in *The Quest. History and Meaning in Religion.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Eliade, Mircea. *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*. Transl. Philip Mairet. Kansas: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1961.

Eliade, Mircea. *Myth and Reality*. Transl. Willard R. Trask. New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1975 (1963).

Eliade, Mircea. *Ordeal by Labyrinth: Conversations with Claude-Henri Rocquet.* Trans. Derek Coltman. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982 (1979).

Eliade, Mircea. "Paradise and Utopia: Mythical Geography and Eschatology". In *The Quest. History and Meaning in Religion.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion*. Trans. Willard R. Trask. San Diego and New York: Harvest/Harcourt, 1987 (1959).

Frunză, Sandu. "Minimal Ethics and the New Configuration of the Public Space". *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies.* vol. 11, issue 32 (Summer 2012): 4-17.

Frunză, Sandu, "Elie Wiesel and Nostalgia for a Lost Paradise". *Transylvanian Review.* vol. XVIII, No. 2 (Summer 2009): 101-105.

Fusman, Alfred. "Reporting 9/11: the Hard Facts of History. Political Discourse". in *Rewriting History: Negotiations of Identity in post-9/11 American Culture.* (unpublished PhD Dissertation defended on March 25, 2011, at the University of Bucharest), 92-113.

Gavriluţă, Nicu. "Actualitatea paradigmei Eliade-Culianu în interpretarea mitologiilor contemporane". *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies.* Vol. 5 issue 15 (Winter 2006): 31-36.

Guétin, Nicole. *Religious Ideology in American Politics: A History.* Jefferson: McFarland, 2009 (2004).

Janssen, Sarah, M. L. Liu, Shmuel Ross and Badget Nan. eds. *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2012*. New York: Infobase Learning, 2011.

"Jefferson's 'original Rough draught' of the Declaration of Independence". from *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 1: 1760-1776.* Princeton University Press, (1950):423-8. Accessed from: http://www.princeton.edu/~tjpapers/declaration/declaration.html

Kennedy, John Fitzgerald. "City Upon a Hill" Speech of January 9, 1961. Accessed at: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3364

Obama, Barack. Remarks on Election Night, November 7, 2012. Accessed from: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/07/remarks-president-election-night

Obama, Barack. Remarks on Election Night, November 4, 2008. Accessed from: http://www.america.gov/st/usg-english/2008/November/20081105101958abretnuh0.580044.html

Obama, Barack. Inaugural Address (January 20, 2009). Accessed from: http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/4453

Paraschivescu, Mihaela. "Mircea Eliade and the Quest for Religious Meaning". *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies.* Vol. 9, issue 25 (2010): 59-68.

Paraschivescu, Mihaela, *The Critical Reception of Mircea Eliade's Works in the United States of America.* (unpublished PhD dissertation defended on September 4, 2012, at the University of Bucharest).

Paraschivescu, Mihaela. "The Religious American". *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies.* Vol 5, issue 13 (2006): 147-151.

Van Dijk A., Teun. *Discourse as Structure and Process.* Vol 1. London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1997.