TRACING THE SPIRAL OF RELIGIOUS TERROR APPARATUS TO BREAK THE CHAIN OF VIOLENCE

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Abstract: In the 21st century, threats to peace have occurred in the name of religion, activating an 'apparatus of terror'. Religion has an ambiguous and multifaceted relation to peace. This article analyses the mechanisms of the religious terror apparatus to elaborate on the way to peace and prevent violence aroused by religions. The focus is on jihadism, the fundamentalist, extremist movement of militant Islamists. With the framework of analysis based on Rogozinski's *Djihadisme, le retour de sacrifice*, I analyse this extreme politico-religious movement as an apparatus of terror. I will elucidate the appeal of the fundamental tenets of jihadism that entice young people by lending transcendental meaning to violence and offering them a new horizon of faith. In religious-political conflicts, we should aim to identify the path of "true religion" and "soft religion" as a counter-apparatus to the terror that can free us from strict precepts and promote tolerance, peace, and virtue.

Keywords: Apparatus of Terror, Great Divine Body, Jihadism, Repressive Transcendence, True religion, Soft religion

1. Introduction

One of the last scenes in the film *Le ciel attendra* (2016) has a strong sentimental appeal: a girl covered in a niqab gradually climbs up a staircase leading to a vertical ascent; she disappears as if being absorbed into the sky. This film tracing the process of becoming a young jihadist in Europe shows the transcendent

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driving force of the fundamentalist, militant Islamic movement that appeals to young people. Peace has been threatened in the name of religion through acts of terrorist violence. It cannot be denied that the hegemonic worldview based on Western imperialism is one of the reasons for the genesis of the jihadist fundamentalist movement. After their defeat in World War I, the Ottoman Empire was demolished by Western forces. The abolition of the Caliphate by Mustafa Kemal and the Western grip on Muslim countries caused confusion and disenchantment in some Muslim circles (Mouline 14-15). The movement to return to the Source, to the Prophet (Salafism), as an antidote to Western domination, has become increasingly rigid and intolerant. Jihadism is the fusion of extremist ideology and the use of violence against non-Muslim believers and non-jihadist Muslims. In this case, religion's role in peace is ambiguous and multifaceted, and extremist religious movements provoke conflict and destruction and disrupt world peace and sustainable development.

This article analyses the trajectories and mechanisms of the religious terror apparatus, which acts to produce and circulate insecurity and conflict, the *affect* of fear and hatred; ultimately, the article aims to break the chain of violence in the name of religion and find a new path to peace. Notably, this article focuses on jihadism in Europe and analyses its socio-political context and certain ideological traits of jihadism to understand the significance and process of this extreme religious violence. The aim is to elucidate how religion becomes a vector of violence and the link between the sacred and the secular in jihadism. Peace is not a fixed and stable state but is always dynamic in the sense that it is animated by a relationship of tension with violence and conflict; therefore, to find a new path to peace, I am obliged to trace the trajectory of violence that invades and destabilises the state of peace. While warning about the dangers of religious violence, I ultimately aim to develop a path to peace in terms of religion while considering Spinoza's argument and Galtung's notion of soft religion.

2. Analysis of the Terror Apparatus Mechanism

The terror apparatus mechanism is woven through an assemblage of socio-political context, its transcendent movement, and religious temporality. This combination of religious representations, institutions, ideology, and specific temporality captures the emotions and sentiments existing among people, such as hatred and indignation, by using conspiracy theories, apocalypse schemes, and election schemes. The next section is dedicated to analysing the terror apparatus mechanism with the goal of preventing religiously-driven violence. I begin by investigating the socio-political context of the terror apparatus.

2.1. The Socio-Political Context

Jacob Rogozinski defines jihadism as a "terror apparatus" (*dispositif de terreur*) in his book *Djihadisme: le retour de sacrifice.* The term 'apparatus' is elaborated by Foucault, and this concept designates a "heterogeneous ensemble of discourse, institutions, law, [...] the said as much as the unsaid" (Foucault 300). With this strategic term, he aims to make us notice the complex and fluid connection of heterogeneous elements and their tensions without getting stuck in an essentialist conception. Therefore, jihadism cannot be defined by a fixed essence or category but is a 'terror apparatus', which is articulated as a heterogeneous and variable arrangement of "representations, practices, knowledge, institutions" (Rogozinski 33). This article considers jihadism as an apparatus of a network of diverse elements, such as representations of the sacred, salvation and the secular world, institutions of belief, religious ideas, extremist conceptions of the Islamic state, religious laws and Sharia, use of mass media and exhibitions of torture, and European social discrimination against Muslim immigrants. I investigate how these heterogeneous elements combine and map the network of components in their interactions and tensions.

When I examine jihadism in Europe, the process of becoming a young jihadist in the Muslim immigrant community is undeniably linked to their socio-historical context, which is based on the history of colonisation and decolonisation. Their North African parents collaborated with French colonisers who

oppressed their independentist leaders, and at the time of decolonisation, they came to France. Nevertheless, they are hated and excluded by both the French and Algerians (Khosrokhavar 97-99). Young immigrants of Arab origin suffer from the stigma of *diaspora*, designating groups dispersed outside their original country, and this involves an identity problem. The diaspora issue is linked to Western imperialist histories that exploited immigrants as cheaper workers. The identity of immigrants is torn and pulverised by socio-economic exclusion and double exclusion. The double exclusion from which young Muslim immigrants suffer gives them a feeling of being uprooted and abandoned without belonging or any recognition. They are, in a way, the '*sans-part*' (those who have no share) (Ranciere 9), who have an invisible and ignored status and no legitimate part in society, or our times. These young people are deracinated without a promised land. Extremist movements give them an illusion of filling these gaps and remedying these social stigmas, but it is only a mirage.

Khosrokhavar indicates that jihadism is "a syndrome of the global politico-social crisis" (35). Politics in Europe can no longer offer a vision of utopia or hope, and social discrimination against immigrants is palpable. Ghettoisation and stigmatisation, as much as "unemployment, social rejection, delinquency, lack of dignity, and social recognition" (Khosrokhavar 13), make them feel humiliated. Through the fundamentalist jihadist movement, young people are trying to acquire dignity and find the roots that they have lost because of their immigrant status. Their extremisation is an act of finding such roots, and in this sense, their religious extremism aims to "avenge the colonisation of their parent and the humiliation of the new generations of immigrants" (Khosrokhavar 96). This apparatus, acting from the bottom up, begins to move through their experience of injustice and social suffering, and at first, it functions as a resistance movement against a discriminatory society.

I suggest analysing this as the Deleuzian '*machien de guerre*' ('war machine'), which operates like 'multiple *ligne(s) de fuite*' ('line(s) of flight') subverting uniformity and dynamising the

competition of different values (Yun, *Philosophical*, 7). Their passion for revolt against an unjust society pushes them to question the legitimacy of the Western system, which is supposed to promote equality, liberty, and fraternity, and they proclaim their different religious values in resistance to the supremacy of European values. These *sans-part* demand a remedy to their social exclusion and to overthrow Western supremacy. This apparatus is made up of the passion for revolt and the uprising of young immigrants, and therefore, this produces anti-establishment terror in European society. Yet increasingly, this apparatus of terror as the vehicle of revolt by the excluded plunges into extremism, such as jihadism, and it becomes the *machine de guerre* that turns into a movement of destruction and violence against the entirety of non-jihadist peoples.

I analyse the process of becoming young jihadists in Spinozist terms. Affection (*Affectio*)[1] is an action of being affected and affecting when one body meets another (Yun, *Geology*, 80). According to Spinoza, the world is constituted by the encounters of one body with another, and I noticed that this produces chains of affections (effect) constituted by certain perceptual, emotional, and cognitive images. In this sense, discrimination towards and social exclusion of Muslim immigrants generate effects, affections (*affectio*), on them, and their affections (*effects*) are as follows: they feel suffering and indignation (emotive images), notice a lack of recognition, the need for reference and framework, aspire to a search for identity, the sacred, and revenge of justice (cognitive and perceptual images). I propose to map them and read them according to the affect that the chains of affections envelop.

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[1] "*Affect/Affection*, neither word denotes a personal feeling (sentiment in Deleuze and Guattari). *L'affection* (Spinoza's *affectio*) is an ability to affect and be affected. However, "*l'affect (*Sponoza's *affectus)* is a pre-personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act" (Yun, Geology, 13).

In *Ethics*, Spinoza mentions the meaning of affect as follows: "By affect (*affectus*), I mean the affections of the body by which the power to act of this body itself is increased or decreased, favoured or hindered" (*III Definition* 3; Deleuze, *Spinoza*, 69). "The passage and transition of the chains of the affections-image (their emotive, perceptual, cognitive image) consists in describing the process of the continuous variation of the augmentation and diminution of the power to act of our body, which is the panoramic mapping of the affects" (Yun, *Geology*, 82). The affect that activated the terror apparatus is no longer the passion for revolt but changes into the affect of hatred. In *Ethics*, Spinoza explains that when something decreases our power to act, we feel the affect of sadness, and that the affect of hatred generated by this sadness is a negative passion that aims to destroy the one who causes the bad encounter, mixing with our body, and the decrease in the power to act. Recurrent experiences of bad encounters with European discriminatory measures make young immigrants feel belittled in their own eyes. Their sadness due to their diminished power to act can take two different directions: inertia and self-hatred or indignation and hatred of the other. "To hate is to want to destroy those which risk destroying you" (Deleuze, *Cours*, 1981).

Young immigrants seek to rebel against the unjust European system through fundamentalist religious values, and they decide to destroy the cause of their sadness and suffering. Rogozinski ingeniously argues that this apparatus is guided and directed by *schemes* of imaginary representations accompanied by affects, such as narratives, images, beliefs, perceptions, practices, and rumours. These *schemes* of representation consist of capturing and mobilising the *affects* of frustration, revolt, hatred of the multitudes, and by means of its schemes, the apparatus manages to "orient subjects towards concrete actions" (Maronneaux 2), for example, the revolution or the attack. Rogozinski (*Djihadisme et sacrifice*) mentions that the *affect* of revolt and indignation is attracted by a certain apparatus of religion, such as jihadism. In this sense, my analysis shows that the *affect* of hatred, animated by schemes of extremely hostile representations towards the

secular world, is no longer a feeling of wrong to be repaired but activates the terror apparatus in the direction of a pure inclination of destruction towards entire peoples designated as 'enemies'. This article attempts to elucidate the mechanism of this apparatus of terror.

2. 2. The Transcendent Movement and Union with the Great Religious Body

This argument consists in extracting its mechanism by analysing the main ideas of jihadism. In this case, what is the relationship between the sacred and the secular world? The secular European world seems to have lost the hope of utopia through the failure of the communist revolution and the negative effects of capitalism, and it faces the limits of Western development where young people have lost reference points or guidance. Individual freedom has become an overwhelming burden for young people, and immigrants suffering from the effects of the diaspora, marked by the experience of decomposition of identity, crave to reincorporate with a great body such as God or the state. They feel scattered, unattached, and pulverised without adequate recognition. Therefore, they seek to find a great organic unity with which they can identify themselves completely and under which they are assigned their place according to the supreme order. They begin to redefine the link between the sacred and the secular world, and the insertion of the sacred into their life becomes one of the axes of the extremisation around which their life pivots. The sacred means *holy*, a whole intact by its transcendent dimension and high values. The formation of the great organic and systemic body consists in absorbing all existential and social gaps and holes. Deleuze and Guattari criticise the concept of a system, a unified *organic body* or *organism* consisting of classifying and hierarchising components according to higher principles. However, this aspiration of immigrants to the great organic and unified body becomes a point of attraction that makes strong cohesion possible as a remedy for the dissemination of meaning. Their process of reincorporation with the great body is to integrate into *Neo-*

Umma (a new idealised Muslim community), God, or the Islamic State.

In jihadism, the link between the sacred and the secular is based on a dualistic and conflictual conception in which the secular world has fallen into an impious state, and the sacred Islamic law must intervene and govern this disordered world. Jihadists are strongly urged to conquer the unholy world to build an Islamic State. As the film about the process of becoming young jihadists, *Le ciel attendra* (2016), shows, the transcendental force of the sacred attracts lost youth, including converts and immigrants, because freedom seems to be a kind of punishment of uncertainty, and European secular life has lost its horizon of meaning. This aspiration to 'belong to something greater than oneself' (Mouline 14-15) can be explained by the diagram of transcendent movement (Figure 1).
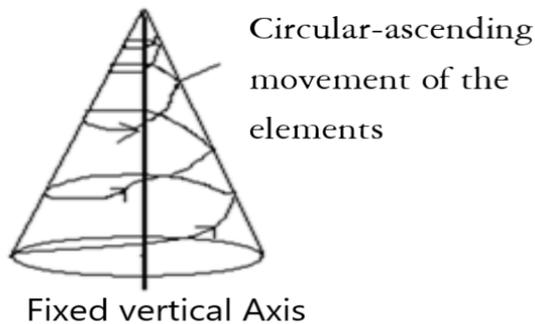

Figure 1. Transcendent movement

In this transcendent movement, the ascending movement of the elements around the fixed vertical axis is formed, and this movement is directed towards the culminating point, which is God or Unity. […] The main role of the axis is to stabilise the movement of various elements and to maintain its regularity so that these various elements do not disperse in the indeterminate direction as the negative unlimitedness. As a result, its

movements are aligned, do not deviate from the trajectory of the Unity, and rise vertically towards the one transcendent principle (Yun, *Architectonic*, 353).

The absorption of people's individualities into the idea of the great Unity in *Neo-Umma* consists in unifying and codifying them under the Islamic sacred law, Sharia. In the Neo-Umma as the great unifying organic body, individuals are no longer indeterminate and scattered elements but become components of this body that categorically fulfil their function according to the order established by the Sharia. This argument about jihadism can be analysed through two parameters: coding (*codage*) and territorialisation, as proposed by De Landa: "The identity of the assemblage will be defined by the setting of the parameters. When territorialisation and coding are at maximum intensity, that assemblage is a stratum." The daily life and practice of jihadists are rigidly codified and framed by the Sharia code, and this hyper-framing consists of capturing the flow of an individual's desire according to religious norms, customs, and law and directing it toward the vertical and sacred ascension, God. Thus, in jihadism, the degree of coding (codification, *codage*) is at a maximum. Furthermore, as the mere components of Islamic Unity, jihadists fit into the hierarchical arrangement, and the boundaries between each component and between insiders and outsiders become deeper. Thus, the degree of territorialisation is at a maximum. The ascending movement of jihadism forms a 'stratum' of homogeneous and hierarchical elements, a fixed, unifying, and oppressive entity at its maximum intensity of coding and territorialisation. In *Mille Plateaux*, Deleuze and Guattari explain that an arrangement of unified and homogeneous elements can form the "strata that make it a kind of large organism, or a totality" (10). In this movement of vertical ascent, an individual is absorbed by a transcendent point of God, and Rogozinski (*Djihadisme et sacrifice*) defines it as "repressive transcendence." As one of the last scenes of the film, *Le ciel attendra* (2016) represents so well, the religious ascent of a girl in a niqab to the top turns into absorption in heaven. I argue that this pulverisation and total

erasure of individuality among jihadists consist in inscribing their body and mind into a coordinated and codified religious space based on absolute belief in the superiority of the transcendent world. In the religious totality, the component parts cannot be taken apart, and they are integrated together for their orderly functioning. The absolute dependence of the components on the totality or the Islamic State commands jihadists to fulfil the duties codified by Sharia.

3. Analysis of Sacrifice and Religious Temporality

This aspiration for ascending and transcendent movement among jihadists aims to extract from the indeterminate nature of life on earth a kind of absolute regularity and order. Federika Spindler considers immanence as that which has no boundaries in *Gilles Deleuze: A Philosophy of Immanence*: "Immanence, thus, in a Spinozian sense, as what is boundaryless, since there is nothing to delimit from or border against: the idea of a beyond is invalidated from the very beginning" (154). Deleuze notes that immanence is chaos, unlimited, where it is not captured by order, whereas for jihadists, transcendence is an embodiment of divine order and law. In my opinion, this notion of immanence is linked to the secular world as the plane of experience that has no given direction or ordered reference point, whereas the notion of transcendence is to regulate that which is dispersed and indeterminate, to master that negative limitlessness that has no boundary, no predetermined direction. The jihadist religion consists of framing and ordering perfectly what is indeterminate, the secular world according to the notion of the positive unlimitedness that is God as the regulative idea. What is not controllable and ordered by divine law is considered evil, and the total mastery and control of this unlimited negative is symbolised by the imposition of absolute submission of humans to divine laws and the elimination of secularity in their life. The horizon of absolute meaning offers jihadist believers a single path to inscribe divine law in every corner of their life by fiercely distancing themselves from the value of secular life. It is this

dualistic basis on which the notion of religious temporality is established.

Religious temporality resides in the notion of eternal life in Paradise beyond life on earth. According to Rogozinski, this eternal, transcendent temporality is common to the Abrahamic religions, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Their religious temporality derives from the belief that the world will end in the apocalypse. The apocalypse unfolds as a predictive sign of the Last Judgement to show how chaotic and disordered the secular world is, in which negative limitlessness reigns. The arrival of the Last Judgement is, therefore, necessary to reorder the whole of humanity. This advent of messianic times is marked by a radical turning point that has no continuity with this unjust world. Young people who have suffered from injustice and social stigma are attracted to this scheme of total overthrow that promises a new future. The Messianic God seems to feel the *affect (sentiment)* of rage and vengeance in this rotten world, as we do. Messianic temporalities are based on hatred of life on this miserable earth, and the deployment of violence and atrocity is justified as a means of punishment by God. The imminent coming of the Messiah is always declared by other fundamentalist sects and jihadism: they are convinced that today's secular, impious world is doomed to be overturned and exterminated by God, and secular temporality is no longer valid.

Daesh launches propaganda about the Messiah and the apocalypse: the last battle of Dabiq against the infidels will herald the end of the secular world (apocalypse), and the dominance of the anti-messiah, Dajjal, will be destroyed by the Messiah (Last Judgement) (Rogozinski, *Le moi*, 159-160). According to Rogozinski, jihadism is a militant messianism that fights to bring about the new divine world and to submit life on earth to the rigid code of Sharia with extreme asceticism. I argue that there is a tension between the apocalypse and the last judgement in the sense that the last judgement is a moment of great turning point and rupture that stops and pulverises the secular world. The continuity of this ungodly world is completely challenged, and this dualistic discontinuity of the

secular world and the godly world invites fundamentalist believers to immediately abandon all secular or western values and go to the new world beyond this world on earth. In the Last Judgement, the collapse of this disordered world is activated by the fundamentalists' *effect* of rage or revenge to restore a divine Supreme Order and justice. However, the restored divine order can only be accomplished in God's eternal world, and in this sense, the end of the secular world is expected and necessary to bring about a transcendent world. "Eternal life" is seen as a "practical postulate" (Spindler, 157) of humankind by which they make efforts to always submit to God's commands in the hope of going to Paradise and by which the pious believers would be rewarded for their sacrifice.

Jihadist movements propelled by the idea of the impending apocalypse urge believers to go beyond and sacrifice, martyr themselves to be elected to Paradise. Rogozinski argues that this destructive act is a rite of self-sacrifice and aims to expel the heterogeneous elements in him to regain the unity of the total body. Their act of extreme violence is to die to be reborn in the new world. This aspiration of self-destruction is to pulverise one's corporality to reconstitute with the Great Divine Body. "Messianism is a scheme that consists of capturing the passions" (Rogozinski, *Djihadisme*, 165) of the masses, such as rage, revenge, hope, etc., to absorb them into and function within their various apparatuses, whether religious or political. Within the messianic scheme, the Abrahamic religious apparatuses call for a reversal of the situation: the excluded of the secular world will be invited to be raised as the Chosen of God, and the Messiah stands next to the excluded.

When the hope-driven messianic scheme is linked to the apocalyptic scheme, the conception of the total enemy as troops of the anti-messiah is activated in extremist believers, and this conception of the total enemy will invite them not only to the *affects* of hatred but also to wage "total war" (von Clausewitz 278), which aims at the annihilation of the entire so-called enemy people. The atrocity of jihadist actions toward non-jihadists is thus justified by these apocalyptic-messianic schemes. The

extreme violence of jihadists, such as suicide bombings against the public and the broadcast of beheadings of non-believers, functions as spectacular punishments by God. The punishments marked on the individual bodies of non-believers and the symbolic body of Western society (e.g. the Bataclan theatre in France) consist in ritualising the outburst of torments as a display of God's supreme power. The spectacle of extreme jihadist violence is intended to show who their enemy is and to exhibit the absolute greatness of divine power, condemning the unfaithful and insubordinate world and shaking the secular earth.

Rogozinski notes that the sovereignty of Daesh is represented in two symmetrical figures of sacrifice: "executioner who beheads enemies and the martyr of suicide bombing who leads men to die for God" (*Djihadisme*, 218). Jihadists sacrifice both non-believers and themselves to achieve salvation. The meaning of sacrifice is analysed in the following way: the destruction of a victim's body allows it to be made sacred as a divine offering. In the religious rite of sacrifice, the sacrificed and the sacrifice-giver are considered identical, and through the death of sacrificed enemies, jihadists fulfil their aspirations to honour God and to pulverise the immanent world to reach the transcendent world. Sacrifice is linked to the idea of auto-transcendence, which encourages one to rise to higher values. Sacrifice is one of the acts of "communicating and merging with the other" (Bataille 35; Hoffmann 74).

I deduce that the sacrificial action allows one to unite and merge with the higher Unity, Neo-Umma, or exclusive Salvation. This argument concerning sacrifice can be explored further through the concept of Hegelian negativity interpreted through the prism of Heidegger and Bataille. "Negativity is the absence of bottom (*Abgrund*)" (Heidegger 46; Malabou 267), and I associate this concept with the unlimited negative, which has no possible delimited contour. Bataille and Strauss (19) also interpret death as the privileged manifestation of negativity. Human beings join negativity through death, the fundamental condition of a finite being, which leads one to the bottomless

unlimited. To master this negativity within themselves, human beings attempt to contemplate and face their death, that is, the death of their body and of their animal and natural being. In sacrifice, the sacrificer identifies with the offering (Bataille and Strauss 19) in the sense that the former sees and projects its own death into the suppression of this finite being, and from the rite of sacrifice, is reborn in the lucid consciousness of death, and obtains their own resurrection in the mastery of the fear of death.

The sacrificial rites of jihadism also function in this way: by decapitating the sacrificial victim, jihadists not only prove the supremacy of the Islamic State's power but also witness the death of their own corporeality, and this encourages them to overcome the fear of this negative limitlessness. After having already witnessed the sacrificial rituals of non-believing offerings, they are invited to sacrifice themselves with the action of suicide bombing in the sense that, with lucid awareness of their bodily death, nothing will stop the realisation of their own death, and in the sense that they annihilate their body to be reborn with the certainty of being united with God. I argue that their resurrection occurs in two dimensions: first, they gain mastery over death, reborn peacefully in the lucid awareness of death, and second, with their self-sacrifice, they gain their resurrection in the sense that they suppress their limited body to join the Great Divine Body. In my opinion, with the suicide attack, jihadists allow themselves to transcend their finite and corporeal condition and allow believers to witness spectacular scenes of sacrifice that allow other jihadists to gain this lucid awareness of death. Nevertheless, where are the roads to peace?

4. Soft and True Religion: Counter-Apparatus of Terror

This article aims to propose a new concept of religion in terms of peace, and I will consider here what Spinoza and Galtung describe as the true path to peace in religion. First, Galtung distinguishes between two forms of religion according to the distance from the core: the closer the religion is to the core, the more it is considered a "soft religion," while the farther it is from the core, the more it is considered a "hard religion." If I apply

this distinction of Galtung to the apparatus of terror, all the characteristics of the apparatus of terror are those of "hard religion" concerning the nature of God transcending, as well as the relationship of religion to the theocratic state. However, soft religion does not involve the denial of life on earth that prevents sustainable development, but instead recognises this world's immanent value and is dedicated to respecting life and realising its power to act.

I link this notion of "soft religion" to Spinoza's notion of "true religion" to find the road to peace in religion. According to Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, the role of religion should be sought in "true religion", and the goal of "true religion" is to bring the political community formed by religio-cultural diversity into peace. For him, true religion—"as opposed to sectarian religion" (Nadler, 156)—dictates our moral behaviour towards our neighbours and communities since God's love is immanent and in our world, i.e., among us. However, the greatest obstacle to community peace is the conflict incited by organised "hard religion" that requires believers to unite with the transcendent God and submit to the theocracy. Spinoza introduces the concept of true religion, which allows for private salvation in this world and the collective peace of society. Different religious sects create the illusion that their believers are the only elect of God and that their precepts are the only version of truth and salvation; this illusion makes them fanatical. However, to escape this illusion, Spinoza invented the concept of "true religion" in the same way that Galtung invented the concept of "soft religion," which overcomes the different sects and precepts of religions and opens the possibility of horizontal recognition. In this horizontal recognition, religion is separated from politics, God is considered to be immanent in this world, and all diverse forms of belief are admitted and reciprocally recognised in the laïc state. It would work as a counter-apparatus of terror that brings peace. In this counter-apparatus of terror, others have become mirrors of ourselves in which we recognise ourselves in the love of God, which allows us to be affected and bound by the feeling of respect for each other.

In this case, the scripture of God reserves us for universally accessible salvation, and it reserves love for neighbours. "For Spinoza, true religion is the glue that holds a political community together" (Topolski, 46) bringing universal salvation and collective peace. Spinoza aims to free true religion from all oppressive precepts and rituals: he recommends that we "love God above all else, and love our neighbour as ourselves, and this is the very foundation of the whole religion (Spinoza, 185, XII, 34)." "Different persons, communities etc., with their particular geographical, historical and cultural specificities must each be able to develop their own practices with regard to the true way of life and pleads for freedom of belief. This is what he [Spinoza] refers to in the preface as freedom of judgment with regards to the foundation of one's faith (Topolski, 50)." The search for true and soft religion is notably based on this spirit of tolerance and virtue. We should aim to move towards the path of true and soft religion as a counter-apparatus of terror, which opens a door of peace and tolerance and prevents religio-political conflict and the hard aspects of religion.

4. Conclusion

The conflicts, insecurity, and violence that jihadist movements engender in the name of religion seriously impede sustainable development. This article analysed and philosophically disclosed jihadist movements' mechanism to break the chain of violence through critique. In this case, "who should legislate on the sacred?"[2] This is the main question that Spinoza asked through his *theological-political treatise* and that this article also posed. Spinoza fiercely criticised theocracy and 'separates what is of the theological order and what is of the legal order' (Rovère). I notice that jihadism is about having a monopoly on legislating the sacred with the Caliphate regime. This Islamic State that jihadists aspire to re-establish proclaims the identity of "religion and state, of Koran and sword, spirituality, and action" (Mouline 14-15). When the caliph legislates on the sacred, power

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[2] This sentence is posed as the title of a radio conference on Spinoza. "Djihadisme et sacrifice (2018)."

is entrusted to God, or the prophet's successor, and is no longer vested in civic or democratic individuals. "This effect of dispossession of individuality" (Rizk) in power makes people submissive and passive.

Applying Spinozist critique and terms to jihadism shows that this theocratic regime needs to rule over people's sadness, consisting in diminishing their power to act and encouraging the regime to maintain order and stability. The weakening of individuals integrates people more fully into the state and divine law. Hatred of other states fomented by jihadism prevents international exchanges since a theocratic state is closed and intolerant, which would seriously impede sustainable development, prosperity, and world peace. When law and divine command are identical, individuals reside only in self-denial and absolute obedience, which erases their individuality, as men are destined to be only martyrs-combatants of God and women to be mothers of combatants.

Spinoza criticises religious conceptions of an anthropomorphic deity because God, whether vengeful or furious, is only a projection of human feelings. In the politico-theological treatise, Spinoza denounces this type of vengeful messianic structure as a political rather than religious issue. Believers' violent and extremist acts are not aimed at their salvation but rather at their social-political servitude. Spinoza showed what the true path to peace in religion would be. To disengage young people, European society must know how to supervise these lost and desperate youths; this work would collectively reintegrate them into society by including educators, psychologists, political measures of equality, and the elimination of social prejudices. We should also ask how to address injustice and inequality produced by the capitalist system because jihadism reflects society's socio-economic malaise and prejudices. The path to peace can be paved by eliminating exclusion and establishing equality.

This article aims to delegitimise jihadism by analysing and revealing its mechanism to move away from this mode of religious violence and re-introduce the possibility of peace in

terms of religion. This means proposing a new concept of religion that does not involve the denial of life on earth that prevents sustainable development but recognises this world's immanent value and is dedicated to respecting life and realising its power to act, and this is mentioned as the main characteristic of soft religion according to Galtung. Instead of shutting ourselves up in rigorous dogmas or precepts that make others feel excluded or hostile, we must move towards the path of true religion suggested by Spinoza, which opens the door to peace and tolerance, and which serves as a counter-apparatus of terror; in true religion and soft religion, others have become the mirror of ourselves in which we reflect ourselves, and we recognise each other in the love of God and our neighbours. As has already been stated by Spinoza, it is this tolerance and virtue that represent the true foundation of all religion.

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