



**WHO PROPAGATES THE POST-TRUTH? THE DISSEMINATION OF
NEGATIONIST SPEECHES AND FAKE NEWS BY FUNDAMENTALIST
RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN BRAZIL**

***QUEM PROPAGA A PÓS-VERDADE? A DISSEMINAÇÃO DE DISCURSOS
NEGACIONISTAS E DE FAKE NEWS POR GRUPOS FUNDAMENTALISTAS
RELIGIOSOS NO BRASIL***

***¿QUIÉN PROPAGA LA POSVERDAD? LA DIFUSIÓN DE DISCURSOS
NEGONIZANTES Y NOTICIAS FALSAS DE GRUPOS RELIGIOSOS
FUNDAMENTALISTAS EN BRASIL***



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ABSTRACT: The article seeks to ponder on the following questions: What are the sociocultural groups and movements responsible for disseminating Fake News, propagating negationist discourses, and disseminating post-truths in Brazil today? Who are the recipients and reproducers of these fundamentalist discourses? Are there limits to religious freedom and expression? And what is the role of the religion scientist, imbued with the prerogatives of the decolonial/intercultural paradigm, in the face of the problems related to the intensification of fundamentalisms and their respective arbitrary and uncompromising practices in the sociocultural field? To this end, the understanding of the category's "pluralism", "secularism" and "fundamentalism" will be explored. The discussion is based on the contributions of authors who dedicated themselves to the reflection of such problems from the epistemological field of the sciences of religion and sociology of religion.

KEYWORD: Religion sciences. Fake news. Post-truth. Negationist. Fundamentalism.

RESUMO: O artigo procura refletir acerca das seguintes questões: Quais são os grupos e movimentos socioculturais responsáveis por disseminar Fake News, propagar discursos negacionistas e divulgar pós-verdades no Brasil da atualidade? Quem são os receptores e reprodutores desses discursos fundamentalistas? Existem limites para a liberdade religiosa e de expressão? E, qual o papel do cientista da religião, imbuído das prerrogativas do paradigma decolonial/ intercultural, diante dos problemas que se apresentam relacionados ao acirramento dos fundamentalismos e suas respectivas práticas arbitrárias e intransigentes no terreno sociocultural? Para tanto, será explorado o entendimento das categorias "pluralismo", "secularismo" e "fundamentalismo". A discussão é amparada pelas contribuições de autores que se dedicaram à reflexão de tais problemáticas a partir do campo epistemológico das ciências da religião e da sociologia da religião.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ciências da religião. Fake news. Pós-verdade. Negacionismo. Fundamentalismo.

RESUMEN: El artículo busca reflexionar sobre las siguientes preguntas: ¿Cuáles son los grupos y movimientos socioculturales responsables de difundir noticias falsas, propagar discursos negacionistas y difundir posverdades en Brasil hoy? ¿Quiénes son los receptores y creadores de estos discursos fundamentalistas? ¿Existen límites a la libertad religiosa y de expresión? Y, ¿cuál es el papel del científico de la religión, imbuido de las prerrogativas del paradigma decolonial/intercultural, frente a los problemas relacionados con la intensificación de los fundamentalismos y sus respectivas prácticas arbitrarias e intransigentes en el campo sociocultural? Con este fin, se explorará la comprensión de las categorías "pluralismo", "secularismo" y "fundamentalismo". La discusión se basa en las contribuciones de autores que se dedicaron a la reflexión de tales problemas desde el campo epistemológico de las ciencias de la religión y la sociología de la religión.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Ciencias de la religión. Noticias falsas. Posverdad. Negacionismo. Fundamentalismo.

Introduction

When one thinks of Fake News, negationism and post-truth in today's Brazilian context, the first reference that comes to mind is the work of neo-Pentecostal evangelical fundamentalist groups and movements, which have been gaining more and more ground in society. Characterized, among other things, by their lack of commitment to truth, common sense and scientific rationality, and their reliance more on emotional and subjective aspects linked to religious belief than on rational aspects based on a socio-cultural consensus, these groups have been gaining followers, becoming increasingly expressive and expanding their scope of interference in politics and the national public sphere.

Neo-Pentecostal evangelicals are significantly expanding their scope of intervention in the Brazilian public sphere by imposing their ideological arbitrariness, especially in politics, culture and religion, whether through the proliferation of churches in peripheral neighborhoods, through the construction of large shrines and small establishments for worship and spiritual services in urban centers, or through their gradual insertion in remote locations, such as rural areas or even indigenous reservations. They find themselves on a progressive scale in party and government politics, being recognized as the components of the "Evangelical Caucus". They are also incisively present in the media - where they are active on radio, television programming, social media and other virtual platforms.

That said, we will try to understand the consequences of modernity and post-modernity for the Brazilian religious field, in terms of the dynamics established between pluralism, secularism and fundamentalism, the serious implications of which are the propagation of post-truths, supported by Fake News and negationism, by ultraconservative neo-Pentecostal evangelical fundamentalist groups.

This task requires a theoretical review of the epistemic construction of the categories "pluralism", "secularism" and "fundamentalism". It is based on the assumption that, among the consequences of modernity and post-modernity for the Brazilian religious field, we are witnessing the emergence of three correlated phenomena, although diametrically distinct: pluralism, secularism and fundamentalism.

Pluralism arose in association with the notion of secularism, in response to modernity's hegemonic desire to expand its influence in the political, economic, cultural and epistemic spheres, which led to the recognition of religious diversity and the human right to religious confession, the separation of church and state and the adoption of secularism as a principle of impartiality to reconcile the different interests in dispute in the public sphere. Thus, the

development of the notion of pluralism served as an epistemic tool, used to subject certain religious discourses, which had a greater influence in certain localized contexts, to the assimilation of a supposedly universal and hegemonic logic, of a secularist and secular nature. Pluralism and secularism came together in the name of a Western expansionist capitalist project. In the political and economic spheres, the secular discourse predominated and although, in the cultural sphere of everyday life, the religious discourse continued to claim a status of legitimacy, we witnessed the configuration of an arrangement characterized by placing the secular and the plural in the same basket of meaning and interlocution, a dynamic that came to be managed not only in the public sphere, but also in the worldviews of individuals.

From this perspective, it is essential to emphasize the fact that common sense has never abandoned explanations with a religious background in order to address its daily and/or contingent demands in life. And that religious sentiment can be understood as a complex and crucial dimension, determining the worldviews and, consequently, the political positions of the faithful, whether extremist or not, who in turn find themselves, passively or actively, in the condition of receptors and reproducers of negationist discourses and Fake News, reputed to be post-truths.

Fundamentalism thus arises in the wake of modernity in response to pluralism, demonstrating itself as a force opposed to the Western hegemonic project, characterized by claiming the exclusivity of its truths, even if this involves the imposition of symbolic and physical violence, thus threatening the viability of religious freedom and interreligious dialogue, related to the proposal of the pluralist principle².

The binomial pluralism/secularism-fundamentalism deserves a closer look. The religious freedom that appears in the current of pluralism in the Brazilian religious field is countered by an antagonistic movement - the intensification of fundamentalisms, which are proving to be active on the political-party scene, in the public sphere and in shaping worldviews.

Next, we will speculate on the role of the scientist of religion, who, imbued with the theoretical-methodological and practical prerogatives of the decolonial/ intercultural paradigm, points to alternatives for confronting intolerance and reflects on the limits of freedom of religion and expression.

² By "pluralist principle" we mean, "[...] a hermeneutical instrument of theological and analytical mediation of socio-cultural and religious reality that seeks to give visibility to experiences, groups and positions that are generated in the 'between-places', edges and borders of cultures and institutional spheres. It enables new divergences and convergences, other points of view, critical and self-critical perspectives for dialog, empowerment of groups and subaltern visions and forms of alterity and inclusion, considering and making explicit the power differentials present in society" (RIBEIRO, 2017, p. 241, our translation)

The consequences of modernity and post-modernity for the Brazilian religious field

Contrary to what some post-modern theorists thought, religion has not disappeared, nor has it increased, because societies have not become totally secularized; on the contrary, we can gradually see a multiplication and intensification of the diversity of religious beliefs in the Brazilian religious field. To the extent that multiculturalism advances with globalization, we are concomitantly witnessing the emergence of a plurality of religions and disputes over influence between the different religious denominations, with significant aggravating factors, such as the strengthening of fundamentalism. Thus, globalized society is witnessing an intensification of identity disputes linked to different forms of religious belonging and declarations of faith, which in turn are no more than a subterfuge for other disputes that overlap at other levels involving power.

Religious diversity, secularization and fundamentalism appear as correlated historical processes. In terms of the epistemic and socio-political cultural dominance of religion, the Christian monopoly has been broken due to the emergence of a plurality of religions and the dissemination of secular ideals. Faced with this situation, a crisis of meanings has arisen in individuals' imaginations, responsible for triggering disorientation in terms of choosing safe and unequivocal paths of belief to follow. The attachment to fundamentalist discourses stems, according to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (2004), from the confrontation with "[...] a confusing world full of interpretive possibilities" (p. 54, our translation). Because such groups have a sectarian orientation, recognized for postulating supposedly incontestable truths, destined for the understanding of only a chosen few.

This crisis of the senses is characterized by the fact that it has triggered a general lack of trust in the systems institutionally established by modernity. The risk society³, to which we are inevitably bound, highlights the fragility of our human condition, which goes against the spiritual ideals that involve the feeling of being a creature⁴ before an irascible divinity. We are faced with dangers of the most diverse nature and scope and the trust previously placed in modern institutions, such as science and religion - attuned to secular molds, once again shares ground with mystical beliefs, which place the dimension of the sacred and religious feeling at the center. It recognizes the vulnerability of the human condition and the lack of trust in the institutions of modernity, which can no longer provide effective explanations. This is enhanced

³ As Anthony Giddens put it in his book, "The consequences of modernity" (1991).

⁴ This discussion was carried out by Rudolf Otto in his book, "The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry Into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational" (2007).

by the advance of post-truth, an event that is linked to the proliferation of denialist Fake News - a socio-cultural and epistemic phenomenon, understood here as one of the most urgent and complex contemporary problems to be faced, as they represent a step backwards, seen as an expressive mark of these obscurantist times.

Despite the mistaken projection of secularism, there has been a revival of religion, and despite the hegemonic scientific project, we are witnessing the rise of anti-science discourses, of a negationist nature and propagators of Fake News, forming post-truths. In the religious field, against the backdrop of the pluralist perspective, fundamentalisms and their ultra-conservative and radical discourses and positions are proliferating.

Never before have religions and less structured forms of spirituality achieved such diversity and openness to the global circulation of their worldviews. The recognition of pluralism comes in the wake of modernity and the imposition of a Cartesian and evolutionist rational logic, responsible for compartmentalizing and categorizing the different religions and their respective practices and interpretations of the sacred dimension, at the expense of - mostly - arbitrary classifications.

The recognition of religious diversity, while broadening the pluralist outlook, also promotes the intensification of identity disputes, carried out more vehemently by the fundamentalist strands.

The burden of a plural religious field, which experiences the condition of religious freedom supported by the principle of secularism, falls on individual choice, which in turn is guided by subjective, emotional factors. The doubt that the subject has when faced with so many possibilities is instigated by the instability of the plausibility structures in society, which become rivals and fail to reach consensus (BERGER, 1997).

The transformations that have taken place in the Brazilian religious field, especially in recent years, have allowed researchers in the sciences of religion to once again pay attention to the fact that the sacred should still be considered a fruitful source for creating worldviews, and is therefore recognized as an important matrix of socio-cultural knowledge that is disseminated by organized groups, precisely because they share the same points of view and interpretations of the sacred. The manifestations of popular religiosity have thus come to be seen as objects of study by scientists and sociologists of religion, and the emotional aspects of belief have once again become a target of interest for researchers attracted by the aim of investigating subjective, localized aspects characterized by admitting the dimension of the sacred a priori in their analyses.

Pluralism

In order to address the issue of pluralism, it is important to first distinguish between "religious pluralism" and "religious plurality". The term "religious pluralism" has a normative character - denoting an ideal status of society, in which "religious plurality" - admitted in the sense of diversity of religious denominations - can not only be recognized and considered acceptable, but also desirable for the vitality of the religious field. In this sense, the idea of pluralism presupposes plurality, but plurality does not necessarily presuppose the existence of pluralism.

The contemporary subject claims the right to exercise religious freedom in the face of a plural religious field and to choose between one or more different religious expressions, according to their existential needs (COUTINHO; SANCHES, 2021). They can choose to present a confession of faith related to a well-established religious tradition, such as the great classical monotheistic religions, they can choose to follow a foreign and/or exotic religion - different from the one commonly followed by their community, made up of members of their locality, they can choose to rescue forms of ancestral religions - related to native peoples, they can choose to promote their own bricolage, selecting certain myths, rites and dogmatic explanations that suit them best from each one and thus promoting a particular arrangement of beliefs and belonging, they can choose to move from one religion to another, or they can choose not to be linked to any religion at all.

As soon as the modern individual is faced with a rich profusion of religious alternatives at their disposal and enjoys the freedom to choose between them, as provided by the pluralist principle, their demand for relativization is awakened. According to Berger and Zijderveld (2012),

[...] relativization is the process in which the absolute status of something is weakened or, in the extreme case, destroyed. Although the evidence of our senses is accompanied by a claim to absoluteness that is very difficult to relativize, there is a whole world of definitions of reality that are not based on an immediate sense of confirmation - the world of beliefs and values (p. 24, our translation).

In a later reflection, the author stated that, "Pluralism has the effect of relativizing worldviews, bringing to mind the fact that the world can be understood in different ways" (BERGER, 2017b, p. 68, our translation).

From the moment that individuals assumed certain social rights and duties with modernity, such as the right to freely express their confession of faith and the duty to respect

the condition of the Other to exercise the same right to express their religion, without any constraints or impediments, the religious field experienced a significant transformation, which allowed plurality to become evident and the pluralist principle to be considered as an alternative for conciliation and a guarantee of peaceful coexistence.

Pluralism allows the following conditions to occur: plurality, syncretism, religious transit, multiple religious belonging and non-religious belonging. These phenomena corroborate the confirmation of major transformations in the religious and socio-cultural fields. Its initiatives involve welcoming minorities, silenced and dissonant voices, expressions of invisible religiosities, mythical narratives and marginalized ritual practices, as it values an ecumenical, inclusive and conciliation-promoting perspective through the promotion of inter-religious dialogue.

Peter Berger (2017a) points out that pluralism finds a place in the mentality of individuals, who can defend it and still keep intact their belief in the truths postulated by their religious affiliation. The author therefore believes that it is possible to commit to defending religious freedom as a way of guaranteeing pluralism and still cultivate a personal belief.

In his theoretical reflections, Berger demonstrated the character of resistance that is foreshadowed in the face of pluralism, given the difficulty of placing different truths in the same arena of interaction. In this way, he admits that pluralism generates a condition of uncertainty, given that relativism does not establish reliable truths - which is why absolutisms are once again triggered. The emotional discourses of truth linked to fundamentalisms exert great fascination among those who allow themselves to be affected by them, which is why they are multiplying.

In order to observe the rise of religious pluralism, it is essential to implement public policies aimed at this end. It is up to the state not only to recognize the legitimacy of the existence of religious diversity, but also to promote practical alternatives for confronting the harmful effects linked to the intensification of fundamentalisms, which are emerging and spreading rapidly and radically, threatening the plural stability and religious freedom of the national religious field.

And it is argued here that it is up to sociologists to point out these contradictions and for scientists of religion to mediate these negotiations, associating them with a scientific perspective in tune with the assumptions of the decolonial and intercultural paradigm, interested in giving visibility and legitimacy to marginalized socio-cultural groups, including those of a religious nature. It is important for the scientist of religion to take a stand in the sense of "[...] combating racism, sexism and homophobia and criticizing the capitalist system as a producer

of social inequalities, violence and poverty" (RIBEIRO, 2017, p. 245, our translation), which requires a political commitment to the development of an emancipatory praxis, like the first ecumenical intellectuals, linked to Liberation Theology, who were responsible for organizing and institutionalizing courses in the sciences of religion in Brazil, as will be discussed in more detail throughout the text.

The fundamentalism

Fundamentalisms develop against the backdrop of religious pluralism, which in turn calls for reflection on human rights, religious freedom, secularism, democracy, tolerance and, especially nowadays, the adoption of critical thinking based on the assumptions of the decolonial and intercultural paradigm.

Fundamentalisms arise in response to the spread of modern values (ARMSTRONG, 2009; BERGER, 1997; 2004; 2012; 2017a; CARRANZA, 2009; COUTINHO; SANCHES, 2021). Amid the plurality and malleability of confessions of belonging, groups emerge whose intransigent positions are characterized by an explicit refusal of religious alterities, they criticize relativization and are guided by the arbitrary affirmation of supposed truths considered incontestable and whose origin they defend comes from the revealed sacred, restricted to a chosen few, belonging to the denomination in question. These ideological-religious groupings are completely unwilling to engage in inter-religious dialog and the possibility of consensus. For them, the Other is seen as heretical, demonic, threatening, impure, whose belief is illegitimate and corruptive and must therefore be fought through a spiritual battle.

According to Brenda Carranza (2009), "Evoking the phenomenon is synonymous with equating fanaticism, radicalism, terrorism and holy war, although each term represents different complex, historical and conceptual realities" (p. 149).

The religious fundamentalist groups that stand out in the current Brazilian context are the ultra-conservative neo-Pentecostal evangelicals who are gradually gaining ground in the public sphere and taking on an institutional character, representing a real danger to the support of a secular state. These groups often use arguments taken from the sacred scriptures in the way that best suits them, appealing to radical interpretations that are closer to the Old Testament than to the libertarian gospel of Jesus Christ. They are characterized by attacking other forms of religious manifestation, with which they do not agree. They interfere in politics and the Human Rights Commission, aspire to intervene in the intimate sexual orientation of their

faithful and of society as a whole, and frequently spread Fake News and make frivolous accusations, such as the false accusation of the implementation of a "gender ideology" in public schools. The non-acceptance of otherness, the abolition of respect, intolerant practices, the pretension to submit others to their wills and radical truths are devices that have gradually intensified. In this sense, "It is dualism that permeates the conception of life of the individual, the group, the fundamentalist movement, not accepting middle ground or other forms of morality and tradition" (CARRANZA, 2009, p. 150-151, our translation).

The current trend in the Brazilian religious field points to the strengthening of fundamentalism, the intensification of disputes over influence and the resulting intensification of religious intolerance, compromising freedom of belief.

Fundamentalists often postulate false truths, understood as post-truths, as well as presenting biased interpretations of sacred texts, which induce radicalism. The recipients of fundamentalist discourse often unreflectively assume the falsity of these messages, without challenge, and subsequently become the reproducers of these (un)truths, which are finding more and more space for propagation in today's Brazilian social terrain.

The power that these speeches claim lies in the repercussions they achieve. It is centered on the desire of those who believe these speeches to believe these lies or forced and reckless interpretations. The feeling that this false news and these radical speeches arouse in the believer can be pointed to as one of the main factors responsible for their dissemination. The sensationalism, the appeal to controversial themes, the application of a rhetoric of fear, the recurring impact of effect words, the habitual use of terms extracted from biblical passages, associated with the charisma of the leaders and content propagators on social media with their convincing eloquence, can be seen as a combination of key elements responsible for expanding the scope of action of these groups in society.

Fundamentalists therefore have in common the fact that they favor the emotion caused by the impact generated by the assimilation of charismatic, biased religious discourses with a strong ideological, ultra-conservative and sensationalist connotation. Believers, who receive these speeches, allow themselves to be affected much more by the sensitive aspects triggered by emotion than by the consensus of truth established in society.

According to Carranza (2009),

[...] religious fundamentalism is a univocal way of seeing and feeling the world based on a certain way of understanding the experience of the sacred, of theology, of religion. The fundamentalist view divides the world in two: sacred-profane, good-bad, right-wrong [...] (p. 149, our translation).

The anti-science discourse, of a negationist and obscurantist nature, questions the credibility of scientific knowledge, which is reduced to the personal opinions of fundamentalist charismatic leaders and their respective faithful.

Post-truth does not necessarily mean opting for lies, but rather that personal, subjective determinants related to religious belief carry greater weight than truths that have been accepted as such, for example as scientific knowledge. It consists of the relativization of truth, since it trivializes the demand for the objectivity of reason and lists feeling and belief as parameters for the construction of its definition of truth. This shows the predominance of emotion over reason. This is not necessarily a case of new events erupting; however, we can see an intensification of their scope of action, albeit under new configurations.

Post-truth is present in various social spheres, in politics, religion, education, advertising, the market etc., because it is committed to unleashing emotions which, although they are not necessarily capable of delegitimizing established consensuses, can weaken them because they present completely opposing points of view, thus arousing doubt.

Fundamentalists, in particular, have broadened their scope of action in the face of a globalized world, as they have developed strategies for disseminating their radical ideological perspectives. With the ease of communication made possible by the popularization of social networks, certain discourses have been able to find resonance in geographically distant places, allowing new interlocutors to be reached and co-opted.

Fundamentalists have no sympathy for discourses, stances and points of view that differ from their own. Relativism, balance and conciliation are not their aspirations. On the contrary, there is a radicalization, sometimes violent, of their positions in the public sphere.

In the extremist fundamentalist conception, otherness is seen as "[...] a serious threat to hard-won certainty; they must be converted, segregated or, in the extreme, expelled or 'liquidated'" (BERGER; ZIJDERVELD, 2012, p. 66, our translation). This perspective is responsible for driving their excesses in Brazilian society, which must be stopped.

The role of the scientist of religion in the face of pluralism and fundamentalism: a decolonial/intercultural perspective

Since John Locke's contributions to modern science, there has been speculation about the limits of freedom of expression, especially when this freedom refers to opening up space for hate speech, highlighting intolerant attitudes. Faced with this problem, the question arises: What degree of freedom of expression is tolerable in the face of the spread of intolerant speech? And what is the role of the scientist of religion as an intermediary in this negotiation process?

It is proposed here that a new strategy for containing religious intolerance, resulting from the actions of fundamentalist groups, should be carried out by scientists of religion, who, imbued with the prerogatives of the decolonial/intercultural paradigm, begin to commit themselves to an engaged praxis, aimed at mediating problems that arise from the religious field, such as the question of the intensification of religious intolerance, which arises as a result of the emergence and strengthening of fundamentalist discourses in common sense and in the public sphere.

From the perspective of interculturality, it is accepted that different religious cultures can be placed side by side and coexist peacefully, and that reason and emotion are equitably arranged in an arena of interpretation, with the aim of reaching a consensus between both predicates, so that heated tempers are appeased and harmonious coexistence in the religious field is facilitated.

While religious sentiment is taken as a legitimate object of study that can be examined, the recognition that its importance often overlaps with the rational dimension leads to the development of new analytical perspectives, which in turn demand new strategies of interpellation.

The epistemological turn in decolonial and intercultural studies on the religious phenomenon points to the incorporation of two analytical and practical strategies: 1) The consideration of the subject's religious experience, which involves taking the religious feeling triggered by contact with the sacred as the object of study. In other words, the sensitive subjectivity of the individual is considered as a socio-cultural, cognitive and epistemic instance that can be grasped. This, in turn, is based on the analytical interpretation of researchers about the subjective interpretation of religious actors. 2) The defense of religious freedom, the fight against intolerance and the promotion of inter-religious dialogue. This presupposes a practical engagement in the problems of the religious field, resulting in a commitment on the part of the scientist of religion, who places himself as a mediator of debates and conciliator of clashes.

Final considerations

The Brazilian socio-political, economic, cultural and epistemic scenario has undergone significant and intense transformations in recent years. An obscurantist era of post-truth is underway, in which personal beliefs and those relating to small groups are affirmed as irrefutable despite facts and knowledge that are socially established as truthful. Post-truth confronts science and serious journalism, which uses previously verified news to postulate its own truths. There is a trivialization of lies and radicalisms that lead to a relativization of the truth.

It was discussed that when Fake News, negationist and based on post-truths, is propagated by religious discourses of a fundamentalist nature, pluralism and the secularity of the state run a serious risk of being ostracized.

It is argued here that as long as the scientist of religion is not committed to the problems that are evident in the Brazilian religious field, such as the strengthening of fundamentalisms, the advance of religious intolerance and the threat to pluralism and the secularity of the state, in order to promote inter-religious dialogue and foster tolerance, while confronting negationism and post-truths, with the aim of defending pluralism and ecumenical conciliation, the Brazilian religious field and the science of religion itself will be in serious danger.

Modernity has enabled the emergence of religious plurality and has emphasized subjectivity and religious sentiment related to the subject's interpretation of the sacred. It is therefore up to the sciences of religion to deal with the nuances of analyzing this complexity. To this end, it is necessary to conceive of a theoretical-methodological broadening of the discipline, in order to include new loci and objects of scientific investigation and to promote an updating of the ways in which reality is understood. In this way, subjectivities linked to religious belief are not only recognized but also valued as useful sources for building knowledge. Thus, it is important to challenge plurality and the rise of fundamentalism with a view to fostering a pluralist perspective, guaranteeing the right to religious freedom. However, if this freedom puts the freedom of the Other at risk, these limits must be questioned.

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