

II. HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

THE DANISH EXPERIENCE, FROM THE LAST THIRD OF THE 19TH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT: CULTURAL STRUGGLE AND CONSERVATISM

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ABSTRACT. In the last three decades of the 19th Century, Denmark experienced a mayor cultural struggle, a spiritual fight, which has profoundly influenced the way of thinking and the situation for the Christian Faith until the present. In this struggle, Christianity and Conservatism expressed themselves on one side, Atheism, Materialism and Individualism on the other. One of the signs was an intense debate about the relationship between faith and knowledge. In this case the Protestant Bishop Martensen presented a very interesting answer to Atheist claims. Another was the demand, from the Radical side, for "schools without confession", that is without any connection with Christianity at all. Finally, there was the question, if upbringing and education should take place in absolute freedom. In the old Orthodox countries, young people as well as parents, schools and the Church will face many of the same problems and questions. All of this asks the question, how can the Church handle a general cultural conflict?

Keywords: Christianity, Denmark, Conservatism, Knowledge, School, Upbringing.

Introduction

Denmark has not experienced the physical and spiritual repression of Communism as Romania has. It has, however, gone through experiences which might be relevant to present day Europe in general. The Culture of every country has various layers; some are easily found, some lay more in quietness. Moreover, the past is always the background of the present. This is also the case with Denmark, and it is possible to find a deeper level beneath supermarkets and superficiality, materialism and ignorance of Christianity.

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Today, many Danes know very little about their own tradition. This is sadly enough most of all the case with the Christian part of it which has a long tradition though not an Orthodox one. There is an individualism, which came very much to the fore in the second half of the 19th Century which, strangely enough, turns against the idea of the free will of man. It proclaimed the free thinking, but it suppressed the free will, and that seems to me a contradiction. It wants to abolish every principle of authority, but it also denied people any real choice. It was deterministic because of its Naturalism, but it also led to the sort of thinking, where everything should be easy and comfortable. Determinism is the way of thinking which contends that man only acts from necessity, not by free choice. There is in Denmark as in the Western world generally an anti-Christian direction in the culture, ever since what is termed the Enlightenment,¹ but it became dominant culturally after 1870. Having a state-supported Church did not prevent that. An attitude has established itself that makes the new, the "latest thing", always better than what is old.²

Denmark had, at that time, a very homogenous population. Only 1, 1/3% declared themselves outside the Peoples Church ("Folkekirken") in 1901. Out of a population of 2.450.000, 106 were Orthodox. Those, who claimed not to belong to any body of faith, grew in number, but were also quite a small part of the population (3628); most were men living in the capital.³ The University of Copenhagen was at the time the only one in the Country. Radicalism, Atheism, Positivism became very prominent in Copenhagen in the years before 1900, and knowledge and the University became an intellectual battlefield. The Academic world dissociated itself more and more from the Christian faith.⁴

Denmark experienced in the last third of the 19th Century a major clash of opposing principles. It was both a cultural and a spiritual conflict, and the result

¹ On this large topic in the West generally, see the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2007), and the American historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004). In a more specific way: Christian Gottlieb, *Dilemmas of Reaction in Leninist Russia: the Christian Response to the Revolution in the Works of N.A. Berdyayev 1917-1924* (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2003).

² Effects of the result of the Cultural Struggle have been described by Henrik Jensen, *Offrets Århundrede* (Copenhagen: People's Press, 2007) and *Det ordentlige Menneske* (København: Kristeligt Dagblads Forlag, 2009); by Torben Bramming, *Opgør med den moderne Myte* (Copenhagen: Kristeligt Dagblads Forlag, 2012); and recently the book Johan Christian Nord, and Kristoffer Garne, eds., *Efter Georg* (Copenhagen: Munch & Lorenzen, 2015). Generally, they do not address the Cultural Struggle itself as a topic.

³ J.P. Trap, *Kongeriget Danmark*, ed. H. Weitemeyer (Copenhagen, 1906), I: 35, 50ff.

⁴ This is a general phenomenon. William F. Buckley, *God and Man at Yale* (Washington: Regenergy Publishing, 1951/2002) provides a very good description of an example. Buckley criticizes the talk about democratic values and cultural heritage without mention of Christianity as central in this heritage. The chapter "The Superstitions of 'Academic Freedom'" is most relevant to the text by Helms below.

was that the bias I have mentioned became paramount. It was the age of the King Christian IX (1863-1906), a period marked by substantial changes in the country in military, political, economic, and cultural matters, beginning with the defeat in the war against Prussia and Austria in 1864. The struggle is an important one for the cultural history of Denmark, which includes the issue, if the culture of the country should bear the stamp of Christianity or of atheism. It was a conflict between ideas, between completely different attitudes to religion. The negative attitude to the Christian faith was the one that won out and has become still more dominant since. It is generally labeled "Radical" in Denmark, or by those who profess it "Modern". This could possibly be rendered as "Liberal" in English. But who were the people who fought against this trend? They are little known in Denmark today. They opposed the ideological movement, which called itself "the Modern Breakthrough". It is important to realize that this was in itself a self-aggrandizing expression, intended to propagate a particular view of life and human beings. The intention succeeded. Practically every history book which treats Denmark in the period from 1870 through 1970 is dominated by this view. This is especially the case where spiritual matters are concerned. They were Naturalists, denying that there was anything outside the visible world, including tacitly or directly, the existence of God, and they wanted to regulate everything according to a strictly secular form of reason. The most prominent figure in this line was Georg Brandes, a critic who promoted the attitude in lectures in 1871. He described the "modern" as an attitude which takes its "position within the totality of Nature and not in the dogmatically supernatural". It is important to be aware that this definition is directed clearly against Christianity, and that it also implies that Naturalism, unlike Christianity, is not based on dogma, which in my opinion is clearly wrong. This is written in a public text. In a private letter, he wrote: "I hate Christianity to the marrow in my bones." That is a very violent expression, and it is an example of the strong emotional character of many expressions by the Radicals when talking about opponents and any other way of thinking than their own, and about Christianity in particular. This phenomenon was also frequent in public texts. This emotional treatment of adversaries, this active aversion, or to use Brandes' own expression: this hatred, is curious, as those who promoted Naturalism stressed the intellectual character, the rationality, the objectivity of their position. There is a contradiction here, which it is very important to study and to try to explain.⁵ The emotional character of the Radical way of fighting, and the strong bias against traditional culture, most of all Christianity, points to the subjective background for the way in which Method was used. The Naturalists did not see that they were not at all as objective, as they claimed to be.

⁵ Jon A.P. Gissel, *Konservatisme og Kulturkamp* (Copenhagen: Munch & Lorenzen, 2014), 60, 64.

Another representative of Atheism was the Classical Philologist J.L. Heiberg who lived around 1900 and wrote about Byzantium. But, as he did not like Christianity at all, there is a tendency to distortion of his topic. Harald Høffding, a Philosopher and Historian of Philosophy, was very concerned with what he called the Law of Causes. By this he meant that circumstances, like inheritance, determined the actions of a person, and in general, what happened. There is a strong deterministic line in the way of thinking of the Positivists, Naturalists and Radicals. This is clearly linked to their striving for certain, that is, positive, knowledge. Analysis was for them to ascertain how causes made only one result possible. There was a general wave of Naturalistic and Radical claims in Europa, especially Western Europe, at the time.

Conservatism at the time might be theological, cultural and political, and the adherents did not necessarily support each other, though in many cases they fought against the same enemies. My own research has mainly been in the field of cultural Conservatism; it has been about those, whom one never hears about in the normal historical accounts and in the media; about the forgotten people, the losing side, about those who did not have posterity on their side, but who also represented a valuable alternative; they have a number of good points, something which is worth listening to. The Radicals are those who have received attention in posterity, the Conservatives have not. So I see what I do as an act of justice.

In Denmark, Romanticism is especially important, as seen in the "Golden Age" of Danish poetry and art in the first half of the 19th Century. Then, Romanticism also gave a strong impulse to historical interest and historical studies. So when the Radicals attacked the continued importance of Romanticism, they harmed the link with the Classical period of Danish culture, whereas the Conservatives, while not accepting Romanticism unconditionally, tried to avoid a break with this important past. The result of the Radical victory in this cultural conflict was a mayor breach in the national tradition of Denmark. In the Golden Age, it was generally accepted in cultural circles that man has a free will. But later in the century, naturalistic philosophical assumptions prevailed and with them the attitude that both nature and culture are governed by laws without exception, that there is a "law of causes".⁶ This made rejection of the idea of the Freedom of the Will the only philosophical way of thinking, in this view. Moreover, this rejection was often combined with attacks on the theologians, and Bishop Martensen argues strongly and diversely for the importance of this ability to make choices in human life. For him, the man after being born, grows, develops continually, as a result of the choices he makes during his life.

⁶ This was the expression of the philosopher Harald Høffding. Jon A.P. Gissel, *Konservatisme og Kulturkamp*, Copenhagen: Munch & Lorenzen, 2014, 292.

Two well-known figures from Denmark in the 19th Century are Søren Kierkegaard and N.F.S. Grundtvig. They are present in the background of my topic. Hans Andersen wrote in 1857 a novel called "To be or not to Be", which is critical of the Rationalism and Atheism of his day, so he can be said to have taken up topics which would later be central in the Cultural Struggle. The bishop Hans Lassen Martensen (1808-84), bishop of Sjælland (Zeeland), was an important figure in the 19th Century, a great academic apart from being a bishop, and a master of synthesis, but he is today less known than Grundtvig and Kierkegaard.⁷ These latter two have in posterity been seen largely without the Christian content, which their writings contained. Grundtvig has been made a symbol of community and popular power, Kierkegaard a symbol of individualism. In that way, they have been incorporated into the atmosphere of very restricted Christianity.

Not everybody supported the domination of intellectualism and individualism. Those who opposed this, are called the Conservatives: they were Christians or at least built on the cultural foundation of Christianity.

The Freedom of the Will

This Conservative way of thinking was represented by the bishop Martensen, who was concerned with the Church and the congregation, the country and the culture as something which fits together, is intertwined. It will be fruitful, I think, to take a closer look at Martensen's important work *Christian Ethics* from the 1870's, in which he opposed the secular movement on important points.⁸ He defended the idea of the free will of man. He was explicitly aware of the importance of a person's circumstances, including the family one grows up within, but he also stressed that these surroundings can only bring an inclination towards a particular way of acting, it cannot force you to act in a certain way. So there is real choice. It is an interesting feature of the situation that the Lutheran theologians at the time defended Free Will, as it is an attitude not normally connected with Lutheranism. This may be worth noting in an Orthodox context. The idea of spiritual growth in man, also a main theme for the Conservatives, is part of the same way of thinking. Martensen explains the freedom of the human will by saying that it can actualize its character within conditions which God has made. Only God has unconditional freedom. Man is dependent on God and on Nature, and what he has been given as an individual, can be formed by the will, but not become something different. God has given man a relative freedom, a freedom of choice. Therefore man acts with will and purpose, therefore he has responsibility, and therefore human sin is counted as

⁷ About Martensen is available in English: Jon Stewart, ed., *Hans Lassen Martensen. Theologian, Philosopher and Social Critic* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2012). The book contains articles by various authors; the important topic of the Freedom of the Will is not prominent, however.

⁸ H.L. Martensen, *Den christelige Ethik I-III* (Copenhagen, 1871-1878).

guilt. Man is intended to become attached to God in his development, and man forms his character through his actions. Man adopts the possibilities for movement or calmness, for action or not acting. Man can act according to the impulses or urges of love or of egoism. Martensen proceeds by saying that determinism only looks at the conditioned in human freedom and contends that this freedom is only a hidden necessity. He argues that man is a part of the family, but also that he is something in himself, that he can adopt or reject the redemption which is offered to by the Gospel of Christ. This is a main point with Martensen: that the will is no passive entity. Human character is determined by the whole continuum of the person's actions, it has formability (the Danish word is "Dannelighed"). There are a variety of possibilities in it. Bishop Martensen says explicitly that in the way of thought of his own time the power of "circumstances" and "situation" has succeeded the belief of Antiquity in the power of the stars over human actions: Determinism is the same, the words are different. But in Martensen's own way of thinking the freedom of choice makes man have a history. In history something undefined is to be defined. There are possibilities, but determinism fails to appreciate the category of possibilities. Finally, Martensen argues against the idea, which became fashionable at that time, that statistics would show freedom of the will as illusory.⁹

Knowledge

The Cultural Struggle was very much a struggle about knowledge and about the University, as already mentioned. The enormous progress of Technology in all Europe at the time, made a particular form of science seem unconquerable. The British author and Historian of Ideas C.S. Lewis wrote that the development of machines from the middle of the 19th Century more than anything else made this the greatest break in world history; that the psychological effect of this was that everything new seemed better than what came before it.¹⁰ In short the idea of change as a value in itself came up. The Positivists, who were the Liberals or Radicals, argued that only certain knowledge was worth considering as knowledge. This ideal of knowledge is linked to Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. To deal with the material world and with what is measurable quantitatively, makes it easier to claim positive knowledge. By making this an ideal, the formulation of laws was made the most important issue. To achieve that kind of certainty, the positivists became very focused on Method: Method turned out to be for them the essence of scholarship. The Conservatives were more inclined to consider a kind

⁹ H.L. Martensen, *Den christelige Ethik*, vol. I (Copenhagen, 1871) (edition 1884), 141-168. Pp. 155f. about the formability of human character. The *Christian Ethics* was translated into Russian (1890), but to my knowledge not into Romanian, see the book edited by Stewart, p. 330.

¹⁰ C.S. Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum", in *Selected Literary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 1-14, on pp. 10f.

of knowledge in which probability was important. From the Conservative side the question was asked: What is knowledge, what are the limits of knowledge? In Denmark, the debate about the relationship between faith and knowledge was quite lively in the 1860's, but with the advance of Radicalism in the 1870's, it changed character.

The Bishop Martensen directly addressed the question of the relationship between faith and knowledge in his great work about *Christian Ethics* from the 1870's.¹¹ He points out that those who support a culture based on human thought alone, the humanists, have insisted that scholarship, all university activities, should be independent of faith. They insist that Theology for that reason is not truly academic, as it generate its results from the faith, and because Theology itself is perception, only a knowledge concerning belief. Martensen argues against the Humanist-naturalist point of view by saying that it is an illusion to think that any human knowledge exists without faith. Faith and knowledge accompany each other. The person who does not want to believe in God and in His Revelation, will have to believe in the World, in Reason, in Nature. From one position or from the other, people develop their knowledge from their own premises. It is wrong to say that faith stands on one side and knowledge without presuppositions on the other. There is, however, a twofold opposition, there are four parties acting, two on each side. One faith and its aligned form of knowledge stand as one party, and another kind of faith and its aligned kind of knowledge stand as another party. Martensen goes on to say that the reason for all human knowledge being carried by faith is that we are created. It belongs to the limitations of everything human, and we cannot as the Creator Himself produce our knowledge out of ourselves, but must take support from something given. All scholarship and science is based on certain foundational presuppositions, the truth of which cannot be demonstrated, but only be grasped directly. This is precisely faith, whether it is of a religious, a moral, or a scholarly or scientific character. Certainty, especially about the religious truth, is conditioned by the personal relation of a human being with the same truth, by the will of the person, and the matter cannot be described in terms of concepts and theory alone.

By treating the issue this way, Martensen rejects all kinds of absolutism of knowledge, something which became more and more prominent in the age he lived in and dealt with. He characterizes the opposite position by saying that Naturalism rests in articles of faith which it cannot prove. This absolutism of knowledge has continued till this day and is not least used when confronting Christianity. On the other hand it has today become more common to acknowledge the importance of presuppositions to research; and this is an indirect admission that Martensen was right.

¹¹ H.L. Martensen, *Den christelige Ethik* III, (Copenhagen, 1878), 334f. See about this Gissel, *Konservatisme og Kulturkamp*, 240f.

This is very important, and to give Postmodernism its due, it has questioned the presuppositions of Positivism.

Martensen is an example of the interesting argumentation, the seriousness on the side which lost, and I think that it is important to unearth these arguments today, when the modern culture in many respects has reached its outer limits.

The history of Danish historiography is a part of this general cultural and spiritual collision. Later work on the period has almost without exception made the Radicals, mainly the historians Kristian Erslev and Erik Arup, the central figures and the models in their discipline. The Conservative historian Johannes Steenstrup (1844-1935) argued that within the field of History, certain knowledge was not possible, but that one could reach a high degree of probability.¹² Steenstrup reacted against the growing domination of Method, of Source-criticism, in his time, represented by his colleague as an historian, Kr. Erslev, who was a Positivist and a Radical, taking the Natural Sciences as a model for historical scholarship.¹³ In a famous debate in 1891,¹⁴ they argued against each other: Erslev that Source-criticism should be the starting point of all work in History, Steenstrup for work on a broader spiritual basis. The following generation became adherents of Erslev, and Steenstrup's point of view was practically forgotten. Being an historian myself, I have seen the consequences within my own discipline: a criticism rigidly opposed to the traditional history and ending by dissolving everything. The matter is complicated: Modernity has two faces: both a belief in objectivity in science and scholarship, and a strong subjectivism which gradually gains control and results in Postmodernism.

Danish academic culture overall, and in the individual disciplines, developed as a result of the Radical attack into a retreat from contact with religion, a fear of not being scholarly, not being "realistic", if not seeking material explanations. This again led to a suspicion against older historiography, more influenced by Christianity, and against Saints Lives as historical sources. The Conservatives wanted to work on the basis of a Christian attitude to life and a Romantic and Idealistic outlook. So while the Radical historians wanted to demolish tradition, regarding it as only an older stage in the development of culture, Johannes Steenstrup saw the purifying of tradition as the aim of historical work. He defended directly Saints Lives as

¹² Johannes Steenstrup, *Historieskrivningen* (Copenhagen: Hagerups, 1915), 182-187.

¹³ Kr. Erslev, *Historisk Teknik* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1911).

¹⁴ The debat took place in the newspaper *Dagbladet* 23.3, 6.4. and 7.4 1891, and it has been edited in *Johannes Steenstrup. Historiografiske og historieteoretiske Skrifter*, ed. Jon A.P. Gissel (Haderslev: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til dansk Historie, 2006), 49-63. See Jon A.P. Gissel, "Åndskampen i historieforskningen i Danmark", *Scandinavian Evangelical e-Journal* 4 (2013): 1-53, <http://see-j.net/index.php/SEE-J/article/view/131/123>.

historical sources, claiming that they were not only literature, but also represented the life, the way of thinking of people in the Middle Ages.¹⁵

For Steenstrup, key concepts of his historical work are curiosity, imagination, ability of combination, psychological insights, rather than an exclusive emphasis on method, on criticism of the sources, as was the case in his Positivist counterpart Erslev. This attitude of Steenstrup's seems to me to presuppose the idea of the Freedom of the Will. The ability to enter the way of thinking of another person, another age, another nation is in his view basic for historical study. The mind, way of thinking and action are intertwined, and man has some influence on his own destiny, therefore the ability, the attempt to understand his choices is a prerequisite to the writing of history. This is a mindset, rather than a method, which allows historical scholarship to move, work and act in a room larger than that of source-criticism alone. Steenstrup insists quietly on the personal responsibility of the individual, and thus on an ethical dimension in historical writing. After understanding also some kind of a verdict, an evaluation is needed. Thus, it seems to me, in Steenstrup's way of thinking, Freedom of the Will is present in his conception of knowledge.

School and Faith

As far as the Christian Conservatism was concerned, education and cultural consciousness, the personal adaption of information, ("dannelse") had to be related to the faith. School and education were important in the context of the Cultural Struggle. For a long time schools were closely connected with the Church. In the last third of the 19th Century, the clergy still had a certain supervision of the schools. But from France came a wish to make schooling secular, both during the Revolution and after 1871, the Third Republic. The argument for this was equality. Christian debaters made the point that religion always contains special features and has historically conditioned appearances. Therefore one cannot make teaching of religion abstract. But it is possible to make a living teaching in Christianity which is organically related to the entire work of the whole school. There was in Denmark a discipline called "religion", which individuals and circles of people attached to the Church tried to strengthen.

Johannes Helms (1828-1895) was an important school-leader at the time. His school was a private one and it belonged to the so-called "learned" schools for boys, which placed special emphasis on the Classical Tradition in content, Greek and Latin language. Helms himself was a poet, and he wrote patriotic songs: he belonged to the National Liberals, the national academics of the generation before

¹⁵ The article "Åndskampen i historieforskningen i Danmark", *Scandinavian Evangelical e-Journal* 4 (2013): 1-53, <http://see-j.net/index.php/SEE-J/article/view/131/123>, also treats the question of Saints Lives.

the Radical attack. This conscientious school-leader wrote 1880 in a publication from his school, a so-called “program”, about the relationship of his school to the Christian faith. It became a brief and effective statement of the relationship of his own school to Christianity. Helms writes that this school was a Christian school, and that a number of classes in religion was insufficient, but no teacher and no discipline could oppose this basis. He admitted that reasons for falling from the faith¹⁶ might come by many ways, which the School could not control. He also had to admit that he could not guarantee that this negative influence might not come from the School itself, because all human work is done in weakness. As the leader he could make a mistake, and he could be blind, but he could give the topic all his attention, to prevent the problem from materializing or to prevent it from lasting. Helms did not want to make any test of the attitude of the teachers, because there were so few to choose between, and because he might open the door to hypocrisy if he did. He said that he was making this statement to preserve the confidence of the parents in the school at a time when a movement, coming from part of the literature of the moment and spreading to all of Society, intended to break down the religious life. He explained that a meeting in the country, where the movements of awakening within the Lutheran Church were strong, had addressed the subject of the relationship between the learned schools and the Church. Helms made the point that his school had a confession, and that Christianity was taught from the Lutheran Confession (*Confessio Augustana*), but that the Faith and practicalities of children of other recognized bodies of faith were respected. He addressed the subject of confidence in the teachers, saying that he would not demand that anybody should teach Christianity, but he did demand that no teacher of his School should try to demolish what the School builds, and no one who attacks Christianity in a dramatic way outside the School can be a teacher there. The School must be a unity. It wouldn't do for every teacher to drag the pupils in his own direction. Helms also said that the teachers and the School should not always talk about Christianity and the Word of God, as this might have the opposite effect of what is wished.

The program by Helms is a remarkable document. The fact that he found it necessary to make this declaration at this early point, in 1880, proves in itself how powerful was the ideological movement which wanted a break between Church and School. The connection could no longer be taken for granted. The statement contains the important Conservative theme of the relationship between the individual and the larger context; in this case the teacher and a concrete school as an institution. Helms as a person respects the attitude of another person, but the School cannot contain everything within its walls. Helms expresses, like Martensen, a reticence regarding preaching Christianity on an everyday basis. This attitude might contain the risk that the Christian Faith gradually drops out of sight.

¹⁶ “Forargelsen” in Danish; the equivalent of “skandalon” in Greek.

Helms was the leader of his school, but he was obviously in a difficult position, maneuvering between the teachers and the parents. His program attracted a good deal of attention, and as a result of it three of his teachers left the school. This is surprising given the moderate character of his remarks, in form and in content, and proves as to how strong the movement against traditional Christianity had become already in 1880.

Upbringing and the novel “Freedom”

“Freedom” was a very popular word at the time, as it is today. But what is freedom, and is it always unproblematic? The author K.G. Brøndsted was a schoolteacher and a defender of the traditional Denmark. The Church, and that means in Denmark the Lutheran Church, was for him personally combined with some sympathy with the Roman-Catholic Church. It is a Denmark, where the Monarchy is indispensable, and in which also the Aristocracy has a stabilizing role to play actively continuing certain virtues and values. It is a culture, in which the Family is the basis and marriage is its kernel. The home is a place which unites spiritual life in its practical form. Brøndsted also used the home as a metaphor for eternal life, the life at home with God. In all these respects, Brøndsted is at the center of a conservative paradigm. In 1893 he published the novel “Frihed” (Freedom), which he called ‘A Tale of the Present’. What makes the book a tale of his own time is the question of upbringing, of education and individual freedom. The father of the protagonist Tymme is a priest in the Danish Lutheran Church, who gets under influence of ideas from the followers of Grundtvig. Those are ideas that parents, the grown-ups should let nature take care of itself, and then it will prosper. So the idea is: as little child guiding as possible. No pressure, says the priest, willing hands make light work. We have met these ideas in recent decades also. It is a theoretical thought of freedom, a kind of Utopia, combined with a certain weakness in the person, the priest, who is its spokesman. However, another person with a stronger will, a much more purposeful follower of these ideas, becomes very influential in the family. The book criticizes the idea of freedom in Grundtvig and his followers, but it also turns its critic against the Radical conception of freedom, which is directed distinctly against Christianity and all traditional values. The children of the priest meet this conception and the persons who carry it later in their lives and come to harm. The newspapers are a recurring feature, they are influential. The boy Tymme’s life becomes a mess, by his always having freedom, a lack of upbringing. He turns aimlessly, now in one direction, now in another. He is unable to concentrate on one piece of work, to learn something thoroughly. In the end he goes to America and becomes a Roman Catholic: he needs Church to take the responsibility from him. Until that point, a

vague upbringing without values made life sad and dark. Brøndsted is by no means a caricature of an authoritarian figure. His portrayal of his characters is differentiated and understanding.

Conclusion

I have been asked: What was the motor for this Cultural Struggle? With regard to the Radical side it was probably the wish for a purely worldly view of life, making the intellect, the individual and aesthetics the main factors. If an attitude to life and human beings is rooted in the Christian Faith, there may very well be an intellectual, a personal and an aesthetic perspective in it, but they belong to a larger contexts, they do not dominate in themselves. They are kept in their place by the Christian Faith. With regard to the Conservative side there was a wish to maintain the Free Will and human responsibility as central in the meaning of life. Christianity should continue to be the foundation of the culture of the country. It was right that there should be a National feeling without exaggeration. Also, the Classical (Greek-Roman) tradition should continue to play its part. They did not want a break with the past, but a quiet development. They wanted a firm upbringing of children, without exaggerations. The love for home, family, and Fatherland was of high importance to them. However, I must also ask: What does „motor” refer to? Is the metaphor the same as the driving force? If the metaphor gives the impression of a purely mechanical movement without personal influence and responsibility, I would say that it points in the wrong direction.

With regard to the situation in the present, in my opinion, the Church will have to be an active voice in the debate, and the Church must itself discuss the subject of the relationship between faith and knowledge. It seems to me that it is important to make known to young people that it is a good thing to study something in depth and in quiet. It is important that young people learn how to evaluate fashionable tendencies in an independent way. It is also important to show that an alternative, to both Modernity and Postmodernism, is possible. The comparison with my Danish topic shows that it is important to be able to call attention to parts of the culture which have been forgotten. There is a fight against lack of remembering and lack of knowledge, which is also relevant to the Christian Orthodox Tradition. Moreover, it is important that young people learn how to distinguish between Faith and superstition, as opponents of Christianity will try to obscure this distinction, as they have tried in Denmark. Young people in Romania are likely to face many of the same challenges, which appeared at the time in Denmark. On the other hand, the background is different. In the West Orthodoxy is generally new, and there has for a long time been a Pluralism with a strong bias away from the Christian faith. In Romania and other countries in Eastern Europe there are

both a long Orthodox tradition and the cruel experience of communist tyranny, including physical repression of the Christian Faith and Christian people. These diverse backgrounds will have to be included in the education of the youth. On the other hand, in both regions young believers will need strength to resist the pressure to join Materialism. Whether it is about excessive use of alcohol or materialism in a more spiritual sense, the rejection of the idea that man is more than a physical being. There is a fight between spirits, and it is difficult to avoid sliding away from the Faith and the Church.

If one wants to fight the antichristian bias, which has often been fanatical, it won't do becoming fanatical oneself. The classical Conservatives I have described briefly here, were not fanatics. It is important that its is documented historically that the radical bias is by no means the result of any "law"; but that other possibilities existed. This is an insight that young people should have access to. But it is also important that arguments are brought forward seriously as well as balanced and practically in the present about topics like the freedom of the will, knowledge, Church and School and upbringing. In such a debate both firmness and humility are needed.

Something that the Orthodox Church can, as I see it, gain from the Danish Experience, is that if the Faith disappears, the cultural foundation will also erode. Somehow, the topic of Authority will have to be addressed. In Denmark today this topic is difficult, because authority as such has been given a negative sound two times (in the last decades of the 19th Century and in the 1960's). Ironically, those who insurrected against authority, became authorities themselves.¹⁷ This might well be the case in Romania also. How can the Orthodox Church explain a Principle of Authority? How can she show young people that a certain lead of direction is necessary? In a school as in the Church, in short in any institution there will have to be a unity of one sort or the other, as is demonstrated by Helm's paper.¹⁸ Often young people will ask for guidance, but still it is a difficult topic today, because authority, both of the parents and of the Church can be portrayed as colliding with the freedom which is so valued today, and, indeed, given the terror experienced under Communism, rightly so. The novel by Brøndsted emphasizes the importance of the question: nobody can grow up in complete freedom. This lesson has been repeated in Denmark in the wake of the 1960's: those who experienced that their parents wanted to be "friends" with them, without any authority, got extremely tired of it. There are voices in Denmark today, saying that the Liberal attitude to upbringing was a mistake.¹⁹ Then, how is it possible to explain to the young people why authority is necessary, and how to avoid the exaggerations, the negative side of authority?

¹⁷ E.g. the Radical historians like Kr. Erslev.

¹⁸ Cf. Buckley, *God and Man at Yale*, 211.

¹⁹ One of them being the historian Henrik Jensen, already mentioned.

The Church must also consider how she wants to and does not want to use the media. In Denmark, Radicalism won the day, to a great extent by gaining influence in the newspapers.

Finally, it seems relevant to ask the question: how can the Church bring a patristic perspective into the debate about the education of the youth and about the attitude to Materialism and to cultural fragmentation? What inspirations can be gained from St. John Chrysostomus and St. Basil the Great? Such a perspective was missing among the Christians and Conservatives in the Cultural Battle I have been addressing here, but it seems much needed in the present situation. St. Basil talks about the use of pagan author, about humility, greed, against anger and against drinking. In his letters appears the Christian family life. All of these themes must be important to young people today; and it will also be valuable to call to their attention, that one of the great saints of the Church has faced these subjects.

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