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**CHRISTIANITY AND DESIRE:  
THE BIBLICAL CARGO**

**Rita Laura Segato**

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# Christianity and Desire: The Biblical Cargo

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## Mission as a hierarchical encounter<sup>1</sup>

When I first conceived this text, my intention was to write about the expansion of protestantism in Latin America through missionary work. However, as I worked, it turned to be a paper on affect and I found myself discussing how, either disembarking by the hands of missionaries in remote corners of Latin America or through television and life mega-shows in urban environments, the Bible finds its way as a token of exchange in an economy of desire. One perspective developed gradually into the other, shifting the issue from the topic of Christianity and its ethos, precepts and values in particular historical conditions, to its reality as a set of textual fragments of belief operating as ciphers or terms of exchange in a specific process of encounter and circulation - in fact, this displacement of emphasis, if fallacious at all, shares that quality with a myriad of writings "on religion" which never reach any farther than society.

This, so to say, ethnography of desire, traces it through a landscape traversed by the biblical text and the variations on its themes, where these textual fragments of belief condense particular libidinal investments originating in the structure of the encounter that takes place. This structure derives from the fact that the partners which make up the encounter are marked by alterity and hierarchy. They are positioned differently not only because they are ethnically diverse and endorse diverging sets of beliefs but also because they fit in a hierarchical matrix which comes to determine the flow of affect between them.

The following incident, though taken from a specific ethnographic source<sup>2</sup> can be said to be paradigmatic of the missionary encounter in post-colonial situations: the anthropologist brings the news, to a group of South American Indians with whom he has been working, of a recent arrival of evangelical preachers to a nearby village, and the question raised by his commentary is: "what vans they drive?".

Depicting here the background for this occurrence as post-colonial is neither the

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1. For the conception of this paper, I relied on knowledge obtained, initially, along a period of field-work on the expansion of protestantism in the Argentine Andes from January to April 1987 and, then, from a continuous participation since 1993 to the present in a Swedish project of research on various aspects of the Scandinavian Pentecostal missions in Bolivia. I am especially indebted to Pablo Wright and the inspiring group of colleagues who, during the meetings of the project in Uppsala and Cochabamba, stimulated me to think the missionary experience from an innovative angle: Jan-Ake Alvarsson, Xavier Albo, Anders Ruuth, Oscar Aguero, Christian Richette and Emil Erdtman. I also want to thank Jose Jorge de Carvalho for his careful reading and useful observations.

2. Pablo Wright' s personal communication from his fieldwork among the Toba Indians of the Argentine Chaco.

result of a fashionable agenda for writing papers nor the spurious extension of a scholarly elaborated attribute to work on the cultural actualities of ex-European colonies in Africa and Asia. Post-colonial missioning turned to be, here, an adequate way for characterizing Christian missions in a particular context. That is to say, in opposition to colonial missioning, of the times when a human contingent composed by administrators and colonists, on the one side, were accompanied, on the other, by a correlate, associate but, nevertheless, distinguishable group of missionaries, specialized in religious work. In those times, there was in force a division of labour between both parts of the colonial contingent and, to say it shortly, temporal and religious matters laid, at least formally but often also in practice, in diverse hands.

The missions to which I am referring here, then, differ from those in that their agents reach their clienteles bringing in one and the same parcel Bible and goods, Christian precepts and technology. In this contemporary, post-colonial setting, the biblical text lands in nearly unreachable enclaves in a package conspicuously composed of last generation vans, airplanes, radios and systems of communication, medical equipment and pharmacy. It would be difficult to make believe that the Christian text is not contaminated by the presence of this coterminous goods and that the cult so installed and maintained is not a cult of this parcel as a whole, to which one well could be made extensive the category of "cargo". In fact, this condition is not absent in the urban setting, where the Bible, every day more often, comes in the company of media machinery, more appealing to the urban, "modernized", public.

In his innovative book *Cargo cult. Strange Stories of Desire from Melanesia and Beyond* (1993), Lamont Lindstrom dares to read the cargo mentality in terms of a formation of affect and calls the attention towards the frequent recourse by authors to extend the idea of cargo-cult in order to shed light onto a variety of other realities. This goes as far as re-patriating cargo-cult, turning it visible at home.

"There is something about cargo cult, though. It evokes an emotional frisson, a faint thrill, an uneasy glee. Cargo cult keeps returning. I conclude by suggesting that we are motivated to use the term, and use it widely, because it palpates and animates our own diffuse but powerful discourses of desire and love, particularly the melancholy of unrequited love. The cargo cult is an allegory of desire. And desire itself, as an emotion, an interest, a future, another self, an unending problem, is desirable..." (Lindstrom 1993: 184)

To the extent that the anthropologist herself participates of the cargoistic structure: "We think we are staring deep into the dark eyes of the native but, in fact, we see reflected in those eyes mostly an image of our cargo-cultic self." (Ibidem). Lindstrom's chapter "Cargo Cults Everywhere" is a convincing argumentation, supported by Lacanian theory, in favor of the universality of cargo structure - a structure which the author makes practically coincide with the pattern of desire, emanating from the void at the core of human self. Thomas Merton's words in *Love and Living* come to his aid: "Man wants to go through the Cargo Cult experience and does so repeatedly. Not only the natives of New Guinea, The Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides, and South Africa, but the blacks, the young Chinese, the white Westerners -everyone - all of us find the Cargo experience, in whatever form, vitally important" (1979:86, apud Lindstrom: 196). Lindstrom adds: "Shopping malls,

television, Hollywood, and Walt Disney have made natives, and cargo cultists, of us all...nowadays, *both* Melanesia and America are the lands of the cargo cult. In Westernizing the native we have nativized ourselves" (Lindstrom op.cit.197). I would say: the logic of cargo reproduces itself not only outwardly but also inwardly, as the structure of hierarchical segmentation that organizes economies, of capital and affect, multiplies within.

For Lindstrom, the generic characteristics of this phenomenon are: 1) "the desire for wealth of some sort"; 2) "some sort of collective behavior [...] widespread, public involvement in irregular ritual and belief"; and, as the foremost defining feature of cargo, 3) "supernatural means [are invoked] to achieve collective ends", being them increased wealth, moral betterment or political sovereignty (p.185-6). But even when goods never show up nor ends are approached, the state of aspiration and expectancy is what really matters, the cargoist deep structure evidenced by the cult.

Despite these stated universal traits of cargo, I believe that Lindstrom's analysis leads us to perceive a more fundamental structure of cargo mentality whereby the expectant disposition within a hierarchical relationship metaphorized in a geographical distance become the crucial elements. There must be expectation for a bestowed upon wealth of some sort coming from a partner to whom alterity of some sort is ascribed, where alterity is defined within a hierarchical scale of prestige and the bestowing agent is perceived by the receiving partner as superior. Furthermore, once this structure is for some reason installed, it becomes possible that, whatever is handed down from the superiorly perceived partner turns to be, in the eyes of the receiving partner in the relationship, a "wealth of some sort". Value being at this point not anything of necessity inherent in the goods but emanating from relational positions in the hierarchical relationship. Value therefore revealing itself, at least at some stage, as a product of contamination in a chain of occurrences where status precedes goods and not the other way round.

Let us then take this inversion even further to say that, once such experience - which I, still inspired by Lindstrom's analysis, would depict as *jouissance* -, derived from an initial reception of goods through a hierarchical distance, is established and can be recognized and recalled as distinct, whatever comes to hint at the prospect of a re-enactment of such act of reception becomes a motive of avid expectation. More or less elaborated rituals come usually to signify this expectation and eagerness.

We may say, also, that an initial act of reception or mere witnessing of superiority, which is, often, at this foundational moment, technological superiority (even if no more than the technological superiority that makes possible to come in contact, to reach the other) installs, for the original recipients, in a cargo pattern, all at once, hierarchy and lack, as well as need, demand and desire. Once there, hierarchy and lack thus conceived, together with their behavioral outcomes, reproduce themselves endlessly. In so speaking, we have become patently close to Jean-Joseph Goux's (1990) intimate equation of libidinal and social hierarchical economies, where gender exchanges (in Lacanian, structural terms) may be put to read the circulation of value in other fields. And with Lindstrom, we are talking of Western goods, and by definition unrequitable love: "an allegory of love gone wrong" (p.198).

Going back to the natives, one finds them witnessing again and again the rerun of missionary disembarking from planes, jeeps or boats with their bundle of Bible and goods, where the Bible comes to stand for the goods but, at the root of their association, one is no longer fully discernible from the other. One wonders about the inner logic linking these

elements: Bible, goods, recipient and bestowers, about the role they play in one and only one libidinal economy. There comes to be, usually (but neither always nor for everyone) a cult of the Bible and a state of permanent expectation of its Good News, endorsed by the technological means that arrive together from a distant place. In some cases, usually when the missions have been in the area for a long time and are well established and run mostly by locals, goods cease to flow in substance, but they remain present in the no less effective mode of recollection of those beginnings. They remain in the knowledge natives have of their existence - somewhere else, in a remote but now forever connected country. Hierarchy, aspiration and the destiny of unrequited love becomes established.

### **Mission's Double Bind**

In the particular case of the Bible, unlike the Melanesian cult, this unhappy fate is not due to a cargo that never comes. It does, even if it does no more than by its token - its Book-coined-fetish. However, as in Melanesia, the long wait never resolves and expectation never appeases itself. Beyond the inherent incompleteness of all desire, contributes to intensify this turmoil the fact that the missionary proposition involves a maddening multiple double-bind or unacknowledged incongruity (cf. Bateson 1991) between two discourses: one on the transferability of moral superiority through faith, and the other on the non-transferability of technological power associated with it. On the one side, the adhesion, libidinal investment and hierarchical aspiration towards the Biblical God slides, metonymically, onto the preacher who brings His Word and, one step further, onto the average citizen of the missionary's society, loaded with goods . But, though God makes Himself fully available to the native demand, the overflowed citizen establishes a limit of how much he can give.

A contradiction is introduced between one term open to unlimited bestowal and a coterminous term which is not. And the double-bind reproduces itself at multiple levels: the stated equality of all human beings before God is contradicted by the sensed inequality of means, the proclaimed kindred quality of humans as God's children is denied by the prevailing absence of miscegenation between the missionary and the missioned contingents. And, finally, the related "irony", as pointed out by Patrick Gesch (1990) talking about the missionaries to Papua New Guinea, that they "should at the same time be representative of the Western technological outlook, the bringers of a spiritualized religion, and agents of secularization as well [...] The missionary wants to defend the scientific culture to which he belongs, at the same time as he fights the rearguard action of a battle between science and religion. The villagers are apparently already religiously impressed by so many technological things that come with the presence of the missionary and others" (p. 236)

These instances of double-bind enhance dissatisfaction and restless expectation, even when the main token of bestowal remains available. But, if the Bible is at all embraced (and this, as I said, not always occurs, nor by everyone), the aspiration goes of necessity beyond it, to another world, to the cradle of moral and material worth from where it has come. Moreover, if the experience of *jouissance* obtained in the instituting act of reception fails to be recovered over and over again, pain and grievance occur. Renewed

contact with the bestowing agency is requested; only in its presence life glows with full meaning now. But, as I have witnessed, the agency who has introduced the Bible may come to share the characteristics of the lover who withdraws his love, and the disappointment which ensues his indifference resembles very much the bitterness and disillusionment of the forsaken lover. We are talking of the alienation of self in the aspiration of meaning and value flowing from the outside.

Funnily enough, I find a family resemblance in the words of the wife of a Pentecostal pastor in Cochabamba, Bolivia, this year, while telling how she, as a child, and her family became members of the Swedish Church, and now she feels "abandoned" by the Swedish ("I loved the Swedish at the beginning because I could give them something...but as soon as they started to flourish as a mission [here in the sense of beneficent work] , they abandoned us as a church and abandoned the evangelizing process. They are not present among us, sharing with us as they used to be, anymore"). And the discourse of Gabriel Garcia Marquez in the act of receiving his Nobel Prize in 1982, when he spoke of Latin America as the "forgotten" continent. I wonder: forgotten by *whom*, by *whom* it needs to be remembered? This man, so enlightened, for *whom* he desires to exist? *Who* has the power of bestowing upon him full being?

Lamont Lindstrom equates the so positioned ethnic subject with a feminine subject<sup>3</sup>: "A weak self / female / native seeking desire / agency /cargo identifies (through sex or mimicry) with a powerful other / male / European and comes to a bad end within a wretched, fetishistic relationship" (p 200) and cargo cult with a "poetics of desire...emblematic of the alien native but also so characteristic of ourselves" (P.205)<sup>4</sup>

However, in this type of exchange, I will still argue, as frozen as it may seem, there is yet room for movement and reversal. Hope, utopia or, at least, escape may paradoxically lie on the fetishistic nature of the Bible. The Book captures and embodies the fetish quality of the commodities which endorsed its arrival. And, as this embodiment, it really circulates, it changes hands. The door is left - half?- open for it to become, at least in some cases, a vector of sound, radical, fulfilling dialogue.

## **The Book as Fetish**

The quality of fetish, as it is well known, can be approached from many angles. Starting from common sense use, where fetish does not differ much from "idol": an inanimate object invested or imbued with supernatural power, a divinity in matter, or shaped matter that shifts into divinity. In this sense, observing the behaviour of those peoples whom the Europeans have been calling "fetishist" since the Portuguese invented the word in the XVII century, it is possible to reach a simple conclusion: if it is true that the fetish, as the embodiment of a divinity, exerts its power upon folks and is felt as having

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3. Very telling when Roland Barthes affirms, under the figure of "Gradiva", in his *Fragments of a Lover's Discourse*, that "if a lover manages to 'love', it is precisely insofar as he feminizes himself" ( 1978:126).

4. Equating the position of the native subject with the site of the feminine may be also found in the work of other anthropologists, as for example Ramos 1995.

a superior agency onto them, it is also true that folks give evidence of enjoying reciprocal agency, as long as they manipulate it ritually to exact the benefits it can offer to them. In short: the fetish acts upon and is acted upon, in a circulatory, reversible operation.

The Bible, as a religious item circulating in the West, is a manufactured good, massively produced, which hides twice the conditions of its production: once by the fetishistic character of commodity itself that Marx taught us to perceive - in fact, it is industrially produced well in accordance with the capitalist order and its production of exchange value and extraction of surplus. And twice because, as it is often donated, ends by obscuring even more thoroughly these material roots. Also a quality of fetishes, it is often sought by collectors. And, though, in its peculiar case, as I said, is frequently not bought as an ordinary merchandise, nevertheless it is not its use-value the most relevant part of it as a circulating item. In other terms, in the demand for it on the part of its clientele, need does not weigh as much as does desire. Its presence is emblematic in every single room of every type of hotel and inn in the Western World and, probably, most of its ex-colonies.

In the missionary cargoist economy, this fetishist quality is redoubled, because it comes to mask other values added along its journey in this peculiar kind of hierarchical circulation, and the double-bind earlier described is subsumed and denied in its concrete circulating vault. It also becomes, as a fetish, the embodiment of the cargo as a whole, of which is not more than a part, diverting and channeling towards itself the libidinal investments diffusely directed towards the goods that share its journey. In other words, its numinous potency is recharged and magnetized by contact with the fetishistic field of the cargo where it belongs but which also masks. It arrests, snatches and obscurely swallows the evidence of cargo: not only the inequality that produced it in its origin as merchandises but also the inequality which supports it now, at the moment of encounter. It hides the whole genealogy of the cargo's economy - political and libidinal - in the various locations of the journey.

However, once it has snatched "the force" of the cargo, the possibility of reversal must not be ruled out. Not only because it becomes theoretically possible, but because I bear witness of it, as do some of my colleagues, who know deeply the rare cases of autochthonous appropriation of Christian symbols in the South American continent among peoples of the Chaco region like the Mataco and the Toba ( Wright 1988 and 1992; Alvarsson 1995; see, also, the classical studies by Miller, 1975 and 1979)

Looking back to theory, we can inquire into the conditions of possibility for this reversal. In his cross reading of Marx and Freud, Jean-Joseph Goux sees at the core of the idea of fetishism

"the question of how subjects alienate their social relations in the form of objects", "a reverse domination - the domination of subjects by universal symbolic products (which, however, are only the effects of relations, of exchange)", where "this universal symbolic product becomes an external mediator, a third party, an independent force, a 'veritable God'" (1990: 157). Then, he explores the nature of that God:

"the *void* that is filled and veiled by the economic fetish is the 'transcendental' element of interpersonal relations, of the exchange of vital activities. But this 'transcendental' aspect of exchange is precisely the location of surplus value, which is concerned not only with the political economy but with social *power* in general.

Surplus value is, in the economic domain, the theologico-political element that structures all social relations: surplus value, then, is theocratic" (Ib.: 158)

It is possible to recognize here, according to my previous analysis, the relationship between the Bible, as a fetish, with the surplus value inherent to "social power in general". The hierarchical alterity present in the missionary/missioned relationship, as a metaphor of imperial relationship in general, is the "transcendental" aspect of exchange, what is abstracted from this particular kind of unequal transactions and worshipped under the guise of a Book.

However, my analysis here departs from Goux's to consider the equal grip with which the fetish/Bible takes hold of members of both parties involved. In this sense, everyone is rendered equal by the fetish's spell and subjected by it, and the surplus - political and libidinal -inherent in the relationships that institute the fetish becomes obscured for all. This equalizing character depends, as it is obvious now, on a sudden, misty, forgetfulness about alterity and hierarchy in the relationship, at least during the practice of worship itself. Everyone, missioned and missionaries, during this lapse, are equally subjected and subjectified by the Bible as an embodiment of a transcendental, divine, agency. During this moment of forgetfulness, however fleeting it may be, hierarchy becomes obliterated and, from then on, the Bible becomes a locus of encounter and reciprocal commutability of positions. People obtain, thus, a glimpse into a world that contains its own subversion or, at least, where reversal is thinkable. The Bible works here as the axis of circulation.

In an earlier article, though in very different terms, I suggested that in this possibility of reversal may lie the clue to understand the motives and meanings of conversion to protestantism in a traditional stronghold of Andean popular Catholicism in Argentina. Open access to the Bible for everyone, as it was evident then, meant equal access to moral worth for everyone. The humble became the "elected", superseding the "scribes and pharisees" (Segato 1991). To possess the Bible meant, literally, a turn over in hierarchy. And in some corners of Latin American, we can witness the blond and caring original bearers of The Book assisting the cult and taking communion from Indian hands. This enacts reversal, however briefly<sup>5</sup>.

If we go further into the psychoanalytic understanding of this question, as it was laid down in Freud's analysis of 1927, we will see that it was there already noted that the whole matter of fetishism was about lack of definition, uncertainty about the phallic - or non phallic - nature of the foundational love-object, with the object-fetish emerging in this scene as the phallus-surrogate for its absence in the feminine primordial object of love. "The fetish is a substitute for the woman's (mother's) phallus which the little boy once believed in and does not wish to forego". (1966:215). But the most important element in Freud's text is ambiguity, of the kind closer to ubiquity: the invested object is and is not in a

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5. Reversal is also exemplified by cases in which people take over the Bible from its original insertion and turn it against oppression and exploitation, as we can read about Pentecostal trade unions in North Eastern Brazil in Novaes (1980 ). Or, for example, when one or more of its faithful present a shift in ideological sign and change political adhesion, as in the case of the branch of Cuban Baptists who decided to stay in the island after the Revolution, told by Fernandes (1981); or the living case of Pentecostal, left wing, Black, poor, female senator Benedita da Silva, in Brazil.



given position, can and cannot perform a role in the relationship. "This was exemplified in the case of a man whose fetish was a suspensory belt which can also be worn as bathing drawers; this piece of clothing covers the genitals and altogether conceals the difference between them. *The analysis showed that it could mean that a woman is castrated, or that she is not castrated, and even allows of a supposition that a man may be castrated*, for all these possibilities could be well hidden beneath the belt [...] Sometimes the double attitude shows itself in what the fetishist - either in actuality or in fantasy - does with the fetish. It is not the whole story to say that he worships it; very often he treats it in a way which is plainly equivalent to castrating it" (Ibidem: 219. My emphasis). And here, according to Freud, lies the essence of circulation: the subject before the fetish, now acting within the register of the feminine (worshipping it), now in the masculine key (castrating it). Subjectivity is constructed and reconstructed, oscillates, having as a pivot and operator of this movement, the fetish.

Tackling this same issue from another angle, we reach the same conclusion: if the boy believed in the mother's phallus, it is possible to say that those were pre-gendered (pre-oedipal) times, where the mother was not exactly a "woman" even in Freudian terms, but a potent partner endowed, at the eyes of the fetishist-to-be boy, with androgynous attributes, including the phallus, embodied either in flesh or in an accessory utensil - and the difference between these two becomes trivial if we consider their structural role in the relationship. So, the "s/he has it, s/he has not" oscillation of belief amounts also to "I don't have it, I have it", and the partners in the relationship shift positions according to the swinging of belief. Again, the pivot of the oscillation is the fetish. The fetish, as a fluctuating phallus, opens the way to emerge from the pre-oedipal stage preserving its completeness, but now as a license to circulate through the phallic - non phallic position, through the bestowing and the desiring. Some evangelical Indians make us realize that fetishes, while subjectifying us, save us from the fixity of subject positions or, in other words, that one thing is to become a subject - this meaning: to relate from a certain position to another - and something very different is to be fixed in a subjectivity defined by that position.

I believe this is also contained in the words of Emily Apter noting fetishism's implicit challenge to a stable phallic referent: "the imaginary phallus, venerated elsewhere, ultimately comes to occupy no fixed place at all" (Apter 1993:4). For this author, the liberating capacity of the fetish derives from the fact that "virtually any object [...] can become a candidate for fetishization once it is placed on the great metonymic chain of phallic substitutions". To that, I would add, as equally important, that the fetish, for been so disembodied, so detached from "any phallic *ur*-form", has the power to free, around itself, all positions from their historical-qua-biological anchors, launching partners into a circulatory movement where positions are commuted. The fetish is the guarantor of this freedom.

Summing up, the Bible, as that fetish magnetized by its contiguity with Western technological goods, and coming from the same hands of the phallic (superior, powerful) bearers of these goods is, though originary from this field, at the same time, detachable from it, and may (though not always does) follow its own autonomous trajectory, introducing the law of circulation. The Bible works, in the foundational moment, as the token of love within an unequal relationship, where the exaction of native's desire for goods results in - or feeds back - the missionary phallic subjectivation in the system. At the

same time, it also masks the hierarchical constitution of this matrix and the exactions thus implied. However, though it alienates partners from the truth of their constitution as particularly positioned unequal subjects, it is also capable to install, as byproduct of the same maneuver, a new truth. With the factibility of radical circulation, an instantaneous glance into utopia becomes possible.

## Epilogue

Christianity was seen, then, in the contemporary missionary situation, to play a part in a hierarchical relationship between two mutually involved partners, and to play a role that other objects, also flowing within that circuit, may also play. The Bible can be considered an emblematic token of this kind of exchanges but it may come to be substituted in that role. This occurs, for example, when a religious outlook is casted onto "development" and its related discourse, and then this becomes the token in the relationship. I realized that it is possible to shift from a literal to an allegorical understanding of the situation depicted, and, then, make it speak about similar structures in which the Bible has not necessarily a part (though it may have) but which imply the bestowal of heavily invested tokens between (commercial, academic, artistic) partners which derive their subjectivity from their mutual positions in that exchange, marked by hierarchy. One bestows the "goods" (understood here in a broad sense, because it could be knowledge, style, opinion, technology or whatever), and exacts desire. One reproduces its phallic nature, while the other is captured in its own lack. We are within the classical economy of the heterosexual matrix, where goods and words - like those of the Biblical discourse - are contaminated by the libidinal investments resulting from the kind of bond established by the partners, very much in the fashion described above for missioned and missionaries.

Still, there is a final, though crucial, aggregate of questions to be approached. One wonders, what makes this whole transaction possible between originally unrelated partners. What allows for the feminine bow of natives to the phallic intruders. When and for the sake of what do they become lovers?. Also, how is it that the numinous character of commodities cuts across apparently thick cultural borders and is able to flash and charm into some otherwise mostly integrated worlds? Who, which persons and societies enter the proposed matrix? We have to ask indeed what made them fall and how and, most of all, who are the ones that evade it. And even, would this introduce the suspicion or even seem to confirm the possibility that this hierarchical, heterosexual matrix is not thoroughly alien, but also inherent in other cultures? If this is not so, how the void, from which desire and longing for the other spring, is inaugurated where there was none?

Is there anything specifically religious - Christian or else - in this ability to navigate and intrude remote social niches, or this ability lies exclusively in the goods? Conversely, can, really, at the last stage of conversion, a Pentecostal Toba or Mataco Indian, or a Baptist Coya, embrace the new kind of spirituality without the mediation of the goods, finally transcending all material and worldly libidinal concerns as the Alcibiades of Plato's Symposium? In this sense, do these mediations work as mere emissaries, a kind of diving board into a new set of beliefs - as happens in the Symposium - or as emissaries

of a whole, different, ascensional order? Do they end by installing a spurious hierarchy, even when they themselves, as mediators, disappear? Would Christianity, in this context, mean exactly that?

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