



Institutul de Științe Politice
și Relații Internaționale
"Ion I.C.Brătianu"
ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ



PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION: ALTERNATIVE VISIONS AND CONFLICTUAL VALUES

April 23, 2018, 10.00

Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian
Academy
Bucharest, Romania



The workshop with international participation will take place at the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations "Ion I. C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy, and continues and deepens the theme announced in the inter-academic project on the theme of *Democratization, Religious Identity and Fundamentalism in Romania and Bulgaria*, giving priority to alternative views and conflicting values that underpin the philosophy-politics-religion relationship.

Mahatma Gandhi believes, taking on Albert Einstein's idea, that those who believe that religion and politics have nothing in common do not understand either. Leo Strauss discusses a theological-political problem of authority, common for religion and politics. The democratic framework of the separation of the Church

from State is a framework of freedom of expression on which both the exercise of the individual right to free practice of the freely assumed religion, and the tolerance are based.

This is also the ideological framework of the *Philosophy, Politics and Religion: Alternative Perspectives and Conflictual Values* Workshop, which brings together clarifications and substantive investigations that, involve relevant issues such as: the issue of authority and consensus; homogeneity and difference; religious community; religious differences/religious conflict; secularization and post-secularization; the legitimacy of faith, etc. Are we dealing with a crisis or vitalizing of religious aspects, with secular society or a society of revived beliefs? The workshop will include two panels:

PANEL 1: PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION. ALTERNATIVE VISIONS;
PANEL 2: PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION. CONFLICTUAL VALUES

PROGRAM

OPENING SPEECHES

10.00 OPENING SPEECHES

Acad. Alexandru Boboc, PhD

Prof. Dan Dungaciu, PhD

Prof. Bogdana Todorova, DSc

Prof. Eric Gilder, PhD

Senior Researcher Henrieta Șerban, PhD

10.30 PANEL 1

PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION. ALTERNATIVE VISIONS

Bogdana Todorova, *The Neo-Ottoman Strategy of Turkey in Bulgaria and on the Balkans - An Alternative Vision*

Nina Dimitrova, *Modernism and Anti-modernism in Contemporary Bulgarian Orthodox Attitudes*

Henrieta Șerban, *The Role of State in the Relationship with Church in Romania*

Viorella Manolache, *Postmodern Theology or Faith Explained for Postmodernists (II). Intellectual Debates in the Double: Interpretation and Visual Anecdotal Experiment*

Lorena Stuparu, *Faith and Religion. Individual Engagement and Public Expressions*

11.45 PANEL 2

PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION. CONFLICTUAL VALUES

Ian Browne, *Can Liberalism Ever Be Compatible with Religious Communitarianism? The Incompatibility of Conceptions of Harm and Freedom in J S Mill's On Liberty with Those Found in Deuteronomy and Leviticus*

12.00 Coffee break

12.30 Gabriela Tănăsescu, *Religiosity and the Political Consequences of Social Capital in Central and Eastern European Countries*

Ana-Maria Negoită, *The Silent Battlefield. New Islamic Waves in Europe. Challenge and Response*

Stelian Gomboș, *Are Secularization and Dechristianization Inevitable?...*

Marius Augustin Drăghici, *How Scientific are the Approaches on Religion Nowadays and Which Are the Perspectives?*

13.45 ROUND TABLE DEBATE

Alexandru Gheorghiu, *The Romano-Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and Its Influence in the Socio-Political Spectrum Vs. Its Actual Deficit of Institutional Influence Today*

Alexandra Vasile, *The Role of Religion in a Multipolar World*

Participants:
Oana Simion
Cosmin Sipos
Corina Taras
Mihai Bârsan
Elena Lazăr
Lucian Jora

14.15. BOOK LAUNCH

Henrieta Șerban, Bogdana Todorova, *Religion, Values and Social Conflicts*, Bucharest, Ed. ISPRI, 2018.

14.30 LUNCH AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION: ALTERNATIVE VISIONS AND
CONFLICTUAL VALUES
TITLES, ABSTRACTS, KEYWORDS

PANEL 1

PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION. ALTERNATIVE VISIONS

BOGDANA TODOROVA, The Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *The Neo-Ottoman Strategy of Turkey in Bulgaria and on the Balkans - An Alternative Vision*

Abstract. Today, the balance of powers is a dynamical process and the correct understanding of international relations is strategically important. Bulgaria is in a complex geopolitical position and faces several possible scenarios. The report will describe the essence of the Neo-Ottoman strategy. This policy is based on tolerance to the minority groups that share a similar historic and cultural identity as the nationals of the Ottoman Empire. The doctrine of Ahmed Davutogly, known as the “Strategic Depth“, continues to refer to the term “neo-Ottomanism“ with the aim to maintain the new image of Turkey for zero problems with the neighbors in the former Ottoman borderlines, suggesting an improved “understanding of the realities of the new century“. The report will present an alternative vision - how Erdogan's policy is a part of a long-term strategy of USA (especially after their failure in the Middle East and the search of a new base), which is performed in two vectors – economic diplomacy and religious diplomacy. We can expect inter-ethnic and inter-religious tension, which will increase conflictogenic potential in the country and in the whole region.

Keywords: *Turkey, Balkans, neo-Ottoman policy, an alternative vision.*

NINA DIMITROVA, The Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Modernism and Anti-modernism in Contemporary Bulgarian Orthodox Attitudes*

Abstract. The present study is attempt to examine the Orthodox religiousness in post-communist Bulgaria, however, not only from a political scientist's point of view. In this investigation, history of ideas, philosophy and sociology of religion are also research positions. All these research positions will be studied by means of analysis of media (including electronic media) publications.

Keywords: *Postcommunist Bulgaria, Orthodox intelligentsia, Orthodox modernism, Orthodox fundamentalism.*

HENRIETA ȘERBAN, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, *The Role of State in the Relationship with Church in Romania*

Abstract. There is a process of democratic redefinition of the relationship of State and Church in Romania. Within this process, the Romanian actors have taken into consideration, as well the Romanian history and the Romanian religious traditions as the experience of Western European countries, finding difficult to identify one single suitable model for this specific relationship over all others. The communication identifies the role of state as democratic administrator and provider of security sustaining a pluralist model present in the law of denominations in Romania. The law describes a minimal State in religious matters. We identify also a more fluid cultural role of the State that allows also for other models and discourses to be advocated in the public sphere, as consequences of the Statal reinforcement of the freedom of religion and freedom of expression: a quasi-pluralist model of Church-State relations identified in the discourse of Romanian political class and the established Church model present in the discourse of the Orthodox Church leaders and in the discourse of the intellectuals who emphasize the importance of

Orthodoxy in preserving Romanian traditions and identity. However, sometimes freedom of expression and freedom of religion may lead to alternative or even conflicting visions which call upon the State in its role as moderator.

Keywords: *State-Church relations, the law of denominations, State and culture.*

VIORELLA MANOLACHE, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, *Postmodern Theology or Faith Explained for Postmodernists (II). Intellectual Debates in the Double: Interpretation and Visual Anecdotal Experiment*

Abstract. The present study overvalues meanings imprinted by *the rule of &* as a way of putting into dialogue, of familiarity and unification of certain aspects, essential for the triple directing hypothesis of our endeavor. The first confirms the idea that *the Christian intellectual tradition is alive and well*, but also validates philosophical ways of *scrolling through the process of salvation through interpretation*. The second is targeting a particular visual projection, which tangentially, anecdotally and/or allusively, launches a phenomenon, arousing reactions and proposing hypothetical alternatives in/by films (here *God's not Dead* and the *Harry Potter* series) which build contexts for discussion and induce or facilitate the *double dialogue* (on the one hand, John D. Caputo & Gianni Vattimo, and on the other, Archbishop Chrysostomos & Basarab Nicolescu or Bishop Auxentios of Photiki) The third perspective insists on trans-religious opinion (Basarab Nicolescu) expressed by that *manifesto* which Archbishop Chrysostomos considers relevant for a reconciliation between science and religion.

Keywords: *the Christian intellectual tradition, the process of salvation through interpretation, reconciliation between science and religion.*

LORENA STUPARU, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, *Faith and Religion. Individual Engagement and Public Expressions*

Abstract. Starting from the basic definitions according to which faith is the personal conviction in regard to the sacred thing, while the religion represents a system of religious beliefs or a system rather of worship than a system of faith, this paper aims to explore compatibility and incompatibilities between the two reference plans.

Keywords: *faith, religion, individual experience, public space, trust.*

PANEL 2

PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND RELIGION. CONFLICTUAL VALUES

IAN BROWNE, Independent Researcher, *Can Liberalism Ever Be Compatible with Religious Communitarianism? The Incompatibility of Conceptions of Harm and Freedom in J S Mill's On Liberty with Those Found in Deuteronomy and Leviticus*

Abstract. John Stuart Mill advances a form of liberalism that takes as one of its central ideas the idea that individuals should be free to do anything that does not harm others. Mill is quite explicit about the danger to individual freedom posed by social practices, values and opinions which extend the conception of harm beyond this. Mill regards conceptions of harm which go beyond harm to others by, for example, extending harm to cover harm to society or to the values of society, as restrictions on liberty as they are used to justify preventing an individual doing what he wants. Communitarianism places shared social values and practices at the heart of society, and sees collective identity as being dependent upon accepting and conforming to shared values. For communitarians, harm is a much more extensive conception than it is for Mill, encompassing the idea of harm to society and to its values and practices. Communitarianism and Millian liberalism operate with different conceptions of harm. In the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy and Leviticus, we find a communitarian conception of society, and a communitarian conception of harm, particularly with regard to sexual practices, seeing certain sexual practices as harmful to society. I shall argue that there is an incompatibility between liberalism and communitarian conceptions of society which seek to place certain religious values at the heart of social practices. This tension is apparent in the recent attempts by the Coalition for the Family to amend the Romanian Constitution and the response of liberals

to this. Whilst both liberals and religious communitarians agree that people should be free to do anything that does no harm, at the heart of the dispute lies the way in which the idea of harm is conceived.

Keywords: *J. S. Mill, liberalism, communitarianism, harm, society, individualism, religion.*

GABRIELA TĂNĂSESCU, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, *Religiosity and the Political Consequences of Social Capital in Central and Eastern European Countries*

Abstract. The paper aims to reveal the social and political implications of the social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness characteristic for the faith-based organizations in the Central and Eastern European countries. It follows in an empirical manner the connection between religiosity and religious involvement and the degree in which the social capital serves civic and political life in CEE countries or (1) provides social support and services, inculcates moral values and encourages altruism and (2) facilitates civic engagement, political participation and good governance.

Keywords: *religiosity, social capital, civic engagement.*

ANA-MARIA NEGOIȚĂ, Independent Researcher, *The Silent Battlefield. New Islamic Waves in Europe. Challenge and Response*

Abstract. This study focuses on the relation between Europe (with its Christian background) and the Islam in these days when the interaction between the two cultural entities as it is performed by huge groups of immigrants. The main goal of the article is to go back in time and analyze the previous ways of interaction between Europe and the Islamic world. To cut from the Islamic civilization those elements able to define a way to inhabit a certain space (area, region etc.) in all the aspects: social, religious, and economical. These elements will be used as a filter to watch and understand the border movements between Europe and Islam today. Most of the elements will be provided by closer look into the *Sharia* law or Islamic law - a set of religious principles which shaped the Islamic culture. *Sharia* is the fundamental religious concept of Islam, namely its law, systematized during the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Muslim era (8th–9th centuries). The methodological approach is quite simple, to create a both-sides mirror placed at the encounter or the “crush area” of these two worlds where the essential elements of living, believing, acting as social individuals are willing or not to interact, to tolerate each other or to generate conflict. The conclusion must display a series of fundamental and fix socio-cultural elements of the European world and the Islamic one and their dynamic during the present process of massive interaction.

Keywords: *Islam, immigration, religion, Sharia, Quran, Hadith, fiqh, Hijra, Musulman, Christian.*

STELIAN GOMBOȘ, The State Secretariat for Religious Affairs of the Romanian Government, *Are Secularization and Dechristianization Inevitable?...*

Abstract. In the nineteenth century, Christian clergy in Western Europe feared what they saw as a general de-Christianization, or decline of participation in the churches. They saw a decline of faith both among intellectual elites, as a result of developments in modern thought that challenged traditional Christian faith, and among the working class, as a result of urbanization and industrialization that challenged traditional Christian practice. In the twentieth century, the theory of secularization, states a decline in the importance of religion, regarded as an inevitable aspect of modernization. Such theories were based upon the real decline in the importance of religious participation in Europe (the concept of de-Christianization) correlated with rationalization of consciousness, the disenchantment of the world, the spread of the scientific worldview, and the pluralism that comes with modernization leading to a ‘crisis of credibility’ in religion. Nevertheless, by the end of the century, religion was again playing a major role both in the public arena and in people’s private lives, particularly outside Western Europe, forcing many scholars to revise their theories. My thesis is that de-Christianization is not inevitable in post-Communist Orthodox countries; rather, the continued role of the Orthodox Church will depend upon how the Church responds to the social and spiritual crisis of the transition. I am approaching the question as an Orthodox believer and scholar in the history of religions, bringing to this discussion certain perspectives from sociology and a comparative history of religion in modernity. Orthodox Church should carefully examine different

experiences of the West in modern times and seek to adapt those aspects that have proven effective, and learn to avoid the pitfalls and failures of Western churches. While the Orthodox Church is hierarchical in its structure, it is not hierarchical in the same way as Roman Catholicism traditionally has been; rather, it embraces the principle of conciliarity, what the Russians call sobornost. In Orthodox ecclesiology, the “church” is not only the clergy, but the whole people, who together constitute the Body of Christ. This principle, however, must not remain an abstract concept, but must become a living reality. If the inertia of the communist-era isolation of the Church from society continues to persist, and the Church continues to rely upon the state, then I predict that de-Christianization will take place in Romania in the decades to come. But de-Christianization is not inevitable. Ultimately, the spiritual fate of Romania depends largely upon the choices that the Orthodox Church makes in the forthcoming years...

Keywords: *Western Europe, Christian faith, Christian practice, secularization, aspects of modernization and industrialization.*

MARIUS AUGUSTIN DRĂGHICI, The Institute of Philosophy and Psychology “Constantin Rădulescu-Motru”, Romanian Academy, *How Scientific are the Approaches on Religion Nowadays and Which Are the Perspectives?*

Abstract. The issue of religion nowadays evolves within a paradoxical frame: on the one hand, we are witnessing an almost incomprehensible development of the technologies and astonishing discoveries regarding the whole sphere of the human domains, which led to solving problems that yesterday seemed unsolvable; and, on the other hand, in spite of the secular contemporary societies the number of the members of various religious communities, proportionally, did not decrease. In this respect the question is the following: given the fact that science seems to cover almost the whole area of human domains, how can we account for the (proportionally) undiminished presence of the religious element in the contemporary societies?

Keywords: *religion, science, secular contemporary societies, religious communities.*

ALEXANDRU GHEORGHIU, European Studies, Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest, *The Romano-Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and Its Influence in the Socio-Political Spectrum Vs. Its Actual Deficit of Institutional Influence Today*

Abstract. Approaching a theoretical retrospective over the Romano-Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, comparing it to its role today, one can immediately remark that the main prerogative of the Church was that of a spiritual refuge, an institution of religious therapy interested in healing souls, without denying a self-proclaimed one, of leading force, implicated in guiding the society throughout politics. The named perspective is an *idealist* one, the historical events proving the essential role that of the Pontiff State as an actor able to intervene, decisively, in domains such as political or social, dictating the direction of the European society, as well as its politics, not leading to a Golden Age, but on contrary, to a Dark one, filtered by the syntagm *Dark Middle Ages*. The implication of the clergy in the political circles, the instauration of a theocracy, based on the divine model, throughout a culture of submission, the civil and political power of the Papacy, transforms the Church, proving its reformist role, even through the dreadful period of the inquisition. Even when the church tried to erase, or correct the sad remembrance which was committed under its name, re-defining its credibility and influence, one cannot ignore its reduced status today, its downfall when it came to politics, being perceived as a simple institution with diminished social and political influence. The present communication/study proposes a double comparison: The Romano-Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and The Romano-Catholic Church today. If the revolutionary mutations have targeted the society and political scene, having its maximal point in the creation of the secular state, of the whole range of citizen rights and freedoms, ideas guiding the man's personal improvement based on his personal interests and his spiritual accomplishments, reconfirming the absolute power of the Church, its *institutional surplus*, now one can observe a delicate situation, of losing the ruling position, with a major *institutional deficit* which reduces it to a simple institution which cannot regain its decisive political and social credibility.

Keywords: *dominance; institutional surplus; institutional deficit; Romano-Catholic Church; political and social influence.*

ALEXANDRA VASILE, The Institute of Political Science and International Relations “Ion I. C. Brătianu” of the Romanian Academy, *The Role of Religion in a Multipolar World*

Abstract. The study proposes an applied analysis of the amplitude of the impact of the religious phenomena related to the demands and objectives with which the multipolar world operates, or functions, nowadays. The points of view are going to be associated to the study of international relations, security studies and to the relevant sociological perspectives in the field.

Keywords: *religion, multipolar world, international relations.*