

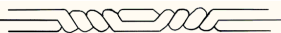
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The 12th INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM on Science, Theology and Arts (ISSTA 2013)

Alba Iulia, Romania, 14-16 May 2013

On 14-16 May 2013 in Alba Iulia was held the 12th International Symposium on Science, Theology and Arts (ISSTA 2013), on subject *Religion and Politics. The Church-State relationship: from Constantine the Great to post-Maastricht Europe.*

It was organized by the “1 Decembrie 1918” University (Faculty of Orthodox Theology) in Alba Iulia, National School of Political and Administrative Studies in Bucharest, State Secretariat for Religious Affairs, Romanian Cultural Institute, L’Istituto di Studi

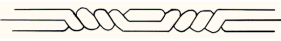


Ecumenici "S. Bernardino" di Venezia, University of Pitești and the "Petre Andrei" University of Iași.

The workshops had 4 sections: 1. Political culture & Religious culture; 2. Political Theology & the Morality of Politics; 3. Church & Society; 4. The State-Religions relationship throughout history.

The first panel raised for discussion issues and questions such as: To what extent has Christian religious culture influenced the temporary political models? May we speak of a transformation/altering of Christian cultural models under the pressure (influence) of political currents? Does the cohabitation/collaboration model of the various history-validated political doctrines have any relevance within the inter-religious dialogue? May the *cohesion* model – proposed by political systems – be reconciled with that of *communion* – proposed by the Church? Which are the cultural aspects/topics that the Church can successfully propose to the political environment, independently of the latter's own line? Are there any research methods within the sphere of religious culture that the laicized political environment may be willing to adopt, independently of the assumed doctrine? If the foundation of our culture is Christian, how is it possible that we allow ourselves to witness the chronicization, multiplication and aggravation of social problems? Which could be the elements of maximum importance for the Church within a cultural dialogue of a symphonic/ harmonic type with the laic (though perhaps not quite laicized or laicist) State?

The second section was about the formulation of the contents of Christian political philosophy (political theology, religious politics), the topicalization of these contents by relating them to a given political context, definitions, principles, hazards, in an inter- and multi-disciplinary approach. The researchers were trying to find answers to questions such as: Is there a political theology? Are we talking about the clericalisation of politics or the politi(cali)sation of the ecclesial space? To what extent the dogmatic consciousness of the



Church is manifesting continuity or discontinuity in the process of structuring a morality of the *polis*? Might the theological justification of a political system be, perhaps, a finality of political theology?

The third panel dealt with the inclusion/exclusion of the Church in/from the social life, in/from its economic, financial and cultural policies. Important aspects in the field of sociology or bio-ethics, such as: social ethics and performance within the limit of available resources, donation and/or transplant of human organs, euthanasia, abortion, legal and moral aspects linked to genetic engineering, family ethics, the role and place of the Church in society, the evangelical structure of ethical and political concepts, etc., are challenges raised by modern society to which the Christian community is called upon to provide an answer.

The fourth section was about the relationship between the State and the Church over the ages in a lengthy historical process: *State and Church in the Roman/Roman-Byzantine Empire*; *The State and the European Religions: from Charles the Great to the Maastricht Treaty*; *State and Church in the East: from the fall of Constantinople to the fall of communism*, etc. This relationship has been understood as an essential chapter of the „political catechism” of each modern State. That did not arise out of some philosophical theories, but has emerged during the existence of peoples as a normal condition, determined by the instinct of a healthy development of nations. No country can afford to neglect the importance of religious denominations and the ballance that religious life can generate in society.

These were some of the topics that the specialists reflected on and contributed with theirs papers to a better understanding of today’s society.

About 120 **applicants** were registered, of which 73 candidates and 13 PhD students were accepted, the latter having a special session, dedicated to them.

Some guests from abroad were present at the conference, coming from countries such as: USA, Italy, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Greece, most of them being international reputation researchers: Herman Tristram ENGELHARDT jr., *Rice University (Department of Philosophy), Huston, USA; Baylor College of Medicine, Texas, USA; Mark J. CHERRY, the Dr. Patricia A. Hayes Professor in Applied Ethics and Professor of Philosophy at St. Edward's University Austin, USA; Petr BALCAREK, ThMgr et PhMgr, PhD. Et Ph.D., Vice-President of the Czech National Committee of Byzantine Studies of the Czech Academy of Science, director of Institute for Byzantine and Eastern Christian Studies, Olomouc, Czech Republic; Ana Smith ILTIS, Director of Center for Bioethics, Health and Society and Associate Professor at Wake Forest University (Department of Philosophy), Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA; Tiziano SALVATERRA, University of Trento (Faculty of Economics), Italy; University Pontificia Salesiana (Faculty of Communication Studies), Rome, Italy; Rector of the Catholic University of Tirana, Albania; Ryan NASH, The Ohio State University, Wexner College of Medicine, Columbus, OH, USA; Corinna DELKESKAMP – HAYES, European Programs, International Studies in Philosophy and Medicine, Freigericht, Germany; Nikolaos KOIOS, University Ecclesiastical Academy of Thessaloniki, Department of Priest Studies; Pascal HÄMMERLI, coordinator of the PhD Program De Civitate Hominis, University of Fribourg (Department of Theology), Switzerland.*

There were a lot of invitations from Romania: from Arad, Bucharest, Iași, Cluj-Napoca, Galați, Suceava, Tîrgu-Mureș Universities – philosophers, historians, philologists, sociologists, economists, journalists and specialists in political sciences, law, education, arts and art history. There were many of theologians also, representing 13 of the 15 Faculties of Orthodox Theology in Romania: Alba Iulia – as host, Arad, Bucharest, Caransebeș, Constanța, Craiova, Galați, Iași, Oradea, Pitești, Sibiu, Târgoviște, Timișoara. Some

Theological Faculties were represented even by 3-4 delegates.

Last but not least, we mention the presence of His Eminence IRINEU, Archbishop of Alba Iulia, as Professor at Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Alba Iulia and host of this cultural event, of His Eminence LAURENȚIU, Metropolitan of Ardeal, and of His Eminence GURIE, Bishop of Deva and Hunedoara.

On 16 May 2013, the last day of the Symposium, the title of Doctor Honoris Causa was awarded to the Rev. Professor PhD Constantin Voicu ("Lucian Blaga" University in Sibiu), the first dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Alba Iulia, 20 years ago.

We believe the aim of bringing together the international and national specialists in science, theology and arts has been reached, so that this interdisciplinary approach can contribute to a better understanding of nowadays society, with its religious, cultural and artistic values and challenges. Due to this, we consider that Alba Iulia gradually regains its historical place, being not only "the soul capital of the Romanians", the seal of the consecrating of the unified Romania, but also a valuable center of Romanian and Orthodox culture and spirituality open to national and international values and cultures.

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