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How to reconcile Theology and Science: a metaphysical approach

... Why do Theology and Science so often overlap? It is worth asking the question from today's point of view. Robert J. Russell points to the existence of an epistemic hierarchy [5]. In the case of the sciences, the epistemic hierarchy means „in essence, the idea is that Physics, for example, places constraints on Biology: no biological theory should contradict Physics, and so on up through the other sciences and Humanities. On the other hand, the processes, properties, and laws of Biology cannot be reduced without remainder to those of Physics, and again on up through the other sciences and Humanities.” [5] An epistemic hierarchy in the case of Theology and Science would mean that constraints should be found beyond Theology and Science would not go beyond and at the same time would not create a contradiction between these domains. However, methodological naturalism in the Natural sciences can be taken as the assumption that what has been unexplained by Science will one day be explained. This assumption works well. It means that perhaps Theology is a ‘mental shortcut’ and it is only a matter of time until everything, including religion, is explained

by Science. In such an approach to the Theology-Science relationship, it is necessary to draw a real demarcation line between them, not only the assumptions. As Alvin Plantinga points out when writing about methodological naturalism, modern science excludes the existence of God: “the scientific evidence base, the evidence base from which current science is conducted does not include the belief that there is such a person as God” [6]. This position can be understood in the light of Plantinga’s approach to naturalism in relation to evolutionism. For example, he claims that the evolutionary account of man’s origins is consistent with the Christian faith, “but if naturalism is true, there is no God, and hence no God (or anyone else) overseeing our development and orchestrating the course of our evolution” [A. Plantinga, Naturalism Defeated, <https://www.scribd.com/document/143800935/Naturalism-Defeated-Alvin-Plantinga>, 19.03.2022, 3]. This would mean that the combination of God’s oversight role over Evolution and our understanding of God’s work in Evolution should be consistent with the Theory of evolution itself. Hence the idea

that evolutionism contradicts naturalism. Plantinga claims that “ordinary naturalism is self-defeating” [7]. The author does not exclude evolutionism, but assumes that since our cognitive powers require us to see a purpose in Evolution, and theism and faith in God tell us that God directs Evolution, excluding this option on the basis of naturalism contradicts naturalism, not Evolution. Thus, naturalism undermines human reason and the ability to obtain knowledge, as Plantinga writes: “so rejection of theistic belief doesn’t automatically produce scepticism: many who don’t believe in God know much. But that is only because they don’t accurately think through the consequences of this rejection. Once they do, they will lose their knowledge; here, therefore, is another of those cases where, by learning more, one comes to know less.” [7, p. 198]

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Contact, subscription:
 • eurjsci@yaho.com

WEB page:
 • <http://www.ejst.tuiasi.ro>

NewsLetter:
 • ejst@tuiasi.ro



FORMATION AND CURRENT STATE OF MILITARY CHAPLAINCY IN UKRAINE

Abstract: Building state-confessional relations in Ukraine includes the interaction of various subjects. An analysis of the parameters and intensity of such interaction can help understand the trends and challenges that arise on the path of the nation's political development. We used the example of military chaplaincy institutionalization to determine the subjective attitudes of interaction participants. The institutionalization of military chaplaincy in Ukraine went through three stages: from the beginning of cooperation between religious organizations and the Armed Forces of Ukraine to the adoption of the Law of Ukraine 'On Military Chaplaincy'. These stages only partially coincided with the process of the formation of Ukrainian statehood but, nevertheless, reflected the role of milestones in the modern history of Ukraine (Proclamation of Ukraine's independence in 1991, Orange Revolution in 2004, Revolution of Dignity 2013-2014, the war in eastern Ukraine from 2014 to the present time). The legal support for the chaplaincy service functioning in the Armed Forces of Ukraine from 2021 has been based on the Law 'On the Chaplaincy Service' adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. By-law legal acts will be changed following the norms of the said Law and will include issues of social security, training of chaplains, provisions of admission to military units, and so forth. The analysed practice of spiritual mentoring has shown that the interfaith nature of the chaplaincy service is a positive factor contributing to the consolidation of Ukrainian society and creating a basis for the formation of tolerant relations between citizens. The 'institutional matrix' we used showed that the level of interaction between religious communities and authorities by qualitative and quantitative indicators has constructive dialogue-oriented nature. Both individual religious entities (Churches, communities, Ummahs) and the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) are committed to deepening cooperation with the state, which is reflected in the participation of UCCRO representatives in international events aimed at raising Ukraine's prestige at the global level. The priority tasks for the introduction of professional chaplaincy are the professional training of chaplains, the attraction of young priests to the chaplaincy, closer cooperation with the authorities, purposeful work of the state to raise the social status of military chaplains, and support for the aspirations of the Ukrainian people to create a political nation on the part of religious organizations.

THE EFFECTS OF RELIGIOSITY AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING ON PERCEIVED STRESS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

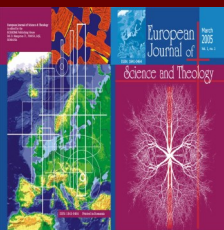
Abstract: The human being is endowed with a strong conservation factor. Created in the image of the Divinity, in extreme conditions it can activate positive spiritual forces in order to overcome the difficult moments in its existence. Spiritual well-being refers to our willingness to find the meaning and purpose of human existence, a habit of questioning everything and understanding abstract things that cannot be easily explained or understood. The present study aims to investigate the relationship between spiritual well-being (SWB) and religiosity as protective factors during the pandemic years of 2020-2021. In order to do so, we conducted an online survey in order to measure the perceived impact and stress of the covid-19 pandemic on young people's life. 719 Romanian students, with a mean age of 28 years (SD = 10.36), filled in a demographic questionnaire, Paloutzian & Ellison's Spiritual Well-Being Scale and Huber's Centrality of Religiosity Scale. The results showed that the people who attended the church more frequently, who prayed a lot, who could communicate with their priest, who have high levels of spiritual well-being and have the religiosity as a central value, perceive a less impact of the pandemic, and felt lower levels of stress during these years. We consider these results to be important for the combined efforts of psychologist and priests to support people's mental health, and is one of the few studies on spiritual well-being on Orthodox population during this Pandemic context.

RELIGION, NIKLAS LUHMANN AND RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES PROJECT OF OVERCOMING THE DICHOTOMY OF THEOLOGY AND ATHEISM

Abstract: The article presents the results of analysis of a number of Russian researches of the religion phenomenon in the philosophical publications showing the reception of the Niklas Luhmann's concept describing the religion as a special autopoietic subsystem of the society. The authors focus on the description of the formation of 'differentiations' and their 'autopoiesis'. Russian descriptions of the religion implicitly start in the ninth and the tenth centuries in the context of reflections on the 'true faith' (истинной вере/Theology), which was distinguished from 'lie/lawlessness' as the 'truth/law'. The term 'religia' (религия) itself becomes an explicit part of the Russian language in the eighteenth century, but until the nineteenth - twenty first centuries it remains uncommon and only then it acquires about 20 meanings in the spectrum of connotations from extremely elevated (tradition of true piety 'традиция истинного благочестия', saving truth 'спасительная истина') to extremely profane (obscurantism 'мракобесие', the opiate of the people 'опиум для народа'). The semantics of the soviet period texts is especially notable, when the authorities begin to construct 'communism' as the global perspective of the 'kingdom of truth' where 'atheism' should be established and all religions should 'die away'. Modern Russian academic religious studies describe the phenomenon of religion in a number of specialized research approaches with their differentiation of the 'true/false', including the understanding of religion as the 'autopoiesis' of beliefs of fellow citizens and their communities as the 'actors' of the communication processes included into the social subsystems of Science, Law, religion, media, etc. with their differentiation of 'atheistic/religious'. Russian religious studies publications of the twenty-first century discuss the variety of meanings of the Latin word 'religio', denoting both infinitely complex and indescribable 'extra-linguistic reality' of human existence in the world and the local forms of 'supervision of the unknown' reducing all 'unfamiliar' to the conventional symbols of confessional 'piety' and non-confessional 'religiosity' manifested in the practice of harmonious life and communication with the divine principles of being that can be understood 'theologically, atheistically', or 'academically'.

EUROPEAN HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF THE SUPERNOVA OF AD 1054 COINS OF CONSTANTINE IX AND SN 1054

Abstract: We investigate a possible depiction of the famous SN 1054 event in specially minted coins produced in the Eastern Roman Empire in 1054 A.D. On these coins, we investigate if the head of the Emperor, Constantine IX, might represent the Sun with a bright 'star' on either side - Venus in the east and SN 1054 in the west, perhaps also representing the newly split Christian churches. We explore the idea that the eastern star represents the stable and well-known Venus and the Eastern Orthodox Church, while the western star represents the short-lived 'new star' and the 'fading' Western Catholic church. We examined 36 coins of this rare Constantine IX Class IV batch. While no exact date could be associated to any of these coins, they most likely were minted during the last six months of Constantine IX's rule in 1054. We hypothesize that the stance of the church concerning the order of the Universe, as well as the chaos surrounding the Great Schism, played a crucial role in stopping the official reporting of an obvious event in the sky, yet a dan-



gerous omen. A temporal coincidence of all these events could be a reasonable explanation as well.

HOW TO RECONCILE THEOLOGY AND SCIENCE A METAPHYSICAL APPROACH

Abstract: The conflict between Science and religion is deeply rooted in Western culture. Its origin is explained by the history of mutual relations between Theology and Natural sciences. Contemporary discourse on the relationship between Theology and Science shows how to build a bridge between these fields. It seems that Metaphysics should be a common ground for understanding. The article shows that the theory explicitly formulated by Aquinas about the real distinction between essence and existence is the foundation for understanding the sources of the conflict between Science and Theology and how to overcome it. The 'agere sequitur esse in actu' formula also plays an important role in agreeing on the relationship between Science and Theology. The action of the world relates directly to its existence and only indirectly to God. Appealing to the theory of the real distinction between the essence and existence is a new approach to the problem of the relationship between Theology and Science, allowing to delineate the framework of their mutual functioning without overlapping.

KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY VERSUS POST-TRUTH SOCIETY THE POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF INDONESIAN MUSLIM KNOWLEDGE CULTURE

Abstract: This paper underlines the necessity of transforming 'Indonesian Islam' from 'religious culture' to 'knowledge culture'. Indonesian Islam represents the acclimatisation of the virtues of Islam in the context of Indonesia, and therefore it is a kind of cultural construction. Indonesian Islam is accordingly subject to transformation and change, in conformity with the spirit of the time without losing its substantial features and its cultural roots. Indonesian Islam is not to be understood as a closed ideology, but both as an evolving identity and religious culture that could serve as an inspiration for knowledge culture. I argue that a religious culture in a particular Muslim society has implications for the modes and characteristics of a knowledge culture in that society. The same can be said about Indonesian Islam. Hence, it is of significance to elaborate on Indonesian Muslim knowledge culture by looking into the inspirations of Indonesian Muslim religious culture. The paper will deal with three main concerns. First, it investigates the contemporary discourse of Indonesian Islam as religious culture. Second, it elaborates on the construction of Indonesian Muslim knowledge culture. Third, it assesses the potential contributions of Indonesian Muslim knowledge culture to the betterment of knowledge society to counter the emergence of a post-truth society.

AT THE PINNACLE OF FAITH IS A PRAYER FOR A MIRACLE

Abstract: Belief in the true power of prayer, i.e. in that which rises above the necessity of the natural order, above the facts of everyday experience and the evidence of reason, is tantamount to faith in the limitless power of miracles, often contrary to the laws of the Universe. Thus, prayer, as the most important component of religious worship, and a miracle, as a special object of religious faith, are truths and values of the highest order for religion. In the Christian religion, any sincere and true prayer is a miracle, a source of miraculous power. On the other hand, God works miracles at the request of the believer, expressed in prayer. The integrating factor of religious consciousness, uniting and bringing together these elements of religion, is religious faith. It is religious faith who unfolds the religious-symbolic environment in which ideas about the effectiveness of prayer and faith in the limitless power of miracles exist and function. This short article provides a religious analysis of religious faith, prayer and miracle as a special object of prayer practice.

MYSTICAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY AN INQUIRY FROM JOHN OF THE CROSS AND TERESA OF AVILA

Abstract: This article analyses the consequences of mystical experiences in changing personality based on the writings of two great Spanish mystics, Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Avila, who are a paradigm of Catholic mystical life. The idiosyncrasy of Catholic Christian mysticism and how mystical states affect personality in a positive way in major domains (sensory, emotional, cognitive and behavioural) are analysed. For this purpose, we describe the distinctive characteristics of Catholic Christian mysticism, which differ considerably from other mystical experiences that do not have the Trinitarian God as the object of these experiences.

A THEOLOGICAL NEWCOMB'S DILEMMA

Abstract: In this paper, I will argue that the agnostic decision-maker may find himself in a Newcomb-type situation concerning the doctrine of Roman Catholicism. Consequently, if the agnostic wishes to decide according to the causal decision theory, he should refrain from living the Christian life, but if he follows the evidential decision theory, he should follow the Catholic life guidance. In the argument, I have cast the role of Newcomb's predictive machine as Divine omniscience.

SCIENTIA PETITA, THEOLOGIA MANIFESTA SCIENTIFIC RATIONALITY AND THEOLOGICAL PROPOSALS IN THE PANDEMIC

Abstract: The urgency of understanding the pandemic has exponentially increased the circulation of information. The main directions of information transfer have been internal, that is within scholarly communities, and external, that is towards the public. The very manner in which scientific communication is produced has also changed. While the difficulty of finding practical solutions has often created a sense of mistrust, it has also led to the emergence of an image of scientific rationality as progressive, collective and capable of growth. This image of Science makes it possible to understand and distinguish the epistemic and ontological dimensions of scientific analysis. Theology can identify an attitude of epistemic humility that is conducive to a better understanding of the role of the human being in relation to nature and as the protagonist of history in collaboration with God.

BOOK REVIEW: The Ring Metaphor and the Spirit of Sofia and Other Essays

Lino Bianco, both as editor and contributing author, has attempted in his book entitled *The Ring Metaphor and the Spirit of Sofia and Other Essays* to expose his philosophy of the spirit of the arts - architecture, planning, literature and music. He ventures to ask, what at face value appears to be a simple and straight forward question: 'Where do I live?'. Nevertheless, the reply that he gives is not as elementary as one would imagine for his answer is not a simplistic one of providing his home address but something more in-depth, philosophical, religious and spatial that transcends space and time, two recurring philosophical themes in this book and in philosophy in general.