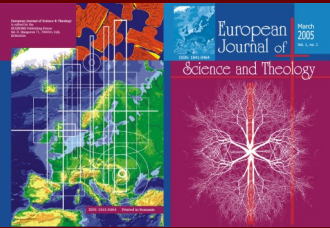


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Foreword of Franco Palla – Chair of ESRARC 12 14-16 September, 2022, Palermo, Italy

Dear Colleagues,
the 12th European Symposium of Religious Art, Restoration and Conservation takes place in the city of Palermo in a very complex world historical period and referring to religions thus assumes an important meaning.

Palermo, founded around 734 b. C. by Phoenicians, becomes during the centuries the melting point of several cultures such as Arab, Jewish, Greek, Latin, engendering a unique artistic and architectural heritage. The city is a casket that holds unique treasures, some of them are UNESCO world heritage sites, such as the Arab-Norman route listed in 2015, which extends from the Steri Palace (Rectorate of the Palermo's University) to the Norman Palace (with Palatine Chapel, related to the Norman Kingdom in Sicily). The Symposium also pay attention to new research centres, active in the city area, such as the Euro-

Mediterranean Institute of Sciences and Technologies (IEMEST), which host some sessions of the symposium.

Italian capital of culture in 2018, Palermo is the third Italian city where ESRARC take place and where, at the local University, a Master Degree Course in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage is active from 2012, whose several practical activities are closely related with the conservation and restoration of Religious artworks.

The 12th ESRARC conference allows interdisciplinary connections based on the Symposium topics (socio-spiritual values of religious art, conservation, restoration and diagnostics of religious cultural heritage, sacred sight in view of the tourist marketing and communication), creating or strengthening bridges between generations and different studies and research fields.

Basing on interdisciplinary

approaches fifty-six papers have been submitted demonstrating a fruitful activity in academic environment and other cultural-research institutions, able to stimulate the development and deepening of current knowledge on religious artworks, under the architectural, conservative and social-cultural points of view.

I warmly thank the participants of 12th ESRARC that in addition to make the symposium an excellent cultural event, certainly allow the establishment of collaborating opportunities as well as friendly contacts.

Franco Palla

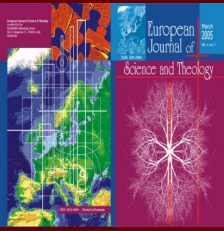
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Contact, subscription:
• eurjscitheol@yahoo.com

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

NewsLetter:
• ejst@tuiasi.ro



IS IT THROUGH EVOLUTION, ON A PROCESS OF CHANGE THAT WE TRANSFORM OURSELVES AND BECOME MORE LIKE A LOVING, NON-VIOLENT GOD?

Abstract: Many classical theodicy questions remain unanswered, one of which is: if God has created humans, why are we so violent? On the other hand, anthropologists and geneticists have their own questions about human violence, including: is modern man/woman more or less violent than the earliest Homo sapiens? Considering that the genus Pan and Homo are phylogenetically sister clades, is homicidal behaviour (conspecific lethal violence) in Homo sapiens the result of our genetic kinship? And, do sociocultural evolutionary processes modulate human violence? I put forth a model of integral evolution to address the theological theodicy problems in the light of evolutionary knowledge. I examine how the genetic component of spirituality/religiosity, subject to natural selection, as well as the cultural (environmental) component of spirituality/religiosity (such as doctrine and religious practices) may contribute to the reduction of lethal social violence. This integral evolution would thereby bring humanity 'closer' to being 'the image of a loving God' through a continuous unfinished evolutionary process (evolution towards self-transcendence). This model shows how this behavioural trait (human violence) is subject to natural selection, modulated by cognitive evolution and the sociocultural environment, including spirituality/religiosity as a component of this gene-environmental modulation.

ECHOES OF TRANSCENDENCE IN A SECULAR AGE

Abstract: This paper analyses transcendence in the secular age. In its origins, secular knowledge based on the model of the natural sciences seemed to have won the battle against religion and myth. This kind of all-knowing knowledge can be translated into physical or mathematical terms. In this scenario, the part of reality that cannot be translated into that language simply disappears. This is the case of transcendence understood as the basis of knowledge of the other-worldly (religion, myth, etc.). Modernity is identified with immanence, there is nothing beyond its limits. Recently, however, transcendence has returned to the public debate. It has abandoned its last religious form and adopted other forms such as the moral and the semiotic. This transformation in transcendence makes possible the construction of a field of analysis in which religions and cultures can recognize difference and put themselves in the place of others. In this transcendence there is no longer God alone, only the possibility of exploring and shaping different ways of being in the world.

CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF STEPHEN HAWKING'S BIG BANG ARGUMENT AGAINST GOD

Abstract: This paper is a critique of Stephen Hawking's very popular Big Bang argument against the existence of God in his book, 'Brief Answers to the Big Questions' (2018). It is a discussion of a single argument in a single text in a single author, in the manner of analytic philosophy. Many writers discuss whether Big Bang theory implies that God could not have created the world, such as William Lane Craig, Quentin Smith, Richard Swinburne, Daniel Linford, and Daniel Saudek; but I mention them only to set them aside. Instead, I shall simply use Hawking to criticize his own argument. I hope to show that in his more considered views in other texts, Hawking implies at least seven criticisms of his own argument. If I am right, then far from objecting to my critique, Hawking himself would seem to agree with it. Most of the paper is on quantum physics and some is on general relativity. The next to last section is on the proper scope of 'ex nihilo nihil fit'.

THE POTENTIAL OF NEUROTHEOLOGY FOR THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEXUALITY

Abstract: We witness a growth in the number of socially acceptable interpretations of the body and forms of experiencing sexuality. The embodied turn in research is developing. The Catholic Church has to answer both issues and, so requires resources for the theology of the body and sexuality. One of such resources may be neurotheology. In this article, I present three cases of neurotheological research. I show neurotheology as a stimulus to theological hermeneutics of the body and sexuality. I posit that neuroscience can inspire: (1) the interpretation of the body as a co-participant with the soul in the salvation, (2) the understanding that the experience of sexuality includes the corporal and spiritual dimension and may participate in the experience of faith, (3) the pastoral approach to persons that need a reconciliation of their faith and sexuality. My study presents the development in theology of the body and sexuality in analogy to the impact of Norbert Elias' concepts for the sociology of body and embodiment.

CORRELATION OF SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY ACCORDING TO THE QUR'AN AND HADITH

Abstract: This article aims to reveal the correlation between Science and Theology using the perspective of the Qur'an and hadith as the source of Islamic teachings. The Qur'an and hadith discuss various knowledge and sciences, such as Biology, Astronomy, Physics, Mathematics, languages and Chemistry. It requires that scientific research and findings are not merely for the benefit of scientific advancement but also should be able to bring humans closer to God. The advances in Science should be able to bring humans closer to God. Theology that is often considered static and too dogmatic should always be able to run harmoniously and healthily side by side with Science. Because talking about the correlation between Science and Theology means trying to find the relationship between Science and religion, it doesn't mean uniting or even mixing up. The identity or character of the two entities does not have to be lost and must be maintained. Science in the Qur'an and hadith has a strong correlation with Theology and faith. Theology is no longer limited to questioning and polemicizing the interpretation of God's territory. Islamic theology should have entered a progressive realm oriented to solve the present and future realities relating to all problems of human life in this universe.

PUBLIC EXECUTION AS THEATRICALIZED MEANS OF INFLUENCING SOCIETY FROM NEW TESTAMENT TIMES TO MODERN HISTORY

Abstract: The article deals with the theatricalization of public executions and the social mechanism of their impact (including the role of the Church) on society from the New Testament times to modern history. Based on research results, public execution in this period is considered a national festive occasion characterized by theatricality of action and is a socio-cultural phenomenon. In the study, the authors show how government bodies and the Church use public execution as a regulatory function that can be efficient if the masses are involved in this process in one way or another. To do this, the authors systematize the types of public executions for various reasons. An attempt is made, as far as the format of the article allows, to describe the expressiveness in public punitive events and public executions according to their scripted, directorial, theatricalized and entertainment components as a tool in managing the masses. Special attention is paid to the etymologization of public executions, based on research, primarily by Michel Foucault, and biblical descriptions. The article is based on cultural and historical research into the manifestation of the phenomenon of public

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execution in the history of mankind. The priority in the analysis is given to European countries in the Middle Ages.

ANALYSIS OF NUN MEMBERSHIP IN FEMALE ORDERS IN POLAND

Abstract: Religious congregations in Poland date back to the Middle Ages. Poland currently has more than 106 religious congregations with an active membership of over 17,000 nuns. For some time, the number of religious vocations has recently been on a decline; hence, this article examines the number of nuns in female religious orders in Poland. This study consists of two parts: a literature review that discusses the history and the current state of female religious congregations in Poland and an analysis of statistical data on nun membership in these congregations. This research was based on secondary information and statistical data. It sought to answer the following research questions: (1) How did the number of nuns change in Poland in 2000-2020?; (2) What are the most popular women's jobs in Poland? The results provide important information about the number of nuns in Polish religious congregations and thus indicate that in the last four years, these congregations have witnessed a significant decrease in the number of sisters serving in them.

EVERYDAY RELIGIOUS LIFE OF GERMAN POPULATION IN NORTH KAZAKHSTAN REGION IN THE LATE 1950s

Abstract: The article examines the everyday religious life of the German population in the late 1950s. In these years Kazakhstan became a place of virgin and fallow lands development, there was also a tightening of anti-religious policy after the XX Congress of the CPSU and the intensification of anti-religious struggle. The harsh attitude of the Soviet state towards religion did not prevent the Germans from adhering to their religious principles and national cultural values. Since their arrival in Kazakhstan the German population managed to establish strong economic communities with their own culture, ethnic identity and religious traditions. The religious everyday life of the German population is analysed based on secret memorandums of the Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs of the North Kazakhstan region Lyapunov, which allowed the authors to examine the variability of the everyday religious life of the German population and demonstrated the vitality of religious traditions and rituals. The authors focus on the religious practices of German communities, who made efforts to preserve their culture and identity amidst the anti-religious struggle. The conclusion is that despite the opposition of state and party organs, the proportion of believers and sympathisers of religion in this period in northern Kazakhstan was quite significant.

JUSTICE IS A PILLAR OF PEACE IN THE TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Abstract: The search for answers to the question of how to achieve peace in the modern world is an important scientific and research challenge. The vision of peace in society has been expressed for centuries by the teaching of the Catholic Church. One of the forms that define the framework for building peace are the specific pillars of peace, which are truth, justice, freedom and love. Pope John XXIII was the first to announce the pillars of peace, then successive popes in various aspects referred to this approach to building peace. The publication shows one of the basic pillars of building peace, which is justice. Many times, the definition of justice and peace became the foundation of the teaching of the popes at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. This article is an interdisciplinary one. It is embedded in theological teachings, because it refers to the teaching of Catholic Church and Apostolic See's statements about concrete an approach to education for peace based on justice. However, due to the matter of these statements, the article can also be classified as security studies - it contains a reference of the Church to contemporary social threats, such as, for example, armed conflicts.

THE REFLECTION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THE ARTISTIC WORLD MODEL

Abstract: The artistic world model that reflects reality in a special way is materialized in the human consciousness in the form of definite objects (paintings, architectural buildings) and spiritual images (literature, music, choreography) perceived by people. The aim of our research is to analyse the reflection of the Ten Commandments in the world art and bring to light the value of each Commandment based on that. Numerous pieces of art show the importance of the Ten Commandments as moral rules and civil laws for the humanity in general. The authors make a brief analysis of the interpretation of the Commandments in Judaism and Christianity.