

Call for Papers INTERNATIONAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROJECT

THREATS TO DEMOCRACY: NATIONALISM, POPULISM, EXTREMISM AND THE RESPONSE OF CHRISTIANITY

Questions & Outlines: tfdconference@gmail.com



Can religion avoid being degraded to the level of an ideology supporting authoritarian power? Are the slogans of returning to Christian Europe and the so-called Christian values not a facade hiding the political aspirations of populists, leading to a dangerous variety of idolatry? Do references to tribalist narratives that generate increased followers for their authors find an audible alternative? Does Christianity have the potential to (co-)respond to the threats of democracy?

We considered these questions to be the opening of a research project, the goals of which include:

- in-depth identification, analysis, and interpretation of phenomena that pose threats to democracy;
- looking for answers to the question about the potential of religion, especially Christianity, in theoretical and practical support of democracy.

There are long-standing trends in the Western world that remain under tension in the face of democracy. These include, on the one hand, the formulation of postulates to return to Christian Europe and the so-called Christian values, especially given the growing number of followers of Islam. Behind these slogans are most often the political aspirations of populists who, using Christian symbols, propose Catholicism without Christianity, i.e., a new religion focused on the nation as a mythical object, hostile to what does not fit within its strictly limited and closed framework.

On the other hand, the extreme liberalism and secularism facing Christianity today may lead to the emergence of Christian fundamentalism, used by populists and nationalists as an element of defense against so-called hostile ideologies. Such fundamentalism is built on post-seizure privileges, using which populists and nationalists often try to win favor with Church representatives. Similarly, the fundamentalist tendency is reinforced by a tribalistic narrative, focused on defense and struggle, thanks to which nationalists and populists gain new supporters, including among young people, whose involvement is often highly radical.

However, recent months have clearly and dramatically shown that Russian imperialism should be added to nationalism, populism, and various forms of extremism as threats to democracy. The war in Ukraine caused by Russia is openly supported by the Moscow Patriarch, who refers to religious ideology. In the context of Western Christianity, serious questions are raised by the Vatican's position on this war.

We want to consider these and other questions, giving the floor to experts and people acquiring academic skills so that - following the best heritage of the Academy, as a community of Students and Scholars - in the discussion and dispute, we lead our search towards new open questions.

PROJECT STRUCTURE [seminars and conferences in English or German]

- Poland, Krakow, expert session: 29.11.2022 – 02.12.2022** - general expert session + cultural program - participating Students/Ph.D. students are looking for inspiration and issues for individual work with the professor
- 12.2022 – 04.2023** - seminars in participating countries and preparation of students' statements
- Georgia, Tbilisi: 01.05.2023 – 04.05.2023** - student and doctoral session - lectures and discussion + cultural program
- Hungary (Budapest): 26.06.2023 – 29.06.2023** - student and doctoral session - lectures and discussion + cultural program
- Germany: 02.10.2023 – 05.10.2023** - summary seminar and selection of articles for publication

PUBLICATION

Publication in one of the leading international publishing houses is planned (level II on the Polish list).

APPLICATIONS: TILL 30.09.2022, IN ENGLISH OR GERMAN

- Abstract up to 1,500 characters with spaces, including the title and abstract of the proposed speech
- In the abstract, please include a note about the author
- conference fee: 100 Euro per participant | fees - with the title: [Conference Threats to Democracy - Name & Surname] - payable at ACCOUNT NUMBER: 74 1240 4881 1978 0011 0078 2618
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