

**“The Problems of Politology of Religion”**  
***Center for Study of Religion and Religious Tolerance, Belgrade, 2012***

Even though we live in a world which promotes tolerance and respect for the human rights of freedom and equality, the beginning of the 21st century brought out the fact that religion is gaining more and more influence on politics. Therefore, the need to understand that broad subject of their relationship led to the initiative for the forming of politology of religion as a separate scientific discipline of political science.

The important difference between politology of religion and other scientific disciplines which have religion as the focus of their studies is that politology of religion does not analyze religious dogma, nor question its correctness, but it deals with the way religion and church influence political events and the frame of mind of a society. This leads us to the conclusion that politology of religion was born as one of the youngest disciplines of political science in order to collect and analyze knowledge about religion and politics and their influence on one another, so that people could understand their relationship and act accordingly, solving important questions and political and social problems and issues.

In his book “The Problems of Politology of Religion”, Professor Miroljub Jevtic tries to give answers to some of the questions defined by the relationship between religion and politics today. The book contains ten chapters which deal with ten important topics concerning the politology of religion and providing good analyses of various issues, including neo-osmanism versus pan-islamism, the influence of the religion on unification of the old continent, the Arabization of non-arabic Muslims and the anthropological change of Arabs, the Orthodox view on conflicts, violence and tolerance in the global perspective, ex-Yugoslavian nations’ view on modern Turkey, the democratization of the Western Balkans and its religiously-oriented parties, religion as the cause of the division of the Serbian people, the transformation of the Albanian secessionism into an anti-Albanian movement, the Eastern Orthodox church and modern religious processes in the world.

In the Introduction, Professor Jevtic defines the main challenges this new scientific discipline faces – its position in the eyes of the political elite and society in general and, more importantly, the significance of identifying wrong points of view, which lead to conclusions and consequences that can only bring

harm to the society.

Throughout the history of political sciences, religion had never been seen as an important factor of influence on politics, under the assumption of peace between different religions, which guarantees peace in multicultural societies. The results of these misconceptions include various recent events around the world, which have proven the importance of a serious, scientific approach to this subject, thus motivating politologists to start analyzing and speaking out about the relationship between religion and politics.

Furthermore, Professor Jevtic also brings out the problem of political correctness and the absence of serious scientific analysis of the subject as the most important problem of politology of religion today. Because of this, politologists and other professionals with a lack of professional knowledge make wrong analyses which do not allow for the true understanding of the subject, which leads to wrong conclusions and guidelines for solving important social issues. Thus, the responsibility for some wrong political moves and their consequences lies with those quasi-scientific analyses done behind the veil of political correctness.

In the second chapter of the book the author focuses on the apprehension of neo-osmanism versus pan-islamism and gives the historical outline of both terms, as well as the terms pan-turanism and pan-turkism. Knowing the history and following the analysis of the current Turkey's foreign policy and its stance when it comes to national identity, we can only come to the conclusion that Turkish political leaders today make decisions that are in accordance to pan-islamism and its goals. We can recognise this in the endeavor to bring back the traditional Islamic system of values and Turkey's approach to the issues related to the Balkans and the Middle East, which are contrary to the values and politics established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the father of modern Turkey. Official political strivings of Turkey clearly have a great influence on the whole region today, so the idea of pan-islamism, rather than neo-osmanism, which is only a part of it, can't be overlooked in analyses concerning the political situation on the Balkans.

The next chapter of the book is dedicated to a study of the influence of religion on the forming of the European Union. Through the analysis of the way the European Union has been developing from the starting idea until today, and the analysis of how the inter-religious relations varied in different phases of the European Union's development, the author comes to the conclusion that there are two possible views on the subject of uniting Europe. The first view is that of a Europe with its different religions as a continent where the conflict is inevitable, and the second one is based on the secularization of Europe as the only way to bring the continent together, while also respecting all the religions and citizens of the continent.

Over the last half-century Islam as one of the major religions has been getting stronger, with the help of Arabization of the Muslim non-Arabs, and with

the anthropological change of Arabs as one of its consequences. This phenomenon can be explained by the Islamization and Arabization of parts of Africa and Asia during the holy Islamic war, Jihad, in the 7th and 8th centuries. This trend continued developing in later history, with Arabization spreading further into Africa and Asia, and this whole phenomenon resulted in changes in language, culture and tradition, as well as changes in anthropological structure, considering that Arabs today include people of different races. The author concludes that in this case the anthropological characteristics of a nation lose their importance in the face of the spreading of the Arabic language and culture, along with Islam as the sole reason for such Arabization.

The Orthodox Christian view on conflicts, violence and tolerance is another important topic this book covers. The view of the religion itself is perfectly clear and it forbids any kind of violence whatsoever. The Church as an institution, however, has a somewhat modified point of view, in accordance with state integrity and security. Keeping peace and promoting tolerance is one of the important roles of the church, but in the case of inevitable conflict the Church will step aside and allow violence, if it is done in order for the society to accomplish its rightful goals.

Turkey, as one of the more important countries on the Balkans, has a major influence on the other countries in the region. This can be easily explained when we have in mind the long history of the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire's rule and the Islamic tradition modern Turkey carries as part of its identity. The sixth chapter of Professor Jevtic's book "The Problems of Politology of Religion" contains a study about ex-Yugoslavian countries' views on modern Turkey. The relationships between these countries are greatly dependent on their religious composition, but they have mostly developed in a positive direction. Different views on different subjects are still changing these relationships, especially the views on the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina whose Muslim people identify Turkey as their homeland, and the different views on the question of the independence of Kosovo and Metohija.

Democratization of the Western Balkans and its religiously-oriented parties is one of the topics which are important for politology of religion, so the author thoroughly analyzes the political parties which have religious elements in their programs and which have been on the political scene of ex-Yugoslavian countries since their formation. These parties connect their activities to the interests of the Church and religion, and most of them propagate traditional social, moral and democratic values, which makes their activities all the more valuable for further research.

The author also covers the topic of the role of religion in the forming of the Serbian nation. Here we have two ways of comprehending the term "nation" – the ethnical and the political meaning of the term. Ethnically speaking, two pagan tribes that came to the Balkan Peninsula, Serbs and Croats, were of the

same, Slavic origin. Over the course of history, members of these tribes got separated by religion, first by dividing into Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians and later, during the Ottoman Empire, by adding Islam to major religions in the region. Shifting from one religion to another was a synonym for leaving one's nation behind, along with the religion of that nation. Therefore, even though they had always spoken the same language and had been of the same origin, in modern history these people of the same ethnic background divided into four different political nations (and countries): Serbs, Croats, Bosnians and Montenegrins because of religion (although Montenegrins are primarily Orthodox Christians like Serbs, they wish to secede from the Serbian Orthodox Church and start their own Church, which also adds to the importance of the Church in the process of the forming of a country). The whole study comes to the conclusion that the reason for the formation of these four countries lies in religious differences, hence once again proving the importance of analyzing religion in connection with political and social changes.

The ninth chapter of the book contains the analysis of the phenomenon of the transformation of Albanian secessionism into an anti-Albanian movement. Through a review of historical events that had lead to the forming of an independent Albanian country up until today, the study paints a picture of Albanians divided into three groups: Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Catholic Christians, and, along with it, their aspirations, attitudes towards the idea of a "Great Albania" and their relationship between each other. The whole text brings out the logical conclusion that Albanian secessionists, a big majority of them being Muslims, transformed into an anti-Albanian movement simply because of Islam. They aspire to become part of a big Islamic country, which is a pan-Islamic, anti-Albanian idea.

The topic of the last part of the book is the Orthodox Church and its role in modern religious processes in the world. Having presented the historical basis of the events that occurred during the 20th century, the author proceeds to analyze the situation in the Russian Federation, Ukraine and on the Balkans today, as well as the relationship between Orthodox churches in different countries and their relationship with the Vatican and other, non-Christian Churches and religions, pointing out the importance of the Orthodox Church and its influence on political events and religious processes in general. This part of the book is also a conclusion and a logical ending, since it, once again, points out interesting and dynamic religious processes in the world, and their importance for the mutual understanding of political actors of different religious backgrounds, as well as an overview of the future social and political processes.

"The Problems of Politology of Religion" is a valuable collection of studies concerning the influence of religion on political events, as well as the current processes and political issues in the world. Professor Jevtic's studies are an excellent example of how these processes should be perceived and analyzed. How-

ever, probably the most valuable argument of the book, as the title itself tells us, is that politology of religion can be problematic, especially when we take into account the problem of political correctness, which makes it impossible for the problems we need to analyze to be interpreted in a correct way, thus resulting in coming to wrong conclusions regarding current political and social issues. Therefore, a serious scientific approach, free of political correctness and society's censorship, is crucial for comprehending both past and current political processes, defining actual issues and offering optimal solutions for achieving peace, tolerance and mutual understanding between people of different ethnic, religious, social or political backgrounds.

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Примљен:14.3.2013.

Прихваћен:25.4.2013.

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