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RESEARCH AND RESTORATION OF THE ICON 'THE TREE OF JESSE WITH THE MOTHER OF GOD KYKKIOTISA'

...
The painting is completely covered - except for the portraits - by a silver revetment (oklad, riza). For the research and restoration of the icon, the revetment was removed by extracting the 41 nails from the edges of the wooden support and from the halos of the Mother and Child (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The icon 'The Tree of Jesse with the Mother of God Kykkiotisa' from the church 'Saint Stefan' - Ticau (Iasi, Romania).

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Physical investigations

The icon was analysed and photographed in direct and tangen-

tial natural light, on the Leica MZ7 stereomicroscope with camera, as well as with the UV lamp (365 nm). The icon was radiographed with an X-ray machine, at 40 kV, 25 mA. The working technique of the iconographer and the forms of degradation suffered by the icon over time were analysed.

Micro-samples gathered from ground and painting layer was used for FT-IR analysis by diffuse reflectance modality. Before taking micro-samples, the icon was carefully examined and documented in order to limit the sampling points and to obtain from them the maximum information as possible [4].

Diffuse Reflectance Infrared Fourier Transform Spectroscopy (DRIFTS) is a versatile tool for qualitative analysis of opaque solid powders. DRIFT spectra was measured using VERTEX 70 Bruker spectrometer. This instrument was equipped with an EasiDiff diffuse reflectance sampling accessory (Pike Technologies, USA). The spectral measurements have been processed with the Spectra Manager. Normalization of the spectra was based on an internal standard. All spectra were recorded from 4000 cm^{-1} to 200 cm^{-1} with 16 scans and spectral resolution of 4 cm^{-1} . Samples have been ground with spectrophotometric grade KBr in an agate mortar.

KBr powder was used as background of the spectrum.

2.2. Biological analyses

2.2.1. Histo-anatomical investigations

The plant material studied was represented by two fragments (A - from the icon's support, B - from a fixing pin of the crossbar) of secondary wood that were subjected to a boiling process for approximately nine hours in distilled water, after which were preserved in a mixture of 70% ethyl alcohol and glycerine, in a ratio of 2:1, for 24 hours. The sectioning of the plant material was done with the manual microtome and the botanical razor, and the obtained sections were subjected to double staining with green iodine and Ruthenium red. Observations and microphotographs were taken on the Euromex light microscope with included camera.

2.2.2. Entomological analyses

The wooden support of the icon showed signs of an attack by xylophagous insects. Adult insects were collected from the flight holes as well as sawdust with droppings. Insects were prepared in 10% potassium hydroxide solution, neutralized with 9% acetic acid and rinsed with distilled water. Observations were made by means of Leica MZ7 stereomicroscope with camera.

[Conference link](#)

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SAINT THOMAS AND THE RESTORATION OF CATHOLIC THINKING

Abstract: Bishop Pèrouse founded in 1859 the ‘Académie Saint Thomas d’Aquin’ in his diocese. Twenty years later ‘Æterni Patris’ appears, in which, unlike Pius IX who was content to condemn modern philosophies and see in Thomism the effective remedy against modernisms of any kind, Leo XIII also proposes the solution: ‘back to Thomas’! The encyclical engages the entire Catholic Church and the idea is to renew Catholic thinking by returning to the philosophy and theology of Thomas. It is said in ‘Æterni Patris’, 28: “Domestic and civil society even, which, as all see, is exposed to great danger from this plague of perverse opinions, would certainly enjoy a far more peaceful and secure existence if a more wholesome doctrine were taught in the universities and high schools—one more in conformity with the teaching of the Church, such as is contained in the works of Thomas Aquinas”. Leo XIII wants to establish a common vocabulary and basic principles by virtue of which Catholics, especially priests, can face everyday problems. The famous Leonine edition also begins with Leo XIII. Then, on August 4, 1880, Leo XIII declared Thomas the patron of studies in Catholic schools, and Pius X, on July 29, 1914, asked the Catholic philosophy professors to teach the principles of Thomism in universities and colleges. In the same year, the ‘Congregatio de Seminariis et Studiorum Universitatibus’ elaborates a list of 24 Thomistic theses considered as ‘tutae normae directivae’. After the death of Pius X, Benedict XV recommends the doctrine of Thomas and abrogates the 24 theses (1917). For all these reasons and many more, Thomas has always been proposed by the Church as a master of thinking and a model of the right method of doing theology. That is why Thomas bears the title of ‘Apostle of truth’, as Paul VI called him in the Apostolic letter ‘Lumen Ecclesiae’, 10. In short, “the minds of all, of teachers as well as of taught, rested in wonderful harmony under the shield and authority of the Angelic Doctor” (‘Æterni Patris’, 20).

LEADERS OF SUFI GROUPS IN KAZAKHSTAN SYNCRETISM AND TRANSFORMATION OF DOCTRINE

Abstract: Globalization and modernization contributed to the new views on religion, religiosity and spirituality. Religious leaders and religious communities are the largest and most organized civil institutions in the world. Religious leaders, more than any other representatives of civil society, have experience in establishing and working with international partnerships. Their experience is unique and can help global efforts to establish interreligious and interfaith dialogue, spiritual safety. Kazakh religious leaders are also contributing to the global effort. Sufi sheikhs are active actors in the Islamic renaissance. Sufism traditional for Kazakhstan was transformed and acquired the features of syncretic teachings. The reason is that modern leaders of Sufi groups receive foreign education, use multifactorial methods, psychoanalysis and various Western theories. The concepts of neo-Sufism and pseudo-Sufism take place in Kazakhstan. The self-identification of modern Sufis has been transformed; they create new religious constructs. In this regard, the article examines modern Sufi groups and social portraits of their leaders in Kazakhstan. The time frame is from independence to the present. The materials of the article are based on the theoretical basis of Sufism, both domestic and foreign studies, as well as on the information obtained by the authors in field research in Kazakhstan and Turkey. The used methods were depth interviews and participant observation.

THE RISKS OF A ROBOTIZATION OF THE HUMAN BEING

Abstract: The risks of the robotization of mankind generate both an issue related to the anthropo-technical nature of mankind’s quest for greater well-being. And, to the technical evolution that follows the appearance of man in his natural environment or biotope. Thus, through a Promethean adventure that makes him a production and even reproduction machine, man wishes to give more than a meaning to existence, in the manner of a homo sapiens and a homo-faber, by producing and reproducing machines or robots on a human scale. Moreover, these gadgets thus obtained constitute for man a form of concomitant transformation of his anthropo-biological nature and his environment, towards a transhumanising existence. In any case, we note that this anthropo-social emergence of technical humanism favours, on the other hand, the alienation of human freedom than the blossoming of the very nature of man as a being of freedom, in constant and permanent quest of the integral progress of his humanity.

NEURAL NETWORK APPROACH TO THE INTERPRETATION OF ANCIENT CHINESE GEOMANCY FENG SHUI PRACTICES

Abstract: It is shown that behind the ideas and practices of Feng Shui (more broadly, behind the ideas of ancient Chinese geomancy) and similar to them is quite certain a rational content. The proofs of this thesis are given on the basis of the neural network theory of noosphere, clearly correlating with the concepts of V. Vanchurin’s concept which considers the Universe as a neural network. According to the used theory the noosphere is a global neuron net, formed by interchange of signals between neurons, localized in the limits of individual persons’ brain. This makes it possible to justify the existence of supra-personal informational structures. At a time when the paradigm of scientific development generated by Western European civilization has practically exhausted its development potential, the rationalization of doctrines complementary to the sociocultural code of other civilizations is becoming relevant. The prerequisites for interpreting the category of ‘Qi’ as well as the teachings of Feng Shui based on the dialectics of information and an expanded interpretation of the noosphere as an informational environment, which includes the symbols generated by material culture and landscapes, have been created.

DESCARTES’ ‘NEW CLOTHES’ CARTESIAN THOUGHT IN PHILOSOPHY, NEUROSCIENCE AND THEISM

Abstract: At times intellectuals in the history of Philosophy are likened to the famous expression: the emperor has no clothes. This is often the case for Rene Descartes, yet it is more accurate to say that he is the emperor with new clothes, but few are willing to admit it. In what follows, I trace some of the recent developments in contemporary philosophy of mind and its overlap with Neuroscience and analytic theology. All three disciplines, interestingly, are confronted with the same problem as found in Descartes’ time and writings, and the solutions provided are strikingly similar to and beginning to look more like Descartes’ substantial dualism with the ineliminable ‘I’ or first-person perspective and irreducible consciousness. In fact, these finds seem to indicate the need for methodological dualism or pluralism that comprise a new science (akin to Descartes’ aspirations) rather than a naturalistic methodology. For these reasons, the following is a cross between analytic philosophy, the history of Philosophy, and analytic theism as a way to investigate Descartes’ influence in Philosophy, Neuroscience and theism.

RELIGIOUS MARKETING SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

Abstract: Various studies dealing with religious marketing and Church marketing were examined to see how the issues raised have evolved over time. This research plans to determine the primary studies, key authors, and the relevant terms



used, exclusive through the implication of marketing in religion. Within the Scopus, Clarivate, and other top four major Publishers' databases (Taylor & Francis, Wiley, Springer, and Emerald), a systematic literature review was performed to select, synthesize and analyse studies on religious marketing and Church marketing. Finally, bibliometric analysis was performed on 227 articles. Five major research clusters were pointed out (1. religious marketing strategies and techniques, 2. religious branding and the case of megachurches, 3. religious marketing orientation and segmentation, 4. religious consumer behaviour, 5. and internal Church marketing) and discussed. According to our knowledge, the present paper is the first systematic review on religious marketing. The research provides a broad overview of the concept, establishing connections between relevant topics, key terms and sub-themes in this area. The findings help to close a gap in the network between all relevant issues. Finally, several research objectives are recommended for the future.

RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR FOUNDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Abstract: The article concerns the problem of relationship between religion and human rights. It is aimed at considering the religious and secular foundations and perspectives of human rights, clarifying the reasons for differences and contradictions between them, as well as revealing the possibility of their interconnection. To implement the research tasks, the authors use the methods of analysis and synthesis, the comparative method, which facilitates the comparison of religious and secular positions regarding the content of human rights, their basis, and their role in human life and society. Attention is focused, first of all, on the following aspects of the relationship and interdependence of religion, human rights and secularism: religion sees in human rights an important means for protecting human dignity and for ensuring freedom of religion and strengthening its influence in society; human rights need religion as an important source of spiritual and moral values and a factor in the mobilization of believers; religion needs secularism to balance relations between religious and non-religious communities within the existing sociocultural space; human rights need secularism to ensure and protect the rights of both believers and non-believers, for social stability and peace. The opinion defended in the article is that between religion, human rights and secularism there should be interdependence, a constructive relationship, and not confrontation and mutual exclusion; lastly, religion, democracy, and human rights must support and complement each other.

CREDO UT INTELLIGAM NOTES ON LESZEK KOŁAKOWSKI'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Abstract: The article presents the views of the Polish philosopher on the phenomenon of religion. L. Kołakowski devoted almost all his professional life to the topic of religion. He placed the area of religious experiences and beliefs within the framework of transcendentalism, one of the basic and mutually exclusive options of 'transcendentalism - empiricism'. The empirical option encompasses empirical sciences and all naturalistic philosophies, while transcendentalism incorporates supranaturalisms, including religion. The philosophical attempt to go beyond naturalism in grasping the Absolute and the self ends in failure, hence L. Kołakowski indicated religious perception as an area that, while remaining beyond Science, does not contradict its value. The anthropological argument, within which the biologisation of human existence is unjustified, occupied a special place in the analyses of L. Kołakowski.

CONTROLLING DESTRUCTIVE ANIMALS USING MAGIC METHODS ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENT JEWISH SOURCES

Abstract: During the history, several animals have been a source of annoyance, disease and death for human and his property. This study explores the magic methods and ways of preventing destructive animals from inflicting harm (incantations, images and amulets) in the Roman-Byzantine Period. It also discusses the attitude of the rabbinic law to these methods (practices that designated *hover haver*). In contrast to the Eretz Israel sources that took a strict approach, which completely forbade any use of incantations to protect oneself from animals, the approach of Babylonian Amora'im was more lenient. They permitted recitation of incantations in order to subdue dangerous animals that assault people actively but forbade this when no danger was evident. Moreover, the Babylonian sources portrayed several incantations that might be beneficial in case of danger. 'Sefer Harazim' recommends controlling animals by the image of the hazard and an amulet that will be attached to the image.

SACRED RATIONALISM OF ROMAN JURISPRUDENCE

Abstract: The authors of the paper seek to trace the genesis of the political and legal institutions of ancient Rome and their features shaped by religious factors. In conquering the world, Roman Law promoted the statization of time, expecting to exist and act forever. This requires a metaphysical rapprochement between the people of today and the departed generations of the era of Rome's founding, that is, the continuity of tradition, coming from myth to religious norms. The Hellenization of Roman religion, which began with the reception of Etruscan cults, also brought with it Greek transcendence in the perception of the deities, previously alien to the Roman spirit. Religion was taking on new forms. The sacred law of the Romans was analogous to civil law. The religious dualism of the old and new gods quite corresponded to the legal dualism formed by Quiritian and Peregrine law. Just as the new Roman gods, censored by the sacred commission, actively crowded out the archaic gods, the law of peoples gradually eroded the rigidity of quirit law and its formalism. Roman law is a phenomenon of world history; it is life translated into rigid conclusions and mathematically precise formulas in the form of Roman jurisprudence, which has glorified its people, its creators, up to the present day.

RESEARCH AND RESTORATION OF THE ICON 'THE TREE OF JESSE WITH THE MOTHER OF GOD KYK-KIOTISA'

Abstract: The icon 'The Tree of Jesse with the Mother of God Kykkiotisa' from the church 'Saint Stefan' - Ticau from Iasi (Romania) is a Cypriot icon, painted in the first half of the 19th century, on gold leaf applied to the patterned ground. The author of the painting is Mihail, the son of Makariti K(o)sti. The painting was covered in 1855 with a silver revetment, donated by Ivascu and Susana Cerne, the people from the parish of Ticau and from the guild of grocers in Iasi. Over time, the icon suffered degradation due to the aging of materials, biological attack and due to inadequate subsequent interventions. For the research of the icon, physical analyses (radiographs, microscopic and ultraviolet light observations, FT-IR spectroscopic analyses) and biological analyses were carried out. The results of the investigations highlighted the method of making the icon and the revetment, the type of degradation, thus facilitating the establishment of the conservation-restoration process of the icon. After the restoration, the icon was valued by participating in temporary exhibitions and re-introducing it into the worship process, in the church of its origin.