RELIGION AND TOTALITARIANISM

CIHEC session in the CISH World Congress in Poznan, 23–29 August 2020

The modern totalitarian State derives from the French Revolution, that took forms of “totalitarian democracy”. The conflict with religion arose immediately. Napoleon, heir of the revolutionary tradition, made a clear statement in the Concordat of 1801 of his contempt for the rights of the weakest, apparently the Church. In a way, that is the essence of the conflict between religion and totalitarianism: the political power won’t find any reason to stop itself before the arbitrary and incorporates the transcendency to the political representation.

The institutionalisation of this invasive attitude was radically established in the so called political religions, according to the definition of Eric Voegelin in 1938, where politics does not only crash with religion, but substitutes it. Resistance to this substitution is of particular interest: motives, main actors, organisations, results. In the Polish case, the division – and confrontation – between People, Church and State is especially interesting.

The inter-war period saw the development of political religions – under different representations – in their maximum extension and power. This period – that was crucial for the recent history of the World – constitutes also the center of this colloquium, although contributions going back to the end of the 18th century or the contemporary soft-totalitarianisms won’t be discarded, as much in theoretical analysis as in practical applications. Also are welcome a open discussion about countries under totalitarian influence during this period, as Spain, during the Civil War or Mexico during the Cristero War in order to clarify the relationship between violence against the Church, totalitarianism and democracy in those countries.

By way of example, without being exhaustive, we suggest some possible topics:

* Transnational aspects of religious conflicts in totalitarian regimes: diasporas and international solidarities.
* Reality, interpretations and representations of religious persecution in totalitarian or semi-totalitarian regimes or states under totalitarian influence.
* Holy See and totalitarian states: conventions, concordats and conflicts.
* Connivances as clerical-fascism, totalitarian churches and pro-totalitarian confessional States in the Interwar years.
* Social and political impact of religious resistance against totalitarianism.
* Martyrs, victims and the memory of the resistance against totalitarianism.
* Relationship between anti-totalitarianism and ecumenism.
* Race and gender in conflicts between religion and totalitarianism.
* Religion as a unifying agent for social resistance against the totalitarian state.
* Contemporary forms of neo-totalitarianism and religious conflict.
* The use – or deformation – of the religious history in the totalitarian propaganda, and, also, the recent approaches to the Church history in the age of totalitarianisms.

The communication proposals of about ten lines, must be sent to a.pazos@csic.es before **30 November 2019**, with a short CV. The selection of the proposed papers will be made in December 2019.