

4th Biennial International Conference on Religion and Politics

A New, Even More Brave World... The Hope of Faith and the Hope of Politics

In memory of Benedict XVI

Thu, 30 Nov 2023 - Fri, 01 Dec 2023

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland

Idea and aim

We live in a time when the idea of a “new world order” has unexpectedly returned to the mainstream of public discussion. On the one hand, the projects of the “Great Reset” or the new world order after the pandemic, and on the other hand, terrifying images of the fight for the “Russian world” and the fear of the hanging hecatomb of the World War shape the social *imaginary*. It seems that the rebirth of various visions of a new, better world in a context marked by existential fear, disturbingly consonant with the constructivist recognition of imagining things “different, better than they are” as the basis of social changes, is worth a deeper analysis precisely in the perspective of the political science of religion. Ultimately, they send us back to the question of hope: What we can legitimately hope for and what we can’t.

In the above context, we would like to devote this year’s edition of the conference on the political science of religion – starting from the widely discussed concepts of “new world order” – to the question of the shape of political and eschatological hopes. What seems important here is the ability to distinguish the legitimate promises of politics from those that constitute a dangerous temptation to realize the “Kingdom of God” in earthly times. The question then arises how to distinguish between this true and false promise, and whether and to what extent religion can be helpful in this? Is the longing for a “better world” contained in religious faith a threat to a policy that respects human dignity, or rather its protection? Does religion *ex definitione* protect against totalitarian political aspirations, or on the contrary? Or maybe only some religions (if so, whether and according to what criteria they can be distinguished) play a positive political role? What does the “positive role” of religion mean (and what should it mean) from the point of view of political science? In the thicket of questions arising around the issue of messianic hopes, a special guide seems to be the thought of Pope Benedict XVI, who died at the beginning of this year. Therefore, we would like to make it the prism of our reflection.

In accordance with our tradition, we invite you to submit proposals for papers in the field of current scientific research in the field of religion and politics, which will be discussed during panel sessions. In particular, we encourage you to take up topics related to the central issues of the conference, which will be discussed during the plenary panels.