

“Religion, Civil Rights and Democracy”

2nd Conference of the international project “Religion and Human Rights”

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Julius-Maximilians-University Würzburg

Abstracts

Thursday, 11th December

Keynote addresses

Predictors of attitudes towards human dignity. An empirical analysis of attitudes of youth in Germany

Hans-Georg Ziebertz (University of Würzburg)

For a long time in history, the dominating understanding of human dignity was contingent. In this view, dignity is dependent from the social position or the behavior of a person. By the loss of a distinguished social rank or by immoral deeds dignity can be lost. Since the enlightenment, an understanding of dignity arises that it should be something inherent to human beings; inherent dignity cannot be lost. Although there is a controversy in philosophy and law about the content and scope of the concept of dignity declarations of human rights and constitutions refer to human dignity as the foundation of rights. This paper elaborates different dimensions of dignity. In the empirical part findings are presented how German adolescents (N=2517) evaluate different types of dignity and which predictors are significant. The general assumption is that different understandings of dignity are present among German youth and that religious belief, the capability to be empathic and sensitive, social class affiliation and socialization predict attitudes towards dignity. The analysis shows that empathy and religious belief are the strongest predictors.

The contested relationship between religion and state in Indonesia: empirical models.

Carl Sterkens (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Although the separation between religion and state is not explicitly part of the codified list of first-generation human rights, it offers important conditions for it. Freedom 'of' religion and freedom 'to' religion, but also freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, are at least partly defined by how the ideal relationship between religion and state is conceived. In practice, there are varying degrees of separation or cooperation between religion and state in different countries. And individual people also have differing views of the ideal relationship between religion and politics. This contribution describes the different ways in which Indonesian students perceive the ideal relationship between religion and state governance. It will also explain the extent to which Indonesian Muslims and Christians agree with different models of religion-state relationships, against the backdrop of their personal backgrounds and their religious beliefs.

Firstly, we will look at the current context of Indonesia in this respect. In recent years there has been an Islamisation of politics that can be understood against the background of recent democratisation and decentralisation of politics (1), and which illustrates the shrinking divide between religion and politics in recent years with some much-talked-about examples (2). Thirdly, we present a theoretical structure of state-religion relationships. We shall ground this theoretical structure on a political-philosophical distinction between autonomy liberalism, diversity liberalism, group communitarianism and state communitarianism (3). We then operationalise this typology in cross-religious comparative measurements (4). In a fifth section, we will describe the empirical results of our research on attitudes towards state-religion relationships. We first describe the levels of agreement with the different empirical models among Muslims and Christians, as well as the significant differences between these religious groups (5). Then we describe where these differing views on religion-state relationships can be found, and end with describing the religious beliefs that can predict agreement with either model (6).

Collegial Papers

Attitudes towards Freedom of Religion among Nigerian Students

Modestus Adimekwe (University of Würzburg)

The question of religious freedom is as old as the Human Rights endeavour itself. Freedom of Religion is a central theme in Human Rights and has come to dominate discussions in international circles in the last four decades. In Nigeria, human rights, especially the fundamental rights have long been adopted as legitimate moral and legal standards. Freedom of Religion is one such fundamental right. However, the recurring incidents of religious bubbles in Nigeria have raised questions about the definition, exercise and enforcement of the right within the territorial designation. This study, therefore, attempts to find out what Nigerians, especially the youths think about Freedom of Religion. Secondary school students (n=1191) in the last year of their secondary education constituted the research population. The Survey cuts across six states plus the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The sample includes Christians (Catholics and Protestants) and Muslims. We want to find out their views on freedom of religion, collectively and separately in their different sub-groups. It is assumed that they have negative attitudes towards the right of freedom of religion. However the result reveals otherwise - their attitudes are positive.

Two Cultures of Human Rights among Spanish Adolescents

Lluís Oviedo (Pontificia Università Antonianum, Rome)

A first wave gathering data with the extensive questionnaire *Religion and Human Rights* has collected about 500 cases of adolescents over 16 years in two Spanish regions, in public and private Catholic schools. The results thus far clearly point to the presence of two cultures: one represents a minority and is very close to Catholic traditional beliefs, practices, stresses the 'life rights' and is reluctant regarding issues like abortion and euthanasia. The second is clearly secular and more akin with new rights, including rights of women and homosexuals. Such situation probably reflects a sort of plural culture in Spain, and allows identifying clusters among these cohort of late teenagers. It would be very interesting to compare the data with other countries in the European environment to assess how such pattern is specific of Spain or finds similar traits in other settings, especially those of Catholic majority.

Religion and civil rights in Italy: an empirical exploration among secondary school students

Francesco Zaccaria (Apulian Theological Faculty, Bari)

Francis-Vincent Anthony (Università Pontificia Salesiana, Rome)

Carl Sterkens (Radboud University Nijmegen)

What is the role of religion in building up a civil rights culture in Italy? According to Marzano & Urbinati (2013), the privileged status of the Catholic Church prevents Italian public opinion to be supportive of civil rights; according to these sociologists, Habermas' theory of a public role of religion in a post-secularized society is not applicable in Italy, because of the virtual Catholic religious monopoly. This contribution presents the historical background of this debated relation between church and civil rights in Italy. It points out the reasons why both a negative and a positive role of religion toward civil rights can be expected. It shows the results of our empirical investigation among Italian secondary school students (N = 1,087), in order to explore the role of religion about civil rights among this portion of public opinion, which will shape the future of this debate in Italy. The questions we answer in this empirical investigation are: 1) To what extent do our respondents agree or disagree with civil rights? 2) Are there differences among groups of students (practicing Catholic, non-practicing Catholic, generally religious and non-religious students) in their support of civil rights attitudes? 3) What is the relation between religious attitudes of the students with their civil rights attitudes? 4) What is the relation between the background characteristics of the students and their civil rights attitudes? 5) What is the predictive strength of the students' religious attitudes on their civil rights attitudes, controlling this by their background characteristics?

Moldovan Youth on Religion and Human Rights: Answers, Questions, Recommendations

Vitalie Spranceana & Svetlana Suveica (University of Chisinau)

The reflection paper is focused on the perceptions and attitudes of Moldovan youth toward religion beliefs and human rights. At the core of the reflection stays the analysis of data collected during the empirical project which was carried out in the autumn of 2013 by a team of two historians (Svetlana Suveica, Ion Gumenii) and one sociologist of religions (Vitalie Spranceana). The team placed the findings into a larger social and cultural context, in which traditional values and custom play an important role. The findings show that at the very general level respondents reproduce the attitudes and norms of their respective religion towards a series of issues such as human rights, social justice, tolerance, abortion, death penalty. However, when confronted with the complexity of these issues, respondents attempt to abandon the religious-inspired interpretation and attempt to find answers on their own. The preliminary conclusions show that the gathered answers raise other complex questions in response, which also should be taken into account while the policy recommendations are designed. We aim at bringing the case study into a larger comparative and thematic frame of discussion, in order to depict common features as well specific affinities in the correlation of religion and human right values in different countries. Learning from the practices of other countries in this regard will help us foresee how such policies can lead toward fostering tolerance, acknowledging diversity and respecting the other among the Moldovan youth. The data were collected between October – November 2013 among 1000 youngsters (last-year lyceum pupils and first-year university students) from different cities on Moldova, with the support of the grant from the U.S. Embassy of Moldova.

Religion and Civil Rights in the multi-religious context of Tamil Nadu, India: Significant findings

Francis-Vincent Anthony (Università Pontificia Salesiana, Rome)

Carl Sterkens (Radboud University Nijmegen)

The multi-religious context of Tamil Nadu, India, can render the relationship between religion and human rights a complex one. The question that we wish to explore in this paper concerns the role religions play in soliciting and legitimizing human rights. Do religions differ in doing this? The focus is particularly on the impact of personal religious attitude (i.e., belief in personal or non-personal God, critical approach to religious belief, religious experiences, religious practice) and contextual religious attitude (interreligious interaction, trust in religions, function of religion, religion in contemporary society) on the perception of first generation of civil rights, namely, religious civil rights (freedom of religion, freedom to religion) and secular civil rights (freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, right to privacy, protection from discrimination of women and homosexuals, and prohibition of inhuman treatment). With regard to the background variables, besides the personal characteristics (i.e., age, sex, education, language, and family), aspects of religious socialization (i.e., religious identity, family and peer-group influence, and interreligious contact) and psychological traits (such as right-wing authoritarianism, social domination orientation, empathy and multiculturalism) have been taken into account. The statistical analysis of the data collected from 1200 respondents, in the Federal State of Tamil Nadu, India, bring to light differences in the tendencies among Christian, Muslim and Hindu students. Factor analysis bring to light two set of civil rights: "conventional civil rights" and "progressive civil rights concerning Homosexuals". Correlation analysis and regression analysis show that religion does contribute in varying degrees to the promotion of civil rights. This is clear from the association and the predictable value that some elements of the personal religious attitude and contextual religious attitude of college students have with regard to the two sets of civil rights. The

associations manifested by religious socialization also support this view. The associations and predictable value manifested by personal variable such as sex and psychological traits such as empathy suggest that educational institutions can contribute to the promotion of civil rights by attending to the relative psychological traits.

Mutual conflicts between religion and civil liberties: The roles of right-wing and left-wing authoritarianism

Üzeyir Ok (Katip-Celebi-University, Izmir)

In modern times the tension between liberty supporters and adherents of traditional values has been available sometimes turning into social conflicts in especially nations which has not yet completed the process of the transition from traditional structure to modern one. Scholars tried to explain the reasons of such kind of social aggression through such concepts as prejudice, fundamentalism and right-wing authoritarianism which are often related to traditional and religious people. In this paper besides studying the role of right-wing authoritarianism in the intolerance towards civil liberties, it was argued that this type of aggression does not come only from conventional people but also from secular fundamentalism so to say. This was tried to be explained by the term left-wing authoritarianism. A survey was distributed to a sample which included 260 university students with 113 male (43.5%) and 147 female (56.5%); their age range is 12-46 (mean=22,68). It was found that highly religious people tend to be against civil liberties. However, right-wing authoritarianism, especially the conventionalism, was found to be the main factor explaining this. In contrast, strictly secular people tend to be supportive of civil liberties in general but they were particularly against religious freedoms. It was found that the new construct of left-wing authoritarianism-aggression was playing the central role in this aggression.

Understanding of women's rights among young people in England and Wales

Leslie J. Francis (University of Warwick)

Mandy Robbins (Glyndŵr University, Wrexham)

Tuin and Fumbo (2012) explored the attitudes toward women's socio-economic rights among Christian and Islamic students in Tanzania. This paper will extend the work of Tuin and Fumbo in two ways. First the attitude toward women's socio-economic rights will be explored among young people in England and Wales (n=1058) and compared to the findings of the young people in Tanzania. Second the influence of religious beliefs and practices for Christians (n=477) and Muslims (n=203) will be explored alongside the beliefs and values of those young people who do not subscribe to a religious worldview (n=378).

The influence of the socio-cultural environment and personality on attitudes towards civil human rights

Susanne Döhnert, Alexander Unser & Hans-Georg Ziebertz (Univ. of Würzburg)

In their comparative empirical research among youth in Palestine and Germany, Webb, Ziebertz, Curran and Reindl (2012) could show that attitudes towards human rights are dependent from religion, values and the country of residence. The empirical result of this study is that the sociocultural context of the respondents matters when they are asked to value statements about human rights. That culture and society have a formative influence is supported by the social theory of human action of Magret Archer. According to Francis and Robbins (2013) the theoretical and empirical weakness of this research is that it neglects the importance of individual factors. In their study among British youth both authors stated that personality has major importance for attitudes towards human rights. Indeed, using Eysenck's personality scale, Francis and Robbins can show that personality influences attitudes towards human rights. But the limitation of this study is that Francis and Robbins did not include socio-cultural factors. The authors can conclude that personality counts, but they have no findings about the relevance of personality compared to socio-cultural factors. Obviously, the question which concepts counts more is unanswered. In the present study we will fill the explanatory gap. The empirical analysis includes both, sociocultural attitudes and personality characteristics. The general hypotheses is that the socio-cultural context of respondents is much more important than personality characteristics are. The sample is selected in six different countries in Europe, Asia and Africa, which allows a broad comparison of both concepts. The empirical findings confirm the hypotheses that in all measurements the explanatory relevance of the socio-cultural context is obvious and that the influence of personality is very low.

Attitudes of Dutch Youth towards Multiculturalism

Claudia Sarti (Emory University, Atlanta)

A multicultural society is a one in which minority groups can live in accord with their own customs. This ideal appears to be difficult to realize in Dutch society. For decades open borders to newcomers and refugees advanced cultural diversity in the Netherlands. In the 60's, the Netherlands experienced a major flow of guest workers from the South of Europe, Turkey, Morocco and Yugoslavia. As a consequence, the Muslim population in the Netherlands grew. In recent decades, guest workers are coming mostly from Eastern Europe—predominantly from Poland. For years the Dutch policy of integration for migrants promoted the empowerment of minorities. Today, however, this model is seen as a 'failure' for various reasons. With this background in mind, the focus of this paper will be to investigate the attitudes of young people in the Netherlands toward multicultural society. Do they see multiculturalism as an enrichment or as a problem? Does the religious affiliation of students have any influence on their responses to these questions? The empirical part of the paper will be based on the data of the Religion and Human Rights 2.0 project collected among 1250 senior secondary school students in the Netherlands.

Friday, 12th December

Keynote address

Relation between religion and civil and political rights among young Croats

Gordan Črpić & Marijana Kompes (Croatian Catholic University, Zagreb)

Due to the high percentage of declared Christians (91,06 %) Croatian society is one of the most religious in European context. Considering that fact this research examines the impact of religiosity (independent variable) on attitudes towards civil and political rights (dependent variable) among young Croats using data from a quantitative research conducted among students in the third and fourth grade of high school in Croatia in 2014 (N=1000). The design of empirical study was developed in the sociological frame. The questionnaire contains different questions about general data of respondent, society and societal life, religion, values and human rights. The statistical calculation is conducted with SPSS software. Expected outcomes are regarding attitudes of student population toward the civil and political rights as well as correlation between religious convictions and practices, and attitudes toward the civil and political rights. Special attention will be given to those human rights of the first generation which generate differences in correlation with the degree of religiosity. Further outcomes are expected regarding the interdependence between religious convictions, human rights attitudes and the youths' view on democracy and their value orientation. The reason for that lies in the fact that today's youth with their beliefs will not only influence the human right practice but also the quality of democracy as well as the value orientation of tomorrow's society. At the end, conclusions will be drawn based on the main findings of the survey especially those that can be helpful for improvement of human rights education among youth in Croatia.

Collegial Papers

Social Capital and the acceptance of Religion in the Public Sphere

Pål Ketil Botvar (Centre for Church Research, Oslo)

Religion has become a contested issue in public debates. Some think that religious symbols should be accepted in the public sphere while others argue that religion is creating so much conflict that it has to be regulated strictly by the authorities. Some of these debates are highly relevant for young people, for example debates on the use of religious symbols such as head scarfs among teachers and the establishing of prayer rooms in public schools. The young ones have different attitudes towards these questions. In this paper I will discuss attitudes towards public forms of religion in the light of social capital theory. Robert Putnam (1993, 2000, 2010) sees social capital as a resource that an individual takes with her or him from one relationship to another. Social trust constitutes an essential component of social capital. Trust generated in face-to-face-settings develops into a more generalized social trust that has profound effects on large-scale modern societies. On the one hand, *bonding social capital* has beneficial aspects by undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity, but it can simultaneously foster antagonism towards outside groups. *Bridging social capital*, on the other hand, serves to generate broader identities and reciprocity. In the paper I will analyze the explanatory power of indicators of social capital on views on religion in the public sphere. I use ordinary regression analyses to differ between these effects of the effects of background factors such as gender, political views, religiosity and the education level of the parents.

Living together in Wales: An assessment of the Welsh Government report from the perspective of the young people in Wales

Mandy Robbins (Glyndŵr University, Wrexham)

Leslie J. Francis (University of Warwick)

In 2008 the Welsh Government produced a report called *Who do you see? Living together in Wales*. This report was the result of a survey contracted by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. A total of 1,586 people aged over 16 years were interviewed throughout Wales. The two key findings to emerge from this report were that those with wide social networks and with higher levels of education were likely to be more inclusive of others. This paper will explore some of the issues raised by the Welsh Government report in relation to the *Human Rights* survey conducted among 1058 young people. The *Human Rights* survey was conducted among people from the ages of 14 to 18 years of age.

Constitutionalism and Human Rights in Fragmented Societies

Milan Podunavac (University of Belgrade)

In contemporary political societies constitutionalism is almost globally universal standard of "good governance". Constitutionalism is no longer brand of Western societies. It has become truism the we have to understand the law and constitution in particular in plural perspective. In the first decade of the new millennium the debate flagged on the role of religion in public sphere and in civil societies as a more focused of the human rights and identity politics discourse. The role of religion in a public sphere of civil society" becomes constitutional issue almost globally. Ulrich K. Preuss teases out the argument that there is only one standard of modernity. Preuss offer thesis that "we are live in the age of "multiple constitutionalism", and one of them may be less individualistic, more communitarian and arguably more religious". That open the question how to balance in such cases freedom of two or more different religious communities, and how to balance their rights with individual religious freedom. How to modify constitutionalism within deep ethnic cleavages based on ethnic, linguistic and more and more religious diversities and defend its inherent premises, individually based equal citizenship. In order to provide the argument to fundamental question – can constitutionalism accommodate deep divided societies and remain liberal- I would discuss, firstly, some scholarship discourse, and in secondly, provide different human rights constitutional politics, mostly backed on SEE perspective.

Georgian Orthodox Church and Human Rights - Ambivalence, antagonism or acceptance of Human Rights?!

Sophie Zviadadze (University of Tbilisi)

Revitalization of religion in Post-Soviet Georgia is vivid as on individual (increased amount of religious people) as well as on institutional (increased role and authority of the Church) level. Religious factors, to some degree define various political issues, cultural identity, values, and social activities. Despite a number of progressive steps in establishment of democratic institutions, civil society, is human rights (freedom of religion, freedom of expression) a challenge for the state as well as for the Church. The paper explores ongoing tendencies in the field of human rights of first generation in post-Communist Georgia. Ambivalence towards religious pluralism, acceptance of freedom of religion and speech, the rise of religious fundamentalism, controversies on the separation of religious and political spheres are crucially important issues facing Georgian society. The position of Georgian Orthodox Church and religious leaders influences developing attitudes towards human rights. The Church tries to determine "who will benefit from human rights". Paper aims to identify main attitudes of Georgian Orthodox Church / religion-based groups towards the human rights of first generation, the acceptance of which right/liberty is most problematical and what are the underlying reasons for such set of attitudes. Is the reason the normative theological views and its influence on society? Religious fundamentalism? Or a lack of civil consciousness and knowledge about human rights?

Traditional Prejudices in Advancing Human Rights Culture in Tanzania

Clement Fumbo (University of Tanzania)

This study investigates the traditional prejudices in advancing Human Rights culture in Tanzania. The aim is to find out nature, causes, and reasons that hinder the process of advancing the knowledge of Human Rights culture in Tanzania and possible measures to tackle the situation. The main research questions are: What are the nature and causes that hinder Human Rights culture in Tanzania? To what extent is the problem and why? What are the possible solutions? The study falls under Humanities Academic Discipline utilizing among others ecological systems and anthropological theories. The methodology is based on library materials and other sources available, including relevant reports and studies. Analysis of data will be in both qualitative and quantitative. It is expected that despite fully embracing and accepting Human Rights Culture in theory as some previous research may indicate, yet, largely, Tanzanians do the opposite in practice. Diversity of cultures and traditions with a huge variance of understandings in Tanzania has a direct influence and impact on their attitudes. Hence, majority of Tanzanians are raised in a strict and conservative pattern. The pattern which is comprised of immediate religion, clan, family, parents, guardians, etc and traditions around them, essentially, assumes legitimate authority in moulding most individuals' attitudes. A combination of the above does influence prejudices and hypocrisies that necessitate Human Rights rejection systematically. Therefore, the study will try to suggest some possible solutions that will elucidate the views on Human Rights towards its legitimation in Tanzania and make our world a safer place.

A Comparison of Approaches to Human Rights: Divergence and Convergence

Ray Webb (University of Saint Mary of the Lake, Mundelein)

Although the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the best known comprehensive statement on human rights, there are several other broad expressions of widely applicable declarations of principles of human rights. This paper compares and contrasts the U.N. statement with 1) a Roman Catholic natural law perspective; 2) a "Protestant" covenant approach; 3) a Muslim "umma" point of view; 4) an Orthodox understanding; and 5) a "human basics" (focus on the poor) approach. The origins, underlying principles, moral absolutes, universal applicability, points of communality and disagreement, and opportunities for convergence and mutuality are explored, as are the modes of interpretation and "enforcement." Ultimately, how can persons of good will, from diverse backgrounds, cultivate possibilities of working toward the common good? The work of Thomas Aquinas, John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, John Rawls, Alasdair MacIntyre, John Witte, Muslim scholars, Orthodox scholars, Paul Farmer, Thomas Baima, and others contributes to the discussion.

The impact of religion on three generations of human rights: Sweden

Anders Sjöborg (Uppsala University)

The first wave of the study on human rights and religion provided an empirically rich material which has enabled theoretical applications and discussions. The Swedish data seemed to indicate a rather limited impact on the freedom of religion and freedom of speech which was possible to interpret as a strong interpenetration of human rights discourse into the religious field, or as a high acceptance of human rights in the general Swedish society. Results from the second wave of the Swedish study undertaken during 2014 will be presented at the conference, highlighting a comparison with the first wave, where possible. In the paper specific attention is given to the impact, if any, of religion, on the three generations of human rights. Here, the subgroups Christian, Muslim and non-religious youth are compared.

Religion in the Public Space: Different perceptions among young Chileans of separation between church and state

Joaquín Silva Soler (Pontifical University Santiago de Chile)

In the decade of the 70s in Latin America was dominated by authoritarian regimes and military dictatorships, with consequent systematic violation of human rights. From the 80 were observed processes of democratic recovery and significant advances in the recognition of the rights of individuals and peoples. Although in Chile Christian churches played an active role in defending human rights and the restoration of democracy, there is evidence to suggest that people do not expect or want the Churches to have a leading role in the public space. To do so, the principle of separation of church and state is invoked, constitutionally active in Chile since 1925. The objective of this study is to determine the perceptions that Young Chilean have about the role of religion in public space and in particular the principle of separation of church and state. Our general hypothesis is that young people value the separation of church and state (E8), but in turn, this assessment will be different according to religious identities (A8), and will have a negative correlation with the degree of influence that they recognize to religion in public opinion (C1. a and f), with the intensity of their religious practices (F2) and confidence levels they express in religion (C5).

Religion, Religious Liberty and Democracy

Johannes A. van der Ven (Radboud University Nijmegen)

In the past religious institutions vehemently reacted against both democracy and religious liberty. Now the scenery has changed, which is to say, some religions accept religious liberty either for pragmatic reasons or for reasons of principle, others do not or at least not totally. The same is true in relation to democracy. Some religions support it, some tolerate it, some oppose to it, as they favour so-called 'decent hierarchical states' (Rawls). Only a small number of small group religions accept democracy within their own walls, most of them are of the opinion that religion and democracy do not go together because of the paradigm of 'symbolic realism' they entertain (Wils). However this may be, the survival in the midterm future of both political institutions (democracy and the right to religious liberty) depend on the support by today's youth. The first empirical question is whether their support is strong enough and the second whether there are differences in that between religious and non-religious youth in this regard, whereas some population characteristics, especially gender as well as value orientations are being controlled. The empirical part of the paper relates to data collected in 2014 among about 1200 senior secondary school students in the Netherlands, one of the most secularised countries. In the project hierarchical regression models will be used to sort both questions mentioned out.