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BETWEEN POLITICS AND RELIGION – IN SEARCH OF THE “GOLDEN MEAN”**

The correlation between politics and religion is still a current problem. This may be illustrated by the example of contemporary European states, which regulate their relation to religion based on double constitutional principles, and so can illustrate two respectively different models of the confessional state and the lay state. The essence of the confessional state lies in its close tie with a concrete Church, which is raised by law to the rank of being official or privileged. Actually in Europe the states which *de iure* are confessional include Great Britain, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Greece, Cyprus, Malta and San Marino (and some cantons of Switzerland).¹ On the other hand, the lay states, as a rule, reject the possibility of acknowledging any religion as official (privileged). Currently in Europe these are distinguished as the lay states whose legal systems are based either on

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¹ The confessional states in present Europe are still democratic ones. They declare the equality of rights to freedom of conscience and religion for all their citizens, though do not respect the equality of rights for Churches as religious groups.

the principle of aggressive separation of religion (such as France²), or on the principle of moderate separation (such as Poland).³

The mismatch of the relationship between state and Church is therefore something obvious, important, and significant at the same time. This is obvious, since in fact it exists in actual historical context. It is important, which is shown by the rank of the constitutional entries. And significant, since it is a distinct expression of the lack of civilizational identity of contemporary European states.

In the perspective of the above issue, the reflections contained in the following article undertake the problem of the identity of Western civilization.⁴ An absence of universally accepted formulas of the interrelation between state and Church as embodied in today's social life seems to be a sufficient motive to reassess the theoretical investigations in terms of the relation between politics and religion. When was this problem noticed for the first time?

The Origin of the Debate

Responding to this question is difficult, but all the same possible. For certain, the theoretical attitude of the ancient Greeks does play the key role here, since not found in poetized, barbarian cultural circles, even though the non-Greeks often represent a highly civilized world. The theoretical debate about the problem of the correlation between politics and religion finds its beginnings as early as in the wake of classical antiquity. In a light of the rich social experience of the ancient Greeks, a conflict between these two spheres of culture comes into being – as Henryk Kieres remarks – when politics, exemplified in the state institution, disregards the authority of religion as the core of social life, or when – due to *ad hoc* tactical or programmatical reasons

² In Eastern departments of France (Alsace and Lorraine) there are three confessions that enjoy the official status: Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Judaism.

³ See Jozef Krukowski, „Konstytucyjne modele stosunkow miedzy panstwem a Kosciolem w Europie,” *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (PAN O/Lublin, 2004 nr 9) (www.panol.lublin.pl/biul_9/art_907.htm - Jan 5, 2007).

⁴ Cf. V. Possenti, *Religia i zycie publiczne. Chrzescijanstwo w dobie ponowozytniej*, trans. into Polish by T. Zeleznik (Warszawa 2005), p. 161.

– doctrinally identifies itself with religion and *ipso facto* loses its own autonomy.⁵ The reflections undertaken by Sophocles or Plato clearly show a Greek awareness of these problems. The author of *Antigone*, in considering the attitude of the eponymous heroine toward the death of her brother, perceives the danger of the conflict between statute law and the religious transcendence of man. Thus, he announces the problem of overly distancing politics from religion. In turn, Plato in his *Apology of Socrates*, in analyzing his master's *causus* of a legally valid death sentence for the crime of promoting impiety, unmasks the fact of political instrumentalization of human piety. He puts then a question mark concerning placing politics too close to religion.⁶ Both diametrically different errors emphasized by the Greek thinkers clearly suggest that the very problem boils down to rediscovering the “Golden Mean” in relations between politics and religion, and setting the boundaries of their social competencies and due autonomies. Let us try to determine it first with following an indirect method, meaning, while developing Plato's and Sophocles' intuitions, to answer the question: what is this “Golden Mean” not?

The Domination of Religion over Politics

Following the steps of Plato, it is easy to get to the conclusion that the “Golden Mean” cannot depend on the sovereignty of religion and its domination over politics in the whole of human culture. Yes, it is not possible to ignore the fact that religion has constituted the center of social relations since the very beginnings of their development, and consequently interfered in the domain of politics. Originally, every type of human society, from the family to the tribe, was identified with a religious society, since no other social system but the sacred was known. Thereby the division between religious believers and members of an ethnic group was something completely strange. On the one hand, all religious practices, such as performing a cultic sacrifice or

⁵ Cf. Henryk Kieres, „Polityka a religia. Na kanwie mysli Feliksa Konecznego,” in ed. Z. J. Zdybicka [and others], *Wiernosc rzeczywistosci* (Lublin 2001), p. 481.

⁶ *Id.*

abiding by religious commandments, determined a political discipline, to which the entire society was subject. On the other hand, all manifestations of political life were meant to deserve the splendor of the living religious worship. The result of this, owing to the sacred characteristic of collectivity, was that the life of a given group could also constitute a certain political whole. Sacred keystones of the past communities might include, for example, a common descent of their members from divine or half-divine ancestors, or myths depicting the genesis or history of a certain community, or laws ruling a given society as an expression not so much of human culture, but divine will. Especially, the history of such civilizations as the Chinese, Japanese, Egyptian, Persian, or Mesopotamian proved that primitive man saw in political society a certain form of *res secreta et sacra*, and worshiped a certain divine element in it. Even the ancient Romans did not protect themselves from this, and in certain periods of their history they approved the *salus publicae* or Rome as divinity, and gave a divine reverence to them.⁷

In practice, however, granting religion the attribute of sovereignty in culture results in either eliminating politics (with its sacralization), or endowing it with a status of certain autonomy.

Sacralizing politics means that it loses itself in religion, which finds its fullest expression in theocratic regimes that use means of political coercion with the goal of saving the souls of their subjects. The very term *theocracy* was coined by Joseph Flavius, who used it to signify the concept of political rule, described in the Jewish Bible. In his *Against Apion*, he notices that, apart from monarchy, oligarchy and republic, there also is a system of rule based on God, to whom is attributed the highest legislative, executive, and judiciary authority. Man, on the other hand, who is a believer and a subject at the same time, is obliged to be obedient not only in the external sphere of his acts, but also in the internal domain of his thoughts.⁸

⁷ Paweł Tarasiewicz, *Spor o naród* (Lublin 2003), pp. 73-75.

⁸ See Josephus Flavius, *Against Apion*, II, 17 (trans. by W. Whiston, 2001): "Now there are innumerable differences in the particular customs and laws that are among all mankind, which a man may briefly reduce under the following heads: Some

Flavius' considerations on theocracy find their follow-up in the thought of Baruch Spinoza, who, in his *Theologico-Political Treatise*, adds that all earthly authority held by man is authority delegated by the Divine Sovereign, who alone chooses rulers for His people. In other words, every actual ruler carries on himself the sign of Divine anointment, thus deserving as much respect of his subject as the obedience the very same subject owes to God.⁹

The autonomy of politics in culture, in turn, designates its complementary character toward the sovereign religion, which in practice means the possibility of granting the former certain rights to its own activity. However, as to the scope of these political rights, as well as to the evaluation of all political proceedings, it is still the religious agent that decides entirely and independently. A phenomenon of this kind is

legislators have permitted their governments to be under monarchies, others put them under oligarchies, and others under a republican form; but our legislator had no regard to any of these forms, but he ordained our government to be what, by a strained expression, may be termed a Theocracy, by ascribing the authority and the power to God, and by persuading all the people to have a regard to him, as the author of all the good things that were enjoyed either in common by all mankind, or by each one in particular, and of all that they themselves obtained by praying to him in their greatest difficulties. He informed them that it was impossible to escape God's observation, even in any of our outward actions, or in any of our inward thoughts" (www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext01/agaap10.txt – access: Jan 5, 2007).

⁹ Benedict de Spinoza, *A theologico-political treatise*, XVII (trans. by R. Elwers), p. 219-220: "God alone, therefore, held dominion over the Hebrews, whose state was in virtue of the covenant called God's kingdom, and God was said to be their king; consequently the enemies of the Jews were said to be the enemies of God, and the citizens who tried to seize the dominion were guilty of treason against God; and, lastly, the laws of the state were called the laws and commandments of G-D. Thus in the Hebrew state the civil and religious authority, each consisting solely of obedience to G-D, were one and the same. The dogmas of religion were not precepts, but laws and ordinances; piety was regarded as the same as loyalty, impiety as the same as disaffection. Everyone who fell away from religion ceased to be a citizen, and was, on that ground alone, accounted an enemy: those who died for the sake of religion, were held to have died for their country; in fact, between civil and religious law and right there was no distinction whatever. For this reason the government could be called a Theocracy, inasmuch as the citizens were not bound by anything save the revelations of G-D" (www.yesselman.com/ttpelws4.htm#CHXVII - access: Jan 5, 2007). See Jacek Bartyzel, „Teokracja,” in *Encyklopedia „białych plam”*, vol. XVII (Radom 2006), pp. 131-133.

effectively unmasked by H. Kieries, who notes that even some contemporary representatives of Christian culture may strive for measuring the legitimacy of political proceedings with a criterion stemming from religion. The proponents of this view concur that such criterion is universal, thus conceptually covering the goal of politics: the common good, and conveying itself in the rather conceptually ambiguous slogan of fulfilling so-called Christian values.¹⁰

In summary, it is noticeable that the main drawback of sacralized as well as religiously autonomized politics is its trespassing upon the ontological status of the human person. Although man rightly appears as a religious being here, at the same time, he is divested of his due sovereignty and legal agency. Granting religion the status of sovereign in culture is synonymous with taking it away from human persons, acknowledging them as beings of purely accidental character. Consequently, men are stripped by the political authority, whose area of activity is meant to reach the depths of the human conscience, of their inborn right sovereignly to determine their decisions, and freely recognize, as their own, all ordinances upheld and promulgated by legislative authorities.

The Domination of Politics over Religion

Following the intuition of Sophocles, it is not difficult to perceive that the next form of denying the “Golden Mean” results from granting the status of sovereign being to politics, and admitting its dominance over religion. Philosophical positions that temporarily bring about the over-estimation of politics in culture are all ways of expanding the views of the modern thinker, Niccolò Machiavelli. In his well-known *The Prince*, he not only subordinates religion to politics, making of the former a tool serving the latter in exercising its power effectively, thus strengthening the unity of state, but also separates politics from morality, entrusting the former with guardianship over the so-called sphere of morally neutral things, and relates it with art, as he sees in it nothing but the “art of ruling,” whose goal is to gain the power, and

¹⁰ Cf. H. Kieries, p. 485.

then retain it.¹¹ Such cognitive suppositions may have many resulting consequences, which in general may extend to eliminating religion, or neutralizing it.¹²

Eliminating religion from individual and social life may find its proponents among those who demonstrate their beliefs through referring them to the thought of Ludvig Feuerbach. In his famous *The Essence of Christianity*, he opts for granting politics the status of a “new religion” built on both the love of man and atheism. He rejects not only Christianity, but also any religion relating to the Transcendent. In his opinion, religion is a form of false consciousness that creates the idea of God as a being opposed to man. The creation of “God”, continues L. Feuerbach, entails degrading man, which ought to be opposed by overcoming traditional faith. And with this assignment he charges philosophy, since anthropology is meant to replace theology until man becomes conscious that “God” is only a name for his own idealized essence. When false consciousness becomes extinct, the place of “God” will be taken up by the state, and the role of philosophy—by politics. In the state, according to L. Feuerbach, human powers are not only divided and distributed, but also developed in order to constitute the infinite being. In other words, the multiplicity of human beings and their forces create a new power: the providence of man. The true state, then, becomes the unlimited, infinite, true, complete, divine man: the absolute man.¹³ By deifying the state (resp. the absolute man) L. Feuerbach comes to the obvious conclusion that politics is to become human religion.¹⁴

The displacement of theology by philosophy is also a characteristic of August Comte’s reflections. The author of *System of Positive Polity* aims at erecting a “positivist religion,” concentrated on

¹¹ Cf. M. A. Krapiec, *O ludzka polityke* (Katowice 1995), p. 17.

¹² Cf. H. Kieres, p. 485.

¹³ Ludvig Feuerbach, *O istocie chrześcijaństwa*, trans. into Polish by A. Landman (Warszawa 1959), p. 87 (cit. in Zofia J. Zdybicka, „Alienacja zasadnicza: człowiek Bogiem,” in ed. A. Gudaniec, A. Nyga, *Filozofia – wzloty i upadki* (Lublin 1998), p. 30).

¹⁴ Z. J. Zdybicka, *Alienacja zasadnicza*, p. 30. See Frederick Copleston, *Historia filozofii*, vol. VII, trans. into Polish by J. Lozinski (Warszawa 1995), pp. 296-303.

the cult of the Great Being, meaning humanity. A main trait of positivist religious worship is that its object identifies itself with one of the objects of positivist science. As a consequence, then, to the elite of his new religion, Comte does not include anybody but representatives of his educated world. To professional scientists, highest priests of the science, he also ascribed the highest competency of having political power, while granting only auxiliary functions to professional politicians.¹⁵ Not without reason, then, one can find an *à rebours* analogy between the positivist political system and theocratic governments. In both cases, in the sovereign power there are exclusively initiated priests that control all proceedings of politicians, whose duty comes down to supervising the people and securing its obedience.¹⁶

The proponents of neutralizing religion, in turn, may be divided into authoritarians or advocates of tolerance, who differ from each other in their views on the range of the respective competencies of politics and religion. Thomas Hobbes is an outstanding representative of authoritarianism, who as the starting point of his doctrine contrasts politics with religion, and religion with politics. He considers all confessions as claimants to power in the state, or, in other words, as competitors to the political elite. Seeing in them a potential danger, the author of *Leviathan* completely subordinates religious communities and their doctrines to political rulers, with the principle of *cuius regio eius religio* in mind. The omnipotence of the political sovereign finds its particular expression in his right to intervene in the sphere of religious views and teachings as far as to give the ultimate interpretation of all religious texts.¹⁷ Generally, authoritarians maintain that the border between the political area of civil obedience and the realm

¹⁵ See Frederick Copleston, *Historia filozofii*, vol. IX, trans. into Polish by B. Chwedenczuk (Warszawa 1991), pp. 100-104.

¹⁶ A literary illustration of such an analogy can be found in the graveside speech in honour of Pharaoh Ramses XII (see Polish novel written by Boleslaw Prus: *Faraon*, vol. III, ch. IX), which describes an Egyptian hierarchy system that consists of the priests who know and determine goals of the state, the pharaoh who cares about accomplishing these goals, and the people whose duty consists in obeying orders.

¹⁷ Frederick Copleston, *Historia filozofii*, vol. V, trans. into Polish by J. Pasek (Warszawa 1997), pp. 53-54. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, III-IV.

of religious freedom lies where human activity meets human thinking (conscience). They believe that men possess complete freedom of religious belief (resp. the sphere of human thought and conscience), while, in their conduct (resp. the sphere of human activity), they must show passive obedience toward political rule, which also enjoys the right to exercise its power over all external phenomena of religious life.¹⁸

Advocating tolerance, on the other hand,, appears clearly in the views of John Locke that faithfully respect the principle of Hobbes' opposition between politics and religion. In his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, he liberates religion from the chains of authoritarian rule, and introduces it into the sphere of politically neutral things that constitute a domain of tolerance. Externalizing one's religion, then, is conditioned by one's positive civil education, meaning the rational agreement of citizens in political matters, the chief of which being the right to and defense of life, freedom, and property.¹⁹

In summary, it can be concluded that the main weakness of politics' dominance in the culture, analogous to the case of religion's dominance, consists in trespassing upon the ontological status of man. Both of its modifications, the elimination of religion from social life as well as its neutralization, clearly undermine the ontological sovereignty of the human person. Against a background of the social whole, the sovereignty of individuals appears to be second-rate, or even superfluous. This becomes apparent particularly in the context of their attempt to eliminate any supernatural transcendence from religion, and convince man to regard the state or humanity as divine beings. Proponents of such a view additionally question religious implications of human nature, as they try to constrain any manifestation of natural religiosity to earthly immanence. The neutralization of religion in social life, in turn, following the principle of the opposition between politics and religion, interferes in the ontological

¹⁸ See Ryszard Legutko, *Tolerancja. Rzecz o surowym państwie, prawie natury, miłości i sumieniu* (Krakow 1998), pp. 36-48.

¹⁹ See John Locke, *List o tolerancji*, trans. into Polish by L. Joachimowicz (Warszawa 1963).

unity of human being, thus making man split into two separate (contradictable) agents: either committing moral acts, or performing political (morally neutral) actions.

The above reflections, launching from the intuitions of ancient thinkers, aimed at responding to the question of what the “Golden Mean” between politics and religion is not, and showing reasons for which the domination of religion over politics, as well as politics over religion, ought to be recognized as false positions. Nevertheless, both of them include some legitimate suggestions that can make the problem of politics-religion interrelation positively resolved.

The “Golden Mean”

The religious sphere and the political domain find their own identities only within their reference to man. Even with their peculiar and inaccurate approaches to human nature, both the above-depicted positions do apprehend some necessary traits of the human being. For proponents of religion as a cultural sovereign do not make the mistake of rejecting the inalienable status of human religiosity. In turn, propagators of politics as a sovereign in culture are entirely right in perceiving human agency (and the legal body of man) in the area of statute law. Now, if both these viewpoints are to avoid cultural conflicts effectively, it seems that there is no other way but fully to respect the integral conception of human being. However, from those who advocate religion or politics, it requires a radical compromise, which consists in transferring the cultural sovereignty from religious and political centers to man, thus subordinating them to him. Such a transfer justifies itself not only in protecting human religious dignity as well as agency in law from opposing each other, but also in respecting human ontological sovereignty.²⁰ Here, it is worth noticing that all these parameters of the human being, deserving to be protected

²⁰ See M. A. Krapiec, *O ludzka...*, pp. 40-52.

and respected within the culture, pertain to the integral vision of the human person, worked out on the grounds of philosophical realism.

Apart from its realism, its universalism is also a significant feature. It does regard the fact that individual members of human societies mostly differ among each other on account of their age, gender, race, or state of health, and also due to their talents, education, or social position. Moreover, each has the equal status of personal being, naturally predetermined by human contingency, potentiality, and transcendency. In the light of its principles, the contingency of man contains his existential unnecessary and derivativeness from the Absolute being; human potentiality implies a rational and free way of actualizing human nature in the context of social life; the human transcendence, in turn, owes its debts to these features of man that distinguish him as a person, namely to cognition, love, freedom (together with responsibility), agency in law, ontological sovereignty, and religious dignity. The realist (i.e. integral) conception of man states that living the life of a person is something natural for all people, and that, in respect of such a life, all people are equal to each other. For every man shapes his personhood from the moment of his conception to his natural death in the context of the same parameters.

The realism and universalism of the integral conception of man predisposes it to performing methodological functions. These two constitutive factors make the conception fully satisfy the indispensable condition of being a neutral criterion of evaluating all human activities and their results, even these of the correlation between politics and religion. Its criteriological competence inheres in its objective and negative character. Its objectivity protects it from entangling itself in apriori ideology, while its negativity safeguards it from following any utopian design of a “new man.” For the integral idea of the human being does not make it possible to determine what the relation between politics and religion ought to be, but only to point to what must be respected in order for every man to make constant progress in achieving his personal perfections. Consequently, in the correlation between politics and religion only such a concept of the “Golden Mean” deserves to be named “adequate” (meaning “human”), for it

makes the integral development of each human person possible. Whereas, any other approach fails to avoid trespassing upon the deposit of person life connatural to every man, and so is an error or abuse.²¹

The integral conception of the human being, as H. Kieres states, reveals the natural religiosity of man and its irreducibility, which leads to conclusion that political activity is not in a position to deprive people of their rights to advance their religiousness, nor impose any religion on them by force. Politics, however, is obliged to create the circumstances in which human religiosity could be accomplished in accord with its nature, i.e. without offending the personal dignity of man.²² It implies that only from the perspective of philosophical realism does man appear as a fully sovereign agent of political as well as religious life.

On the other hand, in no other way but by being subordinated to man does both politics and religion find their proper (autonomous, proportional) statuses in culture. Here, religion exposes its real relational structure, connatural to the dynamic bond between a human person and the Divine Person, where the former depends on the latter for his or her existing, acting, and the ultimate goal of living.²³ Based on the ontological bond between men and the Absolute, religion penetrates all other fields and spheres of culture (including politics), thus becoming the principle of their identity as well as the unity of man himself, since religion raises all of human life to the personal level.²⁴ Politics, in turn, discovers its own appropriate autonomy in culture as a prudent realization of the common good, meaning a care for the proper (ie. according to the individual measure of man) actualization of human, personal potential within the context of social life.²⁵

²¹ See P. Tarasiewicz, pp. 15-26.

²² H. Kieres, p. 490.

²³ Zofia J. Zdybicka, *Człowiek i religia. Zarys filozofii religii* (Lublin 1993), p. 302.

²⁴ Mieczysław A. Krapiec, „Kultura,” in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, ed. A. Maryniarczyk, vol. 6 (Lublin 2005), p. 138.

²⁵ M. A. Krapiec, *O ludzka...*, p. 2.

In accordance with their competencies, H. Kieres concludes that politics and religion achieve proportionately this same goal, as they aim at optimally accomplishing every individual human life, and they respect the same criterion of evaluating their own actions, while using various methods. Their common good is man, and since such a good is indivisible, there is no collision between politics and religion. And if there ever arises a conflict, it is exclusively brought about by the cognitive errors of man. Such errors may consist in rendering politics godless, or sacralizing it, or even in reciprocally neutralizing politics and religion. For if the goal of politics underlies the good of real man, then any nonpolitical sphere cannot exist. Trying to create such spheres is to operate against human nature, and to make the mistake of civilizing one man in two incompatible ways at the same time.²⁶ The “Golden Mean”, then, consists in restoring the due status in culture to man, who is able sovereignly to plan and accomplish the goals of his activities, to which both politics and religion have their own proportional contributions.

What about the Identity of Western Civilization?

It seems to be a truism to think that Western civilization owes its identity to classical culture, which includes Greek philosophy, Roman law, and Christian religion. Such a statement, however, loses its commonplace character in the face of other agents, which also see themselves among the essential characteristics of the Western world. For many centuries within its boundaries and penetrating each other have existed not only Greek, Roman, and Christian models, but also Jewish, Muslim, Celtic, German, Slavic, or the like, samples. Why, then, can Western civilization not find its roots in any non-classical patterns, meaning non-Greek, non-Roman, and non-Christian resources?

²⁶ H. Kieres, pp. 490-491.

The reason is simple, but all the same unusually important. It lies in a difference between territorial and spiritual communities.²⁷ If the West were a unit solely in the space-time sense, then all historical events could lay their valid claims to it in proportion to the time of their presence, or the extent of their influence. Integral ingredients of Western civilization, then, could comprise, for example, Renaissance humanism or Enlightenment universalism, as well as intercontinental colonialism or international socialism. However, the essential core of the West concerns neither *ius soli*, nor *ius sanguinis*, but a specific *ius personarum*. For the greatness of Western civilization is conveyed in formulating the real and universal principles of advancing human persons within society. This means that in order to live according to the Western spirit, man need not be a Christian, nor a disciple of Plato and Aristotle, nor a master of Roman Law. He must, however, respect his own personal dimension and that of others, since trespassing upon the personal status of others is tantamount to undermining himself.²⁸

Therefore, Western civilization is not limited to time, place, race and the like, but it always comes into sight when there is the integral vision of man as the basis of social life. This conception includes not only each and every person, but also their entire structure, so that it does not tolerate any anthropological reduction, even those intended to realize the most beautiful ideals. Its functions in culture it eventually fulfills by caring about the primacy of person over thing, ethics over technology, mercy over justice, and loving “being more” over striving for “having more”.²⁹ That is why the universal respect for the personal dimensions of human life seems to be a key condition of the timeless identity of Western civilization.

TRANSLATION: JAN R. KOBYLECKI

²⁷ Cf. Piotr Jaroszynski, „Co to jest Europa?,” in P. Jaroszynski, *Polska i Europa* (Lublin 1999), pp. 9-18.

²⁸ H. Kieres, p. 491.

²⁹ See Paweł Skrzydlewski, „Cywilizacja,” in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, ed. A. Maryniarczyk, vol. 2 (Lublin 2001), p. 343.

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SUMMARY

The author undertakes the problem of the identity of Western civilization in the light of a correlation between politics and religion. First, he traces the theoretical debates about the mutual correspondence of politics and religion in ancient Greece. Following two extreme errors depicted by Sophocles in his “Antigone,” and by Plato in his “Apology of Socrates,” he infers that the “Golden Mean” is necessary in resolving the problem of politics and religion. Then, he examines the underlying errors put forward in the history. His investigations show the erroneousness of endowing either politics or religion with sovereign status in culture. There is always a conflict between politics and religion unless man regains his own sovereignty from them. Ultimately the author arrives at the conclusion that the “Golden Mean” correlating politics and religion distinctly strengthens the identity of the Western Civilization, and consists in respecting all real and universal parameters of human person life, such as cognition, freedom (and responsibility), love, agency in law, ontological sovereignty, and religious dignity.

KEYWORDS: religion, politics, culture, Western civilization.