

Globalization is a worldwide process driven by economic and technological forces. It brings with it a multitude of social and political developments, some benign, others anything but benign (as recent events have made clear in a compelling way). But globalization has also had massive consequences in the area of culture, including the central cultural phenomenon of religion.

*Peter L. Berger*

Globalization of any form of militancy, whether religious or secular, is in need of ethical, universal criteria to prevent it from becoming a source of further destruction to the sanctity of human life and dignity.

*Adbulaziz Sachedina*

As we are entering the third millennium, we are witnessing the end of hegemonic European Christianity due to a dual process of advanced secularization in post-Christian Europe and of the increasing globalization of a de-territorialized and de-centered Christianity. Thus, the one-thousand-year old association between Christianity and Western civilization is coming to an end. Western Europe is less and less the core of Christian civilization, and Christianity in its most dynamic forms today is less and less European.

*José Casanova*

If we must have nihilism, let us not dilute it with water and let us drink it full strength, with Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the deconstructors. In order to reach the end of the present crisis we must first experience it fully, we must not interminably repeat attempts which already failed a hundred years ago, like “the quest for the historical Jesus.” Mine is a search for the anthropology of the Cross, which turns out to rehabilitate orthodox theology.

*René Girard*

Nations are realities willed eternally by God. That is why we cannot reject their right to existence, but we must consider them as given facts, unavoidable, even on the higher plan of religion, more specifically of Christianity.

The question is, how can we realize that synthesis that will not be in the detriment of the nation, nor in that of Christianity, synthesis which, keeping the specificity of different nations, could save both the unity of Christianity, its ecumenicity and which while leaving nations distinct from each other will unite them in the same spirit.

*Dumitru Stăniloae*



*THE ROMANIAN INSTITUTE  
OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY  
AND SPIRITUALITY*  
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invite you to

*The Tenth Ecumenical Theological  
Symposium*

**Contemporary Culture  
in the Light of Christian Spirituality  
at the Beginning of the Third  
Millennium  
Secular Realities  
and Spiritual Perspectives**

Sunday, December 1, 2002  
5:00 PM

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
13-21 College Point Boulevard  
(at 14th Ave.)  
College Point, New York

Subway 7 or bus Q66 to Flushing Main Street  
then take bus Q20A or Q65

**George Alexe**

Senior theologian of the Romanian Orthodox Church, member of the Union of Romanian Writers, director and founder of *Romanian Communion*; Chairman of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality:

*Contemporary Culture in the Light of Christian Spirituality at the Beginning of the Third Millennium: Secular Realities and Spiritual Perspectives.*

**Oana Hidveghi, MS**

University of Bucharest: *Christian Spirituality in a Self-Oriented Society.*

**Rev. Dr. Bert F. Breiner**

Episcopal Church USA, Chaplain Grace Church School, New York; Professor of Human Services, Metropolitan College of New York: *Christian Ethics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Trajectory of the Good.*

**Rev. Drd. Pavel Nicolescu**

Romanian Baptist Church, Ridgewood, NY: *Is this World Secular?*

**Drd. Daniela Anghel**

The National Institute of Thraco-Dacian Studies, Bucharest: *Contemporary Culture between Real and Ideal.*

**Dr. Constantin N. Tsirpanlis**

Professor of Church History, Patristics and Orthodox Theology; President of the American Institute for Patristic and Byzantine Studies: *Existentialism, Personalism and Orthodox Humanism*

**Dr. Richard Grallo**

Professor of Human Services, Metropolitan College of New York; Quest Institute, New York: *How to Think about Culture*

**Rev. Fr. Dr. Eugen Pentiu**

Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Holy Cross Greek School of Theology, Boston, MA: *Marriage made in the Garden.*

**Rev. Fr. Dr. Theodor Damian**

Professor of Philosophy and Ethics at Metropolitan College of New York; President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality: *Culture and Cultures: Globalization and Identity.*

GUEST OF HONOR:

**The Right Rev. Fr. Dr. Vasile Vasilache**

Vicar of the Romanian Archdiocese of America and Canada

DISCUSSION PANEL:

**Rev. Dr. Paul E.C. Hamilton**, Episcopal

Church USA; Professor of Human Services, Metropolitan College of New York

**Drd. Daniel Damian, MSA, SS.** Peter

and Paul Romanian Orthodox Church, Queens, NY:

**Rev. Fr. Tudor Mazur**

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church USA

Jaroslav Pelikan defined Tradition as being the living faith of the dead and traditionalism as the dead faith of the living.

Can we apply these definitions to culture?

Is a culture that does not change dead?

What is the difference between culture and tradition? What is the relation between identity and innovation? How can status quo maintain its value and relevance in the face of change in a world that divinizes change and demonizes resistance to it?

What kind of change do we want? Can we identify one that will not kill tradition and annihilate culture? Can we constructively receive and deal with resistance to change?

Is religion on the side of change or of tradition? What is the current perception? In discerning the signs of our time, do we see a comeback of religion from the peripheric and the optional to the center?

How does who you think you are affect who you really are? How can Christian spirituality be relevant to a world in process of globalization? Does globalization need to be spiritualized?

What does that mean? Is global capitalism going to bring about global religion?

Such questions and others will be addressed in the papers and discussions that will take place at this Symposium.

*Theodor Damian*