

Faculty of Philosophy

University of Bucharest

Candidate: Professor PhD. Savu Totu

Habilitation Thesis

Philosophy and Theology

(a) Summary

The career development is closely related with the development of the scientific and academic activities. The teaching activity is deeply connected with scientific research activity (which has a profound interdisciplinary character due to the dialogue between philosophy and theology initiated almost ten years ago by the faculties from Bucharest and Iasi) and this requires a continuous reassessment of the courses I teach.

Beside the course of “Greek Philosophy” that I teach to the first year of BA studies program, where the references to theology are just indicatives, the other courses, namely

“Philosophy and Religion”, “Neoplatonism and the Christian Thinking”, “Image of the Invisible. Iconoclastic Controversy” and “Christian Philosophy in East and West” (course that I teach at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology from the University of Bucharest), require also a good knowledge of Christian Theology. For this purpose, I resume reading some authors of the first Christian centuries for a better understanding of European culture’s evolution also from the perspective of what some contemporary authors call it, very inspired, as a different dimension of it, a “culture of spirit”. Therefore, a complementary “reading” of the cultural facts is needed to fully understand the way the “European man” can evolve.

The scientific activity development closely related to the professional one, is viewed from the perspective of the relation between the philosophy and theology. The major interest is the issue of how the neoplatonic philosophy is received by the Christian theology mainly in the first Christian centuries and in the XIV century. My research concerns are directed towards understanding the relationship between reason and faith, highlighting the role of philosophical thinking in building the apologetic Christian discourse, analyzing the philosophical terminology present in Christian writings, studying the role of the icon in Orthodox cult, and so forth. The scientific achievements were the natural pursuit of the research activity development on several lines of force:

- a) the problem of configuring Greek philosophy as ontology and metaphysics;
- b) analyzing the relationship between Greek metaphysics and Christian theology;
- c) examining the role of ancient Greek philosophy for Christian thinking;
- d) highlighting the need for a dialogue between philosophy and theology in the context of globalization.

The research activity developed mainly according to the didactic requirements; a certain part of the scientific research influenced the professional activity, particularly in its last stage. The fact that starting with the academic year 2013-2014 I teach a course entitle “Christian Philosophy in East and West” at the Faculty of Orthodox Philosophy of the University of Bucharest reinforced the conviction that my interest for the complex relation between philosophy and theology should be supported by the development of scientific research and also the teaching activity on this interdisciplinary thematic direction. In fact, my interest in this kind

of philosophical problems has increased naturally, and it was not by accident that the doctoral thesis extended in later research.

The development of academic activity has been in good correlation with professional activities and scientific research. Participating in various conferences, congresses or workshops was and will be directed strictly on the coordinates of the two activities already mentioned. Also, the participation to the conferences organized by the Romanian Patriarchate in collaboration with the State Secretariat for Cults, Al. I. Cuza University of Iasi and the University of Bucharest, under the title “Dialogue between Theology, Philosophy and Science”, became one of the constants of my academic activity. In the academic year 2014-2015, as tutor in the Postdoc Fellowship Program ("Innovation and development in structuring and representing knowledge through doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships - IDSRC doc postdoc POSDRU / 159 / 1.5 / S / 133675) I organized two workshops (mentioned the project's site) and in the following academic year I participated in three international conferences (in Romania, Greece and Spain).

In the future I will organize various conferences at the Faculty of Philosophy, I will continue the projects already started last year and I will organize meetings between theologians and philosophers discussing the possibilities of a Christian philosophy (both organizer and moderator for these meetings). I will continue to investigate the role of philosophy in structuring the theological discourse of the first Christian centuries by analyzing the fundamental philosophical concepts that have contributed to the elaboration of Christian doctrine. A particularly important problem is the influence of the Greek philosophy on the constitution of the doctrinal body of Christianity. In this sense, I consider it necessary to continue the older researches in order to understand this problem in the contemporary context.