

Some Reflections on Religion and Multiculturalism in Romania: Towards a Reappraisal of the Grammar of Traditions.

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the potential of the Christian tradition in Romania to offer a constructive answer to the contemporary dilemmas of multiculturalism. However, for this to happen there is a significant need for a fresh re-reading of this tradition. The starting point of my work will be an overview of the data on the question of religion and ethnicity in post-communist Romania. This will be followed by an assessment of the predominant trends involved in the building of the societal texture of Romanian contemporary society, with special emphasis on attitudes towards authority, otherness and dialogue. The ambiguous potential of traditions, both for destruction and for the healing of societal relations, will be singled out as an important characteristic of traditions. The work will argue for a reappraisal of the Christian tradition and its role, pleading for a fresh re-reading of its complex and pluriformed grammar. Emphasis will be placed on seeing Christianity – and its implicit traditions – as a Religion of Neighbourliness and a Religion of Love, oriented towards the future rather than the past, towards the other rather than the self, inspired by eschatological hope rather than blind allegiance to fixed dogma. Methodologically, my paper will fall in the area of conceptual analysis, partially informed by quantitative analysis and the data available from auxiliary sources

Key words: Multiculturalism, christianity, tradition, orthodoxy.