

**THEOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH  
AND SOCIETY**  
110 YEARS OF *BOGOSLOVSKA SMOTRA*

Stjepan BALOBAN

Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb  
Vlaška 38, p.p. 432, 10 001 Zagreb  
stjepan.baloban@zg.t-com.hr

*Bogoslovska smotra* is the oldest and the most significant theological scientific journal in the Croatian-speaking area and one of the most significant scientific journals in Croatia. The first issue was published in 1910, and 2020 marks the 110th anniversary of the first publication. Since 1966 it has been published four times annually, although on a few past occasions certain issues were published as a compound.

The Faculty Council of the Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb has decided in 2019 to add to the existing four printed issues, a *fifth issue*, as an electronic journal in foreign languages. This is the *inaugural issue of Bogoslovska smotra* in such a format.

Since its inception *Bogoslovska smotra* has always been available to all interested theologians and philosophers in the Croatian-speaking area, as it is evident from published papers. A more thorough analysis of this theological scientific journal would reveal diverse topics that have dealt both with the Church-theological issues and the relationship of the Church and society. It is significant to highlight that our journal has, over the last decades, set out to give more space to current topics with reference to the role and place of Christians in public life and the role of faith and religion generally in new social circumstances, which have been rapidly changing in relation to faith, the Church and acceptance of God. This distinct orientation has benefited from interdisciplinary empirical research projects that have been conducted at the Catho-

lic Faculty of Theology since 1997, in cooperation with colleagues from other members of the University of Zagreb (sociologists, psychologists, statistical methods specialists, sociologists of religion...). Within scientific research activities the Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb has carried out a number of such research projects. I would like to outline the first research of such kind »Religion and Morality in Croatia« from 1997 (led by prof. dr. sc. Marijan Valković)<sup>1</sup> and the international project »European Values Study« which has been carried out continuously for Croatia since 1998 at the Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb (led by prof. dr. sc. Josip Baloban EVS 1999, 2008, and 2017). The papers dealing with these mostly interdisciplinary projects have also been published in *Bogoslovska smotra*.<sup>2</sup>

I would particularly like to emphasise that *Bogoslovska smotra* has published, both throughout its history and today, significant papers from various areas and branches of theology, which at this time of »abundance of theological work« renders the journal scientifically relevant even beyond the Croatian-speaking world.

In order to take scientific papers by Croatian theologian and philosophers beyond the Croatian-speaking area, the professors of the Catholic Faculty of Theology have been, for some time now (somewhere since the early 2000s), striving to publish a part of this work in foreign languages, to allow the international public to learn more about the Church-theological developments in Croatia. Thus far, the international community could have an insight, in a summary fashion, from abstracts of papers published in foreign languages. The idea of publishing articles in foreign languages had gone through various phases before the current Editorial Board realised it as a fifth annual issue in the format of an electronic journal. The support that the Faculty leadership had given us, allowed us to obtain funding and to launch this project. I do hope that conditions for long-term funding of the fifth issue of *Bogoslovska smotra* in foreign languages will be created within the Faculty.

In the course of its century, *Bogoslovska smotra* suffered two periods of disrupted publication (1919 - 1922 and 1945 - 1962). The main reason for these disruptions in publication was of financial nature. Notably, both occurred in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Socio-religious study: »Religion and Morality in Croatia«. Preliminary report, *Bogoslovska smotra*, 68 (1998), 2, 461-700.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. European Values Study - EVS - 1999. Croatian data. Preliminary report, *Bogoslovska smotra*, 70 (2000), 2, 173-503; European Values Study - EVS - 2008. Croatian data, *Bogoslovska smotra*, 80 (2010), 2, 399-642.; European Values Study - EVS - 2017. Croatian data. Preliminary report, *Bogoslovska smotra*, 89 (2019), 2, 201- 488.

the aftermath of the two world wars; following the First World War and the Second World War respectively.

Since the early days, the editorship of *Bogoslovska smotra* has been run by the professors of the Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb, while the publishers have changed over time. The most financially stable period began in 1978 when Croatia's leading Catholic publisher »Kršćanska sadašnjost« took over. More recently, against the backdrop of a difficult situation in publishing generally, and particularly in the area of theological publications, financial support from the Ministry of Science and Education provided to all journals in Croatia, has been of great help in maintaining regular publication schedule. The Ministry has put an end to such practice in 2019, and in the meantime, scientific journals within the University of Zagreb have been looking for new sources of funding. All these factors point to the fact that in the future, *Bogoslovska smotra* will have to rely more on the financial support of the Faculty.

A legitimate question arises: Taking into account such uncertain financial situation, why is the Catholic Faculty of Theology launching a fifth issue of *Bogoslovska smotra* in foreign languages? Two reasons come to mind. Firstly, to create conditions that allow Croatian theologians, principally young theologians, to express their scientific relevance beyond the Croatian-speaking world by publishing their work in foreign languages. Secondly, along with the fact that we have recently been seeing increased interest from foreign authors, to create a possibility for networking and exchange of ideas and knowledge, which is necessary for development of any science, including theology.

The foreign language issue of *Bogoslovska smotra* will consider only those papers that meet the highest scientific criteria of this journal, obtained on the basis of relevant reviews, and when necessary, additional editorial analysis.

With respect to foreign authors, besides scientific excellence, we will take into account the suitability of their topics with reference to the profile of this journal, which is specifically the role of the editor-in-chief and the Editorial Board.

It is important to underscore that the same rule will apply to all authors, both domestic and foreign – we will consider only those papers in foreign languages which meet relevant language standards.

The Faculty Council has, on recommendation of the Editorial Board of *Bogoslovska smotra*, appointed Associate Professor dr. sc. Danijel Tolvajčić the executive editor of the fifth issue of *Bogoslovska smotra*. I would like to wish him much success in this scientifically demanding, but above all challenging work.

By getting off the ground a foreign language issue of *Bogoslovska smotra* and on the occasion of the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of publication (1910 – 2020), the professors of the Catholic Faculty of Theology have demonstrated their commitment to bringing together Croatian theology and theologians with peers worldwide. They have thus demonstrated their commitment to the development of Croatian theology, opening up new possibilities for networking and activating dialogue around the theological duty to serve the Church and society.

I am delighted to welcome the foreign language issue of *Bogoslovska smotra* into the scientific community and wish it continuity and regularity in publication.