

ABSTRACTS

of the publications submitted to the academic jury by Martin Ossikovski, applicant for the position of associate professor in Theory and History of Culture (Research and Communication Culture in the Social Sciences and Humanities), Professional Field 3.1., Sociology, Anthropology, and Culture Sciences (following Republic of Bulgaria's national classification of academic domains), as announced in *Darzhaven Vestnik*, issue 48, 28 June 2022.

1. Martin Ossikovski, *The Priest and the Press: Topoi of Faith in International News, 2011–2019* (Veliko Tarnovo: Faber, 2022); 279 pp.

It is well known that religion often sails in the waters of 'hard' international news – as a rule, hand in hand with thematic domains such as culture, politics, law, education, and economics. Hence many researchers argue that religion news is no exotic media suburb – that neglecting religion could damage or irreversibly harm the story that needs to be told. This book aims to dive into the communication taxonomy of religion news precisely in its capacity of being a vital ingredient of high-quality media content.

Methodologically, the book seeks to achieve this via thematic analysis of religion-related press materials of diverse genres published in leading global news outlets between 2011–2019. The analysis spans over 163 selected publications of higher information value coming from 18 news outlets and focuses out three large religious 'topoi' or 'thematic nests': politics; religious 'others'; and 'big questions' of faith.

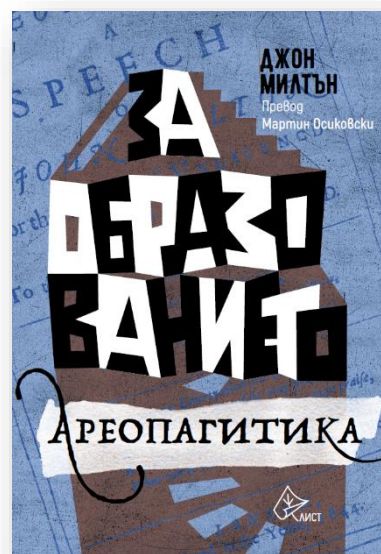
The book's introduction outlines the general directions of the historical development of how religion and news – 'the priest and the press' – work together, primarily after the 1950s, with some scant observations on earlier periods as well. The book's chapters then unfold each one of the thematic nests mentioned above by turning to selected journalistic examples. Chapter one, 'Christianity and Politics,' examines the intersection of political and church life and tracks global social issues, economic concerns, and specific challenges facing Europe, America and Russia as its inner thematic rings. Chapter two, 'The "Others" in Dialogue,' brings forth the 'religious other' around the subfoci of interconfessional Christian dialogue, attitudes to non-Christians, and the religious side of today's migration challenges. Lastly, chapter three, 'Questions of Faith,' addresses more specific matters related to personal, social, and church aspects of religious life – rare, yet persistent companions to religion news worldwide.



In conclusion, the book observes that high-quality religion news can well break through beyond the populist abuses of religion for political gain – and justifies the hope that this could contribute to improving the health of local media ecosystems in general.

2. Martin Ossikovski (introductory study, primary source text translation and commentary), *John Milton: Of Education, Areopagitica*, ed. Kalin Yanakiev (Sofia: List, 2020); 163 pp.

John Milton (1608–1674) published *Of Education* and *Areopagitica* in the summer and late autumn of 1644. The first of these two texts systemises Milton’s pedagogical views of the right path to knowledge as a means to ‘repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the neerest by possessing our souls of true vertue.’ In *Areopagitica*, published several months later, Milton put together his full-scale programme of safeguarding the free flow of knowledge, which ‘cannot defile’ given the fortifications of pure will and conscience. The quest for knowledge, in other words, appears to be a vital topical link between *Of Education* and *Areopagitica*.



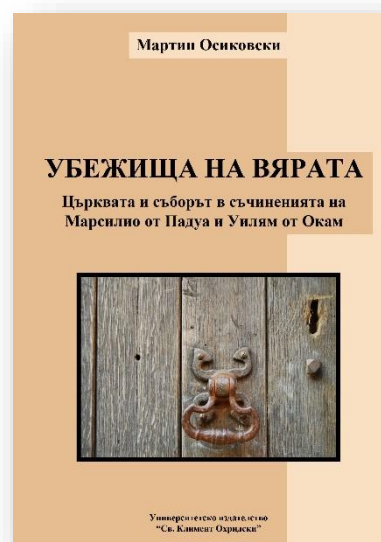
This book offers an in-depth study and Bulgarian translation of the two primary source texts supplemented by detailed parallel commentary. The study aims to unfold the specific context of the circumstances related to the texts’ consecutive appearance in the 1644: the Comenian pedagogical ‘fashion’ in London at the time, which Milton explicitly opposed in *Of Education*; and the development of the system of state censorship between 1637–1644, which takes the focus of *Areopagitica*. The study examines the rich palette of names and documents playing a role in these two nearly parallel processes. A total of 290 *in-situ* commentaries to the primary source text translations reveal the details of Milton’s direct and indirect references to his various opponents and fellow proponents from the 1640s. In this regard, the commentary examines more than 50 additional primary sources, which the book describes in detail in the bibliography at the end.

3. Martin Ossikovski, *Shelters of Faith: The Church and the Council in the Writings of Marsilius of Padua and William of Ockham* (Sofia: St Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2010); 279 pp.]

The book offers a comprehensive study of the eccle-siopolitical views of two prominent fourteenth-century intel-lectuals, the secular theoretician Marsilius Mainardini of Padua (1290–1342) and the Franciscan theologian William of Ockham (1280–1348), and focuses on their views of conciliar inerrancy, which differed profoundly: whereas Marsil-ius considered general church councils to be inerrant confes-sional authorities, William argued that doctrinal institutional authorities, including church councils, were not entirely im-mune to error. The book aims to contextualise this significant disagreement and uncover its underlying sources.

The book’s introduction provides a literature review, sets up a four-layer methodology, and outlines the study plan. The core section of the study spans over chapters 1-5, which examine the general historical context of the debate (chapter 1), the authors’ contrasting lines of argumentation (chapter 2), the specific contexts of Marsil-ius’ and William’s positions regarding conciliar inerrancy (chapters 3-4), and the larger context of contemporary debates on faith and inerrancy (chapter 5). In conclusion, the study rejects the dominating view of Marsilius as a ‘revolutionary’ theoretician and argues that his understand-ing of conciliar inerrancy was in tune with a longer tradition of ‘doctrinal institutionalism,’ which was the actual focus of Ockham’s criticism.

In a longer appendix (of 75 pp.), the book offers three key primary source texts – por-tions of Marsilius’ *Defensor pacis* and *Defensor minor* and of Ockham’s *Dialogus* – in Bulgar-ian translation.



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4. **Martin Ossikovski, Svetla Tsankova, ‘Genesis and Development of the Concept of Media Literacy,’ in Svetla Tsankova, Stela Angova, Maria Nikolova, Ivan Valchanov, Iliya Valkov, Georgi Minev, Martin Ossikovski, *Media Literacy* (Sofia: University of National and World Economy Press, 2022 [forthcoming])**

This introductory chapter examines the history of media literacy within the broader context of media history at large. By linking the general idea of media education to that of press freedom, the authors reject the traditional view of media literacy as appearing as late as the 1970s – and trace its historical origins back to the 1640s.

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5. **Martin Ossikovski, ‘Freedom, Conscience, Academia: Speaking in Public and Protecting the “Good Name” of Universities,’ *Christianity and Culture* 167 (2021): 100-110**

The text looks into the limits of university freedom of expression in the specific contexts of Bulgaria's Law for the Development of Academic Staff and the Code of Labour as well as in view of the Bulgarian Constitution's understanding of academic autonomy. The text first tracks some lines in the pre-modern historical development of universities as free communities of 'masters and scholars.' Attention then turns to three iconic sources of today's idea of academic freedom: Wilhelm von Humboldt's *Report of the Section for Culture and Education* (1809), *On the Inner and Outer Organisation of Higher Education Institutions in Berlin* (1810), and the *American Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* (1940). Next, the text focuses on Bulgaria's current Code of Labour (especially regarding articles 187 and 190, which provide for the 'protection of the employer's good reputation') and notes the serious challenges it poses regarding the 'off-campus' civil freedom of expression in the case of university teachers. The text suggests that the explicit inclusion of this 'third freedom' (along with the freedom of teaching and freedom of research) in the respective legislation might contribute to a solution of the problem. A full Bulgarian (co-authored) translation of Humboldt's *Bericht* from 1809 supplements the publication.

6. Martin Ossikovski, 'Freedom of Speech and Its Christian "Prison": Thomas Aquinas, Johannes Reuchlin,' *CAS Working Papers Series 11* (Centre for Advanced Study – Sofia, 2019), 1-18

This paper aims to illustrate fragments of the pre-Miltonian history of 'the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely' in two of its key (even if not directly interrelated) thematic aspects: the protection of human dignity as a counterpoint to the absolutely unlimited freedom of speech – in the context of Thomas Aquinas' (1224/5–1274) discussion of verbal injuries; and the inviolability of personal freedom of thought and expression – in the context of Johannes Reuchlin's (1455–1522) defence of Jewish writings. On that basis, the paper finally attempts to outline the significance which the views of authors such as Aquinas and Reuchlin may have in a broader cultural and historical context.

7. Martin Ossikovski, 'Ancilla Mercatus Laboris,' in Georgi Kapriev, ed., *Sine Arte Scientia Nihil Est: Essays in Honour of Prof. Oleg Georgiev* (Sofia: St Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2019), 489-494

The text critically takes on three key challenges emerging from the trend to reduce education to an *ancilla*, 'servant,' of labour market needs: (1) the idea of competition as a driver of academic success; (2) academic rankings as determinants of academic quality; and (3) the

unquestioned blending of ‘business’ and ‘academia.’ The article suggests that reductionisms of this kind need to be revised – especially as regards teaching and research in the field of the social sciences and humanities.

8. Martin Ossikovski, ‘Medieval Readings of Aristotle’s Argument for the Collective Superiority of the *Plēthos*,’ in Dimka Gicheva-Gocheva, Ivan Kolev, Haralambi Panitsidis, ed., *The Aristotle Challenge* (Sofia: St Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2018), 195-211

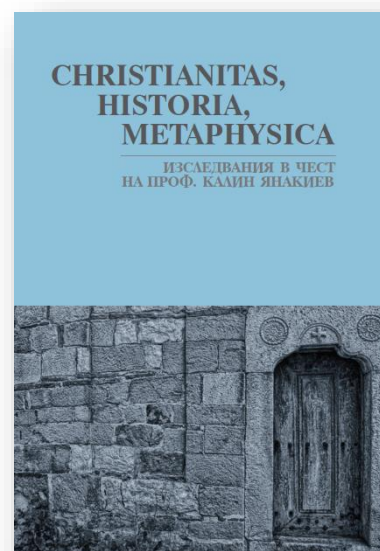
An essential challenge of Aristotle’s *Politics* arises from the juxtaposition of contrasting and competing arguments in favour of virtuous monarchy, on the one hand, and the collective superiority of ‘the many,’ on the other. The paper examines the theoretical reception of this contrast in the writings of some late medieval Aristotelians by focusing on a key section in *Politics* Γ (1280a8-1284b34). Having listed a number of possible ‘sovereign powers,’ *kyria*, in the state, here Aristotle noted that the view that ‘the many,’ *plēthos*, should be sovereign seems to ‘contain some difficulty and perhaps some truth.’ After reviewing Aristotle’s ambiguous position, the paper discusses its interpretation in the commentaries of Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas/Peter of Auvergne, and Walter Burley, as well as its use in the works of Giles of Rome, John of Paris, and Marsilius of Padua. Based on this, finally, the paper outlines some general trends with regard to how medieval scholars dealt with Aristotle’s idea of the rule of ‘the many’ as opposed to that of one or few virtuous persons.

9. Martin Ossikovski, ‘Milton’s Noble Sermon (2),’ *Christianity and Culture* 134 (2018): 52-54

The article deals with the historiographic tension between ‘liberal’ and ‘illiberal’ readings of Milton’s speech and links them to the contrasting layers of his rich argumentative palette. The article suggests that *Areopagitica* follows a retrospective route, along which Milton’s historical and theological arguments take the leading role. This is a follow-up to an earlier publication summarised under no. 12 below.

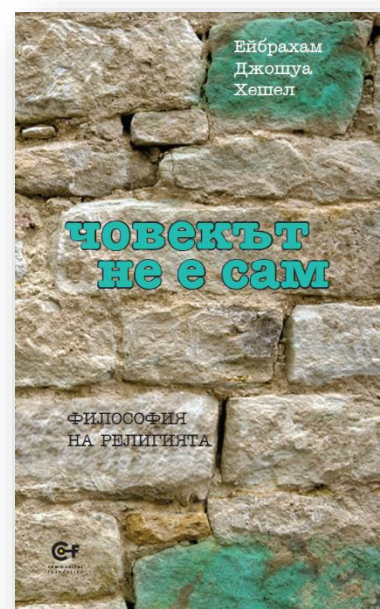
10. Fr Sava (Shtoni) Kokudev, Martin Ossikovski, ‘Doctor Inspirans,’ in Fr Sava (Shtoni) Kokudev, Martin Ossikovski, ed., *Christianitas, Historia, Metaphysica: Essays in Honour of Prof. Kalin Yanakiev* (Sofia: Communitas, 2016), 9-11, 544-549]

A brief introduction to a volume of essays in honour of Prof. Kalin Yanakiev’s (University of Sofia) 60-th anniversary. The text describes key landmarks in his biography and provides a full bibliography of his works published between 1981–2016 (a total of 115 titles, including 14 books, 9 in-depth studies and 92 articles in academic periodicals). The volume’s editors present 34 texts by authors in four thematic circles: church life, theology, philosophy, history, and art.



11. Martin Ossikovski, ‘Abraham Joshua Heschel,’ in Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Man Is Not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion*, trans. Martin Ossikovski, ed. Kalin Yanakiev (Sofia: Communitas, 2014), 13-16

An introductory chapter to Abraham Joshua Heschel’s massive work on philosophy of religion published in 1951. The text briefly outlines the key turning points in Heschel’s biography from his European and American periods (until the early 1940s and his death in 1972, accordingly). As well, the text describes his main studies on Jewish history and theology and notes his major role in 20-century interconfessional dialogue – especially his contribution to Vatican II’s *Nostra Aetate* (28 October 1965), which rejects anti-Semitism as contrary to Roman Catholic Christianity. The chapter introduces a full Bulgarian translation of Heschel’s *opus* (a total of 347 pp.), which is supplemented by 201 notes. The book further includes translations of Heschel’s *Memorandum for Jewish-Catholic Relations* from 22 May 1962 and an exclusive one-hour interview recorded for NBC News towards the end of his life.



12. Martin Ossikovski, 'Milton's Noble Sermon: *Areopagitica* in Bulgaria,' *Christianity and Culture* 86 (2013): 51-57]

The article examines the sporadic references to Milton's *Areopagitica* in Bulgaria before 1944, between 1944–89, and after 1989: its first partial anonymous 'retold translation,' which appeared in the *Narod* newspaper on 2 September 1921, as well as its reception in secondary literature in Bulgaria during the communist period and after the 1990s.

13. Martin Ossikovski, 'Guido Terreni, Marsilius of Padua, and William of Ockham on Institutional Infallibility,' *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 77 (2) (December 2010): 299-311

The paper takes on one of the concluding questions in publication no. 3 (above) and attempts to examine Marsilius' view of conciliar infallibility in the context of the contemporary papalist responses to his main opus. The paper notes that Marsilius' view of infallibility not only failed to attract the attention of the papalist 'camp,' but also provided a surprising basis for agreement between the *Defensor* and its opponents in the 1320s. To confirm this observation, the paper examines in detail the *Quaestio de magisterio infallibili* of the Carmelite friar Guido Terreni (1260–1342) – one of pope John XXII's close advisors and a leading critic of Marsilius. The reading of the *Quaestio* shows that the 'institutional' understanding of the doctrinal authority of the Church is a key point of agreement between Guido and Marsilius – who may well be irreconcilable political opponents, but remain united in their 'universalist,' head-and-members as it were, approach in the domain of ecclesiology.