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**Political Philosophy and Religion through the Minds of  
Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss**

Bachelor's Thesis

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In Prague on  
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## References

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to discover the relationship between religion and political philosophy through the works of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss. The research is based on reviewing some of their major works, as well as secondary sources that provide a clearer understanding of the philosophers individually and the relation of their philosophies to each other. The first section is dedicated to the review of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss. The works investigated include: *Between Past and Future*, *The Human Condition*, and *Religion and Politics* by Hannah Arendt; and *What is Political Philosophy?*, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, as well as *Reason and Revelation* by Leo Strauss. It allows to pinpoint their ideas and serves as a foundation for comparative analysis. The second section is dedicated to comparative analysis based on exploring the research question through the lens of three commonly detected themes: authority, modernity, and politics. The results show how interdependent the disciplines of religion and political philosophy are. It is manifested through a significant likeness of the philosophers in their thoughts but is also displayed through the commonality of and between the identified themes. The results might force one to make a choice, and perhaps even challenge to identify the common ground between religion and political philosophy in their life.

## **Keywords**

politics, religion, political philosophy, Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, authority, modernity

## **Title**

Political Philosophy and Religion through the Minds of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss.

## **Abstrakt**

Cílem této studie je odhalit vztah mezi náboženstvím a politickou filozofií prostřednictvím děl Hannah Arendtové a Lea Strausse. Cílem je nalézt některé rozdíly a podobnosti mezi oběma filozofy, aby bylo možné odpovědět na hlavní otázku. Výzkum je do značné míry založen na přehledu některých jejich hlavních děl a také na sekundárních zdrojích, které umožňují lépe pochopit jednotlivé filozofy a vzájemný vztah jejich filozofií. První část je věnována přehledu Hannah Arendtové a Leo Strausse. Mezi zkoumaná díla patří např: Mezi minulostí a budoucností, Vita Activa a Náboženství a politika od Hannah Arendtové a Co je politická filosofie?, Pronásledování a umění psát a Rozum a zjevení od Leo Strausse. Umožňuje přesně vystihnout jejich myšlenky a slouží jako základ pro srovnávací analýzu. Druhá část je věnována komparativní analýze založené na zkoumání výzkumné otázky optikou tří běžně detekovaných témat: autority, modernity a politiky. Výsledky ukazují, jak jsou disciplíny náboženství a politické filosofie vzájemně provázané. Projevuje se to značnou podobností myšlenek filosofů, ale také se to projevuje společným rysem a podobností mezi zjištěnými tématy. Výsledky nutí člověka k výběru a možná i vyzývají k tomu, aby identifikoval společné rysy náboženství a politické filosofie ve svém životě.

## **Klíčová slova**

politika, náboženství, politická filozofie, Hannah Arendtová, Leo Strauss, autorita, modernita

## **Název práce**

Politická filosofie a náboženství v myšlenkách Hannah Arendtové a Leo Strausse.

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## **Introduction**

Over the course of human history, religion and political philosophy have played the parts of rule setters, as grey eminences of our lives they operate behind the scenes to influence our societies. Both disciplines explain political governance, the course of thought, and the development of values; but they both also have the power to influence a change in all those and other aspects of social life.

Religion and political philosophy provide the basic moral and categorical foundations that determine social systems. While Western political philosophy has evolved to emphasise secularism, separating church and state, political philosophy and religion appear to have similar intentions in searching for valid ideas and formal thoughts upon which to build common understandings of the world. Both fields can contribute to the identity and cohesion of communities. In the face of political complexities, religious identity can be a source of solidarity or division, while political philosophy serves as a foundation for ideologies and political characteristics.

The central question of this thesis is: "How do the philosophical perspectives of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss illuminate the relation between political philosophy and religion in shaping societies?". The relationship between political philosophy and religion is multifaceted. However, the nature of both disciplines, as we will discover, suggests that there is an inherent tension between them with both undermining each other. This exploration seeks to determine whether one field must dominate and if the balance between the two is even possible.

This thesis will explore the works of the 20th-century philosophers Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss. Both philosophers come from a Jewish background and both escaped Nazi Germany just shortly before, or right after, World War II began, both found their safe haven

in the United States. It is even more fascinating that, with so much in common, there is no work of Arendt and Strauss that they wrote together in hopes of bridging the gaps of individual philosophies and producing a comprehensive philosophic outline for the political climate of Western civilization.

The thesis will be divided into several chapters. The first two will discuss Arendt and Strauss separately. These chapters will be strictly based on the works of the philosophers, they are meant as an overview of their political and philosophical ideas, as well as their thoughts on religion. The third chapter will attempt to bridge the philosophers and provide an even clearer answer to the research question. As the philosophies of Arendt and Strauss discovered separately, three distinct yet highly interrelated themes arise. We will dive into the question of authority and how it relates to political philosophy and religion. Discover some of the changes that happened to political philosophy and religion because of modernity, and look into the new reality of Western civilization. Explore the political realms to which philosophy and religion belong. Finally, the concluding remarks will summarize the main findings of this work. Arendt and Strauss challenged politics, but most of all today more than ever, they challenge each one of us to ask the question of what it means to live a meaningful and fulfilling life.

## 1. Philosophy of Hannah Arendt

### 1.1 Between Past and Future

Hannah Arendt, influenced by the heavy political climate of the 20-th century, mostly engaged in the questions of the nature of politics and political life. She draws on conclusions from the past to make judgements for the present and suggestions for the future. Her work *Between Past and Future* is precisely that, she analyses an important relationship between tradition and the modern age. It quickly becomes obvious that she takes her inspiration in Ancient Greece and relates it to the philosophers that followed. To her, “political thought began in the teachings of Plato and Aristotle and came to an end in the theories of Karl Marx<sup>1</sup>”.

It began when Plato’s Allegory of the Cave. He may have only strived to show that ideas provide the moral guidance we require and it is the philosophers who take the time to explore those ideas who should be in charge, but on a larger scale he created an all-encompassing image of our human reality. We inevitably exist in communities; have presupposed and preexisting beliefs; both light and darkness are vital to the creation of ideas; and, finally, there is a difference between artificial light that gives us “something” versus the real light that illuminates the “truth”. All these elements combined, compose the process of thought, the circumstances that surround the way one forms their opinion about something and the necessary, though sometimes dangerous, interaction with others that sharpens said thought leading to new and deeper ideas.

That existence in a community that allows our thoughts and ideas to bounce off each other is the definition of political life, it is the core of political philosophy. This, in Arendt’s understanding, came to an end when Karl Marx declared that philosophy is not an abstract

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<sup>1</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (The Viking Press, 1961), 17

concept detached from the everyday lives of people. Rather our philosophical ideas are shared by and are reflective of the material conditions, social structures, and historical contexts in which people live. Marx, as a true materialist, brings the free flight of thoughts and ideas and grounds them in politics by specifically focusing on economic relations. That is the reason why the tradition of political philosophy ends there – it started with turning away from politics towards philosophical ideas and ended with "returning to the ground" to impose new standards on politics.

This gap between the past and future that tradition used to fill, with time grew thinner and thinner as the future (or modern age) slowly took over. Arendt points out that “When the thread of tradition finally broke, the gap between past and future ceased to be a condition peculiar only to the activity of thought and restricted as an experience to those few who made thinking their primary business. It became tangible reality and perplexity for all”<sup>2</sup>. Philosophers watched tradition fade away as it occupied their minds on the regular, but once it became obvious to all that times have changed it became a matter of politics since it now concerned society as a whole.

Referring to Hegel, Arendt talks about historical continuity and how much of a continual development world history was. First, this continuity became a substitute for tradition, and then tradition broke down altogether. All of a sudden, history got broken apart. Society got flooded with the most diverse and contradicting ideas that somehow co-existed with each other and turned into a development that in the end refused tradition and its authority. It is not that the past got lost and forgotten, it is a tradition that ceased to provide guidance. The anchor that existed in the past that served to help navigate through the past

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<sup>2</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (The Viking Press, 1961), 14

(into the future) was lost. Individuals got left on their own. No answers, no experiences, just a blank slate challenging them to map out modern life.

The reality is that it is impossible for one to stop thinking, nor is it a favourable option. Tradition may have ceased at some point to some degree, but it will inevitably resurface, also, at some point and to some degree. If political philosophy ends with Marx, it will only mean that every good “new” idea since him will be a very well-forgotten “old” tradition.

Tradition provided answers to moral, social and political dilemmas. People did not have to spend time or energy trying to understand these dilemmas or coming up with answers as to how to best handle them. The only way to bridge the gap between the past and future is to re-engage in thinking. One must engage in analysing current issues and challenges rather than fully relying on lessons of the past. Perhaps then we see a shift towards a mindful political life.

## **1.2 The Human Condition**

In this work, Hannah Arendt dives deeper into human nature and how it relates to political engagement. The *vita activa*, an active life, what determines it? Is it simply a life that is busy and occupied no matter what the activity is? Perhaps, it is a life that is engaged in doing something specific? Hannah Arendt’s concept of “*vita activa*” refers to the different modes of human activity that constitute a meaningful life. All human activities are conditioned by the fact that we live in society. While certain things can be done in solitude, the things that matter the most, things that give our lives meaning are matters of those social interactions each of us engages in on a regular basis. Arendt distinguishes three specific human activities: labour, work and action.

Labour refers to the basic activities related to sustaining one’s life. It would include biological processes such as eating or reproducing, everyday repetitive tasks such as

maintaining a home, etc. Labour also includes physical work aimed at producing certain goods that will be consumed, used up, or that will decay over time. The human activity of work is the realm of creativity and the production of lasting goods. It is a matter of turning nature into a human-made environment. Work, unlike labour, has a long-term impact. It includes things like architecture, art creations, inventions, scientific discoveries, etc. Finally, action refers to the highest and most meaningful activity a human being can engage in. It is the interaction and communication that happens in the public sphere. It is the engagement in political discourse. Action is not a matter of production, like labour and work are, but is a matter of intellectual exchange of ideas, expression of identities, and collective participation in the creation of a common world and society.

Drawing on the experience of the Ancients, the rise of the city-state separated human life into two realms – a private life and the so-called “bios politikos”, a second life or public life. There is a certain difficulty that we encounter when it comes to distinguishing between the public and private realms. Essentially, the difference between them, as Arendt herself puts it, can be described as household and political life. Household, being the private realm, is the personal life each of us leads daily that may involve our closest friends and family because we continually have to interact with someone. Political life is a societal life that is born as a result of us living within city-states. As we will also discover later on, as life progressed a third possible realm of human existence evolved, changing the political scene. The realm of the social.

What did each realm represent and why was it relevant? The private realm, the realm of household and family, was born out of necessity – each person had a task assigned to them, tasks obvious and natural to one’s capabilities. In the end, each assignment was driven by the wants and needs of the circle it related to. A man, for example, provides individual maintenance, and a woman ensures survival. One cannot fulfil their tasks without the other

and hence why a community is so important. When living as a group, each member compliments the life of others, and receives the same in return. The household is formed by necessity and is driven by it also. The realm of the polis is the opposite of that, it is the sphere of freedom. Freedom itself belongs to the political realm, the existence of one is correlated to the existence of the other. However, freedom exists within the previously mentioned social realm. Freedom is the cross point of all the realms. Because the ultimate goal is to become free and because we, as people, are subject to necessity, force and violence become the tools employed against each other for the means of achieving the goal. That is true for individual households and also for nations as a whole. As Arendt herself put it “Violence is the prepolitical act of liberating oneself from the necessity of life for the freedom of the world”.<sup>3</sup>

For the Greeks, to achieve well-being, happiness, and flourishing in life (they referred to it as *eudaimonia*), freedom was essential. That freedom revealed itself in the form of wealth and health because only under those conditions a person is not restricted by either physical or material necessities, their limitations are expended to a degree of non-existence making it possible for them to enjoy life as they please.

Freedom is what allows us to distinguish between the spheres. The difference between a household and a nation, or polis to be more precise, lies in the levels of equality between its members. Polis is consistent of only equals, while in a household equality is non-existent. To be free means to fend for yourself, it means to not be subject to having to rule over someone nor to be ruled by someone else. Within a household, its head or ruler is the only one who could be considered free only if he is able to leave the household and enter the polis. Political participation is a requirement for freedom.

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<sup>3</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1958), 31

The social realm barged in and shook things up. It absorbed the family as a social structure and readjusted it to be an in-between element for public and private spheres. As a result, the need for privacy emerged.

The premodern phenomenon of the development of the social realm undermined the public realm to a point of disappearance. Along with it, action lost its power and importance also. All communities were transformed into societies that were centred around labourers. The one thing that must have been taken care of before entering the political to allow a person to grow and thrive has become the very focus point of life, it became the connecting piece between human communities.

Despite that, excellence can only be achieved in public. Even though things such as action and speech became private matters, the public realm is still the only place where a person can achieve excellence. Arendt claims “Every activity performed in public can attain an excellence never matched in privacy; for excellence, by definition, the presence of others is always required, and this presence needs the formality of the public, constituted by one's peers, it cannot be the casual, familiar presence of one's equals or inferiors”.<sup>4</sup>

The term “public” bears two meanings. First is that everything that appears in public has the widest possible publicity. It is the idea that everything is seen, heard, touched, and perceived by everyone. It is a reality that everyone shares, or at least has the possibility to share. Knowing and realising that there are other people around who see the same things as we do secures us in our realisation of reality and even ourselves. It is not to say that private life does not matter, it just has a different meaning and purpose than public life. Some things, such as love, can survive exclusively in the private realm, the public realm would only pervert it. The second meaning of the term refers to the world we live in. It is not the planet

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<sup>4</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1958), 49



that we live on or the world of nature, but rather it is the world that humans create, the environment around us that consists of manmade surroundings as well as human relations within them. It is the world of all three human activities combined.

To be entirely private is almost the same as not even existing. Whatever you do or say, or whatever you may be has no meaning if there is no one there to see, hear and recognize it. The rise of the social did not just threaten the public realm but the private one as well. People's private homes were no longer a safe place where one could hide and be protected from the world. It all became mixed with no clear boundaries leaving people confused about the purposes and meanings.

### **1.3 Religion and Politics**

Hannah Arendt does not talk about religion explicitly and when she does it is in the context of politics. In the case of her essay *Religion and Politics*, she relates it to ideology, specifically to communism. This work is a peculiar and almost paradoxical example of an overlap between politics and religion that reveals advantages and disadvantages of both.

Communism is the new, or at least at the time it was, secular religion that the free world protects its religious systems from. Despite realising it, communism returned the problem of the relationship between politics and religion onto the political stage. All new ideologies have been interpreted as secular religions because the Marxist critique highlighted religions as ideologies. Arendt reminds her readers that it was not "communism" that was the first "...ism" worth discussing but rather that place belongs to atheism that existed until Dostoevsky and others gave it substance and explanation.<sup>5</sup> Atheism was not a matter of simply proving that God does not exist, instead, it was a rebellion of humans against God.

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<sup>5</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Religion and Politics* (Политическая концептология, 2017), 190

When natural sciences began to develop in the XVII century, faith found itself rooted in doubt. Kierkegaard who in an attempt to answer the principle of Cartesian Doubt<sup>6</sup> claims that doubt is overcome not by knowledge but rather by faith. Modern belief transitioned from doubt to faith, and modern atheism transitioned from doubt to unbelief. Arendt points out that this transition has probably hindered true faith more than any atheistic critique ever has because it could not have avoided bringing doubt into faith itself. While in some cases there could be benefit to it, overall it was detrimental to the role of religion.

Doubt is an essential part of life. Our world is secular because we live in a world of doubt and if one wishes to eliminate this characteristic then they would have to get rid of modern science and all that it has done. Modern science is based on doubt whereas ancient science was rather based on the philosophy of wonder. Instead of being in awe of wonder of the way it all works people started to doubt that all that we see and know is something else entirely. Modern faith is different from true faith in that it is embodied through people who doubt that knowledge itself is at all possible. A Modern believer loses their wholesomeness when they cannot bear the pressure that faith and doubt create.

Communism and atheism have in common that they both reject the existence of God. Communism guarantees that its followers would not even think to ask religious questions. Theology views a person as a reasonable creation who poses questions and whose mind requires humility. Communism views a person as a falling rock that can observe and reason in the process of its freefall. This example shows an occasional necessity of religion as a defining tool because although communism is geared towards community, its definition is more individualistic and closed-ended.

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<sup>6</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Religion and Politics* (Политическая концептология, 2017), 190 and Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "*methodic doubt*." (Encyclopedia Britannica, November 1, 2013), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/methodic-doubt>.

This clash between religion and ideology was viewed as just an argument of terminology where the term “political religion” defined antireligious political movements. Later on, “political or secular religion” came to be understood in two ways. The first is the historical approach in which secular religion is born of the secular spirituality of the modern world. The other does not differentiate between religion and ideology on the basis that communism to its followers serves the same purpose or has the same function as religion to believers. In this case, religion is simply a tool used to unite people.

Secularism has two meanings and purposes, political and spiritual. Both presuppose that the other does not have any significant power in a person’s life. It means that from a political standpoint, religious beliefs do not hold any authority and, the other way around, from a spiritual point the political does not control a person. This poses the question of where age-old traditions and values take their root in, but not only that, it questions the origins of power and authority. Arendt suggests that authority has a Roman political origin and was monopolised by religion when the church became a political and spiritual heir to the Roman Empire. Though this break between the past and present or the collapse of authority does not presuppose a religious origin, it does put the authority of the church in a dangerous position because among other things it is a state institution. The two disciplines or completely different meanings are combined together. In this case, confusion gives way to an underground battle for the minds and attention of people.

This also brings us to the question of freedom. Freedom that was introduced by Christianity presupposes freedom from politics, the freedom to live outside of the secular world. A Christian slave remained a free person only if they did not participate in worldly activities, as in activities of mostly political nature. This means that no religious definition of freedom could bring us any closer to political freedom. The only interest that Christianity has in politics, is protecting their freedom from politics. Essentially, Christianity interacts

with politics only as long as to preserves their ability to practise their faith. However, in a political sense, freedom is about doing more than that, it is not just doing what God has commanded you to do, but rather having the freedom to become “god”. It is about, at the very least, becoming the ultimate ruler of your own life and, at most, rule over others as well.

One of the bigger questions of religion is whether it is possible if one were to take God out of the equation. Is religion then just a social concept? Karl Marx was the first to explain religion as something more than superstition, but rather as a social construct in which a person is driven by the “product of his mind”,<sup>7</sup> similarly as in capitalist production a person is driven by the product of his own hands. Marx’s philosophy is based on the following sequence: human history is based on the conflict of classes which can only be resolved through violence; political action, at its core, is that violent power because it forces people to accept a certain view as the right one. The question that is born out of this – is whether we are right to ignore the understanding of ourselves as insignificant. This, for Arendt, is the basis of why she cannot take into consideration what communism says about the self.

The concept of political or secular religion, and the understanding of it, has changed over time and today we use it under different interpretations than when it was first introduced. From a perspective of social sciences, it is natural for people to want to generalise, to find rules and conditions that could be equally applied to all events no matter the time or circumstances and to explain them from a scientific point of view. Arendt refers to the example given by Max Weber who copied his type of “charismatic leadership”<sup>8</sup> of

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<sup>7</sup> Karl Marx, *Estranged Labour*, (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844), <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, (Oxford Univ. Press, 1947).

the Jesus of Nazareth, whereas Karl Manheim's<sup>9</sup> students applied the same model to Hitler. From the perspective of sociology, Hitler and Jesus were similar because they served the same social function, i.e. they were both leaders. It is, however, obvious that such a conclusion can be made only by those who know nothing about either Jesus or Hitler. Similarly, that is what is happening to the term "religion". We strive to functionalize our lives and categorise everything and everyone, but in the end, it is only that a person becomes no more than a mere function of society. Totalitarianism and its ideologies do not reflect atheism but rather show the functionalization that is attempted to be achieved. They are based on the idea of confining people to certain conditions.

In light of the terminological disagreement, the mutual misunderstanding of politics and religion seems huge. To understand it better, Arendt suggests viewing secularism from a purely political perspective. The question that she poses is "What aspect of religion in the past had such a significant political meaning that the loss of it directly impacted our political life?"<sup>10</sup> The reason for this question is that the division of social and religious aspects of life, which has been referred to as secularism, separates politics from religion as a whole and from the Christian faith in particular.

Karl Marx used to say that "religion is the opiate of the masses"<sup>11</sup>, but Arendt cannot agree with him. She considers this saying not only unsatisfactory and vulgar but also highly unlikely due to the pressure that Christian teachings put on individuals –the responsibility of saving own's soul, the insistence of sinfulness of man and the long list of sins. The extensive weight of being religious cannot have the same effects as an opiate would.

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<sup>9</sup> for example Hans Gerth. "The Nazi Party: Its Leadership and Composition." *American Journal of Sociology* 45, no. 4 (1940): 517–41. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2770263>.

<sup>10</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Religion and Politics* (Политическая концептология, 2017), 199

<sup>11</sup> Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970), Introduction

The doctrine of hell in Christian religion is also an important aspect. It is useful in the keeping of authority, but is also, to Arendt's understanding, not of religious origin. The fascinating line that the philosopher draws here is that the teaching of hell was not a part of Jesus's sermon<sup>12</sup> and became a doctrine centuries after his death at the same time as the secular rule of Rome fell and authority was inherited by the Church. It sets an example of how religion can be utilised as a political tool of authority.

The problem of the modern world is that people lose faith in the reward and punishment after death, while the functionalizing of individual minds or the ability to perceive the invisible truth from the political point of view is more fragile than ever. Totalitarian states almost deliberately try to replicate hell on earth, e.g. concentration camps of Hitler Germany, only changing the technological and bureaucratic aspects and missing the eternity of it. In other words, Arendt states that the political consequence of secularisation of today's world is the elimination from society, along with religion, of the fear of hell, i.e. the only political component of religion. This elimination is the most prominent difference between the past and the present. Religion loses its political aspect, while social life becomes deprived of the religiously transcendental authority and ability.

History has proven over and over again that the union of the state and the church will inevitably lead to the discreditation of one or the other. If before, the most dangerous outcome was the use of religion as an excuse for political action, then today it can be significantly worse. Arendt states that today when colliding with ideology, religion will fight it. If we attempt to infuse our political life with religious truths again, religion will transform and pervert into an ideology that will fight be foreign to the concept of freedom.

#### **1.4 Summary**

To summarise only a small part of Hannah Arendt's philosophy but perhaps the most

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<sup>12</sup> The Holy Bible, *Matthew 5:1-12 NIV*

relevant to the research question – a person has to exist in a community to live a fulfilling life by achieving it through political action. It is communal living that allows our thoughts and ideas to develop, which is at the core of political philosophy.

Her work *Between Past and Future* analyses the connection between tradition and the modern age. As time passed, things changed drastically, not only technologically but also in political thought. These changes affected people on societal as well as individual levels. People were no longer interested in drawing on the lessons of the past to advise on the decisions of the present for the sake of the future. Instead, it was chosen to redefine the understanding of moral, social and political matters in light of modernity.

The three activities that Arendt describes in *The Human Condition* got mixed around. The nature of the activities might have remained the same, but the value and understanding of each changed. It came with the shifted comprehension of the private and public realms. While private used to be a place of safety, it was the public realm that gave life meaning. The emergence of the social sphere disturbed our lives while redirecting focus to individualism and combining private and public matters into something of an in-between phenomenon. This mix brought further confusion about the meaning and purpose of human life.

Religion, although a private matter, plays a crucial role in the public realm also. In her essay *Religion and Politics*, Arendt emphasizes that we live in a secular world, a world of doubt that makes us question everything around us. Modern faith is manifested in and through modern people who doubt that the available knowledge is possible. Before people simply believed, and now people question. A modern believer nearly breaks under the pressure that faith and doubt create.

Our ultimate goal in life is to be free, and engaging in politics is the sure way to achieve it. Freedom that was suggested by Christianity offers in its definition freedom from

politics, to live outside the secular despite the secularism of life and the world. The contradiction of definitions allows us to see how different religion and politics are in their natures and raises the question of whether the two should be combined.

Through Arendt's work, we see the difference in the goals and purposes of religion and politics, in what that means for individual lives. However, at the same time, we see, in various attempts, that they have either been combined or entirely separated for social and political purposes. Instead of creating a clear path, it brings with it oppression in one way or another.

## **2. Philosophy of Leo Strauss**

### **2.1 What is Political Philosophy?**

The question of what political philosophy is could be difficult to answer because, throughout centuries of the development of philosophy and politics, the approach to the discipline of political philosophy would emphasise different aspects of it. Let us break it apart into two components: political, or politics, and philosophy.

Politics are about action, either to make sure everything stays as it was or that it changes to something different. That action starts with a thought that leads it to have a direction toward the knowledge of the good. For example, it can be the knowledge of a good life, because it would be a common societal goal.

Philosophy is the search for knowledge of the whole. If that knowledge was already available, then the search would not have been necessary but that is not the case. People and society as a whole when discussing a matter express their opinion rather than stating a fact. Even when a statement is expressed as a fact it is still so greatly influenced by the nature of the person expressing it that it cannot be anything else but an opinion. Philosophy is then an attempt to replace one with another, to replace opinion with knowledge. Leo Strauss narrows it down to the core meaning and states that "a quest for knowledge of "all things" means the



quest for knowledge of God, the world, and man – or rather quest for the knowledge of the natures of all things”.<sup>13</sup>

To now combine the two elements, political philosophy is then “an attempt to replace opinion about the nature of political things by knowledge of the nature of political things”<sup>14</sup>. When the political is added, the quest for knowledge gains an additional meaning. It is no longer about the quest itself but is also about a matter of finding the right political order that is good. This is one way of understanding and defining political philosophy under Straussian influence.

A second definition that Strauss provides stems from Ancient philosophy. It was classical philosophers who saw political things with fresh eyes, as their understanding of philosophy was not tainted by the tradition of political philosophy. Strauss paints the following picture of classical political philosophy: “their political philosophy is comprehensive; it is both political theory and political skill; it is as receptive to the legal and institutional aspects of political life, as it is to that which transcends the legal and institutional”<sup>15</sup>. This understanding of the discipline is in the study of political things, an inquiry into the nature of political life and the human good within the political community.

In this, we see the complexity of what political philosophy represents. On the one hand, it is an attempt to educate others about political things; an attempt to replace existing opinions and prejudices with knowledge and understanding. On the other hand, it is the contemplation of what those political things really are. It is the process of becoming an enlightened citizen or statesman and seeing things clearly that others do not see at all. The two definitions present political philosophy for what it really is - the search for truth that is

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<sup>13</sup> Leo Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy?*, (The Free Press, 1959), 344

<sup>14</sup> Leo Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy?*, (The Free Press, 1959), 344

<sup>15</sup> Leo Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy?*, (The Free Press, 1959), 356

hiding and the observation of details out in the open that make up our lives, all in the context of communities, regimes, common goals, society, etc.

## **2.2 Persecution and the Art of Writing**

Now that we have defined political philosophy, an important part that needs to be addressed is found in the essay titled *Persecution and the Art of Writing*. Leo Strauss emphasised the role of esoteric writing and explained it through an example of political authority.

Political and philosophical texts have significant importance to state authority as they serve as guidelines for the public organisation of human affairs. When a government endorses a view it will most likely be believed to be true by the majority due to the authority that the nature of leadership suggests. However, if people are unable to choose between two or more different views their intellectual independence is destroyed.

That is the only freedom of thought that is of political importance, the ability to think for oneself. The philosopher suggests two arguments: one is that there is a general belief that if something is repeated over and over again then it must be true, after all, a lie would not stand the test of time. The second suggested argument is that a regular person might lie but a respected man (such as a government official for example) would never allow such behaviour and so it is certain then that their statements are true. These two arguments lead to the conclusion that a statement made and repeated over and over by a government official cannot be anything but the truth. It is adopted by the public as the way of life.

However, to each argument and idea, there will naturally exist a counterargument. Strauss claims that individuals who are capable of independent thinking cannot simply accept government-sponsored views. But how would one express their ideas if they contradict the government? The answer that the philosopher gives is simple – esoteric

writing. A type of writing born out of necessity to escape persecution, a type of writing that hides its truth between the lines.

Strauss says: “But how can a man perform the miracle of speaking in a publication to a minority while being silent to the majority of his readers? The fact which makes this literature possible can be expressed in the axiom that thoughtless men are careless readers, and only thoughtful men are careful readers.”<sup>16</sup> Esoteric writing is not just based on the attentiveness of the society but on education and individual goals of each member. It is not only useful to those seeking the truth but is also a tool employed by philosophers. It is important to note that Strauss suggests that philosophers are the only people capable of independent thinking and ultimately, they are the ones who are more likely to provide the truth because they are constantly seeking it in their minds.

If one was trying to prove the incriminating nature of a philosophical text, one would not only have to prove that the author is intelligent and talented enough to write such text but also that their intellectual ability did not suffer any shortcomings in the process of writing that text. In other words, proving that an esoteric text is of political danger is resource-consuming and might end up being meaningless if the philosopher has changed their mind or manages to show that they were misinterpreted. Hence it is a very useful tool not only for the purposes of expressing the truth but also remaining safe in the process of doing so.

Oppression of free-thinking is not new and has occurred in the past as much as it occurs in the present. However, if it is as relevant to the writers of the past then one must wonder if the greatest authors have not also adapted to the persecuting circumstances. Historical research would suggest refraining from adopting this perspective. It is demanded that each period is to be understood by itself. To a historian, a view is true if the author of the view explicitly states it. Therefore, any reading between the lines in the works

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<sup>16</sup> Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1952), 491

of the authors of the past is to be considered pointless guesswork. To a historian, it is important to prove the historical exactness of a work. To Strauss, an exact historian would rather focus on understanding the thought of a great writer rather than proving himself to be the ultimate “truth”.

Subsequent reading between the lines would most likely lead to an overall disagreement between scholars as everyone would interpret texts based on their views, ideas, experiences, and intellectual abilities. To prove the necessity of reading between the lines in the work of a writer of the past it is important to prove that their writing was created in a time of persecution, in other words, they needed to write their truth implicitly.

An exoteric book contains two messages. One concerns the teaching that is widely understood. The other, one of a philosophical nature, is that the most important subject is found exclusively between the lines, it is found only when one is looking for it. These books are addressed to young people who might become philosophers, those who still need to be taught that the truth is discovered rather than told. Philosophers would hold that it is only through education that answers to pressing questions, the political questions can be found, and esoteric writing is their secret weapon enabling their confidence and ability.

### **2.3 Reason and Revelation**

Leo Strauss defines the relation between philosophy and religion in his work *Reason and Revelation*. It was a lecture given by him at the Hartford Theological Seminary in 1948. While Strauss does not specifically speak of political philosophy in this work, the political aspect is mentioned. Above all, however, through these thoughts, we get to “pinpoint” religion onto the map of political philosophy.

To put things into a black-and-white perspective, reason stands for philosophy and revelation represents religion, although it is not as straightforward as that. Strauss, though pinning philosophy against revelation, manages to show the complexity of

both components individually but also of their relation to each other, to some degree even, philosophy and religion become almost intertwined, or so it may seem...

According to Leo Strauss, philosophy and revelation are incompatible. One must disprove, almost invalidate the other to survive. Otherwise, one will inevitably become enslaved to another, be that philosophy becoming a handmaid to revelation or revelation being a servant to philosophy.

Revelation can be understood as both a teaching or a happening, and in our case, it does not matter which aspect of it is the centre of attention, both are right. The aspect of faith that inevitably accompanies revelation is far more important to us as it serves as the foundation for understanding it. Strauss claims that revelation must necessarily refute philosophy. From the standpoint of the two disciplines, there can only be one, there is either a life of philosophizing or a life of obeying God. To refute one would appear to prove that the other is the ultimate way of life. But according to theologians, that contradicts the very nature of revelation.

Faith is the response to revelation, and nothing can prove, or defend, revelation other than faith. Revelation is known through faith and faith is based on revelation. It is a circular relation. That would mean that those who do not have faith would not have any access to revelation, which means it would not at all affect their lives. One who does not believe has no reason to think that he is wrong in his unbelief because to him there is no evidence of that. Although a direct proof of revelation might seem contradictory, an indirect one is unavoidable and it is that philosophic position is inconsistent. Our choice, however it may seem, is not limited to just philosophy or revelation, there is also an option of escapism or despair. If one refutes philosophy, they are taken to a place of hopelessness that only the grace of God can save them from.

Let us come back to the definition of philosophy. Strauss points out that it would be fair to claim that all modern ideas are simply secularised Biblical concepts and therefore cannot be justified without the Bible's help. The definition of revelation seems to be straightforward, but it is also overcomplicated by centuries of history, which is also the case for philosophy. He suggests philosophy in its pre-modern meaning as the alternative to Biblical faith.

As the approach to philosophy changed over time, the meaning took on a different form as well. What we have today, Strauss suggests, is just an inheritance of what it used to be originally that historians are trying to bring to life. It may be presumed, and it often is, that philosophy is a system. However, philosophy is an adventure and adventures take you down unexpected roads and throw your plans out the window. While it may be easier to stick to a map to get to your destination, it would not be the same experience. This same concept applies to philosophy, and ironically to religion as well but more on that later.

Philosophy is about the journey; it is about ascending; it is about finding your answer, rather than just having it. Strauss himself says multiple times that philosophy is the love of wisdom and a quest for truth. In that quest for truth, a philosopher is ultimately looking to uncover how things came to be, the beginning of all. It all starts with nature that had to be discovered. The discovery came to be when two distinctions were realised. The first is the distinction between a lie and the truth – between hearing something and seeing it for yourself. This distinction calls for a demonstration. The second distinction is between artificial and natural things – things made by a man and things not made by a man. Things that are not man-made lead to the beginning of things. This approach does not exclude a divine creator, it rather calls for a demonstration of his existence and that he is behind it all. In this we see that philosophy does not necessarily reject the existence of God. It is more that his existence is irrelevant.

Philosophy attempts to replace opinions about things with knowledge of these things. However, opinion as a concept plays a significant role in human life, be it from the perspective of social or political life, and so perhaps this quest that one might find oneself on is not legitimate after all. To quote Strauss directly, “If opinion is the element of political life, philosophy which questions opinions as such, dissolves the very element of social life: philosophy is essentially subversive (corrupting the young). From the point of view of philosophy, this is no objection to philosophy, since the quest for the truth is infinitely more important than political life: philosophizing is learning to die.”<sup>17</sup> Here we come to the infinitely philosophical questions of “what is the meaning of life” and how does one ought to live”. A philosophical answer to that is simple – philosophy is the right way of living, everything else will only bring a person misery. While this life might not necessarily guarantee happiness it is most definitely required to embark on the path of happiness.

However, philosophy’s position changes when it is confronted with the Bible. The Bible disputes the solution that philosophy offers and suggests its alternative, the revelation of the living God. The quest for knowledge that appears to be the perfection of human nature and the very meaning of human life, the Bible calls the reason for the fall of mankind. When Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden, tasted the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil they disobeyed God’s command.<sup>18</sup>

In this paradigm, the quest for knowledge is disobedience to God. It is only the Bible that poses such a challenge to philosophy, a challenge through knowledge, which is essentially challenging the very meaning of the discipline. If a man aims to know what is good and not just what seems to be good, he requires the knowledge of good to find it. The

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<sup>17</sup> Leo Strauss, “Reason and Revelation (1948),” *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*, January 9, 2006, 141–80, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139177948.010>, p. 146

<sup>18</sup> The Holy Bible, *Genesis Chapter 3NIV*

question then becomes if a man is at all able to acquire the knowledge of the good with reason or if the only solution is the dependence on divine guidance.

To provide a philosophic critique of revelation, Strauss turns to Spinoza. Spinoza rejects revelation because of its imaginative nature. Essentially, he claims that because revelation is made up and is not a product of intellectual work, it cannot be the source of truth. He does not necessarily disprove that imagination might be a tool serving to aid the divine enlightenment, but rather shows the correlation between the features of revelation and human imagination. For all we know, it might simply be a hallucination of which we are not sure whether it happened or will happen or if it is at all real. Since imagination is unreliable as the source of truth, revelation too cannot be the source of it. In Strauss' opinion Spinoza does not consider the difference between a worldly, or fleshly, and spiritual understanding of the Bible, which weakens his argument. Revelation requires confirmation by miracles and Spinoza's critique of miracles is at the core of his critique of revelation.

A miracle is an extraordinary, supernatural event. To know that something is a miracle, one has to be sure that it cannot be of natural origin which means that they have to be aware of the limitations of nature. This condition is difficult and perhaps impossible to fulfil. If an event occurs and it cannot be explained naturally it is possible that it simply cannot be explained just yet, the reasonable scientific explanation of it is yet to be born. In this case, a miracle either requires a different understanding or there are simply no miracles. The defectiveness of the argument is also in that it assumes that anything is possible for nature and Spinoza himself agrees that it is not the case.

In this paradigm, revelation is essentially of the same origin as a myth, it is a superstition. Strauss admits that Spinoza's argument rings true to some degree but is also inconclusive. The significance of Spinoza's perspective is in the way it shows the uncertainty of revelation, how not evident revelation is without the experience of faith that is



required before encountering revelation. This leads Strauss to conclude that even if an unbeliever is capable of proving revelation to be a product of imagination, they would not necessarily disprove revelation as a whole.

The necessity of the demonstration of revelation changes into a necessity of the demonstration of the impossibility of revelation, or at least of miracles. Proving the impossibility of revelation or miracles would require proving their incompatibility with God. But God is mysterious, he is the perfect loving being that can condemn people to eternal suffering. If that is God's description, then He might as well also be the God of revelation. Then, to disprove revelation one must demonstrate that God is not mysterious or that we have sufficient knowledge of His character. Spinoza attempts to do that and presents the most comprehensive response that modern science could provide. It is, however, still limited which means that modern science is limited in the refutation of revelation. Philosophy may succeed in defending the unbelieving position, but it does not destroy the believing position. Revelation is meant to be accessed by faith and everything or anything outside of that is irrelevant to its position.

Philosophy appears to disprove revelation because of the changes that had happened within theology and its transition from traditional to modern positions. Essentially, the instability of the view that theology holds on the meaning of revelation proves that revelation itself is nonsense. It is, however, important to remember that Strauss says the same about philosophy. Over the centuries it has transformed into something new and only the original understanding of it can rival revelation. Time and changes it brought have added more layers of confusion rather than clarification. Modern theology has been influenced by both philosophy and science and so the position of revelation has changed also. Spinoza claimed that the Bible may not be entirely truthful and divine, meaning he does not agree that the texts have been written by people inspired directly

by God. If that is the case, then the Bible cannot be perceived as the ultimate source of faith-inspiring truth that leads to revelation for believers. Miracles would also be rejected. This perspective would turn revelation into a myth.

Modern theology is based on the distinction between the true and mythical characteristics of the Bible. In the Bible, that distinction is based on the spiritual and the fleshly. Essentially, the question is whether a man chooses to follow the will of God, and be spiritual, or follow his desires, and be fleshly. Revelation is about God revealing Himself, His roles as the Father, Judge and Redeemer, and His characteristics of loving, just and forgiving. The man who puts his trust in God is blessed, but it is in human nature to put trust in yourself and be cursed instead. Faith in the intangible God is substituted by a belief in tangible things, observations inspired by faith are exchanged for facts. This happened in traditional theology and was changed in modern theology. Revelation and facts exist separately without coming into conflict with each other because of the difference in their natures. Faith and revelation, essentially, exist creating context and giving it meaning in themselves, whereas facts are independent of any context, they just exist. The most that revelation says about facts is whether or not they are fleshly. Therefore the notion that “philosophy or science ought to be the handmaid of theology, is based on a radical misunderstanding”<sup>19</sup>.

Leo Strauss points out the inconsistency of modern theology in the way it presents miracles, it obscures them all together. Traditionally, miracles are supra-natural actions of God that interfere with the natural order. Modern theology suggests that miracles do not necessarily interfere with the natural. Here, Strauss refers to the Swiss theologian Emil Brunner, citing his idea that “life processes do not interfere with the processes of inanimate

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<sup>19</sup> Leo Strauss, “Reason and Revelation (1948),” *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*, January 9, 2006, 141–80, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139177948.010>., p. 157

matter”. Analogously, revelation "does not break into the sphere of human existence in such a way that it either pushes the human element aside or puts it out of action; but it enters by using the human in its service.”<sup>20</sup> This idea directly contradicts the story of Jesus, who was not just born of a woman, but of a virgin which was the element that made it a miracle. Yet, Brunner admits that the Gospel (as in that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of a virgin woman came to save mankind from sin) is the foundation of real Christian faith. Brunner contradicts himself.

This inconsistency within theology may damage the reputation of theology itself, however, it does not disprove revelation. At most, it demonstrates that people have been trying to understand it and have still not come any closer to being able to do it. Neither does it change anything for philosophy.

Theological arguments are circular. Strauss presents this argument in the form of a dialogue, between a theologian and philosopher. It is a very straightforward way of putting the difference between the disciplines into an explanation. Following is the summary of it using the excerpts directly from the text:

THEOLOGIAN: but it is inconsistent of the philosopher not to admit the strictest moral demands; for philosophy claims to be love of truth, and every relaxation of morality amounts to admitting the right of self-assertion or self-seeking or eudemonism which is incompatible with the radical self-denial that is implied in every real quest for truth.

PHILOSOPHER: denies that human self-assertion and love of truth are incompatible. For we have a selfish need for truth.

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<sup>20</sup> Leo Strauss, “Reason and Revelation (1948),” *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*, January 9, 2006, 141–80, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139177948.010>., p. 159

THEOLOGIAN: philosophy is self-deification; philosophy has its roots in pride.

PHILOSOPHER: if we understand by God the most perfect being that is a person, there are no gods but the philosophers.

THEOLOGIAN: the philosophic understanding of man is superficial; they have not fathomed the depths of man, his despair, what is hidden in his craving for distraction and in that mood of boredom which reveals more of man's reality than all his rational activities.

PHILOSOPHER: these and similar phenomena reveal indeed the problematic character of all ordinary human pursuits of happiness which are not the pursuit of the happiness of contemplation. The philosopher as a philosopher never craves distraction and he is never bored.<sup>21</sup>

Both disciplines claim to provide answers to the most vital questions – on the meaning of life and a source of true happiness. However, they approach it from such different angles that their coexistence within the life of an individual seems impossible, one must give way to the other.

#### **2.4 Summary**

In reviewing Leo Strauss's philosophy, we see that philosophy and religion are important tools that help politics to either achieve a desired change or keep everything the same. In his essay *What is Political Philosophy*, Strauss defines philosophy as the quest for knowledge. It is then political philosophy's goal to "replace opinion about the nature of political things by knowledge of them", as we often tend to only hold an opinion instead of truly knowing it.

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<sup>21</sup> Leo Strauss, "Reason and Revelation (1948)," *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*, January 9, 2006, 141–80, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139177948.010>, p. 163

In the essay, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, Strauss emphasized the important role of esoteric writing, of hiding the truth between the lines. Philosophers have always suffered from misunderstanding; their quests have not always been welcomed with open arms and often enough have been persecuted instead. However, it is only philosophers who are capable of independent thinking, everyone else falls victim to an outside influence. They are the only ones who can provide the truth because, unlike others, they are constantly seeking it. Esoteric texts provide the necessary safety to those who express their ideas and at the same time challenge those seeking the truth to find it.

However, not all answers can be found, some may just be revealed. In his work, *Reason and Revelation*, Strauss shows that divine revelation, although cannot be explained, is valid and may even be relevant. By revelation he refers to faith, God, and everything in between; by reason he means philosophy. Both disciplines claim to be the way of life, the meaning and ultimate purpose which makes them incompatible, as one will inevitably undermine the other.

Reason, or philosophy, is based on searching. It does not necessarily have to always lead to the answers, but it will always be about trying to find them. Revelation, however, provides those answers. It is based on knowing, even if the explanation of it is a mystery. Faith is the most necessary component of revelation, for without it cannot exist at all, making it accessible to only a few.

Over time, the definition and understanding of philosophy has changed a lot. However, philosophy in its pre-modern meaning is what Strauss suggests as an alternative to Biblical faith. When it comes to theology, things are not quite simple either. Strauss argues and shows how often theologians contradict themselves and contradict the Bible which must be held in the highest accord for revelation to be valid. It then comes to be, that each person finds themselves at the crossroads of choosing either philosophy or religion as a path to truth.

Neither disproves the existence or validity of the other, but rather shows that you cannot be divided between them, you have to go all in.

### **3. Discussion: Comparative Analysis of the two Philosophers**

#### **3.1 Authority**

The question of authority is major to any discipline, whether it is a question of science or personal beliefs. We come into the world and live under the authority of our parents, family, friends, government, social norms, religion, and many other things. Truthfully, it is not possible to not be under any authority, even the most powerful of people have weaknesses that dictate their behaviour. Often, one may not even realise that their decisions and who they are are being affected by something outside of them. However, that impact rarely comes from within, even our most personal values can be traced to the circumstances in which we grew up. We fall under the authority of some while simultaneously becoming a figure of authority to others. In all our relationships, we influence each other to a certain degree, giving and taking all at the same time.

It can be argued that some of the most influential authority in one's life is determined by their religious and political perspectives. Both religion and politics are born out of and through social interactions. Politics may only exist if we exist in a community with others. Religion is understood more deeply through the building of personal life experiences and the interaction with the experiences of others.

It is obvious that between the two, Hannah Arendt chooses politics. Life has meaning if and only if it is occupied with political matters. It is not that she does not recognize religion or claims that it is irrelevant, but rather that to her politics would be the primary source of authority that one would fall under and more so, it is the kind of authority one should strive to exercise. Of course, not all of us are born to be political leaders, but in the case of Arendt's philosophy that so heavily relies on Ancient Greece, a person must have political authority

to live a fulfilling life. It is a matter of making political discourse the primary goal and influence of one's life.

A person who has the personal resources to participate in social and political matters is one who is free from the routine of everyday tasks of survival, those responsibilities are simply delegated making the head of the house an authority figure to their immediate family and anyone who may be assisting them with life. If that person then goes and spends their time immersing themselves in the matters of their surroundings, figuring out how society can be improved, what it means to be a part of it, and just in general contemplating the political, then their authoritativeness gains all the more meaning.

Religion, of course, cannot be excluded, it is a big part of human existence even if a person does not exercise it. However, religion and politics should not be mixed because of the consequential discreditation this mix will lead to, according to Arendt. Just as there is a chance politics will discredit religion, religion also will spoil politics. The political may want to utilise religion to enhance its postulates, however, religious people are interested in politics only as long as they have the freedom to exercise their faith. Religious people, as Arendt noted, are not committed to figuring out what is political life but are rather focused on following God's commands. They are societal outsiders who, while still living in a community with others, do not recognize the politics as having the same level of authority as it would for those who do not practise religion. Religion then becomes, in a way of being a grey and unknown territory, a threat to politics, not because of an open rebellion but rather because of a silent ignorance.

Leo Strauss on the other hand focuses on the tension between rational thought and religious belief. He repeatedly pointed to the fact that philosophy, and philosophers, are atheistic because religion, in its nature, defeats the purpose and meaning of philosophy. In this radical difference, Strauss over and over reminds his readers that between philosophy

and religion, only one discipline can win the war of authority. However, due to the separation of the two, philosophy loses sight of the importance of moral principles that are necessary in the political life of a society. Religion, on the other hand, loses the thought and contemplation that philosophy offers, as a result leading to a blind following of the authority of God. It can be rightfully argued, however, that submitting oneself to political authority is no different from religion in its sightedness. The variety of political parties or systems, or even nation-states do not influence this argument since it is a general attitude one has towards the government. The overall idea is that a person accepts a higher authority over themselves. In an ideal world, where conflict does not play such a major role in life, maybe one could fully dedicate oneself to one of the authorities without having to compromise the other or their social position. In the world that we live in, the human soul is torn between many things, one of them being the question of influence.

Maarten Wisse in his article “The meaning of the authority of the Bible”, while exploring Joseph M. Bochensky’s theory of authority points to an important distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* authority, something worth mentioning<sup>22</sup>. When someone has substantial knowledge of a topic, they may be a *de jure* authority. However, it does not mean that they are a *de facto* authority. For example, a teacher must be a *de jure* authority in their class because they are there to teach their students about their subject, but some students might not recognize them as a *de facto* authority over them if they are feeling particularly rebellious or the said teacher does not necessarily care about either the subject or the pupils. When one thinks about which discipline plays a more important role, perhaps it is more about the question of authority rather than authority itself. It is quite normal to want to choose one over the other and the philosophers demonstrate that it may be for the best in terms of

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<sup>22</sup> Wisse, Maarten. “The Meaning of the Authority of the Bible.” *Religious Studies*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2000, pp. 473–87. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20008314>.



the quality of the dedication to it. However, it does not mean that if one chooses politics or philosophy to rule over their life religion will have no authority whatsoever. Frankly, all three influenced each other for centuries and even if you can find a pure doctrine the practice of it would have inevitably inherited an outside influence. It then, perhaps, becomes not a matter of a de facto authority but of the fact that there will always be authority de jure. A person is free to choose what will take which place.

### **3.2 Modernity**

Tradition is one of those factors that plays a silent, but very significant, role in the background of many important questions. Tradition is what we grow up knowing – it is in the things we perceive as “normal”, the ideas we are used to, and the people we spend time watching; it is behind the scenes of our lives. Eventually, however, one comes to a point of questioning that context. Culturally, we cross into the territory of modernity, a phenomenon which rejects the old and instead suggests that “new is always better”.<sup>23</sup> It is especially relevant in the context of religion when the emphasis on it decreases as a generation dives deeper into modern practices.

Religion plays a crucial role in historical concepts and their evolution. Before the world entered the modern age, religion heavily influenced both politics and philosophy. For a long time, the church dictated the social norms and established the views and values. However, that, of course, does not mean that everyone agreed with it. Modernity brought with it not just a technological and scientific change, but a religious shift that in turn affected politics. It is a historical change that redefined the way we view history.

Hannah Arendt points out that science went from trying to answer the question of “what” to focus on the “how”.<sup>24</sup> Giambattista Vico<sup>25</sup> claimed that people can make history,

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<sup>23</sup> Famously used quote by Barney Stinson from an American sitcom *How I met Your Mother*

<sup>24</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (The Viking Press, 1961), 57

<sup>25</sup> Alexander Bertland, “Giambattista Vico (1668—1744),” Internet encyclopedia of philosophy, n.d.,

just as God made nature. However, it cannot be explained how God created nature, He just did. Modern history no longer concerned itself with telling the stories of events and of how they affected people, but rather it became an artificial process which was exclusively created by people. Therefore, God and religion started to slowly fade from the context of history and as a result from philosophy too, and the value of people and individuality began to rise.

Arendt draws on a very important point that there is a vital connection between past and present. That connection is what allows generations to not start at square one of life but build upon the knowledge and experience of previous generations. This build, in theory, allows people to grow faster and more significantly while, at the same time, making progress not only for their own sake but for the sake of future generations. As we develop in accordance with the existing resources we continue to discover more and better ways to understand relevant concepts and more creative ways to approach current problems and forecast possible issues that might arise later. We are adding new knowledge and new experiences into the pool of social sciences and interactions that in turn should allow future generations to start their journeys further ahead and make even more breakthroughs. Eventually, people will find that perfect political system that will enable them to live a good and fulfilling life. In theory. In reality that Arendt points to, it only creates discord and oppression, both on societal level and within each individual member.

Our thoughts are born out of the experiences of our lives. Modern life makes modern experiences and, as a result, conceives modern thoughts. The nature of modernity forces oneself to look into and rely on themselves, and this creates loneliness. Instead of engaging in activities that allow us to relate to each other, people become consumers and only a few still have access to action. Civilization, as it was known, has come to an end and society is now stuck in a gap between what was known and what is yet to become.

We cannot fixate on either the past or the future, for that fixation will cost us our lives, it costs us the present. Truthfully, while the past may sometimes seem to make more sense and the future sounds better because of the unknown yet exciting opportunities that lie ahead, the present is the only one that truly matters. Our political freedom is born in the present. While the circumstances may be oppressive or in general not at all favourable, it is the current opportunity for action, a chance to engage in political and social discourse with others that allows us to live a worthwhile life. The past teaches us important lessons, but those lessons have no value if they are not applied to contemporary life. Knowledge and experience are not meant to stay in a piggy bank until better times and opportunities, they are supposed to be used for the sake of creating them. The future is so elusive that it cannot be relied upon either. Arendt rightfully points to the fact that tradition provides stability that allows us to understand the world and make our judgements of it. We should never try to repeat it or hold on to the traditions so tight that they become all we know, but neither should we forget what happened before us for the sake of not making the same, or worse, mistakes again. George Orwell wrote “who controls the past controls the future...” and reminds us that the past, no matter how much we try to ignore it, will have an effect on us. To forget it completely is to disregard a mindful future and a present awareness, of oppression and totalitarianism included.

The implications of modernity, the striving for the modern, put people into a state of disregarding the importance of the past and also shifting focus to private matters over public ones. Modernity is the reason the social realm emerged and tainted the vitality of the public realm where action gives our lives meaning. Individuals became alienated from the public sphere, political engagement became no longer relevant. According to Arendt, people became overfocused on labour and work while forgetting their duties as citizens. Now, not only is the state as a whole suffering from the lack of thoughtful political building, but

individuals have lost their most meaningful activity. The richness of human life started to fade away turning lives into mere existence. The technological advancement that accompanied modernity may be convenient in that it simplifies our everyday tasks, but instead of utilising it to our advantage to have more time to contemplate our political life, we have become enslaved to it and allowed it to turn ourselves into mindless creatures. Not only that, we use it to destabilise others, to cause pain and suffering.

Modernity shifted focus from the natural order of things to the technological advance, to individual subjectivity. It no longer matters how things come to be or the effect that our existence in society has on people around us. What matters is what technology can give us, how we can advance, and how my personal beliefs form my success. While these goals are not necessarily bad in themselves, it is the resulting corruption of the mind that is of concern. We have come to the point of believing and searching for all the answers within ourselves, but does not that limit ourselves instead? Both Arendt and Strauss agree it is through the interaction with others that we find meaning in the answers that we are looking for as well as a better understanding of the questions we ask.

Not only has it influenced our political aspirations and life but has also significantly impacted our morals and ethics. While Leo Strauss does not favour religion as the primary way of life, he admits that it carries a moral and ethical structure that is vital to our societal and political existence. Philosophy may bring happiness, though it will not necessarily do it for everyone, but its atheism misses the mark of sound communal life. Modernity rejected morals and ethics leading to moral relativism, nihilism, and the disappearance of standards of truth and justice. This, Leo Strauss identified as a profound crisis in Western civilization.

Strauss writes “The crisis of modernity reveals itself in the fact... that modern western man no longer knows what he wants – that he no longer believes that he can know

what is good and bad, right and wrong”<sup>26</sup>. To him, modernity, specifically the changes in political thought, evolved over the course of three waves, each building upon the one before. The first wave changed the focus from public virtue to enlightened self-interest. The second wave tried to unite the city and philosophy by appealing to individual freedom. Finally, the third wave rejected all religious and moral principles. These waves brought Western civilization to the point of being lost in an anti-social state of concepts so broad they could not be applied in life, and ultimately left each person to define ethics and morals themselves.

Modernity attempted to reconcile politics with philosophy. However, the two disciplines are in conflict with each other due to different purposes and goals. Politics require answers, while philosophy seeks to question. Philosophers, recognizing this difference, opted to hide their true ideas between the lines. Perhaps, because modernity began to arise, many relevant truths remained hidden as the societal interests began to change.

Each wave, associated with specific philosophers, showed the importance of political philosophy as a force of influence. To Strauss, these philosophers are at fault for undermining the emphasis on virtue and the common good. While esoteric writing might have proved to be helpful for some it also revealed the unfortunate truth in that less and less people are able to recognize the truth and understand classical ideas, yet another failure that modernity brought with it.

Modernity seeks to find the answers, but not everything has one, as Strauss recognizes, sometimes revelation is the explanation. Perhaps, it asks the wrong questions to begin with, or it is the fact that it does not ask the questions that matter, and so the connection to meaning is lost. Before, when religion was more relevant to society, Western civilization managed to balance reason and revelation. However, with modernity shifting away from

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<sup>26</sup> 1. Leo Strauss, “3 Waves” of Modernity ,” (Internet Archive, 1975), <https://archive.org/details/LeoStrauss3WavesOfModernityocr/mode/2up?view=theater>. p.81

them both, Western thought, and as a result life, became more intellectually impoverished. People have lost all meaning.

The Christian faith is based on love for God and as a result a love for others. Modernity has led us to the love of self. As a result, we find ourselves amid a crisis that is based on our inability to process the boundaries of social existence and the purposes of human life. We entered into a race with unclear goals that have blurred our overall vision. Religion may not be for everyone or may not be the sole purpose of life, but it does provide a framework that allows one to safely grow in knowledge and experience. It is built upon a tradition that encourages individuals to apply the concepts to their current lives while keeping the future in mind without fixating on it. It provides balance people so desperately require yet so eagerly reject. This balance is required for action; it is necessary for philosophical endeavours; it is meant to create the capacity in a person's life for things that bring meaning and fulfilment. Arendt seeks inspiration and Strauss advocates for a return to classical political thought because in it they saw meaning and value to societies, which in turn leads to valuable individual experience full of substance. The turn that human minds took as modernity began its influence was towards empty, materialistic and trivial matters. While the Western civilization continues to live on centuries after modernity, as an era, finished, people suffer more and more from not knowing their purpose.

Modernity is not a new concept, ironically, it is as old as time and has become quite the tradition at this point. Every generation thinks higher of itself than of those who came before. To a degree, there are always ideas and concepts that may work as a better solution that would be considered modern, however, "nothing is new under the Sun"<sup>27</sup>. Modernity has ultimately shifted our values and priorities from hard intellectual labour that resulted in quality byproducts and work to a mindless and lonely race aimed at completely different

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<sup>27</sup> The Holy Bible, *Ecclesiastes 1:9 NIV*

results. It is, however, important to note that neither of the philosophers are actively against modernity. In their works, they highlight the consequences that humanity, specifically Western civilization, now faces because of these changes, but they are neither good nor bad. At this point, we cannot change the past. Modernity, just as anything in life, poses certain challenges, to politics and philosophy especially. Perhaps, these changes are not so different to what was known before, but rather are a new side to the same coin of human society.

### **3.3 Politics**

Finally, although this point has been the primary goal overall, the impact that religion has on politics is both significant and inevitable. By politics, as has also been already mentioned, is meant the social life, the inescapable reality that people live among people and certain activities emerge as a result of it. Religion influences the course these activities take but the question to which level of social life religion should belong to is being raised all at the same time.

As it has been already established, Hannah Arendt distinguishes between three types of activities that a person can engage in. First, the most basic one is labour which refers to biological processes and the necessary processes people engage in to sustain their physical life. Second is work, the created artifacts and the building of an environment that has lasting properties. Finally, the most important one in Arendt's view is action which refers to social and political engagement with other people. It is within the sphere of action that each person can be distinguished from others, that each person becomes their own unique and individual entity. However, all that is possible and has any worth only as long as the person is in communion with others. All this is what Arendt compiles into the human condition.

Certain things in our lives are conditional to mere existence and, although sometimes we would have preferred to avoid them, we cannot get rid of them. Other things, however, determine and give our merely existing bodies meaning, value and purpose. It is those things

that one should dedicate their time to and, in the opinions of Arendt and Strauss, as well as most other contemplators of life, it is those things that bring us happiness and fulfilment. Or at least they do in theory, as both happiness and fulfilment can be so subjective that a person can get desperately lost in the midst of trying to define and achieve them.

When it comes to relating it to religion, Arendt is not as direct as she is with politics. In general, Arendt views religion as belonging to the private sphere of one's life. However, it cannot be avoided in the public sphere at the very least because we interact with others and if it is of any significance to them, it will be brought into the conversation. We must also not forget that religion, for centuries, was the pillar of the formation of traditions. Areas such as education, economy, jurisprudence, and ultimately politics have all been influenced by religion in one way or another. Matters belonging to private lives tend to spill over into the public realm because we bring ourselves into that realm and as social creatures want to share the things that matter to us the most.

Arendt accepts that religion is a part of political life because it is a part of human life. She even agrees that there is goodness to it because of the goodness that the nature of religious life pushes people towards. However, those same religious practices and beliefs encourage people to not engage in political discourse. We can assume that, in Arendt's opinion, Christian religious life is closely related to that of a vegetable – you exist, but your life is not at all enjoyable because you are missing the political aspect of it. It may be a bit of a radical example and not the exact way she would put it, but the point stands that without political engagement human life is vain.

Leo Strauss on the other hand focuses more on political philosophy and its importance. It may be defined as the quest for political good, but it stems from the search for the knowledge of God as the definition for philosophy suggests. Religion brings with it morals and values that are necessary to our human existence.



Approaching religion from a “scientific” point of view defeats the true purposes of faith, and religion is nothing without faith. A person can research it, can try to dispute it, can study it, can compare and contrast it with other works or other disciplines and still miss the mark. Religion is not a set of rules, just like philosophy is not a system. Of course, you may approach it as such, but it will not make any profound impact unless you let go and allow your brain to consider it as the truth at least to some degree. The same applies to philosophy. You can memorize the names of all the philosophers and even learn their theses, but it will not make you yourself a philosopher nor will it influence you to a point of understanding politics or life better.

Political science cannot define “political” without relating it to the state and without answering the question of what that state is made of. Just as every individual must have a purpose for their actions, a state must have a purpose as well. To determine the purposes of a society one must make value judgements, judgements that are provided by the religious framework. Religion provides a moral and ethical guideline for society. In Strauss’ view, classical political philosophy is concerned with answering the question of what the best political regime is. Whatever the answer is, religion enhances it from a humane point of view. He also argues that education is central to philosophers who, ultimately, would make the best rulers of our society. Even if religion is not an active part of a political system, the rulers of a society have to be educated on it to be able to deliver a better understanding of their position and the position of people. It is vital to learn how to make judgements that science cannot always provide answers for.

It appears that the philosophers approach the question from opposite sides, not in the sense of rejecting one another but from a perspective of what plays a bigger importance. Both Arendt and Strauss recognize that there is a place for religion in social life, and they both, to a degree, point out that religion plays an important role in how our society is

organised. However, their views diverge when it comes to the political aspect. To Arendt, personal political involvement is the pillar of a good life. The public sphere is what matters most and is the formative aspect of the fulfilment of our lives. Religion belongs only to the private realm. It may be practised, it may even be beneficial, but it is secondary to the purposes and meaning of life. Strauss instead focuses on the role of political philosophy and the part that people play in it. He admits that religion is important for the aspects that philosophy lacks. It may not be the central point of a society, but it is a necessary tool in building a good system.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of this thesis is to look at the works of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss and through their perspectives discover the role that religion plays in shaping contemporary politics. Understanding their views of what politics, political philosophy and religion are, pushes one to contemplate how it relates to the way our society is structured, as well as question if between politics/philosophy and religion one has to supersede the other.

To Arendt, authority is a matter of politics, and it is only through participation in political discourse that a person can achieve freedom. It is only in that sovereignty and freedom that a person can have a fulfilling life. Leo Strauss, while not offering a definitive answer, draws attention to the fact that a person may only fall under the authority of either philosophy or religion, but never both. Philosophy and religion are inherently different, one chases the questions while the other needs the answers and we must choose which side to belong to. When shifting focus to modernity, the importance of tradition is realised through both thinkers. Hannah Arendt points to the doubt that plagued our lives and shifted focus to science and religion. We lost the connection to the present that holds the importance of political action. Leo Strauss focused on the morals that are vital to societies we try to build, morals that became obsolete as religion got pushed aside. Both philosophers grieve the loss

of meaning and value that came as a result of shifted interest to individuality and thirst for power; and both point to the importance of political philosophy as whole and to Ancient philosophy as the guide to better understanding of ourselves and our societies. Finally, through the topic of politics, and our societal existence, we touched upon the different realms of human activity and the place that religion takes in that framework. Arendt strictly keeps religion private. While religion is sometimes even necessary it should not cross into the line of becoming a political institution and instead should be a silent influencer of morals. Strauss cannot help but point to the fact that religion provides an important framework that philosophy cannot. Both philosophy and religion hide between the lines. Although the Bible is fairly straightforward, the lessons it teaches hide between the lines of our own lives that we layer with different convictions, expectations and values. However, it is philosophy that provides the framework for building and organising our societies, the truths necessary to realise the purpose.

Through this research, it becomes even more apparent how different Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss are. When first encountering the two philosophers, it may appear as though they were very similar, discussing the same questions from almost the same perspectives. However, as one starts to contrast them, it quickly becomes evident that it could not be further from the truth. While both Arendt and Strauss draw their inspiration from Ancient Greece, Arendt focuses on politics, whereas Strauss explores philosophy. Despite this difference, a comparative analysis of the thinkers, especially in relation to religion, allows the readers to grapple with our current political realities, their meaning, and their value. It allows one to explore their convictions and decide for themselves the “whats” and “whys” of their beliefs. The question of the relation between political philosophy and religion is important and relevant because it was relevant to these specific philosophers. Through their works they were able to establish that our societies are complex organisms in need of

meaning and purpose. It is through a balanced and complimentary combination of philosophy and religion that a society can embark on the journey of instituting a free and valuable life.

The lack of more definitive expressions on the matter of religion from the philosophers themselves presented to be a bit of a limitation at first. The scarcity of similar analyses from other authors challenged the comprehension of the question as well. However, these limitations were not ones that could not be overcome. A more careful reading of the thinkers' works, as well as research into their lives, allowed for a better understanding of the topic from their perspectives.

The theme of the relationship between religion and political philosophy, or between religion and either politics or philosophy, is broad. Even when limiting the research to only two philosophers, it is possible to look at the question from many different perspectives. For example, the primary point of view of this work comes from Protestant Christianity. Further research can include the accounts of specific denominations within Christianity or other religions. It can also more specifically focus deeper on the questions of authority and modernity while also resorting to exploring the thoughts of other thinkers on these matters. This question may open many doors while taking the researchers and then the readers on a fascinating journey of understanding religion, politics, and philosophy better as their own individual concepts as well as in relation to each other.

The three disciplines, while wildly captivating on their own, raise the everlasting question of the meaning and value of life. What is the best way to spend the limited time we all have? Is there an answer to this question that can be found at a young age, or is it only possible to realise once all the years you have had are behind you? Is it all subjective, or is there an answer that could unite us all? While it is a solely individual responsibility to understand these questions and search for the answers, one can always hope that the

contemplations of the philosophers who came before us will help us find that meaning and value.

### **Summary**

Cílem této práce je nahlédnout do děl Hannah Arendtové a Lea Strausse a prostřednictvím jejich perspektivy odhalit roli, kterou náboženství hraje při utváření současné politiky. Pochopení jejich názorů na to, co je to politika, politická filosofie a náboženství, nutí člověka k zamyšlení nad tím, jak to souvisí s uspořádáním naší společnosti, a také k otázce, zda mezi politikou/filosofií a náboženstvím musí jedno suplovat druhé.

Pro Arendtovou je autorita záležitostí politiky a jedině účastí v politickém diskurzu může člověk dosáhnout suverenity. Pouze v této suverenitě a svobodě může mít člověk naplněný život. Leo Strauss sice nenabízí definitivní odpověď, ale upozorňuje na skutečnost, že člověk může spadat pouze pod autoritu buď filozofie, nebo náboženství, ale nikdy ne obou. Filosofie a náboženství se ve své podstatě liší, jedna se honí za otázkami, zatímco druhá potřebuje odpovědi, a my si musíme vybrat, na kterou stranu se zařadíme. Při přesunu pozornosti k moderně si prostřednictvím obou myslitelů uvědomujeme význam tradice. Hannah Arendtová poukazuje na pochybnosti, které sužovaly náš život, a přesouvá pozornost na vědu a náboženství. Ztratili jsme spojení s přítomností, která v sobě nese důležitost politického jednání. Leo Strauss se zaměřil na morálku, která je pro společnost, jež se snažíme budovat, životně důležitá, morálku, která se stala zastaralou, protože náboženství bylo odsunuto stranou. Oba filosofové truchlí nad ztrátou smyslu a hodnoty, k níž došlo v důsledku přesunu zájmu k individualitě a touze po moci; oba poukazují na význam politické filosofie jako celku a antické filosofie jako vodítka k lepšímu pochopení sebe sama a našich společností. Nakonec jsme se prostřednictvím tématu politiky a naší společenské existence dotkli různých oblastí lidské činnosti a místa, které v tomto rámci zaujímá náboženství. Arendtová striktně zachovává soukromí náboženství, které je sice

někdy dokonce nezbytné, ale nemělo by překročit hranici, kdy se stává politickou institucí, a naopak by mělo být tichým ovlivňovatelem morálky. Strauss nemůže nepoukázat na skutečnost, že náboženství poskytuje důležitý rámec, který filozofie nemůže poskytnout. Jak filozofie, tak náboženství se skrývají mezi řádky. Bible je sice poměrně přímočará, ale poučení, které poskytuje, se skrývá mezi řádky našich vlastních životů, které vrstvíme různými přesvědčeními, očekáváními a hodnotami. Je to však filozofie, která poskytuje rámec pro budování a uspořádání naší společnosti, pravdy nezbytné k uskutečnění účelu.

Díky tomuto výzkumu je ještě více zřejmé, jak moc se Hannah Arendtová a Leo Strauss liší. Při prvním setkání s oběma filozofy se může zdát, že jsou si velmi podobní, že diskutují o stejných otázkách z téměř stejného úhlu pohledu. Jakmile je však začneme porovnávat, rychle se ukáže, že to nemůže být dále od pravdy. Zatímco Arendtová i Strauss čerpají inspiraci z antického Řecka, Arendtová se zaměřuje na politiku, zatímco Strauss zkoumá filozofii. Navzdory tomuto rozdílu umožňuje srovnávací analýza obou myslitelů, zejména ve vztahu k náboženství, čtenáři popasovat se s naší současnou politickou realitou, jejím významem a hodnotou. Umožňuje prozkoumat jejich přesvědčení a rozhodnout se pro sebe, „co“ a „proč“ jejich víry. Otázka vztahu politické filosofie a náboženství je důležitá a relevantní, protože byla relevantní pro tyto konkrétní filosofy. Prostřednictvím svých děl dokázali zjistit, že naše společnosti jsou složité organismy, které potřebují smysl a účel. Právě díky vyvážené a vzájemně se doplňující kombinaci filozofie a náboženství se společnost může vydat na cestu nastolení svobodného a hodnotného života.

Absence jednoznačnějších vyjádření k náboženství ze strany samotných filosofů se zpočátku jevila jako určité omezení. Také nedostatek podobných analýz od jiných autorů zpochybňoval pochopení otázky. Nejednalo se však o omezení, která by nebylo možné překonat. Pečlivější četba děl myslitelů i výzkum jejich životů umožnily lépe pochopit téma z jejich perspektivy.

Téma vztahu mezi náboženstvím a politickou filozofií nebo mezi náboženstvím a politikou či filozofií je široké. I když se výzkum omezí pouze na dva filosofy, je možné na tuto otázku nahlížet z mnoha různých perspektiv. Například primární pohled této práce vychází z protestantského křesťanství. Další výzkum může zahrnovat výpovědi konkrétních denominací v rámci křesťanství nebo jiných náboženství. Může se také konkrétněji hlouběji zaměřit na otázky autority a modernosti a zároveň se uchýlit ke zkoumání myšlenek dalších myslitelů v těchto otázkách. Tato otázka může otevřít mnoho dveří a zároveň přivést badatele a následně i čtenáře na fascinující cestu lepšího pochopení náboženství, politiky a filozofie jako samostatných pojmů i ve vzájemném vztahu.

Tyto tři disciplíny, které jsou samy o sobě nesmírně poutavé, nastolují věčnou otázku smyslu a hodnoty života. Jak nejlépe strávit omezený čas, který všichni máme? Existuje odpověď na tuto otázku, kterou lze nalézt již v mladém věku, nebo je možné si ji uvědomit až poté, co jsou všechna prožitá léta za námi? Je to všechno subjektivní, nebo existuje odpověď, která by nás všechny mohla sjednotit? Porozumět těmto otázkám a hledat na ně odpovědi je sice výhradně individuální záležitostí, ale vždy můžeme doufat, že úvahy filozofů, kteří tu byli před námi, nám pomohou tento smysl a hodnotu najít.

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