



The Theologico-Political Foundation of Modernity as a Political Problem

Andreas Heuer

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Wissenschaftlicher Aufsatz aus dem Jahr 2011 im Fachbereich Politik - Politische Theorie und Ideengeschichte, Columbia Universität New York, Sprache: Deutsch, Anmerkungen: Lecture held at the Political Workshop, Columbia University New York, October 2010 , Abstract: In this paper I examine two main thinkers who articulated the theologico-political conflict as a major problem of politics and modern state: Leo Strauss and Carl Schmitt. Both were convinced that the liberal state has failed in its attempt to overcome this conflict; they maintain, on the contrary, that faith and religion, albeit in different ways, retain their influence on the public sphere of modern state. The monistic structure of religion, in particular, permeates the western political tradition. This monistic structure which comes from monotheistic religion heavily influenced Greek political philosophy as it was prior to its foundation. Astours notes that "long before Hellenism imposed itself over the ancient civilization of the East, Semitism had exercised no less an impact upon the young civilization of Greece. Hellenism became the epilogue of Oriental civilizations, but Semitism was the prologue of Greek civilization". Firstly, I will examine Strauss concept of political philosophy because it brings this conflict into light. Through the distinction between natural law and natural right, Strauss is able to demonstrate how the conflict between politics and religion is at the core of Western political thinking. In following his approach of putting into question the modern concept of natural right, I want to rediscover the basis of the conflict between politics and religion in Western tradition. Secondly, I will question Schmitt's concept of political theology. Schmitt argues that all significant concepts on modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts. With Schmitt we may better understand the context of ethical-political monotheism in its secularized version a concept

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