

International History Congress
Religion, Society and State: 100 Years of Separation
13 to 16 April 2011

Centre of Studies of Religious History (CEHR)
Faculty of Theology - Portuguese Catholic University

PRESENTATION

The event:

This international Congress will gather specialists from several fields of study to discuss different issues concerning the Separation of the States and Churches: the forms in which these relationships take place, the levels of autonomy and interdependency between the political organization of societies and the ways in which the religious is institutionalized, between the control of the symbolic and individual and social freedom. These issues regard the historical past of societies marked by the confrontation between change and the different forms of Christianity and they also focus, in a broader sense, on other religious experiences from several other places. The discussion also includes questions pertaining to the place of the religious in the present day as an expression of the aspiration of fulfilment of the civil society, of the freedom and the participation of individuals and communities in the frame of citizenship and international order.

Occasion:

On the event of the commemorations of the centenarian of the promulgation of the Law of Separation between State and Churches, by the Decree of 20th April 1911, the Centre of Studies of Religious History (CEHR) organizes this conference meant to contribute to the debate over the importance of religion in societies and its implications. Mainly scientific and academic, this initiative is not bound, nor is it confined, to a commemorative setting. It intends to achieve a broader scope, hoping to place the discussion and the debate regarding the religious while cultural reality and while part of the development of social cohesion as a complex factor of social development and of social integration. Inscripting itself in a dynamic of analysis and rigour concerning the matters regarding the representation and operability of religious institutions, as well as religious and conscience freedom, its main goals are: to publicise work produced in several cultural and scientific contexts; to enable the interchange between investigators from different backgrounds and with different approaches and, at the same time, to

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contribute to the widening of future research perspectives in terms of exchange and partnerships, as part of interdisciplinary and international projects, including some in which CEHR has been participating in recent years. Every session is opened to the public who, following registration will gain access to the documentation and will be given a certificate, as this initiative will be certified as a formative activity, particularly aimed at lecturers of different fields of study.

Methodology:

This International Congress will include debate panels with specialists every morning, and the afternoons will be reserved for thematic sessions, which are organized as small thematic seminars. Each intervention should not take more than 30 minutes, allowing for the interaction between lecturers. The audience will be allowed to question the lecturers, but the debate among researchers is preferred. The thematic sessions with a larger number of participants may be extended into the following afternoon. Chairs are expected to assure the dialogue among participants.