

THE RESPECT OF PHILOSOPHY FOR RELIGION AND THEOLOGY IN EUROPE DURING THE END OF THE 17TH CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 18TH CENTURY

Ioan N. ROȘCA*

Abstract. The author argues that the philosophers from the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century, regardless if they were empiricist or rationalist, showed respect for religion, as well by their admittance of God, as by the adoption of religious morality. Ontologically, the thinkers from the above mentioned period have identified God with the supreme substance, which, by the attribute of scope and that of thought, as Spinoza considered, or, by the extended or omnipresent substance and thoughtful or omniscient substance, as the Deists stated, makes God intrinsic to the world of things and, respectively, to the human souls. Ethically, the thinkers we consider here argued that, being created by God, human souls have enrooted in them the divine principles of moral conduct as well as the freedom of choice between good and evil. The philosophers of Enlightenment reaffirmed the above indicated correlations between philosophy and religion, merely criticizing the behavior of some of the members of clergy, but not exactly the Christian doctrine. The author argues that, at present, given the identified interferences between philosophy, on the one hand, and theology and religion, on the other hand, they could and should be cultivated as consistent and not conflicting forms, which would contribute to the affirmation of the unified and harmonious spirit of contemporary human being and to the revival or, even more, to the retrieval of her moral conduct.

Keywords: ontology, metaphysics, theology, religion, supreme substance, secondary substances, divine feelings, moral freedom.

* University Professor, PhD, “Spiru Haret” University, inrosca@yahoo.com.