Invitation of Papers for the
36th International Course on the
The Future of Religion:
Religion in the Public Sphere

IUC, Dubrovnik, Croatia,
April 23-28, 2012

By

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Call for Papers for the 36th International Course on the
Future of Religion:
Religion in the Public Sphere

Dear Friend:

We are writing this letter to you in order to invite you wholeheartedly to our 36th international course on the *Future of Religion: Religion in the Public Sphere*, to take place in the Inter-University Center for Post - Graduate Studies (IUC) in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from April 23-28, 2012. We invite you to our discourse because we are convinced that you as a scholar are most competent to contribute to the clarification, understanding, explanation and further development of our new topic: the interconnection between religion, and the structural change of the public sphere in constitutional states in the present transition period between Modernity and Post-Modernity.

Anniversary

Last year we celebrated the 35th anniversary of our international course on the *Future of Religion*. We are the second oldest course in the IUC. The oldest course had been established by Academician Ivan Supek, former President of the University of Zagreb. Ivan invited me and my wife Margaret to found the course on the *Future of Religion* in 1975, when he visited Western Michigan University. Since 1977 we have met every year without interruption in beautiful Dubrovnik, coming from all parts of the world in order to study different aspects of the present antagonism between the main world-religions, their cognitive, ethical and expressive sides, and their paradigm changes, on one hand, and secular Modernity, particularly the bourgeois, Marxian and Freudian enlightenment movements on the other, and its possible future reconciliation. We discussed particularly the situation of religion in the present transition period from Modernity to Post-Modernity, which started after World War I. We met even during the Yugoslav war in Hotel Argentina and discussed in its basement Kant’s eternal peace and other issues, while the Serbian troops were stationed right above us on the mountain, from where they were often shooting. We were glad, that we could help the suffering people with medicine and money. We shall take out some time during our discourse to remember our accomplishments in the past 36 years and express our gratitude to the IUC and all those who made them possible, and plan for the future.

Dedication

We dedicate our 36th course to our dear friend Professor Dr. Nikola Skledar, our colleague and
former Co-Director for many years, who left us in November 2011 for a hopefully much better world. We shall remember Nikola as a good, most helpful friend, a great humanist, and inspiring philosopher, and as a most creative member of our course. We all appreciated Nikolas’ great friendliness. He will remain a great example for us to imitate in our future work. We thank Professor Dr. Gottfried Kueenzelen for participating in Nijolas’ funeral and for representing our community as a sign of our gratitude.

**Presentation of Papers**

We hope very much, that you can follow our invitation, and that you can come to the IUC in beautiful Dubrovnik in the last week of April 2012, and that you can join us in our 36th international course on the *Future of Religion: Religion in the Public Sphere*, and that you can present a paper to us out of the center of your own presently on-going research-activities, interests, competence and teaching, and in the framework of the general thematic of 2012. Of course, you are also very welcome, if you do not want to be a resource person and to read a paper, but rather prefer to appear as participant, and thus contribute as such to our, to be sure, very lively discourse. Our course will be part of a very rich IUC Program of courses and conferences in the Academic Year of 2011/2012. Dubrovnik and the IUC are, indeed, alive and well and even growing again in spite of all the tragic events of the past decades! We hope very much that the whole region of the former Yugoslavia will soon become part of the European Union, which will hopefully be able to stabilize the Euro again and its whole financial situation, and will thus survive. We hope that the further trials in Den Haag will be guided not by the *Jus or Lex Talionis* and by the motive of retaliation, but rather in the perspective of the *Golden Rule*, which is present not only in the three Abrahamic Religions - Judaism, Christianity and Islam – but also in all the other living world religions in one form or the other, and of its secular inversion, and translation, and rationalization into the *categorical imperative*, and into the *apriori of the universal communication community*, and of a global ethos built on these religious and secular principles, and of an *international law*, which is rooted in them and will, therefore, never be without mercy and the power of at-onement, and of reconciliation. All ethics and legality must - in order to have motivating power - ultimately be rooted in the insatiable longing for the totally Other than the horror and terror of nature and history (see http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org). We also hope, that the City Council of Dubrovnik will be able, to limit the visiting ships from 12 to 2 a day, and thus to rescue the city from the masses of visitors streaming daily through its streets, and driving out the inhabitants.
Please, prepare your paper out of the material of your present research, in the horizon of our specific theme of this year, and in the context of the present economic, political and historical situation, and in direction of our common goal: *shalom, salaam, peace* among the Abrahamic and all other living world-- religions. We remain convinced, that there cannot be any peace among the nations without peace among the world-religions; and that there cannot be any peace among the world-religions without discourse among them; and that there cannot be any discourse among them without their mutual knowledge about each other and their interpretations of reality and their orientations of action. To such mutual knowledge among the Abrahamic religions and between them and other world-religions, as well as between them and the secular Modernity and Post-Modernity our texts intend to contribute. Your texts must not be perfect. Nobody is perfect! You can still complete your paper to the level of publication-maturation after you have presented it, and after we have discussed it together, and after you have returned home. Our discourse may help you, to complete your paper, and to make it ready for publication after you return home. Finally, we would like to collect our research papers once more for a third volume, following Professor Reimer’s excellent first volume - *The Influence of the Frankfurt School on Contemporary Theology. Critical Theory and the Future of Religion. Dubrovnik Papers in Honor of Rudolf J. Siebert*. Lewiston, New York, Queenston, Ontario, Canada, Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales, United Kingdom, and Professor Michael Ott’s most outstanding second volume *The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society*, which has appeared with the publisher Brill in Holland and with the publisher Haymarket in 2007/2009. We are most grateful to Michael for having volunteered with his great publishing experience, to bring out our third volume in the not too distant future. My own three volume *Manifesto of the Critical Theory of Society and Religion: The Wholly Other, Liberation, Happiness and the Rescue of the Hopeless*, which is very much based in our discourses in Dubrovnik through the years and reflects very much our common efforts, has come out with the publisher Brill in Leiden, Holland, in 2010, and will come out in paperback with the publisher Haymarket in London and Chicago in 2012, and can be of help to us in our future discourse meetings. We celebrated the arrival of the *Manifesto* during our discourse in May 2011 in the framework of our work done in the past 35 years, which it reflects (see http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org).

**Resource Persons and Participants**

Thus, we - the Director, Professor Rudolf J. Siebert, Western Michigan University, and the Co-Directors, Professor Mislav Kukoc, University of Zagreb, Professor Gottfried Künzelen, Emeritus from...
the University of the Federal German Army, Munich, Professor Denis Janz, Loyola University, New Orleans, Professor Michael Ott, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, Michigan, Dr. Dinka Marinovic-Jerolimov, Institute for Social Research Zagreb, and the Coordinators Professor Tatiana Senyushkina, Taurida National University, Simferopol, Ukraine, and Dr. Goran Goldberger, Institute for Social Research, Zagreb, invite you very personally in the name of the IUC, to join us as resource persons or participants in our 36th international course on *The Future of Religion: Religion in the Public Sphere* in the IUC Building, from April 23-28, 2012. We chose this year’s course title once more in a democratic procedure. It grew almost logically out of the texts and the contexts and motivations of our previous discourses on the *Future of Religion*. This year’s theme is certainly once more of highest actuality considering the present world situation: characterized by the continuing crisis of global finance capitalism as well as by the so-called *war against terror*, which unfortunately also continues under the Obama Administration in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Palestine, Yemen, and elsewhere, and which is continually fought on both sides by Jews, Christians and Muslims according to the cruel Jus *or Lex Talionis*, without any real peace, or liberation, or redemption in sight, as the possible result of the praxis of the Golden Rule, in personal, national, and international affairs: a praxis driven by the yearning for the totally Other, for perfect justice, for unconditional love, and by the longing, that the murderer shall not triumph over the innocent victim, at least not ultimately, and by the hope for liberation and happiness, and the rescue of all the hopeless victims of society and history, who have never had their day in court: from Exodus to the Kingdom!

**Addresses: Home, Secretariat, and Hotels.**

In case you have any further questions, please address them to me or my co-directors at the following addresses and through the following media. My home address is: 630 Piccadilly Road, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49006, USA. My home telephone number is: 269-381-0864. My e-mail address is RSieb3@aol.com. My Fax address is: 269-381-1935. My website is: [http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org/](http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org/). If you plan to come, please also contact directly the Secretariat of the Inter-University Center, Don Frana Bulica 4, HR 20000 Dubrovnik, Croatia, Tel.+385 20 413626/7; Fax +385 20 413628. Please, also contact either Hotel Argentina, Tel + 385 20 440 555, Fax + 385 20 432 524, or Hotel Lero, Tel. + 385 20 411 455, Fax + 385 20 432 501, or any other hotel or private pension of your choice in Dubrovnik for room and board. Hotel Lero is the less expensive one. Hotel Argentina is the more expensive one. Most of us will probably stay at Hotel Lero. For further information concerning the broader context of our international course on the Future of Religion, please
look at my web site: http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org. You can get a lower hotel price, if you make your reservation through the IUC Secretariat as early as possible.

**Rome**

The Loyola University in Chicago is organizing a Meeting on its Campus in Rome, Italy, on the “Critical Theory of Society” of the first, mainly Jewish generation of the Frankfurt School from Mat 7-9, 2012. You are aware, that we have developed out of the critical theory of society our “Critical Theory of Religion” or “Dialectical Religiology”. We have invited the members of the Rome event to join us in Dubrovnik. Some of us will participate in the Rome event. You are very much invited to do so as well.

**Suggestions**

Please, allow me to make a few more concrete suggestions concerning the form and content of our discourse on *The Future of Religion: Religion in the Public Sphere*. One reason for such suggestions is to constitute further continuity between our past 35 courses on one hand, and the coming 36th discourse, on the other. In fulfilling this task of continuity, we are greatly supported by Professor Reimer's book *The Influence of the Frankfurt School on Contemporary Theology. Critical Theory and the Future of Religion. Dubrovnik Papers in Honor of Rudolf J. Siebert*, and by Professor Ott’s new book *The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society* and by Professor Siebert’s new *Manifesto of the Critical Theory of Society and Religion: The Totally Other, Liberation, Happiness, and the Rescue of the Hopeless*. The other reason for the following suggestions is to indicate the possible direction, which our new international discourse on the *Future of Religion: Religion in the Public Sphere* may, or could, or should take, when we meet in Dubrovnik from April 23-28, 2012. The few suggestions may indicate the possible theoretical framework, level, and goal for the texts, that we shall produce in writing or orally in and for the new Dubrovnik - and world-situation, and toward the goal of further human emancipation as reconciliation on the long road of humankind from animality to Post-Modern, global alternative Future III: the reconciled, free, just and therefore peaceful society, instead of alternative Future I - the totally administered society as predicted by Huxley, Orwell, Kafka, Flechtheim, Horkheimer, Adorno, Fromm, Marcuse, etc., or alternative global Future II - the entirely militarized society continually engaged in conventional wars and civil wars, and in the preparation of ABC wars, and the consequent environmental disasters, maybe in the framework of a collision of religion-guided civilizations as predicted by the late Samuel Huntington - a disciple of Carl Schmitt, Adolf Hitler’s main jurist and general council, and political theologian and a former Pentagon adviser during the Vietnam
war and the Iraq wars. The following suggestions are, of course, only that - suggestions - and you may feel entirely free, to follow your own dialectical imagination and creativity, and to move in other directions as well, inside, of course, of the wider framework of the general thematic of 2012 (see http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org/).

The Sacred and the Profane

Throughout our discourses in Dubrovnik since 1977 we were guided to a large extent by the critical theory of society and religion, or by the dialectical religiology. From its very start in 1947, the critical religiology as we derived it from the critical theory of society of the Frankfurt School, responding to our experiences with fascism, and with World War II, and with the cold war between the capitalist and socialist block, and more recently with the global war on terror, and with the recent also most painful world-financial-crisis, was constituted by a three fold dialectic:

1. the dialectic between the religious and the secular;
2. the dialectic in the secular; and
3. the dialectic in the religious.

Our present specific theme - religion in the public sphere - is located in the dialectic between the religious and the dialectic of religion, on one hand, and the secular, and the dialectic of enlightenment, on the other, between the sacred and the profane. We are concerned specifically with the access of the religion to the profane public sphere in the secular constitutional state. The public sphere is separated from the private sphere of the family. The public sphere I situated between civil society and the state, and mediates between both of them, and between the bourgeois and the citoyen. The structure of the private sphere includes the legislative branch of the state, the parliament, the congress, the mass media, newspaper, radio, television, computer, internet, journalism, town hall meetings, political, particularly election campaigns. The structure of the public sphere is continually changing between modernity and post-modernity. The public sphere is part of the internal state law, which is the basis for the external state law. The public sphere is as part and extension of the legislative branch the basis for the executive branch and for the juridical branch. The public sphere is open toward culture: art, religion, philosophy, and the sciences

Formal Freedom

The parliaments in modern states do not have the determination to counsel and decide, what is best concerning the political issues, problems, and affairs of the state in itself, from which side they
constitute only an addition. The differentiating determination of the parliaments is rather, that in their co-knowledge, co-counseling, and co-deciding about the general public affairs in respect of the members of civil society, who do not take part directly in the Government as such, the moment of formal freedom may find its right, and its expression, and its actualization. Thus, first of all the moment of the general knowledge receives its extension through the public sphere of the parliaments. This knowledge may in principle be profane as well as religious. Since the French Revolution and the American War of Independence, religion moved from the sphere of the state into the dimension of civil society. State-churches ceased to exist to a large extend. Church and state were separated. In consequence, in civil society religion was privatized. It became an individual matter. It had to stay out of family, civil society, state, international affairs, as well as out of art, and philosophy, and science. All these domains were secularized. The secular state could not establish a religion, to legitimate itself, but it had to secure the existence and the rights of religious associations, as well as their access to the public sphere, which was situated between the liberal bourgeois society on one hand, and the state, the government, the executive branch, on the other. Individuals and families were represented in Parliament first through estates and later through social classes and their political parties, and thus participated indirectly in the state and in the government. In the United States, a Presidential republic and formal democracy, there exists no viable Labor Party or Social Democratic Party. Thus the 200 million workers in American civil society are represented through two bourgeois parties, the neo-liberal Republican Party and the Roosevelt socially modified liberal, New Deal, Democratic Party. Religious associations situated in civil society can gain entrance into Congress only through Republican and Democratic Representatives or Senators, often via lobbyists, if they want to influence the legislative process in their own interest concerning abortion, or stem cell research, or gay marriage, or death penalty, or unjust wars etc.

**Public Opinion**

The opening of this opportunity of knowledge in the parliaments has the general side, that in this way the public opinion comes first of all to true and real thoughts, and to insights into the condition and the notion of the state, and its affairs, and problems, and thereby to come to the ability and competence, to judge about them rationally in argumentative practical discourse. Then the members of Parliament also have the opportunity, to recognize and respect the business, the talents, the virtues, and the skillfulness of the state authorities and officials, and the whole state bureaucracy. As these talents receive in the parliament as public sphere a powerful opportunity of development and a scene of high honors, so it is also the remedy against the self-conceit and hybris of the individualism and of the
crowds and the masses, and a means of education for them, and even one of the greatest. While the modern state has opened up a sphere, where public opinion may develop, it may still be missing in the religious communities, associations, churches, denominations, sects and cults, particularly in the authoritarian ones, which may also be the most effective and successful ones. It may particularly be the danger of the self-conceit and hybris, and arbitrariness of individuals and masses, which motivates particularly authoritarian religious communities to repress the development of public opinion in their own sphere. However, in this way the religious associations fall in their development behind that of the state. A religious community, which does not allow for or does not promote the growth of public opinion inside of itself, will have a hard time to enter the profane public sphere and discourse, and to participate in the formation and universalization of public opinion in the secular constitutional state, and to invert and translate its religious language, values and norms, into secular argumentation, in order thus to participate in will formation and legislation concerning all the issues, which are important for it: concerning divorce, abortion, stem cell research, education, liberal eugenics, liberal euthanasia, gay marriages, death penalty, war and peace, etc. In consequence, the antagonism between religious revelation and its ethical implications, on one hand, and autonomous reason on the other, can not be mediated and reconciled, and may even deepen in civil society and state, and between them, in the public sphere.

*Educational Spectacle*

The public sphere of the parliaments is a great spectacle, which educates excellently the individualistic bourgeois, situated in atomistic civil society, into a genuine citizen, situated in the constitutional state. The nation learns through this public spectacle mostly the truth of its own interests. There exists often the prejudice in bourgeois society, that all people know already what is good for the state, and that in parliament it is only expressed. But, as a matter of fact, in parliament precisely the opposite takes place: here first of all virtues, talents and skills develop themselves, which have to be valid as patterns of communicative action. Admittedly, parliamentary sessions are difficult for the ministers or secretaries of state, who must have jokes ready and eloquence, in order to counter the attacks, which the parliamentarians of the different political parties on the Right, in the Center, and on the Left, direct against them. But, nevertheless, the public sphere is the greatest means of education for the interests of the state in general. In a nation, in which such public sphere exists and such education takes place in shows itself a completely different liveliness in relation to the state than there, where the parliaments are missing, or are not public, as e.g. in the former Tsar’s Duma still in the beginning of the
20th century. Only through the becoming known or the promulgation of every step of the argumentative discourse of the parliament the chambers of the government hang together with the further issues of the public opinion. It becomes obvious, that it is something else what an individual imagines, or is conceited about in the private sphere at home with his wife and children, or with his friends in the local church, and it is something else again, what happens in a large parliamentary session, where one cleverness or smartness eats and swallows up the other. Religious organizations can participate in this educational process, when in the political spectacle of parliament they are represented by a religious party and its representatives, as it is the case e.g. with the Christian Democratic Party in the German Federal Republic. Of course, such learning process can also be inhibited. Thus, in the German Federal Republic, the Christian Democratic Party has been unable so far to rescind the Hitler Concordat with the Vatican of 1934, which is still valid today – in 2012 - 67 years after the Fall of the Third Reich. The Hitler Concordat has too many advantages for the Christian community in German civil society for it to be canceled: good state salaries for priests and ministers, religion classes in public schools, public financing of religious charitable organizations and institutions, etc.. However, the Concordat was not able to stop the decline of the Christian community in Germany in recent decades: lack of priests, huge accumulation of parishes administered by few priests from India or Africa, many clerical child abuse cases, massive cancellation of church membership, refusal to pay church taxes via the state, loss of the younger generation, rejection of Christian values and norms regulating marriage- and family life, further secularization of culture, I,e, movies, theaters, sports, etc..

Common Sense

The public opinion contains in itself the eternal substantial principle of social justice, the true content and the result of the whole political constitution, legislation, and the general conditions of the state, in the form of the healthy common sense as the ethical foundation, which goes through all types of prejudices, as well as the true needs and right tendencies of reality. At the same time as this interior - the substantial principle of social justice- steps into the consciousness and comes into the representation in general sentences, partially for itself and partially for the sake of the concrete raisonnement and argumentation, and time diagnoses and time prognosis about political and historical events, arrangements, and orders, and conditions of the state and felt needs, comes about the whole contingency and accidentality of thinking, saying, meaning, its ignorance and inversion and perversion, wrong knowledge and judgment, In so far as what is at stake here is the consciousness of the peculiarity of the opinion and knowledge, the worse the content of one’s opinion is, the more peculiar it is, and vice versa.
This is so because the bad is that, which in its content is completely particular and peculiar, In contrast, the rational is the universal in and for itself, and the peculiar is that of which saying and meaning is so conceited about.

**Voice of the People - Voice of God**

It must therefore not be considered to be a difference of subjective opinion, when the Roman proverb said,

\[ \text{Vox populi, vox dei,} \]

(The voice of the people, Is the voice of God)

or when Ariosto stated

\[ \text{Che'l volgare ignorante ogn' un riprenda} \]
\[ \text{E parli piu di quell che meno intenda.} \]

(That the ignorant people scold everybody and speak most of all of that, of which it understands the least.

(Orlando furioso XXVIII,11),

or when Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said

\[ \text{Zuschlagen kann die Masse,} \]
\[ \text{Da ist sie respektabel:} \]
\[ \text{Urteilen gelingt ihr miserabel} \]

(Hitting the mass can do, There it is respectable: Judging it accomplishes most miserably).

(“Sprichwörtliches”). Both moments are present in the public opinion: truth and untruth. The voice of the people is the voice of God only insofar, as their public opinion is rooted in something substantial, in the divine Revelation, in its ethical code, in the Decalogue, in the Sermon on the Mount, in the Golden Rule, in the principle of social justice, etc., and insofar as they can inverse and translate it into a theory and a praxis valid in the secular public sphere, and into bills, which can find support in parliament by a majority of believers and non believers.

**Seriousness**
As in public opinion truth and infinite mistakes and errors are so immediately united, it is with
the one or the other not truly serious. What is really meant seriously, can often seem hard to
differentiate. Indeed, this will also be the case, if one holds on to the immediate expression of the public
opinion. However, in so far as the substantial, the social justice or fairness, is really the interior of the
public opinion, only this substantial element is a matter of true seriousness. However, this substantial
element can not be recognized out of the public opinion, but precisely therefore because it is the
substantial, only out and for itself. No matter how much passion is put into the public opinion, and how
seriously people may assert their opinion or attack the opinion of others, or argue and dispute with each
other, that is no valid criterion for that, what is really of concern. However, this speaking and meaning
would the least come to an understanding concerning the issue, that its seriousness was not serious. In
1778, Frederick II, stimulated by d’Alembert, posted the question for a public response and answer as
Price Question of the Berlin Academy: if it is allowed, to deceive a nation. This question is certainly
perennial, and received most dramatic actuality again recently, when the second Gulf War was initiated
with a grandiose deception of the American people by the Bush Administration: President Sadam
Hussain’s possession of weapons of mass destruction. Georg W.F. Hegel, answered Frederic II’s
question by saying, that a nation would never let itself be deceived concerning its substantial foundation,
the essence and the determinate character of its spirit, but that it is deceived by itself about the mode,
how it knows, and how according to this mode it judges its actions, events, etc.. Religion means
seriousness. Whoever is not serious, is not religious. The seriousness is rooted in the religious substance.
The question is, if religious citizens can adequately express their seriousness in the argumentative
discourse of the public sphere. Of course, the religious substance can be inversed into secular form. The
Golden Rule can be translated into the Categorical Imperative or into the Apriori of the Unlimted
Communication Community, which may inherit the religious seriousness.

Great Men and Women

The public opinion in the public sphere deserves likewise to be respected as well as held in
contempt. The public opinion is to be held in contempt according to its concrete consciousness and
expression. The public opinion is to be recognized and respected according to its essential foundation,
social justice, which more or less clouded, only shines into this concrete consciousness and expression.
Since the public opinion does not carry in itself the criterion or measure of the differentiation between
truth and untruth, and since it does not have the ability to lift up in itself the substantial side - social
justice - into determinate knowledge, so the independence from it is the first formal condition for
something great and rational in the reality as well as in the philosophical and other sciences. The great
and rational on its part can be sure, that the public opinion will put up with it in consequence and after
some time. and that it will recognize it, and that it will make it into one of its prejudices, a part of
common sense. While in the public sphere and in the public opinion everything untrue and true is
present, to find the truth in it is the task of the great man or the great woman: of a Mahatma Ghandi, or a
Martin Luther King, or a John XXIII, or a Mother Theresa, or a President Carter, etc. . Whoever says to
his or her time and accomplishes and performs , what his or her time wills and expresses. is the great
man or the great woman of the time. He or she does, what is the interior and the ssential of the time,. He
or she realizes his or her time. Whoever does not understand to hold in contempt the public opinion, as
he or she hears it here or there, can never accomplish great things. Great religious men and women have
become matter of public opinion and through it the content of common sense and of the common
culture. That was so as long as the common culture was not yet a false mass culture, produced by the
culture industry. That the mass culture is untrue, does not mean that the masses do not enjoy it greatly.

Public Communication

The freedom of the public communication, the means of which are newspapers, radios, televisions, computers, is ahead of oral speech through far reaching contact, but it is behind it concerning immediate liveliness. The freedom of public communication allows for the satisfaction of that tingling, tickling, sparkling, bubbling drive and impulse of the citizen to say his opinion and to have said it. The freedom of public communication has its direct securing in the police laws, and laws of right, and arrangements and orders, which partially prevent and partially punish the excesses. It has, however, its indirect securing in the harmlessness, which has its grounding particularly in the communicative and anamnestic rationality of the constitution of the state, in the firmness of the government, the executive, and then also in the public nature of the parliaments, insofar as in the parliamentarian meetings the reliable, honest, educated insight about the true interests of the state expresses itself, and leaves to others few significant issues to talk about, and mainly takes from them the opinion that their speaking is of peculiar importance and effectiveness, and furthermore produces the indifference and contempt against shallow and spiteful, nasty, negative talking, to which it has brought down itself soon enough. Only if religious people or believers are fully aware of the highly differentiated and always changing structure of the modern public sphere, can they take fully advantage of the access to it, which the modern constitutional state guaranties, and thus to make heard their message of redemption and liberation in the modern and post-modern world, and will not in the long run
sink into an irrelevant private niche of history.

**General Orientation**

We hope very much, that those few concretizing suggestions about religion and the public sphere may give you some general orientation for your own preparatory work for our international course on *The Future of Religion: Religion in the Public Sphere*. You can make your own comments and objections to those suggestions and to this general orientation, when we come together in Dubrovnik in the last week of April 2012. We hope very much, that you shall be able and willing to come to our discourse, and that you shall, if possible, present a paper, concerning aspects of our general theme, shortly unfolded in the above suggestions and orientation, or not. The general theme is broad and gives you much freedom to adjust your paper to it. If you have a hard time to connect your paper to our general theme this year, we shall do that for and with you in our argumentative discourse. Please, let me know as soon as possible, if you shall join us in Dubrovnik, and if you like to give a paper during the last week of April available to us in the IUC building and also if you would like to join us in Rome from May 7-9, 2012. Tell us also, if you desire to give your paper at a specific day and hour, and how much time you would like to have. I shall do what I can, to give you as much time as possible.

I am with all my best wishes for you and for your dear family, and for your good work, your

Rudolf J. Siebert  
Professor of Religion and Society  
IUC Course - and Yalta Course Director  
Director of the WMU Center for Humanistic Future Studies
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Please enclose:

1. a short CV
2. **Statement of purpose** (max. 1 page describing the reasons for participating in the course and requesting financial support).

Scholarships will cover expenses, which occur in Dubrovnik (accommodation and meals) only. There are a very limited number of partial travel grants available for participants coming from the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijani, Belarus, Kosovo, Moldova, Republic of Georgia, Russia and Ukraine.

**Date: Signature:**

Applications should reach the IUC Secretariat at least one month before the start of the course. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.