

Preliminary Note

This edition is not the complete book. This is only a summary of the book in English. It contains the title page, the table of contents, the editor's foreword, a brief summary of each chapter in the collection, and short authors' biographical information.

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Book Summary in English

CHRISTIANITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

**POSTCOMMUNIST, HISTORICAL
AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT**

BOOK SUMMARY IN ENGLISH

› **Christianity and National Security** ‹

Book Summary in English

CHRISTIANITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT**

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FOREWORD

With this book we continue the series entitled "Relations between Church and State and Inter-Christian Dialogue." This third collection, conventionally named Vurshets-3 (according to the location where the conference was held), treats the theme of the relationship between national security and Christianity. The attitude of secular authority toward the spiritual message of the Christian faith has been marked by distrust by the former because of the influence and transcendent nature of the latter. Placing this strained relationship into the concrete historical context of the Bulgarian democratic post-communist society, viewed through biblical categories, gives us at least a long-awaited Christian understanding of how important the category of "national security" is to the church—state relationship. Any discussion of national security is generally considered taboo due to the special status of "security" in both totalitarian and post-totalitarian societies, and even in democratic ones. Particularly problematic is delving into this topic when the presented point of view is the one that belongs to the "objects" of the security services' interest – religion; which, during the years of the totalitarian regime, was particularly purposefully persecuted, and as we will see from the articles in the collection, afterwards as well.

Some would ask why a series on church-state relations should address these issues? The Church is mistakenly perceived as only a spiritual institution, as if detached from the material world; and the state – as the entity taking care of the more important state affairs. Such a dichotomous attitude towards spiritual and secular power is extremely erroneous and serves the idea that Christianity is only a private faith; a marginal, insignificant thing of the past, which has no public dimension or [its adherents do not have] any right to participate in public discourse. Such a theory is entirely in the service of the humanistic worldview, as well as religious worldviews that openly politicize religious beliefs, such as Islam, for example, which has always aimed to establish Shariah law. Every ideology holds the claim to represent the one and only truth and, with very few exceptions, seeks world domination.

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The Christian faith, apart from being important for the personal salvation of the soul, reaches people not only through personal testimonies, but also through public preaching. Christianity is also a social movement that has historically changed nations and formed civilizations. These facts immediately raise the question of the public importance of faith in the formulation of the values and mechanisms for the functioning of society. Any genuine form of security has the task of preserving the values of a society and its operation from threat and destruction. Thus, the relationship between the two contextual concepts discussed is more than obvious. Moreover, during the communist dictatorship, Christians were the fundamental ideological enemy of the state's one-party regime. The so-called "State Security" services, from the time of the communist regime, had a goal to defile and make a caricature of the Gospel, discredit Christ's message, and persecute His servants. How contemporary security stems from this totalitarian heritage is part of the issues we have raised.

We have not treated the subject matter exhaustively. However, the collection may boast the significance of a pioneering work as it opens this discussion. Not all essays address directly the connection and tension between Christianity and national security. But even indirectly, the issue is raised and set in the context of a broader study of the relationship between church mission and secular power.

Of the ten papers presented at a conference in Vurshets in 2016, eight are included in this volume. Many thanks to all who worked on this volume – authors, members of the editorial council, proofreaders, designers, and coordinators. I will exclude the list of names, but not the claim that without the dedication of the editorial team, and of the other participants in this collection, it would not have been possible to complete. We retain the hope that this part of the series will help to at least partially clarify the subject matter and to shed a light on the truth and the freedom that many Bulgarians hold dear.

The editor

July 2017

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

in the Collection

As ordered in the book

Christianity and National Security: Between Terror and Forgiveness

by Viktor Kostov

Bulgaria's recent historical heritage is tied to atheistic governmental and political opposition to religion and especially to Christianity. This is a psychological and socio-political model that has not been carefully studied by government officials and politicians, on the one hand, nor by the church and Christians on the other hand. In this model, the concept of "national security" is still in part perceived as a political category that is opposed to Christian faith and the church. Ideologizing the state as atheistic, and not merely democratic and secular, in conjunction with the opposition of the state institutions to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, inevitably leads to a collapse in the protection of the same national security which the state should carefully define and guarantee for the people. The task of committed Christians is to stand against the anti-democratic attempts of the state to take away the church's public and prophetic voice by endorsing the perception that there is no place for faith in public discourse and that Christianity is a threat to the concept of "national security."

Christianity and National Security: Eastern European Perspectives of Today

by Valentin Kozhuharov

This research has attempted to shed more light on the issue of relations between national security and religion (and people's beliefs in general) by founding its considerations on different state, legal and social initiatives as they have taken place in several Eastern European countries in recent times. It has been noted that the above relations in these countries are distorted and inadequate to the contemporary development of these societies. The article focusses on the relations between law, religion and national security and clearly indicates that the initiatives undertaken by state and legal institutions are heavily loaded with ideology. Examples from other countries are considered as applied in the Bulgarian conditions of life

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where one can see that there are commonalities between the Bulgarian situation and that of other Eastern European countries. It has been noted that unless the Bulgarian communist structures – now calling themselves with various names, such as socialist, most commonly, but also other names – cease thinking and acting in ways which were used and applied during the past communist decades, there will be no genuine freedom of conscience, religion and self-determination which the constitution guarantees for every Bulgarian citizen.

Authority - Political, Religious, and Ecclesiastical (In the Context of Self, Society, State and Church)

by Dilian Nikolchev

What is authority from a political, religious, and ecclesiastical perspective and what is its meaning for humanity in human history? What is its impact on both individuals and the peoples of the Old and New Testaments? Is it a term loaded with only legal and political meaning or is it also an inherently moral and religious, and religious-mystical phenomenon? And who is the Absolute Authority to Christians, and the Church, and is it relevant to life in the modern world, including in relation to global political and economic problems? The text to follow is a search for answers to these questions.

Christianity and Issues of National Security

by Kostadin Nushev

Modern crises that cause instability and provoke various conflicts create more and more anxiety and a sense of insecurity. These processes are a serious challenge to the fundamental principles and values of peace, justice, public order and human freedom, which have deeply underpinned public and political life as crucial and paramount to our culture and civilization. Since the end of the Cold War and the subsequent change in the block-type ideological opposition between the East (totalitarian communism) and the West (the free democratic world) in global and regional policy, efforts have been made to build a new system of security and international relations within which individual national States seek mechanisms

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to protect and guarantee their national security. Along with the process of warming up of East-West relations and the creation of this new security system in Europe, and in various parts of the world, many new conflicts have arisen and intensified, which also affects the national security of European countries. In some of these conflicts and struggles, various religious communities are involved and participate or certain religious-political ideologies are being activated, which present a serious challenge to national security.

Values Against Politics. Fragmentation and Radicalization as the Main Threats for the Integrity of Christian Communities

by Momchil Metodiev

Arguments on questions of values are sources of deep division within religious communities in pluralistic societies. What is the reason and who benefits from that fragmentation? This article is looking for the answer to that question on the basis of some recent developments in the Bulgarian Orthodox church and in the Orthodox world in general. It argues that fragmentation is a phenomenon characteristic to the new technological era, whereby the 'active minorities' are trying to restrain the 'silent majority' and to gain control over the leadership of the respected community. This division gives advantage to the churches that do not argue over values, namely churches in societies with authoritarian tendencies. The reduction of Orthodoxy to a mere antimodern and anti-western ideology, which is the aim of certain 'active minorities,' is the main temptation and simultaneously the main threat to Eastern Orthodoxy in Bulgaria, while listening to the opinion of the 'silent majority' by church leadership is the only way for keeping the integrity of the community.

The Nation (Along with the National State) and Democracy - A Product of Christian Europe

by Velislav Altunov

The idea of "nation" is an acquisition of Western European civilization. This concept marks an important stage in world development which resulted from the Reformation and the Enlightenment periods during the 17th-18th centuries in Europe, and subsequently spread throughout the

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world. Europe can, and should definitely, be called Christian due to its religious affiliation, the formation of its culture, and its history. Modern democracy, like the nation, is also a part of the European and Christian cultural heritage. After two world wars in the twentieth century, philosophers assisted by politicians decided that it was the concept of "nation" that was the root cause and source of evil and bloodshed; so the concept was thrown into neglect and almost buried historically. In fact, however, a debate aimed at the categorical disavowal and rejection of the nation as a thing of the past has not been made. Similarly, Europe's religious affiliation to Christianity has not officially been renounced. With this article, the author questions and debates the nation's premature "swan song" and the determined silence in the preamble of the EU constitution of the Christian heritage of the Old Continent. In this sense, the widespread vision of "national security," which already precludes the idea of nation and the Christian affiliation of Europe, is not based on a sufficiently well-founded premise and should also be fundamentally rethought.

National Security and Religious Pluralism

by Tzanko Mitev

Understanding the nation as the identification of people on a religious and ethnic basis is deeply rooted in the thinking of our society. It connects with the old idea of a national identity, based on the principle of "One king, one nation, one faith," where religious pluralism is viewed as a potential danger to national security. Therefore, despite our country's attempts towards democratization and building a civil society, the Constitution, the Law on Religions, and a number of municipal regulations have provisions that limit the rights of religious minorities. Fear and suspicion brought about by the terrorist manifestations of religious fundamentalism raise the question of whether our country will continue to deepen the restrictions on religious freedom or accept the approach of advanced democratic societies that pluralism is a cohesive factor. The choice will determine whether we will get closer to times of religious persecutions and wars, or we will respond to modern challenges by raising the torch of respect and tolerance to see in diversity not only unity but also a force that preserves society.

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A Biology of Security

by Plamen Gechev

In a world of diversity of cultures and religions, contradictions can be exacerbated to the point of creating preconditions for radicalism and terrorism. Sometimes we, Christians, do not realize how deeply all people are connected at a biological level. Since we are brothers in Christ, our fellowship is also on a biological level. This connection is illuminated by the term "structural bonding."

SHORT AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Viktor Kostov, PhD, attorney at law, is a human rights advocate, member of the Sofia Bar Association since 1992, founding editor of the website Freedom for All, dedicated to the discussion of freedom of belief, conscience, speech, and family values. Dr. Kostov is an associate attorney with Alliance Defending Freedom, an international advocates' organization. He has tried and won cases before the Bulgarian Supreme Courts and the European Court of Human Rights defending freedom of religion and speech. Dr. Kostov is author of scholarly and popular articles in Bulgarian and English on the subject of church, state and freedom as well as a guest on national television stations. He is a participant and lecturer in a number of European scholarly forums in missiology (theology of Christian mission). He is also the editor-compiler of the anthologies *Church-State Relations after the Fall of Communism* (2013) and *Christianity and Politics: Cooperation or Conflict* (2015).

Valentin Kozhuharov, PhD, is a theologian and researcher working in the field of Christian theology, missiology, religious education and inter-Christian dialogue. He is the author of nine books and more than fifty articles dealing with topics within the above-mentioned fields of study and written in Bulgarian, Russian and English. He has taken part in more than 100 international scholarly conferences, seminars, consultations, working groups, etc., which have taken place in more than 50 countries, with papers presented and themes defended. He is also a member of 15 international scholarly societies, and serves on scholarly and examination committees on missiology at several universities and theological colleges in different countries of the world.

Dilian Nikoltchev is an Associate Professor, and was the Head of Department for two terms in the Theological Faculty of the Sofia University. Born on March 18, 1961, in the town of Pleven, Northern Bulgaria, he graduated in 1986 from the Theological Academy (now Faculty of Theology at Sofia University) and studied law at the Faculty of Law and History (2008) at The Southwestern University. He specialized in Roman Law at the University of Sofia. Since 1994 he is Professor of Ecclesiastical Law and Management and Planning of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in the Theological Faculty of Sofia University and an Associate Professor since 2006. He is the author of the monograph *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Orthodox Church*, as well as more than 100 articles and studies in Bulgarian and foreign scientific journals specializing in the field of canon law.

Kostadin Nushev is an Associate Professor and professor of Christian Ethics, Spirituality, and Orthodox Foundations of Social Teaching of the Orthodox Church at the Theological Faculty of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski." Member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria (Section "Theological Studies"), the Scientific Council of the Center for the Study of Religions at the University of Sofia and the European Society for Ecumenical Research "Societas Oecumenica". His research interests are related to the problems of Orthodoxy in Europe, the relationship between church and state, freedom of religion and conscience, human rights, and the social mission of the church. In recent years, as a teacher in the graduate programs of the Faculties of Theology and Philosophy, he has developed courses on the problems of contemporary social teaching of the Orthodox Church, Christianity and contemporary issues of bioethics and the relationship between church and public institutions. Kostadin Nushev is the author of six books and more than 30 scholarly publications.

Momchil Metodiev, Doctor Habilitas in Philosophy, is author of the books *Between Faith and Compromise: The Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Communist State, 1944-1989* (2010) and *Legitimacy Machine: The Place of the State Security within the Communist State* (2008). He is Editor in

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Chief of the journal *Christianity and Culture* and research fellow in the Institute for the Study of the Recent Past in Sofia. He took part in the compilation of several documentary collections published by the Bulgarian Dossier Commission. He also worked on several Bulgarian and International Projects on the research of the communist past including on the Cold War Research Project in the Woodrow Wilson Institute in Washington, DC.

Velislav Altunov is Assistant-professor in the ethnographic department of the Bulgarian Academy of Science. He teaches at the Bulgarian Evangelical Theological Institute. He graduated in Theology and Cultural Studies at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski" and his PhD thesis in the New Bulgarian University is associated with Christian anthropology, Church sociology and Ethnology. It explores the revival of interest in religious faith in Bulgaria in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century through the point of view of Bulgarian evangelicalism. Dr. Altunov has specialized in St. Petersburg, Russia (2007) and Fribourg, Switzerland (2007 and 2011). He has published articles and studies in *Bulgaria between Europe and Russia, Bulgarian Theology, Mind, Problems of Art, Christianity and Culture, Transitions, etc.*

Tsanko Mitev is the chairman of the Association for the Protection of Religious Freedom - a branch of the international human rights organization based in Berne - and vice-president of the Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He graduated in Mathematics at Sofia University (SU) in 1983, in 1990 became a pastor, and since 1995 he has also dealt with issues of religious freedom. He has written articles for the international magazine *Conscience and Freedom* and has participated in numerous conferences on this topic.

Fr. Plamen Gechev studied medicine and specialized in psychiatry. He worked as a psychiatrist in the Department of Psychiatry, Medical Academy - Sofia and the National Center for Addictions. After graduating in philosophy and theology in Lugano, Switzerland, he was ordained to be a

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Roman Catholic priest. At present, he is a PhD student in cultural studies at Sofia University, on the subject *From Mysticism to Psychology: Spiritually Unconscious*.