

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY
DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Andrews University doctoral dissertations are microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Some dissertations will also have been published in dissertation series (e.g., the Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series), and in such cases, the pertinent information will be noted in connection with the abstract printed herein.

HUMANIST RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE DOGMATIC MARXIST
CONCEPT OF RELIGION BY ESAD ĆIMIĆ

Author: **Radiša Antić**, Ph.D., 1991

Adviser: Miroslav Kiš

This study analyzes and evaluates the humanist reconceptualization of the dogmatic-Marxist concept of religion by the Yugoslav philosopher Esad Ćimić. The questions we address are: How did Ćimić reshape the dogmatic Marxist criticism of religion? and What is the significance of this reshaping for both dogmatic Marxism and Christianity?

We begin with the broad outlines of the concepts of metaphysics and epistemology of both dogmatic and humanist Marxism because they provide the basic presuppositions for the understanding of the phenomenon of religion in Marxism. Then, we address those elements of Ćimić's life and philosophy which define him as a man and as a philosopher of religion. These matters are of essential importance for the proper understanding of Ćimić's concept of religion.

We analyze Ćimić's reconceptualization of the dogmatic Marxist concept of religion. Ćimić rejects the basic dogmatic Marxist concepts of religion as they existed in socialist societies contending that religious alienation is caused by the multiplicity of sources. In his view, religion is not a simple but complex phenomenon which possesses several dimensions.

Ćimić argues that religion per se is an expression of human beings' natural desire for self-transcendence. Religion is also a socio-historical fact which is caused by the unjust socio-economical conditions. In addition, religion is to be seen as an anthropo-psychological structure which demonstrates that every person has a unique mental composition by which he expresses his religiosity. Ćimić contends that the solution for the religious alienation is to be found in the "socially transforming atheism."

Ćimić's contribution to the concept of religion is evaluated from three perspectives: that of dogmatic Marxism, that of inner consistency of his philosophical system, and that of Christian-theism. We conclude that Ćimić

is to be viewed as a revisionist who has reinterpreted and rejected most aspects of dogmatic Marxism although he has retained some of its features. He can be considered a post-Marxist in that his philosophy, in some respects, goes beyond the Marxist understanding of religion. In addition, Ćimić has made a significant contribution to a creation of new conditions of religious freedom in Yugoslavia as well as in other countries. Thus, he is to be viewed as a forerunner of the present changes in Eastern Europe.