Nationalism, Ethnotheology and Mysticism in Interwar Romania

Roland Clark

Abstract

Scholarship on Christian mysticism underwent a renaissance in Romania between 1920 and 1947, having a lasting impact on the way that Romanian theologians and scholars think about Romanian Orthodoxy Christianity in general, and mysticism in particular. Fascist and ultra-nationalist political and intellectual currents also exploded into the Romanian public sphere at this time. Many of the same people who were writing mystical theology were also involved with ultra-nationalist politics, either as distant sympathizers or as active participants. This paper situates the early work of the renowned theologian Dumitru Stniloae within the context of mystical fascism, nationalist apologetics, and theological pedagogy in which it was originally produced. It shows how a new academic discipline formed within an increasingly extremist political climate by analyzing the writings of six key men whose work significantly shaped Romanian attitudes towards mysticism: Nae Ionescu, Mircea Eliade, Lucian Blaga, Nichifor Crainic, Ioan Gh. Savin, and Dumitru Stniloae. The contributions of these thinkers to Romanian theology are not dismissed once their nationalism is noted, but they are contextualized in a way that allows twenty-first century thinkers to move beyond the limitations of these men and into fresh ways of thinking about the divine-human encounter.

Full Text:
PDF

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5195/cbp.2009.147

Refbacks

There are currently no refbacks.