
Progres Q01

Theology as a Way of Interpreting History, Traditions and Contemporary Society

A programme of basic institutional funding of scientific activities, which supports development of scientific disciplines pursued at Charles University, and interdisciplinary and inter-faculty cooperation.

Cooperating Faculties:

- Protestant Theological Faculty
- Catholic Theological Faculty
- Hussite Theological Faculty

Coordinator:

- Prof. Dr. Martin Prudký

Short Description:

The programme covers research work in the fields of theology and other disciplines that is carried out at the three theology faculties of Charles University. The conception of the programme is based on the unique fact that the study of all the main currents of Christian tradition that have a dominant status in the Czech milieu, both historically and currently, has an institutional base at the same university and within a single academic community. Each of the three theology faculties has its own profile, its specific specialisations, and its indispensable calling, which it needs to continually shape and develop. At the same time, however, it is true that in the field of theology as a whole, and also in its individual branches, disciplines, and specialisations, there is considerable scope and many opportunities for close cooperation, coordinating priorities, and joint approaches in specific projects and tasks (including interdisciplinary overlapping).

Following on from previous cooperation in the programme PRVOUK P01 (2012–2016), the programme PROGRES (*Theology as a Way of Interpreting History, Traditions and Contemporary Society*) aims in general at examining the ways in which theology as an academic discipline analyses, explains, and interprets history, religious traditions, and the life of contemporary society. This approach makes it possible to treat the whole academic field of theology as a complex of activities that examine, “read”, explain, and interpret religious traditions in interaction with the relevant historical contexts, with their various understandings of their historical heritage, and with their current significance and influence, based on their historical development or a newly rediscovered relevance. Understood in this way, theology is also capable of studying Christianity and its historical and living traditions as the code for Christian culture, and to consider its literary, material, civilizational, and cultural manifestations in their contextually determined historical form. A critical investigation and interpretation of religious traditions in their historical and current dimensions can contribute substantially to a clearer orientation in the conceptual struggles of the present day.

Each of the faculties contributes to the programme through specific fields of research and projects, depending on their institutional make-up and areas of specialisation. The Protestant Theology Faculty, with its focus on research into the ways and forms in which the Christian, and in particular the Protestant, tradition has manifested itself in the historical context of European countries, will analyse the issues involved in the project in four particular areas: (1) The Bible and its traditions; (2) Theological teachings and their traditions; (3) Church structures and their historical traditions; and (4) Manifestations of Christian spirituality and its traditions. The Hussite Theology Faculty has for a long time been concentrating its research activity on the relationship between national and religious aspects in modern history; its special emphasis on current aspects is reflected in four priority research areas: (1) The social and charitable dimension of Christianity and Hussite theology; (2) Social education, anthropology and upbringing in a theological perspective; (3) Christian spirituality in an open society; and (4) Interreligious dialogue in the present day. The research priorities of the Catholic Theology Faculty significantly overlap into the field of art history, especially in relation to the visual arts. It defines and coordinates its contribution to the programme in two pairs of projects. In *Theology and Czech spiritual culture* it focuses on (1.1) The history of Czech theology in a European and world context; and (1.2.) The traditions and cultural contexts of theology. In the project devoted to *The history of the visual arts and European culture* it concentrates on analysing and interpreting the European “cultural code”, again in two coordinated sections: (2.1.) The visual arts as a manifestation of the spirit; and (2.2.) The changing face of European and Czech culture over the course of history.

The programme as a whole places a more systematic emphasis on internal interconnections, on the interdisciplinary dimension of individual projects, and on international scholarly cooperation. The priorities of the programme include the high-quality production of the standard types of results of research activity (publications), the promotion of cooperation between and within disciplines, and international cooperation (conference activity). A further major priority is support for an increase in the degree of qualification of co-workers on all academic levels (including advanced studies and in postgraduate research work).