

Alexis de Tocqueville Distinguished Annual Lecture, 2017

Opening Remarks

Joao Carlos Espada

February 23, 2017

Senhora Reitora da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Professora Isabel Capelo Gil,

Senhor Professor Anthony O’Hear, Distinto Conferencista Alexis de Tocqueville 2017

Senhor Dr. José Pena do Amaral, membro do Conselho de Administração do BPI,
patrocinador exclusivo das Palestras Tocqueville,

Senhor Capelão da Universidade Católica, Padre Hugo Santos,

Distintos representantes dos Embaixadores de França e do Reino Unido,

Distintos Convidados, Ilustres Autoridades Académicas, Civis e Militares, Senhores
Professores,

Senhores Auditores, Alunos de Licenciatura, Mestrados e Doutorandos, Minhas
Senhoras e Meus Senhores,

Em nome do Instituto de Estudos Políticos da Universidade Católica Portuguesa,
gostaria de vos dar as boas vindas e agradecer a vossa presença, que muito nos honra.

Permitam-me agora que passe a usar o inglês para homenagear o nosso orador
convidado de hoje.

On behalf of the Institute for Political Studies of the Catholic University of Portugal, I
would like to thank you all very much for coming to this 17th edition of our Alexis de
Tocqueville Distinguished Annual Lecture. All these 17 Alexis de Tocqueville
Lectures have been made possible by the generous support of BPI — Banco Português
de Investimento — and I would like to express our deep gratitude to our sponsor and
in particular to our good friend José Pena do Amaral, member of the Board, who has
kindly accepted to be with us again today.

Thank you.

Since 1998, we have had the privilege of having with us, at the Tocqueville Annual
Lecture, Professors Hugh Trevor-Roper, Alfred Stepan, James Q. Wilson, Michael
Novak — who passed away last Friday and to whom we have paid a deeply felt tribute
— George Weigel, Christopher de Muth, Martin Gilbert, Timothy Garton Ash, Robert
P. George, Anthony Kenny, Raymond Plant, José Manuel Durão Barroso, Manuel
Braga da Cruz, Marc Plattner, Margaret MacMillan and Noel Malcom.

Today, we have the privilege and pleasure of having with us Professor Anthony O’Hear, Professor of the University of Buckingham, Director of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, in London, and Editor of its journal *Philosophy* — one of the oldest scholarly journals on Philosophy in the United Kingdom.

Professor O’Hear has been a good friend of our Institute for many years — he was here in the Autumn of 2004, as a Calouste Gulbenkian Distinguished Visiting Professor, when he gave a now famous intensive seminar on the Tradition of the Great Books. From this seminar emerged a book — *The Great Books: From The Iliad and The Odyssey to Goethe's Faust: A journey through 2,500 years of the West's classic literature* — which was published by Icon Books in 2007, and translated into Portuguese by Aletheia Editores in 2009.

Professor O’Hear has published many influential books. As I am also a devout student of Karl Popper, I would like to start by mentioning his seminal work on *Karl Popper*, published in 1980 by Routledge. Karl Popper — who was not particularly known for giving praise lightly — emphatically recommended this book to me. Later, in 2004, Professor O’Hear edited the very impressive four-volume collection of *Karl Popper: Critical Assessments*, also at Routledge. This is by far the best and most comprehensive work on Popper that has been published so far.

But, as I said, Professor O’Hear has published many more books. Among them, I would like to mention:

- *What Philosophy Is* (1985)
- *The Element of Fire* (1989)
- *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (1990)
- *Beyond Evolution* (1997)
- *After Progress* (1999)
- *Introducing Jesus* (2000)
- *Philosophy in the New Century* (2001)
- *Plato's Children* (2006)

His most recent book, written with his daughter, Natasha O’Hear, is *Picturing the Apocalypse: the Book of Revelation in the Arts over Two Millennia*, which was published by Oxford University Press in 2015.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please join me in welcoming Professor Anthony O’Hear to our Institute for Political Studies of the Catholic University of Portugal.

Thank you.