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I. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

THE WARS OF ISRAEL: AN EASTERN ORTHODOX POINT OF VIEW

CĂTĂLIN VARGA*

ABSTRACT. The war of God orchestrated by His people Israel, has a profound dimension both theological and pedagogical, through this belligerent manner, in the case of the occupation of Canaan, YHWH wishes to exterminate the idolatrous population that could no longer correct itself because their hearts were darkened, in order to replace it with Israel, the holy people, in the middle of which Messiah, the Savior of the world will be born. The law of the war of Yahweh from Deut 20 is the guide the Israelites use for this war, and the social dimension of this law places Israel on a clearly superior position in comparison with the other nations from an ethical point of view. The logical stages of the war of YHWH must be respected entirely, for Israel to be victorious in his armed confrontation with his idolatrous neighbors. The incapacity of the Israelites to obey strictly the laws of the war and their alienation from the ethical perspective of the armed battles, announce indirectly the necessity of the coming of Messiah and of the universal time of peace.

Keywords: the war of YHWH, ethics, Joshua and Canaan, war strategy.

Biblical Premises

Apart from all the historical causes for starting a war, even a world war, there is a cause that comprises all the other, namely the spiritual cause. All the other natural causes originate from here. Both the ancient and the modern wars cannot be interpreted authentically, except for a biblical interpretation. That is because God, the Lord Sabaoth, as the Jewish called Him, suggesting the image of God as warrior (1Sam 17: 25), a name given to the greatness and omnipotence

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of God¹ (Isa 24: 21-23; Zech 3: 9-10), the one who allows the beginning and the ending of each war. Saint Nicholas Velimirović says that the spiritual truth that can be identified behind every armed battle is, broadly, the following: the sins of the people or of the rulers, against the law of God brings without a doubt the defeat; only justice and purity of the people and their ruler brings the long-awaited victory².

Apart from the hardening of the hearts out of evilness and turpitude, as is the case of Pharaoh (Exod 7: 3), or of the Canaanites and Amorites (Deut 2: 30; Josh 11: 20), to raise against the sons of God and to be defeated eventually; there is a final purpose of God, above world, a purpose that conserves and leads the world to its fulfillment (Rom 8: 26) and that can hardly be understood by the human mind³. This is what we are going to talk about in the following.

The sanctifying war in the Old Testament

Before all, it is necessary to explain a terminological-conceptual matter. God does not involve directly into any of the extermination wars carried by the Israelites, for He is the God of life not of death. Only once He deals with death that is on the Cross, defeating it through Resurrection. It is necessary to go beyond the literal meaning of the Old Testament regarding the active involvement of the Lord into the battle campaigns of His people, looking at the only war commanded by God, which is that against passions and sins, according to the paradigm from *Ephesians* 6. In all the other cases, war is permitted by God and consumed only in special cases – YHWH does not actually kill anybody for He says clearly, even from the Old Testament: *“Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?”* (Ezek 33: 11). But sinners, because they hate the Lord and repentance, fall into the hands of the people of God, in this case Israel, who is not in disposition to show mercy to them, and for those people, the Judgement of the Lord is decided. All these that do not return to God will die, those who fall into the swords of Israel, die just a moment earlier – they chose their fate themselves. And Israel in this case, becomes only an instrument for punishment in the hands of God, just as Israel that became idolatrous, will fall into the hands of the heathen that have become a correction instrument in the Hand of the same God (Hab 1: 6-12). But it is not God the one who kills, for He

¹ William Dyrness, *Teme ale Teologiei Vechiului Testament* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Logos, 2010), 47-48.

² Nicolae Velimirovici, *Războiul și Biblia* (București: Editura Sophia, 2010), 161.

³ Athanase Negoită, *Teologia biblică a Vechiului Testament* (București: Editura Sophia, 2004), 76-77.

waits until the final moment a pale intention of correction from the part of the sinner, so that He can save the latter from death (Joel 2: 12-14). God cannot be the Lord of death in the Old Testament and the Lord of life in the New Testament, for His nature is unchangeable (Heb 13: 8). He has the same punishment for the sinners that cannot correct themselves at all, in the New Testament as well (the case of Ananias and Sapphira from Acts 5: 1-10). The idea of war can also be encountered in the New Testament, the book of Revelation speaks about the war of the lamb (17: 14) and His victory⁴. That is why the statement of J. Wellhausen cannot stand, because he said that God chose an armed people to lead into bloody wars, thus war being at the level of identity, the heart of the Judaic religion⁵. This matter of a warrior God, depends mostly on the conceptual limitations of some anthropomorphic expressions such as *YHWH is a warrior killing with His sword all the enemies of Israel*, and on the culture of that epoch. Having a fragile geopolitics, with strong enemies on all the borders, Israel could survive psychologically only by inspiring itself from the common mentality that dictated the presence of a powerful god within at the heart of the army, him being the supreme leader into wars, who offered them victory. That is because Israel still had a frail faith, and felt continuously menaced by enemies, although Yahweh assures the people that He will keep them alive as long as they observe the covenant from Sinai (Exod 19: 3-8). Because of these cultural conditions it is necessary to go beyond the literary expressions regarding war, borrowed by the Israelites from the heathen they came into contact with, in order to truly understand Yahweh, who is the Lord of love and mercy⁶ (Exod 34: 5-7: *“Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished”*). As proof that Israel did not really know God and did not believe in Providence, we have the text from Isa 30: 1-3, when the hebrews abandon

⁴ Lois Barrett, *The Way God Fights: War and Peace in the Old Testament* (Harrisonburg: Herald Press, 1987), 14.

⁵ Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1957), 321.

⁶ King Solomon, and all the other kings that followed, consolidated their power by participating to all sorts of political plots, which clouded the real knowledge of YHWH and His involvement more or less into the wars of Israel. But this is not the case of the prophets who continued to see the glory of God, not the majesty and the power of their kings, who expressed by this the obsession for the expansion of Israel, in direct conflict with the requirements of the Covenant between God and Moses. See Bruce Birch, *Let Justice Roll Down: The Hebrew Scriptures, Ethics, and Christian Life* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), 224-228.

Yahweh and ask for help and security from the Egyptians⁷. The text from Hos 14: 4 must be interpreted in the same context of the religious collapse!

The reality through which God guides his people to occupy the land of the promised Canaan (Gen 15: 18-21), taking it through all sorts of armed conflicts, in which each time He was called, He did involve personally (Josh 10: 8-11; Judg 4: 14; Hab 3: 8-9), and then all the military actions to defend the land inherited from the time of the judges and of the kings of Israel, were, most often, interpreted wrongly as “holy wars”⁸. This notion is truly mistaken, for it has nothing in common with the Judaism of the Old Testament or with the Eastern Christianity. This concept occurs for the first time in Greek, but lately it has been wrongfully transferred to the world of the Old Covenant, through the contribution of the German biblicist Friederich Schwally⁹. But it is not just that. Another renowned specialist of the biblicism of the Old Testament, this time Gerhard von Rad, in one of his brochures named suggestively “Holy War in Ancient Israel”¹⁰, which was highly appreciated in the world of researchers, stated that this name is in fact a creation of the tribes of Israel, based on amphictyony – that is their religious confederation. But this new theory of amphictyony has no historical support, nor a biblical one, because the Holy Scripture calls them clearly “the wars of YHWH” (*milhamot Yahwe*) in 1Sam 25: 28, or the “Wars against the enemies of YHWH” in Judg 5: 31. The idea of a “holy war” (jihad) is of Islamic origin, being Mohammed’s creation, also called the “oath of alliance for war”, through which he ordered to answer violence with violence. This concept is a purely religious one, for it wishes to Islamize the whole world, and sentences to death those who do not want to obey. In Quran, sura II, 190-191¹¹ it is written: „*Fight in the cause of God those who fight you... Kill them wherever you overtake them, and expel them from where they had expelled you. Oppression is more serious than murder...; if they fight you, then kill them. Such is the retribution of the disbelievers*”. Moreover, a contemporary islamologist, Ahmad Taheri, stated in 1990 the essence of what the “holy war”

⁷ Lois Barrett, *The Way God Fights*, 13.

⁸ Researcher A. Deijl says that he cannot find anywhere in the Scriptures this concept of *holy war*, neither with the classical meaning of the term (war as amphictyony), nor in the modern sense (a religious war). Moreover, he comes to the conclusion that this name of *holy war* is a pleonasm because in the Ancient Near East, all the aspects of life, war included, were regarded from a religious perspective and that is why the adjective holy has no business in the context of war. See Aarnoud van der Deijl, *Protest or Propaganda: War in the Old Testament Book of Kings and in Contemporaneous Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 685.

⁹ Alexandru Mihăilă, *(Ne)lămuriri din Vechiul Testament. Mici comentarii la mari texte* vol. 1, (București: Editura Nemira, 2011), 399; Friedrich Schwally, *Semitische Altertümer* vol. 1: *Der heilige Krieg im Alten Testament*, (Leipzig: Dieterich, 1901).

¹⁰ Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 41-51.

¹¹ *THE HOLY QUR'AN* trans. by Maulawī Sher' Alī, (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 2004).

means in the Islamic world – an antagonical vision of the Revelation comprised in the Scriptures: “Muslims have the obligation to defend their territory against the aggression of the disbelievers and in the same time, to conquer the world of the disbelievers until Islam will rule the whole planet. The fight of Islam will cease only when all the people will have received the Islamic faith or will have obeyed its rulers – the border of Islam is the border of the whole world”¹².

As opposed to the “holy war” of Mohammed, which aims to convert the entire world through crimes and violence, the ancient conflicts of Israel, as chosen people of God, are commanded directly by YHWH, though not all of them, and Israel has the divine right to inherit Canaan, according to the promise made to Abraham, as we have already seen above. And this genocide orchestrated and allowed by God precisely for the huge sins of those people, with the purpose to cut evil from its roots, as the Scripture says: “In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure” (Gen 15: 16). God’s kindness is also shown by the fact that he tolerates their sins for years, until Israel will conquer Palestine under the rule of Joshua. Thus, Abraham’s descendants will occupy the Promised Land, also involving a retributive judgment on the inhabitants of the land of Canaan – when the absolute righteousness will insistently ask for it¹³. The name Amorites was a collective name used for all the inhabitants of Canaan (Gen 48: 22; Josh 24: 15). Their capital sins, that draw God’s wrath are not very well known, but through comparisons and analogies we may guess a few of them. The memory of their sins persisted in the Judaic collective mind, providing an element of comparison for the idolatry of Ahab and Manasseh¹⁴ (1Kgs 21: 26; 2Kgs 21: 11). We thus understand that their destruction was caused by the sin of idolatry with all its surrogates lacking moral, that is why I think the best name is that of war for the purification of the place, a *war of consecration, preparation* (Hebr. *qiddešû milhamâ*) or the *war of consecration of Yahweh* (Hebr. *qaddešu milhamâ YHWH*).

This terminological perspective is not new to the theological fundament of the Old Testament, for we find clear texts regarding the relationship between war and consecration: there is the expression “to consecrate the war” from Joel 4: 9; the holiness of God or His dedication (*herem*) also means the “war of extermination” or destruction of the idolatrous with all their belongings from 1Sam 15: 3; the warriors were requested both vigilance (Judg 7: 5-7) and

¹² Nicolae Achimescu, *Universul religios în care trăim* (București: Editura TRINITAS, 2013), 362; Klaus Kienzler, *Der religiöse Fundamentalismus. Christentum, Judentum, Islam* (München: Beck Verlag, 2002), 72.

¹³ John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 1985), 57.

¹⁴ J.D. Douglas, *The New Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: William B.Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962), 37-38.

abstinence (1Sam 21: 5-7) – moral goods of the act of consecration. The war of consecration of YHWH comes into close relationship with the idea of judgment of the Lord, having salvation as final purpose. Because the nations were heading straight towards the alienation from God, the people of Israel is chosen to maintain the light amidst the darkness of sins, thus carrying the flag of the monotheistic faith. Since the other nations chose to remain in darkness, they are gradually removed from the face of the earth (Isa 10: 5; Hab 1: 2) – and here Israel has a contribution, leading Yahweh's war of consecration, all these being part of the great plan of the Lord regarding the redemption of man. Hence, when "the set time has fully come" God sends upon the nations that have reached the final limit of evilness, His divine punishment, which is most often synonymous with their extermination (Exod 23: 27; Josh 24: 12). And the strongest argument focuses on the fact that the sins of the heathen were directed not only against Israel as people, but also against the righteousness and holiness of the Lord¹⁵ (Zeph 2: 10-11). Their extermination was on the other hand a pedagogical act of Yahweh through which He kept His people pure, so that when "the set time has fully come", the definitive peace and the salvation of all the people can be achieved by Christ – Prince of Peace (Isa 9: 5-6). The new era of the universal peace brought by Jesus Christ will end all wars of extermination, because consecration will no longer be defended with the sword, but it will be open to all the nations that will believe in Messiah (Isa 66: 19; Mic 5: 7; Zech 13: 1).

The messianic era, teaches us a new war of consecration, but this time it is a spiritual war, a war of permanent *askesis*, a fight against the passions that are deeply rooted into the nature of the old man, subjected to corruption (Rom 7: 17). This unseen war, necessitates the clothing of the entire armor of the lord, and the armor is a metaphorical expression of the new, spiritual man (Eph 6: 10-17). The Greek word used by the apostle is *panoplia* which refers to the full military spiritual equipment (with the belt of truth buckled around the waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, with the feet ready for the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit). Each of this pieces that form the armor is of vital importance for our spiritual fight, and where one of these is missing, the fate of the entire war is seriously endangered. The genitive used within the text (*toû Theou*) which means "of the Lord" shows us the fact that the weapons used within the fight are not ours, and that is why we need to ask for them ardently from God when we see that they become weak in our life. We thus understand the serious nature of the war, in which our life depends on the grace of God, because without His help we would be swallowed by Satan and his fighters that is the evil spirits (2Cor 10: 4; 1Pet 5: 8: "*Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring*

¹⁵ Athanase Negoiță, *Teologia biblică*, 178.

lion looking for someone to devour”). In this spiritual fight, the apostle also underlines the following aspect: the verb *dínasthai* urges us to fight against our enemy at all cost, and never abandon the fight. Because our resistance against the spirits of evil proves the liberation from the shackle of sin and our new status is maintained only through spiritual awakening¹⁶. Theodoret of Cyrus¹⁷ in his commentary on the epistle to Ephesians says that the war must be focused only against the devil and his temptations, and in all the other cases the wise Christian must live in peace with his fellows (6: 15), because the prophet mentions the beauty of the one who proclaims peace (Isa 52: 7 “...How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvations, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”). Saint John Cassian speaks of a particular manner of fighting against demons, reminding us of the monks who kept the demons away especially at night, through the chant of psalms, through prayer and spiritual readings. They took turns so that there was someone awake at all times and ready for the spiritual fight¹⁸. Now we see why in the next verse, the apostle urges us to pray at all times for all the people (Eph 6: 18), because this is the only way we will have our minds permanently focused on prayer and spiritual meditation and we will no longer have the occasion to sin.

There are some particular elements regarding the form and the content that offer a special note to Joshua’s war, in comparison with the ideological wars of the nations from the Ancient Near East¹⁹.

¹⁶ Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* (Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1990), 442-443.

¹⁷ Teodoret al Cirului, *Tâlcuire la Epistolele Sfântului Apostol Pavel*, vol. 1 (Iași: Editura Doxologia, 2015), 92.

¹⁸ Augustine Casiday, *Tradiție și Teologie în scrierile Sfântului Ioan Casian* (Iași: Editura Doxologia, 2015), 261-262.

¹⁹ Although we meet powerful similitudes between the event of the fall of Jericho and the ancient war campaigns described in the Epic of Gilgamesh (epic XI, II 141-146), where for example the Ugaritic king Keret, after performing several religious rituals, on seven consecutive days, in which for six days he repeats a military scheme that he will perfect on the seventh day, he defeats Pabil. The same happens in the case of the conquest of Jericho by the Jewish. The psychological function of this war strategy is to neutralize the enemies, by drawing them into the trap of false security, by repeating several non-violent acts, which will end in the form of the most surprising attack. To this respect see Sa-Moon Kang, *Divine War in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 144-145. Other researchers, in the light of the recent archaeological discoveries, look with a suspicious eye to the narration of Jericho, because according to the calculi of the specialists from the excavation site in Jericho, it seems that this city was destroyed long before the arrival of the Jewish, around 1560 BC. But there are some archaeological information that there have been some human settlements in Jericho around 1400-1325 BC against which Joshua and his army actually fought. But it is strongly stated that Jericho in the time of Joshua was not at all a big imposing and attractive city. See Mark Healy, *Warriors of the Old Testament* (Poole: Firebird Books, 1989), 24.

The classical scheme according to which Israel acts is the following: the army receives a rapport regarding the enemy and his fight capacity; Yahweh decides that the enemy is already given into the hands of the winners; in the end there is a rapport of the battle justifying the manner in which Israel conquered the spoils²⁰. The narrative of the book of Joshua has a peculiarity worthy of our attention, the people fight in order to conquer a land that was given to them by God, and within this military process, the idea of a war of consecration, may be focused on this theme. In comparison with the bloody ideology of the “holy war” that belongs to the heathen, which is focused mainly on the territorial and religious expansion with the help of raw force. That is why I think that the specialist of the Old Testament, the German theologian Gerhard von Rad, rushed into saying that the wars of the Jews bear the ideological mark of the “holy war” from the idolatrous environments²¹. But Silviu Tatu expresses a very inspired idea to this respect, because he understands through the colonization of Canaan the fulfillment of God’s commandment to exterminate evil that had become cult and to establish the basis of a theocracy governed by the Law of Moses. That is why, he says, the war of Israel is different from that of the violent nations, through the fact that it rather resembles a revolution through which a corrupt and oppressive govern is destabilized²².

A particular case: God’s war of consecration (Jer 6: 4; Mic 3: 5; Joel 4: 9)

The consecration war in the Name of God occurs long before the pre-exilic prophets, this idea can be identified even in the time of Moses, in the sequence of “the Song of Moses” from Exod 15, especially in the part of text called by the specialists in the macro and micro structural analysis of the Old Testament, as the “poetical discourse”²³. Within this poetical discourse of the

²⁰ Gordon Mitchell, *Together in the Land. A Reading of the Book of Joshua* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 24-26.

²¹ Gerhard von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1969).

²² Silviu Tatu, “Iosua”, in *Introducere în studiul Vechiului Testament. Pentateuhul și cărțile istorice*, ed. Silviu Tatu, (Oradea: Editura Casa Cărții, 2016), 274.

²³ Richard M. Davidson, “The Eschatological Literary Structure of the Old Testament”, in *Creation, Life and Hope: Essays in Honour of Jacques B.Doukhan*, ed. Jirí Moskala (Michigan: Andrews University Press, 2000), 350.

text of the Old Testament, we may easily identify the typological elements²⁴ of the biblical text, suggesting to the reader an eschatological key of the text. This type of discourse aims directly to put in a relationship of continuity the theological events such as *the Lord of our parents – the Lord of the Covenant from Sinai – the Creator God*, thus suggesting God's unicity in comparison with the idols of the heathen people²⁵. Such a concept with deep significances is the war of consecration, of offering to God in respecting the commandment of perpetual consecration (Lev 19: 2). A typological event from the past, which was filtered through the prophetic image mentioned above, especially that of prophet Joel (4: 9) – finds its antitype or the completion of the action within the war with the passions described briefly by apostle Paul in Eph 6. The typological-eschatological verse from the Song of Moses is v. 13: *"In your unfailling love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling"*.

We notice especially in the time of Joshua (5: 13 – 6: 27) that the war preparations are rather of a spiritual nature than military, most of the times ignoring the established technique for the close-handed war in favor of the spiritual aspects²⁶. The majority of the important texts regarding war in the Old Testament speak of a consecrating dimension with respect to the preparations for the war of God. The future soldiers of Yahweh were obliged to maintain a state of purity, of holiness (Deut 23: 10-15; Josh 3: 5: *"Joshua told the people "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you"*; 1Sam 21: 6). We can't know for sure what were the actions to which this

²⁴ *Typos* is a sign, a pattern, a mask, a symbol that announces a reality that will be revealed, hence, certain events, objects, beings and persons of the Old testament, prefigures a new reality, which is highly superior. The *typos* belongs to the sacred time, announcing a pattern of fulfillment competing with each other in a simultaneous closeness. For example, both Eve (whose eyes are lightless) and the Virgin Mary (offering light to everyone) symbolize the condition of the whole world and of each of us; that is why we may say together with Saint Ephrem the Syrian that the type hides an unseen power. Such is the typological relationship between the old Adam through whom sin came into the world and the new Adam – Christ, through whom we got salvation (Rom 5: 12-19; 1Cor 15: 22). Such is the typological relationship between Sarah and Agar, in relation to Abraham, developed in the Epistle to Galatians, where the two women represent the two Testaments (the legalist Judaism and the Christian Church). It is exactly the case of the parallel between Melchizedek – Christ; the sea as image of the baptism; the cloud as a sign of the Holy Spirit; the manna as a prophetic image of the Lord's Supper; etc. See Vasile Mihoc, „Sensul tipic al Vechiului Testament după 1 Corinteni 10, 1-11,” *Mitropolia Ardealului* 4-6 (1976): 274; Vasile Mihoc, „Tipologia ca metodă de interpretare creștină a Vechiului Testament,” *Altarul Banatului* 7-9 (1997): 31; Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 157.

²⁵ Ioan Chirilă, „Structura Literar Eshatologică a Vechiului Testament. Analiza Macrostructurală,” *Studia Ubb Theol Orth* 2 (2013): 9.

²⁶ Silviu Tatu, *Revendicarea moștenirii. 13 mesaje din Iosua* (Oradea: Editura Metanoia, 2010), 82.

urge of consecration before the start of the war was dedicated, but we may suppose a certain state of *askesis* (Judg 20: 26; 1Sam 21: 6; 2Sam 11: 11). Very interesting within this frame is the text from 2Sam 1: 21: “Mountains of Gilboa, may you have neither dew nor rain, may no showers fall on your terraced fields. For there the shield of the mighty was despised, the shield of Saul – **no longer rubbed with oil**”, which may refer, as we may well observe, to a possible consecration of the weapons²⁷.

The established expression of “holy war” cannot be found anywhere within the Old Testament, understood literally as the Islamic circles do, but we do find the three texts of the prophets mentioned above (Jer 6: 4; Mic 3: 5; Joel 4: 9). These verses put in a relationship of complementarity within the same verse, the noun “war” (*milhama*) and the verb “to consecrate” (*qadaş*). The presence of the verb *qadaş* within this phrase compels us to translate the holy text in the key of an armed conflictual preparation. From a grammatical point of view, the phrase *milhama qadaş* differs a little bit in the three prophets, but blends within the context: in prophet Micah the verb occurs in the form *piel perfect*, which means that it refers to the false prophets; but in prophets Jeremiah and Joel the verb uses the form *piel imperative*, and the subject of the action are the enemies of Israel²⁸.

The first one in chronological order is Mic 3: 5: “*This is what the Lord says: As for the prophets who lead my people astray, they proclaim ‘peace’ if they have something to eat, but prepare to wage war against anyone who refuses to feed them*”. The context invoked here sanctions the corruption of the fake prophets from Israel, who have rallied according to the manners of their greedy rulers (Mic 2: 1-11), fake prophets that have become the enemies of the Law of Moses (Deut 13: 1-5). They were leading the people astray, pretending to communicate prophetic messages inspired directly by God (Deut 18: 21-22; 1Kgs 22: 19-28). Defeatists in origins, spiritual corruption had become their true prophecy²⁹ (Num 22: 7; Neh 6: 12; Ezek 13: 19). The verb used here for “proclaim” (וְקִרְאָה) rather means, strictly literally “to consecrate”, the expression referring to the consecration of the war, referring indirectly to the religious ceremonies³⁰ (1Sam 13: 8-12; Jer 6: 4; Isa 13: 3). From a literally point of view, the established expression “*qiddeşû milhamâ*” (*consecrate the war*), in

²⁷ Cătălin Vătămanu, “Războiul sfânt din perspectiva Vechiului Testament,” *Studii Teologice* 3 (2006): 104.

²⁸ Cătălin Vătămanu, “Războiul sfânt”, 101.

²⁹ David W. Baker and T. Desmond Alexander, *Obadiah, Jonah and Micah. An Introduction and Commentary* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2009), 192.

³⁰ John Merlin Powis Smith and William Hayes Ward, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1959), 75.

prophet Micah has nothing to do with the idea of an armed conflict, but refers to the imposture of the fake prophets who deceived people with war rumors so that the frightened people gave them gifts in exchange for their prayers for peace³¹. Their moral deprecation is also underlined by the verb that describes the bite of their teeth, similar to that of a poisonous snake, so that the prophecy of the Lord upon the disbelievers may fulfill (Jer 8: 17; Amos 5: 19). They draw God's wrath upon them also because they proclaim peace (*šālôm*), which in the collective mind represented the blessing of salvation (Deut 28: 1-14). The word *shalom* comprises a large area of meanings (physical health, social harmony, economic stability and political certainty), and they promised all these goods without having a direct investment from God, and taking the term out of its ethical and religious context (Jer 6: 14; Ezek 13: 10), hence a usurpation of the authority of God³². Their punishment was imminent because nobody had the moral authority to proclaim peace and salvation except for those who were faithful to Yahweh.

The next text is that from Jer 6: 4: "*Prepare for battle against her! Arise, let us attack at noon! But, alas, the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long*". We find here the same expression of consecration of the war as an act of cult, belonging to the war of consecration of Yahweh. The broad theme of the imminence of the war that dominated chapters 4-5 can also be observed here, in chapter 6. Exactly like in the previous chapters from Jeremiah, this too is a composition of several pieces, oracles –that is why, the verse presented above is part of the context from verses 1-8: a poem that describes the enemies' approach from the North with the purpose to besiege the city of Jerusalem. Hence, the prophet receives the message from the Lord (verses 6-8) which states clearly that the invasion is commanded by God Himself because of the sins of His people. However, this national disaster may be avoided only if Jerusalem repents for its sins³³ (v. 8). This can be easily observed from the prepositional phrase (כַּלְמֵי) "against it", which is a grammatical construction that refers to a timeless relationship between the affected entity (Jerusalem) and the actors of this imminent war³⁴ (Assyrians). God's mercy gives forth, the conquest of Jerusalem is possible (its deportation in Babylon later on

³¹ Cătălin Vătămanu, "Războiul sfânt", 107.

³² Philip Peter Jenson, *Obadiah, Jonah, Micah. A Theological Commentary* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 134-135.

³³ John Bright, *Jeremiah. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1965), 48-49.

³⁴ Elizabeth R. Hayes, *The Pragmatics of Perception and Cognition in MT Jeremiah 1:1 – 6:30. A Cognitive Linguistics Approach* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 218.

strengthens this clause), but He can stop the invaders from the North only if the people shows signs of repentance. One may speak in the case of verses 4-5 of a council in the camp of the Nordics regarding a future invasion (with the meaning to start the fight or to prepare the fight). No matter what the decision is, the Lord is the one who will govern people's decisions, according to His pedagogical plan of restoration of His people fallen into idolatry³⁵.

The last one in chronological order is Joel 4: 9: "*Proclaim this among the nations! Prepare for war (qaddešû milhamâ)! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men approach and attack!*". The extended context presents God's decision to bring all the nations together in the valley of Jehoshaphat so that He can judge them through war (3: 1-3). This verse prepares Israel for the consecrating war, and its target is presented through the repetition of the verbs "proclaim/come" all the nations. The following verse portrays the military equipment of the pre-exilic times, precisely to underline the imminence of the war. The classical call to war observed by the prophet Joel carries a certain dose of irony in prophet Isaiah (21: 5) who describes the warriors eating and drinking, and not waiting for a quick war. The divine judgement aims not only to proclaim the sentence, but to act on this sentence through the consummation of the final battle. Prophet Joel receives from God a message that is similar to the prophecies of Isa (8: 9; 17: 1-14), Zech (12-14) and Ezek (38-39), where the Zion celebrates in a cultic manner the victory of God upon all His enemies³⁶. The seriousness with which this war approaches is given by the very commandment of Yahweh, sent either through His prophets, or through His angels charged to proclaim Judgement to all the nations. The expression we find here *qaddešû milhamâ* derives from the image of the wars of God, which consumes under His strict command. It bears a strong cultic background, there is a commandment regarding the fulfillment of the sacrifices and burnt offerings that prepared the consummation of the war of YHWH (1Sam 7: 8-9; Jer 51: 27), led by the warriors of the Lord who were especially consecrated in order to fulfill this mission (Isa 13: 3: "*I have commanded those I prepared for battle; I have summoned my warriors to carry out my wrath – those who rejoice in my triumph*"³⁷).

³⁵ William McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah* vol. 1, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 141-142.

³⁶ Leslie C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 149-150.

³⁷ John Merlin Powis Smith and William Hayes WARD, *A Critical and Exegetical*, 550.

The nomosic and social dimension of the war of Yahweh (Deut 20)

The laws of the war of Yahweh are presented within this nomosic chapter, it is the reference text for our theme, and that is why I left at the end, for a more careful analysis. Of course, some of the elements here can be found in the cases we have discussed previously, but all those are special cases, which reflect the manner in which Israel applied or not the law of the war of God. Surely, Deut 20 remains the normative biblical text with respect to an objective approach of the theme *qaddešu milhamâ*. The historical criticism that penetrated to us from the direction of J. Derrida, rushed into stigmatizing this only text of the Old Testament, of an exhaustless human richness, considering this chapter of the Law, to be idealistic and not at all anchored into the concrete reality³⁸. We will not comment on this statement. It's superfluous!

Very suggestive in the economy of the war, becomes the importance of the priest in the moral preparation of the future warriors (20: 2-4). They (the priests) had the role to cheer the army through a series of persuasive discourses regarding God's providence. But this is only one of the functions of the priest in times of war. Besides this, the priests were responsible for the sacrifices before the starting of the battle, and some priests were even present on the field, carrying the tabernacle of the Covenant before the army of God³⁹, as we have observed along this study.

From afar one may observe a striking social dimension in this law of the war offered by God, the law in itself being a self-sufficient argument to support the unicity of the war of God in comparison with the holy war of Jihadist type. Based on this text, we may observe how the Israelites' behavior during war was very moderate, in the situation in which the enemy opened his gates willingly, he was granted peace and the city was not robbed, but they settled only on a tribute. In case of resistance, the social preoccupation of the Jewish dominated the entire situation: the women and children were spared, women were respected, the animals were saved from death, fruit trees were not destroyed⁴⁰. The only exception we see is in verses 16-18: *“However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you.*

³⁸ M.H. Segal, *The Pentateuch: its composition and its authorship and other Biblical studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1967), 80.

³⁹ T. Fish, "War and Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 23 (1939): 395-396.

⁴⁰ Claudiu Dumea, *Pagini dificile ale Vechiului Testament* (Iași: Sapiientia, 2011), 234.

Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshipping their gods, and you will sin against the Lord your God", when the occupants of Canaan will have to be put to death from child to man, with all their animals and belongings, an extreme measure accepted by God with a pedagogical purpose, so that His people consecrated through battle does not contaminate with the sins of the heathen nations.

It seems that this social behavior of the people of Yahweh can be found in the Palestinian environment at the end of the Bronze Age (around 1500 BC – 1155 BC) and the beginning of the Iron Age (around 1200 – 600 BC), as the archaeological proofs testify. During this period all the great social and political falls of the royal palaces in the area of Palestine take place. Also, the military system collapses. The military specialists (*maryannu*) that have received great benefits from their king and were provided with the best weapons disappear as well. The researchers state that a new military paradigm was born based on this regional decline, not regarding the battle techniques (the horses and chariots remained effective for many centuries), but regarding the military politics, referring especially to the methods of recruitment and to the social-political relationships involved in the armed confrontations⁴¹. It is possible that this social dimension of the wars of Israel also influenced the mentality of these civilizations, through the direct and indirect interactions. Anyway, here we observe a powerful positive influence of Israel upon the neighboring nations. Especially that we have the narrations of the war campaigns of Pharaoh Thutmose III, Amenhotep II, Seti I and Ramesses II, who bragged about their pillage, prisoners, granaries burnt and trees cut in conditions of besiege. A manner of fight completely opposed to that of Israel⁴².

The social dimension may also be observed from the nature of the wars led by Joshua, in this sphere violence (*hamas*) did not find a place because it was perceived as a frontal attack against the majesty of the Lord. Joshua's campaign is based on God's commandment to exterminate evil from Canaan and to put the basis of a theocracy that is a society governed by the Law of God given through Moses. Hence, we may speak in prosaic terms of a revolution through which an oppressive government is destroyed⁴³.

The Law of Yahweh's war has five main points of a profound social sublayer, where the special care of God for man can be observed, a care for man's smallest needs. Firstly, the one who had built a new home and did not

⁴¹ Mario Liverani, *Israel's History and the History of Israel* (London: Equinox, 2007), 41.

⁴² James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, 234-241.

⁴³ Silviu Tatu, *Introducere în studiul Vechiului Testament. Pentateuhul și cărțile istorice*, (Oradea: Editura Casa Cărții), 2016, 274.

have the chance to use it (*hānak*) was excepted from military service (20: 5). Such a social understanding is also offered to the one who has recently planted a vineyard and has not eaten from its fruits yet. This concession could lead to up to five years of rest (Lev 19: 23-25). Another case of permissiveness is that of the man recently engaged, who could benefit from an exception of maximum one year (Deut 24: 5). Much more affectionate becomes in this scenario the exception from war of the coward who has a weak heart. The moral of the army must not be altered because the army was entirely dedicated to God and anyone who influenced this faith had to be removed (20: 8-9). Cowardice thus becomes a problem of spiritual nature and will later on be solved by Saint Paul (Phil 1: 28) who says loud and clear: “...without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God”. A final social arrangement that I have mentioned above refers to the interdiction of cutting the trees from the lands of the enemies (20: 19-20). Since God will give the whole country, disobeying this commandment would mean an act of conceit against the creation of the Lord⁴⁴.

We observe here in the last commandment of God a careful preoccupation for His creation, an ecological concern. The teaching on the environment is abundant in the theology of the Old Testament⁴⁵, and it will also

⁴⁴ John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge*, 301-302.

⁴⁵ Taking a better look at the Holy Scripture, we may identify some answers to the question: That does the Bible say about the conservation of creation? Hence, we offer the following picture: the natural world is created by God and He rests in it (Gen 1: 31a; Heb 1: 2); creation is good (Gen 1: 4); creation reveals God, its Creator (Jer 5: 20-24; Rom 1: 20); God support creation (Matt 6: 26); man is the crown of the creation of God, and that is why the entire creation is extremely valuable (Gen 1: 26-27; Ps 106: 24); the entire creation sings its prayer for the Creator (Neh 9: 5-6); the consequences of our sins affect our lives, the lives of our neighbors and also the entire creation (Gen 3: 17-19; Isa 24: 4-13; Jer 12: 4; Rom 8: 19-22); the Scripture condemns the destruction of the earth and predicts harsh punishments for those who do this (Lev 26: 40-43; Rev 11: 18); the Scripture teaches us that the earth belongs to the Lord that is why we cannot act our own will upon it (Gen 1: 1; Deut 10: 14; Col 1: 15-16); one of the first commandments that God gives to Adam is: take care of the creation (Gen 2: 15); the destruction of the creation is not allowed (Gen 1: 29; 1Tim 4: 4-5); the Scripture offers us an image of what creation will be at the end of times, it will be healed and restored (Isa 11: 6-9; Ezek 47: 6-12; Rom 8: 19-22; 2Peter 3: 13; Rev 21: 1; 22: 1-5 etc). For more information of the subject see Cătălin Varga, “Îndumnezeire și Restaurare între Typos și Antitypos în cea de-a doua Epistolă a Sfântului Apostol Petru,” *Studii Teologice* 1 (2015): 227-231; Ernst M. Conradie, “Toward an Ecological Biblical Hermeneutics: A Review Essay of the Earth Bible Project,” *Scriptura* 85 (2004): 123-135; Rosemary Radford Ruether, “Ecology and Theology: Ecojustice at the Center of the Church’s Mission,” *Interpretation* 4 (2011): 354-364; Felicia Dumas, „Orthodoxie et écologie en France,” *Journal for Interdisciplinary Research on Religion and Science* 6 (2010): 184.

be approached by some of the authors of the New Testament⁴⁶. The miracles performed by Christ must be interpreted as a prefiguration and a renewal and healing of the entire creation⁴⁷, when the Savior offers the ground rules of the ethics of the new Kingdom, He stops just to two of them: “*The most important one,*” answered Jesus, “*is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these*” (Mark 12: 29-31). Each of these commandments has an ecological side, surely to love God means to value the creation that He values⁴⁸, since He fights to free it from the work of darkness (Rom 8: 21-22⁴⁹). Because we live in the time and space situated between the fall of the creation and its recreation, anticipating and hoping for

⁴⁶ Ernest Lucas, “The New Testament teaching on the environment,” *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies*, 93 (1999): 93-99; Edward Adams, “Does Awaiting New Heavens and a New Earth (2 Peter 3: 13) Mean Abandoning the Environment?,” *The Expository Times* 4 (2010): 168-175; Edward Adams, “Retrieving the Earth from the Conflagration: 2 Peter 3: 5-13 and the Environment”, in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, ed. David G. Horrell, et al. (London: T.&T. Clark International, 2010), 108-120; G.Z. Heide, “What is New about the New Heaven and the New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 and 2 Peter 3,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40 (1997): 37-56.

⁴⁷ In fact, the Christological constitution of man can also be seen from his responsibility for the creation, as the one who is both recapitulation and conscience of the entire creation, as Theodore of Mopsuestiasays, because his image, who is Christ, is the Recapitulation and Savior of all things. See Theodoret of Cyr, *Quaestiones in Genesim*, PG 80, 109B.

⁴⁸ Here we have also had all sorts of theories regarding the age and destiny of the earth, and the researchers asked themselves what could be the biblical proofs that confirm the fact that the earth is much older than we can imagine. Unfortunately, there are only three options, in which the time that provides such an age must be comprised: a) during the week of the creation; b) before the week of the creation or c) after the week of the creation. And if this massive temporal equation cannot be comprised by these three variables, it becomes obvious the fact that the theory of an earth that is too old, has no biblical backup. See Bert Thompson, *The Bible and the Age of the Earth* (Montgomery: Apologetics Press, 2003), 15-17; Bert Thompson, *The Scientific Case for Creation* (Montgomery: Apologetics Press, 2004), 21-25.

⁴⁹ The text from Rom 8: 19-22 together with that from Col 1: 20 are the most quoted text by all the Biblicist ecologists because they express the future hope regarding the physical world of the New Testament. Most of the interpreters think that the term κτίσις (“creation”) from Rom 8: 19 must refer in the Pauline thinking to the entire universe. Anyway, the transition from v. 22 to v. 23 excludes the faithful from the purpose of the creation presented in vv. 19-22, and through the noun ματαίωσις (“frustration”) presented in v. 20, the apostle excludes any human intervention in general. Following the ideas of the prophets (Ps 66: 12-13; Isa 24: 4; Jer 4: 28), Apostle Paul portrays the image of the created world between these two limits: from its fall to its anticipated glory. See Douglas J. Moo, “Nature in the New Creation: New Testament Eschatology and the Environment,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 3 (2006): 453.

the redeeming intervention of God⁵⁰. The ethics of Christianity also includes the ethics of the manner in which we treat our land, in the incarnation, death and life of Jesus, God defeated the powers of darkness, sin and death, inaugurating His providence over the entire creation. This is the good news for the entire earth, because it proves the manner in which a fallen world is restored through the intervention of God⁵¹.

In the book of prophet Joel (chapters 1-2), the earth is not just a footstool for our feet nor the object of a human desire, the author focusing here the attention on the importance of the earth in general, says Braaten⁵², prophet Joel engaging a widely used concept: the earth cries for the sin of man, for the judgement of God or for a part of each of these. In all cases, people are urged to do the same, but they refuse this partnership with nature. Prophet Hosea (4: 1-3) presents earth as an active agent through which YHWH carries out His judgement within the people, and that is why the earth does not act outside God's sphere of manifestation. The earth plays an important part in each stage of the process led by YHWH: in the matter of summoning (4: 1b), in that of the judgement (4: 1d) and in that of the issue of the sentence ("*hence the earth mourns*" – 4: 3a⁵³).

God offers to the Jews the Land of Canaan with the purpose to live, work and flourish in it. The construction of houses, the plating of vineyards, marriage and all the other adjacent things constituted the essence of the life in the Promised Land. If this dimension of the life ceased, the consecrating wars no longer had a purpose. It is obvious the fact that all these exceptions from war prove that in God's plan, the important aspects of the life of His people were

⁵⁰ Mark Bredin, *The Ecology of the New Testament. Creation, Re-creation and the Environment* (Colorado Springs: Biblica Publishing, 2010), 17.

⁵¹ Robert White and Jonathan Moo, "Environmental Apocalypse and Christian Hope," *Ethics in Brief* 1 (2011): 3.

⁵² Laurie J. Braaten, "Earth Community in Joel: A Call to Identify with the Rest of Creation," in *Exploring Ecological Hermeneutics*, ed. N.C. Habel, et al. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 65.

⁵³ Melisa Tubbs Loya, "Therefore the Earth Mourns: The Grievance of Earth in Hosea 4: 1-3", *Exploring Ecological Hermeneutics*, 54-55; Ioan Chirilă, *Cartea Profetului Osea. Breviarum al Gnoseologiei Vechiului Testament* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Limes, 1999), 144: "*Verses 1-3 form a unity and may be considered as an introduction to the discourses that follow. The image of the process is not new for the book of Hosea... it is possible that Hosea is the creator of such genre of discourses that the prophets to come will assume willingly (Isa 3: 13; Jer 2: 9; Mic 6). This introduction may be divided into three parts, characteristic to each act of judgement: a) the prophet asks for the people's attention; b) the act of accusation; c) the punishment introduced by al-ken – imminent, immediate, because, the prophets says, the people lacks the knowledge of God and without this knowledge the people has neither emet – truth nor hesed – the wisdom of the love for its neighbor*".

much more important that the requirements of the army. And this is because of the conviction that victory depended, in the end, not on the army itself, but on the direct intervention of God in the economy of the war.⁵⁴ Through this manner of approaching the war from a profoundly social and spiritual perspective, *qaddeṣu milhamâ* is completely different from exclusively human the structure of the Jihadist ideology, that has nothing to do with the divine-human history of the people of God.

This system of values inspired from the nomosic corpus defines the positive laws of God within which the concern for the familial paradigm abounds, as is the case of Deut 20. Surely, the most important part of the Law of Moses promoted the consecration of life, through the excelling of the priestly paradigm; while the area of the various aspects of life, of the human element, exceeded the beauty of life in its various social aspects. But all the aspects of the Law come into close relationship, based on the family nucleus dedicated to the fulfillment of the will of Yahweh, and this aspect made Israel a unique people on the face of the earth⁵⁵.

Conclusions

The war of God recorded in the history of the chosen people is unique in comparison with the other wars of the heathen nations, from the perspective of the following circumstances: (1) War is an action of man firstly, not of God, for He has nothing to do with the death of the sinner, but waits impatiently for his return. Israel is only a punitive and pedagogical instrument in the hand of God, the One Who reestablishes moral order in the land of Canaan. (2) Before the start of each battle, God's will was consulted through priestly oracles Urim and Thummim. Before every war, God was asked on the opportunity of a possible armed conflict and only after they received confirmation for the guidance of Yahweh the Israelites started the battle. (3) The war strategy was already established by God, the victory of the Jews came into close relationship with a scrupulous observation of the divine commandments. The divine strategy of the battle also comprised the presence of the priest before the army, carrying the tabernacle of the Lord, as a visible sign of the presence of God, the One Who involved actively into the wars of Jews, to raise the moral of the soldiers. Also, the consecration of the warriors before the fight through an ascetical exercise

⁵⁴ Peter C. Craigie, *Deuteronomul* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Logos, 2008), 310.

⁵⁵ Waldemar Janzen, *Old Testament Ethics. A Paradigmatic Approach* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 87-88.

well developed and through the purification sacrifices that invoked the providence of God by the priests, this is another strategy of divine law. (4) Any alliance or covenant with the nations given to death with God's consent is a practice strictly forbidden for Israel (the case of Joshua and the Gibeonites). (5) Last but not least, the wars accepted but not commanded by God consume according to a set of rules established by the Law of Moses, from where we may observe the social dimension of the fight, where Yahweh is careful with the smallest details of His soldiers, providing them with exceptions from the military duty based on various homelike reasons, a permission that could extend up to five years for the one who has recently planted a vineyard.

The consecrating war with its theological (Jer 6: 4; Mic 3: 5; Joel 4: 9) and social dimension is truly a vision of war completely different from that of the Jihadist ideology, which promotes the so-called "holy war". Israel does not fight for a forceful conversion of the heathen nations to the monotheistic faith, but to claim the land of Canaan, inherited directly from God, through the covenant He made with Abraham. The wars after the conquest of Canaan, in the pre-monarchal and monarchal era, are wars for the consolidation of the Holy Land. The side-slips observed in the case of the kings Saul, David, Ahab and others who fight without God's approval are mere incidents that depreciate the consecrating context of *qaddešu milhamâ*.

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II. HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

THE RELIGIOUS POLICY OF EMPEROR HERACLIUS (610-641) IN REGARDS TO HEBREWS: PREMISES, ACCEPTANCE AND CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT. Our study sets out to discuss the religious policy of Emperor Heraclius (610-641) in regards to Hebrews. Before the relic of the Holy Cross was reinstalled in Jerusalem (31 March 630), Emperor Heraclius's relations with the Hebrews do not seem to be tense. Starting with 630, Heraclius retaliates against the Hebrews as a punishment for their collaboration with the Persians, as well as for their involvement in the massacre of Christians when Jerusalem was conquered by the Persians (614). The Emperor issued an edict for the forced conversion of Hebrews to Christianity. The scope of this edict covered the entire Byzantine Empire, but it was only enforced in Cartagena (May 31, 632). Saint Maximus the Confessor condemns Heraclius's decision to forcibly convert Cartagena Hebrews to Christianity. Heraclius's decree was contested among the Hebrews. Their forced christening caused their migration to Persia. Also, Heraclius's anti-Hebrew policy determined them to facilitate the Arab expansion in Byzantine territories.

Keywords: religious policy, emperor Heraclius, Hebrews, conversion, baptism

The last two years of Emperor Phocas's reign (602-610) are marked by the resurgence of conflicts between Christians and the Jewish population; these conflicts increase in intensity on the backdrop of the Persian expansion over Byzantium. The Persian invasion of the Byzantine Orient exacerbated the secular hatred between Christians and Hebrews; the latter were accused of helping the Persians, whom they considered to be their liberators from the shackles of the Byzantine yoke. In his turn, Emperor Phocas triggers a series of bloody persecutions against Monophysites and Hebrews in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. These oppressions turned out to be directly responsible for the

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collapse of the Byzantine rule under the attacks of the Persians in the eastern provinces of the Empire, determining Monophysites and Hebrews to become the main allies of the Sassanids.

In 610, the Hebrews of Antioch revolted against the Christians; they killed Chalcedonian patriarch Anastasios II (598-610)¹ and a few noblemen of the city. The Judaic revolt was repressed with barbarity by Bonosus, "Count of the East" many Hebrews were killed, and those who escaped death were mutilated or expelled from Antioch². The Jewish revolt was intertwined with a series of civil conflicts that started in Antioch as well as in the entire Orient, and whose protagonists were members of the local demes (the Green and the Blue)³. Doubtlessly, the Hebrews were involved in these conflicts either as actors, or as victims. The state of anarchy taking over the Empire was the exposition of an imminent civil war⁴.

The critical state of the Byzantine Empire coincided with the ascension of Emperor Heraclius to the throne (610-641). He proved to be the most eminent among the Byzantine sovereigns to occupy the throne of Constantinople after the death of Justinian I. The new emperor received a "heavy inheritance" from his predecessor, Phocas. In order to overcome the crisis in the Empire, Heraclitus initiated an ample series of reforms, perfected by his successors⁵. The Church played an important role in the reforming politics advanced by

¹ Remus Rus, *Dicționar enciclopedic de literatură creștină din primul mileniu*, (București: Ed. Lidia, 2003), 44 (s.v. *Anastasios II of Antioch*).

² Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, an English translation of anni mundi 6095-6305 (A.D. 602-813), with introduction and notes by Harry Turtledove, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), Annus Mundi 6101, 7.21.1.1.1.9., 7 (hereinafter referred to as *The Chronicle*); Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, vol. II, éditée pour la première fois et traduite en français par J.-B. Chabot, (Paris: Ernest Leroux Éditeur, 1901), X, 25, 379, (hereinafter referred to as *Chronique*); see also Jean, évêque de Nikiou, *Chronique*, in "Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale", XXIV, 1^{re} partie, texte éthiopien publié et traduit par H. Zotenberg, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1883), CV, p. 420 (hereinafter referred to as, *Chronique*); *Chronicon Paschale*, vol. I, ed. Ludovicus Dindorfius, in "Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae," 11-12, Bonn: 1832, 699.

³ Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, 7.21.1.1.1.9., 7; Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, vol. II, X, 25, 378-379; Jean, évêque de Nikiou, *Chronique*, CIV-CV, 419-420; see also *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius et la pénétration des slaves dans les Balkans*, vol. I, ed. Paul Lemerle, (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1979-1981), I, 10, chap. 81-82, 112.

⁴ For a description of the political and religious circumstances that led to the Hebrew revolt in Antioch and the civil conflicts in the Byzantine East (Syria, Palestine Egypt, Mesopotamia), see Gilbert Dagron, "Introduction historique. Entre histoire et apocalypse", in *Juifs et Chrétiens en Orient byzantin*, ed. Gilbert Dagron, Vincent Déroche, (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 19-22.

⁵ Georgije Ostrogorski, *Histoire de l'État byzantin*, (Paris: Payot, 1996), 121-124; Jean Meyendorff, *Unité de l'Empire et divisions des Chrétiens. L'Église de 450 à 680*, traduction de l'anglais par Françoise Lhoest revue par l'auteur, (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1993), 353.

Heraclius, being one of the supporting pillars of the imperial power. Since the beginning of his reign, Emperor Heraclius dealt, from a religious perspective, with the often bloody conflicts between the Christians and the Hebrews from the eastern provinces of Byzantium. The Hebrews rebelled by taking advantage of the conflicts that started in many cities of the Orient, between the demes of the Greens and the Blues.

Our study aims to present, based on the analysis of literary sources, the premises and the consequences of Emperor Heraclius's religious policy, the measures proposed and taken by the Byzantine basileus for settling the disputes between Christians and Hebrews, as well as the way in which they were perceived by the Church as well as by Judaic communities.

1. Relations between Christians and Hebrews between 614 and 630

In the Orient, the Persian Empire remained the most imminent danger for Byzantium. Between 611 and 613, the Persian troops conquered the main Syrian cities of Antioch, Emessa and Damascus. After occupying Syria, the Persians infiltrated Palestine, which was shortly afterwards occupied with the help of the Judaic communities.

The Hebrews perceived the Persian invasion as “a prelude for Messiah's coming, as well as an opportunity for retaliation against 'the Romans'.”⁶ As the Persian conquest progressed, the Hebrews were suspected of collaborating with the enemy and were at the center of the uprising propagating in all cities; they took advantage of the situation in order to get even with the Christian population. The Hebrews in Ptolemaïs (today Acra, Israel) set Christian churches on fire and massacred the Christians in the citadel; at the same time, they offered Christian prisoners to save their life in exchange for converting to Judaism⁷.

The complicity of the Hebrews with the Persian conquerors was nowhere more evident and more symbolic than in Jerusalem, in the year 614, during the siege of the “Holy City” by the Persians. Patriarch Zacharias of Jerusalem led the resistance against the besiegers. According to the information provided by literary sources, the Hebrews backed Zacharias's proposal for an immediate surrender of Jerusalem to the Persians without a fight.

⁶ Gilbert Dagron, Pierre Riché, André Vauchez, ed. *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours*, tome IV: *Évêques, moines et empereurs (610-1054)*, (Paris: Desclée, 1993), 13, (hereinafter referred to as *Évêques, moines et empereurs*).

⁷ *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, édition et traduction par Vincent Déroche, in “Juifs et Chrétiens en Orient byzantin,” ed., G. Dagron, V. Déroche, (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010), IV, 5, 180-181, 241.

After conquering the “Holy City,” Hebrews become the main allies of the Persians, who allow them to rob and destroy numerous Christian churches, massacre Christians and force them to convert to Judaism⁸. A large number of Jerusalem inhabitants, including the patriarch himself, are taken prisoners. The relic of the Holy Cross falls into the hands of the conquerors and is taken to Ctesiphon as plunder: “The Persians captured and led off to Persia Zachariah the patriarch of Jerusalem, the precious and life-giving wood,⁹ and many prisoners.”¹⁰ The Hebrews take full advantage of this favorable turn of events. They practice an aggressive proselytism among Christians who no longer benefit from the protection of state authorities¹¹. At the same time, it seems like the Hebrews tried to take advantage of the Persian conquest in order to reconstruct their political unity. According to Eutychius of Alexandria, the Hebrews of Tyr planned to conquer Jerusalem and banish Christians from the Holy City. Yet their plan was baffled by local authorities¹².

Shortly after the conquest of Jerusalem (614), the relations between Persians and Hebrews took a sudden downturn; the Hebrews were banished from the Holy City. In its place, a close collaboration between Persians and Christians started to form. This was either due to the excesses committed by the Hebrews after the conquest of Jerusalem by the Persians, or, most likely, to Persians' intention to obtain the Christians' support in order to impose and consolidate their authority over Palestine. In this sense, the letter of Patriarch Modestus – Zacharia's successor on the patriarchal see of Jerusalem – addressed to the Armenian Catholicos Komitas (617-625) evokes “God's mercy, who turned yesterday's enemies into allies (meaning Persians), and allowed the banishment of the Hebrews, who had burned Jerusalem to the ground, from the Holy City.”¹³

⁸ Dagron, Riché, Vauchez, ed., *Évêques, moines et empereurs*, 17-18; Saint Theophanes the Confessor, (*The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6106, 5.26.6.6.6., 11), writes that the Hebrews ransomed 90,000 Christian prisoners in order to kill them. We are of opinion that the information provided by Theophanes should be taken with restraint, considering the anti-Judaic polemic engrained into the Christian sources about the events that took place during the first half of the 7th century.

⁹ I.e., a fragment of the True Cross on which Christ was crucified.

¹⁰ Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6106, 5.26.6.6.6., 11; Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, vol. II, XI, 1, 400.

¹¹ G. Dagron, “Judaïser,” in *Juifs et Chrétiens en Orient byzantin*, ed. G. Dagron, V. Déroche, (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 372-373, 375.

¹² Eutychius, *Annales*, in “Patrologia Graeca; Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca”, 111, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, (Paris: 1863), col. 1084-1085 (hereinafter abbreviated as PG); see also, Dagron, “Introduction historique”, 24-25.

¹³ Pseudo-Sébastien, *Histoire d'Héraclius*, traduite de l'arménien et annotée par Frédéric Macler, (Paris: Ernest Leroux Éditeur, 1904), 24-25, 69-73.

2. Emperor Heraclius and the Hebrews

In the fall of 622, Emperor Heraclius launches a military attack against Persians. As he is reconquering the territories and cities that had been occupied by the Persians, Heraclius is enforcing a policy meant to reconsolidate the Empire's political unity and eliminate the religious schisms of which the Sassanids had taken advantage. The Emperor's policy mostly targets Monophysites and Hebrews.

Literary sources do not provide solid information on Heraclius's religious policy in regards to Hebrews between 614 and 630. In any case, before the relic of the Holy Cross was reinstalled in Jerusalem (31 March 630), Emperor Heraclius's relations with the Hebrews do not seem to be tense. Historian Agapius of Maboug recounts that Heraclius ordered his brother Theodore, who had reconquered Edessa (628), not to massacre the Jewish population, even though they had sided with the Persians against Christians¹⁴. In 630, on his way to Jerusalem and carrying the wood of the Holy Cross with him, Heraclius lodged in Tiberias; here, the Emperor was greeted by a notable Hebrew, Benjamin; Christians complained to Heraclius that Benjamin had oppressed them. In order not to break the rules of hospitality, Heraclius did not punish Benjamin; moreover, he convinced him to receive the Christian baptism. Benjamin was baptized in the home of a Christian man, Eustace of Neapolis who, in his turn, had offered the Emperor his hospitality:

“In this year at spring the Emperor left the imperial city to travel to Jerusalem, bringing back the precious and lifegiving wood to restore it as a thanksgiving to God. When he came to Tiberias, the Christians denounced a man named Benjamin on the grounds that he had mistreated them. He was very rich, and received the Emperor and his army. The Emperor condemned him and asked: ‘For what reason did you mistreat the Christians?’ He said: ‘Because they are enemies of my faith,’ for he was a Jew. Then the Emperor warned him, persuaded him to convert, and baptized him in the house of Eustathios the Neapolitan, a Christian who had received the Emperor.”¹⁵

Despite the fact that Theophanous the Confessor describes the tolerant and reconciliatory attitude of Heraclius in regards to Benjamin, we tend to believe that the Emperor in fact forced the latter to convert to Christianity¹⁶.

¹⁴ Dagron, “Introduction historique”, 28; see also, Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, vol. II, XI, 3, 410.

¹⁵ Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6120, 19.1.20.20.10, 30.

¹⁶ Dagron, “Introduction historique”, 28; see also, Louis Bréhier, René Aigrain, *Histoire de l'Église depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. V: *Grégoire le Grand, les États barbares et la conquête arabe (590-757)*, (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1938), 108-109.

According to Eutychius¹⁷, while still in Tiberias, Heraclius received a delegation of the Hebrews from Galilea, who requested amnesty for the Jewish population. The Emperor issued a written document guaranteeing protection for the Hebrews¹⁸.

After the triumphal celebrations in Jerusalem, marking the reinstallation of the Holy Cross in the Holy City, Emperor Heraclius changed his attitude to Hebrews drastically. He started enforcing retaliatory measures against the Hebrews as a punishment for their collaboration with the Persians, as well as for their involvement in the massacre of Christians during the conquest of Jerusalem (614).¹⁹ In spite of the promise made to Hebrews' representatives in Tiberias, it seems that the Emperor ordered the massacre of the entire Jewish population around Jerusalem and Galilea. According to Eutychius, Heraclius was overwhelmed with remorse for having broken his promise to the Hebrews in Tiberias; in order to make up for it, he instituted a special holiday accompanied by lent and prayer which, according to the same Eutychus, had been celebrated by the Melkite Church of Egypt ever since his era²⁰. Theophanes the Confessor writes that Heraclius expelled Hebrews from Jerusalem, prohibiting them to get within three miles of the city: "He expelled the Hebrews from the Holy City, ordering that they should not be allowed to come within three miles of it."²¹

3. Heraclius's edict of forced conversion of Hebrews to Christianity

According to Heraclius's vision, the danger that the Hebrews posed for the Empire would disappear the moment they embraced Christianity; that is the only explanation for the Emperor's decision to decree the forced christening of all the Hebrews in the Empire, recorded by literary sources. The decision to baptize all the Hebrews was announced by Heraclius, most likely, as early as 630, after the reinstallation of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem²².

Although Heraclius ruled the forced christening of all Hebrews in the Empire, the enforcement of his decree is only recorded in Cartagena; here, according to the statements of Saint Maximus the Confessor, George, Prefect of

¹⁷ Eutychius (877-940) was a Melkite patriarch of Alexandria (January 22, 935 – May 11, 940), see Sidney H. Griffith, s.v. "Eutychios of Alexandria", in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 2, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, et al. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 760.

¹⁸ Eutychius, *Annales*, PG, 111, 1089-1090.

¹⁹ Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6106, 5.26.6.6.6., 11.

²⁰ Eutychius, *Annales*, PG, 111, 1089-1090; see also, Bréhier, Aigrain, *Grégoire le Grand*, p. 109.

²¹ Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6120, 19.1.20.20.10, 30.

²² Dagron, "Introduction historique," 31.

Africa enforced the imperial decree; thus, tens of thousands of Hebrews were christened on the day of the Pentecost (May 31, 632):

“The blessed servant of God and illustrious prefect [George of Cartagena], upon returning from the queen of all cities [Constantinople], christened all Hebrews and Samaritans [arrived here] from the entire Africa, native-born as well as foreigners, at the order of our faithful Emperors [Heraclius and his son, Heraclius Constantine]; together with their women, children and servants, they were taken by force to the holy baptism - tens of thousands of souls, in total - on the day of the Holy Pentecost of the fifth year of the current indiction [632]. I hear that the same was done in the entire Roman Empire, which terrifies me tremendously.”²³

The decree refers to Hebrews as well as Samaritans, native and foreign, who had migrated to Cartagena from the entire Africa, as well as from the Byzantine East.

This forced christening is the subject of the work *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati* (The Teachings of Jacob, the Newly Baptized), written in 640 by an anonymous Christian from Palestine.²⁴ *Doctrina Jacobi* tells us that Emperor Heraclius decreed the forced baptism of all Hebrews in Cartagena, without exception. The imperial decree was enforced rigorously by George, Prefect of Africa²⁵.

It is not by chance that Heraclius's edict was enforced in Cartagena. During the third and fourth decades of the 7th century, Cartagena was an economically prosperous city. Also, here lived a strong Jewish community. This is how it is explained that the African metropolis had become a refuge for Jewish people from the entire Orient, who migrated here in order to escape

²³ Robert Devreesse, “La fin inédite d’une lettre de saint Maxime: une baptême forcé de Juifs et de Samaritains à Carthage, en 632,” *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, no. 17/1, (1937): 34-35: “Ὁ εὐλογημένος δοῦλος τοῦ Θεοῦ τῶν ἐνταῦθα πανεύφημος ἐπαρχος, ἐπανελθὼν ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλίδος τῶν πόλεων, πάντας τοὺς κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν Ἀφρικὴν Ἰουδαίους καὶ Σαμαρείτας αὐτόχθονάς τε καὶ ἐπήλυδας κατὰ κέλευσιν τῶν εὐσεβεστάτων ἡμῶν βασιλέων πεποίηκε Χριστιανούς σὺν γυναιξὶ καὶ τέκνοις καὶ οἰκέταις εἰς πολλὰς ψυχῶν μυριάδας συντεινούσας προσαχθέντας τῷ παναγίῳ βαπτίσματι ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἁγίας Πεντηκοστῆς τῆς ἐνεστῶσης πέμπτης ἐπινεμήσεως. Ἀκούω δὲ τοῦτο γεγενῆσθαι κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχήν.”; see also, Dagron, “Introduction historique,” 31.

²⁴ *Doctrina Jacobi* is part of the literary genre of anti-Judaic polemics, which flourishes again in the 7th and 8th centuries, see G. Dagron, “Commentaire. I. Le scénario et ses ancrages historiques” in *Juifs et Chrétiens en Orient byzantin*, ed. G. Dagron, V. Déroche, (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 230, 247; see also, Dagron, Riché, Vauchez, ed., *Évêques, moines et empereurs*, 74.

²⁵ *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, ed. and trans. V. Déroche, I, 2, 70-71.

persecution²⁶. Yet it is specifically Cartagena where the decision of forced conversion to Christianity - applicable in the entire Empire - was enforced most strictly. Therefore, the Jewish fell into a trap here²⁷.

Doubtlessly, Heraclius's decision of forced conversion of the Hebrews to Christianity was determined by their collaboration with the Persians, during the Persian occupation of the eastern Byzantine provinces. The forced baptism was a harsh reply to the trauma suffered by the Christian world due to the conquest of Jerusalem.

4. The position of the Church in regards to the forced christening of the Hebrews

Heraclius's decision to convert the Jewish by force was met by a deaf opposition from the Church. Literary sources do not record any measures taken by the Church in order to enforce Heraclius's edict.

Saint Maximus the Confessor is the only theologian who had the courage to condemn this controversial measure. He was the eye witness of the anti-Judaic policy pushed by the Byzantine Basileus. On May 31 632, while in Cartagena, Saint Maximus was present during the forced baptism of the Hebrews decreed by Heraclius. In a letter addressed to abbot John of Cyzicus, Maximus writes about this terrible event which he found revolting. In his opinion, forced conversion to Christianity would bring nefarious consequences for those baptized, as well as for the true faith. Saint Maximus believes that a forced conversion infringes the freedom of the baptized, in the absence of a voluntary adherence to the faith. On one hand, this type of conversion could cause the definite and final loss of those who, in secret, remain faithful to Judaism or wish to return to their former faith. On the other, Hebrews forced to convert would not show the slightest respect for the new religion - which he finds much worse. Thus, they could freely desecrate the holy sacraments and commit sacrileges, which would set a negative example for the other believers²⁸. Maximus expresses his complete disagreement regarding Heraclius's decision

²⁶ *Doctrina Jacobi* tells us that the Hebrews who had taken refuge in Cartagena came from Constantinopol, Ptolemais (Acra), Sykamina and Caesarea Palestinae, see Dagron, "Commentaire," 245.

²⁷ Dagron, "Introduction historique," 32.

²⁸ *Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul (580-662) și tovarășii săi întru martiriu: papa Martin, Anastasie Monahul, Anastasie Apocrisiarul. „Vieți” – actele procesului – documentele exilului*, translated and presented by Deacon Ioan I. Ică jr., (Sibiu: Deisis, 2004), 51-52 (hereinafter referred to as *Sfântul Maxim și tovarășii săi*); Devreesse, "La fin inédite," 34-35.

of forced conversion of the Hebrews in Cartagena to Christianity, which would contribute to the undermining of the Empire's religious unity. As a consequence, Saint Maximus is of the opinion that the forced baptism of the Hebrews was the first step towards the general apostasy and the end of the world; he places it in an apocalyptic scenario, assimilating it to the coming of the Antichrist²⁹; seen from this perspective, the conversion of the Hebrews is comparable to the invasion of the Persians and especially to the Arab expansion³⁰.

According to Maximus, the conversion of the Hebrews is nothing but „a meddling” that would defile the purity of the true faith. Through the underlying image of a „spoiled” faith, the dogmatic rigor of Saint Maximus the Confessor has, in reality, a strong undertone of anti-judaism. It is significant that, in order to discredit the compromise that imperial power struck with Monophysites - by means of the deliberate conception of Monothelism - in order to bring them back to the Imperial Church, Maximus invokes the example of the Hebrews, against whom he believes the only way to fight is mercilessly: “I mean that tomorrow, the hateful Jews will also begin to say: ‘Let’s arrange peace with one another, and unite, and let us remove circumcision an you baptism, and we won’t fight with each other anymore.’”³¹ In this passage, Saint Maximus makes a vague allusion to the anti-Judaic policy of Emperor Heraclius, which he condemns in his letters³².

5. The reception of Heraclius's anti-Judaic policy by Jewish communities

The forced christening decreed by Heraclius would contribute to the intensification of their aversion and hatred for Byzantines. *Doctrina Jacobi super baptizati* records the reactions of the Jewish population to Heraclius's anti-Judaic policy. The entire Jewish community in Cartagena is terrified. They protest in silence, gathering in secrecy in isolated places, manifesting their disagreement and profound indignation for their forced conversion.³³

²⁹ *Sfântul Maxim și tovarășii săi*, 53; see also, Maxime le Confesseur, *Lettres*, XIV, introduction par Jean-Claude Larchet, traduction et notes par Emmanuel Ponsoye, coll. Sagesses chrétiennes. (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1998), (310), 167.

³⁰ Dagron, “Introduction historique,” 37, 40.

³¹ *Maximus the Confessor and his Companions. Documents from Exile*, edited and translated by Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), chap. 4, 57: “Αὔριον γὰρ καὶ ἰο ἰδυσώνυμοι Ἰουδαῖοι λέγουσιν· Οἰκονομήσωμεν τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους εἰρήνην, καὶ ἐνωθῶμεν, καὶ ἱπεριέλωμεν ἡμεῖς μὲν τὴν περιτομήν, καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ βάπτισμα, καὶ ἰμηκέτι ἀλλήλους πολεμήσωμεν.”

³² Dagron, “Introduction historique,” 38.

³³ *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, ed. and trans. V. Déroche, I, 4, 74; III, 2, 152.

They are afraid that Christians will denounce them to local authorities for their refusal to convert to the true faith³⁴. They go through an identity crisis; at least this is what we make of Jacob's account of a Jewish man newly converted to the true faith:

“Ever since I was baptized, day and night, in tears, sighing and fasting, I have been reading *The Law* and *the Prophets* in Greek, borrowing *the holy books of the Church* from my Christian friends from a convent in Cartagena, trying to understand whether I was lost after being baptized as a Christian.”³⁵

In their turn, the Hebrews from Caesarea Palestinae were extremely happy to find out about the defeat of Sergius, the Governor of Palestine, and his death in the battle against Arabs³⁶ which had taken place near the city:

“When [i.e. Sergius] *Kandidatos*³⁷ was killed by the Sarasins, I was in Caesarea ... and they were saying: *Kandidatos* [i.e. Sergius] was killed! And we, the Hebrews, were extremely happy. They were saying that the Prophet appeared, accompanying the Sarasins, and that he predicted the coming of Christ Messiah who was to come.”³⁸

The above-cited fragment registers the appearance of a new prophet amongst the Arabs, who cannot be anyone else but Mohammed. The Hebrews from the Caesarea Palestinae perceive Mohammed as a precursor of Messiah, who was going to return and set them free from under the Byzantine yoke.³⁹

³⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 43, 135; II, 5, 145.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 7, p. 77: “ Ἐξ ὅτε δὲ ἐβαπτίσθη νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας μετ’ ἀδακρῶν καὶ ἰκλαυθμοῦ ὅσα ἰνηστείας οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην ψηλαφῶν τὸν νόμον καὶ ἰτοῦς προφήτας τῆ ἑλληνίδι γλώσσῃ, ἀπ’ οὗτῆς ἐκκλησίας χρώμενος βιβλία δι’ ἀφίλων Χριστιανῶν ἀπὸ ἐνὸς μοναστηρίου ἐν Καρθαγένῃ, ζητῶν μήπως ἐπλανήθην βαπτισθεὶς καὶ ἰγενόμενος χριστιανός.”

³⁶ This battle took place in Dâthina (al-Dâbiya) in 633 and considerably facilitated the conquest of Palestine by the Arabs, Dagron, “Introduction historique,” 39; see also, Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6124, 37: “Sergios had just come from Palestinian Caesarea with a few soldiers; he engaged the Arabs in battle but was the first one killed. So were three hundred of his soldiers. The Arabs withdrew after a decisive victory, having taken many prisoners and much booty.”

³⁷ Cf. gr. *κανδιδατος* – an officer, see E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (from B. C. 146 to A.D. 1100)*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914, p. 626.

³⁸ *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, ed. and trans. V. Déroche, V, 16, 209: “ Ὅτε γὰρ ἐσφάγη ὁ «Σέργιος» Κανδιδατος ὑπὸ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν, εἰς Καισάρειαν ἤμην ... καὶ λέγουσιν· Ὁ Κανδιδατος ἐσφάγη. Καὶ ἔσχαμεν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι χαρὰν μεγάλην. Καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι ὁ προφήτης ἀνέφανη ἐρχόμενος μετὰ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν καὶ κηρύσσει τὴν ἔλευσιν τοῦ ἐρχομένου Ἑλλειμμένου καὶ Χριστοῦ.”

³⁹ V. Déroche, “Commentaire II. Les intentions de l’auteur,” in *Juifs et Chrétiens en Orient byzantin*, ed. G. Dagron, V. Déroche, (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 264-265.

6. The consequences of Heraclius's anti-Judaic policy

The compulsory baptism of the Hebrews caused their migration. They tried to escape forced conversion and persecution. In this regard, the chronicler Michael the Syrian writes that:

“In this era, the Emperor ordered that all the Hebrews that lived in all Roman territories would become Christians. For this reason, Hebrews ran away from Roman territories. First, they came to Edessa; when they began being attacked here, they ran to Persia. Many of them received the baptism and became Christians.”⁴⁰

The violence enforced against the Hebrews in Jerusalem and Palestine starting with 630, in addition to their compulsory baptism decreed by Heraclius, determined a massive wave of migration from Edessa to Persia⁴¹, Arabia⁴² or Egypt⁴³.

Also, Heraclius's anti-Hebrew policy determined them to facilitate the Arab expansion in Byzantine territories. Arabs were perceived by Hebrews as their liberators from under the Byzantine shackles. At least at the beginning of the Arab conquest we can think of a complicity and a real alliance between Hebrews and Arabs, that Maximus the Confessor alludes to. In his opinion, the Arabs are the Hebrews' main allies in a vast plan of undermining Christianity⁴⁴. In his turn, Theophanous the Confessor writes several times about the complicity and collaboration of the Hebrews with the Arab conquerors, to the detriment of Christians. Theophanous writes that a Jewish man bought the remains of the Colossus of Rhodes, one of the major monuments of Antiquity, after its destruction by Arab general Muawiyah⁴⁵.

⁴⁰ Michel Le Syrien, *Chronique*, vol. II, XI, 4, 414.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Pseudo-Sébéos, *Histoire d'Héraclius*, trad. F. Macler, 30, p. 319; see also Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6122, 34-35.

⁴³ Euty chius, *Annales*, PG, 111, 1089-1090.

⁴⁴ Maxime le Confesseur, *Lettres*, XIV, trad. Emmanuel Ponsoye, (310), 167; see also, Dagron, Riché, Vauchez, ed., *Évêques, moines et empereurs*, 77.

⁴⁵ Theophanes, *The Chronicle*, Annus Mundi 6145, 12.8.1.10., 345, 44: “In this year [653/654], Muawiyah over ran Rhodes and destroyed the Colossus of Rhodes 1370 years after its erection. A Jewish merchant from Edessa bought it and carried off its bronze on nine hundred camels”; see also Bréhier, Aigrain, *Grégoire le Grand* 111 and note 4.

Conclusions

In order to consolidate the Empire's political and religious unity, Heraclius devised a plan whose purpose was to eliminate religious minorities. Similarly to Emperor Justinian I, Heraclius was not tolerant to religious pluralism. And this is the direction that he took in regards to the Hebrews, a policy that complemented his religious unification with non-Chalcedonians. On one hand, the Emperor's decision of forced conversion to Christianity was based on his desire to eliminate any political dissidence among the Hebrews and the risk of the reinstallation of the „Temple;” it served his goal of strengthening the Empire's cohesion by means of the religious unification of its subjects. On the other, this controversial decision started from the idea that history is coming to an end, and the Christian Emperor had an important role to play in this last stage of redemption oeconomy.

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REORGANIZATION OF THE KYIV-MOHYLA ACADEMY INTO THE KYIV THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN 1817: PRECONDITIONS AND REASONS

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ABSTRACT. The question of how the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy could be transformed, or reorganized, into the Kyiv Theological Seminary has caused and causes many scholars and historians a tremendous boom. Thanks to the great efforts of the son of the Moldavian Ruler Metropolitan Petro Mohyla, the Kyiv Brethren School transformed into the Collegium, which caused great irritation and dissatisfaction with both the Order of the Jesuits and the Polish domination. This article's idea is that the creation of the Kyiv Theological Seminary was not only a rejection of secular sciences, but also a result of reorganization.

Keywords: Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv Theological Seminary, History of Church, Eastern Orthodox Church

The Kyiv Mohyla Academy was one of the most well-known and most ancient Orthodox higher educational institutions in Eastern Europe, which existed from the 17th to the 19th centuries. The seminary also appeared much later and became its successor since 1817. When analyzing and comparing the stories of these two educational institutions, the question arose: "The Kyiv Theological Seminary was simply reformed and purified from the school of Latin scholasticism - the same as Kyiv Mohyla Academy, or something else?".

The question of how the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy could be transformed, or reorganized, into the Kyiv Theological Seminary has caused and causes many scholars and historians a tremendous boom. The Academy, which was founded by Saint Petro Mohyla, was a defender of Orthodox education and a source of theological knowledge not only for students from the Ukrainian lands, but also for migrants from Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Syria and other countries. During the progressive development of Protestant Reformation and Catholic Counterreformation, Orthodox education could not

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remain aside and be stationary. It also needed to evolve, shape its image to keep pace with Catholic and Protestant scholarship. Otherwise, the leadership of The Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth¹ would ocatolize the Ukrainian population, and preachers of the Reformation became increasingly popular among the anti-Catholic opposition of the then Eastern Europe. The role of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy at that time was extremely large for Orthodoxy.

If we recall the situation then, after the capture of the Turks-Ottomans of Constantinople in 1453, all Orthodox education was preserved in the monasteries of the Balkan countries, including in the Carpathian monasteries. That is, in places hard to reach for the Turks. Among them can be identified monastic schools at the monastery Putna, in Brasov and others. Later, Orthodox schools were founded in the Polish-Lithuanian state. The first was being in Lviv in 1686. After this, began multitude opening up of the entire then Polish state. In addition to the Lviv School, the most famous Brotherhood Schools was being in Vilna and Kyiv. In Kyiv opened in 1689 and became the foundation for the future Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. It is she who will become the Orthodox school of the world level, although she had a great influence on Reformism and Catholicism. However, she was Orthodox, where she studied not only from Poland, Ukraine, Russia, but from the Balkan and Danube countries. Including from Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldova, Bulgaria and Serbia.

However, despite this, two centuries later, in 1817, the closure of the Orthodox Academy. But why has this happened and why was it not closed by the Catholic Polish authorities, but by the Russian Orthodox? To answer this question, you need to look at the history of the KMA briefly and focus on the important points that will help resolve this issue fully.

The first Orthodox schools in Kiev, after the destruction of the Kievan Rus by Tatars, were Brotherhoods². They appeared here at the end of the seventeenth century approximately in the 1580's and became the basis for the creation of the KMA. As laity and clergy came to study at these schools. It is important to note that for this era in the Orthodox environment of Eastern Europe is characterized by an extremely large role of the laity in the affairs of the Church.

¹ The Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, formally the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, after 1791 the Commonwealth of Poland, was a dualistic state, a bi-confederation of Poland and Lithuania ruled by a common monarch, who was both the King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania // Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, (Pimlico, 1997), 554.

² Brotherhoods (Ukrainian: братства, bratstva; literally, «fraternities») were the secular unions of Eastern Orthodox citizens or lay societies affiliated with individual churches in the cities throughout Ruthenian part of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth such as Lviv, Wilno, Lutsk, Vitebsk, Minsk, and Kiev.

The laity in the face of hetmans, magnates, and Cossack leaders kept and defended Orthodoxy. These are such well-known personalities as Hetman (Prince) Konstantyn Ostrozhs'kyi, Rulers Petro Konashevych-Sahaydachnyy, Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi³ and Ivan Mazepa⁴ who defended not only the national interests or the rights of the Orthodox in the Catholic state at the time, but also contributed to religious-educational development⁵. Here secular proximity to the church is traced. Indeed, after the transition of the orthodox hierarchy to the union with the Catholic Church, it is the laity and lower clergy those who cared for the preservation and restoration of the canonical Orthodox hierarchy.

Thanks to the great efforts of the son of the Moldavian Ruler Metropolitan Petro Mohyla, the Kyiv Brethren School transformed into the Collegium, which caused great irritation and dissatisfaction with both the Order of the Jesuits and the Polish domination⁶. The creation of a new educational institution took place in 1632 because of the merger of two Kyiv religious schools⁷. In addition to the study of theology, a great emphasis on the Collegium, and eventually the Academy, was put on the study of foreign languages and other, rather secular than theological, disciplines. Thus, discipline in the Kiev college was divided into so-called ordinary and extraordinary. Farah, infima scriberi, grammatica, syntaksyma, poeticam, rhetoricae, philosophia and theologia related to ordinary⁸. But one should not forget that most of the vast majority of contemporary intellectuals at that time went to the KMA to study the most extraordinary disciplines, including Polish, Greek, German, Jewish, Russian and French languages, geography, history, mathematics (which included algebra, optics, dioptrics, algebra, architecture, physics, hydraulics, hydrostatics, mechanics and mathematical chronology), music church singing, music, painting, rural and home economics, medicine and eloquence⁹.

³ V. I. Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu* [Киев с древнейшим его училищем Академиею] (V Univers. tipograf, 1856), 67, 91.

⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁵ V. Burega, "V. Kiyevskaya Bratskaya shkola i Kiyevo-Mogilyanskaya kolegiya s 1615 g. po 80-ye gg. XVII" [В. Киевская Братская школа и Киево-Могилянская коллегия с 1615 г. по 80-е гг. XVII], in *Pravoslavnaya Entsiklopediya XXXII* (2013): 698-702.

⁶ Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 116-121.

⁷ F. Titov, prot. *Imperatorskaya Kiêvskaya Dukhovnaya Akademiya v yeye trekhvekovoy zhizni i deyatel'nosti (1615-1915 gg.): Istorichechskaya zapiska* [Императорская Киевская Духовная Академия в ее трехвековой жизни и деятельности (1615-1915 гг.): Историческая записка] (Киев: Гопак, 2003), 85.

⁸ Burega V. V., "Uchebnaya i nauchnaya deyatelnost v Kiyevo-Mogilyanskoj akademii. Bogoslovskiye kursy" [Учебная и научная деятельность в Киево-Могилянской академии. Богословские курсы], *Pravoslavnaya Entsiklopediya XXXII* (2013): 709-712.

⁹ Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 426-434.

From these above-mentioned subjects or classes, it is evident that not all of them served to educate not only the priest but also the public figure. For the priest there would be enough ordinary items.

It follows that Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was a semi- theological and semi-educational institution. The emergence of the Kyiv Theological Seminary was a phenomenon separating theological and secular education. The newly created seminary became an educational institution for immigrants exclusively from the clergy. However, this issue will be covered in more detail below.

In the 18th century Academy reached the top of his fame¹⁰. It was not already geographically beyond the Catholic Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth but by the Russia. Its graduates became leading figures in the creation of almost all higher education institutions of the then Russian Empire. Its first emperor Peter I literally surrounded himself with the best graduates of the Kiev Academy. They began to occupy both important secular positions and most of the bishopric chairs at those times as well. The number of classes at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy at that time increased to twenty. Constantly they introduced new subjects: Hebrew, German and French, general and natural history, architecture, geography, medicine, economics.

It is important to draw attention to the fact that looking at the educational institutions of the 17th – the first half of the 18th centuries, it is very difficult to distinguish secular educational institution from the theological. From the beginning of the nineteenth century we can speak on the division of education on theological and secular. Thus, in the field of education, there have been changes, namely, the transition of KMA from secular-religious studies to a theological educational institution. It was 1817 that became the final transition between the two epochs of Kyiv education - early modern and new¹¹. As for the modern school - it is known today is characterized by disciplined divided into primary, secondary and higher with appropriate programs and age-division students. For a new school, a complete separation of secular education from the theological one becomes characteristic. Starting from the second half of the 18th century we can follow the gradual “evolution” of Kiev “Latin” schools towards school, which is more suitable for the systematic teaching priest’s children¹².

¹⁰ *Pamyatniki izdannyye vremennoyu komisiyeyu dlya razbora drevnikh aktov, vysochayshe uchrezhdennoyu pri Kіevskom voyennom podol'skom i volynskom general-gubernator* [Памятники изданные временною комисиєю для разбора древних актовъ, высочайше учрежденною при Кіевскомъ военномъ подольскомъ и волынскомъ генераль-губернаторѣ] (II К., 1846), 1-30.

¹¹ M. V. Yaremenko, “Kіyevskaya Bratskaya shkola i Kіyev – Mogilyanskaya kolegiya s kon. KHVII – nach. KHІKhv” [Кіевская Братская школа и Кіево – Могилянская колегія с кон. XVII – нач. XIXв], *Pravoslavnyaya Entsiklopediya XXXII* (2013): 705.

¹² M. V. Yaremenko, *Kyіyev-Mohylyanska Akademiya v 1817 rotsi: kinets i storiyi?* [Кієво-Могилянська Академія в 1817 році: кінецьісторії?] (Trudy KDA, 2009), 120-121.

Opening of Kyiv Theological Seminary was not spontaneous, and the cause and effect reaction at that time changes. The opening of this educational institution was the result of many educational reforms that were carried out in the Russian Empire of those times.

If we speak about the 19th century it can be noted that the education of the Russian Empire in all social classes was one of the priorities of the internal imperial policy. That educational impulse that the reforms of Peter I and Catherine II gave¹³, Alexander I put them to the highest level. At the same time, this development was awakened not only by the need to keep pace with other civilized European countries. According to I. Smolich, this process: "...was not based on solid pedagogical principles, but from the need to educate the people as "good subjects". This requirement of Peter the Great remained unchanged, but it should be noted that the school affairs in Russia at the beginning of the XIX century developed successfully and gradually reached the level of Western Europe"¹⁴.

The closure of the famous ancient Kyiv-Mohyla Academy caused many criticisms and diverse points of view. For example, one can mention the historical evidence that no one was quite popularized in Polish and Ukrainian media, that is a harsh view of the famous Polish historian Alexander Walerian Jablonowski. In his view, the newly formed Kyiv Theological Academy, and accordingly and Kyiv Theological Seminary, received from the old academy only the walls, and no more. He described this position in a book entitled "Akademia Kijowsko-Mohilańska", published in Krakow in 1899-1900, and later in Lviv. He described it in contrasting colors, because he believed that KMA was a full Polish educational institution, and with the reforms of Alexander I, it irretrievably lost its customs and programs¹⁵.

In contrast to such a radical view came the famous Kiev historian, professor Ft. Theodore Titov. The foregoing Polish historian, he replied with these words: "In view of this, in the most highly weird way of judging by Alexander Jablonowski, we consider it permissible to confine ourselves to the mere fact that, in spite of the incorrect understanding of the spirit and character of the old Kyiv Academy, it finds in the Polish historian that it is still

¹³ A. N. Nadezhdin, *Istoriya Sankt-Peterburgskoy dukhovnoy seminarii sobrazovaniyem obshchikh zakoneniyy i meropriyatyy po chasti seminarskogo ustroystva. 1809-1884* [История Санкт-Петербургской духовной семинарии съобразованиємъ общихъ узаконеній и мероприятий по части семинарскаго устройства. 1809-1884] (Svnodalnaya tipografiya, 1885), 6.

¹⁴ I. K. Smolich, *Istoriya Ruskoj Tserkvi 1700-1917* [История Руской Церкви 1700-1917] (Spaso-Preobrazhenskiy Valaamskiy monastyr', 1996), 93.

¹⁵ Jablonowski Aleksander, *Akademia Kijowsko-Mohilańska: zarys historyczny na tle rozwoju ogólnego cywilizacji zachodniej na Rusi* (Krakow: Druk W. L. Anczyca i spolki, 1899-1900), 241-242.

perfectly unfamiliar with the essence of the theological and educational reform in Russia, completed in 1808, and the Academy of Sciences touched in the years 1817-19¹⁶.

In this case, it will be appropriate to recall the words of their contemporary, historian Petro Znamenskyi, who describes the former position of the KMA, who wrote: "Having transformed into a Polish and Jesuits system, the college was far from being Polish, because it was exclusively connected with the middle classes, gentlemen, Cossacks, and small-scale, when the Russian nation was kept in all its significance, - here 'Russian nationality' is referred to as the 'Orthodox', since at that time the nationality was tied to the religion, and then he adds, - besides, it was an open and constantly updated tide of the people's forces"¹⁷.

Also, Alexander Yablonowski in his book mentions that the introduction of the Russian language in the Kyiv Theological Academy and Kyiv Theological Seminary was a factor in the eradication of the Polish-Latin element: "Akademia mohilanska przeobrazowana na zaklad naukowy rosyjski, zamin zapanowal wniej jezyk rosyjski"^{18 19}. Ft. Theodore Titov resposned on the previous comment the following: "Reform of 1817-19 was not accompanied by a significant breakdown of the educational system in the Kyiv Academy. Even the Latin language, following this reform, remained in the course of teaching language, at least, of theological sciences in the Kyiv Theological Academy"²⁰. After such comments it is quite difficult to deny something as reforms of the early nineteenth century indeed heterogeneous, they embarrassed and still confuse not one scientist.

It is unlikely that the reason for closing the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy can be called Russification. In modern literature, a significant portion of local researchers tend to evaluate Kyiv-Mohyla Academy as a purely Ukrainian school. Instead, Kyiv Theological Seminary and Kyiv Theological Academy were thought to be anti-Ukrainian Russified educational institutions. However, this view can hardly be considered appropriate in this case. Most likely, this is a

¹⁶ F. Titov, *K voprosu o znachenije Kijevskoy Akademii dlya pravoslaviya i russkoy narodnosti v XVII-XVIII vv.* [Къ вопросу о значение Киевской Академии для православия и русской народности в XVII - XVIII вв.] (TKDA, 1904), 1: 83.

¹⁷ P. Znamenskiy, *Rukovodstvo k Russkoy tserkovnoy istorii* [Руководство къ Русской церковной исторіи] (Kazan: V univers. tipografii, 1880), 207.

¹⁸ Translation from polish language: "Mohyla Academy was transformed into a russian scientific institution, in place of which the russian language prevailed".

¹⁹ Aleksander Jablonowski, *Akademia Kijowsko-Mohilańska: zarys historyczny na tle rozwoju ogólnego cywilizacyi zachodniej na Rusi* (Krakow: Druk W. L. Anczyca i spolki, 1899-1900), 251.

²⁰ F. Titov, *K voprosu o znachenije Kijevskoy Akademii...*, 1: 83.

subjective vision of the contemporary situation. The discovery of the Kyiv Theological Seminary was the result of the reforms of the Russian emperor Alexander I, which envisaged already three-level theological education: college, seminary and academy.

Before describing the opening of the Kyiv Theological Seminary, it is necessary to mention in a few words the closure of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. As it was already mentioned above, in the Russian Empire, new reforms were implemented in full swing. Old Kiev Academy was to change, be transformed²¹, or according to the new terminology restart, becoming the only institution to the clergy.

In the capital, it was planned to close the academy, but implementation of such an intention was delayed every time. There were reasons for this, among which four main ones can be distinguished.

The first reason can be called a major fire on Podil (Medieval Downtown of Kyiv) July 8, 1811 on the day of the celebration of the Kazan Icon of Holy Virgin²². A fire that broke out at noon in the carpenter house due to strong winds, spread to neighboring wooden houses. As a result, only in a few hours from the Podil there were only smoldering coals²³. Historian Viktor Askochens'kyi wrote that nothing was left of all the churches and public buildings in Podil. Monastery of Orthodox Brotherhood and Academy smoked the longest, as a large monastery courtyard, the temple bell and educational buildings were filled with students good. A iconostasis burned to the ground²⁴. The same happened with the old academic library, which until then contained the works of metropolitan Petro Mohyla. From the academic buildings were only two walls²⁵. It is clear that in this period there was no reform.

The second reason was the war with the Napoleonic troops. It is difficult to carry out any reforms during the fighting, in addition to the uncontrolled territory, since Kiev was for some time behind the line of the front. During the war, the academy also suffered. The cost was the life of its students, who recorded massively as the volunteer, replenishing the army's ranks to go on to defend their homeland. Historian Viktor Askochens'kyi describes this as follows: "The Academy also did not lag behind the offering of

²¹ N. Petrov, "Kiyevskaya Dukhovnaya akademiya" [Киевская Духовная академия], in *Bogoslovskaya entsiklopediya*, ed. N.N. Glubokovski (Sankt Petersburg, 1909), 691-692.

²² *Ibid.*, 691.

²³ F.I. Titova (ed.), *Akty i dokumenty, odnosyashchiesya k istorii Kiyevskoy akademii. Otd. III (1796-1869)* [Акты и документы, относящиеся к истории Киевской академии. Отд. III (1796-1869)], vol. I. (1809-1812). (K., 1910), 322-323.

²⁴ Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 463-464.

²⁵ N. Petrov, "Kiyevskaya Dukhovnaya akademiya" [Киевская Духовная академия], in *Bogoslovskaya entsiklopediya*, vol. X, 691.

a common victim; and its pupils became in the ranks of the holy warrior. In the course of 1812 and 1813, the Academic Board issued permissions for students to enter the regiment, and the Kyivan hierarch delivered their archpastoral blessing²⁶.

In addition, in connection with military operations in 1812, at the territory of Academy a mobile laboratory and pharmacy military placed who created exceptional difficulties for seminarian, taking twelve of the twenty-four rooms²⁷. In short, such exploitation of premises was delayed due to the lack of space suitable for moving a military pharmacy²⁸. The Military Pharmacy completely dismissed the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy casings in 1814, after Metropolitan Serapion wrote a letter to the Chief Prosecutor to Prince A. Golitsyn requesting to facilitate the expulsion of the military laboratory and the pharmacy from the academic buildings as soon as possible. Such a direct request was due to the fact that the academies needed their premises, as well as because of diseases that went to the seminrists from patients who were constantly coming to the pharmacy²⁹.

The third reason for delaying the closure of the old Academy was the possibility of protests at any time by the Kyiv intellectuals. Historian Fr. Petro Trots'kyi: "As soon as the news about the transformation of our theological schools was first announced, an *unvoiced* murmur for reform and a certain fear for oneself spreaded within the walls of our ancient academy, both between mentors and among students"³⁰.

The fourth and most well-known reason there had to be some time slot after the reform of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, which the Ft. Theodore Titov mentioned. It was necessary to see the results of the approbation in order to spread reforms throughout the empire, as well as to prepare a new decent generation of teachers³¹.

These reasons did not cancel the closure, but only delayed the irreversible process. The war was over, testing of the new program did not fail, the intelligentsia calmed down, and the consequences of a great fire were eliminated. After the fire Metropolitan Serapion started up the restoration of

²⁶ Askochenskiy, *Kyiev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 468-469.

²⁷ O. Zadorozhna, "Etapu budivnytstva 'Velykoyi bursy' ta pobutovi umovy prozhyvannya v niy studentiv" [Etapu budivnytstva «Великої бурси» та побутові умови проживання в ній студентів], *Naukovi zapysky*, 35. Kyuevo-Mohylyans'ka akademiya, 41.

²⁸ Titova (ed.), *Akty i dokumenty...*, 68-69.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

³⁰ P. Trotskiy, svyashch, "N'fskolko slov ob otkryt'ii KDS v 1817 g." [Н'фсколькo словъ объ открыт'ии КДС въ 1817 г.], KEV, no. 19, 1871, 442.

³¹ F. Titov, svyashch, *Ocherki iz istorii Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy akademii* [Очерки из истории Киевской духовной академии], ТКДА, 1897, no. 10, 191.

the academy³². During the renovation less susceptible to ignition materials were used than the previous ones. An audit was carried out of the remains left in the library during the fire³³. Immediately from all sides began to come to material assistance for the restoration of the academy and the Monastery of Orthodox Brotherhood (Brats'kyy). Among the benefactors was the emperor himself, who later played an important role in accelerating the closure of the academy³⁴. The library began to be replenished with books that came from different provinces³⁵. Historian Viktor Askochens'kyi compared the time with the phoenix academy, saying that she resurrected after burning like this mythical bird. The academy had been restored instantly and its pupils were already spending winter in it. Teachers, whereas, received a salary without delays³⁶. That's how the academy once again "regained on its feet" and even was able to invite teachers from abroad. But the closure happened.

Famous historian of the early twentieth century, the Ft. Theodore Titov wrote that the closure of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was the result of a number of orders of the authorities. These reforms began under the time of Catherine II and were implemented under the reign of Alexander I. Ft. Theodore Titov wrote: "We dare to think that this event was a great and very bitter blow for the pupils of the old Kiev Academy, who were direct witnesses and eyewitnesses to the closure of their almae matris. And yet it was absolutely necessary and was made by the higher theological authorities with the best intentions³⁷".

The last event, before the closure of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, in 1816 was the return of Emperor Alexander I from the Vienna Congress to Kiev. At that time, veterans and nobles returned from Europe. Luxurious celebrations, balls and illuminations swept through Kiev. The emperor, in his turn, devoted most of his time to visiting churches, monasteries and, among others, visited the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. His visit was on September 2, 1817, during which he worshiped the miraculous Brotherhood icon of Our Lady and inspected the Academy. Immediately after the visit of the Emperor, there were some changes. In the same year, the highest order was issued regarding the "transformation" of the third theological educational district³⁸.

³² Titova (ed.), *Akty i dokumenty...*, 1: 514-516.

³³ *Ibid.*, 339-340.

³⁴ Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 466-467.

³⁵ M. Bulgakov, ierom, *Istoriya Kievskoy Akademii* [Исторія Київської Академії] (Sankt Petersburg: V tipografii Konstantina Zhernakova, 1843), 217.

³⁶ Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 466-467.

³⁷ F. Titov, svyashch, *Ocherki iz istorii Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy akademii*, 169.

³⁸ Askochenskiy, *Kiyev s drevneyshim yego uchilishchem Akademiyeyu*, 480-481.

The question arises: "Why was the seminar open instead of the academy after the closing of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy?". The answer to this question can be found by analyzing the contemporary decrees and works of well-known researchers on this topic.

Even before the opening of the seminary (October 27, 1817), at a meeting of the Commission of theological schools at the Holy Synod, on July 24, the same year, the question was raised about the opening of a new theological academy in exchange for the old Mohyla Academy, but this Commission ruled in a different way.

Metropolitan Serapion and local bishops prepared information about the readiness for reform. These reports were sent to the Holy Synod, which on August 14, 1817, issued a decree, in which said: "Since there are already seminaries in which a great number of youths are either getting education or suffering time ... then it is necessary to precede the formation of the Kiev Academy of Education seminary of the Kiev district, and before that all the schools of the Kiev district subordinate to the department of the St. Petersburg Academic Board"³⁹.

In turn, the Commission of theological schools, even before this decree, realizing new reforms of Theological Education, prepared a plan for their implementation. In the first place, she was forced to adhere to the precise reform of the system, which was attributed to the new Charter. In short, the old theological education had become a three-staged: college, seminary and academy. Having only the first of the lowest of the three stages available - the religious schools of the Commission of theological schools decided in mid-July 1817: "The opening of the Kyiv Academy for a new education will be postponed to perfection of at least a two-year course in the Seminary of the Kyivsky District in their new education."⁴⁰.

So, summing up, one can state that Kyiv Theological Academy and Kyiv Theological Seminary were two higher educational institutions with different orientations. Although the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was a more universal institution and for centuries it was the theological educational light of Eastern Europe, it had to give way to a theological institution called Kyiv Theological Seminary. The separation of theological and secular education that was happening all over Europe at that time in 1817 reached Kyiv. For someone, it was a shock, for somebody's expectation, but more than 20-30 years until the

³⁹ Ibid., 481.

⁴⁰ P. Trotskiy, prot., "Khod obrazovaniya dukhovnykh uchilishch v nachal'e nyn'ishnego stol'btiya i otkrytie Kievskoy Dukhovnoy seminarii 1817 g. 27 oktyabrya" [Ходъ образованія духовныхъ училищъ въ началѣ нынѣшняго столѣтія и открытіе Киевской Духовной семинаріи 1817 г. 27 октября], ТКДА, no. 1, 1893, 66.

closure of the Old Academy, only priest's children were taught in it. That indicated the need to abandon extraordinary secular sciences and to focus more on the study of theology and pastoral disciplines. The need to close the old academy was due to the fact that the level of old teachers at the beginning of the nineteenth century was very low. After re-certification, only one teacher of the Old Academy had the rights to stay teaching, all the others because of the low level were released. Therefore, the creation of the Kyiv Theological Seminary was not only a rejection of secular sciences, but also a result of reorganization. Further, the Kiev Theological Seminary for more than a century, from 27 October 1817 until 1919, will conduct training and educational activities. Hundreds and thousands of its graduates became famous church figures and martyrs for the faith of Christ.

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III. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

A DIFFERENT LOOK AT THE TRINITY

HANS SCHWARZ*

ABSTRACT. The doctrine of the Trinity seems difficult to understand today. In the New Testament, there is a unity of revelation and action between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, although a unity of essence is not clearly expressed. We can discern the Old Testament roots of the implied divinity of Jesus and also of the divinity of the Spirit. Yet, from these manifestations of the one God it is difficult to arrive at a doctrine of the Trinity. While the metaphysical terminology of the early church leads to such a doctrine, the biblical witness could only arrive at a doctrine of the Trinity in a mediated way. It suffices that there is a unity of action of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, without the need to fathom the mysteries of the Trinity with regard to their exact mutual relations and their status over against each other. As the New Testament affirms, decisively is that God was and is in Christ for our salvation and that God is present through his Holy Spirit so that there is life.

Keywords: Trinity, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Christianity, Person, Substance, Bible, Jewish monotheism

For most Christians the doctrine of the Trinity is accepted as a matter of fact. Especially in systematic theology the Trinity is frequently used as the starting point for theological deliberations. Yet when we ask a Christian lay person what this doctrine means we usually do not get an answer. Does this mean that theologians have not really communicated the meaning of this doctrine to the Christian community or have they delved into something that is totally incomprehensible?

The eminent Roman Catholic theologian Karl Rahner (1904-84), himself an advocate of Trinitarian theology, often asked: "How do we know?" concerning some of the conclusions drawn from Trinitarian reflections. Indeed

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it would be wholesome to ascertain the biblical roots of the Trinity, since its important advocates, the famous Cappadocian Fathers, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus, hail from the fourth century. But even at this late date this doctrine was highly debated.¹

I. A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE TRINITY?

When we consult Scripture which ought to be normative for the Christian faith, we can perceive the unity of God, Jesus Christ, and the Spirit. Especially in the farewell discourses in the gospel of John the “Helper” and “Advocate” (John 14:16) which Jesus promises that the Father will send and who is generally equated with the Holy Spirit, bears decidedly personal features. But neither in that gospel nor in the Apostles’ Creed do we find an actual Trinitarian doctrine of one God in three persons. We only encounter triadic assertions concerning Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We could even venture to say that Christians by themselves did not arrive at a doctrine of the Trinity. It was only under the cloud of Emperor Theodosius the Great (347-395) that such a doctrine was affirmed in 381. And such a decision arrived at under political considerations should make us doubly apprehensive about calling the Trinity the foundational dogma of the Christian faith.

1. Trinitarian Fascination

From the very beginning of the Christian faith all important was Jesus as the Christ, but not the Trinity. As Paul affirms: “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9). Jesus as Lord is set in parallel with his resurrection from the dead. As the British New Testament scholar N.T. Wright (* 1948) says: “Paul then explains this with a remarkable statement, one of the clearest in all his writings, of what precisely Christian faith consists of. It is not, for him, a vague religious awareness, a general sense of the presence of a benevolent deity. It is the confession of Jesus as Lord and the belief that God raised him from the dead.”² The resurrection as God’s decisive act was the turning point in history and the foundation of hope for each person. From then on it was also evident that Jesus was indeed the one who he said he was, the Christ, God’s human face, the actual Messiah. But what about the Trinity?

¹ For further details to the whole issue of the Trinity cf. Hans Schwarz, *The Trinity. The Central Mystery of Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017).

² N. T. Wright, *Commentary on Romans*, in *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 10, to this passage.

In religion and mythology the number three (3) is understood as a divine and holy number. It symbolizes completeness, since it contains in itself beginning, middle, and end. In many cultures the cycles of the year and of life are seen in three steps: growth, fertility, and decay; or childhood, adulthood, and senescence. There are the three elements which make up the world, earth, water, and air, and in ancient anthropology one often distinguishes between body, spirit, and soul (1 Thess 5:23). In many religions there exists also a trinity of gods. In Hinduism, for example, we have Brahma as the creator god, Shiva as the god of fertility, but also of death and destruction, and as the third main god Vishnu as the sustainer of life. In ancient Egypt we also encounter trinities. In a hymn to God Amon we read: "All gods are three: Amon, Re and Ptah, and there is no second to them. 'Hidden' (imn) is his name as Amon, he is Re in face, and his body is Ptah."³ In Greek mythology the trinity of Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades share the rule over humans and gods. Kerberos, the awe-inspiring dog with three heads, guards the entrance to Hades, the nether world, that nobody can escape from there. At the oracle of Delphi in ancient Greece the priestess Pythia was sitting on a three-legged chair.

Even in Christianity the number three is of significance. Next to the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we have the holy family of Mary, Joseph, and the Christ child. Then we encounter the three kings, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, often also referred to as the three wise men. Before Jesus began his ministry he was tempted three times by the devil (Mt 4:1-11) and Peter denied his Lord Jesus three times (Mt 26:69-75). We could also adduce the resurrection on the third day, which actually was only two days in today's counting, to show the popularity of the number three even in Christianity. With the evolvement of the concept of the Trinity we may find an analogy to the evolvement of seven sacraments. The number seven consists of the number three, the divine completeness and the number four symbolizing the material world which consists of the four elements of fire, water, earth, and air. Therefore seven sacraments can be interpreted to stand for the union of the divine and the material and also for completeness. Initially the number of the sacraments was much more fluid depending on what one understood a sacrament to be. Only in opposition to the Reformation movement, the Council of Trent stipulated the number as seven and also listed these sacraments. A similar move seems to have occurred much earlier with the Trinity. In the post-New-Testament disputes over whether Jesus Christ is indeed equal with God and even one with him, the equality of Father and Son was not only affirmed but also their

³ As quoted in Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, trans. Ann E. Kemp (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1984), 144. See also the whole section "Unity in plurality; Egyptian trinities", *ibid.*, 142-146.

relationship to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit who undeniably is closely associated with Father and Son, was incorporated into a Trinity to emphasize the completeness of the divine. But at what price?

As the Roman Catholic church historian Norbert Brox (1935-2006) affirms, the faithful perceived the Hellenistic speculations on the Trinity largely as a threat to the faith in the one God speculations which also jeopardized the unity of the church. They vehemently resisted the Trinity claiming that with it a doctrine of two or even three gods was promulgated. "The beginnings of a theology of the Trinity by the church were understood as polytheism and rejected as heresy in the name of the biblical God."⁴ Still today the three persons of the Trinity are often understood as the subjects who have their own consciousness, an understanding which leads to some kind of tritheism. This is reinforced in Eastern iconography if the Trinity is depicted in the form of three angels as in the famous icon by the 15th century Russian painter Andrei Rublev. The icon, painted in the early 15th century, depicts the three angels who visited Abraham at Mamre (Gen 18:1-8). The painting is full of symbolism and is interpreted as an icon of the Trinity. In the 15th century the Trinity was considered the embodiment of spiritual unity, peace, harmony, mutual love and humility. Yet today most people would hardly interpret it as symbolizing the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It reinforces the idea of three gods. The notion of one God who successively appears in three modes as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as in modalism, is not satisfactory either. It is difficult to explain how, according to the biblical account, the Son can dialogue with his Father, if Father and Son are just different modes of the same God.

2. Following the Biblical Mode

In the New Testament there is a unity of revelation and action between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We see this most graphic in Jesus baptism: after Jesus is baptized by John, "he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased'" (Mk 1:10-11). The Spirit of God descends upon Jesus and the voice, none other than God's voice, affirms the relationship to Jesus as God's Son. As the New Testament scholar PHEME PERKINS (* 1945) explains this passage: "Elements of apocalyptic symbolism—the open heavens (Isa 63:19), the descent of the Spirit, and the divine voice—also call attention to the fact that Jesus is the agent of God's salvation."⁵ Central focus is on Christology, who Jesus is, and not on the Trinity. Yet the passage leaves no doubt that the Spirit of God, Jesus, and God's own self belong together.

⁴ Norbert Brox, *Kirchengeschichte des Altertums*, 5th ed. (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2008 [1983]), 172.

⁵ PHEME PERKINS, *The Gospel of Mark, The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 8, to this passage.

Another example of the relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is given in Stephen's speech to the Council just prior to him being stoned to death. We read about Stephen that "filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). The phrase "filled with the Holy Spirit" designates Stephen as one who is enabled by the Spirit to give bold and powerful witness to the risen Messiah. The Spirit also elevates Stephen's prophetic consciousness to envision "the glory of God" and "the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (v. 56). The Spirit who filled Stephen is the connecting link between him, Jesus, and God. Since God is invisible, only "the glory of God", in Hebrew *kabod*, can be discerned by Stephen. This is his power symbolized by the radiance issuing from God's own self which remains hidden. But Jesus becomes visible as the Son of God standing at God's right hand which signifies that he is of equal power and glory with God. He has been raised from death and received into God's eternal glory as God's Son and his representative for us. At the same time Jesus represents us before God. The Holy Spirit is in Stephen. Evidently it is the invisible power and might issuing from God who fills Stephen and allows him to perceive the glory of God. This means that the Spirit is the one who allows humans to perceive and understand God and Jesus the Christ. Each of the three, God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit are intimately connected but have very different functions.

Coming from the New Testament, the doctrine of the Trinity has the task of appropriately describing these functions and also of showing the proper relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As the continuous battles during the first four centuries show with excommunications being carried out by one side and then the other, one might question whether the Hellenistic solution of the *homousios* (of the same being) or the Latin phrase of *tres personae et una substantia* (three persons and one substance) have really caught the meaning of the biblical correlation between God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. One should also remember that the decisive issue in the early church was not concerned with the Holy Spirit, but with whether Jesus was indeed equal to God and therefore superior to all the Hellenistic divinities and demigods who could not lastingly solve the human predicament.

The British New Testament scholar James D. G. Dunn (*1939) says with regard to Christology the issue is whether we encounter here an unfolding or and evolution.⁶ An unfolding would mean the outworking of what was always there in principle or in nuce. The Christological formulations of the later

⁶ For the following cf. his perceptive essay "The Making of Christology – Evolution or Unfolding?", in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ. Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology*, Joel B. Green and Max Turner, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994), 437-452.

centuries could then be traced back to Jesus and the apostles. According to Dunn, this is in fact that classic view of Christological development. “The alternative view is that early as Christology developed by a creation, that is, in crude terms, by adding on new ideas and claims which were not implicit in or native to the earliest response to Jesus. This can be characterized more carefully as the model of ‘evolution’.”⁷ Dunn then concludes that the process of the development of Christology in the first centuries cannot simply be described as evolution. Yet he also contends that whether it can be described simply as unfolding is less clear. Nevertheless he states that there was an inner dynamic involved “and that it was understood by the participants as an unfolding of the truth of Christ.”⁸ We certainly must agree with his conclusion. Jesus has always acted as if he stood in God’s place. The development of Christology is therefore a retroactive recognition of this fact.

Yet we wonder whether the same distinction that Dunn applied to Christology should not also be used for the development of Trinitarian reflections. As far as we can see it would be nearly impossible simply to talk about an unfolding of that which is present in the biblical corpus. Yet should we call this development simply an evolution by which new ideas and claims were added in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity? To agree with this latter position would certainly be an exaggeration. In some way or other the post-biblical claims concerning the Trinity are not totally foreign to the biblical sources. Yet they are not their recti-linear conclusions either. But concerning the development of Christology the scales tilt much more closely to the “unfolding” while with regard to the Trinity they are closer to the mark of “evolution”. Is the doctrine of the Trinity then just a result of a post-biblical development that has some roots in the Bible but is steered by other interests?

3. The Doctrine of the Trinity in Peril?

The issue concerning the Trinity does not get easier then we consult the confessional documents of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. In the opening sentence of Article 1, concerning God, we read in the Lutheran Augsburg Confession: “The churches among us teach with complete unanimity that the decree of the Council of Nicea concerning the unity of the divine essence and concerning the three persons is true and is to be believed without any doubt.”⁹

⁷ Dunn, “The Making of Christology,” 438.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 452.

⁹ *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 37.

In the Heidelberg Catechism we read in Article 53: The Holy Spirit “is, together with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God.” And in Article 25 we read that “these three distinct persons are one, true, eternal God.” Should we simply say that this is no longer true since most people, whether Christians or non-Christians, will understand this doctrine as speaking of three gods instead of the one triune God. On the one hand we realize that this affirmation of the triune God is indeed the one doctrine which ties almost all of Christendom together regardless of any other differences. But we must also acknowledge in the same breath that the interpretation of the Trinity has often been shrouded in mystery and caused serious questions. We may only think here of the Spanish medical doctor, lawyer, and Renaissance humanist Michael Servetus (1509/11-1553) who called the doctrine of one God in three persons a monster with three heads, a congregate of four phantoms which one neither could nor should accept.¹⁰ He not only rejected the personal Godhead of the Holy Spirit but also that of Jesus Christ. The Father alone was essentially God while Son and Spirit only participated in the Godhead and were different and subordinated appearances of the one God. Since the doctrine of the Trinity was affirmed by all the Reformers, it is no surprise that at that time Servetus could hardly challenge the traditional doctrine of the Trinity.

As we have noticed, however, in the 16th century anti-trinitarian confessions and churches were formed in Transylvania, present-day Romania, and in Poland. They still exist today, and of course there are Unitarian denominations in the USA. More important is that most Christian lay persons do not understand the traditional doctrine of the Trinity and simply brush it aside as unintelligible. This means more and more an ugly broad ditch has opened up between faithful Christians and professional theologians in their understanding of the Trinity.

We must also remember Schleiermacher’s dictum concerning the Trinity: “We have the less reason to regard this doctrine as finally settled since it did not receive any fresh treatment when the Evangelical (Protestant) Church was set up; and so there must still be in store for it at transformation which will go back to its very beginnings.”¹¹ The influential Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) observes here that the Reformation has simply accepted the ancient doctrine without any further consideration. He also claims that this doctrine therefore is not finally settled and any transformation of the doctrine has to go back to its biblical roots. Implied here is the charge that in

¹⁰ So Nicolas de la Fontaine in his theses 8 and 9 against Servetus in *CR: Calvini Opera* 8:728 (Plainte portée par Nicolas de la Fontaine contre Servet).

¹¹ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, 747 (§ 172).

its development this doctrine has veered off from its biblical foundation. Schleiermacher also contends that many people refute the Trinitarian faith simply because it is unintelligible to them. Therefore he calls “for a thoroughgoing criticism of the doctrine in its older form.”¹² He also refutes the idea that the acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity is the necessary precondition for faith in redemption. Such ideas only leave the door wide open “to the influx of speculative elements.”

Then Schleiermacher gives some indications of the task before us. The first and foremost difficulty he sees in the relation to the unity of the Essence to the Trinity of the Persons. He questions the original and eternal existence of distinctions within the Divine Essence. Is this idea really so clearly and definitely present in the New Testament? Schleiermacher then seems to opt for an alternative between the Athanasian hypothesis that indeed from the very beginning there is a distinction in the Divine Essence of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Sabellian idea of three different and perhaps successive modes within the one Godhead. The next issue which Schleiermacher raises is the equality of the three Persons if the first person is designated as Father and the second as the Son of God. Here he notes that by “Son of God” Scripture always and exclusively means the whole Christ and recognizes no difference between “God” as the Supreme Being and “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He implies here that in Scripture the distinctions in the one God are not that clearly and definitely present as the doctrine of the Trinity leads us believe. Yet beyond of this perceptive critique in which he also asks for “new solutions” Schleiermacher does not provide any.

4. Jewish Monotheism and the Trinity

The issues which Schleiermacher raised are indeed noteworthy. Are there really distinctions in the Godhead from the very beginning so that we can talk of the triune God? As we have seen, there has always been the distinction between Yahweh and his spirit. Yet this ruah Yahweh, this spirit of God, is always second to Yahweh which most likely implies a subordination. Concerning the divine Sonship we cannot go back further than to the expectation connected with the lineage of David. Yet to contrast Jewish monotheism with Christian Trinitarian thinking does not agree with historical reality. The best example for this is the so-called prologue in the gospel of John. The prominence here of the logos, the Word, is thoroughly rooted in the Old Testament Jewish tradition. Especially wisdom theology comes to the fore. But

¹² Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, 749-50, for this and the following quote.

the logos also figures prominently in early Stoicism as the term for the rational principle of the universe. Stoicism taught that the world is held together by an order which can be detected through reasonable insight and recognition. This means that all order has its transcendent origin in God whose word is the power through which everything came into being and is kept alive. “God said” ... “and it was so” (Gen 1:3), is the key insight in understanding the relationship between God and the world. “It is likely, however, that the Fourth Evangelist’s reading of logos was more influenced by Jewish and early Christian interpretations of Stoicism than by Stoic philosophy directly.”¹³

The best place to look for the background of logos is within Judaism. The Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (ca. 25 BC – ca. 50 AD) is an excellent example of a Jewish contemporary of the Fourth Evangelist who melded Greek philosophy, particularly Stoicism and Platonism, with Jewish exegesis of the Old Testament. In Philo, the logos figures prominently as a way of speaking about the creative plan of God that governs the world. Yet the Fourth Evangelist’s use of logos does not seem to be directly a derivative from Philo, but is a Christocentric reading of the meaning of the word in Judaism by someone steeped in the same Hellenistic culture.

The role of the Word in creation and in human history in the opening verse of the Gospel of John thus draws on the Word of God in the Old Testament. God’s spoken word makes the difference between being and nothingness not just in the creation accounts; God also spoke through the law at Mt. Sinai and then again through the prophets. The Word encompasses both word and deed. The Word also brings with it associations from Jewish wisdom tradition. In wisdom theology the creative and almighty word of God and wisdom creating order come together. Wisdom can even become a preacher who beckons humanity: “Does not wisdom call, does not understanding raise her voice? ... I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I attain knowledge and discretion” (Prov 8:1.12). Wisdom was God’s companion “before the beginning of the earth” (Prov 8:23), working alongside God to accomplish God’s plans. This might even infer wisdom’s pre-existence. In later Judaism wisdom becomes a personal being, standing next to God, and “in the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth” (Sir 24:2). While wisdom is decidedly feminine, John refers to the logos as masculine in order to introduce the incarnation of Jesus as “the Word became flesh” (John 1:14). – We notice that at least in the inter-testamental period that there are figures who share in God’s Godhead. Especially prominent is the divine Wisdom and also the

¹³ So Gail R. O’Day, *The Gospel of John, The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 9, in her comments on the prologue.

personified Word of God. While with regard to Wisdom and logos we could always say that their status is only metaphorical, they are no entities in their own right. But the story is different when Philo calls Moses mediator and reconciler.¹⁴ And in *The Testament of Moses* we hear Moses say: “But he did design and devise me, who (was) prepared from the beginning of the world, to be the mediator of his covenant” (*Test Mos* 1:14). Though in the next verse we read that Moses is going to sleep with his fathers, i.e., he is going to die, this verse seems to imply his pre-existence. This is not too unusual, since Philo can identify Moses and Aaron with the holy logos of God and can even call figures within the divine sphere “God” or “second God”.¹⁵

In *The Testament of Dan* we read of “the angel who intercedes for you, because he is the mediator between God and men” (6:2). In Exodus 23:21 we hear that Yahweh will send to the Israelites an angel with the admonition: “Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.” Yahweh’s name, meaning Yahweh himself, is in that angel. Again the identification of God with that angel is very close and moreover we are reminded here of the hymn in Philippians 2 where the crucified Christ is given by God “the name that is above every name” (Phil 2:9). Both in Israel and in Judaism God is not the solitary monolithic figure but there are others around him who share in his divinity and execute his work. This becomes also evident from Psalm 110 where we read: “The Lord says to my lord, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool’” (Ps 110:1). This verse was frequently used in the New Testament as a reference to Jesus’ exaltation to the right hand of God (Mk 12:36; Acts 2:34-35; Heb 1:13). When the question is raised as to who is allowed to sit next to God on the throne, we read: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (Ps 110:4). We gather from Genesis 14:18 that “he was a priest of God Most High.” There was one who sits at the right hand of God executing a priestly function something that *The Letter to the Hebrews* prominently attributes to Jesus.

When we look at the New Testament we realize that there is no interest there in a specific Word of God, or a specific Wisdom, or a specific Messiah, or in what way they shared in God’s divinity. Decisive for the New Testament was that all these figures and metaphors became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth who died on the cross and was resurrected to new and eternal life against all expectations. Such a suffering, dying, and rising Messiah was unique in the Jewish concept of the divine mediator. Therefore, it proved to be a

¹⁴ According to Christoph Marksches, „Jüdische Mittlergestalten und die christliche Trinitätstheologie,“ in Michael Welker and Miroslav Volf, eds., *Der lebendige Gott als Trinität: Jürgen Moltmann zum 80. Geburtstag*, 205.

¹⁵ So Marksches, „Jüdische Mittlergestalten und die christliche Trinitätstheologie,“ 205-06.

stumbling block for most Jews. For example Justin Martyr (100-165) in his dialogue with the Jew Trypho quotes this Jew saying: "Let him be recognized as Lord and Christ and God, as the Scriptures declare, by you of the Gentiles, who have from His name been all called Christians; but we who are servants of God that made this same [Christ], do not require to confess or worship Him."¹⁶ This means that the Jew Trypho could agree to call Jesus Christ and God as long as he would not be required to confess him as his Lord. Jews could attribute to Jesus divine qualities but not that he is their Lord.

The historian of early Christianity Larry Hurtado (*1943) emphasizes two characteristics of ancient Jewish religion:

- a) "A remarkable ability to combine a genuine concern for God's uniqueness with an interest in other figures with transcendent attributes which are described in the most exalted terms and which we may call 'principal agent' figures who are even likened to God in some cases; and
- b) an exhibition of monotheistic scruples, particularly and most distinctively in public cultic/ liturgical behavior."¹⁷

For the Jewish faithful there was only one principal deity who was distinguished from all the divine and heavenly beings but as some kind of high God or monarchical God quite often accompanied by them. There was the characteristic reservation of worship to this one God only, even at the expense of one's life.

Justin Martyr explains: "God begat before all creatures that Beginning [who was] a certain rational power [proceeding] from Himself, who is called by the Holy Spirit, now the Glory of the Lord, now the Son, again Wisdom, again an Angel, then God, and then Lord and Logos."¹⁸ We note that there is a wide variety of divine mediators in Judaism on which Christian theology could draw to explain the significance of Jesus. Since the Jews, however, were reluctant to offer public, corporate worship to such a principal agent next to the one God, this made the early Christian pattern of worshiping God the Father and the Son genuinely innovative and striking. As Hurtado states: "God's uniqueness was characteristically manifested and protected in religious practice, by directing prayer (especially in the cultic/liturgical setting) and worship to God alone, withholding such devotion from any other heavenly being, including God's closest ministers and agents."¹⁹ Therefore the Christian

¹⁶ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* (64), in *ANF* 1:229.

¹⁷ Larry H. Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005), 111.

¹⁸ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* (61), in *ANF* 1:227.

¹⁹ Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God?* 131.

reverence for Jesus was considered heretical by pious Jews. It must have taken powerful experiences such as the appearance of the resurrected One to the disciples or to Paul on his way to Damascus for the cultic veneration of the glorified Jesus to emerge among his first Jewish followers in such relatively close proximity to his life on earth. Jesus was not just recognized as the Christ but also as the one to whom prayers could be offered. We might refer here again to Stephen who in his vision saw in heaven the glory of God and Jesus standing at God's right hand. Having recognized Jesus' privilege and divinely approved status as God's plenipotentiary, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). Praying to the heavenly Jesus is the sort of specific early cultic devotion otherwise reserved for God in Jewish tradition. It comes as no surprise that the Jews including Saul before his conversion to Paul, approved of their killing Stephen because of this obvious blasphemy which contradicted Jewish monotheism. Here we encounter the roots of considering Jesus Christ being equal with God. But this is still a far cry from any Trinitarian affirmations.

II. RECONSIDERING THE TRINITY

Karl Rahner muses "that already before Christ there was in one way or other faith in the Trinity."²⁰ He discerns this faith in the Word which God establishes and in the Spirit who takes hold of the prophets and of the charismatics. Word and Spirit take the place of God in Israel though they are distinguished from him and nevertheless belong to him. In this, Rahner perceives "a true secret prehistory of the revelation of the Trinity in the Old Testament."²¹ If it is indeed a secret prehistory then it is open to all kinds of speculation. But exactly this kind of speculation we must avoid in order to be credible to our own intellect and to other people. There has been so much talk about "the mystery of the Trinity" that most people whether faithful or unbelievers have renounced any interest in the Trinity. Yet most still care about Jesus, the central figure of the Christian faith.

Jesus and his relation to God came to the fore in the Israelite and Jewish context and therefore should be best understood in that context. For instance, when Jesus entered Jerusalem and the crowds were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Mt 21:9 and Ps 118:26) the crowd does not just legitimize Jesus as messenger of God. According to Matthew this greeting implies that

²⁰ Karl Rahner, „Der dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte“, in Karl Rahner, *Sämtliche Werke*, 22/1b:561.

²¹ Rahner, „Der dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte“, 22/1b:563.

Jesus brings with him the name of Yahweh; that is, God is entering the holy city. This mode of presence is prefigured in the Old Testament. There is a differentiation between God whom “even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain” (1 Kings 8:27) and his name and the form of his presence in the temple and in Jerusalem. Since God is hidden there are worldly figures to represent him such as the Word, Wisdom, or the messengers of Yahweh who talk to humans in the name of God.

According to the systematic theologian Christian Link (* 1938) “we encounter here the Old Testament root of the doctrine of the Trinity: the self-representation of God in Jesus of Nazareth and his effective presence in the Spirit of sanctification are revelational images of the name of Yahweh.”²² Link then concludes that a corresponding Trinitarian theology need no longer contradict the monotheistic confession of Israel. Such a doctrine could do without the metaphysical frame of the early church expressed by “substance, nature, and person.” As we have seen Judaism does not deny the different historical figures in which the divine name becomes present. But by refusing cultic devotion to these figures Judaism wants to make sure that they are just manifestations of the one God and of his coming. They are not considered as a second or third mode of the divine being. There is only one divine being, namely the one God. But exactly here we see the limit of drawing a connection between the Old Testament and later Judaism and the Christian faith. Though the Christian faith vehemently affirmed the unity of the one God by insisting on the homoousios, it also insisted on the cultic devotion to Jesus by offering prayers to him.

A faith in the Trinity prior to Christ as Karl Rahner suggested it or to perceive Old Testament roots for the doctrine of the Trinity as Christian Link proposed, is difficult to detect. We can discern the Old Testament roots of the implied divinity of Jesus and also of the divinity of the Spirit. But from these manifestations of the one God it is difficult to arrive at a doctrine of the Trinity. While the metaphysical terminology of the early church leads to such a doctrine, the biblical witness could only arrive at a doctrine of the Trinity in a mediated way. Should we then abandon this doctrine as Unitarians and Jehovah’s Witnesses have done? Even if we wanted to do this we would not abandon the Christian tradition altogether. We would simply follow at minority position which existed throughout the history of the Christian faith. But by doing this we would endanger our faith in Jesus as the Savior. As Jesus himself affirmed and as theologians of the early church tenaciously held onto there is a oneness of Father and Son.

²² Christian Link, „Trinität im israeltheologischen Horizont“, in Michael Welker and Miroslav Volf, eds., *Der lebendige Gott als Trinität*, 227.

1. The Presence of God in Jesus the Christ

From the very beginning of Jesus' ministry the decisive question was whether Jesus was the Christ, the promised Messiah. When John the Baptist was imprisoned he sent some of his disciples to Jesus to ask him, "are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Mt 11:3). Jesus referred them to his words and actions. "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news brought to them" (Mt 11:3-4). With this response Jesus claimed implicitly that in him the Old Testament promises connected with the time of salvation (Isa 35:5-6) were being fulfilled. The claim that he was the bringer of salvation at the end time is frequently attested. For instance, Jesus told his disciples: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it" (Mt 13:16-17). His disciples were experiencing what had been promised for the end time: The Messiah had arrived.

While Jesus acts as if he stood in the place of God, as we previously noted, and while he also allows for the proskynesis – usually reserved for a divine figure or for the emperor – Jesus is still the representative of God and not God's self. Otherwise his intimate interaction with God whom he calls his Father would not be possible. The confession of Jesus as Lord, as the *kyrios*, emerges from the Christian faith in Jesus as the Christ. The divine Lordship of Christ as expressed in the gospel cannot be recognized prior to or apart from Christ. To think that the Lordship of Christ can be discerned in the Old Testament or in the writings of later Judaism is to be mistaken. – We should also be careful applying here the notion of preexistence. It expresses the conviction that the Son participates fully in the deity of the Father. As the New Testament scholar Udo Schnelle (*1952) perceptively notes: "The preexistence statements underscore the claim of the human being Jesus, showing that his words are at the same time the words of God, his works are at the same time that works of God, that as a human being he is at the same time 'from above'."²³ – There is no equal to Jesus as the human face of God either in ancient Israel or in Judaism. Yet both provide the contextual background for that Lordship, since after all Jesus was a Jew. In a unique way, Jesus connects the one God with humanity, being one with God as his representative and at the same time fully human from birth to death. In an unexpected way, however,

²³ Udo Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 670.

his humanity becomes supplemented or rather re-created to new life in the resurrection and exaltation to God's own being (cf. Phil 2:9-11). This then allowed for and even necessitated cultic devotion to Jesus as the Lord. When we apply to Jesus as the Lord the criterion of being homoousios with God then we encounter a both/and. Jesus is of the same being as God and yet he is different. In him transcendence and immanence meet, the invisible God becomes visible. Jesus therefore is the human face of God, of the God who is invisible and unapproachable.

2. The Presence of God in the Spirit

In order to arrive at the Trinity we must also consider the Spirit. As we noted, in the Old Testament, the Spirit is so to speak that tool through which God works in humans and in the world in general. The ruah Yahweh, the Spirit of God is always closely associated with Yahweh, but can also be imparted to humans. It enables humans to live, to be skillful, intelligent, discerning, and to follow God's ways. As the divine power it also makes the difference between life and death not just for humans but for all living beings.

There is a strong continuity between the Old Testament understanding of God's spirit and the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Right at the beginning of Jesus ministry we read that Jesus "saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him" (Mk 1:10). Having been endowed with God's spirit Jesus could drive out the unclean spirits. The people noticed the power and authority by which Jesus performed his deeds (cf. Lk 4:36). As the mediator between God and humans Jesus promises his followers a paraclete or comforter who will continue his activities once Jesus is no longer physically among them. Indeed at the day of Pentecost when they were all together in one place the Spirit of God descended upon them and "all of them are filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4).

It was a matter of fact for the first Christians that their ministry in word and deed was conducted in the name of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Addressing the crowd at Pentecost, Peter emphasized that the fulfillment of the prophecy given by Yahweh to Joel had come true: "In those days I will pour out my spirit" (Acts 2:18; Joel 2:28). Peter explained that God had promised to Jesus the Holy Spirit which he had poured out on his followers. This means the Spirit was given by God through Jesus Christ. Of course, this Spirit as God's life-giving power, was also involved in Christ's resurrection as Paul shows: "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you" (Rom 8:11). Jesus was

raised from the dead by God through the Spirit and this same spirit will also give life to our mortal bodies since it already dwells in us.²⁴ As a result, Paul states to the Christians in Rome that if they are led by the Spirit of God that they are children of God, and if children of God and led by the Spirit they should live as such (cf. Rom 8:13-14). It is characteristic of the Christian understanding of the one God that he is not considered distant but through Christ and the Spirit God is active in those who follow him. This leads again back to the Old Testament understanding that God's Spirit can be imparted to humans. The Holy Spirit therefore can be considered as the connecting link between the unapproachable God and those who try to follow God's commandments. Yet different from Jesus the Christ there is no enfleshment of the Spirit. He is only active as God's divine agent in that the Word became flesh (Cf. Lk 1:35). So where does this leave the Trinity?

3. The Trinitarian Conclusion

We have seen that in the New Testament we encounter no doctrine of the Trinity or Trinitarian formulations. At the most we have triadic formulations as in the famous commission to the disciples when the resurrected Christ said to them: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:18-20). The impetus for transforming such a triadic formulation into a Trinitarian formula arose once Christianity had left Palestine and entered a new religious and philosophical context. This is also true of the so-called Comma Johanneum of 1 John 5:7-8, a "Trinitarian" insertion into the original New Testament text dating back to the 3rd or 4th century and not contained in the Greek text.

As aforementioned there were triads of gods in many different religions. Often there was one supreme god with whom two other gods were associated, such as in Egypt, Babylonia, and in Rome with Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. In these other religions there is often the genealogical triad of father, mother, and son. Generally, triads were patterned after the nuclear family, a union of the male and female principles, and a son as the result of that union. The head of that family was often a creator god. We should not forget that in early Christianity some also talked about God the Father, the divine Sophia, and Jesus

²⁴ N.T. Wright, *Paul's Letter to the Romans, The New Interpreters Bible*, vol. 10, on Rom. 1:3-4, where he mentions the resurrection of Jesus by the Spirit.

Christ as the Son of God. The preference for triads is also found in the number three, since this means a totality with beginning, middle, and end. It also denotes the human being consisting of body, soul, and spirit, as well as the world with heaven, earth, and the surrounding waters. Yet Christianity went at decisive step further beyond genealogy and numerical considerations. It developed at Trinitarian doctrine attempting to show the intrinsic and extrinsic relations between the three members of the triad, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The development of this doctrine was done at great cost. As with most new doctrinal affirmations, there are always some who oppose them and therefore dissensions and divisions in the unity becomes almost unavoidable. This has also been the case with Christianity. Some segments of Christianity left the mainstream church and established their own churches, such as the Arians, Nestorians, and Monophysites, just to mention a few. And finally there came the split over the Trinity between the Western church under Rome and the Orthodox Church in the East. But most lamentable today is that most average Christians lack even the basic understanding of that doctrine. Moreover, the frequent argument of Muslims, Jews, and even of Christians that the doctrine of the Trinity amounts to worshipping three gods, shows how easy it is to misunderstand this doctrine. Should we then simply give up this doctrine admitting that we have overextended ourselves in the attempt to fathom intellectually the unapproachable and supreme God upon whom we depend in this life and in the hereafter?

The answer must be a flat NO. At the same time, however, we must refrain from undue speculation and practice intellectual modesty. If God is in heaven and we are on earth as the Swiss theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968) so forcefully claimed we can only know about God that which he has disclosed to us in his human face, Jesus Christ. Only through the human being Jesus can we approach God, because "the humanity is that holy ladder of ours, mentioned in Gen. 28:12, by which we ascend to the knowledge of God."²⁵ It is only through the impression and impact made by the life and destiny of Jesus that we realize that God loves us. Only through Jesus do we obtain the appropriate understanding of God and God's activities. This means that Jesus is not important because he was such an effective preacher or because of the miracles he performed or the saintly life he lived. Jesus is decisive for us, because he is the mediator of God's salvific activity, shown most importantly in the resurrection. With this emphasis on the salvific activity of God in Christ all the other ways by which medieval Christians proposed to approach God and to understand God's will or to dispose him favorably to them, collapse. Christ alone was Luther's decisive insight.

²⁵ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Hebrews* (1517/18), in *LW* 29:111, in his comments on Heb. 1:2.

The reason for “Christ alone” was founded in God's decision to disclose God's self only in Jesus. Yet the Reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546) realized that this divine self-disclosure hinged on the unique relationship between God and Christ. In order to mediate God completely, Christ could not be just a saint or an Avatar. He had to be completely and totally God. Otherwise he could not have mediated God. At the same time, Christ also had to be completely and totally a human being. Otherwise he could not have reached us and identified himself with us. In being one being with the Father, a point which Luther affirmed with the Council of Nicaea, Christ could mediate God. – How Jesus can be one being with the Father and yet still be different from him belongs to the mysteries of God, as Luther might say, which must be adored and not explored. Ontological categories do not suffice in matters of existential significance. This was the shortcoming of the homoousios.

What Jesus Christ mediated to us was God's love. Yet how God is in himself as intrinsic Trinitarian theology wants to unearth is no business of ours. It is simply undue speculation. To talk about the one God who from the very beginning was triune overextends the biblical warrant. An extrinsic economic Trinitarian theology suffices showing how the one God, the Father of us all, has acted and is still acting for our benefit by the power of the Holy Spirit, and through his Son Jesus Christ. At this point we differ from the Lutheran theologian Paul Althaus (1888-1966) who claims:

“Yet the step to the immanent, i.e., the eternal and essential Trinity of God is indispensable. It is founded in Christology and pneumatology. The recognition of Christ and the recognition of the Holy Spirit lead in principle to the Trinitarian dogma.”²⁶

Faith in Jesus, according to Althaus, includes the certainty, that the communion with the Father is eternal. Yet such eternal communion between Father and Son cannot be established in the Old Testament tradition. It is based solely on a few assertions from the New Testament. Whether it has to be taken literally or metaphorically seems debatable. The Swiss New Testament scholar Eduard Schweizer (1913-2006) rightly claims:

“Pre-existence is not in the strict sense content of the faith but describes the dimension of salvation brought by Christ. ... Its theological import lies in the fact to characterize the one who has died for us, was exalted and is present in baptism, Lord's Supper, and the proclamation of the Word as the one in whom all the wisdom of God which has been effective since the creation for salvation has found its final realization.”²⁷

²⁶ Paul Althaus, *Die christliche Wahrheit*, 5th ed. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1959), 692.

²⁷ Eduard Schweizer, “Jesus Christus. I: Neues Testament,” in *TRE* 16:681.

Pre-existence not in a strictly temporal sense, but much more in a metaphorical and nevertheless existential sense shows the significance of Jesus. It does not necessitate a doctrine of the Trinity in terms of an intrinsic Trinity. An economic Trinity still suffices. But how is it with the Holy Spirit? Does it necessitate an intrinsic Trinity?

The presence and the working of the Holy Spirit is the presence and the working of the one God through Christ or the presence and the working of the living Christ. This is what the New Testament accounts would imply. One and the same event can be attributed to God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit. Yet then we encounter the paraclete in Scripture as distinguished from Jesus. When Paul talks about the varieties of gifts that Christians enjoy he mentions first the Holy Spirit as the giver of these the different gifts (1 Cor 12:11). Yet this does not contradict the conviction that God is the ultimate originator and giver of all gifts who works in our world through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. God is present and active in the world through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. On account of his incarnation a personification of Jesus of Nazareth is clearly given. But this seems to be different with the Holy Spirit. He is more the extended arm of God and/or of Christ than a personified figure of the Trinity. This again would lead in the direction of an economic Trinity. Through the Holy Spirit God is active in the world in general, and in Christians in particular. As Paul emphasizes Christians enjoy the gifts of the Spirit and are expected to walk in the Spirit, meaning according to God's precepts. Contrary to the assertion of Althaus it is not "the confession of the eternal intrinsic Trinity" that secures the borders to any kind of pantheism, but it is the confession of Jesus the Christ, God's human face.²⁸ As Luther adamantly asserted though God is everywhere he is not to be sought there but only where he has shown himself, in Jesus Christ. The attempt to trace God prior to his salvation historical self-disclosure to arrive at some kind of primordial Trinity has no existential relevance and must be termed pure speculation. We should also remember Christian Link's insight that the doctrine of the Trinity could do without the metaphysical frame of the early church which was expressed with the words "substance, nature, and person." This would also go for the distinction between an intrinsic and an economic Trinity. The emphasis on the economic Trinity renders the charge of tritheism untenable. We can only know God concretely in an existential and not just a philosophical way because Jesus Christ, the Son, has disclosed God as our Father. And we can ascertain the ongoing activity of God in the world, the church, and in the faithful, since Jesus has promised the Holy Spirit as God's enlivening, discerning, and redemptive Spirit.

²⁸ Paul Althaus, *Die christliche Wahrheit*, 694.

In the interreligious dialogue the debate with Islam and Buddhism will not be one over the triune identity but whether Jesus, Mohammed, or Buddha can show us the way to the Father. But by starting with the Trinity we set out on the wrong foot because it obscures more than it explains. It puts the cart before the horse since it begins with that which may serve as a tenable conclusion. The Christian faith, however, started the other way around. It entered the scene proclaiming that salvation is in Christ alone. This proclamation is as valid today as it was at the beginning of the Christian story.

We dare not forget that the doctrine of the Trinity evolved only as an offspring of Christological reflection. From the beginning almost to the very end, the discussion during the first centuries was dominated by the quest for Christology: Who is the one whom we call Christ? Once it was clarified that he is indeed God, then the question had to be addressed of how the divine and the human "aspects" are related in him. Again we could assume that this was basically a speculative question. Yet salvation was at stake here too because the conviction soon emerged that if God had not really come down to us in Jesus Christ we could never ascend to him. Others, however, were more afraid that the divine might be too much dragged down into our sphere and thereby lose its salvific power, so they objected to the homoousios of Christ with God.

The unresolved Christological problems similar to those regarding the Trinity go right back to the New Testament, since the New Testament had neither a conceptually and intellectually developed Christology nor an actual doctrine of the Trinity. It was clear for the New Testament sources that Jesus Christ had been an actual human figure in whom God had been truly present. For reasons of adhering to a strict monotheism, Jesus is seldom referred to as God. Yet the early church had always considered Jesus to be God. Paul set the tone for the dominant strain of subsequent Christological reflection when he asserted that Jesus Christ "was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness" (Rom 1:3f.). Contained therein is an understanding of Christ's twofold status, both human and divine.

Christ being truly human and truly divine was then finally accepted as doctrine at the Council of Chalcedon (451) at which then also the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed resurfaced. It was concluded at Chalcedon that Christ is not a composite being but is of two natures, the human and the divine. After stating that Jesus is truly God and truly a human being, the council did not actually state what this new being was like, but decided to establish parameters or boundaries outside of which the unity could no longer be affirmed. Four negatives were set forth: "unconfused" (*asynchytos*) and "unaltered" (*atreptos*), which were safeguards against Appollinarian thought

that Christ is a human/ divine mixture; and "undivided" (*adiharetos*) and "unseparated" (*achoristos*), which were safeguards against Antiochian tendencies that the divine just dwelt in the human person of Christ. These four negatives plus the Western affirmation of truly God and truly a human being may have looked like a compromise.²⁹ It was indeed a compromise. The church finally admitted that while it must affirm that Jesus Christ was truly divine and truly human, it cannot positively assert how he could be such. It could only state, and so it did, how one should not talk about that unity.

With regard to the Trinity, that theological restraint did not take place. In speculative fashion one wanted to fathom the mystery of the Trinity. The result was that the biblical warrant was far exceeded and conclusions were reached which were never really satisfying to inquisitive minds. Perhaps in our present situation in which the Christian faith is challenged by a secular mindset and by the reawakening of the major world religions as hardly ever before, it would be good to show more restraint in Trinitarian reflections. Would it not be sufficient to state that we believe in one God, the creator and sustainer of everything that is, who showed his heart to us in Jesus the Christ, his human embodiment? Through Jesus' life and destiny God indicated that there is eternal life beyond this present one. This God is present in us and the world around us through his enlivening and sustaining Spirit which he mediates to us through his Son Jesus Christ.

It suffices that there is a unity of action of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, without the need to fathom the mysteries of the Trinity with regard to their exact mutual relations and their status over against each other. As the New Testament affirms, decisive is that God was and is in Christ for our salvation and that God is present through his Holy Spirit so that there is life.

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²⁹ See the reservations by Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus – God and Man*, trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988) 285, where he called the formulation "problematic," since it does not take the concrete unity of the historical human being Jesus as its point of departure, but rather the difference between the human and divine creaturely being.

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THE EUCHARISTIC CONTEXT OF PASTORAL RESPONSE TO CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN MARRIAGE, FAMILY, AND SEXUALITY

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ABSTRACT. Pastoral ministry in the Orthodox Church on matters of marriage, sexuality, and family must focus on helping parishioners embrace the full meaning of a “one flesh” union with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The “one flesh” relationship of marriage must be oriented through the blessing of the Church toward the eschatological fulfilment of the Kingdom of God. The connections of Eucharist and matrimony are so profound that pastoral ministry must guide parishioners to enter into only those marriages that may be blessed in the Church as signs of the communion of a man and a woman with Christ.

Keywords: Eastern Orthodox Ethics, Eastern Orthodox Moral Theology, Eucharistic Ethics, Marriage, Sexuality

In today’s climate of rapidly changing cultural standards about marriage, family, and sexuality, the Orthodox Church must respond to the attendant pastoral challenges in a fashion that fits coherently with the “right worship” and “right belief” of the Body of Christ. Otherwise, pastors and moralists will find themselves in the false position of underwriting stances and practices that fall short of bearing witness to the Church’s sublime vision of the “one flesh” union of matrimony as a sign of the salvation of the world. In this light, the celebration of the Eucharist provides a necessary context for undertaking pastoral response to contemporary challenges in marriage, family, and sexuality.

Contrary to those who would separate liturgy and life, St. Nicholas Cabasilas commented on the Eucharist that “its aim is the sanctification of the faithful.”¹ Likewise, the aim of the union of husband and wife is their

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¹ St. Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty, trans., (Crestwood, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2002), 25.

sanctification, their participation in the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. Even as the Church enters mystically into the eschatological reign in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, the married couple become participants in the heavenly banquet through their common life in Christ. In the marriage ceremony, they wear the crowns of the kingdom and drink wine from a common cup in way that is reminiscent of the Eucharist. Both holy mysteries enable human beings to find the fulfillment of their ancient vocation to become like God in holiness.

Themes of offering, sacrifice, blessing, and communion are intrinsic dimensions of both marriage and the Eucharist. They also manifest the fulfillment of basic human desires and needs for life and love. Bread and wine become nourishment for eternal life, while conjugal union becomes an entrance into the heavenly bridal chamber. Due to the physical dimensions of each practice, communicants and spouses share as whole persons in the restoration of their humanity as they direct their hearts for fulfillment in God. Since the “one flesh” relationship between husband and wife serves as a sign of the relationship between Christ and the Church, their union is to become nothing less than an icon of the salvation of the world. (Eph. 5: 31-32)

After describing how the “one flesh” union of marriage includes husband, wife, and child, St. John Chrysostom notes that “Our relationship to Christ is the same; we become one flesh with Him through communion...”² St. Nicholas Cabasilas also affirmed that, through the Eucharist and the other holy mysteries, “Christ comes into us and dwells in us, He is united to us and grows into one with us” such that we “become one flesh with Him.”³ These points of commonality reflect how the conjugal union of the couple is taken up into their communion with Christ in the Eucharist. This is how their “one flesh” union with one another becomes an entrance into the messianic banquet, for they are also “one flesh” with the Bridegroom. Hence, their embodied common life, which includes their children, is to become a radiant sign of the fulfillment of the relationship between man and woman. They wear together the crowns of the heavenly kingdom as they orient themselves together toward Paradise through the daily demands of living as a family.

The Church does not view this marital path as an extraordinary calling for a few exceptionally pious people, but as God’s intention for married couples in fulfillment of the ancient vocation to become like God in holiness. Their sanctification does not require escape from the limitations of the body or the practical realities of caring for children and maintaining a household.

² St. John Chrysostom, “Homily 20,” *On Marriage and Family Life*, Catherine P Roth and David Anderson, trans., (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1997), 51.

³ St. Nicholas Cabasilas, 60-61.

Christ enables every aspect of their common life to become radiant with the divine glory as they embrace ever more fully the implications of being “one flesh” with Him and with one another.

The Eucharist has played a prominent role in how the Church has blessed marriages across the centuries. At first, a marriage was blessed by the bishop when the couple communed together in the assembly. By the fourth century, there is evidence of couples being crowned in the eucharistic liturgy. A marriage rite separate from the celebration of the Eucharist developed in the ninth and tenth centuries in response to an imperial demand that only marriages solemnized in the Church would have legal standing. In this context, a non-eucharistic rite of marriage developed for those canonically prohibited from receiving Communion. The connection of marriage and Eucharist remained, however. A marriage rite in which “worthy” couples received the reserved Sacrament continued in some places until the fifteenth century, while the “unworthy” received simply a common cup of wine. These practices are clearly reminiscent of the Eucharistic liturgy, as are many other dimensions of the contemporary wedding service.⁴

Due to the intersection of Eucharist and marriage, pastoral challenges abound. Even as prayers of preparation to receive Communion stress the communicant’s unworthiness, spouses struggle to embrace the full implications of their union in God. They inevitably stumble in fulfilling their sublime calling. When adultery gravely wounds a marriage or when divorce ends it, the Church responds pastorally by helping the spouses heal through repentance. Exclusion from the Eucharist for a time is part of that process as a way of acknowledging that a break in marital communion is also a breach in communion with Christ. This practice gives spouses time to gain the spiritual strength necessary to approach the chalice with a clear conscience and a renewed commitment to live a life in communion with the Lord.

The Church’s blessing of a second or a third marriage is a merciful act of *economia* that enables those who have endured the brokenness of previous marriages, whether through divorce or widowhood, to bring another marital relationship into eucharistic union with Christ. Yet even with the penitential prayers of the rite for second marriages, the bridal couple wears the crowns of the Kingdom.⁵ Despite the Church’s high vision of marriage, there is no perfectionism in the sense of condemning those who have fallen short of embracing the full implications of the “one flesh” union. Despite their personal

⁴ See Fr. John Meyendorff, *Marriage: An Orthodox Perspective* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1984), 20-29; and Fr. John Chryssavgis, *Love, Sexuality, and the Sacrament of Marriage* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2005), 45ff.

⁵ Meyendorff, 44-47.

brokenness, man and woman may still make their common life an entrance in to the heavenly banquet. Their union with God in holiness does not require denigration of the physical dimensions of their union with one another, as shown by the prayers for fertility in the wedding service. Every aspect of their communion as persons is to serve as an icon of the fulfillment of God's gracious purposes for the creation.

A common pastoral challenge today concerns parishioners who engage in sexual intimacy without being married. Sex for the unmarried typically occurs without the intention of permanence and inevitably lacks the sanctifying context of marriage with its Eucharistic and eschatological characteristics. Consequently, such relationships stand in profound tension with the calling to "one flesh" communion with Christ, the spouse, and one's children. Those who repent of sexual intimacy apart from marriage require spiritual therapy in order to help them gain the strength to reorient their desires for intimate union toward God as they struggle to reserve sexual expression for the blessed state of marriage. Their healing may include exclusion from the Eucharist for a time as a sign of the need for recovery from the damage done to one's communion with Christ through sexual activity in a context of gratifying passions as opposed to pursuing sanctification together with a spouse in wearing the crowns of the Kingdom.

In such situations, some parishioners will end their relationships, while others will begin the process of preparing to enter into marriage. Some clergy instruct cohabitating couples to cease living together for a time before blessing their marriages, while others advise only a period of sexual abstinence. Such circumstances present opportunities for pastors to guide couples in confession, prayer, fasting, and other spiritual disciplines for the healing of their passions as they reorient their love and desire toward purification and fulfillment in God. Through such therapeutic processes, they may gain the spiritual health to offer themselves to the Lord and one another in marriage as a sign of the Kingdom.

More difficult pastoral situations arise in circumstances in which parishioners intend a permanent relationship that will not be blessed by the Church, including situations in which they have contracted a civil marriage. In addition to familiar impediments such as the number of previous marriages or differences in religious affiliation between the spouses, today we face the challenges posed by members of the same sex who are civilly married or who cohabitate with the intention of permanence. What such cases have in common is the reality of parishioners in marriages or other relationships that cannot be not blessed by the Church and which exclude them from full participation in its life. For example, His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America issued a directive on October

29, 2015, that Orthodox who marry outside the Church “voluntarily separate” themselves and may not receive Communion, serve as sponsors at baptisms, or hold any parish office. His Eminence notes that “this applies in all cases,” whether marriage to persons of the same or the opposite sex.⁶ This directive highlights the intrinsic connections between marriage and reception of the Eucharist as enacting “one flesh” unions. They cannot be separated with theological integrity.

Parishioners in some civil marriages may have their marriages blessed in the Church and return to the Eucharist. Without that blessing, however, their marriages are not oriented to the Kingdom through crowning, the common cup, or other dimensions of the service that make marriage an entrance to the messianic banquet. The spouses’ exclusion from the chalice reflects that their unions remain as water not turned into wine, for their “one flesh” union has not been brought into communion with Christ.⁷

There is great difficulty today in providing pastoral care to persons in civil marriages and other relationships that cannot be blessed in the Church, such as those involving persons of the same sex. In light of ongoing changes in sexual mores, alternative marital and familial relationships are now quite public, often having the legal recognition of civil marriage and being championed by activists and affirmed by popular culture. Whether heterosexual or homosexual, parishioners in these circumstances may well have children and comprise a family together with their spouse or partner. Their relationships may be characterized by mutual fidelity and sacrificial commitment to children and other family members. It is one thing to guide a parishioner who struggles, in ways not known publically, with desires, actions, and relationships that fall short of the canonical standards of the Church in sexuality or other areas. It is quite different, however, to respond pastorally to a parishioner who is in a legally sanctioned marriage that cannot be blessed in the Church for whatever reason, especially in light of hierarchal directives that set definite boundaries, for example, concerning reception of the Eucharist.

In this context, pastors must be proactive in helping parishioners understand and accept the importance of entering only into those marriages that may be oriented toward the Kingdom through the blessing of the Church.

⁶ “Metropolitan Joseph’s Archpastoral Directive on So-called ‘Same-Sex Marriage,’” accessed June 2, 2017, <http://antiochian.org/metropolitan-josephs-archiepiscopal-directive-so-called-same-sex-marriage>.

⁷ See Fr. Philip LeMasters, *Toward a Eucharistic Vision of Church, Family, Marriage and Sex* (Minneapolis, MN: Light & Life Publishing Co., 2004), 79 ff. for “An Orthodox Response to ‘Same-Sex Unions.’”

At stake is the basic Christian vocation to bring every dimension of their interpersonal relationships into communion with Christ, which will require refusing civil marriages and other intimate relationships that would exclude them from the Eucharist. The clergy should patiently encourage those who remain in relationships that separate them from the chalice to pursue the healing of their souls as fully as they presently have the strength to do. In “The Sacrament of Marriage and Its Impediments,” the Council of Crete taught that “The Church exerts all possible pastoral efforts to help her members who enter into... [same-sex unions or any other form of cohabitation] understand the true meaning of repentance and love as blessed by the Church.”⁸

Repudiating dimensions of relationships that exclude people from the Eucharist is a necessary step for reintegration into full participation in the Body of Christ. Sexual intimacy outside of a marriage blessed in the Church amounts to a separation of the “one flesh” relationship with a spouse from the “one flesh” relationship with Christ in the Eucharist. Likewise, contracting a civil marriage that cannot be blessed by the Church represents a refusal to offer crucial dimensions of one’s life to the Lord and impairs one’s communion with Him.

The goal of pastoral ministry is to equip the members of the Body of Christ to enter fully into the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. The communion of husband and wife with Christ in the Divine Liturgy should manifest His blessing upon their conjugal union as a sign of their vocation to enter the heavenly Bridal Chamber. Priests should guide their parishioners to pursue the healing of their souls in a way that accords with the profound intersections of marriage and Eucharist in the Orthodox Church. Otherwise, they risk underwriting an unhealthy separation between the spouses’ union with one another and with Jesus Christ. Such a separation amounts to a refusal to integrate liturgy and life.

Those who commune with the Lord in His great Self-offering in the Eucharist must offer themselves, in every dimension of their lives, for ever greater union with Him in holiness. The One Who created us in His image and likeness as male and female, and Who often used the wedding feast as a sign of the Kingdom, calls the members of His Body to become “one flesh” with Him through reception of the Eucharist. In order to do so, Christians must place the “one flesh” relationship of marriage within the larger context of the vocation to become more fully united with Christ. Pastoral ministry worthy of the name will work toward that end.

⁸ “The Sacrament of Marriage and Its Impediments,” *Official Documents of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church*, 1/10, accessed June 2, 2017, <https://www.holycouncil.org/-/marriage>.

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THE SPIRIT MOVING OVER THE GREAT DEEP: THE WORLD'S THIRSTS, OUR RESPONSE

STEPHEN B. BEVANS*

ABSTRACT. My reflection is about the Holy Spirit, about that Spirit of gentleness and restlessness who moves over the waters of the Great Deep, stirring up the thirsts of the world, and calling us to join her, as Christians and religious, to slake those thirsts. A first part will reflect on the Spirit who stirs up those thirsts. A second part will outline several of those thirsts. A third part will reflect on how the Spirit calls Christians to join her mission of slaking those thirsts, and a fourth and final part will suggest that we as religious women and men can play a particular part in that thirst-slaking mission of the Spirit.

Keywords: Holy Spirit, Christian Spirituality, Mission of the Church, Mission of the Spirit, Missiology

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling
and free*

*Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind, wind
on the sea*

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
Then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep
And over the aeons you called to each thing
Wake up from your slumber and rise on your wings

You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
And you goaded your people with a law and a land
And when they were blinded with their idols and lies
Then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes

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Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free

Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind, wind on the sea

You sang in a stable, you cried on a hill;
Then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still,
And down in the city, you called once again,
When you blew through your people on the rush of the wind

You call from tomorrow; you break ancient schemes;
From the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams;
Our women see visions, our men clear their eyes;
With bold new decisions your people arise

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free

Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.¹

The Thirst-Giving Spirit

We live, as Karl Rahner has insisted, in a world of grace.² From the very first moment of creation—what scientists now call the Big Bang—grace has been present in the world through the inspiring, cajoling, persuading power of the Spirit, moving over the waters of the Great Deep, coaxing “up the mountains from the valleys of sleep,” calling each thing to “wake from your slumber and rise on your wings.” The Spirit has been actively present in the whole of history, from the formation of the gases and elements and molecules, to the emergence of life in all its forms, to the gropings of human beings to express their intimations of her presence in various religions. She has been actively present, however, as Elizabeth Johnson puts it, not as a monarch, but as a lover. “... the Spirit, more mobile than any motion, blows throughout the world with

¹ James K. Manley, “Spirit of Gentleness,” found at http://southwood.typepad.com/southwoodlutheran/2007/05/spirit_of_gentl.html.

² See the essays in Leo J. O’Donovan, ed., *A World of Grace: An Introduction to the Themes and Foundations of Karl Rahner’s Theology* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1995 [originally published in 1980]).

compassionate love that grants nature its own creativity and humans their own freedom, all the while companionship through the terror of history toward a new future.”³

The Spirit was fully present in Jesus of Nazareth, whom Kathryn Tanner calls “the key to how the Spirit works.”⁴ From the moment of his baptism in the Jordan, she poured herself on him like anointing oil, to bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, healing to the blind, and mercy to sinners (see Lk 4:18-19). Mark Oakley speaks of Jesus as “God’s body language.”⁵ It might be just as appropriate to speak of him as the *Spirit’s* body language as well. The Spirit, the “*fons vivus*,” the “living fountain” from the Great Deep that the *Veni, Creator Spiritus* alludes to, was poured forth on Jesus’ disciples “on the rush of the wind,” and has been with us ever since.

That same active, cajoling, persuading, healing presence at the first nanosecond of creation is with us now. As Elizabeth Johnson so beautifully expresses it, “wherever we encounter the world and ourselves as held by, open to, gifted by, mourning the absence of, or yearning for something ineffably more than immediately appears, whether that ‘more’ be mediated by beauty and joy or in contrast to powers that crush, there the experience of the Spirit transpires.”⁶ It is in these experiences that we are drawn to the “*fons vivus*” that is the Spirit, the “*fons vivus*” that awakens our thirst. Mary Oliver articulates this experience wonderfully in her poem entitled “Thirst”:

Another morning and I
wake with thirst
for the goodness I do
not have. I walk
out to the pond and all
the way God has
given us such beautiful
lessons. Oh Lord,
I was never a quick
scholar but sulked and hunched over my
books past the

³ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 159.

⁴ Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*, 158, quoting Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 275.

⁵ Mark Oakley, *The Collage of God*, Second Edition (Norwich, UK: Canterbury Press, 2012), 25, 27.

⁶ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 124-25.

hour and bell; grant
me, in your
mercy, a little more
time. Love for the
earth and love for you
are having such a
long conversation in my
heart. Who
knows what will finally
happen or
where I will be sent, yet
already I have
given a great many
Things away, expect
ing to be told to pack
nothing, except the
prayers which, with this
thirst, I am
slowly learning.⁷

Thirst is a grace. It is evidence of that “yearning for something more” that is the sign of the presence of God’s Spirit. Karl Rahner calls this the “supernatural existential”—that longing for Mystery that is “naturally” ours by grace.⁸ Mark Oakley describes the Spirit “as both ‘Comforter’ and ‘Disturber.’ It is the same God,” he writes, “who instills peace and energy who also instills from time to time a sense of loss and the consequent renewed desire to seek [God’s] face, even in the deepest shadows. Graceful irritants are placed in the soul in order to nurture its growth.”⁹ We live in a world of grace, a world that is graced with deep thirsts that only the Spirit, the “*fons vivus*,” only the Christ, the “living water” (see Jn 7:39) who gives the Spirit, can help us recognize and help us quench.

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind on the sea*

⁷ Mary Oliver, “Thirst,” in *Thirst* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 69-70.

⁸ See, for example, Karl Rahner, “On the Relationship between Nature and Grace,” *Theological Investigations* 1 (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961), 297-317.

⁹ Oakley, *The Collage of God*, 11.

The Thirsts of the World

What are these thirsts that God's Holy Spirit gives to the world through grace? There are many, and we can only reflect on a few in this section. Here I would like to propose only four thirsts that arise out of the Great Deep over which the Spirit moves, and I can only reflect on them briefly and suggestively. They are the thirst for the water of integrity, the thirst for the wine of hope, the thirst for the nectar of justice, and the thirst for the elixir of beauty.

The Water of Integrity

All day I face the barren waste
Without the taste of water—cool water.
Old Dan and I with throats burned dry
And throats that cry for water—
Cool, clear water.

These are the opening words of a famous cowboy song, "Cool Water," made popular in the 1940s and '50s by the legendary Sons of the Pioneers and Marty Robins. There's nothing quite like cool, clear water. Janet reminisced yesterday about the mountain springs above Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and how that cool—maybe even cold—clear water slaked her thirst. I remember hiking in the mountains with friends in Austria and holding out a glass jar—it had to be glass, not plastic!—under a waterfall and drinking the most wonderful water I had ever tasted.

Cool, clear, plain old water. In a world filled with the lack of integrity, authenticity, honesty—and filled with what Jesuit leader Adolfo Nicolas names "global superficiality"¹⁰—this is the drink we crave to slake our thirsts. How much better our world would be if we had trustworthy politicians, honest women and men engaged in business, church leaders of real holiness and authenticity, communications media that uphold the values of truth. Instead we are often confronted with regimes like those in Syria or South Sudan, heads of greedy multinational corporations, prelates who prefer watered silk trains and palatial apartments to simple, apostolic living, or pundits who twist and hide the truth on talk shows and blogs. In these days we are appalled at the corruption in the New York State prison system—and probably those in many other states besides, or by remarks of presidential candidates regarding Latino immigration in our country. In May I was in Australia, and the church there is reeling—like

¹⁰ Adolfo Nicolas, "Depth, Creativity, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit Higher Education Today," <http://www.scu.edu/scm/winter2010/shapingthefuture.cfm>.

our own US church and the Irish church from years of sexual abuse by clergy and religious. Pope Paul VI's words, echoed by Pope Francis as well, ring so true: these days people "thirst for authenticity"; they do not listen to teachers, but to witnesses, and if they listen to teachers at all it is because they are witnesses.¹¹ This is why leaders and figures of transparency are so refreshing and important to people today: women and men like Nobel Peace Prize winners Malala Yousafzai, Aung San Suu Kyi, and Nelson Mandela; holy people like Oscar Romero, Helder Camara, and Thea Bowman; contemporary prophets like Sandra Schneiders and Joan Chittister; or church leaders like Joe Tobin, Luis Antonio Tagle, or Pope Francis. These men and women have been raised up by the Spirit to help us recognize our deep thirsts. These women and men offer long drinks of the cool, clear water of authenticity, the authenticity for which the world thirsts.

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The Wine of Hope

Those TV images from Cairo's square,
a friend who waits for mortal word,
curbside-piled belongings of eviction,
spiritual biographies so vulnerable,
news of trafficking for sex and sweat,
unanswered notes a puzzlement,
wayside bombs and robot drones,
and—no symbol now—the waning polar ice.

Holding hands, we risk our way across
to cheer and weep, protest and mourn
as, wary of each revelation of the heart,
we balance on the thin tensility of hope.¹²

¹¹ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN), http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html, 68, 41; see Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG), http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#_ftn118, 150.

¹² Cecily Jones, SL, "Thin Ice on Mary's Lake, February, 2011," in *Mostly for Promise. Poems by Cecily Jones, SL* (Nerinx, KY: Hardin Creek Press, 2013), 9. See the poem as published in ed. Margaret Cain McCarthy and Mary Ann Zollmann, *Power of Sisterhood: Women Religious Tell the Story of the Apostolic Visitation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2014), 166.

Cecily Jones's poem chronicles only a few of the horrors and terrors of our time, but they are enough to tempt us to real despair. If we add what has been going on in the church, especially its leaders' treatment of US women religious in the last decade, that despair becomes even darker. As Barbara Blesse has written, the turmoil and confusion of our time is like a great tsunami, often so systemic and all-encompassing that we are overwhelmed by its power¹³. Despair, writes Ruth Gendler in *The Book of Qualities*,

is overworked and overwhelmed. She has a heart condition. In her dreams the war is everywhere. She is not lying or exaggerating. Still, it is difficult to be around her. There is no arguing with her. She is persuasive, eloquent, and undeniably well-informed. If you attempt to change her mind, you will come away agreeing with her. She has stopped listening to music.

She has also probably stopped drinking wine. But in the midst of despair, on that thin ice that Cecily Jones writes of in her poem, the Spirit is blowing over the great deep and offering us the wine of hope to awaken and quench our thirst. This is the wine that calms our nerves and gives us the anger and courage, as St. Augustine would say,¹⁴ to stand together "on the thin tensility of hope." It is the wine that helps us recognize the truth of the Mayan text: "they can cut all the flowers but they cannot hold back spring." María Elena Martínez writes that these words "teach us to sing in the darkness. When all the sadness that is part of life feels so overpowering, we can take in simple joys, we can claim tenderness, and bask in the warmth of the sun."¹⁵

The wine of hope that the Spirit offers us is, of course, dangerous. If we drink too much of it we might become tipsy with that dangerous counterfeit of hope: optimism. Hope demands discipline, and as I have said, anger and courage. It has a "thin tensility." As Regina Bechle writes,

You will need a sturdy heart,
a torch to fire the gloom
as the way plunges deeper

¹³ Barbara Blesse, "Imagining Possibilities and Unearthing Options," *The Occasional Papers. Leadership Conference of Women Religious* 44, 2 (Summer, 2015): 30.

¹⁴ The phrase attributed to Augustine is that hope has two beautiful daughters, anger and courage. See Addie Lorraine Walker, "Theological Reflection on the Visitation: 'Were Not Our Hearts Burning within Us?'" in ed. McCarthy and Zollman, *The Power of Sisterhood*, 162.

¹⁵ María Elena Martínez, "Living from the Great Deep Is Our Vocation," *The Occasional Papers*: 15.

Thirst for the wine of hope. This is what the Spirit offers us in this difficult, dark time that tempts us to despair.

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind on the sea*

The Nectar of Justice

O God, you call for justice, for goodness, never greed!
You seek a world of fairness, where all have what they need—
Where all have food and water, and homes in which to thrive
Where all have hope and laughter, and joy to be alive!¹⁶

In 1976, famed preacher and theologian Walter Burghardt wrote a small book entitled *Seven Hungers of the Human Family* in connection with the International Eucharistic Congress that was held that year in Philadelphia in that year.¹⁷ One of the hungers on which he reflected was the hunger for freedom and justice, and this is certainly one of the *thirsts* of the world as well: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice” (Mt 5:6).

Burghardt begins his essay on justice by asking whether there really is “oppression, slavery, injustice in the world,” and answers the question, saying that “the answer stares you in the face, from the pages of history and from the front page of each day’s newspaper.”¹⁸ He wrote those lines forty years ago, but they are as true today as they were then.

Last October I heard a talk by former Anglican Archbishop of New Zealand, David Moxon, who pointed out that there are currently twenty-nine million slaves—victims of human trafficking—in the world. This past year here in the United States we have realized that racism still lurks in our nation, as the killings in Ferguson, Baltimore, and Charleston have revealed. We all know the sad history of women’s rights in our world. I mentioned a few minutes ago Mustafa Yousafzai, the girl who had been shot for her advocacy of schools for girls in Pakistan. And that struggle for equality goes on today as well in our church, to which all of us in this room can sadly attest. Millions of women, men, and children have been displaced in their own countries or forced to migrate to

¹⁶ Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, “Oh God, You Call for Justice,” <https://sojo.net/articles/new-hymn-justice>.

¹⁷ Walter J. Burghardt, *Seven Hungers of the Human Family* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1976).

¹⁸ Burghardt, *Seven Hungers*, 17.

other lands. We read about or see on TV thousands dying in our Southwestern deserts, in the Mediterranean Sea, or in the Indian Ocean west and north of Australia. Over the Fourth of July weekend in Chicago there were over forty shootings, one of which was the fatal shooting of a seven-year-old boy. One of our temptations to despair, as Cecily Jones points out in her poem, is the immense crisis of the earth, "our common home," as Pope Francis puts it so powerfully in "Laudato Si'."¹⁹

The Holy Spirit, however, is active in this unjust world, calling forth a thirst within women and men that can only be met by the nectar of justice. Nectar is the drink of the gods in Greek mythology. The thirst for the nectar of justice is the thirst to work with God's Spirit in bringing about a world of justice and freedom, of equality and participation, of mutuality and liberation. It is a thirst that recognizes that "there is another world, but it is in this one,"²⁰ or as Greg Boyle expresses it powerfully, God's "ways are not our ways, but they sure could be."²¹ This is the thirst that spurs on those who mourn those who have died in crossing the Arizona desert; those who protest yearly at Fort Benning, Georgia; those who attend the annual conferences of Call to Action. This is the thirst of our prophets like Martin Luther King and Dorothy Day. They all thirst for the nectar of justice.

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The Elixir of Beauty

The world is charged with the grandeur of God
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade, bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

¹⁹ Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (LS), http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html, especially 17-61.

²⁰ Paul Eluard, quoted in Mark Oakley, *The Collage of God*, 85.

²¹ Gregory Boyle, *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*, (New York: Free Press, 2010), 155.

And for all this nature is never spent
 There lives the dearest freshness deep down things
And though the last lights off the black West went
 Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.²²

Gerard Manley Hopkins's famous poem speaks of beauty at the heart of God's creation—shining like light from shook foil, oozing forth like the ooze of oil crushed. But human beings have not respected this beauty. All is seared, bleared, smeared, and smudged by humanity's smell—or, in Pope Francis's powerful words, "the earth, our home, is beginning to look like an immense pile of filth."²³ And yet, despite this, Hopkins says, that beauty is never extinguished, nature is never spent—"there lives the dearest freshness deep down things." This is "because the Holy Ghost over the bent / world broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings." The Spirit is over the world, in the world, offering thirsty souls the delicate elixir of beauty.

As Mary Lou Kownacki writes, "even the bleakest life needs the sustaining hope of beauty." The thirst for beauty is one of the great thirsts of the world because "beauty uncovers the lie of violence, despair, and lack of hope and helps us imagine a world beyond our present reality."²⁴ We see this thirst being quenched by the elixir of beauty in projects of public art in ghettos and slums throughout the world, small oases of beauty in deserts of ugliness.²⁵ I remember breaking down in tears—on two separate occasions—when I saw the report on "60 Minutes" of how Gustavo Dudamel quenched the thirst for beauty of poor children in Venezuela as conductor of the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra in that country. Mary Lou Kownacki writes about how the Benedictine community of Erie sponsored a Poetry Park and an Art House in an area of the city "of concentrated poverty, drugs, violence, and abandoned buildings," and insists that "beauty in the lives of the poor is as important as bread on their tables."²⁶

²² Gerard Manley Hopkins, "God's Grandeur," *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Fourth Edition, ed. W. H. Garner and N. H. McKenzie (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 66.

²³ Pope Francis, LS, 21.

²⁴ Mary Lou Kownacki, "Overcoming Blight with Beauty: How One Community Is Helping Transform a City through the Arts," *The Occasional Papers*: 10.

²⁵ See, for example, Maureen H. O'Connell, *If These Walls Could Talk: Community Muralism and the Beauty of Justice* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2012); Sally Williams, "Ghetto Fabulous: The Murals of Haas and Hahn," <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-features/9899749/Ghetto-fabulous-the-murals-of-Haas-and-Hahn.html>.

²⁶ Kownacki, "Overcoming Blight with Beauty": 10, 11.

To allude to a famous quote of Dostoyevsky, it is drinking deeply from the delicate elixir of beauty that will save the world.²⁷

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Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind on the sea*

The Church and the Thirsts of the World

“No people are devoid of the inspiration of the Spirit,” writes Elizabeth Johnson.²⁸ All peoples of all times have been gifted with the thirst of the water of integrity, the wine of hope, the nectar of justice, and the elixir of beauty, and with many more thirsts about which time and space has not allowed me to reflect here: thirsts for love and relationship, for truth, for forgiveness and mercy, for deep understanding, for lasting peace. The Spirit, as *Gaudium et Spes* insists, in ways known only to the triune God finds ways of leading every woman and man—and indeed every creature into the Paschal Mystery.²⁹

However, through the amazing grace of God, some women and men, disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, have been anointed by the Spirit in a concrete and sacramental way to share and continue Jesus’ mission—begun by the Spirit from the first moment of time—of slaking the thirsts of the world. They have been gathered and sent as God’s Church—God’s holy People, the prolongation of Christ’s body, the Temple of the Spirit—as the sacrament of the thirst-giving and thirst-quenching mission of the Spirit. This church does not *have* a mission; God’s mission of thirst-giving and thirst-quenching has a church.

In order to live this mission worthily, the church, like the God in whose mission it participates, practices what Roger Schroeder and I have termed “Prophetic Dialogue,”³⁰ an openness in contemplation to discover the thirsts of the world, and a determination in humility to work for the slaking of those thirsts. It does this in an embrace of the world and every context, taking off its shoes before the Spirit’s presence that has preceded it. It does this by “speaking against,” in its wordless witness that unmasks the lie of the “globalization of superficiality” and any unjust exclusion, and in its words that speaks truth to

²⁷ The quotation is from Dostoyevsky’s *The Idiot*. It is quoted by Mary Lou Kownacki, “Overcoming Blight with Beauty”: 11.

²⁸ Johnson, *She Who Is*, 139.

²⁹ Vatican Council II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (GS), http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html, 22.

³⁰ See, for example, Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011).

power and opposes all injustice. It does this by “speaking forth” the good news of the gospel in challenging and consoling words that result from honest efforts of contextualizing its truth; by speaking a word of hope in a world that is so tempted to despair and meaninglessness. It does this finally by embodying the joy and vitality of the gospel in its community life, and by being a community, as Pope Francis has put it beautifully, with open doors—a mother with an open heart, the house of the father of the prodigal son.³¹

Years ago Korean Cardinal Stephen Kim wrote that “only the Church which serves the cause of [the poor, the suffering, the oppressed] is the true Church of Christ.”³² It can equally be said that the only true church of Christ is the church that strives for integrity, that offers hope, and that practices and cherishes beauty. And so the church needs constantly to pray:

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Religious Women and Men within the Church, and the Thirsts of the World

Within this communion-in-mission that is the church are women and men who live in and minister out of communities of consecrated and apostolic life. One of the main ministries of such women and men—and, historically, I believe, particularly women—is “to make interventions in the life of the church so that it will be reminded of its mission to live out the following of Christ.”³³

As such, this ministry is prophetic, a ministry “in obedience to the Holy Spirit,” “invariably in tension with the prevailing institutional reality.”³⁴ Prophetic ministry, however, is more than this. It is a ministry that articulates and demonstrates hope, and a ministry that articulates and demonstrates the full humanity and vitality that living the gospel bestows. Prophetic ministry is intertwined with the ministry of dialogue, and so deeply cherishes every culture and people, and every aspect of creations astounding mystery and beauty. Both dialogue and prophecy are grounded in lives of prayer and contemplation, and religious women and men are particularly dedicated to practices that foster a prayerful and contemplative approach to Christian life.

³¹ EG, 46-49.

³² Quoted in Burghardt, *Seven Hungers*, 19-20.

³³ Marcia Allen, “Living It Twice: Sources of Support and Inspiration,” in ed. McCarthy and Zollman, *Power of Sisterhood*, 130. This quotation refers to the work of Johannes Baptist Metz and subsequently references that of Sandra Schneiders.

³⁴ Allen, “Living It Twice,” 131.

As religious engage in all these practices of Prophetic Dialogue, they work with the Spirit in stirring up the thirsts and offering quenching water, wine, nectar, and elixir to the entire People of God at the same time. This is “ministerial religious life,”³⁵ as Sandra Schneiders names it. It is to enhance their grace-filled ministry that religious women and men pray:

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Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir [us] from placidness, wind on the sea*

Conclusion

Naturally I could say much more, but let me briefly conclude by quoting and slightly adapting a stanza of a wonderful hymn written by Benedictine sister Delores Dufner, a hymn that I first heard at the funeral of a dear friend of mine, Kathleen Sullivan Stewart:

Pulsing Spirit, rippling river, source of mercy’s tender might,
Gentle power, humble glory, subtle, ever dancing light:
Healing wisdom in us flowing, Now reveal our human worth.
Play beneath our muddied waters;
Come, renew and quench our thirsts.³⁶

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³⁶ Adapted from Delores Dufner, “Pulsing Spirit.” The original text is found at <http://www.scu.edu/scm/winter2010/shapingthefuture.cfm>.

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THE ANAPHORAS OF MAR THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA IN THE EAST SYRIAC RITE AND OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM IN THE BYZANTINE CHURCH – STRUCTURE AND THEOLOGY: COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT. The Liturgy (Mass) is the very life of the Church and its way of existing. In the core of the Liturgy there is the Anaphora, specific to each rite. Regarding the East Syriac Church, one mainly knows three important anaphoras – of Mar Addai and Mari, of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Mar Nestorius. This paper is focused on the Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia in the East Syriac rite, analysed in parallel with that of St. John Chrysostom, the most used anaphora in the Byzantine Tradition. Both of the authors are significant representatives of the Theological School of Antioch. This subject was scarcely analysed by the contemporary scholars and it gets a plus of importance in my case for accompanies an on-going process of translating the Syriac text of Theodore's anaphora into Romanian, for the benefit of the Romanian theologians. The paper will be divided into two sections – the first one colligated to the authorship of the two anaphoras, and the second, focused on their structure and theology. Concrete conclusions regarding the identification of some liturgical-theological constants in both the anaphoras will end my research.

Keywords: Anaphora of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Anaphora of John Chrysostom, liturgical theology, epiclesis, Theological School of Antioch.

Theodore of Mopsuestia's and John Chrysostom's Anaphoras. Premises

The most well-known and used liturgy in the Byzantine Church is the so-called liturgy 'of St John Chrysostom'. This liturgy got its name from the Anaphora attributed¹ to St John (Chr), bishop of Constantinople (died 407), one

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¹ The oldest manuscript of the anaphora dates from the 8th century, 'Barberini Gr. 336'. For the text edition see S. Parenti – E. Velkovska, *L'Euclologio Barberini Gr. 336*, (Roma: Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae"/ Subsidia 80, Ed. Liturgiche, 1995), 24-45.

of the most prolific patristic authors. What is interesting regarding this text is its Syriac-Antiochene origin and the connection with the Anaphora 'of the Apostles' (AP), celebrated at Antioch. Supposedly, John Chrysostom knew this Anaphora and celebrated it as a priest in Antioch and later, as bishop of Constantinople, he introduced it into the cult of the city². From the existing studies dedicated to this subject, one can claim that Chrysostom's Anaphora is not simply a translation of the Antiochene Greek Anaphora of the Apostles, but rather its development, with different contextual dogmatic additions, done either by Chrysostom himself or by another author who was familiarised with his theology.

The second author, Theodore of Mopsuestia, was also an exponent of the Antiochene School. While studying rhetoric under the pagan sophist Libanius of Antioch, John Chrysostom was his fellow student. In 381, Theodore was ordained priest of the Church of Antioch and 11 years later he was named bishop of Mopsuestia in the south of Caesarea, place of St Basil. Leontius of Byzantium, in his attack against Theodore, makes reference to two anaphoras – of Basil and of the Apostles. He does not mention the existence of Chrysostom's anaphora³, but criticizes the occurrence of a new heretical one – that of Theodore of Mopsuestia⁴. So, Theodore must have known the Anaphora of Basil and other Antiochene anaphoral texts, including that of the Apostles.

Regarding the question of authorship, we learn from the title of some manuscripts that it was translated from Greek by Mar Aba Catholicos, with the assistance of Mar Thoma, the Doctor of Edessa⁵. It was later that Patriarch Mar Iso'yahb III established the season of its use from the first Sunday of the Annunciation to the Sunday of Hosannas. And yet, the majority of scholars, despite the numerous convergences between Theodore's writings and the liturgical text, advance the idea that AT is the result of the compilation of different sources (including AP and Chr⁶), and, among these, the liturgical text

² The Antioch-Constantinople relationship was strongly present throughout history. For instance, the patriarchs of Constantinople during the 4-5th century were of Antiochene origin.

³ G. Wagner explains this in the sense that he speaks about the rite in the region of Mopesuestia and not Constantinople/ *Der Ursprung der Chrysostomusliturgie* (Münster Westfalen: Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen, 59, 1973), 7.

⁴ *Adversus Nestorianos et Eutychianos* III.19, PG 86.1: 1386C; for details see *Der Ursprung der Chrysostomuskirurgie*, 7-10; discussion mentioned also by Taft R., "The Authenticity of the Chrysostom Anaphora Revisited. Determining the Authorship of Liturgical Texts by Computer", *OCP* 66 (1990), 11-13.

⁵ J. Vadakkal, *The East Syrian Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia: A Critical Edition, English Translation and Study* (AT), (Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies India Publications, 1989), 77.

⁶ Ibn al Tayyib (11th century) mentions the existence of an Anaphora of Chrysostom used in the East Syriac Church/ W. Hoenerbach – O. Spies (eds.), *Ibn at-Taiyib. Fiqh an-Nasrâniya, Das Recht der Christenheit*, CSCO 167-168/ 18-19 (Louvain, 1957), 93.

attributed to him⁷. As its existing manuscripts are all Syriac and one may also find typical linguistic features, the scholars seem to agree that it is a Syriac composition, with the Theodorian theology in it. This anaphora is one of the three used in the East Syriac liturgy.

Structure and theology

Regarding the aspect of methodology, I will mostly use the *structural* and *thematic* approach in my study, followed by the *verbal one* (textual similarities). If the structural approach seeks to identify the distribution and relocation of the material within the text of one anaphora which does not immediately correspond to the text of the other, the thematic one, in consequence, envisages the identification of different themes present in the texts, again in correspondence. These two approaches appear to be complementary, from my viewpoint. Finally, the third method, which involves an exact word-for-word assessment of the texts, will enable me to make a more complete analyse.

The anaphora will be divided into seven structural sections: prayer of acceptance of the gifts, preface dialogue, ante-Sanctus prayer and Sanctus, post-Sanctus prayer, institution narrative and anamnesis, epiclesis and intercessions⁸.

a. *Prayer of acceptance of the gifts*. Structurally speaking, one may identify content similarities in the texts. Despite the different language involved, the theme and scope of the prayer are similarly expressed: even we (I) *are unworthy* (ܐܘܢ ܗܡܢ) / (ἀχρεῖον), *we dare to celebrate* the mysteries by means of the Holy Spirit's presence and the manifestation of the divine mercy: *fill us with the grace of the Holy Spirit, so that when we stand before you with a pure conscience and offer you this living, holy, rational, acceptable and bloodless*

⁷ A special role in this discussion is occupied by Theodore's commentary on the Eucharist, where one may find similarities with AT. The commentary reflects the Antiochene liturgy at the end of the 4th century. See A. Mingana (ed.), *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* (Cambridge, 1933), Homilies XV-XVI. There one may not find a liturgical order, but a commentary on different liturgical moments. Also Narsai (*Homilies of the Mysteries*, ed. by A. Mingana, *Narsai doctoris syri homiliae et carmina* I, Mosul, 1905, 284f) and Cyrus of Edessa (*Explanation of the Pascha*, ed. by F. Macomber, *Six Explanations of the liturgical feasts by Cyrus of Edessa*, CSCO 355-6/ 155-6, 57/ 49) give a liturgical prayer attributed to Theodore, and yet, not the exact text.

⁸ For the AT, J. Vadakkal, *The East Syrian Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuesti* (ft 5), and for Chr, Parenti, E S.-Velkovska E., *L'Euclologio Barberini* (ft 1).

sacrifice, we may find **grace** and **mercies** before you (AT)/ *Enable me by the power of Your Holy Spirit so that, vested with the grace of priesthood, I may stand before Your holy Table and celebrate the mystery of Your holy and pure Body and Your precious Blood* (Chr). In both situations, this prayer is recited while being inclined⁹. Reflecting the classic structure, the ritual of embracing and giving peace one to another is present¹⁰ in both orders.

b. The preface dialogue begins in both cases with the same archaic Pauline salutation (2 Cor. 13:13). An interesting difference is observed in the answer of the people – *Let our mind*¹¹/ $\kappa\lambda\iota\nu\alpha$ *be in the upwards* (AT)/ *Let us lift up our hearts*/ καρδιάς (Chr). In the AT one may find some specific additions, while trying to describe God in biblical terms, ‘of Abraham, Isaac and Israel’, and His Kingdom, glorified by the celestial hosts. The last part of this section reflects the destination of the Offering¹², ‘To God, the Lord of all’, respectively, of the Eucharist as thanksgiving¹³ ‘To the Lord’. The answer is quite identical – *It is meet and right*¹⁴/ *It is proper and right*¹⁵.

c. Ante-Sanctus prayer and Sanctus. As a continuation of the former admonishment, comes the Pre-Sanctus prayer addressed to the Father, glorified in the Trinity. It is a sober thanksgiving for creation and redemption. One can identify clear similarities between these two anaphoras, arguing their common Antiochene origin.

⁹ This prayer is called in AT $\kappa\lambda\iota\nu\alpha$ – of inclination; *I come with bowed neck* (κλίνας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἀχένα)/ Chr.

¹⁰ In AT one may find an intercession for clerics, for the congregation, for those who departed from the Church, as the offering may be accepted for all of them. In AT it follows the reading of the diptychs of the living and dead, which in Chr’s order may be assimilated with the ritual of Proskomidy, once celebrated before the Great Entrance (nowadays before the Liturgy of the Word).

¹¹ *Homily 16:2*; see also John Chrysostom *In Hebr. Homilia XXII, 3* (PG 63, 158) and Greek anaphora of Jacob/ A. Hänghi – I. Pahl, *Prex eucharistica. Textus e variis liturgiis antiquioribus selecti* (Fribourg 1968), 244, Anaphora of Addai and Mari/ A. Hänghi – I. Pahl, *Prex eucharistica*, 375, Maronite anaphora of St Peter/ A. Raes, *Anaphorae siriacaе. Quotquot in codicibus adhuc repertae sunt*, Cura Pontificii Instituti Studiorum Orientalium (Roma, 1939-73), vol. 2, Fasc. 3, 293-4.

¹² $\kappa\lambda\iota\nu\alpha$.

¹³ See the verb Εὐχαριστήσωμεν.

¹⁴ $\mu\eta\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\acute{o}\nu$.

¹⁵ Ἄξιον καὶ δίκαιόν ἐστι.

	AT	Chr
<i>Connection with the preface</i>	It is <i>meet</i> and <i>right</i> ... to give thanks to your holy name ¹⁶ ... to <i>worship</i>	It is <i>proper</i> and <i>right</i> to sing... bless, praise, thank (2 Ts. 1:3) and <i>worship</i> You
<i>Addressed to the Father, through the Son in the Holy Spirit</i>	<i>God</i> , the Father of truth the being from everlasting, and <i>Your Only Begotten Son</i> our Lord Jesus Christ and the <i>Holy Spirit</i>	You are <i>God</i> ... You and Your Only Begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit... we thank You and <i>Your Only Begotten Son</i> and Your <i>Holy Spirit</i> ¹⁷
<i>The object for thanksgiving - creation, redemption</i>	The <i>author</i> of all things visible and invisible... have <i>created</i> and established heaven and earth and all that is in them (Heb. 1:2; Ex. 20:11; Ps. 145:6) ¹⁸ ... all rational nature visible and invisible are strengthened and sanctified	You <i>brought us into being</i> out of nothing (Wisdom 1:14), and when we fell, You <i>raised us up again</i> . You did not cease doing everything until You led us to heaven and granted us Your kingdom to come
<i>Time and space</i>	Every hour, <i>every region</i> , <i>every place</i>	<i>All places</i> (Ps. 102:22) <i>of Your dominion</i>
<i>Angelic worship</i>	<i>Thousands</i> of thousands of heavenly beings and a myriad of holy angels (Dan. 7:10; Heb. 12:22)	<i>Thousands</i> of Archangels and tens of thousands of Angels (Dan. 7:10; Heb. 12:22), by the Cherubim and Seraphim, six-winged (Is. 6:2), many-eyed, soaring with their wings

One may find the four divine attributes in this prayer, which are specific to Chrysostom's theology, addressed to the Father – ineffable, inconceivable, invisible and incomprehensible¹⁹. This fragment clearly reflects his theology. He enlarges the use of the attributes to the whole Trinity. We shall mention here some other typical expressions for Chrysostom: *You brought us into being out of nothing* (frequent theme in the baptismal catechesis), *when we fell, You raised us up again; You did not cease doing everything until You led us to heaven and*

¹⁶ 'Your holy name' – see here the theology of the name, specific to the Semitic tradition.

¹⁷ The Trinitarian repetition is a clear sign of a re-worked text provoked by the Arian crisis.

¹⁸ Here one may find the theme of praising the Lord commemorating the creation done by the Father, as reflected in the Jewish *berakoth* and the early anaphoras. The Trinitarian dimension is clearly expressed by confessing the three qnome (ܩܢܘܡܝܬܐ), co-equal and un-divided.

¹⁹ The Apophatic Credo – ἀνέκφραστος, ἀπερινόητος, άόρατος, άκατάληπτος (*Sur l'incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, Hom. 3, 54-5, SC 28bis).

granted us Your kingdom to come. Finally, specific to him is the conclusion in which the people gives thank *for all things that we know and do not know*²⁰, *for blessings seen and unseen that have been bestowed upon us.*

The Sanctus is more complex in AT with its East Syriac characteristics. I will highlight the specificities of AT in the table below:

<i>Holy, holy, holy, the Lord mighty God, that heaven and earth are full of his glories (Is. 6:3) and of the nature of his being and of the excellency of his glorious splendour. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to God in the highest</i>	<i>Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to God in the highest</i>
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d. Post-Sanctus prayer

One first observation regarding this prayer is that it is visibly shorter in Chr as compared to AT. There are mainly two ideas expressed in both prayers which go together – the holiness of God and the fragility of human who, by himself, is not capable to stand before God, and, as a consequence, one needs divine dispensation so as to be able to make the sacrifice.

<i>Holy are you, God the Father of truth, from who all fatherhood in earth and heaven is named. Holy are you the eternal Son, through whom all things are. Holy are you the Holy Spirit</i> ²¹ <i>by whom all things are sanctified.</i>	<i>You are holy and all-holy, You and Your only begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit.</i>
<i>And through him (Christ) he fulfilled and perfected this great and wonderful dispensation</i> ²² <i>which had been prepared by your foreknowledge before the foundation of the world.</i>	<i>All who believe in Him may not perish, but have eternal life. He had come and fulfilled all the dispensation</i> ²³ <i>for us.</i>

²⁰ This expression has clear Syriac origin, which one may find at the end of a prayer for the deceased (Anaphora of James). In the Syriac anaphoras one of the traditions of asking forgiveness using this expression is usually found at the end of the anaphora.

²¹ An addition in the context of the Trinitarian and Christological disputes/ *Hom.* 16:10.

²² ܠܚܘܘܝܘܬܐ.

²³ οἰκονομία.

The possibility of celebrating the divine mysteries comes from this dispensation that is, theologically speaking, Christ's Providence/ Economy. In order to describe Christ's incarnation and salvation, AT quotes Philippians 2:5-7²⁴, insisting on kenosis as necessary for Christ's coming into the world, and, consequently, the assuming of the mortal and rational body²⁵ and the immortal and intelligent soul from the Virgin by the power of the Spirit. Finally, it gives praise for all the graces, for creation, gift of dignity of freedom, intelligence, sustenance of humans' life and Christ's Economy. Everything is described in the light of Christ's sacrifice.

Regarding Chr, the postsanctus prayer has no complex account of Christ's Economy. It is a simple narration that begins from John 3:16 and introduces the act of institution, similar with the Anaphora of Basil. It highlights the salvific acts, centred on the crucifixion.

e. Institution narrative and Anamnesis

The context of both prayers – the Last Supper – is clearly expressed, when, accompanied by the 'holy apostles' – *in the night in which he was betrayed* (AT) and *in the night he had handed himself over* (Chr)²⁶ – Jesus took the bread and the cup with his *holy hands*²⁷. The four specific verbs – gave thanks, blessed, broke and gave – are present in both texts. One may find some differences between the institution formulas, as follows in the table.

<p><i>This is my Body which is broken</i> (Mt. 26:26) for the life of the world (Jn. 6:51), for the remission of sins (Mt. 26:28).</p>	<p>Take, eat, <i>this is my Body which is broken</i> (Mt. 26:26) for you (Lk. 22:19) for the forgiveness of sins (Mt. 26:28).</p>
<p><i>This is my Blood of the new Covenant which is shed for many, for the remission of sins</i> (Mt 26: 27-28). Take therefore all of you and eat from this bread and drink from this cup.</p>	<p>Drink of it all of you; <i>this is my Blood of the new Covenant which is shed</i> for you (Lk. 22:20) for many, for the forgiveness of sins (Mt. 26: 27-28).</p>

²⁴ Quoted also by Greek Basil.

²⁵ Put on our humanity (ܐܘܪܘܫܝܡܢܐ ܕܢܚܢܐ). For the *theology of clothing* see S. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition", *Studies in Syriac Christianity*, (Variorum, 1992), XI, 11-38.

²⁶ 1 Cor. 11:23-24.

²⁷ Chr adds *pure and spotless*.

In both cases, the text refers to the Eucharist as *Christ's memorial*. AT's anamnesis quotes 1 Cor. 11:25-26 – *Do thus whenever you are gathered for my memorial*, while Chr omits it, but the explicit reference to *this saving commandment* from the introduction of anamnesis (traditional for the Antiochene order) expresses the same idea. *Remembering* is followed in this case by the very anamnesis in an extended list of mysteries: death, tomb, resurrection, ascension, session at the right hand, second coming. It is worth mentioning the uniqueness of this list in Chr (and ApSyr), next to the compressive expression *for the things that were done for us*²⁸.

There is an important term involved at the very incipit of the institution narration in AT, but not present in Chr – *mystery*²⁹. The celebration of the mystery actualises the divine realities; therefore all what is said afterwards is made present by means of the sacramental offering.

f. Epiclesis

Regarding the Epiclesis, there is a structural difference – in AT, the intercessions follow after the anamnesis, in accordance with the East Syriac Anaphoral structure, and only then comes the epiclesis.

The classical tripartite Antiochene structure seems to be present in both texts³⁰ – a prayer addressed to the Father (AT calls him *Lord*) to send the Holy Spirit on the gifts/ offering and on the assembly, and, by that, to make the wine and bread into the body and blood of Christ, so they may be for the salvation of those who participate to them in the communion. Modern western liturgists distinguish between a more *primitive communion epiclesis* and the *developed or consecratory epiclesis*, containing clear petitions for the hallowing of the gifts and their changing into Christ's body and blood. Juan Mateos seems to bring a structural nuance in reference to the second dimension, arguing that *epiclesis is nothing else than the same consecration considered, especially, from the point of view of the divine action that occurs here. It is the dogmatic repetition of the historical narration. There are two aspects of the same reality: with one it is highlighted the visible rite; with the other the invisible action*³¹. Let's see the three parts compared in the table:

²⁸ καὶ πάντων τῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν γεγενημένων.

²⁹ ⲕⲁⲗⲁⲛⲁⲙⲛⲉⲥⲓⲥⲁⲛⲁⲙⲛⲉⲥⲁⲛⲁⲙⲛⲉⲥⲁⲛⲁⲙⲛⲉⲥⲁⲛⲁⲙⲛⲉⲥ.

³⁰ In the Slavonic and the Romanian Orthodox Churches, the troparion of the *Third Hour service* was added before Epiclesis.

³¹ J. Mateos, "L'action du Saint-Esprit dans la liturgie dite de Saint Jean Chrysostome", *Proche Orient Chrétien* 9 (1959), 193-208.

<p>We <i>beseech</i> You... And we persuade You... may the grace of the Holy Spirit come (ܠܗܘܘܢ), <i>upon us</i> and <i>this Qurbana</i>... and may she dwell and rest upon this bread and upon this cup and may she bless (ܘܒܠܝܢ), sanctify (ܘܩܕܫܢ) ³² and seal (ܘܨܘܡܢ) them in the name ³³ of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And by the power of your name may this bread become (ܠܗܘܢ) the holy body of our Lord Jesus Christ and this cup the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>We ask, pray, and <i>beseech</i> You: send down (κατάπεμψον) Your Holy Spirit <i>upon us</i> and <i>upon these gifts</i> (τὰ δῶρα) here presented. And make (ποίησον) this bread the precious Body of Your Christ. And that which is in this cup the precious Blood of Your Christ. Changing (μεταβαλῶν) them by Your Holy Spirit.</p>
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From the table above one can easily identify some differences. Firstly, AT is more detailed and longer. For the intercession of the Holy Spirit, AT asks for the grace of the Spirit and uses the expression *may come*³⁴, while Chr asks for the Spirit himself through an imperative verb *send down* (as in Basil). Then, regarding the action on the gifts, AT uses again the same verbal form *may become* under the action of God's name, expressed in the Trinitarian form, while Chr involves two connected verbs– *make* and *change*, by the direct intervention of the Father in the Spirit. Lastly, there is a visible difference in terms of the effects of the communion: in AT, *for the pardon of debts, the remission of sins, the great hope of resurrection from among the dead, the new life in the kingdom of heaven and glory for ever*, and in Chr, *for vigilance of soul, forgiveness of sins, communion of Your Holy Spirit, fulfillment of the kingdom of heaven, confidence before You, and not in judgment or condemnation*.

g. Intercessions

This section is the most specific part for each liturgical prayer. Therefore the differences are quite important. I will primarily evoke two aspects that are visibly common, mentioned by Vadakkel – namely, the intercessory role of the Eucharist (AT – *this Qurbana is offered... for*, Chr – *we offer you this rational worship for*) and the intercession for the hierarchy, despite the different formulation³⁵.

³² See the anaphora of Basil.

³³ See the theology of the name in the Semitic tradition.

³⁴ *Hom.* 16:23.

³⁵ *The East Syrian Anaphora*, 188-9.

Let us see the categories of petitions in both texts:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Church/ its welfare</i> ▪ <i>The Patriarch/ metropolitan/ local bishop/</i> ▪ <i>Bishops, periodeutas, priests and deacons</i> ▪ For those the Qurbana is offered ▪ Fruits of the earth ▪ Categories of saints ▪ <i>Departed people</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holy Virgin, Saint John the prophet, the Apostles; for Saint(s) commemorated; and for all the saints ▪ <i>Departed people</i> ▪ <i>Clerics (bishops, priests, deacons)</i> ▪ Whole world ▪ <i>Church</i> ▪ Those from public service ▪ <i>Patriarch/ metropolitan/ local bishop</i> ▪ The city (village), country/ different categories of people (travelers, the sick, the suffering, and the captives... charitable work, who serve in Your holy churches, and who care for the poor)
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Unique to Chr is the order of the intercessions, with the dead before the living, an assimilation of Basil’s Anaphora, where the last section of Epiclesis is a petition for the communion with the saints in the Holy Spirit. And this leads to the commemoration of the dead, as the saints were also initially considered as *chief among the deceased*. The perspective that we pray *for* the dead and *to* the saints is emphasized by Taft, who asserts that this is *a later refinement based on theological reflection*, foreign to the original text of Chr, which had no commemoration of saints by name in the earliest manuscripts.

Both texts end with a Trinitarian doxological confession.

Conclusion

Being consequent to the methodological approaches involved in the analysis above, I will draw some short conclusions. Firstly, structurally speaking, one may identify the presence of the main classic anaphoral sections in both texts. The most visible difference is the place of the intercessions in AT before Epiclesis, whereas in Chr it is placed afterwards. Secondly, the text of AT is longer and more detailed in reference to that of Chr and the distribution of themes, despite the fact that many of them are common, is quite different.

From the thematic point of view, there are common themes distributed along the text, or organically present during the entire anaphoral prayers, which may indicate a mutual influence or, more precisely, common sources. I will mention the most important among them: the suitability of thanksgiving and doxology to God in all time and places; the Trinitarian character of thanksgiving; the celebration of the Eucharist possible only by means of divine intervention that enables the celebrant to make the sacrifice; the celebration connects the two realities, earth and heaven; the presence of the immaterial hosts in the celebration (presanctus prayer); the intercessory role of Christ, with the emphasis on the cross (postsanctus prayer); the faithfulness to the narrative institution recite (1 Cor. 11:25-25) and the Eucharist seen as Christ's memorial (institution narrative); the Epiclesis on the people and on the gifts; and the intercessory role of the Eucharist.

Regarding the verbal approach, the texts put in parallel above highlighted important terminological similarities that led us once more towards the conclusion of common sources. In this line, one may once again argue in favour of their common Antiochene origin. On this general structure, the authors/ compilers create a partial new anaphora or re-elaborated an existent one (an aspect visible more in the case of Chr and ApSyr), which occasionally expresses the doctrinal problems of their time. And this occurs within the natural development of the liturgical dynamic tradition of the Church itself.

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THE JESUIT AND PATRISTIC SPIRITUALITY IN KARL RAHNER'S SPIRITUAL THEOLOGY

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ABSTRACT. In the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner's life and work, philosophy, spirituality and systematic theology are harmonized for the benefit of the increasingly desacralized and secularized man of the late modernity. Familiarization with the great world's philosophers, from Plato to Aristotle up to Blondel and Heidegger, with Ignatian spirituality and with the Eastern and Western Fathers of the Church decisively helped Rahner in his endeavour to free the Catholic theology from the "captivity" of scholastic rationalism and objectivism and to redirect it "existentially", by a genuine turn, from an abstract God, isolated in the transcendent and irrelevant for the Christian life, to the concrete man, "hearer of God's word". The spiritual experience of the most influential Catholic theologian of the 20th century was conveyed in an original way, by pastoral guidance, through lectures and his monumental work, on many generations of Catholic servants and believers. Setting out the Ignatian and Patristic sources of Karl Rahner's spiritual theology, this article outlines, against its background, the odyssey of yesterday's and today's Christian experience, at the same time emphasizing the profound ecumenical dimension of patristic spirituality.

Keywords: Karl Rahner, Jesuit, Spiritual Exercises, Ignatian spirituality, Church Fathers, existential experience

1. The Years of Jesuit Apprenticeship

Karl Rahner (1904-1984) became a member of the Jesuit Order on the 20th of April, 1922 in Feldkirche/Vorarlberg in Austria, when he had barely turned 18. During his two years of novitiate in Tisis (Austria), his attention was drawn by the life and spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) and generally by the spiritual literature. His novitiate concluded by taking the monastic vows and by the publication by the young Ignatian of his first article:

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“Warum uns das Beten nottut” / “Why we need to pray”¹, in which he expressed his conviction that only in a state of prayer we have the possibility “to touch our Creator and Lord” (*ad attingendum Creatorem ac Dominum nostrum*).

Afterwards he studied philosophy at Tisis for three years and two more years at “Berchman” College² in Pullach (München), where he taught the History of Philosophy. In that period he became familiar with the thought of the great ancient and medieval philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas a.o., as well as with the thought of some Jesuit philosophers of early twentieth century, such as Pierre Rousselot (1878-1915) and Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944). Rahner admitted that the Belgian philosopher Maréchal exercised the most vivid and the strongest influence on him, that exceeded the influence of the famous philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).

During his studies of theology (1929-1933) at the Faculty of Theology within the private University of the Jesuit Order in Valkenburg (the Netherlands), the young Jesuit continued to be interested in the patristic spirituality and in the spirituality of Jesus’ heart, generally in mysticism and philosophy. His studies were followed by the tertianship (*das Terzia*) at Kärnten, in Austria, the last year of Jesuit novitiate, when the spiritual life deepened and the authenticity of vocation was verified for the last time.³

Rahner’s special interest in spirituality – maintained throughout his entire life – materialised in many works, grouped in eight of the 32 volumes

¹ Published in the *Leuchtturm magazine* 18 (1924–25), 310–311; republished in Karl Rahner, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1 (*KRSW 1-*), Karl Lehmann, Johann Baptist Metz, Karl Heinz Neufeld S.J. et al. (eds.), (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2008), 3-4.

² The Curriculum at this Jesuit College included: Logics and Theory of knowledge (1 semester); General metaphysics (1 semester); Cosmology (2 semesters); Metaphysic Psychology (2 semesters); Experimental Psychology (2 semesters); Theodicy (2 semesters); Ethics (2 semesters); History of philosophy (2 semesters); Physics and Chemistry (2 semesters); Biology (2 semesters); Pedagogy (1 semester); Hebrew (2 semesters); Physiology (1 semester); Rhetoric (2 semesters); Seminar of Ethics (1 semester); Homiletic exercises (4 semesters). Walter Kern, “Erste Philosophische Studien 1924–1927”, in Paul Imhof, Hubert Biallowons (eds.), *Karl Rahner: Bilder eines Lebens* (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1985), 19.

³ Maria Keller, “Im Terziat 1933/1934”, in *Karl Rahner: Bilder eines Lebens*, 24: “As in the case of novitiate, in the centre were the four weeks of exercises, and at the end of tertianship other eight days of exercises. Life in St. Andrew was imbued with monastic atmosphere. People lived in a recluse way, everyone would look after himself and would use time to draft the lectures about the exercises. Rahner discussed with Fr. Lotz the plan for the publishing of a theology of the exercises or of a comment in this respect”.

that make up the *Sämtliche Werke / Complete Works*⁴ of the prolific theologian. Johann Baptist Metz made the remark that thanks to his master, popular and everyday mysticism (not elitist and esoteric) infused the concrete lay life of their contemporaries.⁵

2. Ignatian Spirituality in Rahner's Interpretation

Unlike the other great German-speaking Catholic theologian of the last century, the Swiss Urs von Balthasar, Karl Rahner remained a Jesuit all his life:

“For more than 60 years, the Jesuit Order was the spiritual homeland and the universe where father Rahner lived. The Jesuit spirituality marked his life. His transcendental-philosophical reflections are ultimately not the core of his theology; they are only its profile (*Gestalt*). The existential spring he drank from was, actually, experiencing the spiritual exercises, which he seldom shared and only among his friends. The references relative to Jesus' life, mentioned in the book of ignatian *Exercises*, formed the fundamental substrate from which Karl Rahner started to preach God's life giving Word”.⁶

Becoming a Jesuit, Rahner had no intention to be a specialist in philosophy or a professor of theology, but he wished to be a confessor, a priest, a monk, always ready to be sent on a mission anywhere in the world.⁷ Spirituality and mission had been at the core of his Jesuit training, as well as in the centre of his theological concerns. Therefore, Rahner's theology is grounded in the Jesuit spirituality, where he always drew his energy from. His work is, to a great extent, the fruit of the experience acquired at the school of Ignatius of Loyola and the *Spiritual Exercises*. One must look here for the “matrix” of his thinking, the key that opens the access to the understanding of

⁴ vol. 1: *Frühe spirituelle Texte und Studien* (2014); vol. 3: *Spiritualität und Theologie der Kirchenväter* (1999); vol. 7: *Der betende Christ. Geistliche Schriften zur Praxis des Glaubens* (2013); vol. 13: *Ignatianischer Geist. Schriften zu den Exerzitien und zur Spiritualität der Ordensgründers* (2006); vol. 14: *Christliches Leben. Aufsätze – Betrachtungen – Predigten* (2006); vol. 23: *Glaube im Alltag. Schriften zur Spiritualität und zum christlichen Lebensvollzug* (2006); vol. 25: *Erneuerung des Ordenslebens* (2008); vol. 28: *Geistliche Schriften. Späte Beiträge zur Praxis des Glaubens* (2007).

⁵ See J. B. Metz, “Apprendre à croire”, in K. Rahner, *Le courage de théologien*, dialogues publiés par P. Imhof et H. Biallowons (Paris: Cerf, 1985), 14-15.

⁶ P. Imhof, H. Biallowons, “Vorwort”, in *Karl Rahner: Bilder eines Lebens*, 6.

⁷ See *KRSW* 25, 92.

his profound, varied and topical work.⁸ Here as well is to be found also, as a matter of fact, the purpose of his theology, namely to find God in all and in everything, in order to preach Him to everybody, so that He may be glorified by all the people.

According to Rahner, in Ignatius of Loyola three different lines of thought are conjoined: the medieval Christian tradition, the modern thought (characterized by the issues of subjectivity and freedom) and the modern thought on existence. These three lines are represented, from the philosophical perspective, by Thomas Aquinas, I. Kant and M. Heidegger.⁹

In the Jesuit existential background lie also the other sources of Rahner's thinking, but, compared to the philosophy and the theology which inspired him, the Ignatian spirituality was much more important.¹⁰ And it was more important, first of all, for the primacy granted to the mystical "existential experience", and, implicitly, to the "existential knowledge". Because, for the German theologian, Ignatius of Loyola was "a leading existentialist", from whom he learned that theology is based on experiencing the divine life mystically: "For me, in my theology it is of a fundamental importance to have an authentic, genuine experience of God and His Spirit. It logically precedes (but not necessarily in time) reflection and theological verbalism".¹¹

This "existential experience" of the Living God in prayer and meditation brings that concrete "existential knowledge", in which God and man embrace each other mystically. In this knowledge, man's endeavour and the Lord's grace, man's work and God's work, the natural and the supernatural blend together. Starting from the "phenomenology" of God's actual presence in the

⁸ See Bernard Sesboué, *Karl Rahner* (Paris: Cerf, 2001), 35-36; Harvey D. Egan, "Der Fromme von morgen wird ein 'Mystiker' sein", in H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Wagnis Theologie. Erfahrungen mit der Theologie Karl Rahners* (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1979), 100; Egan, "Theology and spirituality", in D. Marmion, M. Hinnes (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 13-14. About the model Ignatius of Loyola and about his importance in Rahner's training wrote Arno Zahlauer extensively in *Karl Rahner und sein 'produktives Vorbild' Ignatius von Loyola* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1996).

⁹ See Karlheinz Ruhstorfer, "Das moderne und das postmoderne Interesse an den Geistlichen Übungen des Ignatius von Loyola", *Theologie und Philosophie* 73 (1998), 359.

¹⁰ "Aber die Spiritualität des Ignatius selbst, die wir durch die Praxis des Gebetes und eine religiöse Bildung mitbekamen, ist für mich wohl bedeutsamer gewesen als alle gelehrte Philosophie und Theologie innerhalb und außerhalb des Ordens" / "But I think that the spirituality of Ignatius himself, which one learned through the practice of prayer and religious formation, was more significant for me than all learned philosophy and theology inside and outside the order." (*KRSW* 31, 180-181); See also William Dych, *Karl Rahner* (London: Continuum, 2000), 6.

¹¹ P. Imhof, H. Biallowons (eds.), *Karl Rahner im Gespräch*, II (München: Kösel, 1983), 257; See also *KRSW* 31, 321.

world (*Gott in Welt*) and in man, through His self-communication (*Selbstmitteilung Gottes*) in grace and in Jesus Christ, Karl and his older brother, Hugo (1900-1968), a Jesuit himself too, were very early interested in the “existential knowledge”, since the period of their collaboration for deepening the Jesuit spirituality and theology.¹²

On the existential knowledge of God in Ignatian manner, Rahner wrote a major study with the title “Die Ignatianische Logik der existentiellen Erkenntnis”¹³ / “The Logic of Concrete Individual Knowledge in Ignatius Loyola”, to which he would often make reference when he was requested to initiate someone in his theology. In this existential knowledge, derived from the intense and direct experience of God, has been seen the origin of Rahner’s philosophy and transcendental theology. Probably that is why Johann B. Metz proclaimed this work as “great and unique”, and Martin Maier reckoned that its influence would also outlive the 20th century.¹⁴

Rahner was sure that the Ignatian work *Spiritual exercises* is among the major works of Christianity and, like all the major creations, it should be re-read and reinterpreted in the religious and cultural context offered by each historical era, being a permanently fresh source of inspiration and teaching for the theology and generally for the Christian experience. “By the term ‘Spiritual Exercises’ is meant every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual activities.” (*Exercises* 001)¹⁵

Used as a spiritual guide for the instruction by the spiritual advisor (“the master”), the spiritual exercises are conducted throughout a period of four weeks, in accordance with the four parts of the homonymous work.¹⁶ Through them, the disciple comes to love and serve God in all and to be ready

¹² On the collaboration of the two Jesuit brothers and on its fruit, see Hugo Rahner, “Eucharisticon Fraternitas”, in J. B. Metz (ed.), *Gott in Welt. Festgabe für Karl Rahner*, II (Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 1964), 895-899. A professor of Patrology at the University of Innsbruck, Hugo Rahner was deemed one of the most competent exegetes of Ignatius of Loyola.

¹³ Originally published in F. Wulf (ed.), *Ignatius von Loyola: Seine geistliche Gestalt und sein Vermächtnis* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1956), 343-405; republished in *Das Dynamische in der Kirche* (Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 1958), 74-148 and in *KRSW* 10, 368-420.

¹⁴ See Martin Maier, “La Théologie des Exercices de Karl Rahner”, *Recherches de science religieuse* 79 (1991), 538.

¹⁵ St. Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, translated by Louis J. Puhl S.J. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1951).

¹⁶ “Four Weeks are assigned to the Exercises given below. This corresponds to the four parts into which they are divided, namely: the first part, which is devoted to the consideration and contemplation of sin; the second part, which is taken up with the life of Christ our Lord up to Palm Sunday inclusive; the third part, which treats of the passion of Christ our Lord; the fourth part, which deals with the Resurrection and Ascension.” (*Exercises* 004)

anytime to be sent anywhere, because “he will see God present and active anywhere”. This way, he will become a “contemplative in action”.¹⁷

According to the Ignatian logic, hermeneutically captured by Rahner, the existential knowledge – that has its grounds in the inward revelation of God in man’s soul, through the act of inspiration – is not identical to the rational, deductive knowledge, mediated by the senses, nor merely to faith; is not, however, identical either to the direct, unmediated knowledge (*visio beata*), which is a specific feature of the age to come. A partaker of this knowledge is the man who seeks to fulfil God’s will in the concrete events of life. In the existential knowledge emphasis is not so much on the actual act of knowledge, but on the act of freedom and of free choice.¹⁸ But, nevertheless, the existential knowledge of the divine will is not the fruit of man’s effort, but is a gift of the divine grace. However, it is possible also thanks to the fact that man is endowed with the gift of receiving God’s revelation, is a “hearer of the Word” (*Hörer des Wortes*), “event of God’s self-communication” (*das Ereignis der Selbstmitteilung Gottes*) and “being of transcendence” (*das Wesen der Transzendenz*) that is in a dynamic openness toward God, the absolute Transcendence.

There are three moments, according to the *Spiritual Exercises*, when God’s will can be recognized and chosen: a) when God moves and attracts the believer’s will unto Himself; b) when the soul receives enough light and knowledge – through the experience of comfort and desolation and by the wisdom of discerning of spirits; c) when the person, fully at ease, reflects on the purpose for which he/she came into existence: to serve God and to be saved (*Exercises* 175-177). All the three moments, believed Rahner, are inseparable. Actually, the *Spiritual Exercises* are, according to him, a practical initiation in learning and fulfilling God’s single will in the daily events of life, an embodiment, *hic et nunc*, of God’s will in man’s daily activity.¹⁹

The Jesuit theologian particularly insists on the discerning of spirits or the spiritual discernment to be able to choose God’s will in an undelusive way. To discern spirits is an act of discernment between God’s Spirit and His angels and the many evil spirits that tempt the soul. Generally, according to Ignatius, thoughts are good when they are accompanied by peace and joy, when they cultivate and produce the good and respectively, thoughts are bad when they are accompanied by nervousness and cause uneasiness. God, His angels and

¹⁷ “In (Jerónimo) Nadal, the Rahner brothers found two formulae that they, and many Jesuits after them, took as epitomizing the distinctive charism of Ignatius: ‘finding God in all things’, and ‘contemplative in action’.” Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 69.

¹⁸ See Maier, “La Théologie des Exercices de Karl Rahner”, 547-548.

¹⁹ See K. Rahner, “Die Ignatianische Logik der existentiellen Erkenntnis”, in *KRSW* 10, 387.

good thoughts comfort the soul, while the evil spirits push the soul to desolation (*Exercises* 329-336). However, there are also special circumstances when the evil angel can take the appearance of an angel of light and initially delude the soul with consolation to eventually push it to errancy and malice.

In his interpretation, Rahner aims to identify the ultimate foundation of discernment and, also, the “fundamental features of an Ignatian logic of existential ethics”.²⁰ For this, he consulted Ignatius of Loyola, from whom he learned that only “consolation without cause” is beyond any delusion, because only it comes solely from God (*Exercises* 336). This “consolation without a previous cause”, although it transgresses the “consciousness of the objective reality” (*Gegenstandsbewusstsein*), is, still, a state of conscious participation in God’s love, where the reflexive consciousness is not missing. This love “beyond any definite object” is actually the positive aspect of *sin causa precedente*, by which is actually called God Himself, apophatically speaking.²¹ Rahner therefore concludes that in God and in participating in Him, through love, we acquire the “consolation without cause”, which is the ultimate foundation of discernment.

“But consolation without cause is not only the obvious foundation for the discerning of spirits, but is also the ontological and logical foundation of a direct experience of God as an absolute and sacred mystery. It is an experience of transcendence because it is without sensorial representations. It takes place, therefore, in man’s deepest intimacy and is of spiritual nature”.²²

Embedded in man as “the supernatural existential” (*übernatürliches Existential*), the supernatural grace – as an event of God’s genuine self-communication to man and of the ascension of human transcendence to God – mediates the most intimate encounter of man with himself and with the divine Mystery. And the “signs” of this double meeting of man with God and with himself are peace, joy and consolation. The Ignatian mysticism conjoins, according to Rahner’s interpretation, not only the divine will and man’s will, but, also, the divine love and the human love. And the more profoundly one participates in the divine life, the more profoundly one discovers oneself. The

²⁰ Ibid., 409. About the foundation by Rahner of the existential ethics on the Ignatian spiritual exercises wrote B. Fraling: “Existentialethik im Zeichen der Exerziteninterpretation”, in *Wagnis Theologie*, 61-81.

²¹ See Rahner, “Die Ignatianische Logik der existentiellen Erkenntnis”, 399. In the Ignatian existential logic, “consolación sin causa” acquires, according to Rahner, a similar function to “the first principles in the general Logic and in Ontology”. Juan Carlos Scannone, “Die Logik des Existentiellen und Geschichtlichen nach Karl Rahner”, in *Wagnis Theologie*, 86.

²² Maier, “La Théologie des Exercices de Karl Rahner”, 553.

perfect interpenetration between man and God, between the human will and the divine one, between the human love and the divine one is revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ.²³

As it is known, the *Spiritual Exercises* have Jesus' life in their centre. Three out of the four weeks the spiritual exercises last, the trainee contemplates Lord's life, death, resurrection and ascension. From this historical Jesus, mediated by the Gospel, received through faith and imaginatively contemplated in the *Spiritual Exercises*, started Rahner to develop the transcendental Christology. In the human transcendence is given the openness of the human spirit towards the world, the self and towards God, and this transcendence is attained in the historical Jesus Christ. In his Christology, the Jesuit theologian gave thought also to the human consciousness of Jesus, and, particularly, to the Holy Heart of the Lord, about which he wrote many articles between 1928-1981.²⁴ Faithful to Ignatius of Loyola, who had "something inherently almost archaic-archetypal", and starting from Jesus' Heart as from the "hearth" of the divine fire of everyday mysticism, Rahner always preached following Christ the Humble and poor and serving Him by serving the poor and suffering neighbour with whom He identifies Himself.²⁵

In 1978, the famous theologian resumed the topic of the immediate and direct experience of God by a stylistically bold work, titled *Rede des Ignatius von Loyola an einen Jesuiten von heute / Speech of Ignatius of Loyola to a Modern-Day Jesuit*²⁶, in which he systematically developed his own spiritual theology of Ignatian origin. This *Speech of Ignatius*, in which exegetes of the famous theologian glimpsed elements of his own spiritual biography, was deemed by Rahner himself his own spiritual testament.²⁷ Referring to this

²³ See Ingvild Røsok, "The kenosis of Christ revisited: the relational perspective of Karl Rahner", *Heythrop Journal* LVIII (2017), 59-60.

²⁴ Republished in *KRSW 13: Ignatianischer Geist. Schriften zu den Exerzitien und zur Spiritualität der Ordensgründer* (2006).

²⁵ See H. Vorgrimler, *Karl Rahner verstehen. Eine Einführung in sein Leben und Denken* (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1985), 50; Mgr. Peter Henrici, "Une théologie puisant à une source spirituelle commune: Ignace de Loyola", in H. Gagey, V. Holzer (eds.), *Balthasar, Rahner. Deux pensées en contraste* (Paris: Bayard, 2005), 24.

²⁶ *KRSW 25*, 299-329; K. Rahner, *Ignatius of Loyola Speaks* (South Bend, Indiana, 2013); K. Rahner, "Ignatius of Loyola Speaks to a Modern Jesuit", in P. Imhof (ed.), *Ignatius of Loyola* (London: Collins, 1979).

²⁷ See *KRSW 25*, 84. "Rahner characterized his own theology as an attempt to spell out the implications of the experience of the Holy Spirit that St. Ignatius wished to deepen and clarify through his *Spiritual Exercises*. All theology, Rahner asserted, should have a mystical dimension; it should be nourished by the experience of grace. Using this inner experience as a starting point, Rahner radically transformed the traditional theses of scholastic theology." (Avery Dulles S.J., "Jesuits and theology: yesterday and today", *Theological Studies* 52 (1991), 535)

work, Bernard Sesboüé believes that “it is not an exaggeration to say that Karl Rahner’s most speculative thought is the theological thematization of the spiritual experience of encountering God, as it is proposed by Ignatius”.²⁸

Open and full of joy, this Ignatian Rahner describes the direct, apophatic experience of God:

“I was convinced that I had encountered God. (...) All I am saying is this: I have experienced God, the nameless and unfathomable one, the silent and yet near one, in the trinity of his love for me. I have experienced God also and most especially beyond all concrete imagery: the one who when drawing near of his own accord and out of sheer grace cannot be confused with anything else. (...) I experienced the incomprehensibility of God so strangely and from the perspective of the godlessness of your own time where such godlessness merely eliminates the idols of a previous era that equated them in both harmless and terrible ways with the unfathomable God. (...) I have truly encountered God, the true and living one, the one who merits the name that extinguishes all other. (...) I have encountered God; I have experienced him”.²⁹

Starting from this personal experience, Rahner was preoccupied to revive in the conscience of the increasingly secularized contemporary man the confidence that God has not died and that it may be “directly”, “immediately” and convincingly experienced. To the modern man, who lives the drama of alienation from heaven and himself, Rahner proposes a living and very close God, Who is, certainly, beyond the human words about Him, words that are so poor, so deceptive and also so disappointing. His theology opposed the contemporary atheism and agnosticism, with the complete self-sufficiency of sciences, with the wretchedness and sterility of life without God.³⁰ This theology was orthopraxy at the same time, namely a deed of the Good Samaritan, who anoints deep wounds with oil and wine. The words of this Rahnerian Ignatius are, at the same time, the expression of ecstasy of the encounter with the Living and close God and of the agony of losing Him in human words, images and representations, cultivated, unfortunately, also by a certain kind of theology. Whereas Ignatius of Loyola was permanently concerned with helping the souls in their ascent to heaven, Rahner, as his disciple, endeavoured to help the modern man, as applicable, to regain, to keep or to deepen his faith. Certainly, the pastoral-missionary dimension of Rahner’s theology does not originate in the abstract theological thinking, but in the personal, genuine experiencing God and His Ghost, in the spirit of Ignatius of Loyola.

²⁸ Sesboüé, “Spiritualité ignatienne et théologie”, *Revue de Spiritualité Ignatienne* 115 (XXXVIII), 2 (2007), 33.

²⁹ KRSW 25, 301-302; Rahner, *Ignatius of Loyola Speaks*, 6-8.

³⁰ See Sesboüé, *Karl Rahner*, 39; Metz, “Apprendre à croire”, 16-17.

In this Rahnerian *Speech*, Ignatius speaks to the contemporary Jesuits also about obedience and about service in the Church.³¹ The way Ignatius of Loyola understood to serve the Church was a model to be followed for the German theologian. Both of them openly and repeatedly declared their loyalty to the Church and its hierarchy. But, despite this loyalty, both suffered due to the ecclesiastical apparatus. Ignatius of Loyola, Rahner reminds, had difficulties with the Inquisition six times. The Jesuit monk was given a special “attention” by the Vatican for more than a decade, with even a partial ban on his writing and speaking³², particularly because he had expressed a categorical opposition against the proclamation of the dogma of the Bodily Assumption into Heaven of the Holy Virgin.³³

Through Ignatius’ mouth, Rahner stated he wished to serve the Church his entire life, as he was animated by *sentire cum Ecclesia*, but by this he understood serving God first, and only afterwards serving an institution. For him, to love the Church is not the first and the last reality of his “existence”, but a secondary fact, as experiencing God in Christ is the ultimate foundation of his faith. He took the freedom to maintain a critical relationship³⁴ with the official Church, being sure that the Church is not confined to its magisterium and that also the critical exercise reveals a genuine ecclesial³⁵ specific feature, a “redemptive” dimension. For Rahner, the intense and intimate relationship with Christ and listening to his own conscience as a priest and monk meant more than the obedience to the hierarchy. As the Church is called to point beyond itself, to the kingdom of God and to the living man.³⁶ As a matter of fact, Rahner remained faithful till the end of his life to his youth belief according to which “the Church is for the man, and not the man for the Church”, as man becomes eternal, and not the Church.

³¹ On the ecclesial obedience in Rahner’s life and work wrote Udo Bentz in detail in his excellent monograph *Jetzt ist noch Kirche* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 2008), 351-510.

³² See *KRSW* 25, 116; See also Vorgrimler, *Karl Rahner verstehen*, 110, 116.

³³ In *KRSW* 9, XLIV-XLVII a letter of Hugo from Rome to Karl Rahner was published on February 18, 1955, from which there results the state of irritation and depression in which was the famous theologian due to the “Roman practices”.

³⁴ See Imhof, Biallowons, “Vorwort”, in *Bilder eines Lebens*, 6.

³⁵ See Sesboüé, *Karl Rahner*, 55.

³⁶ See Vorgrimler, *Karl Rahner verstehen*, 51.

³⁷ Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality*, 238.

³⁸ Rahner’s entire contribution to the Jesuit spirituality and theology was reunited in *KRSW* 13: *Ignatianischer Geist* (2006) and *KRSW* 25: *Erneuerung des Ordenslebens* (2008). For more details about this contribution, see also Michel Fédou, “Préface”, in K. Rahner, *L’esprit ignatien. Écrits sur les Exercices et sur la spiritualité du fondateur de l’Ordre*, Œuvres 13, sous la direction de M. Fédou (Paris: Cerf, 2016), 7-21.

Philip Endean, the author of a profound analysis of Ignatius of Loyola's influence on Karl Rahner, pointed out that the Ignatian spirituality offered to the German theologian the necessary resources to the renewal of the Catholic theology.³⁷ Living in the Society of Jesus like in another family, Rahner preoccupied himself, out of gratitude, to also leave it a legacy. His writings of spirituality and Jesuit theology³⁸ were the renovating heritage he left to the Order that hosted him and fed his soul his entire life. Fr. Kolvenbach, one of the Generals of the Jesuit Order, stated:

“The significance of Father Karl Rahner for the Church ministry and for the society is definitely unique. I hope that his influence will continue to mark the Society of Jesus a long time from now on. In this respect, I do not think so much to the use of his dogmatic method, but, more significantly, to an influence on the others by what he undertook for the renewal of the spiritual life and for strengthening the Church. He did that by a constructive criticism, which highlighted the expertise he had acquired through hard work, carried out in silence”.³⁹

3. The Holy Fathers: Fountains of Living Water

Simultaneously with his concerns in the field of spirituality and Ignatian theologian, Karl Rahner was attracted by the spirituality and theology of the Holy Fathers and generally of mysticism. As early as the first year of his theological studies he made a reading list which comprised, among others, the following texts of the Church Fathers: the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, The Shepherd of Hermas, Polycarp, St. Justin the Martyr and Philosopher, The Epistle of Barnabas, the Acts of the martyrs of the 2nd century, *The Muratorian Fragment*, St. Irenaeus of Lyon (*Adversus haereses* and *Demonstratio apostolicae Praedicationis*), then Tertullian and St. Clement of Alexandria with “Opera omnia”, St. John Chrysostom (*On the priesthood*), St. Gregory of Nyssa (*On prayer*), Blessed Augustine (*On predestination* and *De dono perseverantiae*) and Apponius (*Commentary on the Song of Songs*). In the period of his theological studies also he was particularly concerned with repentance and conversion, reading a rich patristic literature on these topics, but, especially, Origen and Augustine. He continued to be interested in spirituality and spiritual theology, reading, as Karl Neufeld's noted: Ruysbroeck, Seuse, John of the Cross, Pascal, Surin, Scupoli, Colombiere, Newman, Soloviev, Gaudier, Ludovic de Granada,

³⁹ Imhof, Biallowons, “Forwort”, in *Bilder eines Lebens*, 6.

Francis of Sales.⁴⁰ In the period of his Jesuit training he read “high spiritual literature quite a lot” and studied not only the Ignatian spirituality, but also that of Teresa of Avila or of John of the Cross.⁴¹

But Rahner not only read and was edified by the spirituality and theology of the Church Fathers, but was also a genuine hermeneute of their writings. The first contribution to Karl Rahner’s patristic exegesis – “Le début d’une doctrine des cinq sens spirituels chez Origène” – was published in *Revue d’Ascétique et de Mystique*, in 1932, while he was still a Jesuit student at Valkenburg. In 1933, he published another study on the spiritual senses in the Middle Ages, especially with Bonaventura, and another on the spiritual doctrine of Evagrius of Pontus. The following year he explained in another article, the meanings of the notion of “ecstasy” with Bonaventura.⁴²

The Jesuit theologian’s preoccupation for the spiritual senses is, actually, a natural search for the transcendental data of the subject, with the aid of which God’s presence in the world can be perceived. The young theologian tried to explain by these kind of studies – in keeping with the Ignatian spirituality – how transcendental knowledge and experience is possible by using the spiritual senses, how these senses of the spirit present in the world (*Geist in Welt*), in history, allow experiencing and knowing the Supreme Reality.⁴³

Like Urs von Balthasar, Rahner granted a special attention to Origene, both being contributors to the rehabilitation of the famous Alexandrian by substantial studies. In addition to the study on the spiritual senses, Rahner wrote also studies about Jesus’ Heart and the repentance with Origen.⁴⁴ Two of the studies of the Jesuit theologian reveal intense and long lasting interests in the patristic theology and spirituality: ‘*E latere Christi*’: *Der Ursprung der Kirche als zweiter Eva aus der Seite Christi des zweiten Adam. Eine Untersuchung über den typologischen Sinn von Joh 19, 34 / ‘E latere Christi*’:

⁴⁰ Karl Neufeld, *Die Brüder Rahner. Eine Biographie* (Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 1994), 98-99.

⁴¹ *KRSW* 31, 183.

⁴² “La doctrine des ‘sens spirituels’ au Moyen-Age: En particulier chez St-Bonaventure”, *Revue d’Ascétique et de Mystique* 14 (1933), 263-299; *KRSW* 1, 82-147; “Die geistliche Lehre des Evagrius Ponticus”, *Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik* 8 (1933), 21-38; *KRSW* 1, 66-81; “Der Begriff der *ecstasis* bei Bonaventura”, *Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik* 9 (1934), 1-19; *KRSW* 1, 148-163.

⁴³ See K. Neufeld, “Ordensexistenz”, in A. Raffelt (ed.), *Karl Rahner in Erinnerung* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994), 33.

⁴⁴ K. Rahner, “«Coeur de Jésus» chez Origène?”, *Revue d’Ascétique et de Mystique* 15 (1934), 171-174; *KRSW* 1, 164-169; Idem, “La doctrine d’Origène sur la Pénitence”, *Recherches de science religieuse* 37 (1950), 47-97, 252-286, 422-456; *KRSW* 11, 80-190. For more details on Rahner’s interpretation on Origene, see M. Fédou, “Karl Rahner et Hans Urs von Balthasar lecteurs et interprètes des Pères”, in *Balthasar, Rahner*, 148-159.

Church origin, as a second Eve, from the rib of Christ, the second Adam. A research on the typological meaning of the text of John 19, 34 (1936) and, particularly, *Ascese und Mystik in der Väterzeit / Asceticism and mysticism in the Fathers' era* (1939).⁴⁵ *E latere Christi* is the doctoral dissertation on theology of young Rahner, successfully defended at the Faculty of Theology of Innsbruck, at the end of year 1936, and unpublished until 1999, when it was included in *Sämtliche Werke*.⁴⁶

Using a diachronic account and a pluridisciplinary methodology, that combined exegesis, patrology and dogmatics, Rahner presented the origin of the Church in the bleeding side of the Crucified Christ. In the interpretation he gave to the biblical text – “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19, 34) – he separates from the tridentine perspective, according to which the Church was juridically founded on the Cross or on a founding word of Jesus, interpreting John’s metaphor of the pierced side, of which came out blood and water, in the interpretation offered particularly by Origen, Evagrius of Pontus and Bonaventure.⁴⁷ In this interpretation, life that came out of the pierced side of the Lord, was extended in mankind through the vivifying work of the Holy Spirit, present both in the Mystery of Baptism as a mystery of the incorporation in Christ and in the Church, as well as in the Mystery of Eucharist, as a Mystery of the mystical union with Christ. Bride of the Lord, the Church is the mother of all the people, the second Eve from the second Adam.⁴⁸ The birth of the Church from the side of the Crucified Christ was prefigured by Eve’s emergence from Adam’s rib, and the water and blood that came out from the Lord’s side, are “actual symbols” of the Baptism and Eucharist. Through these symbols, Christ’s life is mystically transferred into our life, thus being possible the sacramental

⁴⁵ Both writings were published in *KRSW 3: Spiritualität und Theologie der Kirchenväter* (1999).

⁴⁶ See *KRSW 3*, 1-84. On the genesis of this work, see *Ibid.*, XVII- XLIII; Neufeld, *Die Brüder Rahner*, 130-137; Vorgrimler, *Karl Rahner verstehen*, 83-85. Preceded by an introduction, the work contains five chapters: 1. “The biblical (Johannine and pauline) grounding”; 2. “The patristic literature until the middle of the third century”; 3. “The first exceptional witnesses of the 3rd century”; 4. “From the flowering period of the patristic literature up to the twilight of the patristic period”; 5. “The middle and modern ages”. Remembering the genesis of this work, Karl Rahner did not hesitate to qualify it “petty, miserable, but sufficient, according to the norms of that time” (*KRSW 25*, 6). His brother Hugo enumerated this work among the writings “about which we laugh” and which are a part of “the pre-history of our science” (H. Rahner, “Eucharisticon Fraternitas”, in *Gott in Welt*, 896).

⁴⁷ See Andreas R. Batlogg, “Kirche als Gegenwart Christi: Die theologische Dissertation”, in *Der Denkweg Karl Rahners: Quellen, Entwicklungen, Perspektiven* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald, 2003), 49-50; Günter Wassilowsky, “Kirchenlehrer der Moderne: Ekklesiologie”, in *Der Denkweg Karl Rahners*, 227.

⁴⁸ See *KRSW 3*, 9.

union of man-bride with God-his bridegroom. For the Christians of the early Church, the pierced side of the Lord was “the sign of their salvation, of all grace and power, up to martyrdom”, “a fountain of life, which flows through the Baptism and unites them themselves with Christ”, the spring well of Christ’s blood which they drink in the Eucharist.⁴⁹

The Jesuit theologian suggests that it is possible and desirable to correlate the origin of the Church in the pierced side of the Lord with the patristic piety to Jesus’ heart and, implicitly, the patristic spirituality with the Ignatian spirituality. In fact, Urs von Balthasar made the remark that Rahner “was a great defender of Church’s origin in Christ’s side and through this of Jesus’ heart cult’ and that “here would be the actual centre for him”.⁵⁰

Initially published in French, with the title *La Spiritualité des premiers siècles chrétiens*, and signed by the famous French patrologist Marcel Viller, *Asceticism and mysticism in Father’s era*⁵¹ is the work of the French patrologist “freely processed” by Rahner and published in 1939, under the signature of the two.⁵² In the “Foreword”, the German theologian noted that although the topic of asceticism and mysticism with the Church Fathers occupies a central place in the history of Christian spirituality, theology of German language had not benefitted till then from such a book and, that is why, it came to fill a great gap and to meet a great expectation.⁵³

The authors of these patristic syntheses place perfection at the centre of their analysis, its meaning and the way it can be acquired according to the biblical writers, to the testimonies of martyrs, of the Church Fathers, of the great ascetics and scholar-monks. In the last two chapters of the work (11 and 12) are also set forth the ways and practices (prayer, devoutness and spiritual exercises) the laymen should pursue in order to acquire holiness.

According to the biblical authors, perfection means: a state of complete humility, of self- denial, of love for our neighbours, the state arisen in the soul by the “transparency, simplicity and sincerity” of children (Matthew); the union of man with Jesus and, through Him, with the Father (John); to feel like Christ, to

⁴⁹ See *Ibid.*, 82-83.

⁵⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Cordula ou l’épreuve décisive* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1968), 86.

⁵¹ Beside the introduction, general bibliography and the table of contents, the volume has 12 chapters: 1. “The New Testament and the first Christian writers”; 2. “The Martyrdom”; 3. “Chastity”; 4. “The academic piety of the 3rd century”; 5. “Monasticism in the East. The founders of the Egyptian monasticism”; 6. “The great cappadocians of the 4th century”; 7. “Propagation of monasticism in Palestine and Sinai”; 8. “The latin monasticism”; 9. “The Greek mystics of the 5th-7th centuries”; 10. “From Augustine to Gregory the Great”; 11. “Holiness in the world”; 12. “Prayer, devoutness and spiritual exercises”. (*KRSW* 3, VII-X)

⁵² With respect to Rahner’s contribution to the German edition of the book, see *Ibid.*, 125-128.

⁵³ See *Ibid.*, 125.

live Christ's life in your life, to incorporate yourself into Christ through the Baptism and to be one with Him (Paul). Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, dead as a martyr in Rome, wrote that the sign of perfection is the union with Christ through the martyric death and through Eucharist respectively. After the end of the anti-Christian persecution, monasticism has been perceived as a bloodless martyrdom, that can entail holiness. For Anthony the Great, perfection is the return to the original state of our nature, to its original beauty and purity, possible, however, only by mastering passions, by defeating sins and the devil. In line with Origen, Evagrius of Pontus is the father of an entire learned spiritual tradition (that includes Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor), according to which spiritual life includes active life and contemplative or gnostic life. At its peak, contemplative life is crowned with the contemplation of the Holy Trinity, the ultimate goal of spiritual life. But gnosis – as a vision of God and communion with the divine love – can only be acquired by a purification of passions and through pure prayer, as it is a gift of the grace bestowed by Christ on the soul. For Augustine, perfection – as an ideal of Christian life – is the fruit of love, of such a love for Christ that defeats death, as martyrs show us. The martyric death is the sign that the perfect Christian gets to feel that “wild” love for God that is not just an ecstatic self-effacement, but also self-sacrifice, self-consuming whole burnt offering for the loved One.⁵⁴

At the end of the book, the authors confess that although it does not offer answers to all the issues raised to the Christian Asceticism and Mysticism by the Christian experience of the contemporary world,

“The Spiritual teaching of the Church Fathers can feed our own life in the Spirit. (...) In a community rooted in tradition, as the Church, the Fathers permanently remain a never-fading force for the present, fresh springs from which it takes its own power, the teachers we should ask. (...) A thorough study of the writings of the first century could promote the idea of reunification in the same religion and in the same devotion – the ultimate goal of unity that Christ wished so much, the achievement of which being also our sacred duty”.⁵⁵

Conclusion

A Jesuit monk trained at the school of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola and of the Church Fathers' spirituality – following the path of the creative and innovating faithfulness – Rahner intended to point out that the

⁵⁴ See *Ibid.*, 140-152, 160, 200-202, 213-214, 330-332, 341-342.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 389-390.

intense spiritual experience of the past has the power to revive the increasingly secularized life of contemporary Christianity. He did that through many meditations and spiritual exercises – particularly in the spirit of Ignatius of Loyola – but also through his many articles and pious books which he would recommend to anyone who wished to discover the core of his theology, in particular, and generally of the Christian theology. His most important concern was, therefore, to “help the souls” of his contemporaries to rediscover the path of faith and of the Christian experience, in a time when “the absence of mystery was officially enthroned” and when even some theologians would speak about “God’s death”. It has been rightly noted that Rahner’s most speculative and most spiritual thinking is rooted in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola, in whom he saw “a leading existentialist”. If the existentialism integrated the most concrete experience with the profoundly speculative thought, then Rahner himself may be perceived as a “leading existentialist”, sent to rediscover the spiritual dimension of everyday life and the historical dimension of Transcendence, to impart meaning on “recent man”’s (Roman Patapieviçi) life.

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IV. THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

CIORAN AND GNOSTICISM

CIPRIAN SONEA*

ABSTRACT. This study presents Cioran's relation with Gnosticism that is marked by the fragmentary and contradictory style of Romanian thinker. This is caused by the specific ambivalence signalled by the Romanian essayist, ambivalence that is affirmed by the vitalist standpoint, and negated by the nihilist standpoint. The theoretical contradiction is a repercussion of Cioran's way of approaching to the essence of life marked by the irrational and to the knowledge that is both, at the same time, a privilege and a hex. Therefore, from the nihilist point of view, that of an apologist of decomposition and desperation, Cioran can rightfully be associated with Gnosticism. On the other hand, many of his ideas describe, at the same time, an Agnostic outline. From the vitalist and fervent point of view, Cioran is represented as a strong enemy of gnosis. When he defames existence and history, he can be considered a Gnostic, and when we take into account the fervour for our world delusion and appearances, he is situated at the opposite pole of Gnosticism.

Keywords: Gnosticism, creation, demigod, knowledge, nihilism.

Many of Cioran's exegetes consider him an exponent of Gnosticism. Moreover, Gnostic ideas and several references to the Gnostic representatives, and their doctrines, are to be found in excerpts of his work. That is why, even if halfway, such labelling can be considered legitimate. This happens because of the specific ambivalence signalled by the Romanian essayist, ambivalence that is affirmed by the vitalist standpoint, and negated by the nihilist standpoint. This situation is similar in the case of other religious forms, to which the thinker adheres, in his fragmentary, paradoxical and contradictory style. But, first and foremost, this very principle of antagonistic determination may be a Gnostic one. This instance is similar to the one depicted in a Romanian folk legend that

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showcases Gnostic features, often mentioned by Blaga, “Fârtate și Nefârtate”¹, in this particular case what the former ties together and builds, the latter unties and does backwards. In a similar fashion, Cioran situates himself in a place where he pays tribute to Gnosticism and is in an ultimate contradiction with it.

I. Therefore, from the nihilist point of view, that of an apologist of decomposition and desperation, Cioran can rightfully be associated with Gnosticism. The thinker himself has stated in *The Trouble With Being Born* that “when you get in touch with the extreme truths of the Gnostics, you would like to go, if possible, even further, and utter something that has not been uttered before, something that solidifies, or turns history into dust; something that belongs to a cosmic Neronism, to a insanity at the material level”².

In spite of the particularities belonging to different Gnostic systems, generally speaking, and without any exhaustive expectations, Gnosticism is characterized by the faith in two Gods: a good one, creator of the souls and of the spiritual world, unfamiliar and unknown to the ones belonging to our world, and the demiurge as an embodiment of evil and incompetence (in Marcion’s case identified with the God of the Old Testament). The latter is the creator of our material world and of the bodies in it, an inferior world that is evil and incomplete. The creation of the material world is an accident that occurred in the world of the spirits, or a consequence to the fight between the two exponential principles, good and evil (e.g. Manichaeism). History becomes a representation of the exile from the world of the spirits, and it is placed under the providence of the demiurge. Consequently, the man is permanently possessed by a feeling of estrangement. Only true knowledge (gnosis) can help the man overcome the ignorance that surrounds him, in the form of bodily imprisonment, and reach his own salvation. As a specific example, in the Valentinian gnosis, deliverance could be reached if one knew where the souls were, in their original state, what became of them, what world they belong to, respectively what was the meaning of birth and rebirth. Knowledge has a redeeming effect and discovers: the origin of the World, of Evil, of Christ’s drama, of the One embodied, and is meant to send forth and save the people, and bring God’s victory, that leads to the end of History and the destruction of the Universe. The true nature of man is spiritual, is of divine origin, but it’s incarcerated in the body. Initially, he used to dwell in the divine world, but later was thrown into the material world. The creation of the actual world is a

¹ Blaga, Lucian, „Fârtate și nefârtate”, Manuscript, from the series of essays entitled: *Minciunile lui Dumnezeu*, v. *Isvoade. Eseuri, Conferințe, Articole*, edition by Dorli Blaga and Petre Nicolau, preface by George Gană (București: Minerva, 1972), 208-210.

² Emil Cioran, *Despre neajunsul de a te fi născut*, translation from French by Florin Sicoe, (București: Humanitas, 2006), 119.

“sinister tragedy”, and is the work of “a demiurge or a demonic Being, true embodiment of the Evil”. From this perspective, the birth represents a “fall into matter”, and “the rebirth”, a liberation from the material, and an elevation into the spiritual³.

The Gnostic perspective is aligned to Cioran’s theory of the evil demiurge, and the body of consequences stemming from it. In *The new gods*, the author considers existence in its entirety the work of “an evil god”, “without scruples”, “immoral”, “inferior”, “agitated”, “event instigator”, “miserable”, “cursed”⁴. The world is wicked from its very beginnings, a hypothesis that comes to contradict the Christian teachings, according to which, at the beginning of the world all things were very good. Cioran says that the Christian belief of the good God, *the Father* participant in the *scandal of creation*, is completely inadmissible. The good God is not the creator because on one hand, a world dominated by death, illness, suffering, cannot be created by a good divinity. Henceforth, for Cioran, the evil is not an absence of the good, as stated by the Holy Fathers, but an evidence that governs everything that is alive. Moreover, Cioran considers that the good God cannot participate at genesis, because the good is not able to create, due to anemia and lack of dynamism. Every creation has at its origin a satanic principle, because tension is reflected only by evil, by its action, contradiction, and fertility, while the good represents calmness, anemia and inactivity. In *Cioran, l’hérétique*, the exegetes Patrice Bollon observes that the author of *The new gods*, speaks about the aspiration of our souls towards heavens. With Cioran, and implicitly with Gnosticism, the good God shows indifference towards this world, history, as a whole, being placed under „the eye of the Evil”⁵.

Cioran appreciates Marcion the heretic, who in order to protect the good God against the responsibility of the existence of evil, denies his attributes as creator and providence. As we know, according to Marcion’s teachings, the creator of this world is the God of the Old Testament, who is not evil, but imperfect, inferior. The evil is caused by the matter in which dwells the principle of evil. This demiurge, is neither omniscient nor powerful⁶, and transmits his imperfections to the world and its creations. The world created by

³ Mircea Eliade, *Istoria credințelor și ideilor religioase*, vol. II (Chișinău: Universitas, 1992), 359-363.

⁴ Mircea Eliade, *Demiurgul cel rău*, translation from French by Irina Bădescu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 8-9.

⁵ Patrice Bollon, *Cioran, l’hérétique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 193.

⁶ “Marcion extracts his arguments against God the creator from the Old Testament, submitting him to a rational hermeneutics. The first thing that draws his attention is the *loci* of the divine ignorance (Gen. 3, 9, 11) As long as God asks the first man to hide in Paradise: ‘Adam, where are you?’, it means that he is not omniscient”. I. P. Cuianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului. Istorie și mituri*, trans. by Tereza Cuianu-Petrescu (Bucharest: Polirom, 2002), 177.

this good divinity is immaterial and inaccessible for us⁷. Cioran agrees with Marcion's hypothesis, mentioning that the latter explains our world's imperfection without getting in contradiction with the goodness of God. Marcion, observes Cioran, refuses the dogmas of the Church, by placing creation and history under the sign of evil, but „defends God's honour”⁸. After all, from what Cioran wrote to Wolfgang Kraus on January 2nd 1980, we can see that the teaching of the heretic Marcion, „the most interesting figure of gnosis”, „was the nucleus that gave birth the *evil Demiurge*...”⁹.

Cioran's theory about the evil Demiurge pays tribute to Gnosticism, and to his philosophical heritage, chiefly Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. In the “The Mischance of Being Born”, Marta Petreu underlines Schopenhauer's influence upon Cioran's philosophical thinking. The critic notices that in *The World as Will and Representation*, the man and the world are “something that they shouldn't be”, made not “by God but by the Devil”, and likewise, with Cioran, “the world was not made by the good God, the Father”, but ‘the evil God’¹⁰. We can also mention that Nietzsche himself – as presented in *On the Genealogy of Morality* – from early childhood associated evil with God, considering him “the father of evil”. “The problem regarding the origins of evil – states Nietzsche – followed me since I was a thirteen year old boy: at an age when your heart is torn between childhood games and God, and it is to God that I dedicated my first childish literary activity, my first philosophical writing practice – and with regards to my ‘solving’ of the problem back then, well, I deemed appropriate to grant God the honor of considering him *the father of evil*”¹¹.

Getting back to Cioran's relationship with Gnosticism, we notice that the scholar made reference to the doctrine in his *Notebooks*, where he writes that, like Marcion, he believes that the demiurge is not first and foremost evil, but “incompetent”¹². In his *Notebooks* Cioran also states that the man is brought into being by “the devil's spit”¹³. The idea leads us, this time around, to the doctrine of the Bogomils. According to I. P. Culianu¹⁴, in Bogomilism the devil creates the

⁷ *Ibid.*, 185.

⁸ Emil Cioran, *Demiurgul cel rău*, translation from French by Irina Bădescu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 14.

⁹ Emil Cioran, *Scrisori către Wolfgang Kraus. 1971-1990*, translation from German, edition and notes by George Guțu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2009), 181.

¹⁰ Marta Petreu, „Ghinionul de-a te fi născut”, in *Ionescu în țara tatălui*, by Marta Petreu (Cluj-Napoca: Apostrof, 2001), 166.

¹¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogia moralei*, in *Știința voioasă, Genealogia Moralei, Amurgul idolor*, translated by Liana Miclescu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1994), 291.

¹² Emil Cioran, *Caiete I*, translation from French by Emanoil Marcu and Vlad Russo (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999), 170.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁴ Culianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, 224.

snake out of his saliva, and Adam is animated, brought into being, by an off-putting sputum upon his soul. Cioran's affinity with Bogomilism is reflected in the proverb encountered in his *Notebooks*: "God is not without sin, since he created the world"¹⁵. In the same *Notebooks*, Cioran confesses that Ahriman stands for his principle and his God¹⁶. This time around he joins the Persian dualism, which, according to Blaga, represents one of the sources of Bogomilism¹⁷.

The element these Gnostic doctrines share is the presence of a temptation of the evil. Cioran underlines that both Marcion and the Manicheists represent the evil as an "attraction". They are "obsessed with horror, dreadfulness"¹⁸, ascribing the evil God the condition of an "increate", because without the evil, the world would seem empty. By obsessively showing interest in evil, Cioran becomes a Gnostic:

"As the ones that out of love for the Father, pondered too much upon the Opponent, they were to understand the eternal condemnation rather than the liberation"¹⁹.

Cioran's Gnosticism is also reflected in the essay about Joseph de Maistre, published in *Exercises of Admiration*. The sentiment of the exile, "the fact that everything is evil, because nothing is in its place"²⁰, or the idea of a providence that attributes a fatalistic level to the historical becoming²¹, are aspects that stir Cioran's admiration towards the French moralist. Cioran brakes away from Joseph de Maistre, when the latter backs up the surreal of the evil, which is an accident, an absence of a kind, when the latter states that the man is the responsible entity for the original Sin, and for the Fall²², and that the world is a creation of the good God. Or, for Cioran, the evil and the good share the same reality, if not a greater one. As in the case of a disease that is not a health absence but a durable reality, the evil is substantially existent. As in Manichaeism²³, he considers good and evil principles that dwell together, both

¹⁵ Emil Cioran, *Caiete II*, translation from French by Emanoil Marcu and Vlad Russo (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999), 367.

¹⁶ Cioran, *Caiete I*, 26.

¹⁷ Blaga, „Fârtate și nefârtate”, 207.

¹⁸ Cioran, *Demiurgul cel rău*, 14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁰ Emil Cioran, *Exerciții de admirație*, translation from French by Emanoil Marcu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 12.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

²² *Ibid.*, 24.

²³ It is known that in Manichaeism the two natures coexist: "The Father of All Greatness", symbolized through light, governing the northern territory and "The Prince of Darkness", represented by matter, and dominating the southern part. The two principles are conflictual, and our world is the result of this continuous struggle. See Mircea Eliade, *Istoria credințelor și ideilor religioase*, vol. II, 377.

at the level of eternity and that of evolution. The grotesque and the absurd, characterizing the historical events, can be explained rationally, by the presence of an evil principle. This aspect is the “one to blame” for the creation and the events developing in the evolution of history²⁴.

Another Gnostic aspect of Cioran’s work results from “the correlation”²⁵ established between the concepts of birth and error. In *The new gods*, creation as a whole, becomes a “embarrassing detail”, “an inutile episode, even ill-fated”²⁶. Being “a suspect”, procreation has to be “discouraged”²⁷. One major issue regarding the birth is the imminent implication it brings along, namely *the death*. The man is condemned to die, from his birth. Any birth fatally assumes suffering and death. That is why, God’s commandment to our forefathers as presented in Genesis – “Be fruitful and multiply” – is characterized by Cioran as a “criminal encouragement”²⁸. The philosopher is situated closer to the teachings of the Bogomils²⁹ and that of the Cathars, who condemned marriage: “To procreate means to love flagellation, to want to maintain it, and to multiply it”³⁰. Likewise, in *The Trouble With Being Born*, as suggested by the title, “the birth”, is “evil”³¹, “scandal”³² or “an outburst towards evil”³³, because nothing “material” is capable “to elevate”³⁴ the existence. The birth is a “chance”, an “accident”, but the “forgetfulness” that entails life gives the sensation that it is a capital event for the “equilibrium of the world”³⁵. The accident does not resume to the human beings, but becomes a general one. From this perspective, the philosopher reaches consensus with the Bogomils, and with the Thracians, the ones that wept the birth³⁶ on our lands. Also, Cioran resonates with the idea

²⁴ Cioran, *Exerciții de admirație*, 20-21.

²⁵ Emil Cioran, *Caiete III*, translation from French by Emanoil Marcu and Vlad Russo (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999), 116.

²⁶ Cioran, *Demiurgul cel rău*, 13.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ “At the 1211 council against the Bogomils, the ones that sustained that the ‘woman breeds in her womb with Satan’s help, and that Satan dwells there from the beginning until the birth of the child’ were anathematized”. Although I don’t dare to imply that the Devil would show so much interest towards us as to accompany us months in a row; but I also could not doubt the fact that we have been procreated under his supervision and that he truly offered assistance to our beloved creators.” *Ibid.*, 90.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

³¹ Cioran, *Despre neajunsul de a de fi născut*, 6.

³² *Ibid.*, 23.

³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

presented in the Gospel of the Egyptians, where Jesus affirms that he came to “kill the fruit of a woman”³⁷, because as long as the women will give birth, people will be victims of death.

Cioran’s attitude places him in concordance with Marcion’s doctrine according to which no one can escape the evil of creation. For Marchion – states I. P. Culianu – man’s creation is the most abominable act of genesis, because it is shaped in accordance with the image of the demiurge, from a “lapsed substance” that makes him a “servant of procreation”, namely a servant of the flesh. That is why, he believes that procreation cannot find justification, whether it is “practiced freely”, or inside this “brassy trade (*negotium impudicitiae*) that is marriage”³⁸. The only possibility to avoid evil is “the restraint pushed all the way to Encratism”³⁹. Tertulian, in defense of marriage, criticizes them, and accuses them of “letting themselves die (*apocarteresis*) in order to show despise towards the Creator”⁴⁰.

The human condition described by Cioran also shows obvious affinities with Gnosticism. The man, as he enters life, feels *estranged*, *exiled*, and constantly carries with him *the nostalgia of the unborn*. Or, these particularities carry a strong Gnostic mark. The man, considers Cioran, can only imagine life before birth as “a sleep without beginning”, and “everlasting”⁴¹, and can regret the original inactivity.

“Not to be born [...]. The nostalgia of the previous infinity is nothing but the regret that a condition was interrupted [...] the one in which the non-manifestation was voluptuous, and dismayed by the immanence of the being”⁴².

Nostalgia is accompanied by the ideal of the not-born, by the desire to return to the original condition. In this sense, Cioran confesses in his *Notebooks*:

“I don’t despise life, I don’t long for death, I only wish I hadn’t been born. I prefer the re-birth to life and death”⁴³.

The Gnostic particularities of Cioran’s thinking are a result of his positioning as a defamer of the world and of history, instances of the magic eye of the evil. In his *Lectures*, Cioran draws a comparison between Christianity and Gnosticism. Christianity, even if at first tempted by eternity, and inclined towards surrender, gradually betrays eternity and enters the realm of history.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 119.

³⁸ Culianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, 184.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Cioran, *Caiete III*, 196.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 194.

He will see in the evil doings of history liberating tryouts. Closest to Cioran's ideas are the ones of Gnosticism where the evil is in relationship with time:

"For the Gnostics everything that is associated with time originates in evil. [...] The loss of recognition expands upon history as a whole, as a means of belonging to a sphere of false realities. It doesn't make sense, and it shows no utility. The passing through history is not fructified"⁴⁴.

Similarly, for the philosopher, time is a "disease of eternity", and history "a disease of time"⁴⁵. The devil is "an emissary of the god" who is meant to "set order" in the "world below", respectively in history⁴⁶. All the insufficiencies and the shortcomings, present in history, are "assigned" to him.

In *Cioran ou le Dernier Homme*, Sylvie Jaudeau brings to light his Gnosticism. The idea of creation as "decay"⁴⁷, also that of the human evil as a result of the divine "mistake"⁴⁸, of the "evil demiurge"⁴⁹, the one of "the refusal of procreation"⁵⁰, and the one referring to the feeling of "estrangement in the world"⁵¹, testify that Cioran is a "dignified perpetuator"⁵² of the Gnostic spirit. Likewise, Beatrice Bollon appreciates in *Cioran, l'hérétique* that the scholar can be associated both with the Buddhist and Gnostic way of thinking⁵³. The co-participation of the two opposing forces to the process of creation, perceive creation as a "mistake", and history as "an ontological exile". P. Bollon places Cioran among "the great Gnostic Alexandrian scholars of the 2nd century, such as Valentinus and Basilides"⁵⁴. Even if he doesn't want "to label" him as a Gnostic, William Kluback shows, at his turn, some similarities between Cioran's ideas and those "of the great Gnostic scholars, like Valentinus, Basilides, Carpocrate"⁵⁵. William Kluback transforms Cioran's conception on the issue of evil into a logical, standardized language, observing that "Evolution is [...] the source of corruption", of evil. But also, "Creation is the origin of Evolution".

⁴⁴ Cioran, *Convorbiri cu Cioran* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2004), 217.

⁴⁵ Cioran, *Caiete III*, 186.

⁴⁶ Cioran, *Demiurgul cel rău*, 10.

⁴⁷ Sylvie Jaudeau, *Cioran ou le Dernier Homme* (Paris: José Corti, 1990), 50.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 59

⁵² *Ibid.*, 51.

⁵³ Bollon, *Cioran, l'hérétique*, 191.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 192-193.

⁵⁵ William Kluback & Michael Finkenthal, *Ispitele lui Cioran*, translation and notes by Adina Arvatu, C. D. Ionescu and Mihnea Moise, Bucharest, Ed. Univers, 1999, 170.

Therefore, the evil exists from genesis, is a “constitutive”⁵⁶ part of existence, and is “co-substantial with human nature”⁵⁷. This is the reason why—considers the critic- in Cioran’s work, the man cannot find “caressing” in “God’s goodness, but in the evil god- master of Evolution and contributor to the misfortunes and the vanity of our world”⁵⁸.

II. Having in mind the specificity of Cioran’s thinking, impossible to associate with one conception, we are compelled to admit that many of his ideas describe, at the same time, an Agnostic outline. From the vitalist and fervent point of view, Cioran is represented as a strong enemy of gnosis. With Cioran the world is cursed and adored at the same time. Therefore, when he defames existence and history, he can be considered a Gnostic, and when we take into account the fervor for our world of deceit, he is situated at the opposite pole of Gnosticism.

This fervent approach is presented at his best in his early writings, when his vitality is at its peak. Here, the moment is risen, by the intense feeling, to the rank of eternity. Although torn by the shadows of decay, brought by evolution, the young Cioran does not deny *this* world. He believes in the world situated down below, the world of disappointment, of ephemera, a world that can get a meaning either by revolting or living fully. Even when he negates existence, the principle he goes by is still in connection with the assertion of our world of disbelief, but in a negative way.

The shortcomings and the curse brought by knowledge, according to Cioran, belong to a principle that is in contradiction with the Gnostic teachings. S. Jaudeau notices that Cioran opposes the Gnostic idea, according to which salvation is reached through knowledge, and is often opting for its absence⁵⁹. In this direction, Cioran propagates *the awakening from knowledge*⁶⁰, while the Gnostic stimulates the *awakening from ignorance*. We notice that with Cioran we experience, initially, a metaphysical ideal that eliminates the illusion, the awakening from ignorance, but once one gets the chance to taste the fruit of knowledge, also aspires towards the original unconsciousness. The reasoning behind this Agnostic final attitude is related to the sense of essential revelation. If the Gnostic discovers the eternity of the soul and its divine origin behind the material illusion, Cioran discovers behind this illusion only eternity and the infinity of nothingness. In Gnosticism the immanent hides the transcendental, the Being, while with Cioran, behind the immanent hides death, the Non-Being.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 234.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁵⁹ Jaudeau, *Cioran ou le Dernier Homme*, 50.

⁶⁰ Emil Cioran, *Amurgul gândurilor* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1998), 132.

That is why, for the philosopher, “to know everything” is ultimately followed by “not knowing where to”⁶¹. Even so, in the case of this radical opposition, there is a Gnostic that will sustain it. Basiliades, as believed by Cioran, has the great merit to observe a fundamental truth: salvation can be achieved through ignorance. If mankind wants salvation, it should have as a purpose getting back to the original “ignorance”⁶². Together with Basilides, Cioran believes that a man’s duty is to abandon knowledge. Knowing things is often connected with ones desire. But many of the things we desire are not in our power, or are incompatible with our nature. And since suffering is a result of a unsatisfied desire, the only way one can remove it is by giving up knowledge⁶³.

From the above mentioned we can illustrate another distinction: Gnosticism offers soteriology through the access to true knowledge, while Cioran resigns in front of the irreparable impossibility to bring salvation. Marcionism is an example in this sense. Therefore, despite the practiced nihilism, Marcion believes in the salvation brought by Christ. With Marcion, Judgment Day means installing the kingdom of the new Father, of the good God who shows forgiveness and is a stranger at the same time. The righteous ones will pass into the eternal life of the angels, and the sinful ones will be given to the demiurge, and will die together with him and the world he created by a universal combustion⁶⁴. Cioran is incapable to adhere to such ideas that require an act of faith. If in Gnosticism death can be understood as salvation, because it helps us brake away from the imprisonment of the body, and the soul can return to the superior universe, according to Cioran, neither life nor death offer a solution.

As long as the evidence of evil is taken into account, Cioran bears the same tonality the Gnostics do, but when an existence that exceeds evidence is postulated, as placed into transcendental with the help of faith, the two standpoints differ radically. But, the main difference between Cioran and Gnosticism does not refer only to the life *after* death, but also to the life *before* death. If for Gnosticism paradise is equivalent to the world of the spirits, for Cioran paradise is identified with the non-being⁶⁵ (this is when knowledge is radically rejected), and with ignorance (this is when knowledge is limited and disguised). In other words, for Cioran the paradise represents an absolute and relative absence of knowledge and conscience.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁶² Cioran, *Demiurgul cel rău*, 140.

⁶³ Emil Cioran, *Caietul de la Talamanca*, translation by Emanoil Marcu (Bucharest, Ed. Humanitas, 2000), 16.

⁶⁴ Culianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, 186.

⁶⁵ “In paradise, things and beings [...] are deprived from reality”. Cioran, *Despre neajunsul de a te fi născut*, 188.

The discrepancy between the two visions is also a result of taking into consideration the nature of the spirit. For the Gnostics, the spirit, the main component of the human being, was imprisoned in the body at the time of the fall. According to Cioran the spirit (the equivalent of conscience) is not an essence, but an accident that descends upon the organs because of the disease. Because of the pain, the body reaches its conscience. Furthermore, the spirit or the conscience, as defined by Cioran, dies with the body, while in Gnosticism the spirit is eternal.

To all these aspects we can add the fact that Cioran is not interested in the distinctions and doctrine divisions, such as those referring to the number of angels, or the classifications of the skies. In this direction, Simona Modreanu underlines that Cioran sometimes establishes an identity rapport between the demiurge and the devil, other times he makes a distinction between the two. For Cioran – states the critic- cosmogony is never triadic (God, Demiurge, Devil), as it is for Gnostics like Ptolemy and Marcion (Cioran claims to be his exponent sometimes), but it operates either with the God-Devil opposition, or the God- the evil Demiurge one⁶⁶. Cioran summarizes only the nihilist Gnostic ideas that can give expressions to his obsessions and agonies. From this perspective, I.P. Culiianu places Cioran among the existentialists, and considers that they share with Gnosticism themes like: “abandonment”, “forgetfulness”, “lack of authenticity”⁶⁷. Their ties stop here, because each conception chooses a different direction. If Gnosticism, starting from this negative condition, hopes for a salvation through the relationship with the transcendental, Existentialism conceives the purpose of the being as “being – for – death”. This is the reason why, Existentialism, and implicitly Cioran’s point of view, represent “the reverse of Gnosticism”. Cioran, as considered by the critic, is affiliated with Gnosticism, because he stresses the question “what origin does the evil have?”, and because of the answer he provides: the evil Demiurge.

Moreover, at a closer look, we observe that the answer given does not reflect that strong affinity, because Cioran always has in mind the *idea* of divinity, and not its existence. The essayist sums up the idea of an evil demiurge as a rational answer to the existence of evil.

In this sense, in one of his *Lectures*, Cioran says that for him the divinity is merely a “concept”, even if pertaining to a “limit”. This “limit concept” is the only one that can satisfy the scholar’s strive for absolute. God is a “fictive existence”, a “unsubstantial point”⁶⁸ that receives from us different names, and

⁶⁶ Simona Modreanu, *Cioran* (Iași: Junimea, 2005), 59.

⁶⁷ Culiianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, 327.

⁶⁸ Cioran, *Convorbiri cu Cioran*, 216.

is an exceptional partner of discussion, when the individual reaches the extreme limit of solitude. This is an “inner content” of ours, “[our] maximum point” that will help us overcome “futility” , and life’s lack of sense. This kind of a concept, fiction or idea, without a correspondent in reality, is the evil demiurge. Cioran himself confesses in his *Notebooks* his disbelief in this evil god, mainly during the time he was writing the text about “the evil demiurge” (July 1964): “I would like to write about this god as if I believe in him – although I don’t”⁶⁹. Even so, the philosopher believes that he “needs *him*”. Even if an illusion, Cioran accepts him because he makes his life possible. That is why in a lecture Cioran confessed:

“I must admit that I’ve spent a lot of time on the image of this evil God, only because such a vision about the history of the world can ease things. You get to understand and explain everything with its help”⁷⁰.

Therefore Cioran depicts a difference between *the existence of divinity* and the *idea, or the concept of the existence of divinity*. This procedure is used by the scholar when he makes the difference between the suicidal act and the idea of suicide. The idea that we have the possibility to take away our life can give us the illusion that we are the masters of life, and that we can decide upon the moment death should occur. Life becomes more bearable when we realize that it is also in our power to decide the moment of the great ending. Therefore, the philosopher affirms in *All Gall Is Divided*: “I am still alive because it is in my power to die when I choose to: without the idea of suicide, I would have forever killed myself”⁷¹, and in his *lectures* he confesses: “if the idea of suicide didn’t exist, I would have killed myself for sure”⁷². Therefore, if for being able to live we need the idea of suicide, and not the suicide, similarly we need the idea of the existence of divinity, and not necessarily its real existence. Cioran stops upon the idea/the concept (the psychological level), and does not extract, according to the ontological argument, the existence of divinity. His purpose is not to demonstrate the existence of divinity, but to make his own life more bearable.

“Whatever you do, after you’ve lost your own support, you can only find another In God. And if one can still breathe without him, without his *idea*, you would lose yourself in the chasms of the mind”⁷³.

⁶⁹ Cioran, *Caiete I*, 263.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 123-124.

⁷¹ Emil Cioran, *Silogisme amărăciunii*, translation from French by Nicolae Bârna (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 57.

⁷² Cioran, *Convorbiri cu Cioran*, 173, 207.

⁷³ Cioran, *Amurgul gândurilor*, 63.

The demiurge is presented as a concept, an idea that solves the problem of the evil. Another idea, that does not have, a correspondent in reality, explaining partially the life and history, is that of the original sin.

“Without the idea of the original sin, the stupefaction would be the only feeling in front of everything that is happening. This idea is a principle that explains the universal value that allows us to understand all the miseries that overwhelm us especially the ones that are connected to being a man”⁷⁴.

Having as a starting point such premises of Cioran’s philosophy, Culianu concludes that Cioran is a “knight of nihilism”⁷⁵, situated at the “antipode of gnosis”, the only common thing shared with this conception being the negative attitude in front of the world. “The negative” is the only point where the two visions intersect. The same aspect is underlined by S. Jaudeau, when she affirms that with Cioran we have an “atheistic”⁷⁶ or “without God”⁷⁷ Gnosticism.

In conclusion, we can state that trying to capture Cioran in a certain category, well determined and final, such as the one of Gnosticism, is not completely possible, unless we shut one eye, and maintain a unilateral view upon the thoughts of the Romanian scholar. The same type of conflict is underlined by Marta Petreu in *About the Diseases of the Philosophers*, where she mentions the problem of faith in Cioran’s work:

“the problem of faith or lack of it with Cioran is a matter too complicated to be solved with a *yes* or a *no*”⁷⁸.

Therefore, more efficient would be an endeavor to find his place in a contradictory, but complete way, in order to get to the conclusion that he is, and at the same time isn’t, an exponent of Gnosticism. The conflict between the two perspectives finds a solution in the dialectics of life, where the elements that are contradictory, at the theoretical and logical level are organically merged.

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⁷⁴ Cioran, *Caiete III*, 194.

⁷⁵ Culianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, 328.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 328.

⁷⁷ Jaudeau, *Cioran ou le Dernier Homme*, 54.

⁷⁸ Marta Petreu, *Despre bolile filosofilor. Cioran* (Cluj-Napoca: Biblioteca Apostrof, 2008), 65.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan. *Ortodoxie și Luteranism în Transilvania între Revoluția Pașoptistă și Marea Unire. Evoluție istorică și relații profesionale [Orthodoxy and Lutheranism in Transylvania between the 1848 Revolution and the Great Union. Historical Evolution and Confessional Relationships]. Andreiana Publishing House/Cluj University Press: Sibiu/Cluj-Napoca, 2015, 934 pages*

Through this work, published three years ago, young historian Mircea Abrudan offers us a substantial monographic contribution regarding one of the exceptional personalities of the Romanian nation in the Habsburg Empire, Orthodox bishop Andrei Șaguna. Initially presented as a doctoral thesis at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, under the coordination of professors Nicolae Bocșan and Rudolf Gräf, the present book is not devoid of a celebratory connotation: the year before its printing, 2014, marked the 150th anniversary of the concretization of the great Șagunian project: the foundation (reactivation) of the Transylvanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church. Far from being dictated by celebratory reasons of conjuncture, the present work sensibly enriches the knowledge of ecclesiastical history of the Orthodox Romanians living in the mid-19th and second half of the 19th century.

The book opens with a Foreword signed by His Eminence, Laurențiu Streza, Metropolitan of Ardeal, a preface written by professor Nicolae Bocșan, followed by the author's argument, in which the goals

and the course of the research are briefly presented, as well as the institutions and the people with whom he interacted during the process. An introductory chapter follows, which contains preliminary aspects meant to guide the reader throughout the aforementioned subject of the book and to contextualize within the epoch the two Churches which are subject to this research: the Orthodox Church and the A. C. Evangelical Church in Transylvania.

The second chapter, *The Orthodox Church in Transylvania and Hungary in the Șagunian period (1846-1873)*, is a thoroughly researched portrayal of the historical context and the epoch in which several steps were taken within the Orthodox Church of the Romanians in Transylvania, under the tutelage of bishop and later metropolitan Andrei Șaguna, as well as an outline of his relations with the heads of the Evangelical Church, professors and superintendents of this religious structure. It is an ample incursion, complemented by the richness of information which the author took from German sources, fact that sets aside Mircea Abrudan's research in relation to other studies

dedicated to Şaguna and his epoch, which did not surpass the linguistic barrier of Romanian sources from the aforementioned period.

The third chapter focuses on a subject that was of concern on a large scale in the 19th century, a debate which was held in both ecclesiastical spaces and outside them: the relationship between Church and Nation. The chapter deals with the two Transylvanian churches, Orthodox and Protestant, in terms of organization and administrative-territorial jurisdiction, and, at the same time, regarding the perspective from which it was conceptualized and formed in the two ecclesiastical environments, with the issue of the ethnicity-confession/Church-Nation relationship. The fourth chapter casts light upon a subject of major importance for understanding the two Churches studied by the author: constitutional organization. Mircea Abrudan successively outlines the constitutional organization achieved by Andrei Şaguna for the Orthodox Church in Transylvania, the constitutional organization of the Evangelical Church and, in the final section of this chapter, he proposes a comparative approach of the two churches from this point of view. The facility with which the author covers large spaces, the references to the Transylvanian political and institutional context and the European cultural, ideological, spiritual and theological context of the epoch are to be observed, fact that highlights a thorough research of the chosen sources, extensive readings that allow ample enquiries into the problematics of the subject. The Conclusion, a summary in German, the annexes, the bibliography and the name index are the final sections of the book.

We stand before a highly substantial work, one of the most massive and

consistent contributions that falls into the field of ecclesiastical history which was published in Romania after 1989. The quantitative aspect, due to the 930 pages, speaks for the amplitude and scope of the scientific research carried out by the author. Mircea Abrudan has a double academic formation, of historian and theologian, fact that allows him to better contextualize the problematics of the subject and to employ in-depth research otherwise difficult to access by historians who lack a theological background. He completed his history studies at the Faculty of History, Babeş-Bolyai University, the German line of study, which was cancelled later on, studies to which a master's degree in the history of Southeastern Europe was added, completed both at the Babeş-Bolyai University and the University of Graz, Austria (through an Erasmus programme). The knowledge of German offered him the chance to access very valuable information, from church and state funds, through which the meeting and interferences of the two churches in Transylvania, Orthodox and Protestant, can be reconstituted. The scope of documentation, in as far as the primary sources are concerned, is illustrated by the archival resources used by the author, identified by him in Sibiu, Cluj-Napoca, Bucharest, Vienna and Munich. The first-hand information, taken by the author from archival funds in the country and abroad, among which the German documentation must be noted, is a strong point of the book and places the value and relevance of the documentary contribution at a very high level.

An important merit of Mircea Abrudan's book, from a historiographic point of view, is that it deconstructs misconceptions which circulated throughout

time in relation to the organization of the Transylvanian Orthodox Church. Of relevance in this case is the author's statement on page 761, in a chapter where a comparison between the constitutional organization of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the A. C. Evangelical Church in Transylvania is made: "it is precisely the fundamental elements that give the Organic Statute its originality, the Constitution of the A. C. Evangelical Church lacking the following principles: the separation of powers, the right to control the legislative bodies over the executive, universal and direct suffrage, the presence of the laity in a numerical proportion of majority in all bodies on each church level, the differentiation of the dogmatic, sacramental and canonical issues from the administrative, school-related, foundation-related and tutelary ones. Of course, one cannot deny altogether [...] the existence of similarities between the two church constitutions, but they were of structure, not of substance, in other words, of juridical body, not of ecclesiological nature, so that they do not overshadow the merits of the Şagunian principles, and an incrimination of Protestantism cannot be objectively justified." Thus, following in the footsteps of Johann Schneider's work, *The Organic Ecclesiology of Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna and its Biblical, Canonical and Modern Foundations* (published in Romanian at Deisis, Sibiu, 2008), Mircea Abrudan contributes to the thorough reconsideration of the constitutional organization of the Romanian Orthodoxy in Transylvania and to the removal of this issue from an area of controversies and polemics in which it has been placed over time, as a result of various Protestantization accusations from Catholic environments.

The research carried out by Mircea Abrudan acknowledges that, as far as ecclesiastical history is concerned, this is the century of nation and nationalism – the 19th century of national ideologies and political projects. For the Romanian and Transylvanian Saxons of those times, the Church-Nation relation was of utmost concern, the two factors being viewed as the central pillars of communal identity. Church environments within the epoch focused on the issue of the nation, both conceptually and from a more pragmatic perspective, of the organization of institutions, in order to configure practices that were in line with their own tradition and with the spirit of time.

The present volume restores, at the same time, a cultural and human climate, fragments of inter-human and intercultural life and relations in the Transylvanian society of the mid-19th century. Andrei Şaguna's relationships with bishops and other leaders of the Church and the Saxon community show a society in which such contacts and meetings were not only possible, but also frequent, and they expressed the normality of a society that practiced multiculturalism in everyday life.

Thus, Mircea Abrudan wrote a contribution of utmost interest for the history of a Church and an epoch, regarded in all their complexity and dynamics. It is a work that studies and research of ecclesiastical history should take into account for a long time to come.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ingeborg Gabriel, Peter G. Kirchschräger and Richard Sturn, eds. *Eine Wirtschaft, die Leben fördert, Wirtschafts- und unternehmensethische Reflexionen im Anschluss an Papst Franziskus [An economy that supports life. Economical and business ethics reflections following Pope Francis]. Ostfildern: Matthias Grünewald Verlag, 2017. 353 pp.*

This collected volume deals with the major ecologic-social crises caused principally by the current configuration of the global economic system. The title of this book represents a programmatic answer to the often-cited words of Pope Francis from *Evangelii Gaudium* (shortened as: EG) „Such an economy kills” (EG 53). This assertion of the Pope refers primarily to an economy of exclusion, inequality, and financial speculation that only focuses on its material dimension (idolatry).

The present volume gathers papers of distinguished scholars both in German and English. It attempts to analyze the contemporary socio-ecological crisis from different perspectives such as (Christian) social ethics, economics, and political science. Consequently, the book explores several alternative solutions based primarily on the social ethical doctrine of the Catholic Church on the current socio-ecological crises. The papers address topics such as fundamental questions of economic ethics (Gabriel Ingeborg), social justice (Georges Enderle, Richard Sturn), social market economy (Markus Vogt and Gerhard Kruij), financial economics and

ethics (Bernhard Emunds and Wilfried Stadler), ecological challenges (Stefano Zamagni and Franz Gassner), and business ethics (Michael Pirson).

In the Introduction (p. 9-22), the editors present a global view of the current status of the economy that aims „to acquire the material basis of existence for all people” (p. 9). Several extremely important problems are found at the global level, which require an ethical corrective to achieve a better configuration of the socio-economical global system. For instance, the significant amount of people that are living in absolute poverty (785 million people in 2015), the concentration of wealth, the tax avoidance by global business actors and banks, the necessity of financial norms as well as social and ecological standards for commodity markets, and finally the problematic conception of permanent economic growth - are crucial challenges for the world economy. These challenges are considered urgent by Pope Francis, as expressed in the *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013). However, the aim of the Pope is not to convince the world to be against an open market economy, but rather to pose the question

which type of liberal market economy has the most favorable ecological and social consequences for the entire world and for the next generations, too. Therefore, Pope Francis starts a debate about these big challenges that is continued in *Laudato Si'* (2015; shortened as: LS) in which he analyses global justice in the light of the limited resources of the world and offers ethical impulses for creating institutions that promote justice on local, regional and international levels.

Next, I will present two papers that make very clear, on the one hand, the inner interdependence between ecology, social and human dimension, and on the other hand, the approach of Pope Francis to the ecological debate.

The first article "Ökonomie – Theologie – Sozialethik. Divergenzen und Konvergenzen" (English: "Economics – Theology – Social Ethics. Divergence and Convergence") by Ingeborg Gabriel describes the biblical-theological basis of a Christian economic ethics, and addresses at length an anthropologically based criticism of the most important anthropological and ideological premises of modern capitalism, and finally draws several conclusions regarding the current economy and economic science from the point of view of both individual and social ethics (p. 23).

Starting with the well-known book by Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904), Gabriel addresses the following question that is actually a paradox: How could an economy such as capitalism with its high regard for wealth emerge on the ground of Christian civilization with its skeptical view regarding wealth? (p. 24).

The first part discusses both the remarkable success as well as the social

ethical "heresies" (gr. *hairesis* as partial truth) of the modern western economics. The economic theory of Adam Smith is based on the value of freedom of the individual who is able to set up their own aims according to their private interests. Remarkably, this type of existential configuration has become normative in modern society. As a result, the anthropological concept of *homo oeconomicus* suffers mainly from three limitations: (a) lack of inclusion of human sociability and relationality; (b) reduction of the human person to their role as worker and owner; (c) amalgamation between the empirical and ethical (p. 29-33). The second part of the paper analyses universal equality as well as the general framework of economic competition. Due to the complexity of the global market system, Smith's principle of the "invisible hand" functions imperfectly because of a lack of equality of market participants (how can a peasant from Nepal who sells their harvest to survive compete with a multinational agrocompany?). Furthermore, Ingeborg Gabriel's approach criticizes both the substitution of morally dependent human action through conveniently justified actions as well as the idea of endless progress that serves as a basis for the entire project of modernity including its economics. Infinite economic progress is definitely not possible in a finite world. Consequently, the anti-statism of the economic mainstreams is analyzed as a heresy (partial truth) from a philosophical viewpoint. The state is needed also in a free market economy since the realization of all economic activities depends of several preconditions that are or must be guaranteed by the state (jurisdiction, currency, education etc.). At the same time, principles such as social justice and the common good are to be realized by the

state and are a precondition for a functioning democracy. The third part of this paper provides ethical and economic reflections on an economy that supports common welfare based primarily on Catholic social teaching. Summing up, ethics should return to the center of the economy and play a role at individual (protection of freedom of the individual) and institutional (concerning the common good) levels in order to increase humanity and justice in society.

Stefano Zamagni's paper offers an explanatory model for the current global situation and stresses several features of a new economy examined in the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*. The first thesis explores the interrelation between ecological and social problems: "The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together" (LS 48). The second thesis views the ecosystem "as a global common good" (LS 23; 174). The third thesis examines the "economic biodiversity", which has three dimensions: the material, the socio-relational and the spiritual. These are closely interconnected, and should be maintained in equilibrium overtime (p. 139). In the fifth chapter Zamagni focuses on solutions to the current environmental crises. These are: a) creating a World Environmental Organization (WEO) with the right to sanction; b) transformation of existing power structures; and, c) a new view on consumer and corporate responsibility. The conclusions stress the message of hope expressed by Pope Francis that should imply more involvement of the individual: "to not consider oneself either merely a result a processes that fall outside the control or as a self-sufficient entity with no need to entertain relations with others" (p. 152).

The present volume definitely deserves attention in the Orthodox world, because the economic, ethical, and ecological challenges should be discussed in local Orthodox churches more frequently and in depth. As the analyzed papers show, the ecological questions are strongly connected to the anthropological and social questions, and accordingly to ethical-theological questions; the Churches cannot remain indifferent with regard to such questions. Whereas the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, an advocate for the conservation of our environment (he is also called the "Green Patriarch",) is perhaps the only positive exception in that he considers the environment. The other Orthodox local majority churches – maybe due to a stronger than necessary nationalist focus – are neglecting on the one hand, the global challenges of the world including the economy, and on the other hand, a pan-orthodox common ecclesial initiative to address these urgent questions. However, it would be preferable that all Christian churches cooperate in an ecumenical way in order to promote global standards for economics and ecology so that the social and human dimensions become much more important in the political decision-making process.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Olimp N. Căciulă. *Euharistia ca jertfă* [Eucharist as a Sacrifice]. Translated by Ioan Ică sr. Sibiu: Deisis, 2016, 410 pp.

Under the auspices of the prestigious Deisis Publishing House in Sibiu, it appeared the doctoral thesis of Ph. Fr. Olimp N. Căciula, who was promoted to the Faculty of Theology of the National and Capodistrian University of Athens in 1931, translated for the first time in Romanian, by Fr. Prof. Ioan Ică Sr. who also signs the foreword entitled: "*Olimp Căciulă*" and *the remarkable theological generation of Great Romania*.

The book has nine chapters grouped in two parts, each with several subdivisions: Part I: *About the sacrifice in general* (I. Religion and sacrifice, II. The origin of the sacrifice, III. The Being of the sacrifice, IV. A brief look at the Jewish sacrifices and Part II: *About the Eucharistic sacrifice in particular*, V. The teaching of the Orthodox Church on the Eucharistic sacrifice – the acceptance of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, VI. The teachings of the Protestant Church on the Eucharistic sacrifice – the denial of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, VII. The Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Tradition of the First Centuries of the Church, VIII. The Eucharistic Sacrifice according to Holy Scripture, IX. The Being of the Eucharist as a Sacrifice).

In the first pages of the work we find the definition of sacrifice: "essential act of cult to God, the sacrifice is also the fullest manifestation of the religious sen-

timents of humanity ... it is, perhaps, the only act through which it has manifested in history, this inexpressible desire for cleansing, forgiveness and reconciliation with God that every man has felt unceasingly, that burning urge for salvation" (43).

Further, it is stated that: "God, man and sacrifice are the three indispensable essential elements of any religion" (43).

As for the origin of the sacrifice, the author sets forth four theories – the theory of offering gifts of interest (attributed to Renan), the theory of sacrifice as a feeding of divinity, the theory of the origin of sacrifice from the notion of totem, Loisy's theory: the origin of sacrifice in the inclination of primitive man to magic – and concludes that the origin of the sacrifice is to be sought after the ancestral sin, in the conscience of the human race's head of guilt, and the manifestation of God's worship.

Concerning the being of the sacrifice, are developed hypotheses that: the being of the sacrifice is to offer a thing that expresses our inner gift, or the change of the offered thing by destruction, slaughter, burning.

Father Căciula highlights three very important terms: sin, atonement, reconciliation that constitutes the basis and being of any Jewish sacrifice (115), and states that the act of destruction is the only one that constitutes the being of every sacrifice (108).

The Orthodox Church has no doctrines formulated and ratified by the Ecumenical Councils on the Eucharistic Sacrifice, because it has never been disputed in the first eight centuries of the Christian era, but finds the author, no other point of Orthodox faith has been more vehemently challenged by Protestants.

The Savior is found not as a shadow or imagination, but in a real sense, in a sensible way (130) in the Holy Eucharist. This presence constitutes the unspent source from which the whole vitality of the Church springs out (129).

The Eucharist is the sacrifice of the Church, although the Church does not offer anything; it only prepares the proper conditions under which the Lord presents Himself in the form of a sacrifice offered unremitting to the God ... offering the physical elements, the figurative representations of the true body and blood of the Lord, not itself His body and blood (132).

The bringing of the sacrifice does not provide salvation mechanically, Father Olimp points out, the sacrifice of Christ present on the altar of the Church has the purpose of filling man's existence with the fire of God and persuading him to resemble his Savior, on the one hand bringing one's sacrifice pure and well-pleasing to God, and on the other hand, pursuing spiritual communion with His Creator (134).

None of the Holy Fathers or church writers specifically dealt with the Eucharist as a sacrifice ... it continued to remain an object of faith, and St. Ciprian of Carthage is the first who pronounce in its writings expressing the character of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, but "it is not a personal invention of its own ... because it was the unadulterated faith of the first Christian Church (144).

The Protestant rationalist critique has delivered several interpretations of the Last Supper, of which the present paper

retains two: *The Eucharist as a simple parable* (C. Weizsäcker, A. Jülicher), *The Eucharist as an eschatological teaching* (F. Spitta).

Any effort to find the origin of the Eucharist as the other Christian Mysteries in the mysteries of Antiquity can be characterized only as a ill will and a clear proof of unbelief and rationalism.

The last chapter presents different theories on the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, at Roman Catholic theologians:

- some centered around the idea of change: 1. the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice in the real change: a) of the elements of bread and wine (Mathieu van der Galen) and b) of Jesus Christ (Roberto Bellarmino) 2. the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice in the mystic change (Gabriel Vasquez). The change in the Eucharist by sanctification does not concern the real object of this sacrifice, Christ; it is only a transubstantiation, ie a change in the natural elements of the Eucharist (349).

- others around the idea of offering: 1. the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice in offering Christ by Himself (Marius Lepin); 2. the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice in the offering of Christ by the Church (Ch. Pesch, Maurice de la Taille).

All this reduces and explains only in abstracto the question of the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, but the element of atonement is overlooked by the followers of the sacrificial theory as offering (360).

In another section, there is the analysis of the views of Russian, Greek and Romanian Orthodox theologians (end of the 19th century – the first half of the 20th century):

Macarie Bulgakov sees the Eucharist as an act of a double offering: of Christ by Himself and of Christ by the Church. This double offering takes place at sanctification by the Holy Spirit ... to communicate to the believers for whom

the sacrifice on the Cross is made, and from this point of view it is actually an atoning sacrifice (365-366).

Nikolaos Damalas quite rightly observes that the Eucharistic sacrifice is not a repetition, but a remembrance ... putting into action of the sacrifice once brought by the Lord on the Cross (369).

Christos Andrusos formulated the most scientific theory in the Orthodox Church about the Eucharist as a sacrifice (369). The act of sacrifice is to be sought in sanctification, when sacrifice and sacrificer are one and the same person; through this sanctification the Eucharist becomes both the representation of the sacrifice on the Cross and real sacrifice ... The Eucharist as a sacrifice remains the very sacrifice of the Cross, on the altar we sacramentally have the sacramental re-presentation or presence of the sacrifice on the Cross and not the presentation or repetition (371-372).

According to Konstantin Diouviotis, the Eucharistic sacrifice cannot add anything to the value of the sacrifice on the Cross ... the mystical and unbloody repetition of this sacrifice on the Cross to share the fruits of the believers (374).

Alexiu Comorosan emphasizes that the Eucharistic sacrifice is a renewal of the sacrifice on the Cross of the Lord to share believers with its fruits (368).

Ioan Mihălcescu believes that the destruction is done sacrificially (376), the presence on the altar of Christ in sacrifice is meant not to be offered again, but to the contrary, to be assimilated by believers ... the sanctification – the act par excellence – that realizes the Eucharistic sacrifice, since this sanctification presents Christ on the altar of the Church as a sacrifice (377).

The book concludes with a section titled: *A sketch of a correct theory of the being of the Eucharist as a sacrifice*, in which the author concludes: The sacrifice

on the cross of the Lord consists in the slaughter of His righteous body and the shedding of His blessed blood (391). The sacrifice of the Savior in heaven is a true sacrifice, but a passive sacrifice. And that this sacrifice becomes active, our personal contribution is needed ... only when Christ's sacrifice becomes, by sharing our own sacrifice, it passes from passive to active, interceding with the heavenly God for our salvation...our personal, spiritual sacrifice unites with the help of Christ, with which it is truly offered to God at the altar of heaven, so that the redemption work, that is, our salvation is not necessarily acquired magically, as many imagine, but is, on the one hand, the result of the goodness of God and, on the other hand, the personal co-operation of man.

The Holy Eucharist – the mystery of the real presence of the Savior in the midst of the faithful, which occupy the central place in the mystical life of the Church – is at the same time Mystery and Sacrifice, mutually intertwined, for which reason it is a matter of utmost importance and permanent actuality.

Although written more than three quarters of a century ago, the work, the fruit of a sustained and earnest work, points very clearly the fundamental aspects of Orthodox teaching, remaining, despite the foreign influences, specific to the time in which it was drafted, of a certain value for Apologetics and Dogmatics, the author proving an excellent knowledge of the bibliography of the period, related to this theme, as well as a great capacity for analysis and synthesis.

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