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I. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

THE BYZANTINE ICONIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CHERUBIM: SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE POINTS

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ABSTRACT. The aim of this study is to tackle a subject of iconography from a Scriptural perspective. In other words, we wish to study the extent to which the iconic morphology of the cherubim abides by the details mentioned in the Holy Book and assumes the theological message it conveys. We are aware that the Holy Scripture is not the only source for iconography. Icon painters can also use other sources when creating their artistic representations. However, if the morphology they represent originates in the Holy Scripture, then it is compulsory that the elements taken from the biblical texts should be correct and not at all distorted. In our research, we shall focus especially on the Tetramorph, a morphology that has greatly challenged the creativity of icon painters, in order to clarify the mystery of its origin. Contrary to the general view, some terminologists and icon painters considered this morphology proper to the group of the seraphim and not to that of the cherubim. In our endeavour, we shall also use the method of contextualisation and linguistic analysis, but the main working method is specific to the Christian East and places primacy on the unity of the text and the integrity of the theological message.

Keywords: cherubim, iconic morphology, hermeneia, Miron Cristea, Dionysius of Fourna, Ezekiel, Tetramorph

Introduction

Cherubim are angelic beings about whom the Holy Scripture and in particular the Old Testament offers us the most details with respect to their appearance. This is not by chance, as the cherubim are mentioned in all the categories of canonical texts from the Old Testament. Starting with the Genesis,

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they are entrusted with the mission of mysteriously signalling God's presence. In the mind of the chosen people, the cherubim were associated with the holy space, given their place at the entrance to Eden (Gen 3:24) and especially given their artistic representations portraying their face in various ways in the biblical sanctuary. Whether we refer to the faces woven on the veil (Ex 36:35) or on the curtains of the tabernacle (Ex 26:1) or to the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant (Ex 25:18-22; according to 37:7-9) or to those that guarded the Holy of Hollies (2 Chron 3:10-13) or to other representations from the area of the Temple of the earthly (3 Kg 6:32-33; 7:27-29) or heavenly (Ez 41:17-20) Jerusalem, the cherubim had the role of offering the chosen people the possibility to reach the communion with the One enthroned between the cherubim (2 Kg 19:15; Ps 80:1; Is 37:16) or flying on the wings of the cherubim (Ps 18:10).

Even though we have enough Scriptural details to reconstruct the iconic morphology of these celestial beings, the representation of the cherubim has been a great challenge for icon painters. This is due, in particular, to the information prophet Ezekiel provides with respect to their appearance in the inaugural vision, where God's glory is described. The artistic representation of the cherubim in this writing has led to the so-called Tetramorph, portraying four faces united in a single body. Taken separately, these four faces have been associated in iconography with the evangelists, given the patristic exegesis which correlated their image with the four faces of the beings described by Ezekiel. Although the cherubim are linked with three animals (the lion, the bull and the eagle), their appearance is anthropomorphous[1] or at least partially humanoid (Ez 1:5-14)[2]. They have several pairs of wings and a multitude of eyes on their body. And, to deepen even more the mystery of their morphology, they are associated with winged wheels of fire that move in line with the cherubim's body.

We have provided these Scriptural details in order to understand the reason why the artistic representation of the cherubim has been challenging for icon painters. The lack of a unitary Scriptural discourse with respect to their appearance has led to iconic morphologies that are not consistent with the Holy Scripture. For these reasons, we wish to analyse the iconic representation of the cherubim described in two hermeneias[3], proper to the Eastern world, and

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[1] Ioan Chirilă, *Fragmentarium exegetic filonian* [Veinal exegetic collection of fragments] (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2002), 104.

[2] J. Skinner, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapters I.-XXXIX. With Introduction and Notes* (Cambridge: University Press, 1897), 44.

[3] We shall resort to the Greek hermeneia of monk Dionysius of Fourna (*Hermeneia of the Painting Art*, re-edited by Sofia in 2000) and to the only Romania hermeneia, whose author is patriarch Miron Cristea (*Iconografia și întocmirile din interiorul bisericii răsăritene* [Iconography and compilations from within the Eastern Church], edited in Sibiu in 1905, following Western sources, yet adapted to the Byzantine specificity.

to ascertain their faithfulness to these sources. We shall focus solely on Byzantine morphologies in order to restrict even more the area of research. Since the present study aims at an introductory approach, of a general nature, we shall not analyse the specificity of distinctive representations in various churches, like Andela Gavrilovic did[4]. Consequently, we shall not resort to recent Western specialised research except for cases of reconstruction of the Old Testament religious context[5]. The working method used for the analysis of Scriptural texts is specific to the Christian East, but we shall also resort to contextualisation and linguistic analysis where necessary. The present research shall be divided in two sections: one dedicated to hermeneias and the other to the Holy Scripture.

Scriptural morphology of the cherubim

We have testimonies about the cherubim and in particular about their appearance and their mission from the Book of Genesis (3:24). They are mentioned for the first time in the context of the expulsion of the first man and woman from the Garden of Eden. Then, God placed cherubim with a flaming sword at the entrance to Heaven. Their mission was not necessarily to guard the garden from an eventual abusive attempt of man to get back inside[6], but to remind Adam and Eve of the state they had before their fall, when they resembled angels and could be close to God. Philo of Alexandria believed that the flaming sword had the role of showing men, even at night, the presence of Heaven, the space of direct communion between them and God[7]. Father Ioan

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[4] Andela Gavrilovic "The Representation of the Cherub in the Narthex of the Decani Monastery Above the Portal Leading to the Nave. Contribution to the Research of the Iconography and Meaning of the Cherub in Serbian Medieval Art," *Zbornik Matice Srpske za Likovne Umetnosti-matica Srpska Journal for Fine Arts* 46 (2018): 13-34.

[5] The main source for this area of research is Alice Wood*, Of Wings and Wheels. A Synthetic Study of the Biblical Cherubim* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 267 p. We also have in mind studies such as: Raanan Eichler, "Cherub: A History of Interpretation", *Biblica* 96.1 (2015): 26-38; Raanan Eichler, "When God Abandoned the Garden of Eden: A Forgotten Reading of Genesis 3:24", *Vetus Testamentum* 65 (2015): 20-32; Lydia Lee, "'You Were the (Divine) Cherub': A Potential Challenge to Yhwh's Sole Divinity in Ezekiel 28.14", *Journal for the Study of The Old Testament* 41.1 (2016): 99-116; Mary J. Carruthers, "Ars oblivionalis, ars inveniendi: The Cherub Figure and the Arts of Memory", *Gesta* 48.2 *Making Thoughts, Making Pictures, Making Memories: A special issue in Honor of Mary J. Carruthers* (2009): 99-117; Wolfgang C. Schneider, "The 'Cherub entry' in the 'Temple of Light' – The staging of the spiritual identity of the Christian emperor in the late Antiquity", *Zeitschrift fur Antikes Christentum – Journal Of Ancient Christianity* 10.2 (2006): 336-357; D. Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub: A promising symbol or a dangerous idol?", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65.2 (2003): 165-183.

[6] Eichler, "When God Abandoned the Garden of Eden," 20-32.

[7] Chirilă, *Fragmentarium* [Collection of fragments], 106.

Chirilă underlines that these angels convey the greatness of divine glory[8] and invite to communion, their role not being in any case that of interposing themselves between man and God: "The cherub is a revelation, a messenger of the One who is uncontainable, he is not a hindrance, but a discovery, a call. They are the image of ceaseless ministry towards which man has to strive and aspire."[9]

Unfortunately, this episode does not provide any detail that could help us reconstruct the morphology of the cherubim. The fact that they swirled flaming swords makes us believe they had arms. Likewise, the *swirling flaming*[10] swords offer us the possibility of presupposing that their appearance was fiery, that their nature resembled the fire that sheds light. Even if Josephus Flavius (*Ant.* 8.3.3)[11] states that no one knows how the cherubim look like[12], we believe that, from Jewish literature, we can retain the fact that they were placed in front of the doors of Heaven in order to be contemplated by men, just like a painter looks at his model before representing him artistically (Philo, *De Cherubim*)[13]. Like this, men were offered the possibility of trying to be like them, mysteriously taking on their image through dispassion and comprehension, according to Origen[14].

The cherubim are mentioned again in the context of works carried out at the tabernacle. Moses received from God the command of making artistic representations cherubim's faces on the Ark of the Covenant, on the veil and on the curtains that covered the tabernacle (Ex 26:1-31). On this occasion, we are provided with a few details regarding the appearance of the cherubim (Exodus 25:18-22; acc. 37:7-9). We notice that the cherubim have wings and faces. Moreover, they had to be represented one in front of the other, facing the Covenant, with their wings open so that they looked like covering, shadowing

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[8] Ioan Chirilă, "Porţile cerului. O reabordare a teologiei icoanei din perspectiva dimensiunii simbolice şi transcendente a actului liturgic" [The gates of Heaven. A reapproach of the theology of the icon from the perpective of the symbolic and transcendant dimension of the liturgical act], in *Caietele Echinox. Teoria şi practica imaginii. Imaginarul cultural* [The Echinox Notebooks. Theory and practice of the image. Cultural imagination field], vol. 2 (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 57.

[9] Philo, *On the cherubim (De Cherubim)*, trans. by F. Colson and G. Whitaker (Harvard: University Press, Cambridge, 2014), 14-27.

[10] Saint John Chrysostom, *Omilii la Facere* [Homilies on Genesis], in *Părinţi şi scriitori bisericeşti* 21 [Church Fathers and Writers 21], trans. by Dumitru Fecioru (Bucharest: IBMO, 1987), 213.

[11] Josephus Flavius, *Antichităţi iudaice* [Jewish antiquities], vol. 1, trans. by Ion Acsan (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2002), 440.

[12] It is possible that the first man and woman were so well acquainted with the cherubim that no additional description of their appearance was necessary. N.M. Sarna, "Genesis", in *The JPS Torah commentary*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 375.

[13] Ioan Chirilă, "Cunoaşterea lui Dumnezeu în Vechiul Testament prin teofanie şi anghelofanie" [Knowing God in the Old Testament through theophany and angelophany], *Anuarul Facultăţii de Teologie Ortodoxă* 1 [Annual of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology 1] (1998): 101-102.

[14] K. Stevenson, M. Gluerup, "Ezekiel, Daniel", in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture OT*, vol. 13, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 4.

and, why not, offering protection. These Scriptural details provide us with two elements specific to all angelic beings, which are always present in the iconographic representations of angels: the wings and the faces. If their wings suggest their spiritual nature, their faces reveal us the personal openness towards communion[15]. We can presuppose that the face of the cherubim is anthropomorphous, having in mind the communional side entailed by the presence of these angelic beings.

Grasping at this openness, we underline the fact that, in rabbinic literature, the Hebrew term *cherub*[16] which, by association with an Akkadian correspondent *karabu*, means *to pray, to give blessing, to welcome someone, to praise (a god or a person)* or to *offer a sacrifice*[17], would mean "child". Rabbis translate the Aramaic *rabia* like this, claiming that the term cherub can be translated by "like a child" (*Sukkah* 5b). Considering that the face of the cherubim is represented in iconography as that of a child, which emphasises their purity and plenitude, we believe this rabbinic interpretation might have been a source of inspiration for Eastern icon painters.

A new Scriptural detail that helps us reconstruct the face of the cherubim can be found in the second book of Chronicles (3:10-13).From this text, we find out that, when Solomon built the temple, he asked his craftsmen to build in the Holy of Hollies two winged cherubim, 10 cubits tall, standing upright on their feet, their face turned towards the Holy and implicitly towards the people, in order to suggest the idea of communion[18].The detail that catches our attention is that the cherubim have a body and legs. Most likely, their appearance resembles that of a man. The wings are the only detail that differentiates them. Still in the context of building the temple, we notice that faces of cherubim (1 Kg 7:27-29) were also engraved on the panels of postaments that supported the bronze sea, in order to urge towards inner purity[19]. We are not provided with any detail regarding

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[15] Eichler, "Cherub," 33. Jill Middlemas, *The divine Image* (Tubbingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 69.

[16] More details on the branches of the verbal root *krb* can be found in: David Freedman and M.P. O'Connor, "כְּרוּב (*kerub*)", in Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren and Heinz-Josef Fabry (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 7, trans. by David Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 308; M. Kmosko, "Kerub und Kurib", *BZ* 11 (1913): 225-234; W.F Albright, "What were the Cherubim?", *BA* 1 (1938): 1-3; J. Trinquet, "Kerub, Kerubim", *DBS* 5 (1957): 161-86; M. Haran, "The Ark and the Cherubim", *IEJ* 9 (1959): 30-38, 89-94; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, in *A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 274.

[17] Paul Shalom, "Cherub", in Fred Skolnik et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia judaica*, vol. 4 (Farmington Hills: Keter Publishing House, 2007), 600.

[18] Louis I. Rabinowitz, "Cherub in the Aggadah", in Fred Skolnik et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia judaica*, vol. 4 (Farmington Hills: Keter Publishing House, 2007), 601.

[19] Lamar E. Cooper, "Ezekiel", in *The New American Commentary* 17 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 58.

their shape, but we are told that the cherubim were engraved together with lions and bulls. This association will ease the understanding of Ezekiel's inaugural vision.

Before analysing the details offered by Ezekiel in the vision of divine glory, we shall remind you of the fact that, like for the other two sanctuaries, the prophet mentions faces of cherubim in his description of the new temple of Jerusalem (Ez 41:17-20). In the case of this mention, as well, we point out the presence of a significant detail: the cherubim had two faces, one of a man and one of a lion. It is interesting to notice that the cherubim are represented as bicephalous on the wall of the temple (like in an icon). Having in mind that their iconic representation was two-dimensional, it is possible that this manner of representation was the one recommended by the prophet with respect to the cherubim. Even if he presents the cherubim as beings having four faces, when they appear on the wall of the temple, he chooses a bicephalous iconic representation. A two-dimensional iconic representation would have allowed for all faces to be shown, like we can see in the case of the Tetramorph, but Ezekiel prefers only two of them. We shall close this section where we have summed up the Scriptural texts in which the cherubim appear in the Old Testament, by specifying that in one of the visions, where the prophet describes the cherubim once again, he draws our attention to the fact that, under their wings, the cherubim had "what looked like human hands" (Ez 10:8).

Before describing the way in which the prophet Ezekiel portrays the cherubim in his inaugural vision, we call attention to the fact that these heavenly beings, present during theophanies, have been personified by exegetes, who have associated them with the dark cloud that keeps the mystery of Godhead. In the past, the cherubim were considered beings of the air who, in time, provided the name of one group of the first triad of angels[20].

In his vision, Ezekiel descried the way in which he saw God's greatness unfold before his eyes[21]. Starting with the 4th verse, he presents the heavenly beings accompanying God (Ez 1:4-15)[22]. A similar description that contains many of the elements of this prophetic presentation can be read in the text of the Apocalypse, which shows God's Throne, surrounded by 24 chairs on which old men dressed in white clothes, wearing golden crowns, were sitting. Next to the throne, one can notice the presence of the four living creatures in the image of

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[20] Widyapranawa, *The Book of Isaiah*, 31. For other details regarding the manner in which the cherubim were perceived in the religious context during the time of the Old Testament, see: Lee, "You Were the (Divine) Cherub", 99-116 and Schneider, "The 'Cherub entry'", 336-357.

[21] D.I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel·Chapters 1-24*, in *NICOT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 96.

[22] Launderville, "Ezekiel's Cherub," 170.

an ox, a lion, an eagle and a man (Rev 4:6-11). A sea of glass, clear as crystal, the fire, the lightnings coming out of the throne and the thunders add to this heavenly view that very much resembles what Ezekiel saw[23].

Before moving forward, we point out to the fact that this text made some icon painters believe that the Tetramorph was a species of the seraphim. The arguments on which they could found their opinion are the following: the seraphic chant and the number of wings. The former is meant to link he apocalyptic text to Isaiah's vision, who mentions that the seraphim, standing before God, were continuously singing to one another the following hymn: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." (Is 6:3). In the Apocalypse, the first part of this chant is identical, only the second differs. We believe that, because of this association, some icon painters made this confusion. The fact that Isaiah does not mention the cherubim in his vision does not automatically mean they were not present. Considering that the thrones were there (Is 6:1), where could the other group of angels of the first triad have been? Given that they now chant the same hymn, we believe they were also present then, even if the prophet's attention was directed only towards the seraphim. We also think that, although they are not mentioned in Ezekiel's vision, the seraphim were present when God's glory was revealed. The frequent references to fire, burning coal and lightnings entitle us to believe that the ones with a fiery face (the seraphim) were also present in the theophany of the Apocalypse.

The second argument the aforementioned icon painters could conjure up (opinion shared also by the patriarch Miron[24]) is that the cherubim from Ezekiel's vision and those mentioned in the sanctuary (here, we have in mind those from the Ark of the Covenant, the two standing in the Holy of Hollies, facing the people, those woven on the veil or on the curtains and those carved on the golden acacia walls) had only two pairs of wings. The ones referred to in the Apocalypse and the seraphim mentioned by Isaiah had three pairs of wings. This is why we believe the Tetramorph and the other iconic structures that portray cherubim have this number of pairs of wings. In other words, the

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[23] For details on Ezekiel's vision, we recommend the subchapter dedicated to this event in Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 95-138.

[24] "They are still portrayed with six wings, with a halo around their head, with the face of an angel and holding the Gospel at their chest with both arms. In the middle of the two wings above their head, there is an eagle; on the pair of wings from the right side, they have a lion and, on that from the left side, they have oxen, a bull. [They] look upwards." Elie Miron Cristea, *Iconografia și întocmirile din interiorul bisericii răsăritene* [Iconography and compilations from within the Eastern Church] (Sibiu: Tiparul tipografiei arhidiecezane, 1905), 82.

cherubim do not borrow one pair of wings from the seraphim..., they have six wings, according to the Apocalypse[25].

In his vision, Ezekiel does not specify what exactly these living creatures are. He does it in chapter 10, when he indicates that the beings he sees are similar to those from the inaugural vision, namely cherubim (10:15-20). Here, new details are offered regarding the way in which these beings act, their role in relation to God and the connection between these beings who had four faces and the wheels of fire on which there were wings and eyes (Ez 10:4-22). The only noticeable differences are the following: here, the prophet replaces the face of a bull with that of a cherub (v. 14) and, now, the face that takes precedence is that of the cherub, not that of the man. Consequently, some exegetes considered that the cherub must have the face of a bull. Let us not forget, however, that man's face is first among the others, a fact received as such in iconography[26]. The Targum retains this identification and mentions in the first chapter that Ezekiel makes reference to the cherubim. This would also be confirmed by Sirach, who stated that: "Ezekiel saw the vision of glory, which was revealed to him by the chariot of the cherubim" (Sir 49:8). Obviously, the language used here by the prophet is symbolic, offering us at least the frameworks necessary to solve the mystery of Ezekiel's vision.

Hermeneutic reference points for the iconic representation of the cherubim

Patriarch Miron provides icon painters with a few ways in which the cherubim can be represented on the walls of churches, but also in icons: a. bodiless, two-winged angels, wearing a diadem and having a halo around their head; b. angels with four wings, on which there are many eyes. If three cherubim are to be painted, the ones on the sides follow the former model and the one in the middle shall be represented with four wings[27]. Dionysius of

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[25] We underline, on this occasion, that the prayer preceding the epiclesis, which reminds us of the threefold angelic chant, has a biblical argument. Not only the seraphim chant *Holy Holy Holy*, but also the cherubim and, together with them, all the heavenly powers: "We thank You also for this Liturgy, which You have deigned to receive from our hands, even though thousands of archangels and tens of thousands of angels stand around You, the Cherubim and Seraphim, six-winged, many-eyed, soaring aloft upon their wings, singing the triumphal hymn, exclaiming, proclaiming, and saying: Holy, Holy, Holy...Together with these blessed powers, Master, Who loves mankind, we also exclaim and say: Holy are You and most holy..." *Liturghier Pastoral* [Pastoral Liturgical Texts] (Iași: Trinitas, 2004), 189-190.

[26] Carruthers, "The Cherub Figure and the Arts of Memory," 114.

[27] Cristea, *Iconografie* [Iconography], 102.

Fourna mentions in his Hermeneia that the cherubim are represented in icons under the form of a child's head with wings[28].The same description is also mentioned by patriarch Miron Cristea in his iconographic guide[29]. In the section dedicated to the groups of angels, Dionysius does not offer other details regarding the manner in which the cherubim are represented, but he does mention the cherubim when describing the way in which the faces of the four evangelists are painted. They are accompanied by a symbol that helps the observer easily identify which of the four men painted at the base of the dome is John, Matthew, Luke and Mark[30]. Next, Dyonisius offers an explanation with respect to the association between the evangelists and these animals. The source of inspiration for this iconographic model is the Holy Scripture, in particular Ezekiel's inaugural vision. The four faces were seen by the prophet at the river Chebar, in Babylon, when he looked at the brightness of God's glory: "And [the symbols of the evangelists for, emphasis added] the four faces [all together, in one appearance, emphasis added], are painted with a crown around their head, like this having the face of the angel with six wings and holding the Gospel with both hands in front of the chest, with an eagle in the middle of the two wings, above the head; and a lion in the right wing on the side; and an ox in the left hand, looking upwards, having Gospels at their feet. This is how prophet Ezekiel saw it all."[31]

If we read the text of Ezekiel's vision, we will easily observe that the Gospels held by each being are missing from the image described above. Therefore, we notice that Dyonisius does not describe the face of that angelic being that had four faces, but an iconic structure called Tetramorph, also

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[28] Dyonisius of Fourna, *Erminia picturii bizantine* [Hermeneia of the Painting Art] (Bucharest: Sofia, 2000), 67.

[29] Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 80.

[30] "When they sit on the chair and write, having in front of them the winged symbols, holding Gospels and looking at them.1. Matthew sitting in the house and writing (the beginning of his Gospel): *This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham*. [It has as a symbol, translator's emphasis] man. 2. Mark, in his house, writing: *The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.* [It has as a symbol, translator's emphasis] the lion. 3. Luke, inside the house, under the baldachin, writing: *Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us…* [It has as a symbol, translator's emphasis] the ox. 4. Saint John the Theologian, sitting in the cave and looking back at the sky in awe, having [his] right [hand, translator's emphasis] on the knee and his left hand spread towards Prochorus; and Saint Prochorus, sitting in front of him, writes: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* [It has as a symbol, translator's emphasis] the eagle." Dyonisius of Fourna, *Erminia picturii* [Hermeneia of the Painting Art], 147.

[31] Dyonisius of Fourna, *Erminia picturii* [Hermeneia of the Painting Art], 147.

inspired by the same vision. The description shows that the Tetramorph is an iconographic representation based on the face of the cherubim that prophet Ezekiel saw.

Following the explanations that clarify the issue of the symbols of the evangelists, Dyonisius also offers the icon painter a Christological interpretation of these images, in order to justify their presence next to the four Apostles: "Interpretation: The one resembling *man* pictures the embodiment [and Christ's human nature, translator's emphasis]. The one resembling *a lion* pictures [Christ's, translators' emphasis] royal work [and power, translator's emphasis]. The one resembling *an ox* shows us [Christ's, translators' emphasis] sanctifying work and priesthood. And the one resembling *an eagle* shows us the advent of the Holy Ghost [and the greatest meaning, the Godhead of Jesus, translators' emphasis]."[32] The interpretation of the author of the hermeneia springs from the Tradition of the Church which, by means of Saint Gregory the Great, assumed a symbolic interpretation of Ezekiel's vision[33].We shall probably provide more details on the patristic approach of Ezekiel's text in a future research in which we shall relate to the manner in which the Church Fathers fathom the mystery of the cherubim's appearance.

In his hermeneia, patriarch Miron Cristea mentions the fact that the four beings assigned with an obvious symbolic meaning are represented together for the first time in a mosaic from the 12th century in the Church of Saint Pudenziana. They are not placed next to the evangelists, but on each side of a cross that dominates the composition of an iconographic representation: "In this mosaic, we can see animals hovering – to the right and to the left of the cross –, which are the symbols that the first Christians assigned to the evangelists, based on prophet Ezekiel's vision (1:5-20) and on Saint John (Rev 4:7), where four

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[32] Dyonisius of Fourna, *Erminia picturii* [Hermeneia of the Painting Art], 147.

[33] He explains in the fourth homily on Ezekiel the way in which the four images are correlated with the evangelists. Saint Gregory the Great, *Omilii la Profetul Iezechiel* [Homilies on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel], trans. by Elena Sima and Ileana Ingrid Bauer (Iași: Doxologia, 2014), 70-3, 95. Saint Nicholas Cabasilas embraces this idea, claiming that "the four living creatures (Ez 1:5) are heralds of the Economy, (the apostles) who travelled the entire world preaching Christ as a man – which is shown through the face of the man –, as originating from a kingly ancestry – which is shown through the face of the lion – and as a heavenly, not earthly emperor – which is suggested through the face of the eagle –, who purifies men with His Blood – whose prefiguration was the face of the ox (acc. to Ez 1:10)". Saint Nicholas Cabasilas, *Cuvântări teologice: la Iezechiel — Hristos — Fecioara Maria. Scrieri I* [Theological Discourses: on Ezekiel — Christ — Virgin Mary], trans. by. Ioan Ică jr. (Sibiu: Deisis, 2010), 56. This idea is taken from Saint Irenaeus.Irenaeus, *Adversus haeresis*, in K. Stevenson and M. Gluerup, "Ezekiel, Daniel", in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture OT* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 4.

mysterious animals stand before God's throne. Each has a different shape, with the whole body covered with eyes and with many wings."[34]

Unlike Dyonisius, who only mentions the meaning of these symbols, patriarch Miron offers an argument for the association of the four beings with the Evangelists, each creature being correlated with a certain Evangelist. He claims that man is the symbol of the Evangelist Matthew because his Gospel starts with the genealogy of the Saviour, which emphasises God's human nature (Mat 1:1-2).The lion is the symbol of Mark because the Evangelist starts his writing with the resounding words of John the Baptist, who announced loudly, like a lion in the desert, the advent of the Messiah. Another reason would be that Mark visibly highlights the Saviour's kingly dignity, made obvious through the numerous miracles related. The ox is correlated with the Gospel of Luke because he insists on the sacerdotal dimension of the Saviour, who offers Himself as a redeeming sacrifice. In this sense, the reference to priest Zachary and to rituals from the Temple is not accidental. And, last but not least, the eagle is associated with John because he wanted to emphasise Jesus Christ's Godhead through arguments that raise "our mind in the higher spheres of Christian dogma"[35]. Nonetheless, it is necessary to specify that the aforementioned correlations have been established in time. There are iconographic representations in which, for example, Mark is linked with a lion and John with an eagle[36]. In others, the eagle or the lion is correlated with Matthew[37]. These differences are insignificant for the present approach. What is relevant is that the four beings mentioned by Ezekiel have been accepted by the Tradition of the Church as symbols of the Evangelists. The fact that in some representations the eagle or any of these beings is associated with the Evangelist John or Matthew is less meaningful. The idea itself is the most important one, not a specific correlation that can be justified through a certain argument which can be applied to another evangelist as well.

In the Eastern iconographic tradition, an image has been created that sums up in a single face the four beings presented in the book of Ezekiel and in the Revelation. This iconic representation is called a *Tetramorph*. Its description was written down in Dyonisius' hermeneia, without, however, its name being specified. Patriarch Miron refers to Tetramorphs, but, like we have mentioned

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[34] Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 99-110.

[35] Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 110.

[36] See details in the Tetraevangelions of Vatopedi and of the Dochiariou Monastery from the Holy Mountain.Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 111.

[37] Even in patristic writings, there can be associations that different from the ones already mentioned. For example, Saint Augustine believes the lion is a symbol that suits much better the evangelist Matthew, who highlights God's kingly dignity.

before, he believes they are a species of the seraphim, not of the cherubim. In one of the previous studies[38], in which we presented how the group of the seraphim is represented in icons, we explained the reasons why the Tetramorph is included in representations that are specific to the seraphim. The frequent mentioning of the seraphim and the cherubim in prayers and in liturgical songs, the fact that Ezekiel's vision does not clearly state that the four beings mentioned in the first chapter are cherubim and the fact that Tetramorphs have six wings have made certain icon painters make this confusion. We believe this last argument has also determined patriarch Miron state that the Tetramorphs is a species of the seraphim. When describing them, he starts with this argument: "...the so-called *Tetramorphs*... are portrayed with six wings, with a halo around their head, with the face of an angel and holding the Gospel at their chest with both arms. In the middle of the two wings above their head, there is an *eagle*; on the pair of wings from the right side, they have a *lion* and, on that from the left side, they have an *ox*, a bull. They look upwards. This is how prophet Ezekiel saw them: *Their faces looked like this*: *Each of the four had the face of a human being, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle* (1:10)"[39].

In his iconographic guide, (after the description of the Tetramorph) the patriarch makes a connection between the four beings and the symbols of the Evangelists, stating that they represent attributes of the given apostles. It is not by chance that he makes this association, as there is an immediate reference to the idea of evangelical unity. Although there are four different presentations of the Gospel of Christ, this is still one of them: "The *Tetramorph* is thus the combination of the four attributes of the Evangelists in a single image, it is a body with four heads. Matthew's *man*, Mark's *lion*, Luke's *bull* and John's *eagle* have each set their head on a winged man, on an angel. This combination wants to say that the four evangelists are one. This *fourth part* is very much used in Greek iconography, while it is barely known in the western one[40]. In other words, the Tetramorph holds within the idea of unity and, implicitly, of uniqueness of the Gospel. The icon painter who made this model of artistic representation of the four beings from the book of Ezekiel had in mind the emphasis of the unity of the Gospel and not necessarily an exercise of iconic representation of celestial beings who do not have a counterpart in the visible world or who possibly have one only in the mythical or religious imagination field from the Egyptian

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[38] Stelian Pașca-Tușa, "Iconizarea serafimilor – reperele biblice și patristice care au stat la baza realizării acestei morfologii iconice și a mesajului ei teologic." [The iconic represenation of the seraphim – biblical and patristic reference points on which this iconic morphology and its theological message were based] in *In honorem pr. prof. univ. dr. Vasile Stanciu*, ed. Daniel Mocanu (Cluj-Napoca: PUC, 2018), 337-354.

[39] Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 82.

[40] Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 82.

or Mesopotamian area. Even if the Tetramorph, as an iconographic model, appeared and developed in the East, in the Greek world, it was also assumed in the West, especially during the Middle Ages, as it very much aroused the interest of painters. The act of making this iconic structure, involved and required the creative side of artists and, as a consequence, in manuscripts, on frescoes and on mosaics we have various representations of the Tetramorph.

For these reasons, although he said that the iconography of the Tetramorph was barely known in the West, the patriarch presented a morphology of icons specific to Westerners, kept in a manuscript called *Hortus deliciarum*, which was made by the nun Herrad de Landsberg between 1167-1185 and which is now part of the collection of the library of Strasbourg. The image of *animal ecclesiae*, which symbolises and, at the same time, personifies Christian religion, combines the four symbols in one figure: "It has four legs and four heads. The *trunk* of the body is that of a *horse*. The *heads* are the ones assigned to the evangelists; one of a *man*, another of an *eagle*, of a *bull*, of a *lion*. The same for the four *legs*: one – the right one in front – of a *man*, another – the left one in front – of an *eagle*, the third – the right one behind – of a *bull* and the fourth – the left one behind – of a *lion*. The bull is both at the head and at the legs, placed in front of the lion. Why? Maybe by the painter's mistake. A different representation is justified, with man – as a special being – put in the first, honorary place, the soaring eagle second. Now, the lion should follow and, at the end, the bull, the simplest. We find these symbols in this order many times; even in the aforementioned manuscript (at the Crucifixion), surely made under Byzantine influence"[41]. The only notable difference of this iconic structure is the fact that, in the Christian East, the body of the Tetramorph is that of a man instead of an animal. This better highlights the pre-eminence of the human face among these beings. The other differences are related to the peculiarity of Western art, which is not a priority for our study.

Therefore, since the beings that make up the Tetramorph are part of a scriptural vision in which the main role is held by the group of the cherubim, we can say that the iconic morphology of the Tetramorph is part of the imagery of the cherubim. It is to the artistic representations of this group of angels that we have dedicated this study[42]. For this reason, we shall not insist on theological details. We shall only mention that the artistic representation of these celestial beings signals God' presence. The one who looked at the faces of the cherubim, either on the Ark of the Covenant or on the Holy of Hollies (this privilege was

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[41] Cristea, *Iconografia* [Iconography], 83.
[42] Stelian Pașca-Tușa, "Implicațiile teologice ale reprezentărilor heruvimilor în sanctuarul biblic" [Theological implications of the cherubim's representations in the biblical sanctury], in *Icoană. Mărturie creștină. Totalitarism* [Icon. Christian testimony. Totalitarianism], eds. Vasile Stanciu and Cristian Sonea (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2017), 57-72.

allowed only to the high priest) or on the veil or at the ones engraved on the wall of the temple or on the bronze sea, had to be aware that God was above them, invisible, a fact perceived in the other categories of writings from the Old Testament (1 Kg 4:4; 2 Kg 6:3; 2 Kg 22:11; 4 Kg 19:15; Ps 17:12; 79:2; 98:1; Is 37:16; 3 Tin 1:31[43]). The fact that God revealed Himself in the holy tabernacle / temple above the Ark of the Covenant that was under the shadow of the wings of the cherubim is enough argument for the aforementioned statement.

Conclusions

The approach of iconic morphologies from an exegetic perspective is necessary when these iconographic structures are inspired from the Holy Scripture. In other words, it is appropriate to study first whether the way in which icon painters chose to represent an event, a person or an angelic being is in line with the scriptural text and, implicitly, with the message it conveys. Reaching some theological conclusions that sum up the essential details related to one of the aforementioned categories can clarify certain confusions that might be caused by a fragmentary perspective.

In the case of the cherubim, we have noticed that certain icon painters or authors of hermeneias considered that the tetramorph, as an iconic structure, must be included in the group of the seraphim. This direction is erroneous. The content of Ezekiel's prophecy proves the contrary. The tetramorph must be included in the forms of representation of the cherubim. Through this kind of approach, we only want to clarify a mistake that has slipped, either out of inattention or out of ignorance, in specialised literature. We are aware that, besides the Holy Scripture, iconography also has other sources of inspiration that are important when conveying a theological message.

We believe that, through the present research, we have opened the door towards a more in depth study of the iconic morphology of the cherubim. The other sources assumed by icon painters in the artistic representation of the cherubim are still to be tackled in the future. Here, we refer mainly to patristic texts and to hymnography.

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[43] The song of the young; it is an addition to the Book of David. It does not appear in Western versions of the Bible.

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II. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

BASIL THE GREAT ON THE ESCHATOLOGICAL UNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

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ABSTRACT. Basil the Great in the fourth century AD argued that all material entities are constantly carried away by motion. He spoke of the flow of existence as "ever pressing on and passing away and never stopping in its course." His general conjecture in respect with spatiotemporal existents was that motion and time constantly shift and twist their ephemeral selves, leading them to annihilation. Hence, no entity that is subject to time persists so as to preserve its essential core. The Body of Christ in its temporal dimension, i.e. the visible Body, may also follow a sort of current. It may also experience constant change. The lack of ontological stability is the main characteristic of all unredeemed existents. The Body of Christ, on the other hand, is not a mere temporal entity. It has an eschatological self that will never be destroyed. This eschatological unity will never fade away. It is ordered by a different kind of time. This article aims to shed light on certain foundational aspects of Basil's theory of eschatological unity and of the changing self. It endeavors to explicate Basil's eschatological threads presented in the *Hexameron*. It attempts to demonstrate that Basil's subtle and nuanced analysis of the subject offers an explanatory framework capable of making sense of more recent events in ecclesiastical history.

Keywords: Saint Basil the Great, Unity of Church, Eschatology, Body of Christ, Eastern Orthodoxy

This article represents my reworking of a paper delivered during the 2018 conference at the University of Cluj dedicated to the 100 years anniversary of the unification of the Romanian nation. The conference also indirectly celebrated the long and turbulent history of the Romanian church. An ecclesiastical aspect of this celebration appears to have an extraordinary significance in the light of

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various oppressive or hostile civil and ecclesiastical powers that confronted the nation and its ecclesial self for centuries. It is a miracle that the Romanian church not only managed to survive through time so as it preserve its institutional core, but also to increase in number. It also introduced to the world a unique ecclesiastical heritage as far as theology, church arts and architecture are concerned.

In general, the 2018 conference in Cluj revolved around the topic of unity. What is the unity of the Romanian nation and of the Romanian church? Indeed, as far as the current state of conditions is concerned, this "unity" is transient. The nation is partially unified, having various exclaves in neighboring countries. Its territory also contains various enclaves of other ethnic groups that populated the Romanian land for centuries. The situation becomes even further complicated by the fact that the Romanians, as of today, have a considerably sized diaspora in various parts of the globe. The same can be said about the Romanian church. Apparently neither the national state nor the national church can exclusively secure the unity of the Romanians. We may also recall the fact that a large group of Romanians abroad took their refuge under an ecclesiastical umbrella of various non-Romanian ecclesiastical entities (i.e. those that do not belong jurisdictionally to the Patriarchate of Bucharest). One such a large group belongs to the Orthodox Church in America. Hence, the notion of unity, as far as the national state and the national church are concerned, appears not to be perfectly instantiated in reality. Such a unity is partial, perhaps signifying the work in progress that the nation undergoes in order to attain fully its unification. However, one may also suggest that the notion of unity proper (i.e. without qualification) may not be applied to historical entities characterized by a particular place on the map or a particular jurisdictional territory. In this case language and culture would probably constitute the principles of unity. However, even these variables may not persist, at least for those who are in the diaspora. Moreover, if we look at the European history we may see that most of the borders were in constant flux across history. Where is unity then? We may conclude that the notion of unity transcends spatial boundaries and temporal constraints. Any concrete and tangible entity of this world appears to be chopped into temporal bits and constrained by a very particular place subject to increase and diminishing. Its sensible manifestation can shrink to an almost invisible and imperceptible state, vanishing for some time from its place and reappearing in another place. However, some of its constituency may exist invisibly. This unity also transcends language and culture. What does then unity proper consist in? In the scope of this paper I assume that unity proper is an eschatological reality, one that belongs to the fabric of redeemed existences and is preserved for ever "invisibly." Indeed, these observations of mine do not mean to underestimate the importance of the state tradition. It remains crucial in securing the continuity of the Romanian existence, its culture and tradition.

The idea of unity has a significant appeal to the Orthodox people. Even in the state of territorial and ecclesiastical fragmentation we preserve a very unitive *phronema.* The notion of unity is deeply ingrained in our collective consciousness, even if first and foremost it refers to that which is above and beyond perceptible traits. The ideal of the united church is our guiding principle. However, the current state of affairs indicates that this ideal remains far removed from reality. The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church subsists in the state of fragmentation. It is chopped into various constantly contesting ecclesiastical bits. Those ecclesiastical bits maintain their own subsistence, some of them being in communion with others, some - not. The Eucharistic unity exists among the fourteen historical Orthodox self-governed bodies. However, this unity does not extend beyond Orthodoxy. It does not encapsulate non-Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. It does not maintain union with the church of Rome. And it has a very remote type of communion with reformed churches, which consists in a mere recognition of the validity of their baptism, Eucharist and ministry.

Another way to look at this issue would be to say that the idea of unity is only partially instantiated. It enters the fabric of existents in such ways that we clearly perceive its traits. However, none of these can fully satisfy our conceptual ruler that we apply to judge instances. We thus experience a certain cognitive dissonance as far as the talk about unity is pursued. Is there a resolution to this issue? A reasonable way out of this situation is to ask the patristic authorities for help. Basil the Great, the bishop of Caesarea, gave us a fascinating account of temporal and extended unities so as to contrast them with an eschatological unity of redeemed existents. To this account I will direct my gaze.

The fourth century Christian thought was marked off by the ongoing controversy over the nature of God and its hypostatic instantiations. This controversy introduced various splits and divisions into the life of the church. It should be noted that the unity of the church at the time was largely secured by the newly Christianized imperial authorities.[1] As a result, the visible body of Christ reached the climax of its unitive mode of subsistence.[2] However, neither the imperial coercive power, nor an internal code of conduct (i.e. canon law) could prevent the body of Christ from division and fragmentation. Basil the

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[1] John Meyendorff, Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: the Church, 450-680 AD. (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 8-20.

[2] It will soon start losing its unitive mode of subsistence thus undergoing multiple large-scale splits. The fifth century development will be detrimental for unity as the church will be fractured into two main branches differing in their assessment of the role of the council of Chalcedon.

Great wrote a short treatise, *De Judicio Dei* during the outbreak of the Anomoean (i.e. heteroousian) controversy, associated with such prominent heterodox theologians as Aetius and Eunomius.[3] The mood of this treatise is pastoral and its style is rhetorical. It sounds like an exhortation to unity. Although the contents of the treatise pertain to an ongoing Arian controversy now experiencing a new twist, its ramifications seem far-reaching. In this treatise Basil describes a particular manifestation of an ongoing theological contest. He does not intend to dive into a deeper metaphysical level of analysis. He does not juxtapose the two modes of being, one which is proper to the Kingdom, and another one – belonging to the world. Rather, Basil seems to pursue his quest for unity. He writes that:

> in the Church of God alone, for which Christ died and upon which He poured out in abundance the Holy Spirit, I noticed that many disagree violently with one another and also in their understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Most alarming of all is the fact that I found the very leaders of the Church themselves at such variance with one another in thought and opinion, showing so much opposition to the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so mercilessly rending asunder the Church of God and cruelly confounding His flock (*De Jud.* 31.653,14-26).

Indeed the corruptive power of evil seems to creep into the life of the church thus introducing the spirit of division and disintegration. He implores his readers to quench the sprit of contentiousness so as to restore harmony. He exhorts his readers by saying that:

> it is so obviously and undeniably essential for unity to be fully realized in the whole Church at once, according to the will of Christ in the Holy Spirit, and, on the other hand, disobedience to God through mutual discord is so dangerous and fatal (*De Jud.* 31.661, 3-8).

Basil gives a similar assessment of the situation in *De Spiritu Sancto* comparing the state of affairs with a naval battle.[4] He is aware that even the imperial power cannot assure unity. Basil does not go as far as to declare that the principle of ecclesiastical unity is extrinsic merely due to the fact that, as a sensible entity, the body of Christ, follows the trajectory of all other sensible

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[3] Aetius, "The Syntagmation." in L.R. Wickham. "The Syntagmation of Aetius the Anomean." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 19, no. 2 (1968): 532–69. & Eunomius. *Liber Apologeticus.* in Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius: The Extant Works*. Oxford Early Christian Texts. First Edition, 3–78. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

[4] Basil, *De Spir. S*. 30.76, 1-4. Basil's disappointment with the ecclesiastical affairs of his time seems to reach its climax in this treatise.

particulars. On the contrary, unity is intrinsic to this divinely-organized or divinely-constituted entity. Its unity is instituted by Jesus Christ Himself. According to this approach such a divinely-constituted unity of the visible Body of Christ must endure for ever. And yet, this unitive agenda does not seem to find support in all Christian quarters. Why so?

Basil cries out asserting that "never before has there arisen such discord and quarreling as now among the members of the Church in consequence of their turning away from the one, great, and true God, only King of the universe" (*De Jud.* 31.656, 8-11). This move toward disunity and indeterminacy is clearly perceived as evil. Basil does not seem to remain content with the conjecture that a higher degree of unity does not belong to this world, that it cannot be instantiated in the realm of sensible particulars. He argues that this evil comes from our self-determination and we are fully responsible for it. If this constraining power of self-determination, of the freedom of choice, prevents us from attaining unity, what can prevent us from chasing away the spirit of contentiousness, from healing the wounds left by the schisms? If the root-core of disunity and disintegration lies in our human self, what can prevent us from making an effort to restore unity of the visible body of Christ? Basil's exhortations precisely aim to target our own inclinations detrimental to the ecclesiastical unity. In other treatises Basil indeed makes an attempt to analyze the nature of evil and its impact on the Body of Christ. He tells us that our estrangement from God leads us to annihilation. This estrangement is associated with our grasping and uncontrollable irrational nature that needs supervision and guidance by the ruling rational faculty. Thus, our incapacity to make good use of our hegemonic faculty (i.e. reason) is responsible for all evils. It is associated with ignorance and perversion. Basil also reminds us that Satan is the true ruler of this world.[5] However, in the scope of this treatise, Basil does not pursue this line of analysis, perhaps seeing its intrinsic limitations in discerning the subject at hand.

We can, however, see another approach to the same issue, associated with a conceptual and methodological shift to metaphysics and eschatology. Basil seems to be making a leap from the analysis of disunity to a thorough investigation of the fabric of beings and the role of unity in it. However, even when looked at from this new perspective, the issue indeed does not appear

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[5] In his *Homily Explaining that God is not the Cause of Evil* Basil takes great pains to adapt the privative theory of evil to Christian thought so as to build up his own theodicy. He argues that evil is the privation of good and estrangement from God. Meantime, he also (and quite surprisingly) tells us about ungodly powers, dominions and principalities, perhaps re-evoking the major elements of Christian *phronema* of the previous centuries, marked off by the massive waves of persecution.

very different. How do we understand unity? A classical Platonic treatment of unity is to affirm that unity proper belongs to the noetic world. As far as sensible particulars are concerned, their unity is extrinsic. They come-to-be unified through participation. Thus, the true unity (i.e. of the intelligible entities open to participation) becomes dissolved into multiplicity through participation. As a result, the unity of sensible particulars always has a diminished degree of wholeness. Their existence is classified by partiality and not by the holistic state.

In this new context Basil tells us that an intrinsic characteristic of this world consists in its imperfection. Unity proper, on the other hand, is a mark of perfection. It should be noted in this context that Basil's subtle and profound arguments clearly exhibit his classical education. Indeed, Basil was educated in classical thought having spent years of his life in Athens studying philosophy and rhetoric. Some recent attempts to uncover the philosophical underpinnings of Basil's thought clearly testified Basil's commitment to Platonic metaphysics. John Rist's careful and thorough analysis of Basil's philosophy indicated that Basil's conceptual contents were largely indebted to Middle Platonism and, even more so, to Neoplatonism, including Plotinian and even post-Plotinian thought.[6]

We must also keep in mind that, according to Neoplatonism, the world of ours is always mixed with non-being. It always suffers from imperfection. We cannot find a perfect instantiation of any idea in the world of sensible particulars, including that of unity. Perfection, on the other hand, belongs to the world of intelligible realities. Basil fully affirms this conjecture. However, he makes some further points so as to assert that this principle seems to be rather eschatological, pertaining to redeemed subsistences, those that belong to the reality of the Kingdom. Basil's Christian background in this context comes to the forefronts of his philosophical developments. His discourse entail that the Body of Christ has the dual mode of subsistence. He speaks of various natural limitations in the journey to unity and confirms that the sensible instantiations of unity (i.e. unified things) may not be pure. It would follow that the visible Body is transient and incomplete. Its unity is conditional. It indeed cannot be absolute due to the fact that the visible Body belongs to this realm. However, Basil exhibits his commitment to regeneration and to the reality of the Body of Christ in its pure and redeemed state.

A treatise that clearly exhibited Basil's ontological commitments was the *Hexaemeron*. There he shifted his intellectual cursor from the statements on imperfection and partiality as far as particular manifestations of unity are

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[6] John Rist, "Basil's 'Neoplatonism': Its Background and Nature." in Paul Jonathan Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea, Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: a Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 137-220.

concerned to an analysis of unity proper, aiming to set out an ontological schema of existents in the light of the unitive principle that permeates all existents and gives them a degree of coherence. Basil, not unexpectedly, resorts to classical Platonic two-world metaphysic. He tells us that prior to the creation of this world there existed "intellectual and invisible natures, all the orderly arrangement of pure intelligences who are beyond the reach of our mind and of whom we cannot even discover the names" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 9-11). Those intelligences, being eternal and infinite, outstrip the limits of time and place. This order is atemporal and unextended. He tells us that those entities "fill the essence" (συμπληροῖ τὴν οὐσίαν) of the invisible world. Their being is thus essential to the being of the intelligible world.

However, he amends this statement with the following one, asserting that "to this world at last it was necessary to add a new world, both a school and training place where the souls of men should be taught and a home for beings destined to be born and to die" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 16-20). Thus, the world of ours was subsequently created. What is the nature of its constituents? It seems that the souls preexist the creation of this world. They are intellectual entities capable of changing their mode of subsistence so as to descend into non-being and become incarnate. What about other natures? What does Basil tell us about them? Apparently they do not possess an essential core of its own kind. They are non-essential particulars representing bundles of matter and properties.

> Do not let us seek for any nature devoid of qualities by the conditions of its existence, but let us know that all the phenomena with which we see it clothed regard the conditions of its existence and complete its essence. Try to take away by reason each of the qualities it possesses, and you will arrive at nothing. Take away black, cold, weight, density, the qualities which concern taste, in one word all these which we see in it, and the substance vanishes (*Hexaem.* 1.8, 18-28).

Hence, sensible particulars are simply bundles of properties. They participate in the intelligible beings and become what they are through participation. They are also named after those intelligible entities that are open to participation. Their "essence" is thus derivative. However, the souls and ecclesial entities do not seem to fall under such a class of existents. These entities are indeed partially or fully immersed in this world. They have their sensible manifestation. More important is that, just opposite to sensible particulars, they also have an essential core. Thus, their essence is not acquired by a mere participation in the intelligible realities. It is not ephemeral. There is something that persists throughout all changes and never fades away, even upon the dissolution of their sensible characteristics. In other words, these entities are

not mere shadows, or replicas, or imitations, or images of some primary realities. On the contrary, they are the realities of their own kind, those that bridge the two worlds, experience pilgrimage in the world of sensible particulars without losing their essential self.[7] Their being is preordained by God's *pronoia* in such a way as to allow them to survive change and to have various sensible manifestations.[8]

Another issue that Basil accentuates in this treatise is that the world is not self-constituted. It was once generated. He then infers that the fate of generated sensible particulars is to cease to exist at a certain instant of time. This concerns not only things characterized by irregular motion, but also the celestial bodies that appear to perpetually revolve around their axis. Their perpetuity, however, is not without qualifications. Basil warns us that we must not be confused by the fact that they move in a circular course. Indeed, "it is difficult for our senses to define the point where the circle begins" (*Hexaem.* 1.3, 3-4). He implores the reader not to believe "that bodies impelled by a circular movement are, from their nature, without a beginning" (*Hexaem.* 1.3, 4-5). He argues that our perception cannot clearly detect the beginning and the end points of the circle. However, he notes, "although we are not sensible of it, it really begins at some point where the draughtsman has begun to draw it at a certain radius from the center" (*Hexaem.* 1.3, 9-11). Hence, the celestial bodies revolving in the circle must have had their proper beginning in time. Basil continues by saying that "that which was begun in time is condemned to come to an end in time. If there has been a beginning do not doubt of the end" (*Hexaem.* 1.3, 20-2). He insists that we must not attribute characteristics of God and of the intelligible natures, such as eternity and un-originate existence, to this limited material world. Since its parts are subject to generation and destruction, the whole must by necessity submit to the fate of its parts. This concerns the celestial bodies and the entire created visible cosmos.

More importantly, we learn from Basil that time ordered the motions of all particular beings of this visible universe **in respect** of before and after. Basil tells us about certain characteristics of this kind of time asserting that it was created in a fashion analogous to that of the world. Hence, this time is immersed in the realities of the world being isomorphic to them. Basil speaks of "the

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[7] As Olga Druzhinina rightly pointed out, "Scholars also do not take into account St Basil's view of the Church as a two-dimensional mystical reality that exists in heaven and on earth at the same time with the strong bond between these two parts." "The Ecclesiology of St Basil the Great: A Trinitarian Approach to the Life of the Church." Dissertation (University of Manchester, 2015), 13.

[8] As J. Callahan rightly pointed out, the entire account of Moses has "for its chief purpose the edification of the Church and of our souls." John F. Callahan, "Greek Philosophy and the Cappadocian Cosmology." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 12 (1958): 29-57, 32.

succession of time, for ever pressing on and passing away and never stopping in its course" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 21-3). This time thus flows being subject to motion. In the *Adversus Eunomium* he would also argue that this time is coextended with the world.[9] This time is not present to us as a unified whole and its parts appear non-existent. Basil fully endorses Aristotle's paradox of the non-existence of time.[10] He exclaims: "is not this the nature of time, where the past is no more, the future does not exist, and the present escapes before being recognized?" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 23-5). He tells us that such is also "the nature of the creature which lives in time — condemned to grow or to perish without rest and without certain stability" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 26-8). He presents it as being "obliged to follow a sort of current …carried away by the motion" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 29). This motion leads sensible particulars "to birth or to death… [they] live in the midst of surroundings whose nature is in accord with beings subject to change" (*Hexaem.* 1.5, 30). This "flowing" time is primarily responsible for the destruction of unredeemed existents. Their fate is to cease to exist at a certain instant. Here again, Basil fully accepts Aristotle's conjecture that time leads things to annihilation.[11] However, sensible particulars do not cease to exist instantaneously but remain in existence for a certain period. They are ordered and positioned within the fabric of created existents in a very particular way. What keeps them in existence? How do all these things, subject to time and extension, cohere together?

Things are held together by some powers. Basil emphatically asserts in this context that: "all is sustained by the Creator's power" (*Hexaem.* 1.9, 25-6). He unsurprisingly attributes this sustaining power to God. God is the proper principle of unity and integrity for the entire creation. It was God who:

> welded all the diverse parts of the universe by links of indissoluble attachment and established between them so perfect a fellowship and harmony that the most distant, in spite of their distance, appeared united in one universal sympathy (*Hexaem.* 2.2, 58-61).

Hence, the principle of arrangement of all sensible entities is extrinsic. They are not self-constituted and not self-structured. The constellation of their constituents and their harmonious arrangement is introduced from outside. Moreover, this extrinsic principle that holds things by force or violence also necessitates their ceasing to be at a certain point in time. Basil concludes by saying that the contrariety of the elements and their struggle necessarily effects their dissolution. The cause of their destruction is their imposition by violence

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[9] "Χρόνος δέ ἐστι τὸ συμπαρεκτεινόμενον τῇ συστάσει τοῦ κόσμου διάστημα." Basil, *AE.* 1.21, 28-30. In this treatise he was concerned exclusively with the "moving time."

[10] Aristotle, *Phys.* 4.10, 217b.29-218a.8.

[11] Ibid., *Phys.* 4.10, 221a.28-221b.8.

within a certain structure and the mere fact that heterogeneous entities may not co-exist peacefully within an artificially created whole for a long period of time. Thus:

> A body to which violence is done and which is placed in opposition to nature, after a short but energetic resistance, is soon dissolved into as many parts as it had elements, each of the constituent parts returning to its natural place (*Hexaem.* 1.11, 31-4).

The elements of the bodies thus tend to reunite with their natural place. From the very outset of his discourse, Basil seems to fully accept Aristotle's theory of natural place and of its power to organize existents. This theory seems to play a role in explaining natural phenomena. Basil also reviews Aristotle's conception of elements (i.e. earth, air, fire and water). He speaks of the conflict of elements that are held together by force, arguing that this conflict necessarily leads sensible particulars to annihilation. Hence, it is the strive of the elements to reunite with their natural place and the heterogeneity of the compounded wholes that seems to be responsible for the despoliation of sensible particulars. The common conceptual thread that he shares with Aristotle is that sensible particulars pass away because of their constitution (or because of the nature of its constituents). Basil observes that the maintenance of the composite celestial bodies, those that consist in the four simple bodies,[12] appears to also require a special force as it seems "impossible to put even a single one of their movements in accord and harmony with all those that are in discord" (*Hexaem.* 1.11, 24-6). Therefore, the celestial bodies are held together in harmony by the extrinsic force. They consist of heterogeneous elements that may experience struggle and be dissolved in time.

It is interesting to observe that as far as "intangible" and essential entities are concerned, Basil at times pursues classical Platonic thread thus presenting them as some sort of ideas or intelligible contents that their eternal contemplator utilizes to create the world. At other times, he speaks of them as created entities that constitute the invisible world. However, his key and unique theory concerns an eschatological unity of redeemed existents fully reincorporated into the life of God. These intermediary entities are souls and ecclesiastical entities. It should be noted in this context that when Basil speaks of these realities his language appears illusive as he clearly aims to accentuate the fact that these entities cannot be fully accessible to us through the net of intertwining *logoi*. In

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[12] He does not rule out the notion of aether right away. However, in his analysis of the composite celestial bodies he does not seem to make use of it. Hence, the fifth element does not play a significant role in Basil's discourse. He seems to endorse the view that the celestial bodies consist of the same elements as the sublunar ones.

other words, our discursive intellect has natural limitations in grasping certain aspects of these realities. Although we may have some intuitive grasp of such beings, we may not have this intuition extended to our own posthumous self-awareness since we must not know future contingencies and we may not synthesize our immediate intuition of the ideas with the notion of the continuity of our own self-awareness in its non-sensible mode of existence. Hence, a discourse on the matters of the soul and the ecclesia and on the nature of the body-soul and celestial-terrestrial ecclesia connection, according to Basil, always faces various epistemological impediments. What is clear, however, is that their essential selves are eschatological realities. Thus, we must wait until the end of time when the veil will be removed so that all redeemed existents may see the beauty of the Body of Christ by direct vision. We would no longer need discursive reasoning to arrive at a limited understanding of it. As far as the current state of conditions is concerned, we may experience the redeemed Body of Christ mystically in liturgical celebrations without a full discursive grasp of its essential self. Basil, however, gives us some hints about its redeemed state by saying that the end (eschaton) is just like the beginning. So perhaps we can intellectually descend to the beginning so as to see things yet to come.

All the constituents of this world were created. They came into being out of non-being at a particular instant of time. Hence, we may track them back to their origins so as to better understand how temporal entities function. Moreover, we may also glimpse into the pure and uncontaminated subsistence of the original creation. Firstly, Basil tells us that the creation of the world was instantaneous, bringing into existence all things according to the pre-ordained intelligible schema designed by God. He tells us about the rapid and imperceptible moment of creation, arguing that the "beginning" must be indivisible and instantaneous (*Hexaem.* 1.6, 20). He approaches the creation narrative (i.e. the six days of creation) as metaphorically delineating causal and logical relations within God's creative action compressed in an instant. The sequence of days thus depicted is meant to exhibit a set of relations within God's creative act ascending from less to more complex aspects, as the introduction of the light logically precedes and conditions the introduction of human beings.[13]

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[13] In this context I would like to express my disagreement with the otherwise subtle and persuasive description of Basil's theory by J. Callahan. Callahan argued that, according to Basil, God's will, though in itself timeless, manifests itself by succession in the temporal order." Callahan, "Greek Philosophy," 34. He argued that Basil's theory of creation has anthropomorphic elements and consequently juxtaposed it to Gregory of Nyssa's account of instantaneous creation. However, this contrast between the two great Cappadocian thinkers seems artificial. The text itself does not give us any doubts about Basil's theory of instantaneous creation.

God created all things in the beginning. This statement on the second phase of creation (i.e. the creation of all visible things) needs some clarification. Basil immediately points out to the homonymy of the "beginning." It can mean different things. He is concerned with a very particular meaning signifying "the epoch when the formation of this world began" (*Hexaem.* 1.6, 53). Basil then asserts that we may intellectually descend into the past endeavoring to discover the "beginning" of creation, meaning the first instant of creation and the first movement of time. This also means that we need to make a leap from the temporal to the atemporal or pre-temporal. When was it that time moved along with creation? Basil notes that:

> if some objector tell us that the beginning is a time, he ought then, as he knows well, to submit it to the division of time — a beginning, a middle and an end. Now it is ridiculous to imagine a beginning of a beginning. Further, if we divide the beginning into two, we make two instead of one, or rather make several, we really make an infinity, for all that which is divided is divisible to the infinite (*Hexaem.* 1.6, 23-8).

Hence, the meaning of the "beginning" is that of an atemporal and indivisible instant of creation: "God made summarily that is to say all at once and in a moment" (*Hexaem.* 1.6, 32–3). This means that the beginning as such does not belong to the flowing time. It is not a part of our extended and continuous time. It does not have parts. As a result, it cannot be subject to division. Neither can it be subject to that which is ordered "in respect of the before and after." Instead, it is ordered by a different kind of time.

Basil, following Philo, makes a subtle semantic distinction between the "first day" (πρώτη ἡμέρα) of creation and "one day" (ἡμέρα μία). He argues that this mystical one day of creation initiates the series and sets out an interval and duration of time. However, itself by itself it is not subject to time known to us. In other words, it is not an element of the flowing time. It is not framed within the temporally organized causal chains of created realities. Having been followed by the second, third days (ἡμέρα δευτέρα, τρίτη), those that comprise a sequence, it does not function as a member of this series. It is "wholly separated and isolated from all the others. τοῦ γὰρ μοναχοῦ καὶ ἀκοινωνήτου πρὸς ἕτερον ἢ τὸν χαρακτῆρα δεικνύουσα" (*Hexaem.* 2.8, 56-7). We may then conclude that, whereas the beginning of time represents an indivisible (ἀμερές) and unextended (ἀδιάστατον) instant (*Hexaem.* 1.6, 19), "one day" is also an unextended and self-enclosed entity, separated from all other entities. It constitutes the foundational protological unit. It mystically embraces all "six days" or creation. It revolves immovably around itself. It orders our shifting time thus assuring the continuity of all processes in the world. That is why they never fail. It sets out the pattern for the revolution

of time. It is an ontologically stable entity that belongs to the original conditions of God's creation. Moreover, it orders all redeemed existents and assures the perpetuity of their subsistence. Basil argued that "whether you call it day, or whether you call it eternity, you express the same idea. Ὥστε κἂν ἡμέραν εἴπῃς, κἂν αἰῶνα, τὴν αὐτὴν ἐρεῖς ἔννοιαν" (*Hexaem*. 2.8, 70-1). Contrary to the flowing time, this monadic time is responsible for the continuity and uninterrupted subsistence of redeemed existents. It does not lead them to annihilation.

Basil's juxtaposition between the moving or flowing time, designed to order sensible particulars and sharing foundational characteristics with them and the single and isolated time, made manifest by "one day," immediately reminds us of some classical conceptual thread in respect of time. What are they? We may think of Aristotle's theory of measure and starting point in *Met*. I.1. However, what also comes to mind is Iamblichus' taxonomy of shifting / flowing time and the monadic time which is an intermediary between time and eternity.[14] The question about the philosophical underpinnings of Basil's theory is important as it may help us understand the extent of Basil's commitment to post-Plotinian Neoplatonism. For now let us say that Basil appeared to be one of the most learned Christian thinkers of his time.

We also learn from Basil that the beginning and the end are typologically similar or the same. "One day" of creation mystically mimics the last (i.e. the eighth) day of creation, one that he calls "the day of the Lord." Basil tells us that:

> it is in order that you may carry your thoughts forward towards a future life, that Scripture marks by the word one the day which is the type of eternity (μίαν ὠνόμασε τοῦ αἰῶνος τὴν εἰκόνα), the first fruits of days, the contemporary of light, the holy Lord's day (τὴν ἁγίαν Κυριακὴν) honored by the Resurrection of our Lord. And the evening and the morning were one day (*Hexaem*. 2.8, 74-7).

Basil's emphatic unitive approach is further accentuated in *De Spiritu Sancto* where he argued that "'one' and 'eight' are the same, and the 'one' day really refers both to itself and to the 'eighth' day" (*De Spir. S*. 27.66, 72-3). This day was totally unknown to the (pagan) sages of this world. Whereas they could direct their gaze to the beginnings, they seemed to be unaware of the ultimate end of all creation. Hence, the last times were not unveiled to them. They:

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[14] Shmuel Sambursky & Salomon Pines. *The Concept of Time in Late Neoplatonism: Texts with Translation, Introduction, and Notes* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Section of Humanities, 1971), 26-47.

have not known how to raise themselves to the idea of the consummation of all things, the consequence of the doctrine of judgment, and to see that the world must change if souls pass from this life to a new life. In reality, as the nature of the present life presents an affinity to this world, so in the future life our souls will enjoy a lot conformable to their new condition. But they are so far from applying these truths, that they do but laugh when we announce to them the end of all things and the regeneration of the age (*Hexaem*. 1.4, 15-24).

Indeed the idea of regeneration or re-creation (ἀποκατάστασις) was well-known to various philosophical schools, notably to the Stoic philosophers. However, as far as its application is concerned, they could not, according to Basil, draw proper conclusions from the given set of premises. They seemed to confine their thought with a more mechanistic account of regeneration, being incapable to see the mystical and redemptive aspect of it. Basil speaks of the restoration of beings to their original conditions.[15] However, this restoration pertains only to redeemed existents. All others appear to be subject to judgment and the consequent annihilation. The time of their subsistence is set within the limits of a finite duration. It is ordered exclusively by the flowing time. And this type of time cannot secure the perpetuity of their subsistence.

Basil tells us that ecclesia is a divinely instantiated entity. He argues that it is the work of the Spirit who is not present physically in the sense of being diffused in the material universe but, rather, as working invisibly within the intangible or immaterial realm. However, the results of this work manifest themselves in the visible realm. The mystical body of Christ has its visible and tangible dimension. It is the community of the faithful guided by the Spirit and scattered across places and ages while preserving an integral unity invisibly. It is in the state of pilgrimage, making a transition so as to redeem its members and unite them with God, restore the original communion with God. It anticipates the completion of history and the transition to an ahistorical state. As a result, if we look at its essential self and also at its visual historical manifestations, we may experience a certain cognitive dissonance, expecting the idea of unity to be perfectly instantiated in this transient historical reality and seeing in its stead disunity and fragmentation. However, the quest for unity must always be balanced with the understanding of its limited applicability. Our visible realm of sensible entities is the place of divine *paideia*. It was created in order to educate the souls and to reunite them with God. As such, it aims to approximate unity while actually finding itself in the state of division.

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[15] For more info see an excellent article by Hilaria Romelli, "Basil and *Apokatastasis*: New Findings." *Journal of Early Christian History* 4.2 (2014): 116–136.

It this context we must also point out the homonymy of eschatology. This word first and foremost indicates the last things. However, it also signifies the completeness of history (of salvation) made manifest by the Incarnate presence of Christ. Hence, eschatology stands not only for the completion of the temporal series of the world, an instant when it terminates, but also for the fullness or wholeness or completeness of reality. This completeness is never given to us as a sensible form since the sensible universe is chopped into spatial and temporal bits. It is never present to us as a simultaneous whole. In the mind of the ancients, both meanings of eschaton were intrinsically connected. That is why it was no surprise that during the first centuries of Christian history the faithful had an imminent expectation of the Second Coming and the Judgment. Once the fullness has revealed itself historically in the Incarnate presence of Christ, all existing causal chains must be dissolved and all temporal series terminate. However, by the fourth century these expectations faded away and the fullness of the Kingdom was no longer associated with the termination of a temporal series. History must keep unfolding itself until it reaches a divinely designed but unknown to us instant. Consequently, the idea of simultaneity (or of an imminent succession) of the Incarnate presence and the final Judgment lost its vital force. And the collective mindset of Christianity ever since was marked off by a certain tension between an already existing presence of the Kingdom and an expectation of its future all-embracing efficacy. Eschatology thus embraced the fullness of the Kingdom in its both aspects, the Incarnate presence and the Second Coming associated with the end of history. Hence, the "eighth day of creation" and the full restoration of beings and their reconciliation with the Creator required the completion of the present "seventh day." And the existing tension between the "already" and "not yet" was resolved exclusively in the form of liturgical celebrations.

In the course of our sensible (i.e. terrestrial) subsistence we do not really experience fullness, completeness or wholeness of being. Unity and wholeness belong primarily to the intelligible. In addition, unity and wholeness also marked off the original conditions of creation. However, in the fallen and unredeemed state, our visible universe does not exhibit an original, proper or unqualified unity and wholeness. It rather represents particularization, separation and dissipation of beings. Their unitive mode of subsistence is no longer a reality. They are separated from the whole, thrown into disunity, dissipated and fractured, chopped off into spatial and temporal bits. Even more so, our experience of eschaton, of the final and wholistic state of conditions, is a caricature of the real and true eschaton. Our eschaton, the last things that we experience, the completion of any action, just contrary to what Aristotle proposed in the *EN*, is not really accompanied by pleasure, but always by pain and suffering. What we experience is

rather disappointment and frustration of expectations. And, ultimately, our eschaton is death and annihilation, the cessation of all causal chains associated with our subsistence, the end of all temporal series of our existence, their terminating point. We may, however, have a grasp of the unity and wholeness of being during liturgical celebrations, when we experience the fullness of the Kingdom, when we confess and truly perceive the unitive reality of ecclesia, one and undivided, when we see the redeemed existents brought into communion with God. It will be "seen" directly by the eye of the soul by those who reach the final destination of their pilgrimage in the Kingdom of God. At this fleeting period of our terrestrial existence, however, we must pray for the unity of the church and for the salvation of all creation so that we may mystically anticipate its glorious redeemed self in the eschaton.

We can then conclude that, according to Basil, the notion of unity primarily refers to protological and eschatological considerations. However, its visible manifestations are equally important, even if the perfect unitive mode of subsistence is unattainable for the things of this world. The body of Christ in its visible form can only approximate unity. It is ordered by the flowing time. Its dis-unitive subsistence is conditioned by the basic parameters of the sensible realm. It is scattered across places and ages. However, it preserves its essential core, one that will shine out in its beauty and will exhibit its fullness at the end of time at an instant of the final consumption of all beings under the dreadful judgment seat of Christ. Thus, being a sensible and transient entity in the state of pilgrimage, moving and shifting itself through place and time, having an imperfect manifestation of its unitive mode of subsistence, it also has its eschatological self, one that we may experience liturgically and one that functions as a guiding principle of our life. This eschatological self is ontologically stable, ordered by a different kind of time, one that assures the continuity of its posthumous redeemed subsistence. It is my conjecture that Basil's analytic schema can help us make sense of recent ecclesiastical developments. This, I suggest, may also contribute to the ongoing discussion on the unity of the Romanian nation and church.

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THE CHRISTOLOGY OF ST. ISAAC OF NINIVEH AND THE EAST SYRIAC THEOLOGY OF THE 7-8th CENTURIES

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ABSTRACT. Isaac of Niniveh is one of the most prominent East Syriac author, whose dates go to a complex historical and religious time (7-8th centuries) – the Arab conquest and the West Syriac proselytism, and yet a period of flourishing theological literature. His discourses have a practical perspective and they may be easily lectured as a gnoseological-mystical itinerary, communicated in a technical language, in a line of a specific tradition(s). Theologically speaking, the possibility of achieving divine knowledge can be expressed only within the Christological frame, as Christ is the perfect Man and perfect God, and any human knowledge resides in Him. In consequence it is dependent on the way one expresses the relation between Christ's two natures (*communicatio idiomatum*). Isaac of Niniveh does not systematically deal with Christology, but one may identify in his discourses an attitude, a phraseology and a mystic theology, in consequence, described as divine knowledge, perception and vision. In this paper we will deal with Isaac's Christological perspective in the frame of the Christological disputes of his time, and, in consequence, we will search for identifying the type of mystics he professes.

Keywords: Christology, incarnation, dwelling, dyophysitism, deification.

The first observation one can underline after an attentive reading of Isaac of Niniveh's discourses is that he disagreed with the doctrinal disputes and consequently he did not really intervene in the Christological discussions[1]. He is quite discrete and even silent when comes about the polemic doctrinal issues that occurred in the Church life of his time. Therefore one can hardly find salient points in Isaac's works regarding this topic. It is not difficult to observe his attitude in the admonishment he addresses against those who dogmatise and support doctrinal discussions – the right way of acting is the practice of virtue.

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[1] M. Morony speaks about the mystical ecumenism professed by Isaac of Niniveh. For details see M. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest* (Gorgias Press, 2005), 380.

We will give two suggestive examples: *Confound critics by the power of thy virtues, not by word; and the imprudence of those who will not be persuaded by the peacefulness of thy lips, not by sound*[2]; or: *When thou becomest angry at anyone and zealous for the sake of faith be cautious*[3].

The disputes around orthodoxy prove, in his opinion, that the truth has not been yet achieved: *The one who seems to be zealous towards men because of the truth, he has not yet learned what the truth is*[4]. This argument can be supported by the absence in his discourses of the problematic phraseology that generated conflicts in matter of Christology in the community he belonged to and by the historical information we have. We will address both the issues in the next few pages.

Isaac's Christological phraseology

We will firstly refer to the language the bishop of Niniveh employs for expounding his Christological vision. One can affirm that he uses the terminology specific to his East Syriac theological tradition, in particular inherited from Theodore of Mopsuestia, but with cautiousness and interpreted. We will give some significant examples, divided into two important categories. Firstly, a frequent expression refers to the description of the body of Christ as *temple/tabernacle of the divinity*: the human nature[5], borrowed by Christ, became *a sanctuary*[6], *a temple for His divinity*[7], or *a glorious Tabernacle of His eternal being*[8]; *a temple made of flesh*[9] or an abode – *the Man whom Divinity took from us for his abode*[10]...

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[2] *Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Niniveh translated from Bedjan's Syriac text with the introduction and registers by A.J. Wensinck* (Wiesbaden: Nieuwe Reeks, Deel XXIII, 1, 1969), abbreviated I, IV, 33; for the Syriac text, Mar Isaacus Ninivita, *De perfectione religiosa,* ed. by Paul Bedjan (Paris-Leipzig, 1909), abbreviated B.

[3] I, V, 55.

[4] Isaac of Niniveh (Isaac the Syrian), *The Second Part. Chapters IV-XLI*, transl. by Sebastian Brock, CSCO 554/ Syr 224, (Lovanii, 1995), abbreviated II, 3.4,77; for the Syriac text Isaac of Niniveh (Isaac the Syrian), *The Second Part. Chapters IV-XLI*, ed. by Sebastian Brock, CSCO 555/ Syr 225 (Lovanii, 1995).

[5] ܒܣܪܐ.

[6] ܒܝܬ ܡܩܕܫܐ.

[7] ܗܝܟܠܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܗ.

[8] ܡܫܟܢܐ ܫܒܝܚܐ ܕܐܝܬܘܬܗ; II, 5,1.

[9] ܗܝܟܠܐ ܕܒܣܪܐ II, 5,1; See John 2:19-21.

[10] ܠܒܝܬ ܡܥܡܪܐ.

the Man who completely became its temple[11]; *the divinity*[12] *chose to dwell*[13] *in man… like in a temple*[14]. This imagery has perfect correspondence in the New Testament. It is also true that, soon after the Christological conflicts, it was dropped by the Byzantine or the West Syriac theology, and yet, in the early theology it was indiscriminately used[15].

A second specific expression refers to the description of Christ's humanity as the *garment of divinity*[16], or the idea of God being *clothed* in humanity – *the Creator is clothed in human being*[17]. Professor Sebastian Brock has studied in detail *the theology of clothing* in the Syriac tradition and showed that this expression has a long story in the East Syriac theology, starting with the Scripture itself[18]. In short, one can say that Adam was *clothed* in light and glory. After the fall, he was stripped of his robe. Christ is the one who re-clothed mankind with this robe. There are three essential moments in this process: the Nativity, the Baptism and the Descent/Resurrection and, correspondingly, three wombs – of Virgin Mary, of Jordan[19] and of Sheol[20].

When dealing with the incarnated Word, Isaac uses two of the terms implied in the Christological disputes, omitting exactly the one that created problems (ܩܢܘܡܐ -qnwma, hypostasis). In the frame of his own theological tradition, he speaks about two natures (ܟܝܢܐ/ kiane) united in one person (ܦܪܨܘܦܐ/ parswpa). This union makes the humanity of Christ be venerated together with His divinity. We will render below a text that suggestively supports the coexistence of the two natures, working in union:

> We do not hesitate to call the humanity of our Lord – He being truly man – God and Creator and Lord; or to apply to Him in divine fashion the statement that `By His hands the world was established and everything was created… He granted to him that he should be worshipped with Him

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[11] ܗܝܟܠܐ ; II, 11,12.

[12] ܐܠܗܘܬܐ.

[13] ܠܡܥܡܪ.

[14] ܗܝܟܠ ; II, 11,12; dwelling – II, 5,6.

[15] For details see S. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition", *Studies in Syriac Christianity*, Variorum, XI (1992), 11-38, here 15-16.

[16] ܠܒܘܫܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ ; II, 11,24; See also: S. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression", 11-13.

[17] ܐܬܠܒܫ ܒܢܫܐ ; II, 11,28.

[18] For the first time this expression was used by E. Peterson, "Theologie des Kleides", *Benediktinische Monatsschrift*, 19 (1934), 347-356.

[19] One can easily identify the sacramental dimension of Syriac theology.

[20] S. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 11-13.

indistinguishably, with a single act of worship for the Man who became Lord and for the divinity equally, while the (two) natures[21] are preserved with their properties[22], without being any difference in honour[23].

Having observed that Isaac highlights the existence of the two natures in Christ, reflecting the definition of the councils, it is necessary to make a step forward trying to identify the way they connect themselves in the context of the Christological dyophisite doctrine of his tradition. As one could have already grasped, Isaac is faithful to the East Syriac Christology when using both the terms *nature* and *person* and, omitting the third problematic term (*qnwma*), seems to avoid any theological debate.

In the Second collection there is one important fragment where the Bishop of Niniveh presents a synthetic panorama of his Christological vision. One can identify the two terms involved in the theological discussions, but the crucial one (*qnwma*) again is absent. There he insists on the fact that, in the union, each nature keeps its own properties, to avoid any confusion of natures. His definition is clearly against the West Syriac Christology, when stressing that Christ is not in one nature:

> Il Cristo Signore è sia il primogenito[24], sia l'unigenito[25]. Le due cose infatti non sono in un'unica natura[26], perché diviene primogenito di molti fratelli, ma (é) unigenito per non eservi altra generazione prima e dopo di lui. Le due cose si avverano (rispettivamente) in Dio e nell'uomo[27], che furono uniti in una persona[28], senza che si confondessero le (proprietà) della natura per l'unione[29].

From all these examples one may identify that Isaac, describing the unity of God and human in Christ, highlights the distinction of the two natures, so as to preserve the proprieties from confusion. God willingly dwelt in Jesus and because of his sacrifice he was lifted up to God the Word and he was gifted with

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[21] ܟܝܢܐ.

[22] Among the East Syriac councils only two address the issue of properties – that of Catholicos Joseph (554) and that from 612, during Babai the Great. They seem to echo the Chalcedonian definition. See: *Synodicon Orientale ou Recueil de Synodes Nestoriens/ abbreviated SO,* ed. and transl. by J.B. Chabot (Paris, 1902), 97-98.

[23] II, 11,21

[24] ܒܘܟܪܐ.

[25] ܝܚܝܕܝܐ.

[26] ܚܕ ܟܝܢܐ.

[27] ܐܠܗܐ ܘܒܪܢܫܐ ܕܐܬܚܝܕܘ.

[28] ܒܚܕ ܦܪܨܘܦ.

[29] ܚܕܝܘܬܐ ; II, 3,1,49.

the same honour. This is the crucial point for his mystical theology, because the way he expresses the union of natures in Christ conditions the possibility of knowing God. Isaac asserts that: *All that applies to (the Man) is raised up to (the Word) who accepts it for himself, having willed to make Him share in this honour… so we have acquired an accurate knowledge[30] of the Creator*[31].

The soteriological role of Incarnation is interpreted in the same frame of the East Syriac tradition. When speaking about salvation, in particular, the Alexandrine tradition uses the term *deification* (*theosis*), based on the union of human with the divine nature and the *communicatio idiomatum* in the person of Christ. Despite the firm distinction of the natures in Christ, Isaac uses the same term to describe the process of knowledge, in a different perspective and, yet, not contradictorily[32]. He does not use it very often and yet one can find it in a triple sense – symbolical, theological, as well as mystical. So as to illustrate the symbolical use we will give two examples from the First Collection: the practice of ascetic life leads humans to become *a god on earth*[33]; or, in the adjectival from, the same concept is present: a spiritual man is called *divine*[34]. Occasionally, one can also find the concept in a theological form. In the Third Collection, Isaac's rhetorically asks: *And what way of life did it offer in exchange for becoming 'God'[35]? … What position could be greater than that of divinity? And behold: creation has become 'God'*[36]. [37] Thirdly, Isaac speaks about becoming *gods* from a mystical perspective. This time in the Second Collection one may find this idea expressed within the eschatological expression of the final unity: in the life to come *we all will become 'gods' by the grace of our Creator*[38].

The sacrifice, the resurrection and the ascension of Christ opened up the way of ascending human nature towards God. Using the words of Hilarion Alfeyev, while interpreting Isaac's theology, deification is *perceived dynamically***,** *as*

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[30] ܫܪܝܪܬܐ ܝܕܥܬܐ.

[31] II, 11,22.

[32] In the Syriac terminology one may find the concept of *theosis*, but it is used very rarely in this form (ܡܬܐܠܗܢܘܬܐ). For details see S. Seppälä, *In Speechless Ecstasy. Expression and Interpretation of Mystical Experience in Classical Syriac and Sufi Literature*, Studia Orientalia 98 (Helsinki, 2003), 144-145.

[33] ܐܠܗܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܗ ܒܐܪܥܐ ܐܢܫܐ; I, VI, 64 (B, 95).

[34] ܐܠܗܐ; I, XIII, 84-85 (B, 124-125).

[35] ܐܠܗܐ ܕܢܗܘܐ.

[36] ܗܘܬ ܠܗ ܒܪܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܐ.

[37] Isacco di Ninive¸ *Terza collezione*, edito da Sabino Chialà, Lovanii, In Aedibus Peeters, CSCO 346-347 (Lovanii, 2011), abbreviated III, 5, 4-5; On divinization in the Syriac tradition, see N. Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), Appendix I.

[38] ܕܝܠܢ ܒܛܝܒܘܬܗ ܗܘܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܟܠܢ ܕܒܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܬܝܕ; II, 3.1,62.

an ascent of the human being, together with the whole created world, to divine glory, holiness and light[39]. We will quote below a paragraph where Isaac himself describes the process of salvation inaugurated in Christ's incarnation and potentially achieved by the whole creation. Here, the author, underlying the universal value of salvation in Christ, points to some expressions strictly connected with the process of knowledge and the theological controversies of his time – light and glory:

> Amid ineffable splendour (the Father) raised Him to Himself to heaven, to that place that no created being had trod, but whither he had, through his own (action), invited all rational beings, angels and human beings, to that Blessed entry in order to delight in the divine light[40] in which was clothed the Man who is filled with all that is holly, who is now with God in ineffable glory and splendour... His intension was to give to all knowledge of his glory[41].

Another important expression implied by Isaac in describing the union of natures in Christ is *voluntary union*, borrowed from the *Book of Heracleidis*[42] and used in the East Syriac Christology[43]. The Word of God incarnated in order *to renew us by the means of voluntary union*[44] *with the flesh*[45], revealing the way by which human may be raised to God's mystery[46].

Lastly, we will evoke a term used by Isaac, which seems at least unusual and, probably controversial for the East Syriac dyophisitism, despite its long history[47]. In order to describe the level of intimacy of creation with God,

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[39] H. Alfeyev, *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian* (Kalamazoo, 2000), 57.

[40] ܢܘܗܪܐ ܐܠܗܝܐ ; This expression also occurs at Evagrius: "Letters", ed. W. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Ponticus* (Berlin, 1912), 554-634), or some contemporary authors like Sahdona: *Martyrius/ Sahdona. Oeuvres spirituelles,* ed. by A. de Halleux, CSCO 255-256/ Syr 113-114, IV, 21; and Dadisho: *Commentaire du livre d'Abba Isaïe (logoi I-XV)*) *par Dadišo Qatraya,* ed. by C. Draguet, CSCO 326-327/ Syr 144-145, XIII, 12.

[41] ܝܕܥܬܐ ܕܫܘܒܚܗ ; II, 11,29-30; Evagrius, *Kepalaia Gnostica*, ed. by A. Guillaumont, *PO* 28 (1958), 1, II.55.

[42] P. Bedjan (ed.), *Nestorius. Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas* (Paris, 1910), 264.

[43] A. Vaschalde, *Babai Magni. Liber de Unione*, CSCO 79-80/ Syr 34-35, 91.

[44] ܚܘܕܬܐ ܒܝܕ ܚܕܝܘܬܐ.

[45] II, 5,7.

[46] One may identify the soteriological accent not in incarnation, in an objective way, but more in the revelation of God as love, developed in a subjective response of human. In fact, this is the very reason of Incarnation/ see II, 3,4,78, discussed by I. Hausherr, "Un précurseur de la théorie scotiste sur la fin de l'incarnation Isaac de Ninive", *Etudes de Spiritualité Orientale* Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 183 (1969), 1-5.

[47] Specific to the pseudomacarian homilies and, consequently, to some parts of Syriac theology; see C. Stewart, *Working the Earth of the Heart". The Messalian Controversy on History, Texts and Language to AD 431* (Oxford, 1991), 169-203.

achieved in the sacrifice of Christ, the Bishop of Niniveh uses the term *mingling*[48] of the Creator with the creation. He does not speak about essential unity, and yet he speaks about mingling: *the world has become mingled with God, and creation and Creator have become one*[49].

The conclusion one can draw from this short analysis is that the sharp distinction between the natures in the Theodorian tradition is not really present in Isaac's writings. The uncreated Word and the created man Jesus is one and the same person. Consequently, the union of Christ, which denotes the assumed Man to the Trinity, through union with the Word, represents the very basis or the perfect mingling of the saints with God[50]. And finally, salvation can be described as the process of the human nature's ascension to the divine light and glory of the divinity, by following Christ, who, by His union, deified human nature.

Isaac of Niniveh and the theological disputes in the East Syriac community

Regarding Isaac's biography, there are mainly two short notes, due to Ishod'nah de Basra[51] and an anonym author, published by Rahmani[52]. The bishop of Basra offers two interesting pieces of information around Isaac, which are most probably colligated. The first one refers to some of Isaac's sentences that were contested by Daniel bar Tubanitha, Bishop of Bet Garmai; the other one, located at the very end of the note, lists the name of Isaac next to that of John of Apamea, John Dalyatha and Joseph Hazzaya, while stressing the reason for his resignation from the see of Niniveh – the envy of the contemporary, the same attitude manifested against these three spiritual personalities. If the first source is dated 9th century, the second one 15th century, but, as Paolo Bettiolo suggests, the latter one might have used information and material very close to the events it evokes, around Rabban Shabur Monastery, taking into consideration the details it gives concerning Mar Yozadaq in his correspondence with Bushir, from Rabban Shabur Monastery, and the pacifist tone of the text[53]. He places the sources of this text at the middle of the

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[48] ܡܘܙܓܐ; For the history of the term at different Patristic authors see C. Stewart, *Working the Earth of the Heart*, 169-203.

[49] ܐܬܚܠܛ ܥܠܡܐ ܒܐܠܗܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܒܪܝܬܐ ܘܒܪܘܝܐ ܚܕ ; II, 5,18.

[50] II, 7,3.

[51] Jesudenah, évêque de Baçrah, *Livre de la chasteté composé par Jésudenah, évêque de Basrah,* publié et traduit par Jean Baptiste Chabot (Rome, 1896), 63-64 (53-54).

[52] Ephraim II Rahmani, *Studia Syriaca,* vol. I (Beirut, Deir el-Sharf, 1904), ܠܝ (32-33).

[53] For details see P. Bettiolo, "Congetture intorno a un'assenza*:* Tommaso di Marga, Isaaco di Ninive e le tensioni interne alla chiesa siro-orientale tra VII e IX secolo", E. Coda – C. Martini Bonadeo (ed.), *De l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge* (Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2014), 149-169, here 150.

8th century, in a time of a silent reception of Isaac's writings, after the first polemic stage[54]. This text mentions Isaac's subtle mind, to explain his resignation.

In a third note, dated 9-10th century, Hanun Ibn Yuhanna Ibn as-Salt[55] also evokes the contestations raised against some of Isaac's sentences. He writes that one of his visitors, Abu al-'Abbas 'Isa Ibn Zayd Ibn Abi Malik, *homme connu pour ses sentiments religieux, son intelligence, sa bonté et son mérite*[56], remembers that the Catholikos John Ibn Narsai spent one day next to him reading the works of Isaac. Being asked about his opinion on Isaac's theology and the contestation of Daniel, he had clearly responded that *Mar Isaac speaks the language of the beings in Heaven and Daniel speaks the language of the beings of earth*[57]. We do not know exactly what the three problematic ideas were, but we know from Abdisho of Nisibe (13th century)[58] that Daniel addressed a work against the so called *The Fifth Part* of Isaac's works. Sabino Chialà had published two homilies that possibly belonged to this collection, dedicated to God's providence[59]. If their authenticity can be proven, one might get an idea about the argument of the contestation[60].

Around these items of information, Dana Miller advances two possible explanations: either the lofty teachings of Isaac shook Daniel's theological conceptions or the envy and the malice against the saint, as pointed in Isho'dnah's notice[61]. Ibn as-Salt gives us some more information which might support these hypotheses. When speaking about the way Isaac's writings were received and read during his time, he asserts:

> This holy man wrote his epistles and works for perfect monks in whom he perceived a pure intellect, abundant understanding, indeficient knowledge, and perfect worship of God. And they, in turn, worshipped his writings, acknowledged their truth, adhered to his path, and were aided by the excellence of his guidance. Then these monks unanimously agreed to withhold his writings from all who were unable to comprehend them[62].

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[54] P. Bettiolo, "Congetture intorno a un'assenza", 149-150.

[55] Cf. *Traité religieux, philosophique et moraux*, *extraits des oeuvres d'Isaac de Ninive (VIIe siècle) par Ibn as-Salt (IXe siècle)*, P. Sbath éd., Imp. 'Al-Chark' (Le Caire, 1934), p. 16-19.

[56] Cf. *Traité religieux, philosophique et moraux,* 109.

[57] *Traité religieux, philosophique et moraux*, 109.

[58] *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Catalogus*, 1725, 104.

[59] "Due discorsi della Quinta Parte di Isacco di Ninive?", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 79 (2013), 61-112.

[60] It is about the very optimistic tone of the discourses up to expressing the idea of a final restoration. On this connection see S. Chialà, "Two Discourses of the *Fifth Part* of Isaac the Syrian's Writings: Prolegomena for Apokatastasis?", *The Syriac Writers of Qatar in the Seventh Century* (Gorgias Press, 2014), 123-132.

[61] Cf. "Translator's Introduction: A Historical Account of the Life and Writings of the Saint Isaac the Syrian", D. Miller, *The Ascetical Homilies of St Isaac the Syrian* (Boston, Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1984), LXXXIII.

[62] *Traité religieux, philosophique et moraux*, 109.

In one other place he stresses the same idea:

The reading of Mar Isaac's writings is only suitable for a man who has plunged into the divine Scriptures, whose soul is apt for inquiries of the intellect and who has avoided the lust of the world in his thoughts and his mind... Youths have been rightly forbidden to delve into the secrets of the writings of this virtuous man, because wisdom is only known by its adherents[63].

There is a second interesting interrogation regarding Isaac's place in the ecclesiological landscape of his time. It is focused on the reason of his resignation from the see of Niniveh, after only five months from his election as bishop of this city. Isho'dnah of Basra gives no explanation for his withdrawal, he mentions only that *he abdicated his episcopacy by a reason which God knows*, while the text of Rahmani names *the acuteness of his intellect and his zeal* as the main reason to leave the see of Niniveh. This might be an argument, taking into consideration the loftiness of his theology, as we have highlighted above. A third simplistic explanation, this time evoked by Joseph Assemani and assumed by Nikephoros Theotokis, is found in Vatican's 198th Manuscript. This short extract states that shortly after his election as bishop of Niniveh, Isaac faces a common situation – he was asked to judge the cause of one man against his debtor. When he appealed to Scripture, by asking the one who had lent the money to forget about the debt or, at least, to prolong the loan refund term, the answer of the rich man was to lay aside the Scripture. The conclusion Isaac drew was that, if the gospel is not present, then his place is not there. And he decided to go back to his hermitical life[64]. This information might be correlated to an internal detail, where Isaac speaks about one hermit who left his solitary life and became bishop. The loss of divine grace is considered to be the result of changing his lifestyle. This recite might be an autobiographical piece of information[65]. This way of dealing is recurrent for monastics. Nevertheless, this last theory has no solid base to be accepted.

Around this problem, Sabino Chialà advances three hypotheses: Isaac's attachment to the solitary life, pointed above, a time of crisis for his church and his difficulty to integrate in a region far away from his native land[66]. Among these three hypotheses, we believe the most consistent and valid one refers to the polemical atmosphere that characterised his timing, with its two components – canonical and theological.

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[63] *Traité religieux, philosophique et moraux*, 75-76.

[64] J. S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana I*, Propaganda Fidae, Roma, 1725, 445.

[65] I, 35, p. 167 (B, 249).

[66] S. Chialà, *Dall'ascesi eremitica. Ricerche su Isaaco di Ninive e la sua fortuna*, Biblioteca della rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa XIV (Firenze-Olschki, 2002)*,* 81.

We remember from the short biographies we have that Isaac had been taken by Catholikos George, when he came to his native region in 676 to convoke a council[67] so as to solve an old conflict between the Metropolis of Rev Ardashir, which was at that time in schism with the See of Seleucia. He was ordained bishop in Bet Abe Monastery, in North Mesopotamia, where Isho'yahb III and George Himself received their monastic formation. In this context appears the envy of those who dwelt in the interior[68] for somebody coming from Bet Qatraye. Adjacently, stressing again Isaac's pacifist attitude in a time of harsh proselytist West Syriac attitude[69], we can easily understand that he might have been not very well welcomed and he did not feel at ease in this situation. Despite the fact that Isho'dnah does not condition Isaac's abdication on the envy of his faithful, but on the contestation around his theology, one can easily argue that this element occupies an important place when dealing with Isaac's position within the ecclesiastical landscape of his community.

Besides that, it would be of great importance to refer to Isaac's possible connections with the so called Messalian polemics. It is useful to bring into discussion again the first biographical note of Isho'dnah, from where one can learn about Isaac's three themes that produced reactions and the listing of his name next to the mystics condemned by Patriarch Timothy I. Fiey argues that the Metropolitan of Basra uses a neutral tone in his writings, except when he manifests a clear positive position regarding the three mystics – John the Solitary, Joseph Hazzaya and John Dalyatha[70], demonstrating that his opinion was *not always according to the official doctrine of his Church*[71]. Paolo Bettiolo shows that this is due to the direct attitude against Timothy's council and the sentencing of the three mystics. However, one can nuance Isho'dnah attitude – it reveals divergences with Timothy's position, but, at the same time, convergences with his successor, Isho'bar Nun[72]. It is also true that Isaac was not condemned in the *process of the mystics*, and yet it seems Isho'dnah identifies a connection between him and them, adding his name on the list.

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[67] For the canons of the Council see *SO,* 215-226 (480-490).

[68] The territories around Tigris and Euphrates. The ecclesiastical provinces were divided into *internal*, the oldest ones, whose leaders participated to the patriarchal councils, and *external*, formed of territories recently evangelized, whose leader did not participate to the patriarch's election and they were designated directed by this one; cf. A. M. Eddé – F. Michau – C. Pirard, *Communautés chrétiennes en pays d'islam*, *du début du VIIe siècle au milieu du XIe siècle* (Paris, 1997), 26.

[69] See the foundation of Metropolis of Tagrit (628-629).

[70] Cf. J. M. Fiey, "Ichô'dnah, métropolite de Basra, et son œuvre", *Orient syrien* 11 (1966), 431-450 (here 450); "Isho'dnah et la Chronique de Seert", *Mélanges offerts au R.P François Graffin – Parole de l'Orient* 6-7 (1975-1976), 447-459 (here 449-450).

[71] "Ichô'dnah, métropolite de Basra, et son œuvre", 449.

[72] P. Bettiolo, "Congetture intorno a un'assenza", 154.

In the same frame, next to this information, we remember that during Isaac's time there was a suspicion of Messalianism around a few important characters, who eventually had to leave the monastery, after a lot of contestation from their brothers. It was the case of Mar Afnimaran, who founded a monastery, which John Dalyatha frequented before joining the monastic life, and Jacob Hazzaya, both of them spiritual fathers of Blessed Steven, the master of Dalyatha, in Mar Yozadaq Monastery[73]. This monastery was also accused of Messalianism, if we remember that Nestorius of Nuhadra, monk in this convent, when elected bishop of Bet Nuhadra, was asked to do an anti-Messalian profession of faith, before his ordination. Then, the latter one was the disciple and biographer of Joseph Hazzaya, the third author condemned by the council. Therefore, at least hypothetically, one can advance the idea that Isaac was not foreign to this theological direction. If we recall the idea expressed by Vittorio Berti, the East Syriac Church knew in its monasteries and schools *divergences regarding the conception of union with God and, in consequence, divergences on the Christian life, in general*, generated by the contact between two different conceptions regarding spiritual life – one more mystical, and the other more institutional[74]. Hence, one may speak about a Christological perspective that allows an experiential theology. Isaac himself was a significant name in this polemical meeting.

Conclusion

One can argue after this short analysis that in the East Syriac Church of Isaac's time there was no unitary Christological doctrine. We can speak either about parties or, more exact, about different perspectives within the parties. Thus, the goal of monastic spirituality was radically different from the intellectual practices. In this frame, the ascetics manifested an anti-scholastic attitude, by an experiential theology that gives space to a direct contact with the divinity, at the level of the mind and heart. To justify their perspective many times they advocated a balanced and conciliatory position, or, maybe, sometimes, reformative attitudes, in terms of Christology, and so they were not always in the line of their Church theological tradition. This ecumenical position was seldom assimilated as Messalian by the representatives of the *philosophical*[75] party of their Church community.

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[73] Mar Yozadaq, who declared himself disciple of Isaac of Niniveh.

[74] Cf. *Vita e studi di Timoteo I († 823) patriarca cristiano di Baghdad. Ricerche sull'epistolario e sulle fonti contigue* (Cahiers de Studia Iranica 41, Chrétiens en terre d'Iran 3), Paris, 157-166.

[75] Cf. "The Culmination of Monastic Ideology: Isaac of Niniveh", A. H. Becker, *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom. The School of Nisibis and the Development of Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 184-188 (here 187-188).

Speaking about Isaac of Niniveh, to recall the phraseology of Michael Morony, *he was an important transition figure, coordinating nearly the entire set of ideas associated with love of mysticism*[76]. The same author adds other two names next to Isaac's name – Jacob Hazzaya and Joseph Hazzaya – in order to advocate the idea that a group of ascetics shifted the emphasis from ascetic mysticism, propelled by fear and induced by extreme forms of self-denial, to an ecstatic mysticism, based on the love of God. Thus, he adopted a conciliatory position, while advising believers to abandon all literature that could divide Christians[77]. In the same line, he expressed his mystical theology in a Christological language that avoids any polemic discussions. It is not about a simple quietism, so that to detach from the current evangelism, theological disputes and state intervention, but about liberation of the spirit from temporal authority[78]. He takes upon an *ecumenical mysticism*[79] which has as direct consequence a type of spiritual toleration[80].

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[76] M. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 464.
[77] P. Wood, *The Chronicle of Seert. Christian Historical Imagination in Late Antique Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 162.
[78] M. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 450.
[79] M. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 380.
[80] *Deem all people worthy of bounty and honour, be they Jews or miscreants or murderers* (I, IV, 39)

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CHURCH, *MINJUNG* AND STATE: THE REVIVAL OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY IN NORTH KOREA

JOOSEOP KEUM[*]

ABSTRACT. The issue of church and state takes us to the heart of mission because the Gospel is the good news in every part of human life and society. Throughout the history of the Church in Korea, the issues of church and state, religion and society have been deeply connected to the development of the Korean churches. Indeed, an important factor in Christianity's success in Korea has been its frequent identification with political movements promoting Korean nationalism, independence, democracy, and Korean reunification. Especially in Northern Korea before the division of the peninsula in 1945, and in North Korea after it,[1] the church-state relationship has been one of the crucial issues determining the fate of the churches. It is the purpose of this article to introduce the revival of Protestant Christianity in North Korea in the Communist context, with special reference to issues of church and state.

Keywords: Church and State, Protestant Christianity, North Korea, Gospel

Historical Paradigms of Church and State Relations in North Korea before 1972

The *Minjung*-Centered Oppositional Paradigm

Protestant Christianity was introduced to the Korean peninsula through Manchuria in the late 19 century. It arrived in a northern Korean society that suffered from economic, social and political discrimination, in relation to Southern

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[1] The terms 'Northern Korea' and 'Southern Korea' will be used as shortened names for 'the northern region of the Korean peninsula' and 'the southern region of the Korean peninsula' before the partition in 1945. The terms 'North Korea' and 'South Korea' will be used where appropriate in place of the official names, 'Democratic People's Republic of Korea' and 'Republic of Korea,' for the period after 1945.

Korea, at the end of the Chosun Dynasty. Against the traditional caste system of the south-centered Confucianism, northern Protestantism engaged in the enlightenment of social equality among the northern *minjung*.[2] Northern Protestantism developed the idea of social reformation, which emphasized a republican polity, emphasizing the role of the people against that of the monarch. Translation of the Bible into *Hangul*, the language of *minjung*, gave the *minjung* a new vision of the Kingdom of God, where every human being is equal.

When Korea was colonized by Japan, the exploitation by the Japanese colonial government concentrated on Northern Korea because of its mining industry, and in order to prepare the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Under these conditions, Protestant Christianity in Northern Korea developed as an important focus of the independence movement, in particular through leading the March First Independence Movement in 1919. Korean nationalism thus became an important characteristic of northern Protestantism. When the Japanese imposed *Shinto* shrine worship[3] to suppress the rise of Christian nationalism, the northern Christians strongly resisted, on the grounds that it was an issue of *status confessionis*. By leading the independence movement, northern Protestantism was recognized as a patriotic religion by the northern *minjung*.

Therefore, the church-state relationship in Northern Korea before independence modeled a paradigm of Christian opposition to the state, aimed against both the south-centered Chsun Dynasty and Japanese colonial rule. In the development of this oppositional paradigm, the notion of being the church of the *minjung* was important in Northern Korean Christian self-identity. Northern Protestantism understood both the Chosun monarchy and the Japanese colonial state as tyrannies that oppressed the *minjung*. Therefore, resistance against the state was justified on the grounds of the liberation of the *minjung*. Protestant Christianity in Northern Korea was highly respected by the *minjung* as a patriotic and, indeed, a *minjung* religion. This oppositional paradigm of church-state relations was a major cause of Protestant Christianity's original success in Northern Korea.

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[2] The word "*minjung*" is a Korean pronunciation of two Chinese characters: "*min*" and "*jung*." "*Min*" literally means "the people"; "*jung*" means "the mass." Combining these two words, we get the idea of "the mass of people." Yet "*minjung*" is a more inclusive word than the mass. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that there is no single agreed meaning of *minjung* even among the *minjung* theologians themselves, because *minjung* movements broke out spontaneously in diverse fields. Nevertheless, it is also true that when one looks at its historical origins, a rough, "rule of thumb" definition of the term emerges as follows: "the *minjung* are those who are oppressed politically, exploited economically, alienated socially, and kept uneducated in cultural and intellectual matters."

[3] For a general understanding of *Shintoism*, see, W. G. Aston, *Shinto: The Way of the Gods* (London: Longmans, 1905); "The Shinto Shrines: A Problem Confronting the Church", *IRM* 29, (1940): 161-188; *CTC Bulletin* 3, No. 3 (Hong Kong: CCA, 1982).

The Competitive Oppositional Paradigm

During Japanese rule, both Protestant Christianity and the Communist movement, especially Kim Il-sung's anti-Japanese guerillas, were centers of the independence struggle in Northern Korea. With liberation in 1945, a new phase began. Northern Protestantism and Communism now encountered each other as ideological rivals in the task of nation building. The Christian attempt to take political hegemony through organizing the first modern political party in Korean history, the Christian Social Democratic Party, was offset by Kim Il-sung and his followers, who established a Communist regime with the support of the Soviet Army. Kim Il-sung invited the Christians to cooperate in national construction through joining a united front. However, the Five Provinces Joint Presbytery (FPJP), which acted provisionally in place of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea in the North, rejected this option, and fell back on the oppositional paradigm of church and state that had prevailed during Japanese rule. The northern Christians argued that Christianity could not co-exist with atheistic Communism. Therefore, the Christians competed for political power through organizing Christian parties and clashed with the Communists over several political issues, and most notably that of the boycott of the general election.[4]

In this process of political competition and conflict with the Communists, the northern Protestant Christians lost the support of the *minjung*. One of the main reasons behind the competition and conflict was the issue of land reform. The northern Christians rejected the Communist land reform in order to maintain their recently upgraded social status, in which they had risen out of the *minjung* to become part of the elite. As a consequence, the northern *minjung* welcomed the Communist policy of social reform, but did not favor of the northern Christians' attempt to gain political power. Because of the Communist suppression and the disapproval of the *minjung*, the political initiatives of the FPJP finally collapsed. With the outbreak of the Korean War (1950-1953), the majority of northern Protestant Christians evacuated to the South to avoid the discrimination and persecution they expected to experience under Communist rule.

The above oppositional paradigm between the church and the Communist state succeeded the traditional paradigm of opposition between church and state before liberation. However, the position of the church altered after liberation, by the fact that it lost the support of the *minjung*-axis. From this we can conclude that in the development of an opposition paradigm against state, the support of the *minjung* is a crucial factor. Without it, Christianity could not succeed in North Korea.

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[4] See, Jooseop Keum, "Remnants and Renewal: A History of Protestant Christianity in North Korea, with Special Reference to Issues of Church and State, 1945-1994", PhD Thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1992), 116-128.

The Diplomatic Cooperative Paradigm

With the establishment of the North Korean state in 1945, a cooperative paradigm developed between the leaders of the North Korean Christian Association (NKCA)[5] and the new Communist government emerged. The NKCA recognized that the Communist social reform was necessary in North Korea. Therefore, they supported the Kim Il-sung regime, and participated in the United Front of North Korea. The NKCA and the Communist regime thus developed a cooperative paradigm of church-state relations.

Although this Christian group was a minority within the northern churches, it held ecclesiastical power with and through Communist support. The NKCA leaders introduced a radical renewal program to root northern Protestantism in the Communist soil. However, this process of renewal was largely dependent on the support they received from the Communist state, and was carried out through a top-down method. The theological justification or basis for this approach was very weak, and in any case deficient. When the Korean War broke out, the NKCA leaders continued their cooperative paradigm by supporting the Communist cause against the UN "Police Action,"[6] which carried the support of the WCC and western churches. However, their cooperation resulted in failure because the majority of northern Christians, including many leaders of NKCA, fled to the South during the war.

Thus, just as the FPJP's opposition to the Communist government lost the support of the northern *minjung*, so too the cooperation paradigm of the NKCA failed to find support among the grassroots Christians in North Korea. Although the NKCA supported the land reform, and declared its intention to work for the *minjung*, most of its activities were actually concentrated on securing ecclesiastical power through a bureaucratic approach to the Communist state. While the FPJP aimed at obtaining the secular political power through competing with the Communists, the NKCA aimed at the same thing through diplomatic cooperation with the Communist leaders. Both eventually failed.

The original intention of the NKCA was to renew the church-state relationship through rooting northern Protestantism in the Communist soil.

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[5] Concerning the NKCA, see, ibid., 140-149.

[6] The UN's intervention in the Korean War was the first military action in her history. From the beginning of the War, the US had participated. However, President Truman sent American air and naval power to Korea "without congressional approval." The lack of such approval meant that Truman could not call for general mobilization. Therefore, he brought the issue to the UN, to cover the shortage of ground soldiers. Truman called his intervention in Korea a "police action" so that he would not have to get a declaration of war. According to B. Cumings, this "police action" inaugurated the pattern for subsequent conflicts in Vietnam and Persian Gulf, in which wars were declared by executive decision rather than through proper constitutional procedure. B. Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 265.

Although the NKCA aimed to be a church for the *minjung* in theory, in practice, its activity was focused on diplomatic cooperation with the Communists. The NKCA failed to achieve an authentic renewal of the northern churches because it attempted to achieve the renewal simply through bureaucratic changes.

Although by 1949 the NKCA had become the only representative Protestant organization in North Korea, it paid the price for its uncritical cooperation with the government. The NKCA became a sort of religious spokesman for the Kim Il-sung regime. The diplomatic cooperative paradigm of the NKCA resulted in a dependency of the church-axis on the state-axis at the expense of the *minjung*-axis. Its uncritical cooperation with the secular state also brought about an identity crisis in the NKCA in regard to public issues.

The Paradigm of Catacomb

After the Korean War, only one fourth of Protestant Christians and a few NKCA pastors remained in North Korea. However, they were not able to reconstruct their churches because of the social antipathy toward the Christians, the great majority of whom had supported the enemy during the war. In this context, the remnant Christians (who were not part of the NKCA) again collectively boycotted the general election, as an action aimed against the Kim Il-sung regime in 1958. This boycott brought about a severe "Anti-Religious Campaign" by the Communists. The Communist state legalized a policy of social discrimination against the Christians. Anti-Communist underground Christian leaders were executed, and anti-Christian propaganda and slogans were displayed across North Korea. Because of the NKCA's concentration on a bureaucratic approach, it was not able to provide a theological justification for the continued existence of Christianity in North Korean Communist society.

Consequently, the remnant Christians were in difficulty to openly enjoy religious life after 1958. The state-axis absolutely overwhelmed the church-axis, and did not allow any religious freedom. This paradigm of church-state relations was similar to the paradigm of the Catacombs in Rome during the Neronian persecution.

The discrimination and persecution practiced against Christians in North Korea from 1958-1972 points to the failure of the former church-state relationships, developed by the NKCA and the FPJP. Both the competitive oppositional paradigm of the FPJP and the diplomatic cooperative paradigm of the NKCA had ignored the axis of the *minjung*. Therefore, when the Communist state introduced its hostile ideological attack on northern Protestantism, the remnant Christians were neither able to justify their Christian existence in the North Korean Communist society, nor able to receive any support and sympathy from the *minjung*. This taught northern Protestantism an important lesson: a diplomatic rapprochement

with the state was clearly not enough to secure the survival of the church; rather it had to be a church "with" and "for" the *minjung*. Furthermore, it would have to articulate a theological understanding of the significance of Christian churches in a Communist society.

The Revival of Christianity in North Korea since 1972

The Context of Revival

The post-1972 period can be characterized as a politically stabilized, or static era in North Korea. During the 1950s, Kim had faced serious internal political challenges from his Communist rivals. In the 1960s, there was an external crisis, the Sino-Soviet Dispute, which threatened his leadership. In this context, the year of 1972 was a very important turning point in not only the ecclesiastical but also the political history of North Korea. In that year, Kim Il-sung succeeded in rewriting the constitution and was elected president of the republic. [7] In contrast to previous general elections, there was neither a Christian boycott, nor factionary resistance nor foreign influence. The political stability which then followed in North Korea was an important aspect of the context in which Protestant Christianity revived. In this atmosphere, the Communists no longer regarded the Christians as a possible political threat.

In the 1970s, there began to be definite signs of a realignment in the old East-West confrontation. There was a Sino-American rapprochement and the Soviet-Japanese and Sino-Japanese peace treaties were concluded. It was in 1972 that all these dramatic changes became historical realities. The Cold War climate that had created the division of the Korean peninsula was changing. Both North and South Korea were forced to readjust their position to cope with the new developments. A series of reunification talks between two Koreas undertaken and lasted until 1975.[8]

For the northern churches, the North-South dialogue, while it lasted, created a new opportunity for revival. On account of it, North Korean society was exposed to the South and outside. Often, during the dialogue, North Korea was questioned as to whether there was religious freedom. This question was posed in such a way that it focused on the presence of Christians and existence of churches in North Korea. It must have caused some embarrassment to North Korean Communist officials, who claimed the superiority of their political

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[7] Kim was the premier of the cabinet before 1972. Concerning the political development in North Korea in this period, see, V. Mikheev, "Politics and Ideology in the Post-Cold War Era", in Han S. Park, ed., *North Korea: Ideology, Politics, Economy* (Simon & Schuster, 1996), 87-104.

[8] See, Republic of Korea, National Unification Board, *South-North Dialogue in Korea*, No. 54 (Seoul, 1992).

system over that of the South. Through the dialogue the North Korean Communists also began to learn about the Christian struggle for democracy and support for the *minjung* in the South. Until then, for the Communists in the North, the image they had of Christianity was only as an "American imperialistic religion." However, the *minjung* theology of the southern churches gave them a different picture. It was an extraordinary experience for them, which forced them to reconsider their understanding of Christianity. Consequently, for the first time, Kim Il-sung made an open address in 1973, in which he recognized that "Christianity has some resources for the liberation of *minjung*."[9]

The New Platform

In this context, in 1972, the central committee of the Korean Christian Federation (KCF, the former NKCA) gathered together to discuss the revival of the churches in North Korea, and adopted what it called a "new platform" for this purpose. Firstly, the KCF the declared that Christianity is a patriotic religion of North Korea. The KCF declared that the Christians fully supported their government, and would cooperate with its policy:

> With patriotism, we will make efforts for the prosperity of the country upholding the constitution and policy of the Republic government. [10]

It is understandable that the new platform thus starts by expressing strong support for the state. The KCF needed to reassure the government because of the history of opposition between the church and the state in North Korea. The revival of the churches was not aimed against the government, and would not threaten its authority. This was not merely political lip service paid to the Communist government. Rather, Protestant Christianity was genuinely trying to root itself among the North Korean people as a patriotic religion, and shed its image of being a tool of "American imperialism."

Secondly, the KCF explained further some of the ways in which the revival would benefit North Korean society:

> We will strive to eliminate all sorts of discrimination based on gender, nation, religion, property and class, and to establish a free, equal society founded on the spirit of Christian Charity. [11]

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[9] KWP, *Chosun Joongang Nyungam*, The Yearbook of North Korea, (Pyongyang: KWP Press, 1974), 261.

[10] *The Platform of the Korean Christian Federation*, 1972, Article 1.

[11] Ibid., Article 2.

The second article indicated that the revived church would not work only for the Christians. Rather, it promised that the Christians would contribute to the wider community.

Then thirdly, the KCF expressed its ecclesiastical concerns:

> The KCF will work to defend the freedom of faith and religious life for the development of Christianity in North Korea, including work for evangelism, and the rights and demands of the Christians.[12]

Although the internal concerns of the KCF, the actual revival and spread of Christianity comes thirdly, this was nevertheless a powerful declaration, demanding religious freedom in North Korea. It also shows great confidence in the solid faith of the remnant Christians.

As a matter of fact, the revised constitution ensured the freedom of religion, in its article 54. However, at the same time, it also guaranteed what it called "the freedom of anti-religious propaganda." [13] Article three of the platform of the KCF was a strong request to the government to realize the spirit of the constitution, and not to apply it only one-sidedly. The KCF tried to confirm that the freedom of faith in the new constitution specially included the freedom of evangelism. This can even be interpreted as an indirect criticism of the "freedom of anti-religious propaganda," which was a left-over from the Anti-Religious Campaign, which had been used to restrict and suppress evangelism. The KCF understood the freedom to evangelize as an essential aspect of the freedom of religion.

The House Churches

In addition to the new platform, in the same year (1972) the revived central committee of the KCF decided to reopen the seminary, register individual Christians and reconstruct the ecclesiastical order of the KCF. This was to be an institutional revival of the northern Protestantism. However, behind it, there was also the revival of the house churches, which is most significant from the perspective of *minjung* because the grassroots Christians were the people who originally developed the house church tradition in North Korea. They preserved their faith communities underground, in spite of persecution, from 1958-1972. Even after 1972, they have revived and strengthened their communities by their own initiative. This characteristic allows us to define the house churches as the *minjung* Christian community in North Korea.

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[12] Ibid., Article 3.
[13] *The Socialist Constitution*, Article 54.

In 1972, when the Anti-Religious Campaign finally disappeared, the KCF did not have exact statistics of how many Christians remained in North Korea. Therefore, surveying the remnant Christians, and registering them with the KCF, was an important task for the KCF to undertake, as they set about reconstructing ecclesiastical order.

Table) Distribution of Membership of the KCF, 1984-2002[14]

Year	1984	1988	1996	2000	2002
Membership	5,000	10,000	12,000	12,343	13,043

The statistics given above for 1984, 1988, and 1996 are approximate number for the membership of the KCF. Only more recently, did the KCF announce the exact numbers of its membership. Although the figures were approximate, it seems that the membership was doubled in the four years from 1984-1988, and increased by about 300 members annually from 1988-1996.

By 1984, the KCF had finished surveying the situation of house churches across North Korea. There were about 500 house churches, and each church had about ten members. The average age of the Christians was fifty-five years old, and 70% of them were women.[15] It is certain that the majority of the churches had joined the KCF by 1984. In other words, by 1984, the house churches and the KCF seem to have reached a situation of mutual trust. Recently, in 2002, the KCF has launched an evangelism campaign, aiming to increase membership to 14,000 by 2004.[16] It is certain that one of the characteristics of Protestant Christianity in North Korea is its strong interest in evangelism, in accordance with the evangelistic tradition of Korean Christianity.

The house church is a unique ecclesiological form of Protestant Christianity in North Korea. It may be described as a small congregational community under lay leadership. At first, the remnant Christians started to organize house groups in the disaster of the Korean War. The Christians met in the houses of lay leaders to carry on their religious life because their pastors

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[14] The statistics of 1984 are from J. Moyer et al., "Visit of a Delegation to the D.P.R.K. from May 24 to June 10, 1984", *Lutheran World Federation*, 4; 1988 from T. M. Brown, "Trip Report: East Asia, October 27-November 28, 1988", *Asia/Pacific Desk, Anglican Church of Canada*, 20th February 1989, 7; 1996 from K. Park, "North Korea-Background of the Churches" *WCC Memorandum*, 25th June 1996, 1; 2000 from Y. Kang, "Keynote Speech", *The Seventh Korean Christian Conference for Peaceful Reunification of Fatherland*, 13th December 2000, *Fukuoka, Manuscript*, 4; 2002 from Young-sup Kang, "Keynote Speech", *The Eighth Korean Christian Conference for Peaceful Reunification of Fatherland*, 23rd June 2002, Tozanso, Unpublished Paper, 3.

[15] NCCCUSA, *op. cit.*, 9.

[16] Young-sup Kang, *op. cit.*

had evacuated to the South. During the Anti-Religious Campaign period, the state officially abolished the house communities, but many continued to exist underground. In this context, the church had to be organized as a small and lay-centered secret faith community for survival. This small and secret lay-centered congregational model of house church, under persecution, is similar to the ecclesiastical form of the First Church, during the early centuries.

However, in 1988, there was a new phenomenon in the house church tradition in North Korea. From 1972 onwards, the underground house groups had been coming out into the open, and registering with the KCF. With the reopening of the seminary, the house groups began to be developed as house churches, where ordained ministers would proclaim the Word of God and celebrate the sacraments. Remarkably, in 1988, the Bongsu Church was built in Pyongyang, and has now 450 members. The Chilgol Church was built in 1991 in memory of deacon Kang Ban-suk, the mother of Kim Il-sung, and has now 150 members. The two churches absorbed more than half of the 50 house churches in Pyongyang. From 1988, a new congregational model began to emerge in North Korea, and was evident in the Bongsu Church and the Chilgol Church. As in the South Korean Church, senior and associate pastors were appointed, elders were elected, choirs were organized, and the church buildings were beautifully decorated by the Christians of the two churches who belonged to the urban elite.

The KCF, which took the initiative in constructing these two churches, said them as a symbol of the revival of Protestant Christianity in North Korea. Indeed, it was an historic event in the history of the North Korean church. The Christians were proud of what they had finally achieved. However, when the KCF encouraged by these successes, tried to build another church in Hamhung, the house churches there rejected it. Although the establishment of two organized churches in the capital city was highly impressive for the grassroots Christians in Hamhung, they preferred the atmosphere and fellowship of their house churches. As a matter of fact, this rejection was predicted when some former house church Christians criticized the atmosphere of the Bongsu Church. E. Weingartner notes that during his days in the Bongsu Church, about twenty former Nakrang House Church members returned to their house church:[17]

> They soon found that it felt uncomfortable in such a large setting. There were many people in the congregation whom they did not know. It seemed impersonal. After the service people simply returned to their homes. They did not have any chance to stay and mingle. They missed the quiet of their meetings, the comfort of communing with those whom they trusted. They missed having snacks and drinks and visiting with each other after worship. Eventually, they left Bongsu and reassembled their small house church.[18]

[17] Interview with Erich Weingartner, 12th April 2001, North Bay, Canada.
[18] E. Weingartner, "God Leaves No One Without Hope", Unpublished Paper, 25th March 2001, 4-5.

This indicates the reason why the house churches do not hurry to construct church buildings and big congregations. Indeed, the 511 house churches[19] which overcame "the fire-kiln of suffering" have mostly developed as a distinct ecclesiological structure in North Korea, which preserves close fellowship between believers.

The Reopening of Pyongyang Theological Seminary

The revival of Protestant Christianity in North Korea began with the restarting of theological education. From the Korean War until 1972, there had been no theological education in North Korea. Therefore, for the KCF, the training of new pastors was the most urgent priority for the revival. Just as the Anti-Religious Campaign was an external challenge for the Christians, so too the lack of pastors was a serious internal crisis for the KCF. Although there were lay leaders, preaching and sacraments were rare and very restricted in house churches. Communion was usually held only twice a year, at Easter and Christmas, conducted by circulating pastors. On these occasions several local congregations would come together.[20] However, even this was limited to the house churches in larger cities. In this context, the priority of the reopened the Pyongyang Theological Seminary[21] was to train pastors. The seminary offers a three-years course of Bachelor of Divinity. Most students have degrees in other subjects before entering their theological training.[22] In every three-year, from ten to fifteen new students are enrolled, a new group of students entering when the previous group graduates.[23]

The reopening of the seminary fundamentally changed the life of the house churches in North Korea. With the appointment of ordained pastors, the house churches became more stable and active. When the seminary reopened, only ten pastors were left, but as a result of restarting theological education, house churches had more opportunity of having ordained pastors to minister to them. By 1989, thirty-seven graduates from the seminary had been ordained, and served in house churches.[24] By 1995, seventy students had graduated from

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[19] The statistics are taken from Young-sup Kang, *op. cit.*, 3.

[20] NCCUSA, "Confidential Report of the NCCCUSA Official Delegation Visit to North Korea", 19th June-2nd July 1987, 8.

[21] The Pyongyang Theological Seminary was opened in 1901 by Samuel Moffet. It was abolished by the Japanese in 1938 because the professors and students opposed *Shinto* shrine worship. With liberation, it reopened in 1945. However, with the outbreak of the Korean War, it was closed again.

[22] For example, according to Bong-il Paik, all but two of his ten classmates, who graduated in 1995, had university degrees before getting into theological education. Interview with Bong-il Paik, 5th April 2001, Pyongyang.

[23] Kyung-seo Park, "North Korea-Background of the Churches," WCC Memorandum, 25th June 1996.

[24] Ibid*.*

the seminary. According to the report from the KCF to the WCC, fifty-two had been ordained and the others were having pastoral training in their placement in 1997.[25] In this period, the number of Protestant Christians in North Korea doubled. According to Bong-il Paik, the graduates prefer to work in house churches rather than KCF offices because of the "atmosphere of fellowship in house churches, and their evangelistic zeal."[26]

It seems that the training is similar to what used to be given in the old seminary in missionary times as well, sometimes without much change. For example, according to Insik Kim, Rev. Deuk-ryong Kim, who taught Homiletics, used his notes, which he had taken in the class of Homiletics given by Allen Clark by the end of the 1930s.[27] When E. Weingartner asked about the textbooks, Ki-jun Koh, answered, "We use old books that have survived from old seminaries."

The KCF has often expressed strong political opinions against "US imperialism" and the "military dictatorship of South Korea." In this respect, it sounds as if the theology of the seminary could be radical and political. However, although the KCF has an interest in political issues, that does not mean that the theology of the seminary is radical. On the contrary, most specialists on Christianity in North Korea agree that the theological education of the seminary is quite conservative.[28] According to Dong-kun Hong, who was a part-time lecturer at the seminary, "theological education of the Pyongyang Theological Seminary preserves the conservative Korean Presbyterian tradition, which was influenced by the American missionaries."[29]

Indeed, the theological development of the seminary had been held back, ever since its abolition in 1938. After eight years of non-existence (1938-1945), the seminary reopened for five years (1945-1950), but it closed its doors again for another twenty-two years (1950-1972). In this circumstance, it was difficult for the seminary to develop its own theology. Furthermore, the staff members of the reopened seminary were drawn from among ten surviving pastors, who were educated before 1950. What they taught was based on their own conservative theology, in which they had been trained by the American missionaries. The theological education in North Korea is still fairly basic. It is

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[25] "From the Central Committee of KCF to the Asia Desk of WCC", June 1997.

[26] Interview with Bong-il Paik, 5th April 2001, Pyongyang.

[27] Interview with Rev. Dr. Insik Kim, 13th December 2000, Fukuoka, Japan.

[28] The author asked same question on the theological characteristics of the seminary to eight specialists, Prof. Kyung-seo Park, Rev. Young-il Kang, Rev. Dr. Insik Kim, Prof. Syngman Rhee, Rev. Dwain Epps, Rev. Dr. Seong-won Park, Mr. Eric Weingartner and Rev. Dr. Dong-kun Hong. All interviewees point out the conservative nature of its theology.

[29] Interview with Rev. Dr. Dong-kun Hong, 13th April 2001, Los Angeles. Hong visited North Korea for six months every year from 1989-2001 from USA to lecture at the Kim Il Sung University and Pyongyang Theological Seminary. He passed away on 11th November 2001 in Pyongyang during his visit for the lectureship.

not yet equipped to train people as independent researchers. Rather, its main target is ministerial formation, the training of pastors. For the development of North Korean theology, the KCF must consider how to upgrade the quality of its seminary. However, since the reopening, the Pyongyang Theological Seminary has been the backbone of the revival of Protestant Christianity, by training and providing pastors.

Publication of Bible and Hymnbook

When the KCF was studying the situation of house churches, it discovered another urgent demand of the remnant Christians. The Christians were eager to have a new Bible and hymnbook. The Bible and hymnbook had not been printed since the liberation in North Korea. Therefore, the language used was not appropriate in modern Korean. Moreover, even this old version of Bible was not sufficient for the Christians because only a few copies had survived during the Anti-Religious Campaign. Suk-jung Song states his experience in 1982 as follows:

> During the worship, we carefully watched the Bible and hymnbook of the members. The covers of most of them were worn out…Some had hand-copied Bibles. However, there were colorful underlinings. They might read several times whole pages of Bible. After the worship, I heard that some hid their Bible in a vat (for *Kimchi*), and used to read it only in the night. [30]

In response to this, the KCF prepared the publication of a new Korean Bible and hymnbook, from the mid-1970s on. The New Testament was published in 1983 and the Old Testament in 1984. In 1984, the complete Bible was brought out and the KCF printed 10,000 copies of it. They also printed 10,000 copies of the new hymnbooks. However, by 1987, none of them were left. The number of Protestant Christians had already reached 10,000. The KCF therefore reprinted the Bible and the hymnbook in 1990.[31]

At first, the KCF had intended to bring out an entirely new translation, but the leaders soon realized that this would be over ambitious. Therefore, the written Korean of the Bible was modernized, and partly revised through a comparative reading with Hebrew and English Bibles. However, Ki-jun Koh frankly said that many preferred the United Korean Bible, which was jointly translated and published by the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in South Korea, in 1977.[32] In the preface to the hymnbook, the KCF said the "hymns

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[30] Suk-jung Song, "What I Saw and What I Heard", in *Bundaneul Tuieonumeo*, edited by Eun-sik Yang, Across the Division (Seoul: Jungwonmunhwa, 1988), 222.

[31] Jung-hyun Paik, *Bukhanedo Kyohoega Itnayo?* Are There Christian Churches in North Korea? (Seoul: Kookminilbosa, 1998), 121.

[32] Ibid., 120.

are taken from the *New Hymnbook*, Department of Education, PCK, 1939, with modernized words."[33] The hymnbooks in 1990 were printed at the Amity Printing Company in Nanjing, with the support of the United Bible Society.[34]

In addition to the reopening of the seminary, the publication of the new Bible and hymnbook were events of symbolic importance for the revival. The Christians donated 2% of their monthly income to the KCF for the publication, during this period.[35] Now, the Christians, who had hidden the Bible in *Kimchi* pots, were free to read the Bible and sing hymns openly. Every Christians was at last able to have a copy of the Bible and hymnbook for themselves. On every Sunday, they rejoiced and worshiped in house churches with their new Bible and hymnbook.

International Ecumenical Relationships

As J. Hormadka predicted when the WCC Toronto Statement, which supported the UN Police Action in Korea, was issued, the ecumenical relationship between the North Korean church and the WCC had been closed since the Korean War.[36] The international ecumenical relationships of the KCF were frustrated by the policies of the Cold War. Especially during the Anti-Religious Campaign period, the North Korean church was completely isolated from the world Christian community. However, the revival of Protestant Christianity in North Korea brought the revival of its international ecumenical fellowship as well.

During the 1970s, the KCF still did not have full confidence in the WCC because of the WCC's earlier support for the police action during the Korean War. Instead, the KCF preferred to participate actively in an organization called the Christian Peace Conference (CPC). However, the CPC played a role of reconciliation between the KCF and the WCC. The CPC leaders informed the KCF of the changes that had taken place in the WCC after the rise of the notion of the social gospel at the 1968 Uppsala Assembly, and encouraged the KCF to take more interest in the WCC.

In 1981, the KCF then sent a letter to the WCC, and asked for information on membership of the WCC.[37] Heung-soo Kim claims that this application was rejected by the central committee of the WCC because the WCC had no confidence in the existence of Christians in North Korea, and also had some doubts about

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[33] *Chasongga*, Hymnbook (Pyongyang: KCF, 1984), 2.

[34] Jung-hyun Paik, *Bukhanedo Kyohoega Itnayo?*, 123-124.

[35] NCCCUSA, "Confidential Report of the NCCCUSA Official Delegation Visit to North and South Korea, 19 June - 2July 1987," 21.

[36] "From Hromàdka to Visser't Hooft", 30th November 1950.

[37] "From Sung-ryul Kim to WCC", January 1981.

the political purpose of the application.[38] However, WCC did not reject the KCF, but explored new possibilities of establishing a relationship. Two executive secretaries of the International Affairs (CCIA), E. Weingartner and V. Hsu, secretly visited the KCF, and suggested a direct meeting between the northern and southern Christians for reconciliation. They came back with news of active Christian life in house churches in North Korea. Furthermore, the KCF accepted the WCC's invitation to meet the church leaders from South Korea at the CCIA conference on Peace and Justice in North-East Asia, 29th October-3rd November, Tozanso, Japan, which was especially organized to discuss the issue of Korean reunification.[39]

The Tozanso conference made a historic resolution on Korea, the so-called Tozanso Process, which it recommended to the global ecumenical family:

> 8.2.1. The WCC be asked to explore, in collaboration with CCA, the possibility of developing relationships with churches, Christians and others in North Korea, through visits and forms of contact.
> 8.2.2. The WCC, in collaboration with CCA, should seek to facilitate opportunities where it would be possible for Christians from both North and South Korea to meet in dialogue.
> 8.2.3. The churches be encouraged to share with the WCC and the CCA plans for contacts with and results of visit to North Korea.[40]

An official resolution had now been established allowing and encouraging the WCC to develop its relationship with the KCF. In 1985, the first official visit from the WCC to North Korea was carried on from 10th-19th November.[41] Since the Tozanso conference, North Korean church has participated in the global ecumenical movement. On the other hand, the international ecumenical fellowship also contributed to the revival of the KCF.

The Christian-*Juchean* Dialogue

Juche is the word that sums up the political thought of Kim Il-sung. As a system of values, *Juche* is commonly translated as "self-reliance." This notion has become the blueprint of North Korean society and the central guidance for

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[38] Heung-soo Kim, *A History of the Churches in North Korea After Liberation*, 6.

[39] Concerning the Tozanso meeting, see, CCIA ed, *Peace and Justice in North East Asia: Prospects for Peaceful Resolution of Conflict* (Geneva: WCC-CCIA, 1985); E. Weingartner, "The Tozanso Process: An Ecumenical contribution to the Struggle for Peace and Justice in North-East Asia", Peace And Reunification of Korea (Geneva: WCC-CCIA, 1990), 12-28.

[40] "Findings and Recommendations", CCIA/WCC Consultation on Peace and Justice in North East Asia, 29th October-2nd November 1984, Tozanso, Japan.

[41] E. Weingrtner, "The Tozanso Process", 17.

policies. It has evolved through various phases ranging from a mere political slogan to a comprehensive *Weltanschauung*. In his own explanation of the idea, Kim Il-sung said that the basis of *Juche* is "man is master of nature and society, and the main factor that decides all matters.'[42] The master of socialist construction is the masses, and the power to effect revolution and construction rests with the people. The master of one's fate is oneself, and power to control one's fate rests with oneself.[43] As such, man should not be subjected to enslavement of any kind, whether it is caused by economic poverty, political subjugation, or military domination on the part of other human beings. Therefore, *Juche*'s self-reliance has been interpreted as meaning a human-centered world-view.

While being an ideology that proclaimed itself to be essentially socialist and Marxist, *Juche* in fact stands in defiance of material determinism of history. The Marxist premise of economic or material structure as the substructure upon which all superstructures are founded is unequivocally rejected. Instead, in the *Juche* ideology, it is the spiritual consciousness that determines the course of history and it alone underlies all other structures.[44] In fact, *Juche*'s fundamental deviation from Marxism begins at this point.[45]

The *Juche* Idea also suggests the practical guiding principles to be taken in regard to revolution and construction: *Juche* (self-relience) in ideology, *Chaju* (self-independence) in politics, *Charip* (self-sustenance) in economy, and *Chawi* (self-defense) in military matters.[46] These four slogans which North Korea used for developing an indigenous Communism was a remarkable attempt at self-reliance within the Communist bloc. In Marx's *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, "workers have no nation of their own." However, in the *Juche* Idea, the concept of nationalism was given a positive interpretation, and integrated into the process of the socialist revolution then presumed to be taking place in the third world countries. The *Juche* idea critically states that imperialism is possible even within the Communist bloc, and can be practiced by the Communist super powers. In the *Juche* idea, national independence is not a sub-task of the Communist revolution, but it has an equal importance with the Communist revolution, especially in the Third World context. This is a crucial difference compared to orthodox Marxism.[47]

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[42] *Kim Il-sung Works*, vol. 27 (Pyongyang: Foreign languages Publishing House), 491.

[43] Concerning the *Juche* Idea, see, Kim Il-sung, *Juche sasang e daehayeo*, On the Idea of Juche (Pyongyang: KWP Press, 1977); Kim Il-sung, *Uri hyukmyung eseoeui Juche e daehayeo*, On the *Juche* in Our Revolution (Pyongyang: KWP Press, 1970); Academy of Social Sciences ed, *Hyukmyung kwa kunsule kwanhan Kim Il Sung Donjieui Sasang kwa keu widaehan seanghwallyuk*, The Thought of Comrade Kim Il-sung on Revolution and Construction and Its Great Strength (Pyongyang: Sahoe Kwahakwon Chulpansa, 1969); Kim Jong-il, *On the Juche Idea* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1982).

[44] Kim Jong-il, *op. cit.*, 9-10.

[45] See, J. Keum, *op. cit.*, 293-291.

[46] See, *Exposition of the Juche Idea*, 99-124.

[47] In the European context, nationalism has been considered as a negative ideology. However, in

The nationalistic characteristic of the *Juche* Idea rooted well in the soil of North Korea, because of the northerners' historical experience of being subjected to discrimination.

Rev. Ki-jun Koh was the first to suggest a Christian-*Juchean* dialogue, in his paper "Socialism and Christianity in North Korea."[48] As soon as he was elected as the general secretary of KCF in 1981, he proposed the dialogue as a new policy of the KCF. Koh examined why and how the Christians and the socialists were now able to live together without a conflict between the two belief-systems, a situation that was very different from previous experience. He believed that the answer of this question would clarify the theological identity of revived Christianity in North Korea. He also asked: "Is it possible for the Christians and the *Jucheans* to cooperate together in the construction of socialist country, and for the reunification of fatherland?" and on the presumption that the answer to this question would be affirmative, "Where is the rationale for this cooperation?"[49] These were the theological questions that revived North Korean Christianity needed to answer, yet they were remarkable. While the churches had reopened since 1972, nobody had tried to interpret their experiences before Koh. Responding to the Koh's proposal, the Institute for the *Juche* Idea in Pyongyang and some Korean theologians living abroad decided to open a dialogue with the KCF. A consultation process of the Christian-*Juchean* dialogue was launched and consultations were held annually from 1981-1991 and a number of scholars participated.

Throughout the dialogue, the issue of *juche* and *minjung* was one of the most important agenda for discussion. Although one of these systems is a theology, which developed within the climate of the suffering *minjung* during the military dictatorships in South Korea in the 1970s, while the other is a political ideology, which developed within the circumstance of the reconstruction of North Korea after the Korean War and emphasized political independence against China and the Soviet Union during the 1950s, both begin their theological and philosophical argument with the issue of historical subjectivity. The first principle of the *Juche* idea is that "man is the subject of history."[50] On the other hand, the first theological theme of *minjung* theology is "the *minjug* as subject of history."[51]

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the Asian context, where most countries experienced colonialism, nationalism has been positively interpreted in relation to national liberation movements.

[48] Later, this paper was published in South Korea. Dong-kun Hong ed., *Vienna eso Frankfurt kkaji: Buk kwa Haewoi Dongpo, Kidokja kaneui Tongil Daehwa 10 Nyun Hoego*, From Vienna to Frankfurt: A Memory of Ten Years of Reunification Talks between the North Korean Christians and the Korean Christian Diaspora, (Seoul: Hyungsangsa, 1994), 135-143.

[49] Ibid., 140.

[50] *Kim Il-sung Works*, vol 27 (Pyongyang: Foreign languages Publishing House), 491.

[51] Yong-bock Kim, *Messiah and Minjung: Christ's Solidarity with the People for New Life*, 5.

This is not a coincidental conjunction but, in both instances, the result of indigenization of foreign ideas. The *Juche* idea should be seen as indigenous Korean Communism, and *minjung* theology as indigenous Korean liberation theology. Both are strongly rooted in traditional Korean philosophies. One of the characteristics of traditional religion and philosophy in Korea is humanism. The two influential modern Korean beliefs, the *Juche* idea and *minjung* theology, do not stand apart from this strong, humanistic tradition of the Korean ethos. Both have links with the traditional humanism of Korean thought through declaring that "man," or the "*minjung*" are the subject of history. This is a highly important reference point for the dialogue between the *Juche* idea and *minjung* theology, because both have a similarity in their methodology of indigenization as well in their as human-centered approach to history. Both beliefs link up with the traditional Korean concern for the people who suffer. This "common ground" is a remarkable basis for the Christian-*Juchean* dialogue and for working together for the suffering *minjung.*

As a result of the ten years consultation process, the most dramatic change in the official *Juchean* understanding of Christianity was in the amendment of the article on religion in the constitution. Article 54 of *The Socialist Constitution* in 1972 had said: "Citizens have freedom of religious belief and freedom of anti-religious propaganda." However, the reference to the "freedom of anti-religious propaganda" was completely deleted in the *Kim Il Sung Constitution* in 1992. Compared the still existing Article 46 of the Chinese Constitution, which talks about "the citizen's right to enjoy freedom not to believe in religion,"[52] the complete deletion of the "freedom of anti-religious propaganda" in North Korea was a remarkable change of religious policy. It is certain that the Christian-*Juchean* dialogue had influenced the above changes.

The *Minjung*-Centered Cooperative Paradigm

While the former cooperation paradigm practiced by the NKCA and the KWP had merely been a diplomatic one, the new revived cooperative paradigm was based on mutual understanding through theological and ethical dialogue. The point of convergence between the two different systems of thought was the similarity of their understanding of the *minjung* as the subject of history. This similarity has served as a theological justification of the KCF's cooperation with the Communist state. Consequently, the article of "anti-religious propaganda," which had been the legal foundation of the Communists' discrimination towards

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[52] Concerning criticisms on this article, see, T. Lambert, *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church* (Illinois: SHAW, 1991), 37; with W. Rees-Mogg, "Religious Policy of China," Interview with Jian Zemin, *The Times*, 18th October 1999.

the Christians, was deleted from the constitution. The dialogue brought about a positive change in the North Korean understanding of Christianity. In this meaningful renewal, the *minjung*-centered cooperative approach emerged as a new paradigm of church-state relations in North Korea. Northern Protestantism introduced the *minjung* as the dynamic element in a revived understanding of church-state relations.

Conclusion: The *Minjung*-Centered Approach in Church-State Relations

Through the above research, we can conclude that northern Protestantism has developed diverse historical paradigms of church-state relations, and that each paradigm decisively influenced the fate of the northern Protestant churches. The issue has not been merely a legal and institutional debate on specific issues like religious education, religious tax, state church or free church etc. Rather, has been a response to the whole modern history of North Korea, with its major themes of colonization, national construction, partition, war etc.

Protestant Christianity in North Korea has experimented with a wide range of historical paradigms of church-state relations, from opposition to cooperation, and each paradigm influenced Protestant Christianity's success or failure in North Korea in different ways. In this experience of success and failure, the notion of a *minjung*-centered approach was a key issue, which decided the appropriateness of each paradigm. Through our examination of the various historical paradigms, we have identified that the concept of the *minjung* has to be included in the bilateral relationship between church and state for establishing a proper relationship. In the North Korean context, the notion of the *minjung* has to be the criterion for determining whether the northern church should oppose the state or cooperate with it. If the state developed policies in favor of the *minjung*, and the *minjung* support their government, the church can cooperate with the state. However, if a government is tyrannical and oppresses the *minjung*, the church cannot allow the legitimacy of the government, and must oppose the state. Therefore, the triangular approach of church, *minjung* and state is a highly relevant analytical methodology for the northern churches in critically assessing their church-state relations.

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THE POSITION OF FATHER DUMITRU STANILOAE ON THE THEOPHANIES AND MARIAN APPARITIONS OF HIS TIMES

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ABSTRACT. During the interwar period, as well as the communist dictatorship, a number of miraculous apparitions occurred in Romania – both theophanies and Marian apparitions. They generated "spiritual awakening" movements among the members of the Romanian Ortodox Church. Such instances were the visions of shepherd Petre Lupu of Maglavit (1935), the visions of Mother Veronica of Vladimireşti Monastery (1937), and those of Sister Virginia, respectively, which resulted in the establishment of the "New Jerusalem" Monastery at Pucioasa (1955). Like similar phenomena within the Roman-Catholic world, theophanies and Marian apparitions in Romania divided the lay and ecclesiastic elites by generating divergent opinions. This study presents the position of Father Dumitru Stăniloae on these unusual phenomena and their adherents. It is a very difficult issue, generally avoided by theological research as it presupposes a nuanced interpretation, like the one offered by the great theologian on the grounds of his vast erudition and deep theological insights, as well as his personal religious experience.

Keywords: Dumitru Staniloae, Theophanies, Marian Apparitions, Romanian Orthodoxy

On 31 May 1935 – a Friday, shepherd Petre Lupu from Maglavit (a village in southern Romania, close to the Danube) claimed to have seen a white-bearded Old Man, who commanded him to tell people to repent, observe the feast days, attend the Church and stop sinning. The apparition occurred three times, and on Saturday, 15 June 1935, Petrache Lupu first described his visions to the village people, also announcing the priest and the mayor. A pilgrimage began immediately, gathering tens and later hundreds of devout people from the neighboring villages, all seeking to obtain a first-hand, detailed account of the wondrous event[1].

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[1] On Maglavit see Prof. dr. Petre David, *Invazia sectelor. Asupra creştinismului secularizat şi intensificarea prozelitismului neopăgân în România după decembrie 1989*, vol. II (Constanţa: Europolis, 1999), 155-158; Radu Petre Mureşan, *Atitudinea Bisericilor Tradiţionale Europene faţă de prozelitismul advent. Impactul în societatea contemporană* (Bucureşti: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2007), 573-576.

However, its impact would have been limited, of merely local relevance, but for the major daily newspapers with wide readership (*Dimineața, Curentul,* and *Universul*) which attached such importance to the event that they offered it national coverage. Reporters sent by these publications described the magnitude of this pilgrimage (20,000 believers were said to visit Maglavit every day), quoted the shepherd's account and interviewed the village priest, and very importantly, made known the unexplainable healings among the pilgrims[2].

Between 22-25 September 1935, Father Dumitru Stăniloae visited Maglavit, as one of the prominent ecclesiastical figures who felt compelled to travel to this "site of miraculous happenings" in order to witness the events taking place there. At the time, the great Romanian theologian was 32 years old, had been a priest since 1932, an editor of the periodical *Telegraful Român* [*Romanian Telegraph*] since January 1934, and a professor at the Theological Academy "Andreiana" in Sibiu (professor at the Chair of History and Pastoral Theology since 1 July 1932, and a tenured professor at the Chair of Dogmatic Theology and Apologetics, since 1 October 1936)[3].

According to his own declarations, Father Stăniloae had an unexpected, astonishing personal experience at Maglavit, to which he attested truthfully: "*I professor and priest D. Stăniloae, testify before God and the people, about the following miraculous healings, which I myself witnessed at Maglavit, in full awareness and control of my faculties*". Father Dumitru Stăniloae goes on to enumerate nine "wondrous facts" he had witnessed himself at Maglavit, where he had the oportunity to talk to the people who claimed being cured of various diseases, illnesses or infirmities[4].

Beside the miraculous healings he witnessed and to which he testified, Father Dumitru Stăniloae himself had a strange experience, while he was listening to Petrache Lupu. We quote the testimony of Father Dumitru Stăniloae: "*I also confess that, in addition to the miraculous healings I have witnessed myself, and*

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[2] Among the newspaper articles, we mention: "Un om care a vorbit Vineri cu... Dumnezeu. Sate puse în mișcare de mișcarea unui cioban" newspaper *Dimineața*, June 27, 1935, 13; "Viața omului care a vorbit cu Dumnezeu", *Curentul,* (July 3, 1935): 2; "Cum s-a arătat Dumnezeu ciobanului Petre", *Curentul,* (July 4, 1935); "Mănăstirea lui Dumnezeu", *Curentul* (July 20, 1935): 3; "Maglavitul-loc de pelerinaj", *Curentul* (July 29 1935): 3.

[3] Florin Duțu, *Viața Părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae, 1903-1993* (București: Editura Floare de colț, 2015), 16-17.

[4] Pr. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, "Vindecările Minunate văzute de mine la Maglavit", *Telegraful Român*, LXXXXIIII, no. 41 (29 September 1935): 2-3, article also included in the volume *Cultură și duhovnicie.* Book published with the blessing of His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Edited, introduction, notes by Ion-Dragoș Vlădescu (Bucharest: Basilica Publishing House, 2012), 712-717; Pr. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, "Vindecările Minunate văzute de mine la Maglavit", *Renașterea* XIII, no. 47 (6 October 1935): 40.

saw with my own eyes, I experienced another miracle: I did see, without any doubt, but keeping my calm and critical thinking, a strange figure behind Petrache Lupu, while he was standing on the platform, around 11 a.m. It looked like a big-sized bust, of a blue-greenish hue, that could be seen against the horizon. It was not a cloud, for it moved to the right or left, following the movements of Petrache, and it did not dissipate gradually, but it appeared and disappeared all at once. Neither was it the shadow of Petrache, because others were standing on the platform next to him, but nothing could be seen behind them. I had heard many people speaking about this bust, but I did not know what to think of it. Now I saw it myself, as did many people who were around me: father Mocanu, his wife, my wife, and other persons".

Father Stăniloae's account of his visit to Maglavit ended abruptly, without any conclusions or commentaries: *"These are the wondrous things I witnessed at Maglavit. I take full responsibility before God and my fellow people, in that I am declaring nothing but the truth. I will not recount here any of the miracles described by others. I can only say that many occur every day, more than anyone can count. I conclude without any commentary. This article contains mere facts."*

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The January 1936 issue of *Gândirea [Thought]*, an important cultural journal of traditionalist orientation, published two articles on Maglavit. One was authored by Nichifor Crainic, the journal's director and professor of Mystical Theology at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Bucharest, and the other was written by Father Dumitru Stăniloae. Nichifor Crainic had visited Maglavit on 23 October 1935 and portrayed the man (Petrache Lupu) whose humbleness had generated "*this huge wave of mystical devotion*". His account followed three directions: an assessment of the shepherd's mental health; his manner of praying for the people; and his religious psychology, respectively[5]. What he witnessed at Maglavit was a collective movement, engaging the souls of millions of people. As this movement was prompted by a lonely, illiterate shepherd's spiritual experience (which was inward and personal, hence uncontrollable), it followed that the phenomenon was essentially mystical. Nichifor Crainic also attested to the "strange figure", and concluded that the phenomenon "*requires extensive theological research, in order to ascertain its true nature. We have merely provided a descriptive presentation, with no other claims than the complete honesty of recorded facts. If we are wrong, which is quite possible, time will tell. It is only time that can offer any certainty, either to disprove or to confirm our perceptions. Actually, this is the method employed by our Church, which proclaims and acknowledges saintliness only when appearances have become certainties*" (p. 11).

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[5] Nichifor Crainic, "Vizită la Maglavit", *Gândirea*, XV, no. 1 (January, 1936): 1-11.

The article published by Father Dumitru Stăniloae in the journal *Gândirea* was a comprehensive theological study entitled "Încercare despre teofanii. Interpretarea vedeniilor lui Petrache Lupu" ["On theophanies. Commentaries on the visions of Petrache Lupu], containing many insights into matters of psychology and psychoanalysis[6]. The study aimed to demonstrate the error of those who claim that God cannot show Himself to the people, based on the text of the Gospel according to John: "*no one has ever seen God*" (John I, 18). Father Dumitru Stăniloae explains this by the antinomic manner of speaking in the Scriptures, which employ contradictory expressions concerning God's accessibility, or inaccessibility respectively, in relation to men. This issue was partially settled by 14th -century hesychast debates, which clarified the fact that God is inaccessible by His essence, but His energies and works descend to us; the idea was further developed by modern Russian theologians, especially Bulgakov and Berdiaev.

According to Father Dumitru Stăniloae, the highest step along one's ascensional path towards God lies in feeling Him close to oneself and within oneself, as a person (p. 16). It is very difficult to relate to God as to a person, with the only difference that He is invisible to bodily eyes: "*We think of God in deistic terms – based on the effects of His works in the past, and we feel Him in pantheistic terms – as acts emanating from some impersonal force, but we fail to perceive Him as a person, in personalist terms. This is the truth, most of the times. How difficult, how rarely do we really make our prayer into a conversation with God - our neighbor!*".

Following this logic, our great theologian asks how is it possible that God should show Himself to people, in a sensorial (material) way? Father Dumitru Stăniloae enumerates several theophanies mentioned in the Holy Scripture, when these were perceived by a single person but not by the others around (the martyrdom of Holy Archdeacon Stephen; the shepherds, on Lord's Nativity), then he concludes that such situations were similar to Petre Lupu's visions, for the respective apparitions were not seen by the shepherds accompanying him, although they could hear him talking to someone (p. 18). Moreover, the case of this shepherd corroborates the assertion of Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki, who stated about the Taboric light that the apostles did not see that light with their bodily eyes, but most likely they contemplated it mentally.

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[6] Dumitru Stăniloae, "Încercare despre teofanii. Interpretarea vedeniilor lui Petrache Lupu", *Gândirea*, XV, no. 1 (January 1936): 14-29. The study is based on a series of articles published in *Telegraful Român:* "Încercare despre teofanii (I), *Telegraful Român*, LXXXIII", no. 40 (22 September 1935): 1; "Încercare despre teofanii (II), Telegraful Român, LXXXIII", no. 40 (20 October 1935): 1; "Încercare despre teofanii (III), *Telegraful Român,* LXXXIV", no. 2, (5 January 1936): 1; "Încercare despre teofanii (IV), *Telegraful Român,* LXXXIV", no. 3 (12 January 1936): p. 1-2; "Încercare despre teofanii (V), *Telegraful Român,* year LXXXIV", no. 4 (19 January 1936): 1-2; The five articles are included in the volume *Cultură și duhovnicie. Articole publicate în Telegraful Român,* vol I (1930-1936), 705-711, 718-722, 759-768, 769-778, 779-787.

At this point, Father Dumitru Stăniloae undertakes a thorough analysis of apparitions (visions) produced by imagination or by hallucinations, in various instances: delusion, nightmare, delirium, dementia, and he refers the readers to the works of reputable specialists of his times. In his opinion, Petrache Lupu's visions did not belong to the category of hallucination phenomena of any type, since by definition hallucinations are "*projections with a destructive character, harmful to both the individual whose personality they undermine, and to the society at large*" (p. 23). On the contrary, Petrache Lupu was mentally healthy, and his visions did not generate anything morbid and unsound but they promoted spiritual health and strength.

With regard to imagination, Father Dumitru Stăniloae states that this is the path followed by everything that comes forth from the depths of the soul, so that we may become aware of it. By "depths of the human soul" he designates not only representations and images from the past or biological urges, but the very source of human life from which stem one's understanding of the world, one's virtues, one's feelings, one's creative power (p. 18). The images that present themselves to our awareness are not exclusively produced by conscious or unconscious imagination. Father Dumitru Stăniloae points out that in many cases, they are produced within us by an external cause which does not have a subjective nature, by an outward agent. We do not always meet that external factor, or agent, by our will or our interest. Petrache Lupu's vision is a case in point. "*There is no reason* - Father Dumitru Stăniloae points out – *to doubt that the image seen by Petre Lupu is an instantiation of the reality it expresses: God*" (p. 26).

It is known that God, when He chooses to reveal Himself in such a way that no doubts can exist concerning His revelation, shows Himself in a human form. Acting on the human soul – Father Dumitru Stăniloae goes on to say – therefore acting on created "matter", God kindles a light there and provides an image of Himself; and the image of a human being is somehow the most natural form in which God appears (p. 28). His dogmatic, psychological and psychoanalytical arguments lead Father Staniloae to a categorical conclusion: "*As we can see, there is nothing to prevent us from inferring that Petrache Lupu has indeed seen God. His vision has all the attributes of a theophany*".

The interwar period was marked by sustained efforts to define the Romanian identity. Outstanding thinkers such as Nichifor Crainic, Nae Ionescu, Constantin Rădulescu Motru or Lucian Blaga endeavored to describe the relationship between Orthodoxy and "Romanianism", that is, the "Romanian spirit", or specific character. Because debates on this issue tended to downplay the role of Orthodoxy in the making of the Romanian spirit and as integral part of it, Father Stăniloae developed an "ethnic theology" by which he postulated a close relationship between the two, going as far as to equate Orthodoxy and Romanianism.

From 1933 onwards, Father Stăniloae published a series of articles in "Telegraful român [The Romanian Telegraph]" journal, praising the group known as *Oastea Domnului [The Lord's Army]*, a well-known "spiritual awakening" movement emerged within the Romanian Orthodox Church, According to Father Stăniloae, *Oastea Domnului* had the merit of re-establishing the bond between Christ and "the soul of our peasants" and contributing to the "emergence of a new type of peasantry, truly belonging to our future": a peasantry not dominated by alcoholism, by hopelessness, by roughness towards children, not deceived by the promises of politicians, but instead loving the Church and ready to help those in need, interested in reading devotional literature and above all the Holy Scripture. "*It is a new peasantry,* Father Stăniloae wrote, *because it stands on new 3spiritual grounds; it is the peasantry belonging to our Lord Jesus Christ*"[7]. By asserting the vital role of the Romanian village, Father Stăniloae developed a true "theology of the Romanian people" as a theological counterpart to the political discourse of the times (which described peasantry as the representative and the holder of the true values of the Romanian people)[8].

In February 1935, Father Stăniloae published the article "Ortodoxie şi naţiune [Orthodoxy and Nation]"[9], and in October 1935, he reiterated the same ideas in the article "Românism şi Ortodoxie [Romanianism and Orthodoxy]"[10]. Petrache Lupu's visions occurred in the summer of 1935, that is at a time when Father Stăniloae was diligently constructing a theological edifice, intended to express the complex relationship between faith and nation, between Orthodoxy and the Romanian specific character, or spirit. This is why Father Stăniloae's position on "the theophany at Maglavit" can only be understood and considered in the context of his "ethnocentric" theology, which he developed during his huge polemic both against Catholicism and Protestantism, and against some great thinkers of interwar Romania, especially Constantin Rădulescu Motru and Lucian Blaga.

His arguments are based on his perception of the nation as a living organism, and of ethnicity as expression of a life community. If an ethnic group fails to be spiritualized by religion (in this case, Orthodox religion), then it is threatened by dangerous deviations and pathological excesses. Father Stăniloae

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[7] Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, "O ţărănime nouă", *Telegraful român* LXXXI, no. 15-17 (18 February 1933): 1-2.

[8] Pr. Prof. Dr. Ilie Moldoveanu, "Actualitatea gândirii Părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae cu privire la etnic şi etnicitate" in Persoană şi comuniune. Prinos de cinstire Părintelui Profesor Academician Dumitru Stăniloae la împlinirea vârstei de 90 de ani, ed. Ioan Ică jr. (Sibiu, 1993), 120-130; Lecturer George Enache, PhD, "Biserica-societate-naţiune stat în România interbelică. Explorări în orizont liberal", *Revista Teologică,* no. 2 (2010): 166-202.

[9] Dumitru Stăniloae, "Ortodoxie şi naţiune", *Gândirea* XIV, no. 2 (February 1935): 76-84.

[10] Dumitru Stăniloae, "Românism şi Ortodoxie", *Gândirea* XV, no. 8 (October 1935): 400-409.

considers that Orthodoxy has pervaded and has left its imprint on the Romanian people, and this two-millennia symbiosis "*allows us an almost aprioric belief – that the Romanian soul has been shaped and fashioned by Orthodoxy*". He analyzes the spiritual and social practices of the Romanian village, and points out that "this mystical bond with the extra-human world, that is, the animal and vegetal realms, has been created under the influence of Orthodoxy" (p. 405), then concludes that "*the people most pervaded by, and infused with the Orthodox spirituality is the Romanian people. It was born Christian. It never knew any other religious structure to undermine the Orthodox one...*" (p. 407)

Accordingly, Father Stăniloae as the founder and champion of a true "mystical theology of the nation", could only salute the massive pilgrimage to Maglavit, in which he saw the beginnings of a movement of spiritual reawakening of the Romanian people[11]. His visit to this "site of miracles" reinforced this conviction, and this led him to the theological justification of Petrache Lupu's visions, which he did in complete sincerity and taking full responsibility.

The tribulations of history (dictatorship, war, the communist regime) hindered both collective religious manifestations and mystical thought in its various expressions, Between 1937-1939, a former member of Oastea Domnului [The Lord's Army] group, Vasilica Gurău (later Mother Veronica) claimed she had witnessed a number of theophanies and Marian apparitions, which prompted her to establish a convent at Vladimireşti (Galaţi county), during the war years. The remarkable spiritual evolution of this monastic settlement posed a great challenge to the recently installed communist regime, which decided to close it down in 1955, while Mother Veronica and other nuns were sent to the infernal communist prisons. In his turn, Petrache Lupu was imprisoned during the communist dictatorship, and after his release he maintained complete silence, until his death in 1994.

I could not find in the writings of Father Stăniloae published after 1938, any mention of the "Vladimireşti phenomenon", whose magnitude was similar to that of the "Maglavit phenomenon". However, the theological literature of the early years of the communist regime contained several articles which, in the words of a Romanian theologian, demonstrated how "*researchers into Fundamental Theology were allowed to work in their field, but could never contradict the postulates of militant atheism*"[12]. In this context, we note an entire 1949 issue of "Studii Teologice [Theological Studies]" journal (no. 5-6, July-August 1949), where several professors of Theology provided arguments derived from the discipline

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[11] Dumitru Stăniloae, "Exagerări", *Telegraful Român* LXXXXIII, no. 39 (15 September 1935): 1.

[12] Rev. Prof. Constantin Drăgulin, "Părintele Petru Rezuş, un apologet de seamă", *Lumina* newspaper, 31 March 2011, (https://ziarullumina.ro/documentar/parintele-petru-rezus-un-apologet-de-seama-13182.html).

they taught, against superstition, occultism, witchcraft, magic. The stereotypical manner in which these articles open and end, leads me to believe that this special issue of "Studii Teologice" journal was actually commissioned by the communist authorities. Two articles were signed by Father Professor Petru Rezuş, who very harshly denounced the "Maglavit phenomenon" of the interwar times, as well as the events at Vladimireşti, dating from the same period[13].

In 1952, Father Dumitru Stăniloae published an extensive study condemning the "false mysticism" with general statements on such phenomena, but without any explicit mention of Maglavit or Vladimireşti[14]. False mysticism, placed in the category of "religious counterfeit", is "*a disposition of the soul which expects or sees miracles everywhere, which seeks visions and attaches a supernatural quality to any person who is less ordinary*". Father Stăniloae classifies miraculous phenomena and visions into three categories, pertaining to occultism (magic, witchcraft and superstition), to pathological conditions, and to fraud, and analyzes the manifestations of each. The conclusion of his study is that promoters of false mysticism are persons with certain disorders of the soul, who find themselves at various points in-between health and a medical condition. They live in society, and so their obsessions and so-called visions have an impact on the religious disposition of a great number of people. Their fixed ideas become visions of purely terrestrial origin, are manifest in material forms, and bring about nothing new.

The true visions, expressions of the divine revelation, are above any material form and they receive only a symbolic one, to indicate spiritual significance, as do the Book of Revelation or the Book of Daniel. Moreover, true visions are rare and they serve lofty missionary goals: "*When a person claims to have visions, even on a daily basis, and on the other hand that person is unable of conducting serious missionary activity, then that individual is certainly mentally deranged or a fraud, or else a victim of ignorance... Ignorance is the most important vehicle spreading false mysticism. The epidemic forms of false mysticism are a sad tell-tale sign that a people is religiously backward and cast a shameful light on the religious shepherds of a nation*".

One might think that by these general considerations, Father Stăniloae actually makes a critical hint to the Maglavit phenomenon and thus he contradicts his own statements made 30 years earlier, on Petrache Lupu's visions. Indeed, Father Stăniloae was forced to comply with the policy of the communist authorities, as were all professors of Theology at the time. Actually, in an "Activity Report"

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[13] Rev. Prof. Petru Răzuş, "Criteriologia falselor teofanii, *Studii Teologice*", no. 3-4 (May-June 1949): 226-237; idem, "Criteriile revelaţiunii divine şi combaterea falselor teofanii", *Studii Teologice*, no. 5-6 (July-August 1949): 345-364.

[14] Rev. Prof. Dumitru Săniloae, "Formele şi cauzele falsului misticism", *Studii Teologice* no. 5-6 (May-June 1952): 251-271.

he submitted to the Department of Religious Affairs, again in compliance with the regime's requirements, he noted that in the previous year he had published, among others, the study entitled "Formele şi cauzele falsului misticism [Forms and causes of the false mysticism]" in "Studii Teologice", No. 5-6, 1952; there, he states, "*I denounced and criticized a number of morbid or ill-intended manifestations and acts in the realm of religious life*"[15].

In my opinion, this "compliance" with the communist policies was carried out in the same delicate, discreet manner that was characteristic of Father Stăniloae, and did not necessarily deny his position taken in 1935-1936 on the events of Maglavit. Better said, in the terms of Teodor Bakonsky, the biography of Father Stăniloae contained two Stăniloae, different but not necessary antagonistic[16]. In the first, interwar part, there is the young nationalist, educated in the spirit of the journal "Gândirea", there is the right-wing, philo-Orthodox and anti-Catholic, pro-European and anti-Marxist professor. This "first configuration of the self" reacts to the horizon of reality, and prompts him to take a stand on Petrache Lupu phenomenon, or on the "heretical gnosticism" of Lucian Blaga. Then the young romantic was succeeded by the grown-up man persecuted by the "unjust history" and by the old Stăniloae. These later experiences, constituting the "summer and autumn of a patriarch of Romanian religious thought" led him away from any political stance and spiritualized him, helping him to revisit his ethnocentric position. The second Stăniloae is the philocalic champion, the patristic exegete who translated thousands of pages, and above all the man in possession of certainties. All these biographical and spiritual (st)ages render him all the more valuable and trace a rich and complete, fully responsible destiny.

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III. HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

THE CONSOLIDATION OF DONATISM
IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

DRAGOŞ BOICU[*]

ABSTRACT. The Donatist Movement represents a phenomenon that can be studied as a paradigm for the emergence of schisms and their evolution from a canonical-disciplinary deviation to a dogmatic-moral one, transforming the dissident group into a heretical one. This study aims to deepen the way in which the resistance of the Numidian clergy was consolidated during the Constantinian dynasty despite the concessions and pressures exerted on it.

Keywords: Constantine the Great, North Africa, Donatism, Donatus Magnus, circumcelliones

The Church was considered from the very beginning a theandric institution, wanted, founded and led by God, infallible in its own right as an extension of the Body of Christ – its head; even so, throughout history it was faced with a problem common to all living organisms: mutation. Of course, we do not refer in this case to the sudden appearance of a new genetic character that reflects a modification of the hereditary material, but rather to a fundamental change in structure, whether disciplinary, liturgical or dogmatic. Since the very first century of the Christian era, a series of communities have emerged, with their own particularities that distanced them from the kerygma taught by the Apostles in the Near East and the Mediterranean Basin. Leaving aside for a moment the formal distinction between heresy and schism, we notice that the tendency of fragmentation is a constitutive feature of Christian religion, as the Saviour Himself said, 'Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three' (Luke 12: 51-52).

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Paradoxically, the protection Emperor Constantine the Great and his successors provided for Christianity further favoured the spread of this phenomenon in the 4th century, and one of the most serious divisions that affected the Church once the persecutions ceased was the Donatist schism.

Against the backdrop of the dissensions surrounding the succession for the Episcopal Seat of Carthage, two groups were formed and both claimed jurisdiction over the entire African Christianity: the Donatists – the supporters of Majorinus – and the so-called Catholics / Orthodox – who supported Caecilian as the legitimate successor of Bishop Mensurius[1]. In order to resolve the conflict, the Numidian or Donatist clergy repeatedly appealed to Emperor Constantine the Great, who ordered the examination of the complaints made against Bishop Caecilian by four synods (Rome – 313, one in Africa the same year, Arles – 314, Milan – 316), favouring the decisions of the latter. However, the rigorist faction of the Donatists asserted itself in northern Africa, gaining numerous followers who were breaking the communion with the Caecillianists and isolating themselves from all those suspected of being *traditores* or in any relationship with them.

The first persecutions against the Donatists

The repeated pleas of the Donatists for the Emperor to intervene had inevitably impacted the community from the perspective of the property law, since as he was in favour of Bishop Caecilian the Emperor was now bound to seize Donatist churches and give them to the Catholics, who considered the rightful owners of ecclesiastical buildings in North Africa.

After several years of restricting the Donatists' activity, Constantine found that he did not succeeded in causing them to abandon the schism, but on the contrary they endangered themselves even more, victimizing themselves and legitimizing their persistence through the cult dedicated to the martyrs killed accidentally during the evacuation operations of the churches given to the Catholics.

However, the events that unfolded between 316 and 321 are quite unclear and the lack of consensus among historians on this topic raises enduring doubts. Most scholars interpret the few sources recording this period as signs of an

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[1] For a detailed genesis of donation, see W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church. A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford, 1952), and Brent Shaw, *African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Also see Pr. Prof. Nicolae Chifăr, "Mişcarea donatistă şi politica religioasă constantiniană (The Donatist Movement and Constantine's Religious Policy)", *Revista Teologică*, no. 4 (2012): 129-130, and Daniel Nicolae Vălean's contribution, *Erezii, controverse şi schisme în creştinismul secolelor I-XI* (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2009), 74-78.

atrocious persecution of Donatists launched by imperial troops, on Constantine's orders. But apart from the letter addressed to Eumalius *Vicarus* (November 316) and the Donatist text of *Passio Sancti Donati*, we have no other evidence to prove these persecutions took place[2]. The restitution of the churches was undoubtedly carried out with great difficulty and often by force, but imperial forces sent by Emperor Constantine were instructed to use only the clubs to implement his disposition [qui non gladiis sed impia fustium caede tricidabantur]; this detail stresses even more his intention to take over the edifices without killing Donatists. This testimony is given by the already mentioned Donatist text, which among other pieces of information also reports the death of a cleric in the most accidental circumstances: Bishop Honoratus of Sicilibba's throat was 'gashed' by tribune's sword during a mêlée[3].

This view seems to be supported by Optatus of Mileve, who recalls the numerous Donatist petitions against the killings caused by Paul's and Macarius's missions in Carthage, Bagai and Nova Petra (in 347), but the schismatics didn't blame Leontius and Ursacius who had coordinated the restitutions between 317 and 321. There is therefore no solid evidence that systematic retaliation had taken place in that interval, but only moderate implementation of the imperial provisions that stipulated the transfer of churches to Catholic clergy and the exile of riotous Donatist bishops[4].

Despite the measures taken by Constantine, the dissidents strengthened their position by taking advantage of the clashes with law enforcement to legitimize their victimhood, while the Emperor and the Caecilianist clergy were considered agents or associates of Satan for having used money and various favours to lure the Donatists and break their resistance[5]. Moreover, before 321 they addressed a document to Constantine the Great in which they categorically rejected any kind of communion with Caecilian and his supporters. This caused the Emperor to suspend any attempt to restore unity to the church in Africa, as the path of dialogue had never been opened[6], while the Donatists maintained their position with the same obstinacy as before 314.

Therefore, Constantine published a rescript of tolerance with which, without accepting their demands, he suspended their persecution and recognized the

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[2] Noel Lenski, "Constantine and the Donatists. Explorig the Limits of Religious Toleration", in *Religiöse Toleranz. 1700 Jahre nach dem Edikt von Mailand*, Martin Wallraff (Hg.), Colloquia Raurica (Berlin / Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 108 sqq.

[3] *Passio Donati*, VII, *PL* 8: 755: "episcopi jugulum tribuni gladius non penetravit, tamen compunxit".

[4] See: Éric Fournier, "Constantine and Episcopal Banishment: Continuity and Change in the Settlement of Christian Disputes", in *Clerical Exile in Late Antiquity*, ed. Julia Hillner, Jörg Ulrich and Jakob Engberg (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016), 47-66.

[5] Noel Lenski, "Constantine and the Donatists", 123.

[6] Noel Lenski, "Constantine and the Donatists", 112.

existence of a massive rupture in the north African Church. Consequently, he summoned the Donatist clergy back from exile and proclaimed a relative religious freedom in Africa; then on 5 May 321 he sent Verinus, *vicarus Africae*, a letter informing him of the provisions of the rescript of tolerance.

> However, until the heavenly cure takes its effect, we must keep our plans behind so that we would cultivate patience and endure everything through the virtue of tranquillity (totum tranquillitatis virtute toleremus) no matter what they might try or do in their arrogance through the practices of intemperance. Do not reward evil with injustice (Rom. 12: 17), for we really need to serve God, lest we be fools to take revenge into our own hands (Rm 12: 19) especially when our faith should give us the certainty that anything that we endure from such people because of their madness, will count to God as a martyrdom[7].

This passage from the letter addressed to the African bishops expresses the same frustration and helplessness of the Emperor in his attempt to persuade the Donatists to renounce the schism, although he has made repeated concessions and even tried to force them to acknowledge Caecilian. He deprived them of the places of worship and exposed them to a harsher treatment, hoping that the deprivations will make them more conciliatory or even cause them to give up their opposition to the Church from which they have separated, bringing them back to Constantine's much desired unity.

But the edict of 5 May 321 has facilitated the spread of Donatists throughout North Africa. It seems that in this context the actions of schismatics became more daring and culminated in the rebellion led by Axido and Fasir, 'duces sanctorum', who terrified the rural areas and threatened the public order until they were repressed by comes Taurinus[8]. We must mention that this is the first case in which a certain form of Christianity identified itself with a national movement, the religious opposition to Rome having a strong political correspondent[9].

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[7] *Epistola Constantini Imperatoris ad episcopos* (321) in H.v. Soden, *Urkunden zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Donatismus*, 1913, reed. by H.v. Campenhausen, *Kleine Texte für Vorlesungen und Űbungen*, 122, (Berlin, 1950), 52: "Verum dum caelestis medicina procedat, hactenus sunt consilia nostra moderanda ut patientiam percolamus et, quicquid insolenta illorum pro consuetudine intemperantiae suae tentant aut faciunt, id totum tranquillitatis virtute toleremus. Nihil ex reciproco reponatur iniuriae (Rm 12, 17); vindicta menim quam deo servare debemus (Rm 12, 19) insipientis est manibus usurpare, maxime cum debeat fides nostra confidere quicquid ab Huiusmodi hominum furore patietur martyrii gratia apud deum esse valiturum".

[8] Optatus de Mileve (Afrus), *De Schismate Donatistarum Adversus Parmenianum*, *Libri VII*, III, 4, *CSEL* 26, ed. Carol Ziwsa, (Viena, 1893), 82.

[9] See the position of Brent Shaw, *Sacred Violence. African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011),54-55.

It is obvious that the Emperor disapproved of the Donatist position, and we may say that, as schismatics remained unwavering in their beliefs formulated immediately after Caecilian's election as Bishop of Carthage, Constantine the Great also firmly maintained his prejudice expressed as early as 312 when he accused them of 'still abiding in their madness'[10]. The concessions made to the dissidents came at the price of a condescending tone and the construction of a rhetoric of disapproval, both elements that can be identified in the epistle sent by Constantine to the African bishops in 330[11], the last piece in the Donatist dossier during his reign. This text expresses even more clearly the emperor's disapproval, when he does not hesitate to characterize Donatus's supporters as mad, stubborn, sick, and satanic. The emperor's disgust becomes even plainer from his order that the Numidian Catholic bishops should no longer try to regain the Church in Cirta, abusively occupied by the Donatists, assuring them that he will build a new church for them, asking in return to sever all connections with these dissidents lacking common sense and openness for dialogue. On the contrary, they must be left in God's hands:

> Indeed, the judgment of the Most High God is seen from this greater and more righteous situation, that He is so tolerant of such people, and condemns with patience all the iniquities which they commit, bearing them, since God promised that He is the Vindicator of all[12].

Of course, the relaxation of the restrictions on Donatists could be seen in the wider context of the Roman Empire's internal policy, and especially in connection to the conflicts between Constantine the Great and Licinius. Thus, one can notice that when the first animosities between the two emperors appeared in 314-316, Constantine chose the path of dialogue and councils, and after the end of the civil war, Constantin intervened more brutally in the Donatist issue and, not being pressed by other factors, he allowed some small disturbances in North Africa. However, in 321, the tensions between Licinius and his brother-in-law resurfaced after Constantin violated the provisions of the 316 A.D. peace treaty, sending troops in Licinius's territories in pursuit of some Sarmatians who had invaded his territories. The situation was repeated a few months later when Constantine attacked the Goths who devastated Thrace, which is why the emperor

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[10] *Epistola Constantini Imperatoris ad Caecilianum,* in H.v. Soden, *Urkunden zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Donatismus*, 8-9.

[11] *Epistola Constantini ad episcopos Numidas*, in H.v. Soden, *Urkunden zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Donatismus*, 53-56.

[12] *Epistola Constantini ad episcopos Numidas*, in H.v. Soden, *Urkunden zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Donatismus*, 55.

of the East accused him of violating the treaty and began preparations for a new civil war. This time Constantine needed to ensure the loyalty of the African provinces, especially since that region provided the wheat supplies necessary to Rome and the whole of Italy.

Coincidentally or not, the intervals of political conflict correspond to those in which Emperor Constantine the Great appeared to be conciliatory, although he was aware of the Donatists' errors and was frustrated by the stubbornness with which they supported their cause. However, after the year 324, when he became the sole ruler of the Roman Empire, Constantine did not resume the persecution of schismatics, a decision influenced by the aggravation of the Arian crisis that led to the convocation of the First Ecumenical Synod (Nicaea, 325) but also by his strong conviction that the Donatist opposition consolidated in the last decade could be shaken only by divine judgment, as it transpires from the two Constantinian texts in 321 and 330.

What stands out is the conviction of the Donatists that they are the 'sons of martyrs' who make up the 'Church of Truth'. This conviction emphasizes the ability to build an identity around the notion of martyrdom in an era in which, at least theoretically, there was no conflict between Christianity and Empire. However, using any occasion that antagonized the authorities, they missed no opportunity to appear as victims of an aggression of the emperor, who proved to be no better than the persecutors Diocletian and Galerius, while the Donatists were the rightful descendants of the martyrs and did not hesitate to become martyrs themselves when the situation required it. The authority accumulated through the sacrifice of the dissidents gave the Donatist group a special impulse, but also a typical self-sufficiency that further strengthened the arrogance of the 'few chosen', radicalizing them on a path far from the evangelical precepts. Once engaged in this radical dynamic that escalated daily in increasingly absurd situations, presented as tests to be overcome with the same obstinacy, the schismatics ended up committing horrible atrocities that had nothing in common with the spirituality and the liturgical-dogmatic thesaurus that they claimed to protect.

The evolution of Donatism during the reigns of the sons of Constantine the Great

The death of great Constantine left a deep void in the political life of the Roman Empire, but this did not stop the transformation of the Mediterranean space into a society in which the Christian element was dominant. This evolution would prove to be full of contrasts and paradoxes. The empire was divided between the sons of 'Constantine: Constantine II (337-340), Constantius II (337-361) and

Constans (337-350) – as follows: 'he allocated to the eldest his grandfather's portion (Galia, Britania and Spain with Mauritania Tingitana), to the second the government of the east (Egyp, Orient, Asia and Pons), and that between them (Italia, Africa, Pannonia, Illyricum and Tracia) to the third'[13].

The Peace of the Empire would soon be disturbed when the step-brothers of the great Constantine, Julius Constantius, Dalmatius, Hannibalius, and all the male descendants of 'Theodora's lineage' – the legitimate wife of Emperor Constantius (I) –, would be massacred. Just Galus and Julian, children then, remained alive. The historian Philostorgius, acknowledged for his Arian penchant, wishing to justify this act, whose main beneficiary was Constantius (II), states that these bloody measures were reprisals against those who were rumoured to have poisoned the great Constantine, because his death was not natural at all[14].

However, the shedding of blood was not enough to restore political balance. The return to the form of polyarchic government would prove difficult as conflicts soon arose between the three brothers. While Constantius was forced to cope with the Persians in the Orient, the conflict between Constans and Constantine II broke out in the West. However, Constans did not tolerate Constantine's interference for a long time, which is why he would try to consolidate his autonomy. Consequently, Constantine, wishing to restore order, invaded Constans's territories at the beginning of the year 340, but in his march through Italy, still faithful to the emperor of Sirmium, he faced strong resistance from the population, and in the course of the Battle of Aquileia in 340, Constantine was killed, and his body was thrown into the waters of the Alsa River, near the city[15].

Thus, Constans became sole ruler of the entire West. Together with Constantius, he increased the provisions of the legislation favourable to Christians and was particularly involved in ecclesiastical issues owing to the Arian crisis, but just like his father, he postponed baptism to the end of life, a proof that Christianity had no special meaning yet for the political life of the Empire.

Supporters of the two Christian factions, Nicean and Semi-Arian, Constans and Constantius would have tense relations, but the external pressures of the Franks on the Danubian and Renan frontiers and of the Persians in the East prevented the escalation of violence between the two brothers. The field of doctrinal battle between Semi-Arianism and orthodoxy was for now Illyricum, where a whole series of synods (Sardica 343, Sirmium 348, 351, 357) were

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[13] Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, introduction, translation, and commentary by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall (Oxford, New York, 1999), 172-173.

[14] Robert M. Franks, "The Dynasty of Constantine Down to 363", in *The Cambridge companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 99.

[15] Dumitru Tudor, *Figuri de împărați romani*, vol.2 (București: Ed. Enciclopedică Română, 1974), 92.

organized. Their purpose was to reach a consensus: the condemnation of pure Arianism. Regarding these councils, we should note the special support that Constantius gave the Semi-Arian bishops.

The balance struck in this fashion between the two Christian groups would be destroyed with the proclamation of Flavius Magnetius Maximus as emperor in the West and the murder of Constans in the year 350. Convinced that he was following his father's dream, Constantius's goal was to rebuild the territorial unity of the Empire, but also to restore religious peace. Therefore, after pacifying the Persian frontier, he personally came to Illyricum the following year, on the one hand to support the Semi-Arian party at the Sirmium Synod of 351, and on the other hand to follow the usurper's actions and to organize the offensive against him. The first confrontation between the two would take place in the same year at Mursa, where Magnetius's troops would be defeated, while the usurper would be chased for two more years until he killed himself at Lugdunum in Gaul[16]. Thus, Constantius ruled alone over the entire Empire[17].

For the Church of Africa, the civil wars of the period 340-353 represented a time when the Donatist dissidents became stronger: they had crystallized their opposition to everything that meant *ecclesia traditorium*, and a significant role in consolidating their stance was played by a strange mixture of self-victimization and violent outbursts. The dissidence of bishop Donatus and his clergy took the form of a serious intransigence, affirmed as an absolute refusal to compromise, but proved to be a symptom of self-sufficiency that was an equally impure motivation[18].

The radicalism promoted by Donatus Magnus was extremely attractive, so about 300 African bishops recognized his authority, and by the end of the reign of Constantine the Great, 270 bishops were reunited in a synod at Carthage under Donatus's presidency, where they debated for 75 days over the validity of the Sacraments performed by the *traditores* clergy. According to the views of Saint Cyprian, the validity of the Sacraments was closely related to the moral state or the worthiness of the minister. Although during two and a half months of discussion there was no definitive decision, Donatus supported the rebaptism of all the Caecilianists who were in communion with him, as there was no valid baptism outside this communion. This view would be embraced and applied by the other bishops, although there have been exceptions such as the situation faced by Bishop Deuterius of Macri in Mauritania[19].

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[16] John Meyendorff, *Imperial unity and christian divisions. The Church 450-680 A.D.* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 7.

[17] Tudor, *Figuri de împărați romani*, 98-100.

[18] Andrei Pleșu, "Un dialog despre curaj și compromisuri" (I)https://pressone.ro/andrei-plesu-la-70-de-ani-un-dialog-despre-curaj-si-compromisuri-i/, accessed May 20, 2019.

[19] Augustin, *Epistola* 93, 43, *PL* 33:329-330.

Consequently, the moment of Constantine the Great's death found Donatus reinforcing his authority, while Caecilian's descendants at the helm of the Church of Carthage remained unknown for almost a quarter of a century[20].

Besides, with a few exceptions, the authority of Bishop Donatus was recognized in all African provinces, and his recognition as the head of Carthage – and, therefore, as the primate of all Roman Africa – was even intended by Emperor Constans[21]. The dull presence of Gratus, the Caecilianist bishop of Carthage, had also greatly contributed to the strengthening of the Donatist element, as well as to the generalization of the schismatic state by the isolation of all those suspected of being *traditores* or in any relationship with them.

It seems that it was not only an ecclesiastical separation, but also a social one in which the contacts between the two parties were limited to personal attacks and sometimes street violence. Although it is tempting to make a simplistic association between certain social strata that have embraced Donatism or remained in communion with the Church of Rome and the Caecilianist clergy, there can be no precise element overlapping the religious option with a particular environment, or with a certain political orientation. On the contrary, in the absence of real opposition, Donatism was embraced by both citizens and slaves, by the inhabitants of the big cities, and the rural areas, by intellectuals and farmers alike.

In the same period, the Donatist faction developed from a patrimonial point of view, with many properties being acquired, which, according to historian William Hugh Clifford Frend, was rather the symptom of the loss of the initial enthusiasm that the Donatist Movement had as a spontaneous reaction of opposition against those who betrayed Christ, and as a result of the development of a specific routine of an institutionalized organism[22]. These changes, as well as the differences of opinion among the main leaders of this group, have caused successive fragmentations resulting in six factions: Rogatists – the most moderate, Urbanists, Claudianists, Primianists, Maximianists, and Circumcellions.

The latter, also called 'Agonistici' or 'fighters', were a radical Donatist group made up largely of nomadic Berbers and day-labourers who were working 'with their bent back and sweaty temples'[23]. They are mentioned by Augustine as peasants or agricultural workers (agrestes) who have abandoned their plots and now spread fear on the great properties[24], the landlords being perceived as Satan's

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[20] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 168.

[21] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 169.

[22] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 170.

[23] Optatus de Mileve, *Libri VII*, V, 7, 135-136: "qui curvato dorso et desudatis lateribus sinus terrae faciat".

[24] Augustin, *Contra Gaudentium*, I.28.32, *PL* 43:725.

agents[25]. As a result, the actions of the Circumcellions had both religious and economic nature, and they directed their aggression against the so-called *traditores*, but also against the great creditors and the owners of large agricultural lands.

However, the aspect of social revolution was secondary, Circumcellions being fanatics ultimately, who had abandoned sedentary living to stray through different villages, living from the work of those they were indoctrinating with extremist principles. The Circumcellion appellation is derived from the 'circumcella' formula, indicating that these radical Donatists were nourished near the small rural temples, converted in Christian chapels or around the sanctuaries raised on the tomb of a martyr or saint. Their activity was predominantly carried out in the countryside in the form of a perpetual pilgrimage: living temporarily around the graves of the saints, they were emphasizing the vocation of every Christian – a traveller of this life, 'for here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come' (Heb. 13, 14). But even so, some centres could be found from where the actions of the Circumcellions were coordinated. These centres were located in the rural area of northern Numidia in the so-called *castella* (fortifications) of Fussala and Sinitum[26].

Nomadic life and the devotion to martyrs have facilitated the formation of their own and distorted conception of martyrdom within Circumcellion groups, which these Donatists were too readily willing to embrace. In fact, it was the expression of a general ennui caused by the lack of social and / or material outlook for these disenfranchised groups, due to the social inequities specific to the ancient society. This general state of dissatisfaction created a psychological availability for martyrdom, also prepared by ritual dances as well as libations that degenerated into Bacchic orgies, meant to intercede the blessing and power of martyrs buried in the places that were now populated by Circumcellions. Clad in monochrome colours, as Isidor of Seville remembers[27], they rushed upon the unfortunate victims, agitating up the fearsome clubs Augustine said Circumcellions used to threaten their enemies, although,

> 'neither Christ nor the emperor can be shown to have allowed this: the private use of clubs and firebrands, and this illegal madness. because it's written: "sheathe the sword" (Mat. 26, 52), they think there's no crime in using clubs! Not so that someone should be killed (of course) but so that they might be badly beaten and then later die, having suffered from long

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[25] W.H.C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution the Early Church. A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 556.

[26] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 172-173.

[27] Isidor, *De officiis ecclesiasticis*, II, 15, *PL* 83:796-797: "Circumcellionum, qui habitu monachorum usquequaque vagantur".

torture. but if they had pity, they could kill with one blow of their clubs. They call their clubs "israels" because God held this name in honour, but they shame the name more than the bodies they have beaten'[28].

The text reflects both the determination of those who called themselves 'milites Christi', and the caution in the act of violence, using 'non-lethal' weapons, their possession being allowed by the authorities. However, this did not diminish the aggressiveness with which the Circumcellions supported and imposed their doctrinal and social viewpoint, but on the contrary, it increased the devotion to the martyrs and martyrdom. Thereupon they sought to provoke the Roman legions in order to be killed and be sent among the saints[29], shouting as they went to death 'Deo laudes!' (a formula that inevitably leads us to the more recent use of 'Allahu akbar', shouted by the authors of the suicide bombings).

Suicidal attacks are attested both by Donatist and Catholic sources. Thus, Tyconius († 423), a Donatist sympathizer, eventually excommunicated for his various views on the rebaptism of the Caecillianists, said of the Circumcellions that 'they do not live in the same manner as other brothers do, but kill themselves as if for love of martyrdom, so that when they depart from this life they might be called martyrs'[30]. On the other hand, Saint Philastrius, the Bishop of Brescia († ca. 397), informs us that 'in Africa there are those called *circuitores*, who surround the domains and gather those whom they discover on the road to be killed by those saying that they want to suffer martyrdom, and that is why many have sometimes committed robberies. However, being put to tortures, they endure the evil destruction of the misfortune, and some of them are violently killed. They are rushing to perish without reason and are defying drawbacks to receive an honourable death, but instead of cleansing themselves, they get even more entangled in the future judgment of God'[31].

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[28] Augustin, *Psalmus contra partem Donati*, 147, 154–162 (*PL* 43:28): "Vos enim non vultis pacem. Illi minantur de fuste… Non Christus, non imperator haec probatur permisisse, / fustes et ignes privatos et insaniam sine lege. / Quia scriptum est *Reconde gladium*, scelus non putant in fuste, / non ut homo moriatur, sed ut conquassetur valde / et postea moriatur inde, iam cruciatus in languore. / Sed tamen si miserentur, occident et uno fuste. / Fustes Israheles vocant quod Deus dixit cum honore, / ut plus vastent ipsum nomen quam corpus quod caedunt inde".(

[29] *cf.* John Joseph A'Becket, "Agonistici", in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), accessible at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01223a.htm. (3.03.2019). See also, Claude Lepelley, "Iuvenes et circconcellions: les derniers sacrifices humains de l'Afrique antique", *Antiquités africaines*, vol. 15 (1980): 261-271.

[30] Tyconius: "Et isti non vivunt aequaliter ut ceteri fratres, sed quasi amore martyrum semetipsos perimunt, ut violenter de hac vita discedentes et martyres nominentur", in Traugott Hahn, *Tyconius Studien. Ein Beitrag yur Kirchen-und Dogmengeschichte des 4. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1900), 68.

[31] Philastrius, *Diversarum Haereseon Liber*, 85 (*PL* 12: 1197-1198).

A first conflict involving the Circumcellions broke out in 340 and the Imperial reaction did not delay; anticipating the creation of a centrifugal movement centred on the Donatist dissidence, towards the end of Emperor Constans's reign (337-350), there was a new attempt to liquidate the schism. Therefore, in 347, the Edict issued in 317 was renewed in order for the Donatists to pass under the authority of the Caecilianist Bishop of Carthage, Gratus, and the opponents of the imperial judgment were threatened with harsh retaliation, while rigorous bishops were to be sent into exile (the case of Donatus Magnus), or even put to death through public execution (the case of Marculus and other 9 bishops).

As a result, Circumcellions constituted 'remarkable bands of nomadic terrorists, recruited haphazardly from the dregs of the population, from the discontented of every race and province, fugitive slaves, ruined farmers, oppressed colons, outlawed criminals, social failures, excommunicated Catholics, and purely religious fanatics'[32]. But although they were the avant-garde of the Donatist Church, for without the support of these 'gangs of savages' the Donatism would been crushed rapidly by imperial forces, the varied composition of this radical group and the unpredictability of the Circumcellions made the schismatic bishops sometimes disavow their actions, even if they used them as an instrument of hatred and revenge[33]. This became obvious during the uprising (340 A.D.) led by the 'captains of the saints', Fasir and Axido, who displayed remarkable sadism, terrorizing their victims, to whom they sent threatening letters describing the various kinds of tortures to which they would be subjected when they would catch the landlords[34].

In fact, some of the Donatist bishops were so overwhelmed by the excesses of their allies that they met in a council[35] and complained to Taurinus that 'such people cannot be reformed within the Church'[36], claiming they did not accept the ecclesiastical discipline and asked him to intervene for their pacification.

During this action led by Taurinus, many Circumcellions were repressed in the fairs where they met, and some of them lost their lives during the confrontations, as it happened at Octavia in Numidia. Those killed were immediately declared martyrs, and Clarus, the priest of Subbula, buried them in the church, giving them the honour that only the bishops normally enjoyed[37]. On this occasion, the Donatist bishops which took part at a council in Numidia have forbidden the burial of such people in the basilicas[38].

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[32] R. Pierce Beaver, "The Donatist Circumcellions", *Church History* 4, no 2 (1935): 125.

[33] Beaver, "The Donatist Circumcellions", 126.

[34] Paul Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1912), 31.

[35] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 31.

[36] Optatus de Mileve, *Libri VII*, III, 4, p. 75: "dicuntur huiusmodi homines in ecclesia corrigi non posse".

[37] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 176.

[38] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 32.

Despite their exaggerated claims to appear as defenders of the true faith, in the midst of these confrontations, the Donatists chose to flirt with the Arians as well. Thus, the African schism and the great Eastern heresy seemed to make a common front against the Orthodox/Catholic Church. This explains the sending of a copy of the acts of the Semi-Arian Council of Sardica or Philippopolis (343 A.D.) to Bishop Donatus Magnus. However, these occasional contacts with the Arians did not have any serious consequences for the doctrinal purity of the Donatists[39].

The lack of influence of the new Catholic bishop of Carthage, Gratus, favoured the growth of the authority of Donatus Magnus of Casae Nigra, who claimed for himself the primacy of the African Church and the imperial recognition as the 'senior' Bishop of Carthage. The talks with Emperor Constans advanced far enough and it was even decided to send a delegation to Africa to investigate the situation and report it to the monarch who would approve Donatus's request.

The two imperial notaries, Paul and Macarius, arrived in Africa in the spring of 347 and manifested their sympathy with the Caecillianist clergy from the very beginning, participating in the service of Bishop Gratus. The African anarchy, the periodic brigandage of the Circumcellion and their Berber allies, the impertinence of the Donatists, the rapidity with which the dissident communities increased, but also the suspicious relations with the Arians, worried the representatives of the central power. Emperor Constans, however, believed himself to be sufficiently skilful and convincing to restore peace and suppress the African schism. That is why he tried to address the situation with delicacy, by luring the Donatists with significant material aids, to persuade them to return peacefully into the bosom of the Universal Church. Therefore, Paul and Macarius were considered to be the artisans of unity, tasked with preparing the unification of the two Churches, giving alms to communities and generous gifts to more influential Donatist bishops.

Donatus was resentful of the officials' attitude and when Paul and Macarius tried to get in touch with him to complete the investigation, the schismatic leader is said to have replied 'quid est imperatori cum ecclesia' (what has the Emperor to do with the Church?)[40]. Moreover, he ordered his subordinate clergy to ignore the delegation's requests or any help that the two notaries would give them. Also, to justify his attitude towards the Emperor's messengers, a rumour was started and spread, that during the Eucharistic celebration led by Bishop Gratus, they would put a statue of Constans on the altar and offered incense sacrifices[41]. This new element led to an even stronger antagonism of the masses who despised idolatry with all their souls and who associated Paul and Macarius with the persecution of Diocletian and the tetrarchy[42].

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[39] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 33.
[40] Optatus de Mileve, *Libri VII*, III, 3, p. 73.
[41] Optatus de Mileve, *Libri VII*, III, 12, p. 100.
[42] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, p. 178.

Quickly understanding that they cannot reach any agreement with the Donatists, Paul and Macarius reported this to the Emperor, who had already received a reprimand from Donatus[43]. Consequently, in the middle of the year 347 Constans promulgated a union edict, commanding the merging of the two rival Churches, or, more precisely, the abolition of all schismatic communities and the transfer of the buildings and other goods to the Catholics.

On August 15th 347, a proconsular edict was published in Carthage, which included measures to enforce the imperial decree, which reprised the provisions of Constantine's document of 317: the confiscation of churches, the exile of Donatists bishops, and the ban on rebaptism[44].

On this occasion, a Donatist named Maximianus tore up the document. As a result, he was detained and subjected to torture, while another dissident, Isaac, who had witnessed the incident and mocked the Catholics, was also arrested and tortured wildly, dying the same day. On the orders of the proconsul, the bodies of both Donatists were thrown into the sea, inciting the dissidents even more[45].

After defeating the weak resistance around Carthage, Paul and Macarius went to Numidia, where as they advanced they were faced with increasing hostility. The feeling was fuelled by the rumour that the imperial notaries had the task of forcing the Donatists to sacrifice in front of Emperor Constans's statue. That is why, when Paul and Macarius arrived in isolated villages or farms they found them abandoned. Schismatics were grouping around Bishop Donatus of Bagai, who also called in the Circumcellion to strengthen this fortress, gathering supplies and preparing for an armed confrontation.

Taking this into account, Paul and Macarius did not hesitate to appeal to Silvestrus, *comes Africae*, asking for additional troops to confront the Circumcellions led by Donatus. The imperial army occupied the offensive positions and engaged the Donatists, avenging the tortures to which a group of military scouts had been subjected the night before. The officers could not do anything to stop their troops from devastating the Bagai citadel and its population. During the massacre, Bishop Donatus was captured and murdered, the schismatics immediately attributing him the quality of martyr and venerating him as such.

Demoralized by this defeat, the Donatist bishops gathered together in a council and decided to send ten bishops to Macarius to condemn the violence and to seek a solution to restore peace. The meeting with the Roman official took place in Vegesala, in the north of the Aures Mountains, but it failed. The Donatist bishops insulted Macarius, who immediately went into retaliation: he ordered the bishops be beaten publicly with clubs, then he released nine of them, while Marculus, the bishop who had stood out due to his unusual insolence,

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[43] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 34.

[44] Jacques Bernard Nkoa Lebogo, *La querelle sur le baptême: Les divisions de l'Église chrétienne africaine* (Paris : Éditions L'Harmattan, 2011), 89.

[45] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 35-36.

was detained as a prisoner and paraded like a trophy through the places where Macarius travelled, inspiring fear among the Donatists. However, W.H.C. Frend and several other historians place the meeting between the dissident bishops and the Roman official on June 29th 347[46], six weeks before the incident in Carthage, which would mean that the confrontation in Bagai took place earlier that summer, before the proconsular edict was published.

It is certain that Macarius has been able to appease the dissident communities by terror, putting an end to the resistance and preventing, at least for the time being, the future violence of the Circumcellions. Finally, when the imperial troops reached Nova Petra[47], Marculus threw himself off the cliffs, or, according to Donatist sources, he was helped by soldiers to jump[48]. Schismatics immediately proclaimed him a martyr, honouring his relics and his memorial day with piety, and taking pilgrimages to the place where his life ended. In the autumn of 1933, during the archaeological excavations in Ksar el-Kelb (Algeria) – the old Vegesela settlement – the inscription 'memoria domni Marchuli' was found to the left of the Basilica's nave, and since this building undoubtedly belonged to the Donatists, the researchers identified Marculus with the bishop killed during Macarius's campaign[49].

This violent march led by the 'artisans of unity' created a negative impression among both Donatists and Catholics who were ashamed to proclaim the union of the Church based on cruel acts committed especially by Macarius. In fact, the impact of these events on the North African collective mentality would be so significant that, from that point on, they would refer to the 'Macarian Age' (Macariana tempora) or 'Macarian persecution' (Macariana persecutio), and the Catholics would from then on be called the Macarians (macariani), the group of Macarius (pars Macari) or the Church of Macarius (Macariana Ecclesia)[50]. The Donatists would crystallize their non-violent opposition through writings belonging to the genre of Acta Martirica, meant to glorify the victims (*Passio Maximiani et Isaaci*[51] and *Passio Marculi*) and express contempt for the persecutors powerless to corrupt the pure souls of the martyrs. The Roman authorities are depicted as agents of the devil in the fight against the saints of God[52]. Emperor Constans was not spared by the authors of these texts that portrayed him as 'the tyrant' and 'the forerunner of Antichrist' (praecursor Antichristi)[53]. The two

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[46] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, p. 179.

[47] Optatus, *Libri VII*, III, 6 and Augustin, *Contra Cresconium* III, 49, 54, state that Marculus was killed.

[48] *Passio Marculi*, *PL* 8:765.

[49] Hippolyte Delehaye, "Domnus Marculus", *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. 53 (1935): 81-89.

[50] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, 37-38.

[51] *Passio Maximiani et Isaaci* seems to be a letter addressed by someone named Macrobius to the dissidents. W.H.C. Frend identifies the author with the Macrobius the Donatist Bishop of Rome.

[52] Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution*, 554.

[53] *Passio Marculi*, *PL* 8:761A: "de Constantis regis tyrannica domo et de palatii arce pollutum Macarianae persecutionis murmur increpui".

beasts sent to Africa (duabus bestiis ad Africam missis[54]) show an unimaginable cruelty, and the merit of those who bear the suffering is even greater, as it is made cleared in this passage of *Passio Maximiani et Isaaci*:

> 'Thus there was the war between the flesh and the corporal punishment, between the profaners and the devotee, between the virtues of the soul and the mutilation, between the soldier of Christ and the soldiers of the devil, between the one who suffers and the judge, and, as he (Maximianus) fought so against them, he was worthy to fight even more gloriously with the multitude of sufferings and enemies, so that through one confrontation he would win more than a single victory'[55].

For Donatists everywhere, the heroism displayed by the 'martyrs' legitimized their radical position even more, even if at that moment they could only be the helpless witnesses of this forced union. Donatus Magnus himself was forced to leave Carthage and Africa and lived in exile until his death in 355, and for this reason the dissidents proclaimed him a martyr fallen for the cause of the Church of the pure.

Despite the nominal victory achieved by the imperial troops, the Catholic Church failed to capitalize on this triumph, and Bishop Gratus of Carthage delayed seizing the impulse created by Paul and Macarius. In 348 or 349, Gratus convened a synod with 50 bishops, including some 'repented' Donatists, but he failed to assert himself as the leader of the African Church, as Aurelian or Augustin[56] would do several decades later. Apart from the 12 canons on ecclesiastical discipline – a sign of the laxity that appeared during the schism – two canons referred specifically to the Donatists: one forbidding the repetition of baptism (can. 1) and the other preventing the worship as martyrs of those who killed or consciously exposed themselves to situations that were fatal (can. 2)[57].

The Donatists quickly recovered their lost positions, waiting for the right moment to manifest their ideas again. Even at the Synod of Carthage (348/349), the Catholic Bishop of Madauros complained that under the pretext of reconciliation and unification, the 'repented' Donatist Bishop stole his entire community, a situation commonly found in Numidia[58], foreshadowing the rebellion of the reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate.

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[54] *Passio Marculi*, *PL* 8:761A.

[55] *Passio Maximiani et Isaaci*, *PL* 8:769: "Sic illic bellum gestum est inter corpus et poenas, inter sacrilegos et devotum, inter amini vires et lamiantes, inter millitem Christi et millites diaboli, inter patientem et iudicem et unus sufficit afflictus contra tantum dimicare suppliciorum hostiumque gloriosius multitudinem, ut in uno certamine non unam victoriam reportasset".

[56] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 183.

[57] Karl Joseph von Hefele, *A history of the councils of the church: from the original documents*, V, 70, vol. II, translated by Henry Nutcombe Oxenham (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1896), 400-402.

[58] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 184-185.

Conclusions

Ironically, the ideal of unity of all in one great Eucharistic communion has transformed itself over time into one of the main causes of the Church's fragmentation in ever smaller entities, with almost irreconcilable standpoints. When the synodal path proved to be inadequate, both Emperor Constantine the Great and his successors tried to achieve the unity of the Church either by diplomatic means or by imposing an arbitrary decision by force. This has further contributed to the antagonism of the parties involved in the conflict. This situation proves over decades that secular authority has sometimes sought and defended the values of Christianity with great interest, while the pride of the clergy has deepened the crises of the Church. Under the pretext of excessive moral rigour, such clergy perpetuated the schism and even encouraged appalling atrocities which had nothing in common with the spiritual and the liturgical-dogmatic treasure they claim to protect, and unfortunately this kind of situations are still visible today.

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III. PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

COLOUR IN MURAL PAINTING:
VIRTUE IN CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

VICTORIA GRĂDINAR*

ABSTRACT. This study analyzes an essential part of the painting technology regarding the colours, their various origins and uses, critical factors in determining the final aspect of the paintings. Numerous varieties of coloured materials differ from each other in terms of brightness, mattness, transparency, covering power, etc. Thus, identifying the chemical compositions of colours by means of laboratory tests is mandatory in the restoration interventions. Only utilizing this scientific method can colouring materials be classified. Through the specialized interventions of mural painting restorers, chromatic truths are uncovered and valuable contribution is brought to the knowledge array regarding methods and colours in painting. In mural painting colour symbolizes tradition and innovation and the art of restoration ennobles and turns almost forgotten masterpieces into works of art worthy of contemplation.

Keywords: mural painting, colour, investigation, conservation, restoration, chromatic

> *„If drawing is of Spirit and colour of the Senses,*
> *you must draw first, to cultivate the spirit*
> *and to be able to lead colour into spiritual paths"- Matisse.*

Mural painting involves a series of *technological processes* that encompass the science of methods and also the materials usage and processing means. Through restoration, no matter the technique used, the original appearance of the painting often alters. These changes can be caused by historical events, natural calamities, repainting, vandalism, incompatibility between materials,

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etc. In the process of unravelling them, historical documents and investigation methods specific to restoration are used, all with the purpose of collecting the information needed to establish the intervention methods.

Examining the wall surfaces and drawing up an intervention project in the process of conservation-restoration are preliminary steps in finding out the causes of the changes in the aesthetics of the paintings, which determine the required intervention methods. Inspecting the paint layer can reveal surprising data regarding the building of the monument or the historical events it was subject to[1].

At the same time, the *stratigraphic examination*[2] of mural painting uncovers the eventual need of emergency interventions meant to stop degradation and eliminate its unwanted effects. Over time, mural painting is marked by "the implacable effects of historical time"[3] and the technique used to create the painting is "the first key which opens the path of action in restoration[4]".

A natural ageing of pigments[5] or even that of mortars (the base of the paint layer) leaves its mark on the surface of the painting. The material ageing phenomenon is inevitable and leads to irreversible degradation with undesirable effects; it can be delayed by the intervention of restorers, but it can never be stopped or eliminated. Also, through ageing, primers and binders lose their cohesion properties and thus, the colour layer becomes brittle or it exfoliates. Mural painting exposed to an aggressive microclimate[6] is subject to extensive degradation processes in the base layer, resulting in cracks or crack networks which can reach the surface of the painting layer.

An important part of the *painting technology* is *knowing the colours,* their various origins[7] and use, key factors in determining the final aspect of

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[1] Oliviu Boldura, *Movileştii: Romanian History and Spirituality,* vol. III (Suceava: Muşatinii, 2007), 151.

[2] The preservation status of the ensemble can only be established by examination and by a series of investigations on the materials used, the execution technique, the identification and timely interventions, the type of degradation and its causes. The monument is to be inspected all along the intervention and in the case of paintings, any new, unpredictable issue will be analysed in order identify the etiopathology of degradation, Corina Popa, „Restoration and Research. Case Study: Mural ensembles of Berca, Potlogi, Măldăreşti and Tg. Hurezi", in *The Notebooks of Restoration* (Bucharest: ACS, 2014) 123.

[3] Ioan Darida, "The Restoration of Mural Painting Topoloveni-Inuri", in *The Notebooks of Restoration*, (Bucharest: ACS, 2014), 164.

[4] Anca Bratu, *Mural Painting of Maramures: Painting Craftsmen and Stylistic Interferences* (Bucharest: ACS), 333.

[5] C. Săndulescu-Verna, *Materials and Painting Technique* (Timişoara: Marineasa, 2000), 67.

[6] Iulian Olteanu, Gabriela Olteanu, "National Bank of Romania", in in *The Notebooks of Restoration*, (Bucharest: ACS, 2014), 20.

[7] Săndulescu-Verna, *Materials and Painting Technique*, 67.

the paintings. Numerous varieties of coloured materials differ from each other in terms of brightness, mattness, transparency, covering power, etc. Thus, identifying the chemical compositions of colours by means of laboratory tests is mandatory in the restoration interventions. Only by means of this scientific method can colouring materials be classified[8].

Colour degradation in mural works of art can also have interactive causes such as: deficiencies in pigment manufacturing, high atmospheric humidity at the time of painting, bacteria and fungi appearing in organic binders in unventilated dark places[9]. At the same time, repainting seriously affects the integrity of the original work of art and also the usage of improper materials which cover parts adjacent to the painting results in the loss of the original painting material. The discovery of mural ensembles hidden under repainted surfaces entails the need to reconsider the value of the restoration work.

In the context of various types of degradation in terms of image alterations determined by the degree of exposure, the climatic agents can strongly influence the preservation condition of outdoor paintings. The water resulting from rain or melted snow that wash the outdoor painting, leads to severe degradation and may aggravate some construction and structure problems[10].

Considerable surfaces of paintings are lost due to stationary humidity, especially in the lower parts of walls, phenomenon which leads to the maceration of the base layer, the emergence of gaps and erosion, which ultimately cause the loss of colour. Humidity caused by condensation, to which humans are contributing by using the monument, indicates the lack of proper ventilation and uniform temperatures. The degradation of the roof triggers the infiltration of humidity, which in turn determines the migration of substances from the wall mass to the surface of the painting, thus generating sometimes massive loss of the painting layer and the developing of biologic attacks[11].

Thus, atmospheric humidity and temperature combined with the wall humidity and temperature, atmospheric pollution and the materials used for the mural painting represent causes of the painting layer degradation. Aesthetically,

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[8] Ibid., 70-72, Colours are classified according to appearance, origin or source, i.e. natural or synthetic. They are also classified based on their chemical composition, i.e. organic or inorganics and according to the characteristic of the colouring materials: covering power, resistance, the consumption of binders, hydrophobia, toxicity, grinding and drying.

[9] Boldura, *Movileștii*, 157.

[10] Oliviu Boldura, *Mural Painting in Northern Moldavia. Aesthetic Modifications and Restoration*, (Bucharest: ACS, 2013), 16.

[11] Florea Oprea, *Biology for the Conservation and Restoration of the Cultural Heritage* (Bucharest: Maiko, 2006), 10.

the chromatic relations undergo alterations based on often irreversible chemical effects, such as oxidation, which reduces the shine of the metal foils covering the surfaces.

The in situ analysis can highlight multiple causes, often mixed, in the development of colour layer alteration. Construction flaws lead over time to wall cracks and dislocations and therefore to colour layer deterioration. Regular cleaning cause air drafts and dust particles to move and adhere to the painting surface, whereas by wiping or washing the walls, many painted surfaces fade away, sometimes completely.

The permanent usage of a building when in poor conservation state is another factor that can weaken the integrity of the mural painting. The sources of degradation should be removed before any work of restoration is performed, but failure to observe restoration principles[12] entails additional degradation. Cleaning the mural surfaces, consolidating the painting layer and performing chromatic integration, though motivated by aesthetics, must follow some scientific principles so as to best preserve and protect the respective work of art[13].

The intervention on mural painting with the most impacting visual effect is *the chromatic integration* of the colour layer, action that cannot be finalized without thorough examination of the support layers. In all mural paintings, no matter the tradition, an innovating concept emerges[14], thus the process of chromatic integration must be performed responsibly, in line with the specific techniques used to create the painting.

There have been cases when historically and artistically valuable mural surfaces were lost in historical contexts[15], or merely due to unqualified human intervention. Changing the architectural shape by oversizing the windows, building or eliminating the pulpit, changing the shape of arches, building annex spaces are just a few elements that can lead to considerable losses of painted surfaces. During these types of remodelling the colour coat degrades when exposed to whitewash unskilfully applied or construction material debris[16].

Another factor with severe repercussions on the painting layer is the usage of mixed techniques and dry retouches[17]. Applying colour layers after the calcium hydroxide carbonation process has ended, using different types of

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[12] Cesare Brandi, *The Theory of Restoration* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1997), 109.
[13] I. Olteanu and G. Olteanu, "National Bank of Romania", 24-25.
[14] Bratu, *Mural Painting of Maramures,* 82.
[15] Ibid., 152.
[16] Darida, "The Restoration of Mural Painting Topoloveni-Inuri", 165.
[17] C. Săndulescu-Verna, *Materials and Painting Technique*, 384.

materials[18] to build the walls, having uneven thicknesses of mortar or plaster not covering the surfaces homogenously, can damage the painting due to cohesion issues. These flaws make the colour layer react differently due to physical and chemical characteristics specific to each technique and thus the conservation requires additional care.

To conclude, we may say that the colour layer can be affected from one or two directions. The first one refers to problems identified on the outer side of the wall, as mentioned above, which cause repercussions on the interior of the wall. The second direction refers to the inside part of the wall, the surface of the colour layer, which can be affected by superficial erosions and polishing, especially in the lower areas where furniture is placed or people rub against the walls[19].

The major variances between mural painting techniques require the support layer to be handled differently, otherwise serious alterations and chromatic migration of the painting layer may occur, proof that the execution technique is flawed. Restoration carried out by unskilled people can lead to the deterioration of mural surfaces. Thus, washing areas affected by smoke with off the shelf products and then repainting those surfaces without having consolidated the pre-existing colour layer, combining mixed techniques (water based and oil based colours) result in stylistic and chromatic alterations that do not match the original.

The analysed mortars often bring information regarding the causes of mural decorations deterioration, execution methodology, constituent materials and various particularities. Slaked lime obtained from poor quality limestone, with impurities or traces of clay, low quantity or lack of hemp fibres, traces of vegetation, all lead to the degradation of the plaster layer. Materials used in this way, or in the presence of humidity, damages the colour support layer and consequently the colour deteriorates due to fissures, cracks, gaps of different depths and surfaces, macerations, erosions and friability.

Among the visible damaging of the colour layer we can mention powderiness and exfoliation, two phenomenon with complex causes which ultimately lead to the disappearing of the layer. In some cases when chromatics fade, we can still find legible traces of the drawing. Even if "the visual impact is

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[18] Theo Mureşan, "Mural Painting 'a fresco' on Stone", in in *The Notebooks of Restoration* (Bucharest: ACS, 2014), 209, "The different reactions of stone and brick to humidity and temperature factors demand technological caution: masonry homogeneity (...) We must acknowledge the technical difficulty imposed by a stone support, by an inhomogeneous support, the placement of the homogenous areas of stone or brick, the composition characteristics, the presence or absence of preparation layers".

[19] Bratu, *Mural Painting of Maramures*, 333.

due to the brightness of the colours"[20] and sometimes the stratigraphic erosion allows us to see a superficial bump that contours a shape[21], a piece of clothing or a face, reconstruction based on surfaces would go beyond the principles of restoration. Shape and colour, different from each other, are perceptual means that we can recover through specific operations, without altering the authentic appearance. Consolidating the colour layer must be done responsibly, so as to prevent the chromatic layers from accidentally and irreversibly being removed.

Aesthetic alterations of the original painting are due also to using unstable pigments in the presence of environmental factors. Samples of pigments from the affected area and compared tests[22], highlighted special cases where chromatic alteration is clearly delimited. Thus, we consider that in order to preserve the colour layer over time, eliminating the sources that enable the damaging and choosing high quality materials are paramount.

Pigment alteration through physical and chemical irreversible processes appears at exposure to high temperatures and smoke, especially in areas where candles are lit or inadequate heating systems are used. When pigments turn brown or black, the original aspect of the painting is lost and the chromatic range becomes narrow. Besides various factors that change the authentic expression of image, we can identify another cause – the man himself, the one who is supposed to actually protect the work of art. We can often notice incisions, accidental or premeditated scratches, name carving, dates and messages, which degrade the painting.

Specialized restorers perform a stratigraphic examination of the mural painting, which identifies the type of materials used, the stages of the painting process and the execution techniques and methods applied. The technical

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[20] Rudolf Armnhem, *Art and Visual Perception. A Psychology of Creative Sight*, trans. Luminiţa Ciocan (Iaşi: Polirom, 2011), 317.

[21] Ibid. "Per se, shape is better means of identification than colour, not only because it offers a lot more types of qualitative differences, but also because the distinctive features of shapes are more resistant to environmental variations. (...) Shape is not affected by changes in brightness or colour in the environment, whereas the local colour of objects is very sensitive to them".

[22] Boldura, *Movileştii*, 155. In order to understand the process of enamel alteration at, pigment samples were collected in the white chalky areas and the blue ones and were examined under a MC 5 microscope. After comparing particles of the same strength and size, a powdering phenomenon was noticed for the discoloured pigment as compared to the particles of unaltered enamel. The altered pigment does not maintain physical properties similar to the unaltered one, becoming powdery. This phenomenon is explained by the way the pigment is prepared. If the proportions of the substances composing the glass are not respected, manufacturing flaws appear. Following its interaction with water, the enamel will have a larger number of alkalis which interact with cobalt, resulting in the loss of its blue colour and in diminished resistance to attacks of environmental factors.

procedure of mural paintings is closely related to the composition of the support layer and this is the first one of the painting conservation parameters[23]. Stylistic options revealed through specific restoration procedures[24], such as the usage of grout, drawing and colour to fill in the gap areas, ensure a unitary image of the painting.

Colour is a valuable testimony, no matter what art movement it belongs to. It transmits "the savour of time" through tones and shades. The way colour is applied is proof of the assimilation of the "local artistic inheritance which persists like a subjacent lode on which characteristics of various styles will graft over time"[25]. The problems faced in the attempt to preserve artistic particularities and certain types of alterations, can fundamentally influence aesthetic appreciations.

Limiting chromatic interventions and carefully emphasizing the colour sophistication denote the restorer's professionalism. He renders all the chromatic brightness of the past, ensuring the painting conservation[26]. "All the factors favouring the degradation process, the natural ones but also unskilled human intervention, deeply influence the restorers 'decisions"[27]. The encounter with mural painting contributes to finding a state of mind where preserving the individuality and image quality is paramount.

Throughout history we can identify various artistic and aesthetic concepts that led to the disappearance of numerous mural paintings with rich pellicles of colour, applied using diverse techniques. Therefore, the restorers 'efforts should be invested in preserving as much *chromatic substance* as possible, in such a way that over time it can show that pigment – basis of all colours, defines the technique, completes and perfects the monument.

Without colour, we cannot speak of mural painting and the "aesthetic interpretation is determined first and foremost by the image's ability to communicate the artistic message"[28]. Building an edifice involves responsibility, the correct attitude when choosing building materials, observing the steps and times of execution. Failure to follow these steps renders the painting confuse in terms of chromatic quality.

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[23] Pia Stinghe, "Mural painting in oil," in *The Notebooks of Restoration* (Bucharest: ACS, 2014), 234

[24] Ibid., 233, "One of the fundamental principles of contemporary restoration is to maintain and preserve the monuments in line with their original individuality. During restoration, materials compatible with the old ones and traditional work techniques and any intervention must be discreet and reversible, its purpose being to reconstruct the original aspect of the monument. The restorer must act like a doctor: find the causes of degradation and remove them and establish the most appropriate methods of intervention in such a way as to ensure it lasts over time".

[25] Dana Jenei, *Gothic Mural Painting in Transylvania* (Bucharest: Noi Media Print, 2007), 47.

[26] Corina Popa, *Medieval Monuments in Oltenia* (Bucharest: ACS, 2011), 104.

[27] Bratu, *Mural Painting of Maramures*, 333.

[28] Boldura, *Mural Painting in Northern Moldavia*, 15.

Images during the mural painting at *The Summer Altar*,
Bixad Monastery, Satu-Mare County.

The restoration of mural works of art is a multidisciplinary approach. The conservation and restoration of mural paintings requires the joint efforts of a restorer, an architect, an art history specialist, a chemist, a biologist, a hydrologist, a construction engineer and last, but not least, a painter. An efficient work group will produce exact information on all the painting characteristics and this way, the final intervention –*chromatic integration,* will shape visual harmony. The actions of the restorers are conditioned by *the methodology* of each mural painting and support technique.

The conservation and restoration of mural paintings that embellish in a unique way, by means of stylistic and technical elements, buildings, churches, chapels, libraries or palaces, contribute as witnesses of the human creative value. "Once restored, the painted decoration reveals the true artistic and historic significance and highlights the authenticity of the entire architectural ensemble".[29]

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[29] Bratu, *Mural Painting of Maramures*, 337.

These ensembles are impressive through their monumentality, style, proportions, chosen themes or other elements, but the artistic particularity is reached the most when they are emphasized by chromatic congruence.

Through the specialized interventions of mural painting restorers, chromatic truths are uncovered and valuable contribution is brought to the knowledge array regarding methods and colours in painting. We conclude that for the final presentation of each work of art, the decorative purpose of the painting must be taken into consideration, in such a way that the chromatic integration grasps the authentic image. In mural painting colour symbolizes tradition and innovation and *the art of restoration* ennobles and turns almost forgotten masterpieces into works of art worthy of contemplation.

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V. VARIA

KYIV THEOLOGICAL ACADEMY IN 1869-1884: AN ATTEMPT TO COMBINE THEOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION

TETIANA TVERDOKHLIB[*]

ABSTRACT. The article reveals the history of Kyiv Theological Academy – the only higher educational institution of Orthodox Church. It functioned on Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire. Based on the analysis of historical and pedagogical literature, archive materials and documents placed in periodicals, the paper depicts theological education at Kyiv Theological Academy in general and focuses on pedagogical training that was organized there within 1869-84. Study of Pedagogy as a compulsory subject and taking special practical classes on the 4th year are considered to be main components of pedagogical education at higher theological educational institution. The paper reveals the content of Pedagogy, forms and methods of teaching Pedagogy and peculiarities of staffing. The article focuses on the attempt of lecturers of Kyiv Theological Academy to organize students' pedagogical practice at local seminary, advantages and disadvantages of pedagogical education at Kyiv Theological Academy and the level of education there compared with universities.

Keywords: Kyiv Theological Academy, Pedagogy, pedagogical education, special practical classes, theological education, form of education.

Introduction

Nowadays in modern society there is a tendency of growing interest in religion, Orthodox moral values and traditions. Against this background, there is a transformation of Ukrainians' value-meaning orientations. With this in

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mind, it is not surprising that active development of theological educational institutions is the specific feature of modern educational practice. Students' training for pastoral, missionary and teaching activity, which requires knowledge of pedagogy, is the important task of work of these institutions. Seminarians and students' pedagogical education is implemented in varying degrees almost at all these institutions. Taking this into consideration, it is worth using historical heritage for improving the quality of pedagogical education. In particular, implementation of valuable developments in organization of pedagogical education at Kyivska Dukhovna Academia – *Kyiv Theological Academy (KTA)* in 1869-84 is of great importance. Taking into account the disadvantages of pedagogical training at this higher theological educational institution in the specified period can also be useful.

The problem of combination of theological and pedagogical education at KTA in 1869-84 is of scientific interest not only for Ukrainian pedagogues and scientists. The higher theological educational institution had international significance. Belarusians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Russians and Serbs studied there. Most of graduates-foreigners of KTA were engaged in pedagogical activity in their native countries, contributed to the rise of theological education there, as they occupied high positions in the local church hierarchy.[1]

Kyiv Theological Academy as Theological Higher Educational Institution in 1869-84

KTA was established in 1819. It was the only higher theological school on Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire. Started from 1869, the specific features of functioning of it were determined by a new statute which was more progressive than the previous statute. KTA acted according to it till 1884. Due to the new statute, some general elements of higher secular education were introduced. These elements included faculty organizing, special-practical classes, system of private-habilitation, system of scientific attestation, correspondence of a position to a scientific degree, etc. and were implemented at Russian and

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[1] T. Prishchepa, "Teaching Bulgarians at Kyiv Theological Academy (1878-1915)" [Навчання болгар у Київській духовній академії (1878-1915 pp.)], *Visnyk Kyivskogo Natsionalnogo universytetu imeni Tarasa Shevchenka. Istoriia*, no.1 (2015): 34, http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/VKNU_Ist_2015_1_10; V. Tserkovna, "Graduates from Kiev Theological Academy – Outstanding Representatives of Romanian Orthodox Clergy of the XIXth Century (on the Materials of "Chisinau Diocesan Registry") [Випускники Київської духовної академії – видатні представники православного духівництва Румунії XIX ст.], *Naukovyi visnyk Izmailskogo derzhanvogo humanitarnogo universitetu,* no. 34 (2016): 141, http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/Nvidgu_2016_34_27.

other universities at different time. University influence can also be seen in extension of the rights of the teaching corporation, introduction of collegial discussion for solving most of problems connected with educational and scientific process. These statements, as well as a significant increase in salaries of Academy lecturer, met the demands of time, state policy in education and social tendencies.[2] According to the new statute, higher theological school became more democratic and open. Both graduates of seminaries and classical gymnasiums were allowed to enter the Academy.[3] Different listeners were allowed to attend lectures with the permission of the Council of the Academy.[4] KTA supervision of the seminaries of its educational-theological district was abolished, which gave the opportunity to focus on internal affairs of the higher educational institution.

Unlike the previous statute that provided students' compulsory study of educational subjects in all forms, the statue of 1869 changed the situation. According to it, the theological academy included three departments, namely: theological, church-historical and church-practical departments. Students who were enlisted in a certain department took both compulsory subjects and those that were assigned to a certain department during for three years. In their fourth year there was complete specialization.[5] So, multidisciplinarity in the course of higher theological educational institution was overcome. Exclusion of Mathematics and Physics from the list of subjects at KTA also contributed to it.

Despite positive influence on educational process at KTA, the introduction of differentiation of subjects by department had also negative consequences. It caused weakening and one-sidedness of theological training. For instance, students at church-practical department had 13 subjects for three-year course of study, and only six subjects were theological (they were Holy Scripture, basic theology, pastoral theology, homiletics and history of preaching in the Orthodox Church and in the West, church law, church

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[2] Natalia Suhova, "Reforms of higher Orthodox theological education in Russia in the second half of the 19th century" [Реформы высшего православного духовного образования в России во второй половине XIX века] (PhD diss., St. Tikhon's Orthodox University of the Humanities, 2006), 21 https://vivaldi.nlr.ru/bd000162600/view

[3] "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies. no. 47 154 dated 30 May (1869)" [Высочайше утвержденный устав православных духовных академий. № 47 154 от 30 мая (1869 г.)], in *The Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire: Collection 2*. Vol. 44. (St Petersburg: Tipografiia II Otdeleniia sobstvennoi Iego Imperatorskogo Velichestva kantseliarii, 1873), 553.

[4] Ibid., 550.

[5] "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies", 545, 552; N. A. Shyp, *Kyiv Theological Academy in cultural-educational space of Ukraine (1819-1919)* [Київська духовна академія в культурно-освітянському просторі України (1819-1919)] (Kyiv: NVP "INTERSERVICE", 2010), 111-112.

archaeology and liturgy).[6] Despite these disadvantages, the status of KTA as a theological educational institution was undeniable. We can confidently state that the higher theological school was able to "provide higher theological education in the spirit of Orthodoxy for educated ministry of the Church," which was the aim of its activity.[7] However, it is difficult to say how well it managed to train teachers for theological-educational institutions as it was one of the tasks of functioning of it. Can we say that "being an outpost in the sphere of training educated priests, the academies due to availability of humanitarian disciplines in their programs turned into peculiar pedagogical institutions of church ministry."[8] The answers to these questions can only be given after investigation of pedagogical training at KTA.

Pedagogical Education at Kyiv Theological Academy in 1869-84

Reform of higher theological school in 1869 was supposed to promote the quality of education at theological educational institutions. The statute provided for organization of pedagogical training of academy students who had to teach in theological academies, seminaries and schools. It was limited to the study of Pedagogy as a compulsory discipline and taking special-practical classes in 4th year.

Pedagogy was an important subject in curriculum at KTA. The analysis of primary sources[9] suggests that development of training programs on this subject, as well as other disciplines, was the responsibility of lecturers who taught it. The study of author programs and review of lessons of M. Zaitsev, P. Linytsky and M. Olesnytsky allows to characterize the content of Pedagogy classes which they conducted during the period under research. Unfortunately, there are no similar documents authored by V. Petrov, that is why the content of Pedagogy taught in 1871-1872 academic year was not revealed.

During 1867-68 and 1868-69 academic years M. Zaitsev taught Pedagogy for students in their 4th year. At this time Pedagogy was taught for two years.[10]

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[6] "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies", 552.

[7] Ibid., 545.

[8] Shyp, *Kyiv Theological Academy in cultural-educational space of Ukraine*, 113.

[9] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for February 1871" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за февраль 1871 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 6 (1871): 43-44; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for November and December 1872" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за ноябрь и декабрь 1872 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 3 (1873): 135-136.

[10] Svitlana Kuzmina. "Courses of Pedagogy in Kyiv Theological Academy: Content and Traditions of Teaching" [Курси педагогіки в Київський духовній академії: зміст і традиції викладання], *Naukovi zapysky NaUKMA. Filosofiia ta religiieznavstvo*, no. 76 (2008): 58, http://nz.ukma.edu.ua/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=246&Itemid=31.

The content of Pedagogy taught by M. Zaitsev was not thoughtful and logical. For instance, in the first term, the first class was dedicated to introduction to Pedagogy; then there were Pedagogy classes focused on comparison of upbringing with education (both as a process and result), development and art; one class was about history of education. After that, students learnt about the importance and difficulty of study of Pedagogy as a moral and applied science and methods of teaching. In the second term M. Zaitsev focused his Pedagogy classes on history of education again (five classes) and peculiarities of methodics of teaching different subjects in seminary (ten classes). Taking into consideration the significance of mastery of methodics for students' further professional activity, it could have taken more time to study it. Furthermore, in the third term, while studying Pedagogy, the lecturer decided to focus completely on history of education again. In the fourth term he considered the general principles of education, paying more attention to theological principles and peculiarities of training process at people's school and revealing such directions of education as physical, moral and intellectual education.[11] Evidently, the content of Pedagogy course taught by M. Zaitsev was systemless. The conducted research confirms S. Kuzmina's opinion that professor's activity, probably, reflected more his intense search for his own teaching concepts than sustainable teaching system.[12]

In 1872-1873 academic year Pedagogy was taught by P. Linytsky. He focused on "history of pedagogical ideas and theories" which existed during the second half of the 16th century – the 19th century. At the end of academic year he made a review of modern pedagogical ideas.[13] Certainly, this information was not enough for students' successful teaching activity in future.

Professor P. Linytsky had certain influence on the content of Pedagogy classes of M. Olesnytsky who was a young teacher. The analysis of M. Olesnytsky's training program[14] shows that it covered only introduction to the science of Pedagogy and history of Pedagogy from ancient to new times. The introduction covered the essence of Pedagogy, the definition of up-bringing and revealed the

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[11] Notes of subjects taken in the academy in 1867-68 and 1868-69 academic years [Конспекты предметов, преподаваемых в академии за 1867–1868 и 1868 – 1869 учебные годы], 1869, File 5963, Inventory 1, Fund 711, Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv, 97-104.

[12] Kuzmina. "Courses of Pedagogy in Kyiv Theological Academy," 58.

[13] Review of information given in Pedagogy classes to third-year students of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1872-73 academic year [Обозрение преподанного по педагогике студентам Киевской духовной академии III курса за 1872 – 1873 учебный год], 1873, File 1017, Inventory 3, Fund 711, Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv.

[14] Programs and notes of lectures given in 1874-75 academic year. [Программы и конспекты лекций, прочитанних в 1874-1875 учебном году], 1875, File 1126, Inventory 3, Fund 711, Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv, 31-33; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1874-1875 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии в 1874-1875 учебном году], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 11 (1875): 42.

significance of up-bringing and independence of pedagogical science. As well as P. Linytsky, M. Olesnytsky devoted 80% of the study time to history of Pedagogy, though he expanded chronological boundaries of this part of the training program, unlike the Professor of Philosophy. The content of the course of Pedagogy by M. Olesnytsky was a bit like P. Linytsky's program only during the first two years of M. Olesnytsky's teaching activity. From 1875-1876 academic year, the content of Pedagogy expanded and changed significantly. The subject covered the information about introduction to the science of Pedagogy, the subject of Pedagogy, essays on education in the new time and research of "elements of education," namely: "training of mind, heart and will."[15] It should be noted that M. Olesnytsky covered some problems of didactics, while teaching the theme of "training of mind." For instance, he revealed teaching techniques (dogmatic and heuristic), certain principles of training (principles of naturalness, clearness) and requirements for a learner in the process of educational work.[16]

So, the content of Pedagogy at KTA depended greatly on competence of lecturers who taught it. Turnover of staff that had to teach Pedagogy caused some problems with its content. One of the problems was the prevalence of history of Pedagogy over theory of up-bringing and didactics. Due to educational-methodic work of M. Olesnytsky from the mid 70s of the 19th century, this omission was remedied.

While teaching Pedagogy at KTA, certain forms and methods were used. Lecture was the most wide-spread form of education, but according to the Statute in 1868, it lasted not 90 minutes, but 60 minutes.[17] There was a system of distribution of the lecture load at KTA during the period under research.

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[15] Program of Pedagogy lectures given to third-year students in 1875-76 academic year [Программа лекций, преподанных студентам III курса в 1875-1876 учебном году по педагогике], 1876, File 1187, Inventory 3, Fund 711, Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1875-1876 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии в 1875-1876 учебном году], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 11 (1876): 22; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1876-1877 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии в 1876-1877 учебном году], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 2 (1878): 20; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1877-1878 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии в 1877-1878 учебном году], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 11 (1878): 258; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1878-1879 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии в 1878-1879 учебном году], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 11 (1879): 18.

[16] Program of Pedagogy lectures given to third-year students in 1875-76 academic year, Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv, 12, the reverse side.

[17] Svitlana Meshkovaia, "Secular component of Orthodox theological education in the Russian Empire in 1857-1884" [Світський компонент православної духовної освіти в Російській імперії (1857-1884 pp.)] (PhD diss., V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, 2004), 91; "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies", 553.

According to the statute, professors and other regular lecturers gave as many lectures in their subjects as the Council of the Academy appointed. At the same time, the Council decision was not administrative-commanding or random, as it was based on lecturers' ideas about expediency of certain load. Nevertheless, the statute regulated the minimum number of lectures, having determined that at any combinations students should have not less than 18 lectures a week in their first years and not less than 9 lectures a week in their 4th year.[18] It was the reason for unequal number of lectures in Pedagogy in different years of the investigated period. For instance, from 1869-1870 academic year, students had one lecture a week, but from 1876-1877 they had two lectures a week at the request of M. Olesnytsky.[19] The analysis of protocols of meetings of KTA Council and reports of this higher theological educational institution[20] shows that Pedagogy lectures were given for all academy students in their 3rd year. So, we have reason to consider unreasonable some scientists[21] statements that this academic discipline was studied in all academy departments in the 4th year.

It is clear that the peculiarities of lectures depended on lecturers' personal qualities. However, they had the desire to make organization of these educational forms authoritarian. For example, professors I. Malyshevsky, V. Pevnutsy, D. Pospekhov and Archimandrite Sylvester formulated a set of rules what had to regulate educational process at KTA. It was noted that at lectures "a student cannot evade explanations and answers that a lecturer can ask, but he should not ask a lecturer any questions and objections at lectures. If a student has any difficulties with understanding the information at lecture, he can ask explanation after it and after leaving the lecture room."[22] Moreover, students were not allowed to show their emotions at lectures.

So, increase in the number of Pedagogy lectures from 1876-1877 academic year helped to enhance the effectiveness of pedagogical training at

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[18] Meshkovaia, "Secular component of Orthodox theological education," 96; "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies," 553.

[19] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1871-1872 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии за 1871-1872 учебный год], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii,* no. 11 (1872): 17; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1875-1876 academic year," 22; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1876-1877 academic year," 20.

[20] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1875-1876 academic year," 22; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1876-1877 academic year," 20. "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for July and August 1869" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за июль и август 1869 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 1 (1870): 19.

[21] Meshkovaia, "Secular component of Orthodox theological education," 128.

[22] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for July and August 1869," 45.

KTA. However, short duration of these educational forms (they lasted less than seminars), some authoritarian character of their conducting were the obstacles for the successful assimilation of knowledge in Pedagogy.

Students' independent extracurricular daily work was another important form of education.[23] In academy lecturers' opinion, it was aimed at holistic, thorough study of science, considering it as a system. The Council of the Academy was in constant search for the ways to improve efficiency of this form of educational work. For example, in 1874-1875 academic year, KTA rector, Bishop Philaret, pointed out that it was impossible to study the science thoroughly without working with additional sources. It was not considered to be good "if a student does not reproduce information he heard in classes every time in his mind while studying at home and if he does not think independently about the problems raised at lectures. Without it, a student, even if he is attentive at lectures, can have only general idea about the subjects, without awareness of interconnection between them and without acquisition of their scientific material."[24] At the initiative of the rector, a special commission was creates. It developed a system of measures that had to provide a thorough study, conscious assimilation of disciplines and the most reasonable organization of different forms of education. When considering independent extracurricular work, the commission offered the lecturers, Pedagogy lecturers in particular, to involve students in reading and analysis of additional literature, giving talks or making reports.[25]

Organization of students' educational-research work was of great importance at KTA. Students in their third year had to prepare a thesis for theology PhD. Students in their fourth year worked on the master's thesis that was usually defended at the end of the fourth year but it was not necessary. Most often the work for master's degree was completed after graduating from the theological academy.[26]

Among master's works, we should focus on Semen Mshanetsy's work "About Moral Education in Childhood."[27] It was the first and the only Pedagogy thesis at KTA. It was a big work and consisted of introduction, two chapters of the main text, conclusions and references. Unlike the works done at the beginning

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[23] "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies," 548.

[24] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1874-1875 academic year," 67.

[25] Ibid., 70.

[26] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1874-1875 academic year," 76; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1876-1877 academic year," 48-49; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1878-1879 academic year," 48.

[27] Mshanetsky Semen. About moral education in childhood [Мшанецкий Семен. О нравственном воспитании в период детства], 1869, File 436, Fund 304, Institute of Manuscripts of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, Kyiv.

of the 19th century and the first half of the 1860s, thesis had references. Semen Mshanetsy's thesis had references at the beginning of the work; the references contained 12 sources, among which there were 10 foreign pedagogical works and K. Ushynsky's "Man as an Object of Education" and materials from the journal "Teacher."[28] Certainly, they were not enough for the work which had 169 pages. In most cases Semen Mshanetsy referred to the studio of Necker de Saussure. In authors' opinion, the first chapter should depict theory. It was focused on characteristics of childhood and periodization of it, tasks and means of moral education in childhood. Semen Mshanetsy considered the second chapter to be practical, so he revealed the factors that influence children's moral education, namely: "firstly, people who are around the child; secondly, child's physical and spiritual individuality; thirdly, education, i.e. town or village, parents' house or school."[29] So, the second part of the work was focused on theory as well, and it seems inexpedient to distinguish it. In general, the thesis was written in scientific style and had material presentation logic. We agree with the conclusion of reviewers of this master's work, as the work got 3.5 points on a five-point scale and "bloatedness" of the thesis was the main disadvantage of it.[30]

So, Pedagogy theses were written seldom. As a result, we can say that students were not involved enough in educational-research work in Pedagogy.

The statute of Orthodox theological academies determined the forms of students' assessment. These forms were exams and repetitions. The latter was a new form of assessment in KTA. The statute only determined the necessity of introduction of repetitions but it did not provide any additional instructions and explanations.[31] In order to introduce repetitions as forms of students' assessment, the Council of the Academy had to give instructions. However, there were not any instructions about repetitions in set of rules concerned educational process in KTA in 1869; it was only pointed out that lecturers in all subjects should organize repetitions at their discretion.[32] Having analysed five-year experience in organizing repetitions by lecturers, the members of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy found it necessary to develop detailed requirements for conducting these forms. They decided that repetitions had to be organized after studying some themes or "parts of science," but in Pedagogy as a compulsory subject repetitions should be held at least once in six months. They could be oral or in writing. The results of these repetitions at the end of

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[28] Ibid., 2.
[29] Ibid., 30.
[30] Ibid., 171-172.
[31] "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies," 548.
[32] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for July and August 1869," 46.

term were announced to administration of the academy department and taken into account during the year's exams. That is why, students considered repetitions to be an important form.[33]

It should be noted that during the validity period of the statute of 1814, exams at KTA were taken twice a year, but during the investigated period, exams were taken once a year, at the end of academic year. Both the statute and reports of KTA and protocols of meetings of the Council attest to this.[34] The Council of the Academy had to determine the time and rules of taking exams.[35] Pedagogical expediency of taking examinations depended greatly on the competence of the Council. The first rules developed by the Council for exams had general statements and were not detailed. For example, in 1870 a month-long term of taking exams and their timetable were developed. Moreover, it was determined that every exam had to be taken by a lecturer and two members of the examination committee. I. Bobrovnytsky, M. Zaitsev and priest G. Malevansky took Pedagogy exams for the third-year students in 1870. The rules also indicated that could answer examination questions and examiners' questions and could get mark on a five-point scale, where 5 and 4 meant very satisfied students' answers, 3 meant satisfied answers, 2 and 1 meant unsatisfied answers.[36] Gradually, the rules and procedure for examinations became more thoughtful, new rules and conditions were added. For instance, lecturers started to provided students with 10 days for preparation for exams, and before them lecturers were asked to make reports on the content of educational material given to students during the academic year.[37]

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[33] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1874-1875 academic year,"67.

[34] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1871-1872 academic year," 36; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1875-1876 academic year," 60-61; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy (30 March, 26, 28 April, 6 and 31 May 1878)" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии (30 марта, 26, 28 апреля, 6 и 31 мая 1878 г.)], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 11 (1878): 389; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for November 1870" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за ноябрь 1870 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 2 (1871): 21; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for March and April 1871" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за март и апрель 1871 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 7 (1871): 56-59; "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies," 553.

[35] "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies," 550.

[36] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for April 1870" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за апрель 1870 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 8 (1870): 25-26.

[37] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1878-1879 academic year," 49; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for March 1873" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за март 1873 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 7 (1873): 351; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for February-June 1876" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за февраль-июнь 1876 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 8 (1876): 262.

Unlike the first, second and third-year students who had exams in certain subjects, the fourth-year students had complex exams. The students took complex exams in subjects that they had chosen for their special-practical classes, that is why one exam covered Pedagogy, Psychology, History of Philosophy and Theology.[38]

So, due to constant improvement of organization and procedure for exams and repetitions, systematization and strong assimilation of pedagogical knowledge by students were ensured.

Teaching staff had a significant role n development of Pedagogy as a new subject at theological academies. At the research stage, Pedagogy at KTA was taught by M. Zaitsev (1867-1870), V. Petrov (1871-1872), P. Linytsky (1872-1873) and M. Olesnytsky (1873-1895). M. Zaitsev graduated from Kaluga Theological Seminary and St Petersburg Theological Academy. He taught Literature and Latin at secondary theological educational institution in Kaluga, and he taught Pedagogy at KTA from 1867 to 1870.[39]

Business trip abroad made by M. Zaitsev in 1861-1862 promoted his professional development as Pedagogy lecturer. It was organized to study foreign educational and charitable institution.[40] His article "Basic principles of training"[41] and schoolbook "Guide to elementary education,"[42] which was written in co-authorship with I. Malyshevsky and colleagues noted that M. Zaitsev "had good influence on young students due to live speech, through tireless activity, hot worries about development of young minds and tender, sincere and noble attitude to them."[43] Taking this into consideration, M. Zaitsev's desire to reduce the number of hours to study Pedagogy at KTA seems strange. In his opinion, it was because of the difficulties in teaching Pedagogy as "this science was developed little, particularly taking into account strict Orthodox-Christian foundations which

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[38] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1877-1878 academic year," 292; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for May 1871" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за май 1871 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 9 (1871): 66.

[39] Zaitsev Nikolai Lazarevich [Зайцев Николай Лазаревич], File 1466, Fund 175, Institute of Manuscripts of the V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, Kyiv; "Necrologue. N. L. Zaitsev." [Некролог. Н. Л. Зайцев]. *Pravoslavnoie obozreniie*, no. 2 (1872): 82.

[40] "Necrologue. N. L. Zaitsev," 82.

[41] N. Zaitsev, "Basic principles of training" [Основные начала обучения], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 9 (1868): 519–544; N. Zaitsev, "Basic principles of training" [Основные начала обучения], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 8 (1868): 296–324.

[42] N. L. Zaitsev, I. I. Malyshevskii and I. T. Ekzempliarsky, *Guide to elementary education* [Руководство к начальному обучению] (Kyiv, 1869).

[43] "Necrologue. N. L. Zaitsev," 83.

should be the basis of development of Pedagogy at theological academies."[44] Certainly, this argument was not convincing. However, we have reason to say that this position was not connected with the lecturer's irresponsibility and professional incompetence. Because of serious illness, M. Zaitsev did not have opportunity to conduct three Pedagogy classes a week. The analysis of the protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy and other sources[45] revealed that from 1862 M. Zaitsev, who was 22 years old, had serious health problems, he suffered from joint disease. When he was appointed as a bachelor in KTA in 1867, he went to work on crutches. In 1869 his illness got worse, and M. Zaitsev was not able to get out of bed for weeks or even months. Certainly, many lectures were missed, and lectures given by him inflicted his physical suffering. At the end of 1870, M. Zaitsev did not work at KTA any longer, and in 1872, he died at the age of 35.

After graduating from KTA, V. Petrov started to work at the Department of Pedagogy and Moral Theology at KTA. From October 1871, he started to work as full-time associate professor. Unlike M. Zaitsev, V. Petrov specially prepared for teaching science of education, as in his fourth year at the academy he attended special-practical classes in Psychology, History of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Basic Theology by choice. Besides, he successfully gave two trial lectures (lecture in Pedagogy and lecture in Moral Theology) in the presence of members of the Theological Department.[46] Based on the analysis of study of the report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1872-1872 academic year, we can say that V. Petrov had a conscientious attitude to giving lectures and special-practical classes in his subjects as he did not miss any class.[47] However, V. Petrov did not have any opportunity to gain experience and improve

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[44] Case of reduction of lectures in the departments of moral theology, pedagogy and general church history. 10 September 1869 – 21 October 1869 [Дело о сокращении лекций по кафедрам нравственного богословия, педагогики и общей церковной истории. 10 сентября 1869 г. – 21 октября 1869 г.], 1869, File 5970, Inventory 1, Fund 711, Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv, 1.

[45] "Necrologue. N. L. Zaitsev," 82-83; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for July and August 1869," 45-48.

[46] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for December 1870" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за декабрь 1870 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 3 (1871): 33; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for September 1871" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за сентябрь 1871 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 2 (1872): 44-45, 59-60; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for October 1871" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за октябрь 1871 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 3 (1872): 1-3.

[47] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1871-1872 academic year," 20-21.

professionally. At the beginning of 1872-1873 academic year, he did not appear at the academy because of serious illness, and on September 16, 1872, the young lecturer died.[48]

From October 1872, P. Linytsky was assigned to temporary teaching of Pedagogy. This lecturer was KTA graduate, as well. He graduated from this higher theological institution in 1865 and got master's degree after defending the thesis on "Different directions of German after Hegel Philosophy Concerning Religion." At the beginning of 1872, P. Linytsky worked as Extraordinary Professor and taught philosophical disciplines. In spite of Professor's workload because of teaching philosophical subjects, remoteness of his scientific interests from Pedagogy and lack of special training for teaching this subject, P. Linytsky was not indifferent to teaching Pedagogy. For example, this is evidenced by the fact that in January 1873 he required to purchase about 20 books on Pedagogy for the academic library; works by V. Vodovozov, A. Diesterweg, M. Korf and other scientists were among these books.[49]

The next lecturer in Pedagogy at KTA was M. Olesnytsky. When he was a student, he stood out among other KTA students, and the members of the theological department pointed to M. Olesnytsky's talent and called him the best student on the course.[50] Based on the analysis of the sources[51] we can conclude that he did not have intention to teach Pedagogy: for his special-practical classes he chose a block of disciplines that included sacred scripture and Hebrew, gave trial lectures in these subjects and defended master's thesis on a topic related to sacred scripture. However, this did not stop him from developing

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[48] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for September and October 1872 [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за сентябрь и октябрь 1872 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 2 (1873): 79, 122.

[49] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for September and October 1872 [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за сентябрь и октябрь 1872 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 2 (1873): 127-128; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for March 1873," 300-301.

[50] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for May 1873" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за май 1873 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 11 (1873): 512.

[51] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for April 1873" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за апрель 1873 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 9 (1873): 414-415; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for September and October 1872," 106; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for November and December 1872," 135-136; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for May 1873," 510-511; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for January 1874" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за январь 1874 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 6 (1874): 264.

the educational course on Pedagogy and teaching this subject successfully to 1895, changing positions from acting Associate Professor to Extraordinary Professor during the period under research.

So, the influence of pedagogical staff on the quality of pedagogical training at KTA can not be assessed unambiguously. On the one hand, Pedagogy was taught by the best graduates of theological academies, and they active and ready for professional growth. On the other hand, they often succeeded each other and did not have enough time to delve into pedagogical science and gain experience.

Special-practical classes were absolutely new form of education at KTA. They were conducted in the fourth year and took the whole academic year. These classes were mainly aimed at improving knowledge of selected subjects and students' training for their teaching in seminaries. At the beginning of the academic year, student chose a group of disciplines in which they had to attend special-practical classes. In classes students explored seminary training programs and textbooks, worked with sources, got ready for writing master's thesis and taking master's exam and conducting trial lessons.[52] In the middle of the 1870s, a new requirement to educational process was introduced. According to it, lecturers of the academy had to involve fourth-year students mainly in improving their knowledge of selected subjects at the first half of the academic year. The second half of the academic year had to be dedicated to methodic training.[53] Rationing the number of hours for special-practical classes per week was another measure that helped to improve new forms of educational work at KTA. From the end of the 1870s, lecturers had to have at least two hours for these classes.[54]

Special-practical classes in all groups of subjects of the academic course differed in pedagogical orientation. The group of subjects that included Pedagogy had the greatest pedagogical orientation. The specific feature of this

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[52] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1870-1871 academic year" [Отчет о состоянии Киевской духовной академии за 1870-1871 учебный год], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 10 (1871): 10; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy (30 September, 11, 28 October and 25 November 1877)" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии (30 сентября, 11, 28 октября и 25 ноября 1877 г.)], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 6 (1878): 138-139; "Highest approved statute of Orthodox theological academies," 548; Tetiana Rohova and Tetiana Tverdokhlib, *Pedagogical heritage of lecturers of Kyiv Theological Academy (second half of the 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century)* [Педагогічна спадщина викладачів Київської духовної академії (друга половина XIX – початок XX століття)] (Kharkiv: Tsyfrova drukarnia № 1, 2013), 76.

[53] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1876-1877 academic year," 46; "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1877-1878 academic year," 265.

[54] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1878-1879 academic year," 25.

group of subjects was that fourth-year students of all the departments of the academy could choose it. It was the only group that included subjects which were compulsory in the first, second and third year. Till 1871-1872 academic year, it included Psychology, History of Philosophy and Pedagogy, and from 1872-1873 academic year, it included Psychology, History of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Basic Theology.[55]

The lecturers had some problems with organization of students' training for conducting lessons in seminaries, as the lecturers did not have enough experience in teaching at secondary theological educational institutions. Lessons were often called lectures, especially in the first half of the 1870s, and the same requirements were imposed both to lessons and to lectures. So, it is not surprising that in December 1874 the Holy Synod issued an order, according to which lecturers of KTA should "pay attention to trial lessons as they show academy graduates' teaching skills, and trial lessons should be adapted to the concepts and ideas of pupils for whom they are conducted."[56] Trial lessons were always conducted in the presence of a commission of Professors and Associate Professors of certain department and other fourth-year students, if possible. Grades for conducting the lesson could be different: from "very satisfied" (5) to "unsatisfied" (2 and 1). Students usually conducted three trial lessons, and they chose two topics of the lessons themselves and one topic of the trial lesson was assigned by a lecturer. Trial lessons had different topics, namely: "About children's games," "About religious education," "About means of education," "About educational management" etc.[57] After successful conducting the trial lessons, students received certificates that indicated the right to take teaching positions at seminaries.

It should be noted that trial lessons were not full lessons. They were rather imitation of lessons as they were conducted at the academy without seminarians. These disadvantages could be overcome due to organization of pedagogical practice. It became clear not only to lecturers of KTA but to members of

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[55] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for November 1870," 20; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for May 1874" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за май 1874 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 7 (1874): 314; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy (30 September, 11, 28 October and 25 November 1877)," 139.

[56] "Report on the state of Kyiv Theological Academy in 1874-1875 academic year," 48.

[57] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy (30 March, 26, 28 April, 6 and 31 May 1878)," 426; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for December 1871" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за декабрь 1871 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 5 (1872): 4; "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for May 1872" [Протоколы заседаний Совета Киевской духовной академии за май 1872 года], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 9 (1872): 32.

the Holy Synod.[58] At the initiative of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, I. Malyshevsky, P. Lashkariov and P. Linytsky, the pedagogues of the higher educational institution of Orthodox Church, developed a project of organization of students' pedagogical practice.[59] This project provided organization of practical classes for students at local seminary. These classes have to be conducted in subjects which students were going to teach at secondary theological educational institutions. Based on the analysis of this project, we can assert that attending and conducting lessons, checking pupils' written works and assisting seminary teacher in conducting repetitions were the main forms and methods of pedagogical practice. I. Malyshevsky, P. Lashkariov and P. Linytsky had the most problems with organization of conducting lessons by students. Pedagogues had to develop such a system which could not disrupt the normal course of the educational process at seminary and could provide qualitative pedagogical training of future teachers of secondary theological schools. Taking this into consideration, the pedagogues offered to start conducting lessons from October 1, "in order to give students enough time to prepare for this lesson and to give seminary teachers time to involve students in subject they teach."[60] Each student had to conduct at least one lesson every two weeks by timetable drawn up by the Council of the academy with Pedagogical meeting of the seminary. Students had to conduct lessons in the presence of subject teacher, and other students of the group could also be present at the lessons. Unfortunately, not all pedagogues at KTA and the Holy Synod were for strengthening of pedagogization of the academy, that is why this project was not implemented.

So, Pedagogy as an independent subject was taught at KTA during the second half of the 1860s – 1884. If we compare teaching Pedagogy at higher theological educational institution with teaching it at secular educational institutions, i.e. at universities, we can say that the academy had advantages. Though there was not specific department of Pedagogy in both higher educational institutions, at KTA Pedagogy was taught as a compulsory subject for the third-year students and as an elective subject in their fourth year. At special-practical classes students learnt the methodics of teaching Pedagogy and other seminary subjects and trained for conducting lessons. Universities did not have this

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[58] "Protocols of meetings of the Council of Kyiv Theological Academy for April 1873," 410-411.

[59] "Ideas of commission about the way of organization of practical classes for the fourth-year students at local seminary" [Соображения комиссии о способе устройства практических занятий студентов IV курса в местной семинарии], *Trudy Kievskoj duhovnoj akademii*, no. 12 (1873): 562–564.

[60] Ibid., 563.

training. The analysis of the historical literature[61] has shown that at secular educational institutions Pedagogy was taught only for certain categories of students during some periods and lecturers had minimum hours for teaching it. For example, in 1877-1878 academic year, after a few years' break, Pedagogy was taught at History and Philology Faculty of Kyiv University.

Conclusions

So, the results of the research show that theological education at KTA was a bit limited and combined with pedagogical training. At this higher theological school, pedagogical education included study of Pedagogy as a compulsory discipline and special-practical classes in the 4th year. The main advantages of pedagogical training in the academy were: the inclusion of the latest achievements of Pedagogy as a science in the content of pedagogical disciplines; systematic use of exams and repetitions to control and systematize students' knowledge; taking special-practical classes in the 4th year, which facilitated students' familiarization with seminar training programs and textbooks and training for conducting trial lessons. The main disadvantages of pedagogical training in the academy were: the prevalence of history of Pedagogy over theory of up-bringing and didactics; insufficient lecture hours for this academic discipline; inferiority of trial lessons, their imitative character; turnover of pedagogical staff. Though from the mid 70's of the 19th century some omissions were partially or completely remedied, pedagogical education at KTA remained limited. It was because of the lack of pedagogical practice. Kyiv Theological Academy did not reach the status of pedagogical educational establishment, but the level of pedagogical education there was much higher than in universities.

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[61] Natalia Demianenko, "Teacher's general pedagogical training in the history of higher school in Ukraine (the 19th century – the first quarter of the 20th century)" [Загальнопедагогічна підготовка вчителя в історії вищої школи України (XIX – перша чверть XX ст.)] (PhD diss., Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology of Professioanl Education of National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, 1999), 22; L. Zelenska, "Kharkiv National Pedagogical University named after H. Skovoroda: milestones of history" [Харківський національний педагогічний університет імені Г.С.Сковороди: віхи історії], *Pedagogika ta psykhologiia*, no. 50 (2015): 173, http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/znpkhnpu_ped_2015_50_21; Shyp, *Kyiv Theological Academy in cultural-educational space of Ukraine (1819-1919)*, 113.

Discussion

Certain problems of organization of educational process at Kyiv Theological Academy during the second half of the 19ᵗʰ century – at the beginning of the 20ᵗʰ century were investigated by N. Gupan, Ie. Plekhanov, O. Cherkasov, T. Tkhorzhevska, G. Borovska, V. Ilyin, S. Kuzmina, S. Meshkovaia, M. Muravytska, A. Plekhanov, N. Suhova, M. Tkachuk, V. Fazan, I. Iuras.

The most similar to the subject of our research is V. Fazan's PhD thesis dedicated to the study of Pedagogy at Kyiv, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan Theological Academies at the beginning of the 19ᵗʰ century – in the 1920's. However, in this scientific work, the pedagogical training at three above-mentioned higher theological academies of the Russian Empire was generalized, but the peculiarities of pedagogical education at Kyiv Theological Academy were not investigated.

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THE PLACE OF STUDENTS AND WORKERS ACTIVISM IN POLITICS: A HISTORICAL REFLECTION

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ABSTRACT. History has revealed that overtime Students and Workers through their activism have played significant role in politics as they have acted as checks in any political dispensation that is against the common interest. This is because while the proletariats (workers) produce the wealth plundered by those in authority, the students form the literati, on whose shoulders rest the conscience of the society. It was in line with this mandate that in the 19th Century, Russian students were in the forefront of the struggle against the Czars' exploitative and dictatorial social system. Similarly, Chinese students constituted the most active groups in the fight against feudalism and Japanese colonization. In the 1960s, students took up arms in opposition to inhumane Western consumer societies and their exploitation and repression of the poor, black and yellow races. Also American students were actively involved in the civil right movements, especially in the Southern parts. Under the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) they created a climate of opinion about the Vietnam War which the American people could not ignore. In Africa, outbursts in Mali, Zaire, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria and South Africa have shown students and workers as important factor in the decolonization politics. This is because the oppressive policies of the state have most often further impoverish them both physically and psychologically. However, with the attainment of Independence, this role have been crippled by the forces which they paper intends to interrogate. Data obtained from primary and secondary sources were deployed to carry out the study with an analytical and narrative historical method. Findings indicate that oppressive politics has been the major factor that stimulated their role in politics especially during the decolonization process, and that in the neo-colonial state, emerging forces and policies of the government are directed at destroying this role.

Keywords: Workers, Students, Governance, Politics.

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Introduction

The origin of trade union movement in Nigeria could be traced to the pre-colonial period. At this time, there existed guilds, mutual aid groups and professional or occupational craft unions all of which function to play the role of trade union. However, these associations are not in the modern sense of it full fledged trade union. Rather, most of them are merely workers association.[1] However, available historical evidence has revealed that cases of oppressive rules has also manifested in Nigeria especially during the Colonial period leading to the emergence of workers and students groups. In this way, activities surrounding the emergence of Trade Unionism have been associated with oppressive government. It is in line with this that it has been noted thus:

> The revolutionary wave, that that was ravaging the world after the Second World War did not spare Nigeria. The first major confrontation between the Colonial master and the Nigerian working class broke out in June 1945, under the leadership of Michael Imoudu. This general strike lasted for 40 days and all the workers demands completely won. The 1945 general strike marked a significant turning point in the history of trade unionism in Nigeria; it was not for joke that Michael Imoudu eventually became the all-time Nigerian Labour leader number 1. This strike passed an unforgettable message to the colonial masters that Nigerian workers had finally arrived and were equally capable of revolutionary acts like their counterpart the world over. If the Nigerian workers had carried out this magnificent struggle under an independent working class party, the question of workers power might have been concretely posed, but it all ended up as ordinary economic struggle. The colonial masters did not leave this matter for chance; if Nigerian working class of 1945 was that powerful, what would become of it in 1950s and above?

From the above, it is clear that the inception of modern trade union in Nigeria could be said to coincide with colonialism. Consequently, the first set of trade unions were modelled after British unions. Unlike the situation in most developed countries, trade union preceded industrialization in Nigeria. However, at the earliest period of colonialism, Nigerians were discouraged from belonging to unions as union membership was regarded as anti- colonial attitude.[2] This situation sped up the birth of it, such that in 1912, the first trade union organization was born in Nigeria. The strength of it organisation became

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[1] D. Otobo, *The Role of Trade unions in Nigerian Industrial Relations* (London: Malthouse, 1987), 12.
[2] Ibid., 12.

evident in the fact that by 1913, the union already had its branches in Kaduna and Port-Harcourt. It is on record that it was initially called Southern Civil Service Union, with about 500 memberships, cutting across the length and breadth of the nation. It was later renamed Nigerian Civil Service Union after the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates.

The success of the activities of the Nigerian Civil Service Union and the need to check the excessiveness of the colonial administration led to the formation of other workers unions. This became evident when in 1931 the long pre-eminence of the civil service union was broken. This was when the railway workers went on a short and sharp strike led by Michael Imoudu, against a newly introduced system of calculating wages. In the same year the Nigerian Union of Teachers was inaugurated and the following year the Railway Workers Union was formed. The strike by the Railway workers was seen as significant because they gave a clearer picture of the exploitative manoeuvres of the colonial government and however this had robbed the people of the resources. In support of this, O. Kazeem opined thus:

> Colonial political economy was founded on the exploitative principle. The colony served as a source of cheaper raw materials for metropolitan Britain as well as a market for its goods (Colonial economy was mainly geared towards making Nigeria supplier of raw materials for imperialist economy). To achieve this goal, the British colonizers built railways to facilitate the extraction of raw materials like cotton and ground nuts from the North, cocoa from the West and palm kernel from the East as well as mine products from Plateau. This made railway transportation the main pivot upon which the whole colonial economy was resting. The railway workers were carrying the burden of the colonial economy and felt that their interest might not be properly protected under the Civil Service Union where they were before 1931. Expectedly, Nigerian Railway Workers Union started out as a very militant labour union and was lucky to have a fearless and honest leadership headed by Pa Michael Imoudu.[3]

These were followed by the formation of the Post and Telegraph Workers Union, The Nigerian Marine African Union, and the Public Works Department Workers Union, and several others such that by 1940 there were over twelve trade unions actively organising on the railways, at the docks, in the post and telegraph offices, the PWDs, and the other key points in the sinews of the economic and military infrastructure of colonial Nigeria.[4]

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[3] Ola Kazeem, "Centenary of Trade Unionism in Nigeria," http//www.workersalternative.com.

[4] Yusufu Bala Usman, *Nigeria: Independence on a Gold Platter?*, vol 3, no. 3 (Nigeria: In-Depth Analysis, 1988), 10.

While most of the above-mentioned Unions could be described as formed by those directly affected by colonial employment policies, other bodies that were also discriminated against and wanted an end to what they described as unjust policies began to emerge. Thus, in 1937, Lagos, witnessed the formation of The Lagos Fishermen' Association, followed in 1938 by the Taxi Drivers Union and the Canoe Transport Union, and in 1939 by the Wholesale Builders Association and in 1940 by the Women Sellers Union. Even the Night Soil Removers Union was formed in 1942. In his analysis of the situation, Kazeem O. wrote:

> ...As a result of the fact that colonial exploitation was biting painfully hard not only in the southern protectorate, but also more terribly in the Northern protectorate. Nigerian working class started out with hands of solidarity and comradely interactions nation-wide, without any ethnic and religious bigotry, even before the nation was born. A lot of battles were waged and won by this union against the colonial masters and this further encouraged more workers to enroll and by 1931 another two major unions were formed: Nigerian Union of Teachers and Nigeria Railway Workers Union.[5]

On the eventual success of these groups in bringing an end to colonial exploitation in the area, Aremu I. noted thus:

> The first generation of workers emerged from the nascent colonial economic and administrative structures. Colonial authority preferred forced unpaid labour but was challenged by the workers. In essence, the colonial order prompted the emergence of early working class movement in Nigeria. In between the two world wars, (from 1919 and 1945) the British colonial economy intensified colonial exploitation through direct increased taxation, retrenchment of the workforce, wage cuts, casualisation and hourly payments. These periods also marked the radicalization of the country's labour movement. The high point of labour's resistance was in 1941 when Nigeria's railway men led by Micheal Imoudu and the union's secretary, Mr Adenekan matched through streets of Lagos to see Governor Sir Bernard Bourdillion. The protest led to major victories for the workers in terms of improved wages and abolition of hourly pay system. Subsequent labour agitations such as the 44 day strikes of 1945 led by labour NO 1 Micheal Imoudu and the 1949 Enugu coal Iva Valley massacre in which 22 coal miners were brutally killed by the colonial police for daring to demand for wage arrears. These agitations linked the demand for better working conditions in particular with the demand for independence in general. Nationalists like Dr Nmadi Azikwe and Obafemi Awolowo backed the demands of the trade unions, deploying their journalist prowess to pressure the colonial authorities to improve the workers' lot.[6]

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[5] Kazeem, Ola. "Centenary of Trade Unionism in Nigeria."

[6] I. Aremu, "The Nigerian Economy and the Labour Movement, recorded live from FRCN daily commentary," (2012), http//www.nigeriacommentaries.blogspot.com.

While the Workers' Union was formed and continued to fight for the liberation of the people, group of Nigerian students both at home and abroad also came together agitate for better government conditions in Nigeria. This action is well documented in the emergence and activities of West African Students Union (WASU) between 1925 and 1952. They established a news magazine WASU, in which they undertook public enlightenment sessions such as discussion groups, public lectures and conferences designed to influence political thinking within the British Political parties and spur activism at home. Members also undertook regular tour of Nigeria to raise awareness; as exemplified in the activities of leaders Ladipo Solanke between 1929 and 1932, during which in collaboration with others to establish branches of WASU in Lagos, Ibadan, Ago-Iwoye, Ijebu-Ode, Ile-Ife, Enugu, Port-Harcourt, Jos, Zaria and Kano. Some of these centres later became important branches of the Nigerian Youth Movement, mobilizing Nigerians for agitation against colonial rule. Even at the local levels, students continue to condemn the activities of the colonial administration as well as form Unions. Usman gave the picture thus:

> … alongside these, old Boys of various secondary schools like Kings College and Teachers Colleges like Katsina College and Bauchi Teachers Training College organised themselves too. The Nigerian Union of Students itself was formed in 1939. Kinship and tribal Unions like the Igbirra Progressive Union, the Urhobo Renascent Convention, the Idoma Hope Rising Union sprang up along older ones like the Ibibio Welfare Union and the Ibibio Farmers Union.[7]

From the analysis of the activities of the Unions in the colonial period, it is safe to argue that the history of the country's labour and students movements are linked to the history, progress and development of Nigeria's society and economy. It is also important to note that the relatively peaceful road to independence in Nigeria contrasts sharply to years of bloody armed struggles that heralded freedom in other countries (Mozambique, Angola) as a result of the doggedness of both the Students and Workers Union of that period.[8] Nigeria's relative peaceful road to freedom, notwithstanding, the long struggle to the independence was also characterized by mass resistance, mass strikes and protests, enormous sacrifices largely by Nigerian workers, their trade unions and labour movement.

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[7] Usman, *Nigeria: Independence on a Gold Platter?*, 10.
[8] See Aremu, "The Nigerian Economy and the Labour Movement."

Workers and Good Governance since Independence

The general idea of struggling for self government from colonial master was to create a situation in which the people will be free from the oppressive dictates of foreign rule as well as a situation in which the resources (both human and natural) will be channel towards internal development.[9] For example, in a letter dated 17th September 1945, from Poona, India, a Nigerian Soldier, Private No. 82602. Theo Ayoola, wrote home thus:

> We all overseas soldiers are coming back home with new ideas...we have been told what we fought for. That is 'freedom' we want nothing but freedom.

In line with the above, Usman[10] opined that the above and activities of the workers Union in Nigeria made matters very clear to the British with their long experience of of colonisation and decolonisation, going back almost two hundred years to the rebellion of North America colonies.

Since independence, the Nigerian trade union movement has led series of struggles for both good governance and decent work agenda. In the area of good or deceit wage, it has been noted that is evident from the Harragin, Turdo-Davis, Miller Commissions of the pre-colonial period to Adebo, Udoji, Shagari, 2000 minimum wage reviews and the current minimum wage Commission of the recent times. In the area of fighting against dictatorship, labour movement remained a unifying force for national unity. Significantly labour championed the struggle against military dictatorships with enormous sacrifices that included dissolutions of its elected executive councils. It has also been at the forefront of the resistance against polices such as fuel price increases without which the earning and purchasing power of the working class would have been eroded by inflation. The trade union has served as backbone for the first developmental effort of the newly independent Nigeria during the first and second Republics.

In the discharge of the above, successive governments have tended to see labour as a problem in their attempt to implant their programs. Thus, various attempts were made (at various times, including legislative actions) to ensure that labour is amenable to the dictates of the regime in power. This was more during the military era when the various military regimes particularly pursed with vigour the fight against strong union, which they see as a potential threat, especially when considered in the light of the fact that their intervention in government has no constitutional backing and subject to rejection on the

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[9] Usman, *Nigeria: Independence on a Gold Platter?*, 10.
[10] Ibid.

basis of legality.[11] In this way any stumbling block was cleared with all military might and power. It was in line with this that even the Media was at various times declared enemy and the government had to come down hard on them. For example, on the 2nd day of August, 1973, a journalist Mr. Amakiri of the Observer had his head shaved with an old rusty razor blade, stripped naked and given twenty four strokes of the cane on his bare back. This happened at the office of the then Rivers State military governor, Commander Alfred Diete-Spiff, because he published the grievances the Nigerian Union of Teachers, Rivers State Branch had against the governor.[12]

The attempt by the Student Union to checkmate the illegality of military incursion into politics, met with the might of arms of the government which described their activities as illegal. For example, in 1978, the Obasanjo administration described the 1978 student crises as the handiwork of students and their hoodlum accomplices. In the federal government's statement on the crisis, it announced thus:

> Those students and their hoodlum accomplices…ought to be ashamed of themselves;…it has been established that the students solicited and employed the services of undesirable … to commit their lawless acts.[13]

As a way of making sure the activities of the students were brought under government control, the administration continued to target those they believed were importing what they described as Marxism into the school. For example, in 1981 and 1982 it attempted to deport Dr Patrick Wilmot, a radical sociology teaching in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, while it handed over Dr Dennis Brutus, a teaching at the university of Calabar to the South Africa Intelligence Agencies.[14]

By 1985, the administration of Babangida came with the policy of the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), which brought untold hardship on the populace, impoverishing parent so much so that it became very difficult for them to finance their wards through school. However, by 1986, with the implementation of SAP, the threat of the withdrawal of education subsidy and the restricted environment of academic pursuit was resisted by Nigerian Students.[15]

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[11] B.T. Bingel. "Understanding Trade Unionism in Nigeria: Historical Evolution and Prospects for Future Development," in *Trade Union in Nigeria: Challenges for the 21st Century*, edited by F. Adewunmi (Lagos: Fredrich Ebert Foundation, 1997), 32-33.

[12] Jakande, I.K., „The Press and Military Rule," in *Nigerian Government and Politics under Military Rule*, edited by Oyeleye Oyediran (London: Macmillan, 1979), 119.

[13] A. Iyorchia, *Essays in Popular Struggles* (Oguta: Zim Pan African Publishers, 1986), 56-58.

[14] "Wilmot: Spy or Extremist," *The African Guardian* (March 28, 1988).

[15] M. Tukur, "The Immediate Future of Higher Education in Nigeria," Letter to the Honourable Minister of Education, 27th September, 1984. B. Olukoshi, ed., *The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria* (London: James Currey, 1993), 24.

Like the Shagari's administration, Babangida finally succeeded in deporting Wilmot and continued to target other university teachers and students who spoke out. Describing the outcome of this Kukah wrote:

> General Babangida began to wage war against what he referred to as undue radicalism. The target was the academic community. By this time, it had sharpened its tools of contestation with the military. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and its counterparts in the universities of Ibadan, Calabar, Port Harcourt and Jos, had become the hot beds of very informed Marxists radicalism in the 80's;... University lecturers were harassed or detained. They were accused of not teaching what they were paid to teach. Fear began to grip the academic community as many radical intellectuals began what would later be referred to the season of migration.[16]

Other scholars[17] gave further information thus:

> Across the campuses in Nigeria, members of ASUU therefore came under intense pressure. . ... the government launched a war across the campuses, seeking to curb what it termed undue radicalism. The government fought its war on two fronts. Its move to bare its fangs by flushing out some twenty lecturers across the country was thwarted when ASUU secured a court injunction restraining the Minister of Education from going ahead with the decision. Government then made another move. By promulgating the Trade Unions [Miscellaneous Provision] Decree of 1986, the government disqualified ASUU from membership of NLC. Along with this came the removal of the mandatory check-off system by which Unions automatically deducted monies from workers' salaries into the coffers of the Unions.

At the end of the day, the appointment Dr. Festus Iyayi, who was the president of the Academic Staff Unio of Universities and lecturer with the University of Benin was in 1987 terminated on the grounds that he had been engaged in private practice. However, the academia argued that it was rather the fact that he was bent on opening the eyes of Nigerians to the evil of the government of the day that led to his deportation.[18] This hostility continued even in the reign of Abacha, thus F. Adewumni, specifically noted thus:

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[16] M.H. Kukah, *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria* (Lagos: Spectrum Books Ltd, 1999), 79.

[17] Olukoshi, *The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*, 193; Kukah, *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 159.

[18] "Why was Wilmot Deported," *The Analyst* 3, no. 2 (March-April 1988): 34.

> Events since the ascendancy of the Abacha regime in November 1993, have practically resulted in the complete demobilization of the unions. The incoherent response of organized labour to the political crises that followed the annulment of the 1993 presidential election provided the opportunity for the Abacha administration to dissolve the executive committees of the Nigerian Labour Congress, The National Union of Petroleum and National Gas Workers (NUPENG) and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) who were frontally involved in the attempt to force a de-annulment of the election results in 1994.[19]

Apart from the above, the military administration under General Abacha continually clamped down on the media. For example, General Abacha within its first 100 days in office, seized over 50,000 copies of TELL magazine without any reason(January 2, 1994); Arrested and molested employees of Guardian Express (January 4, 1994); aborted NUJ Press conference (January 14, 1994); Charged the editor in chief of Razor Magazine for sedition (January 19,1994); Executed Ken Saro-Wiwa and others (January 2,1994), Disrupted the meeting of Campaign for Democracy, a Human Right Organization (February 15,1994) (Akinkuotu, A. 1994).

Even before the Abacha Administration, the military administration under General Buhari, showed its intolerance to the media when the administration closed down newspaper houses, while practitioners were detained (Some of the newsmen detained include Tunde Thompson and Nduka Irabor. This led to the popular NUJ and Guardian protest) (National Concord, 1985).

The victories of the Student body in association with the Workers Union in in this pursuit have been acknowledged thus:

> Students have indeed, over time, registered some considerable victories in this country. For example the demonstration against Murtala's death, the Ali must go demonstration of 1978, which shook even a military dictatorship; the Ango must go demonstration of 1986 which shook Ahmadu Bello University, the anti-SAP and removal of oil subsidy riots of 1989, 1990 and 1991 and the demonstration against the annulment of the June 12 elections in 1993 were all spasms that made Nigeria sit up on the issues of the day. To be sure, some of these clashes with security agencies have led to deaths. Unfortunately, student demonstrations in Nigeria have tended to be ad-hoc, chaotic, lacking substantial staying power, clarity and focus and ability to go across the board to draw national sympathies to their cause. This is not unconnected with the very limited and sectoral interests of the issues

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[19] Cited in A. Adesoji, "The Subversion of Labour Militancy in Nigeria: A Case of the Nigerian Labour Congress," *The Nigerian Journal of Economic History*, no. 5&6 (2003), (Ibadan: Quantum Publishers, University of Ibadan, 2003): 32.

around which students agitate, namely, their welfare, and access to education and campus conditions. Of course, students do not necessarily have plans to replace governments since they have no strategic replacements from their ranks. Given their mobility and the fact that they are largely birds of passage, they can only hold out a moral vision for society. When they move on, they hand the baton and join the struggle in another turf in our turbulent national life.[20]

Nigerian Union, Government Repression and the Road Ahead

The situation in Nigeria today is such that any observer of Workers and student unionism in Nigeria will have to concede that their dynamism has waned considerably. While the Workers union seems to still maintain some considerable influence, the Student Unions have greatly diminished as a result of long years of military repressions, intimidation, blackmail, infiltration by security agencies, co-option of members that have taken their toll considerably. It has also been observed that the lack of democratic space and misappropriation of resources led to sharp corrupt practices within the various bodies. As such, students have to align themselves with institutions and agents of sometimes dubious interests and credentials to remain afloat or secure things such as good grades, accommodation, etc. these are some reasons which have led to moral decay on our campuses, thus turning them into haven for cults and secret societies. Thus, instead of encouraging students bodies to engage the government in robust discourse, the political class would rather have them become armed thugs for political activities. This has been systematically achieved through the underfunding of the education sector, victimization of lecturers, encouraging brain drain as well as recruitment amateurs to manage the system. The result is that that energy that would have been channeled towards vibrant unionism is now tailored towards violent cult activities on campus, so much so that thousands of students have lost their lives to it while properties worth millions have also been destroyed. Apart from the injured and those rusticated or expelled, troubled universities students are generally known for their activism everywhere.[21]

The above is supported by the table below with gives a chronicle of activities of these groups since the period of military repressions, intimidation, blackmail, infiltration by security agencies.

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[20] Kukah, *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 160.

[21] A.I. Ajayi, T.E. Haastrup, and F.M. Osalusi. "Menace of Cultism in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions: The Way Out," *Anthropologist* 12, no. 3 (2010): 155-160.

Table I: chronicle of activities of Cult Activities on Some Selected Institutions

Date	Activities	Place
1985	A non-cult student incurred the wrath of another student, who was a cult leader for snatching the latter's girlfriend.	University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
1991	A student of University of Port Harcourt was beheaded during a feud between cult members; the activities of secret cult groups resulted in the death of a Principal Assistant Registrar and his wife.	Delta State University, Abraka,
2002	A 300 level economics student was shot dead and slaughtered at the Dallimoore area	Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State.
2006	Cult members invaded University of Ado-Ekiti, burnt the cadet's office, killed three students and injured students and staff of the university	University of Ado-Ekiti
nd	ten students were gunned down in a day by cultists	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife
2006	Seun Oyedola, a lecturer was abducted and killed during a clash between cults	Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun
1999	five students were killed slain students were George 'Yemi Iwilade, the then Secretary General, OAU Students Union, Tunde Oke, a member of Democratic Socialist Movement, Efe Ekede, Eviano Ekelemu and Yemi Ajiteru).	Obafemi Awolowo University
2003	Three students—Kehinde Dosumu, Omotayo Suraju and Olalekan Ajao were killed.	Kwara State Polytechnic
2008	Tony Ileogbuna, was murdered (acting Head of Geology department)	Enugu State University of Science and Technology
2004	Vincent Uloho was murdered in cold blood.	University of Benin
2004	Wale Adeyori and Banji of were killed	Federal Polytechnic Ilaro
2005	Ashifat Olatunji Saheed, a student was slaughtered	Polytechnic Ibadan
2005	Gbenga Joseph, a policeman attached to anti-cult squad of Kwara State police command was killed by suspected cultist	Kwara State
2005	Cultists slaughtered Bolaji Toniwa, a student	Lagos State University
2012	Cultist killed a final year student	University of Benin

In the case of the Workers Union various government have continued to adopt manipulative measures to wane their strength. These ranged from the dissolution of the executives, arrest, detention and imprisonment of leaders, sponsoring pro-establishment labour leaders to central leadership positions as well as supporting malcontents within the rank and file of labour movements. In 1976, the National Executive Committee of the NLC led by Wahab Goodluck was dissolved while Goodluck along with other labour members was banned from participating in labour activities in 1977.[22]

The administration of General Babangida which did not hide is hatred for their radical position marked the doom of the labour movement, by meddling into the internal affairs of the body. This was achieved through the process of co-option, enticement and inducement. Having been rattled by the Ali Chiroma led NLC during the students' riots at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1986. Ali Chiroma had kept the government restive during the period of his leadership of the NLC. The killing of students at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, the demonstrations against Margaret Thatcher and the resistance to fuel price hikes were some of the remarkable achievements of the Chiroma era between 1986-1988. To curb the power of the Union, the government, sponsored Takai Shamang, making available financial resources to the Shamang faction. The elections ended in a stalemate which led to the so-called sacking of the Chiroma-led executive with Shamang, the contestant, declaring himself as president. With this impasse, the military went on to proscribe the movement and install a sole administrator who later saw to another round of elections. This time, Mr. Paschal Bafyau, who was considered a military apologist became the new President of Labour.[23]

Under General Abacha, the government sensing the support for the Social Democratic Party, Chief Abiola's party, by the NLC decided to use only the opposition stalwarts to kill Labour. As a way of actualizing this, the administration sacked the executive following the oil workers' strike in 1995 and in its place appointed members of the National Republican Convention (NRC) to act as sole administrator. These include Major General Samuel Ogbemudia, Alhaji Uba Ahmed and Mr. Ason Bur. With this development, Labour was unable to make any serious input regarding the welfare of its constituency.[24]

In line with the above Adesoji[25] observed that the fear and apathy created in workers through unending rationalization, retrenchment, wage freeze as well as outlawing the use of a strike became effective as a tool of frightening

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[22] Adesoji, "The Subversion of Labour Militancy in Nigeria," 32.

[23] Kukah, *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 161.

[24] Ibid., 161.

[25] Adesoji, "The Subversion of Labour Militancy in Nigeria.", 32-33.

labour activists. This not only made it possible for the workers to be further away from their leaders, it has also made it possible for the leadership to trade away the union for their own aggrandizement.

Conclusion

From the discourse so far it is clear from history that the struggles of Nigerian workers and students have been monumental and their liberation fight through checkmating dictatorial governance remains one of their most significant contributions in the history of the nation since colonial time. These unions consistently opposed capitalism during the colonial period and oppressive governance from the period of independence and in the process constructed its ideology of resistance which has assumed its highest exemplification in revolutionary socialism. In this way, these movements have had a harvest of qualitative social, economic and political improvements, progressive international and domestic legislations and tens of independent workers and states to show for its struggles. Significantly, unlike crusades of the bourgeoisies, its struggles have benefitted the entire oppressed humanity. The anti-colonial struggle in Nigeria for example, illustrates the extent to which political and economic struggle of workers and their students' union counterparts have expanded the frame of rights enjoyed by the citizenry and improved its overall quality of life However, there have deliberate attempt to make sure both bodies do not perform these roles in post-colonial Nigeria, it was therefore not surprising that in order to deny the workers Union of the association and friendship that would have enriched it various government have deliberately prevented them from affiliating with other International bodies except the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU). This was particularly observed in the 1970's under the Murtala/Obasanjo regime. This line has been towed by subsequent administration, thus weakening the ability of the Unions to checkmate the government. This resulted in situation in which the union leadership (both students and workers) became bunch of military lackeys who had no affinity with principles, integrity and democracy.

For there to be a turnaround there is need for a fundamental restructuring of the entire movements (especially the students unions) in order to make it respond both to the needs of its members and also to have clout in society. These Unions must therefore realize that the most potent weapon they have is their unionism, which remains the thread that binds them together, if they must retain their relevance.

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VI. REVIEWS

Patriciu Vlaicu and Răzvan Perşa, eds., *Canonical Tradition and Mission of the Church* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018), 350 pp. [In Romanian]

The first volume of the collection "Studii Nomocanonice" brings together the papers presented at the International Conference of Canon Law and Orthodox Theology from Bruxelles (3-5 September 2015). The 13 contributions are divided in five sections, each of them having a distinct importance for this theological domain: canonical tradition, canonical principles, role of clergy, Church and law, the actuality of the tradition.

The only article included in the section *The Canonical Tradition of the Orthodox Church* is dedicated by Revd. Assoc. Prof. Irimie Marga to "The Canonical View of Revd. Prof. Liviu Stan" [pp. 9-25], one of the most important professors of Canon Law in the Romanian Orthodox Church. His canonical thinking is complex and profound, and the author underlines five main characteristics: a) his view is based on Andrei Şaguna's ecclesiastically canonical foundation; b) Liviu Stan's contribution as a pathfinder for the Romanian Orthodox Canon Law; c) his preoccupation to rediscover the Orthodox canonical principles, especially with that of laity's participation to Church's life; 4) his persistence to return to the study of ecclesiastic law sources and e) Stan's approach to all current problems faced by the Church.

The section *The Fundamental Canonical Principles in the Tradition of Orthodox Church* opens with the study signed by Assist. Prof. Iulian Mihai Constantinescu, "La Tradition canonique orthodoxe et l'application du principe hierarchique dans la vie practique ecclesiastique (The Orthodox Canonical Tradition and the Implementation of
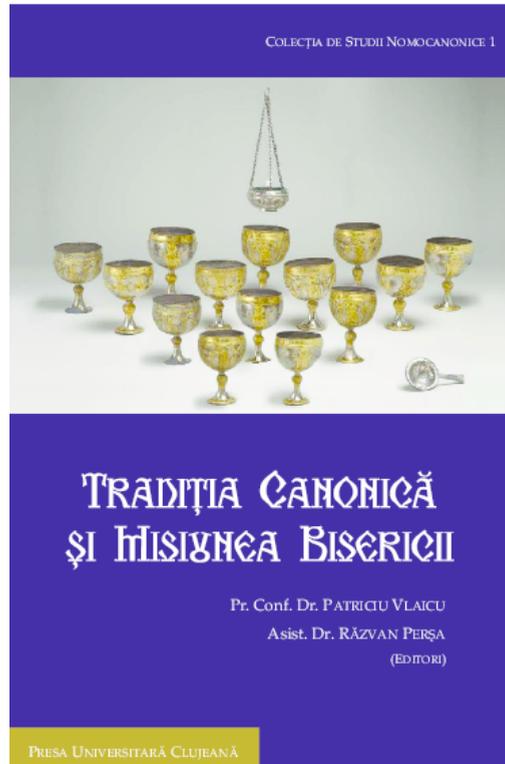
the hierarchical principle in the practical ecclesiastic Life)" [pp. 29-48]. In this contribution the author analyses one of the most important principles for he organization and leadership of the Church – the hierarchical principle, which is directly related to the other canonical principles and highlights the problem of "canonical primacy" in the sense that there cannot be a bishop above the ecclesiastical power, transmitted through apostolic succession. This subject is even more relevant when we think that the use of this hierarchical principle within the practical life of the Church has raised many issues, with some canonical implications for the inter-orthodox relationships, due to different interpretations and ecclesiastical interests of some local Autocephalous Churches.

The following study, "Synodality and primacy: expressions of Ecclesiastic Communion and joint Responsibility" [pp. 49-73], written by Revd. Assoc. Prof. Patriciu Vlaicu, highlights the relation between the sacramental and eschatological dimension of the Church and the institutional one. The author emphasises on the one hand the ways in which synodality is manifested at the local level, and on the other that this was the effect of the influence of the Roman-Byzantine Empire on the Church's structure.

The study signed by Revd. Assist. Prof. Grigore Dinu Moş, "Is 'sacramental oikonomia' a coherent and faithful expression of Orthodox ecclesiology and is it useful for its ecumenical vocation? Reflections on some theological conceptions and official statements" [pp. 74-100], explores the nuances of this concept and the limitations of this practice, underlining the two positions of St. Cyprian of Carthage and Saint Basil the Great regarding the admission of heretics and schismatics, and their influence over time. The author considers that the theory of 'sacramental economy' does not represent "the tradition and perennial teaching of the Orthodox Church".

The third section, *The Role of Clerics in the Canonical Tradition of the Orthodox Church*, begins with the study of Revd. Assist. Prof. Nicolae-Coriolan Dura, entitled "Communicating the Priest's Mission in a Secular World" [pp. 103-117]. The author admits that there is a great temptation for clerics to identify themselves with the world, but the Church has kept vigil, so that, through her canonical norms, the aspect connected to this menace should be cleared up since the biginning. They are guided by these rules to know exactly what the nature of their service in this world is.

The next study, "The historical Developing of Clerical Offices and Canonical Norms regarding the clerics in the Canonical Tradition of the Orthodox Church" [pp. 118-165], written by Assist. Răzvan Perşa, analyses the terminological and historical considerations regarding the title of clerical offices and emphasizes different ways of naming the clerical orders and offices in the Orthodox Church, such as: inferior and superior clergy. Referring to the non-clerical personnel the author stresses that the inferior clergy although doesn't receives through χειροτονία the admission in the sacramental hierarchy, they have distinct functions and liturgical responsibilities in order to build the relationship between clerics and laity.

The fourth section, *Church and Law*, includes two contributions. The first one, "The natural and legal persons in the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church" [pp. 169-198] is signed by Assoc. Prof. Liviu-Marius Harosa, who explains the conditions required by laity and clerics to hold their distinct place in the ecclesiastic community. The other text, "The Religious Communities and European Court of Human Rights" [pp.

199-211] belongs to Revd. Ionuţ-Gabriel Corduneanu and presents the difficulties of the international organism to define 'faith' or 'religion' and the religious character of a community. Finally, the Court has found two criteria to identify any religious communities: self-identification (which requires an organized structure) and the approval of the national authority. The key is the institutional autonomy of every religious group and of course the neutrality of the State.

The fifth and final section, *Tradition and Mission in actuality*, opens with the study of Jean-Paul Durand "Les attentats de janvier 2015 et le respect laic en discipliner France. Comment la liberte de la satire? Responses de l'Etat de droit a un 'islamisme' terroriste (The attacks of January 2015 and laic respect in disciplining France. How far can go the freedom of satire? Responses of the Rule of Law to a terrorist 'Islamism')" [pp. 215-224]. The author explores the reaction of the French State towards the terrorist attacks which are identified as Islamist attacks, as in the case of Charlie Hebdo attack, but the main problem remains the limitations and responsibilities of the journalists, who are protected by the French law for the freedom of press (29 July 1881). There are exposed some examples of attacks against both Muslims and Catholic Christians, even against the Pope, but according to the French Law and Jurisprudence neither of them was classified as slander and so to risk perpetuating this kind of situations remains opened.

Revd. Assoc. Prof. Cristian Sonea tries in his study, entitled "The Christian mission in a changing ecclesial and global context. The Role of Academic Orthodox Theology" [pp. 225-248], to identify the main challenges of the current Christian mission. This includes solutions and answers to a new kind of spirituality, the need of a new kind of theological discourse and a new way of making mission among the migrants and proselytes. Finally, the author addresses the problem of the theological teaching and its importance.

The second contribution of Assist. Răzvan Perşa is called "The mission and involvement of lay and monks in the life of the Orthodox Church according to Canonical Tradition" [pp. 249-300] and follows the role of the laity and monachism, underlining especially the rights and duties of laymen: to participate to the exercise of the sacramental, teaching an jurisdictional power according to the canonical rules as they were specified over time.

The next study, "Bioethics: Challenge and Chance for the Church. The Christian under the pressure of bioethical decisions" [pp. 301-331], belongs to Revd. Prof. Ştefan Iloaie and tries to establish the role of Bioethics in the Dialog between science and faith, placed at the interference of many other scientific domains. The author stresses that the needs and values of the Christian family are under the pressure of the bio-ethical decisions, which regard many aspects of our daily life. This is way we need landmarks and a Christian vision for viable Bioethics.

The last text, "Diacritical thinking. Apology and cultural mission" [pp. 332-350], is written by Assist. Prof. Nicolae Turcan, who proves that the diacritical thinking joins the dialogue with God and the dialogue with the world. This kind of thinking "may take the form of criticism but also of apologetic; can become a philosophical discourse in the horizon of faith, a Christian philosophy, as well as a theological formulation in the light of divine inspiration and attentive to the current philosophy, a kind of philosophical

theology; can appear as analogous and contemplative thinking [...] often paradoxical, the dialectical thinking takes place in the interval between philosophy and theology seeking to glorify with discernment and fidelity to the truth of the Church, God who cannot be comprehended by the mind" (p. 350).

The papers included in this volume highlight once more that the preoccupations in the field of Canon Law and Missiology address real problems faced by our society and prove that the Orthodox Theology has a say in solving at least part of them.

DRAGOŞ BOICU

Paul Siladi, *Word and Image* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2019), 588 pp. [In Romanian]

Among the most surprising works published in the first half of the current year the volume signed by Paul Siladi occupies a very a special place. Written as a ThD thesis under the coordination of Fr. Prof. Valer Bel, Siladi's work is attempting to prove that it is impossible to fully deliver the Christian message if word and image are separated. Mission is understood as the sum of the Church's actions, by the means of which it transmits, sustains, and creates the environment for experiencing faith.

The author divides his volume in nine chapters preceded by an *Introduction* and followed by *Conclusions* and *Bibliography*.

The *Introduction* serves to contextualize the topic and shows that the inseparable connection between word and image is based on Christ Himself, Who possesses the double quality of being both the Father's Word and His Image. Even if the word and the image have been the objects of numerous analyses, their connection has only seldom been addressed from a theological point of view, and there are only a few works dedicated exclusively to it, mostly in the western protestant space (Jean Phillippe Ramseyer, Jacques Ellul, Jerôme Cottin). A notable work in the Romanian theology is the Th.D. thesis of fr. Dumitru Vanca, focusing chiefly on didactically and catechetical aspects. All these contributions at the theology of the word and the image will be analyzed in detail.

Chapter I entitled *State of the research* [p. 25-70] lists the works dedicated to the issue of the word and the image in Romania from the second half of the 20th century on, precisely because Romanian theologians have shown interest in this matter. The articles were divided into three categories, depending on subject matter: studies dedicated to the word, the icon/image, and to the relation between them. In addition to these, there is a section presenting the articles of icon theology appeared in representative western journals. It must be said that in the multitude of local papers dedicated to the icon, there is not enough originality, neither in approach, nor in structure. The remarkable
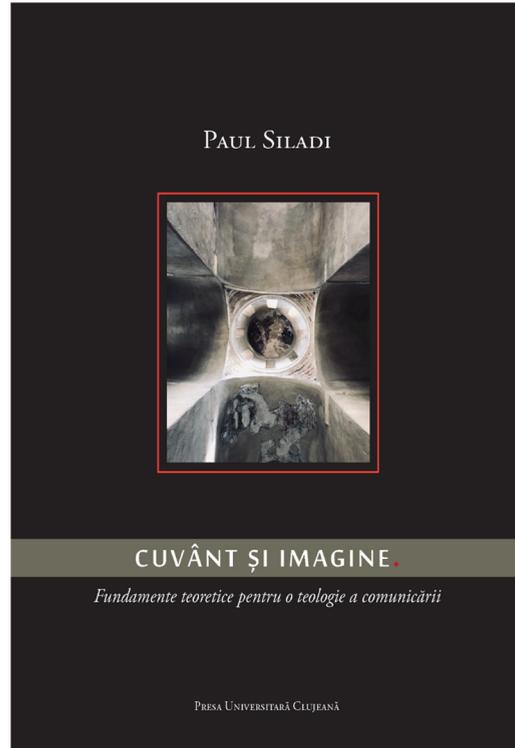
iconology articles written by fr. Stăniloae have stood the test of time and have irrevocably marked the Romanian theological thought (restricting it to Christology as fr. Ioan I. Ică jr criticizes). Equally worthy of being remembered are the article written by Ioan Rămureanu on the veneration of icons in the first three centuries of the Christian era, and the well documented contributions of fr. Nicolae Chifăr in the field of Byzantine iconoclasm and the icon theology elaborated on that occasion.

Chapter II entitled *Word and Image-A semantic and philosophical analysis* [p. 71-92] is reserved to the theological investigation of the two concepts, beginning with their etymology and then extends towards their philosophical meanings. The first phase presents the meanings of the word '*cuvânt*' (word) in Romanian, and then compares them to the ample meanings the Greek word *logos* has. Regarding the concept of *image*, the theological language uses two different key concepts, inherited from the Greek: *eikon* and *eidolon*. Although both of these terms may, on a certain level, be translated with *image*, the relation the types of images have with reality is different. *Eikon* is an image reflecting a reality, whereas *eidolon* is the image of an illusion, of a figment of imagination. The most well-known analysis of the two concepts in Romanian theology is fr. Dumitru Stăniloae's study 'The idol as image of deified nature and the icon as window on divine transcendence'. Synthesizing fr. Stăniloae's ideas from the introduction to his study, it can be stated that even though *eikon* and *eidolon* partially share a common semantic field centred on the image, the distinction between them at a strictly conceptual level isn't all that unambiguous in the biblical sphere. The last section of *Chapter II* is dedicated to a brief presentation of the Latin terms for image: *imago, forma*, and *figura*.

Chapter III is dedicated to Christology (*Logos and Eikon – a Christological approach*) [p. 93-150]. In Christian theology the connection between *Logos* and *Eikon* is based on their unity in the unique person of the Son of God, Who the Scriptures define as the Word and Image of God. The chapter has two parts: the first one presents the philosophy and the theology of the divine Logos, and the second focuses on the Christological significance of the term *eikon*. The fact that the Son of God made flesh was the Father's Logos or Word has never been challenged, being part of what might be called the common doctrinaire corpus of all Christian theologies. For this reason, the space reserved for the divine Logos in the structure of the thesis is smaller than the one dedicated to the Son as Father's Image. The way we comprehend God's visibility, considering the biblical sources, bears the mark of our confessional appurtenance. This is the case of the French Calvinist theologian, Jérôme Cottin, who tried to outline a Protestant theology of the image, but who still holds fast to the traditional positions of the Reformation, reaffirming the incompatibility between the theology of the image and that of the word. For the Reformed theologians such as J. Cottin the biblical statement that the Son is 'the image of the invisible God' (Col. 1,15) is nothing more than a reformulation of the Johannine assertion that the Son is the Word of God. By contrast, the Orthodox east has developed in time an image theology based on Christology. The issue of the Son's visibility was central to the Church Fathers, as one that had ultimate implications and was an endless source of theological speculations. For the Romanian theology the one who absorbed and went into these aspects of Christology even deeper was fr. Dumitru Stăniloae. His vision is largely concentrated on the point where Christology and anthropology connect, elaborating on the implications of the embodied Christ's being God's Word and Image has for the word and image used in human communication.

In *Chapter IV*, *The Man and Creation from the perspective of Word – Image Binom* [p. 151-178], the author analyses the connection the two concepts have on an anthropological and cosmological level. On the former level, it is significant that the man is created in the image of the Logos-Image, a syntagma reuniting the two fundamental qualities of the Son of God, namely being God's Word and Image. These qualities are also found in the man created in the image of the One Who is both Logos and Image. Moreover, the word-image binomial is not confined to the anthropological sphere; it can be seen in the entire creation. The world hides behind the image, through which it is accessible to us, reasons of the things placed there by God; when the man perceives them he knows their source, God the Word. An eloquent expression for this is fr. Stăniloae's phrase naming the world 'plasticised reason', a meaning that became material, and due to its corporeality, accessible to sight.

Chapter V, *Logos and Eikon in the Iconoclast era* [p. 179-332], the most extensive section of the thesis, is dedicated to the analysis of the relationship between *logos* and *eikon*, between word and image during the Iconoclastic period. This age is fundamental for our topic, because that is when the theoretical bases for the icon theology are laid and because those conflicts are 'the genesis of a thought on the image we have inherited'. The foremost representatives of the iconodules, namely St. Germanos of Constantinople, St. John of Damascus, St. Nicephoros of Constantinople and St. Theodore of Studion have paid special attention to the connection between word and image in their treatises.

Chapter VI, entitled *Word and Image in the Western Thinking* [p. 333-388], is dedicated to the relationship between word and image in western theology and is consequently divided into two sections: a presentation of the reception and the consequences of the Byzantine iconoclasm in the west, and a review of two works of reference on the topic, written by Jean-Philippe Ramseyer and Jacques Ellul. They have very different approaches and perspectives. Ramseyer is much closer to Orthodox than to Catholic theology when he writes about the word of God: from the beginning it is connected to the sphere of visibility, for the simple reason that when God speaks He also acts, or rather God acts by speaking. His word is not a vehicle of intellectual communication, but an action by which God becomes involved in history, calling beings and things into existence. This way, although He is not actually visible, the Word of God becomes visible through His actions. According to J. Ellul, the sight introduces a *plastic* dimension in biblical revelation. It is naturally an immaterial plastic, a sort of spiritual body whose visibility offers itself to the inner sight. Therefore, sight is a Word in immaterial images. On the other hand, the French Reformed theologian, Jacques Ellul assumes an iconoclastic position. Endowed with fantastic intuitions, Ellul's image criticism cannot be fully ignored, even when he writes about the use of icons in the church.

Chapter VII, *Word and Image in Modernity* [p. 389-424], deals with the word-image relationship in modern times. The starting point is the idea that modernity and postmodernism share a continuity, not only historically, but mostly with respect to ideas. The specific element of modernity on a semiotic level is breaking the bond between signifier and signified. Words and images are self-referential: they no longer refer to something found beyond them. Both words and especially images have this destiny. The solution to free the image from this tyranny is the icon, free from the logic of modern imagery. Instead of the image's self-reference, the icon's kenosis which fades as much as possible in order to allow a bridge to the beyond to form.

Chapter VIII, *Mission through Word, Image and Sacrament* [p. 425-464], presents the mission through word, image, and Sacrament. The entire cult of the Church and, above all, the Sacraments, are examples of the union between word and image, spirit and matter. The word, the image, and the Sacrament are means through which the Church can efficiently fulfil its mission to grow and to incorporate all people in the mystical body of Christ, so that they may all live fully this way. A special aspect of this union is the witness given by the holiness one's life. Taking Christ as a model in life he who preaches the word of God has to complete the words he utters by his own image, as the fulfilment or the embodiment of those words. The word which doesn't become a reality in the one who articulates it is a mere empty promise. For someone to have *a powerful word*, a persuasive word, capable to convert others, it is necessary that that word be accompanied by the image of the person talking, embodying the message of the Gospels he preaches. This reality is exemplified by the monks in the Egyptian desert, for whom personal example took precedence over empty, moralising talk.

The last chapter, *Inclusive Simultaneous* [p. 465-476], analyses several possible definitions of the word-image relation. Firstly, there is the definition of N. Ozolin who perceives this relation as 'analogy and complementarity'. When this relation is discussed from a theological perspective, its terms are theology and icon, and everything becomes clearer now: the two concepts, *analogy* and *complementarity*, show their faults, but this does not annul their didactic value. The source of the shortcomings is the tendency for a mechanical understanding brought about by the latter term. Usually, two complementary objects form a unity, which is often something else than what each element is in itself. In this case, theology and icon form a unity that is paradoxically nothing different from what they each express.

The *Conclusions* [p. 477-488] emphasize that both concepts are simultaneous means of communicating and transmitting revelation, and they are equally means of communicating and transmitting the faith in God and His work. Jesus Christ is the supreme and ultimate synthesis of God's work, because He is the embodied Son and Word of God, as well as 'the image of the invisible God' (Col. 1,15). Among the ways God communicates Himself and his work to us are the word and the image/icon, in a relation of inclusive simultaneity, playing a major part in the mission of the Church, namely in preaching, supporting and experiencing faith. The word and the image have various concrete forms of being present in the Church. The word id found in the Scriptures, in preaching, in prayers etc. The image is found in icons, the image of Christ and His saints, the image of the confessor, the image of the Christian mother etc., even the image of the authentic Christian community. The word and the image in their simultaneity, in these forms or others, are means of communicating and living the faith, means of Christian witness and mission. The preached word must be accompanied by image. The man, created in the image of He Who is the Word and the Image of the Father, is in his turn word and image, and in order for his testimony to be authentic, his words must express his inner reality, they must spring forth from an authentic experience of the reality preached. Otherwise the words remain empty and never go beyond being mere sound (even articulated ones), a superficial shell for a distant truth. In these situations, the risk of hypocrisy is immense.

DRAGOȘ BOICU

Max Oxbrow and Tim Grass, eds., *The Mission of God. Studies in Orthodox and Evangelical Mission*, Regnum Studies in Mission (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2015), 258 pp.

Mission has always been an important topic both for the Ecumenical dialogue and the Churches. Therefore, nowadays, the researches dedicated to it are intensively investigated and discussed in different contexts. An interesting and recent book from this area can also be considered the one entitled: *The Mission of God. Studies in Orthodox and Evangelical Mission,* edited by Max Oxbrow and Tim Grass, that brings together 22 studies in missiology signed by specialised people from different scientific areas.

The two editors, namely Rev. Canon Max Oxbrow, who is the international director of Faith2Share and Facilitator of the Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative, and Rev. Tim Grass, important writer and theologian with a Baptist background, are helped by other 22 theologians from different confessional and geographical spaces, and they are analysing different aspects of mission and its understanding in Orthodox and Evangelical contexts.

In the introductory part (p. 1-6), after speaking about the way how the evolution of society have shifted the understanding of mission and its relevance for nowadays, the editors point an interesting fact about the importance of knowing the other in the ecumenical dialogue, showing that:

"Many doctrinal, liturgical and ethical issues divide us, and may continue to do so until our Lord returns, but increasingly a significant number of Orthodox and Evangelical Christians have become convinced that the centrality and urgency of the mission of God can and must transcend these divisions and bring us together in a common bond of love for God, each other in his world. The Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative (LOI) is one of this kind of expression of this research for reconciliation through the transforming power of the Gospel" (p. 2).
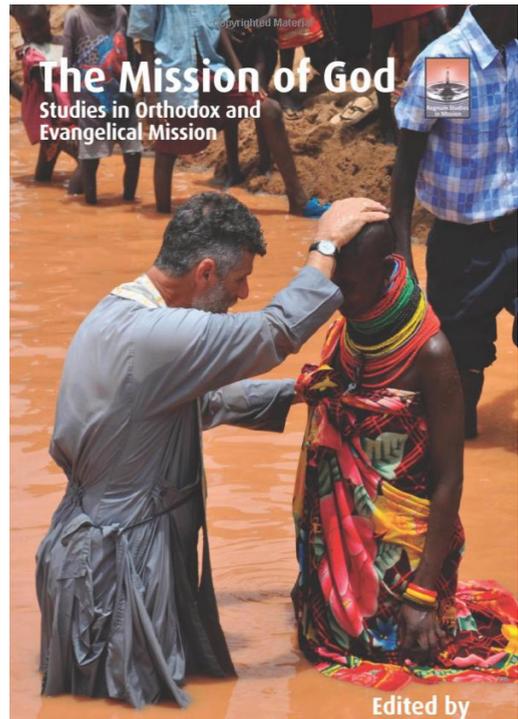
After presenting the institutional background of the investigation and the reasons of the aforementioned initiative (p. 7-12), the editors split the content in four big sections: "Mission" (p. 15-95), "Evangelism" (p. 99-172), "Spiritual transformation" (p. 175-212) and "Authority" (p. 215-238). These are the keywords of the whole investigation. Although, at a first glance, the book looks, because of this segmentation, limited in an artificial way, a serious reading shows the richness of it.

Therefore, the authors are investigating different segments of the topic that circumscribs the section from different points of view. Some of them come to it from a biblical perspective (like: Ramez Attalach, who sees the mission from the perspective of conversion of Peter and Cornelius (p. 15-16), Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Yulios (pp. 17-19), or Femi Adeleye, who speaks about the relationship between mission and neighbourhood (p. 20-23). Others, like father Ioan Sauca, director of the Ecumenical Institute from Bossey and Deputy General-Secretary of World Council of Churches (pp. 51-67) or Cecil M. Robeck Junior (pp. 68-84), come into debate from a theological perspective, while theologians like Luke A. Veronis, tries to speak about the challenges of mission starting from a case study from places like Albania (p. 85-89) or Egypt (p. 90-95).

Without falling prey to a didactic attitude, the authors also define terms like Evangelism, spiritual transformation or authority emphasizing their understanding in different traditions and cultural spaces, the relationship between them and the potential keys of dialogue. They speak there about the evolution of their meaning in the ecumenical space and also about the challenges in its deepening. They point there, as Father Ioan Sauca says in the conclusions of his study, the fact that:

"In the past, the theological perspectives on ecclesiology, soteriology and mission of Orthodox and Evangelicals seemed to be irreconcilable, today they are signs of reconciliation and common perspectives. The differences between Oriental and Western approaches to theology in general still remain an issue, and at times signs of misunderstanding and difference of discourse can be seen" (p. 67).

Despite of that, each dialogue attempt and meeting make the theologians, belonging to different confessions and spaces, more conscious of their common points, like the Trinitarian base of mission, as Bishop Anastasios Yanoulatos underlines it (p. 24-25), but also of aspects like the ecclesiastical background (p. 25-26), or the communitarian one, synthetized in the words "Liturgy after liturgy" as well as their theological meaning developed by father Ion Bria. This can constitute the beginning of a fruitful way together being a trustworthy witness of a heritage and of a set of specifically Christian values.

Written in an interesting way and bringing together important theologians from the Orthodox and Evangelical space in a debate dedicated to the mission and its outcomes and their contemporary value, the book entitled: *The Mission of God. Studies in Orthodox and Evangelical Mission,* published under the coordination of Max Oxbrow and Tim Grass is both an useful tool in the ecumenical dialogue and a handbook that help the reader to understand the mission from an inter-confessional point of view and to see its potential development in tomorrow's society.

MAXIM MORARIU