

TEOLOGIA

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The review publishes studies, translations from Holy Fathers, notes, comments and book reviews.

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The Dynamics of the Theological Thinking and the Dialogue With the Modernity

The Orthodox theological thinking can not be separated by no means from the framework, in which it arises, and this framework is the Church, on the one hand, but the Church can not ignore at all the historical, cultural, philosophical and social context in which takes place the approach of the theological reflection. Therefore, theology is a necessary and indispensable function of the Church which is used by it in order to achieve its ultimate goal, which is the salvation of believers.

By these rows we want to emphasize some aspects or coordinates of the Orthodox theology, in its most specific, and, secondly, to look at how theology can be a real presence, important and creative in the context of its dialogue with modernity. Or, in other words, to what extent can theology enter into the dialogue with the modernity; how much it is prepared to face such a dialogue and what kind of valences is the theology stressing when it addresses the modernity. This work wants to trigger a real, relevant and targeted debate on regarding the theological dialogue with the spirit of the present times, in which it manifests itself, wishing to interest the theology in what modern thinking develops and grows, often in contradiction with the fundamental elements of theology, sometimes being in a complementary with it.

Theology is, according to the etymology of the word, the word or the science about God and His works in close contact with man, his aspirations and his deepest needs, based on divine revelation. If we remain only at this definition, we would not truly capture the true specificity and dynamics of Orthodox theology, which seeks to not only to be the science or the way to the connection with God, but also how to be in the connection of love and communion with God-Love, which is made by the Christians through prayer and existential participation on the life of prayer, ministry

and confession of the Church. The mission of the theologian is, therefore to transmit the ethos and the ecclesial Christian thought, which became his own thinking. In this context must be understood also the dynamics of theological thought, which means the transmission of the message of salvation of Jesus Christ in a well defined historical, cultural and geographically context. Thus, the message of faith, on which the theologian reflects is always the same, because it expresses Jesus Christ, Who “yesterday, today and forever is the same” (Hebrew 13, 8) and the historical and cultural context, which is constantly changing. Here we may refer to a point of tension between what is permanently relevant, theologically valid and what is in a continuous movement and transformation. Therefore, the theological thinking must discern well the spirits, must be able to refer to what is always true and what is changing. The theologian is called to pray constantly for his theological reflection to be printed also by the prophetic spirit. The theology not always knew how keep in balance the constant character with the dynamic character of the Apostolic Tradition of the Church, from which it should draws rays of light and meaning for each generation of believers.

The Orthodox theological thought can not omit the fact that it is closely related to the life in Christ that every Christian receives at his own baptism. When Christian is clothed in Christ, as with a light coat “of water and the Spirit”, the first gifts he receives is the seal of the Holy Spirit to grow in the life in Christ, in order to achieve “perfect man stature” (Ephesians 4, 13), which is Jesus Christ. Thus, although Christian is entirely of Christ and of the Church, His body, he can not escape the world he lives in, but has the mission to confess to the modern or post-modern world the new life received as a gift at baptism. Thus, the Christian becomes a confessor of the Christian gospel and of the new life received in the Church.

Secondly, the theology or the Orthodox thinking has an ecclesial-communitarian dimension, not only for the fact that it takes place in the Church, as a function and a mission of the Church, but also because the Church always remains the criterion, the security and authenticity of the theological thought. The theology has a reference and a correction point in the reality of the Church, the “pillar and foundation of truth” (I Timothy 3, 15). The ecclesial rooted theology receives courage and inspiration, content and the dynamic of the confession from its relationship with the Church. The theology must clearly show to the world that it must entirely

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receive the seal of the Church. Although the Church is not from the world, it is still for the world, which it tends to include in its horizon of interest, mission and light.

Thirdly, the act of the theological discourse receives through the Church an intrinsic dynamics, by the fact that it is articulated and based on the interrogations expressed by the world and addressed to the Church and theology. The theological discourse becomes a kind of response of the Church in the context of cultural, scientific and philosophical developments of each century. Thus, the theology receives in its dynamics also an apologetic coordinate, meaning that the answers given by the theology to interrogations of modernity are authorized and explains, develops and protects the fundamental values of the Gospel and thus of Christianity.

If the modern times look at human life and the world in terms of temporal and often only material perspective, the theology constantly draws attention to the aspect of mystery, light and eternity of the human person and on the transformation of history into an anteroom of the Kingdom of God.

This dialogue with modern theology must be worn with intelligence, responsibility and the need to testify about the content of theology, based on the Revelation that culminated in Jesus Christ, pointing out that the theology of the Church is always alive, taken and passed on from generation to generation, in any historical context and against any challenges, addressing Christian conscience, but, and to the world alike.

Rev. Ioan Tulcan

Michael Welker¹

Vorbild – Gottes Bild – Lebendigmachender Geist: Wer ist Jesus Christus für Uns Heute?

Zusammenfassung

Die Hauptgedanken des Verfassers gehen davon aus, dass Jesus Christus weit mehr als ein individuelles menschliches Vorbild ist. Ja, sein Bild wird, wenn wir ihn auf ein individuelles menschliches Vorbild reduzieren, zerstörerisch reduziert und verzerrt. Nach den biblischen Überlieferungen sind es die Dämonen, die unreinen Geister, die nach Jesu ersten spektakulären Heilungen ausposaunen: „Du bist der Sohn des Höchsten, du bist der Sohn Gottes!“ Jesus reagiert nach dem Zeugnis der Evangelien darauf, indem er ihnen zu schweigen gebietet. (Schon Mk 1,34 heißt es: „Er verbot den Dämonen zu reden. Denn sie wussten, wer er war.“) Bis zur Auferstehung soll seine Identität nicht kenntlich gemacht werden, damit er und sein Wirken nicht auf das Vorbild des großen Heilers, das Vorbild des großen Lehrers, das Vorbild in der Annahme der Mitmenschen oder das Vorbild im politischen Widerstand reduziert werde. In Kreuz und Auferstehung scheint Jesus dann dem Suchen nach einem Vorbild und einer entsprechenden Orientierung ganz entzogen zu sein. Erkennen wir im auferstandenen und erhöhten Jesus Christus die Gegenwart des lebendigmachender Geistes in Kontinuität und Diskontinuität zu seinem vorösterlichen Leben, so sehen wir, dass dieser lebendigmachender Geist sich in seinen Zeuginnen und Zeugen materialisiert und konkretisiert. Dann gewinnen wir das Vorbild Jesu – geradezu explosionsartig entfaltet – in der Polyphonie des Geistwirkens und in der Ausstrahlungskraft seiner Zeuginnen und Zeugen zurück.

Stichwörter

Jesus Christus, Vorbild, unbescheidene Vorbilder, lebendigmachender Geist, menschlicher Geist, Gottes Bild

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Wenn Jugendliche heute gefragt werden, ob sie ein Vorbild haben, nennen sie mehrheitlich an erster Stelle Sportler, Sänger oder Schauspieler und danach oft ihre Eltern. Aber auch Freunde, Freundinnen, Lehrer und Lehrerinnen fungieren als Vorbilder. Vorbilder sind Personen, mit denen wir uns identifizieren, deren Verhalten wir bewusst oder unbewusst nachahmen oder nachahmen wollen und deren Lebensweg ein Modell für den eigenen Lebensweg ist. Können wir Jesus Christus in die Reihe solcher Vorbilder einordnen? Ist Jesus Christus für uns heute ein Vorbild?

I. Jesus Christus als Vorbild?

In der christlichen Theologie hat das Wort „Vorbildchristologie“ einen negativen Klang.² Die Theologie warnt: Wer an Jesus Christus glaubt, dürfe ihn nicht auf ein ethisches Vorbild reduzieren. Doch gegenüber diesem theologischen Vorbehalt spricht die christliche Frömmigkeit in Geschichte und Gegenwart immer wieder eine andere Sprache: „Jesu, geh voran auf der Lebensbahn! Und wir wollen nicht verweilen, dir getreulich nachzueilen; führ uns an der Hand bis ins Vaterland.“ So dichtete Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts.³ Wie auch in vielen anderen geistlichen Liedern schillert das Bild Jesu hier zwischen einem Vorbild und der Vision des eschatologischen Retters, der die Menschen ins „himmlische Vaterland“ führen wird. Zinzendorf betont in den weiteren Versen vor allem das Vorbild Jesu im Ertragen von eigenem und fremdem Leiden. Er mahnt: Mit Geduld, in Ergebenheit und Klaglosigkeit sollen wir dem Vorbild Jesu nachfolgen.

Am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts, im Jahre 1896, veröffentlicht Charles Monroe Sheldon (1857-1946), Pfarrer in Kansas und einer der Führer des Social Gospel Movements, ein Buch *In His Steps* mit dem Untertitel *What Would Jesus Do?*⁴ 30 Millionen Exemplare werden von diesem Superbestseller verkauft. Auch heute noch sind mehrere Paperbackausgaben

² Vgl. Friedrich Schweizer, Art.: *Vorbild*, RGG, 4. Aufl., Bd. 8, Sp. 1207-1208.

³ *Evangelisches Gesangbuch*, 391. Siehe auch ebd., Nr. 384: „Lasset uns mit Jesus ziehen, seinem Vorbild folgen nach“.

⁴ Er beruft sich u.a. auf den englischen Journalisten William Thomas Stead (1849-1912) und sein Buch *If Christ Came to Chicago: A Plea for the Union of All Who Love in the Service of All Who Suffer*, London 1894; reprint: BiblioLife 2010.

in Umlauf.⁵ Im März 1900 wird Sheldon für kurze Zeit Herausgeber der Zeitschrift *Topeka Daily Capital* und bringt in der Redaktion das Prinzip ein: „Newspapers should be operated as Jesus Christ would operate them.“ Die Auflage des *Capital* steigt daraufhin schnell von 12.000 auf 387.000 Exemplare. 100 Jahre später, in den 90er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts, nimmt der Laienprediger Dean Seaborn in Michigan den Slogan „What would Jesus do?“ auf und organisiert eine äußerst erfolgreiche Grassroots-Bewegung. Die Geschäftsfrau Jamie Tinklenberg hat die Idee, ein Armband mit den Initialen „W. W. J. D.“ zu kreieren. Über 50 Millionen Mal wird dieses Armband verkauft. Jesus Christus – also doch ein Supervorbild?

Der Philosoph Immanuel Kant hatte den berühmten kategorischen Imperativ formuliert: „Handle so, dass die subjektiven Regeln, nach denen du lebst, jederzeit zugleich als Prinzip einer allgemeinen Gesetzgebung gelten können.“ Diesem kategorischen Imperativ ähnlich wird „What would Jesus do?“ zu einem moralischen Appell: „Handle so, dass die Regeln, nach denen du lebst, an Jesu Worten und Taten orientiert sind.“ Doch entspricht solche religiös-moralische Vorbildchristologie dem Leben und Wirken Jesu, und lässt sich eine Vorbildchristologie überhaupt leben?

Zumindest ein Teil der Leben-Jesu-Spezialisten, deren Forschung am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts stark wiederauflebt, würde diese Fragen mit Ja beantworten. Dazu gehört John Dominic Crossan mit seinen zwei erfolgreichen Jesus-Büchern: *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*⁶ und *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*⁷, das in den USA ein Bestseller wurde. Crossan untersucht 522 biblische und außerbiblische Texte, die zwischen den Jahren 30 und 150 nach Christus entstanden sind und die sich auf Jesu Leben und seine Worte beziehen. Besonders interessieren ihn die beiden ältesten Schichten der Jahre 30 bis 60 und 60 bis 80. Ferner hebt Crossan Erzählungen und Hinweise auf Jesus hervor, die in voneinander unabhängigen Fassungen mehrfach bezeugt sind. Von den 522 untersuchten Texten bieten 42 eine dreifache Bezeugung bestimmter Worte oder Taten Jesu und 33 sogar eine häufiger als dreimal wiederholte

⁵ Zum Beispiel: Wilder Publications: Redford 2008; Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, Reprint 2010.

⁶ Harper: San Francisco 1992; deutsch: *Der historische Jesus*, München: Beck 1994.

⁷ Harper: San Francisco 1995; deutsch: *Jesus. Ein revolutionäres Leben*, München: Beck 1996.

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Bezugnahme auf bestimmte seiner Worte und Taten. Dazu gehört interessanterweise die Aufforderung: „Lasst die Kinder zu mir kommen ... Denn Menschen wie ihnen gehört das Reich Gottes“ (Mk 10,13-16 par.). Auf der Grundlage dieses textarchäologischen Ansatzes zeichnet Crossan eindrücklich einen Vorbild-Jesus.

Jesus habe elementarste Bedürfnisse der Menschen erkannt – die Bedürfnisse nach Heilung, Nahrung und Gemeinschaft. In den Heilungen von Kranken und in der offenen Tischgemeinschaft nimmt Jesus die Menschen an. Darüber hinaus bringt er eine Neuordnung der Gesellschaft auf den Weg. Alte und Junge, Frauen und Männer, Reine und Unreine, Sklavenhalter und Sklaven wachsen in dieser Jesusbewegung zu einer neuen Gemeinschaft zusammen. Das führt zu einer revolutionären, aber gewaltlosen Veränderung der politischen und familialen Herrschaftsverhältnisse.

Das Jesusbild des John Dominic Crossan ist nicht abwegig. Es trifft ganz sicher Züge des historischen Jesus und seines Wirkens und hebt deutlich den ethischen Vorbildcharakter des Lebens Jesu hervor. Doch dieses Bild Jesu blendet die Tiefenstrukturen von Jesu Verkündigung ebenso aus wie das für seine Person, sein Leben und seine Wirkmacht zentrale Geschehen von Kreuz und Auferstehung. Die Erinnerung an einen ethisch vorbildlichen Jesus, der die elementaren natürlichen Bedürfnisse der Menschen erkennt und sich helfend darauf einlässt, eine damit verbundene Vorbildchristologie verzerrt die Vergegenwärtigung von Leben und Wirken Jesu Christi und den Glauben an ihn. Man muss nicht ein „frommer Christenmensch“ sein, um diese Einwände anzuerkennen.

II. Jesus Christus als Gottes Bild?

Von Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, dem großen, aber schillernden französischen Politiker zur Zeit der Französischen Revolution, wird die folgende Anekdote berichtet: Ein Zeitgenosse Talleyrands sucht ihn auf und bittet ihn um Rat, wie man eine neue Religion gründen könne. Talleyrand, so heißt es, habe sich daraufhin im Sessel zurückgelehnt und gesagt: „Unser Herr und Meister Jesus Christus hat eine neue Religion

gegründet, indem er sich kreuzigen ließ und nach drei Tagen auferstand. Ich würde Ihnen empfehlen, für Ihre Angelegenheit etwas Ähnliches in die Wege zu leiten.“ Die Reduktion der Christologie auf eine einfache Vorbildchristologie scheitert an Kreuz und Auferstehung. Zwar kann man im Blick auf Jesu Weg zum Kreuz seine vorbildlichen zeichenhaften Handlungen wie die wunderbaren Speisungen und den gewaltlosen Widerstand gegen die Weltmacht Rom hervorheben. Heroen des gewaltfreien Widerstands wie Mahatma Gandhi oder Martin Luther King werden deshalb in die Nähe zu Jesu Person und Wirken gerückt. Dennoch stellt der Abgrund seines Leidens jede Rede vom „Vorbild Jesus“ in Frage.

Jesus wird ans Kreuz geschlagen im Namen der Weltmacht Rom, im Namen der mit dieser Weltmacht in Konflikt stehenden jüdischen Religion, im Namen von zweierlei Recht – dem jüdischen und dem römischen Recht – und im Namen der herrschenden Meinung (Da schrien sie alle: „Kreuziget ihn!“ Mk 15,13f par.). Selbst seine Jünger verlassen ihn, fliehen, verraten und verleugnen ihn.⁸ Die absolute Einsamkeit, die umfassende und gezielte Isolation des Gekreuzigten, gegen den sich „die ganze Welt“ verschworen hat, radikalisiert die Ohnmacht, die Hilflosigkeit des qualvollen Leidens auch unter brutalster Ungerechtigkeit, die Jesus mit vielen Märtyrern und „Opfern der Weltgeschichte“ teilt. Völlig abwegig erscheint darüber hinaus die Rede vom menschlichen Vorbild Jesus, wenn wir an seine Auferstehung denken.

Die Auferstehung Jesu wird leider immer wieder mit einer physischen Wiederbelebung gleichgesetzt und löst dann entsprechenden Zweifel und Spott aus. Die biblischen Zeugnisse von der Auferstehung sind dagegen sehr subtil.⁹ Sie betonen einerseits, dass der auferstandene Jesus bei den Begegnungen *nicht* sofort erkannt wird, was gegen eine physische Wiederbelebung spricht. Sie heben auch hervor, dass er sich entzieht wie eine visionäre Erscheinung. Andererseits betonen sie die Kontinuität zu seinem vorösterlichen Leben und die Gewissheit, dass er, Jesus von Nazareth, hier in neuer Gestalt gegenwärtig ist. Besonders erhellend ist die sogenannte Emmausgeschichte (Lk 24, 13-35): Zwei Jünger begegnen auf dem Wege

⁸ Michael Welker, *Was geht vor beim Abendmahl?*, 3. Auflage, Gütersloher: Gütersloh 2005, erweitert um ein Register und ein Nachwort zur päpstlichen Enzyklika *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*.

⁹ Hans-Joachim Eckstein und Michael Welker, *Die Wirklichkeit der Auferstehung*, Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn 4. Auflage 2010.

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nach Emmaus dem Auferstandenen, erkennen ihn aber nicht. Er legt ihnen „aus der Schrift“ das Geheimnis des Messias aus. Am Ziel angekommen, bitten die Jünger den Fremden, zu bleiben: „Bleibe bei uns, denn es will Abend werden, und der Tag hat sich geneigt.“ Als er bei Tisch den Brotritus vollzieht, werden, wie es heißt, „ihre Augen geöffnet“. Aber schon im nächsten Vers heißt es: „Und er verschwand vor ihren Augen.“ Statt sich nun über einen Spuk zu entsetzen, kommt es zu der Erkenntnis der Jünger: „Brannte nicht unser Herz in uns, als er mit uns redete auf dem Wege und uns die Schrift öffnete?“

Auch andere Zeugnisse der Auferstehung bieten die merkwürdige Spannung von Sinnfälligkeit der Gegenwart des Auferstandenen und seiner Entzogenheit. In der Spannung von Erfahrung einer Gottesoffenbarung und starken Zweifeln präsentieren die Auferstehungszeugnisse die nachösterliche Gegenwart Jesu Christi. In der Auferstehung geht es also nicht um die Wiederherstellung des vorösterlichen biologischen Leibes Jesu, sondern um die Gegenwart und die Wirksamkeit des nachösterlichen Leibes des erhöhten Christus, den Leib, der auf seine Zeuginnen und Zeugen ausstrahlt, ja, sich aus ihnen bildet. Mit ihren geistlichen Gaben konstituieren sie die Kirche als Leib Christi mit verschiedenen Gliedern, die der Erbauung und der Ausbreitung der Kirche und ihrer Verkündigung dienen sollen.

Die biblischen Zeugnisse sprechen davon, dass der auferstandene und erhöhte Christus „das Haupt“ dieses Leibes ist und dass er durch seinen Geist diesen Leib lenkt und regiert. Schon bald nach Jesu Kreuzigung und Auferstehung festigt sich die Überzeugung, dass sich in diesem Menschen Gott selbst geoffenbart hat. Er ist Gottes Bild, ja er ist „Gott von Gott, Licht von Licht“, wie das Nizänische Glaubensbekenntnis formulieren wird. Im Auferstandenen und Erhöhten offenbart sich Gott selbst und gewinnt Menschen zur Anteilnahme am Leben des Auferstandenen und damit am göttlichen Leben, am ewigen Leben. Damit scheint die Rede vom Vorbild Jesus Christus ganz ins Abwegige gerückt zu sein. Wohl ist der vorösterliche Jesus in mancher Hinsicht vorbildgebend. Aber ist nicht der auferstandene und erhöhte Christus so wenig ein Vorbild, wie Gott als das Vorbild von Menschen angesehen werden könnte? Jesus Christus ist nicht ein Vorbild – er ist Gottes Bild. Doch ist die so formulierte Alternative die Lösung?

III. „Unbescheidene Vorbildtheologie“ der Bibel?

Im Jahre 2010 erschien ein Buch mit dem Titel: *Fehlbare Vorbilder in Bibel, Christentum und Kirchen. Von Engeln, Propheten und Heiligen bis zu Päpsten und Bischöfinnen*¹⁰. In diesem Buch spricht Helga Kuhlmann von einer „(u)bescheidene(n) Vorbildtheologie in Texten der Bibel“¹¹. Sie verweist auf biblische Texte, die, wie sie sagt, scheinbar

„in eklatanter Spannung (stehen) zu dem, was in der christlichen Dogmatik im Anschluss an die Erzählung vom sogenannten Sündenfall bis ins 21. Jahrhundert wiederholt als herausragende Bestimmung genuiner Sündigkeit tradiert wird: sein zu wollen wie Gott (Gen 3,5)“¹².

Es handelt sich um biblische Texte, die geradezu zum Streben auffordern, sein zu wollen wie Gott. Im Alten Testament heißt es: „Ihr sollt heilig sein, denn ich bin heilig“ (3 Mose 19,2). Und auch die Bergpredigt sagt: „Ihr sollt vollkommen sein, wie euer Vater im Himmel vollkommen ist“ (Mt 5,21). Paulus fordert die Korinther auf, ihm nachzuaahmen, wie er Christus nachahme, und der ganze neutestamentliche Kanon ist von einer Nachfolgeethik geprägt, die ohne ein ausgeprägtes Vorbilddenken nicht vorstellbar ist. Die Apostelgeschichte kann auffordern, Jesus im Leiden nachzufolgen. Die Sendung der Jüngerinnen und Jünger orientiert sich am Vorbild des Lebens Jesu.

Das Leben des auferstandenen Christus ist also ganz offensichtlich rückgebunden an Züge, in denen der irdische Jesus ein Vorbild war und ein Vorbild bleibt. Der Leib Christi wirkt durch viele Taten der Liebe und Vergebung und durch diakonisches Handeln, das sich im Zuge der Missionierung und Ausbreitung des Christentums ganz besonders in der Einrichtung von Krankenhäusern und Schulen erwiesen hatte. Können wir diese Dimensionen zusammenbringen ohne die Bindung an das irdische menschliche Leben zu verlieren? Der Auferstandene ist weit mehr als ein menschliches Vorbild. Er vermittelt nicht weniger als das Bild Gottes unter den Menschen. Er ist Träger der göttlichen Offenbarung, durch den sich Gott zu erkennen gibt. Und das entspricht – mit Helga Kuhlmann gesagt

¹⁰ Hg. Helga Kuhlmann in der Reihe: *Theology in the Public Square / Theologie in der Öffentlichkeit* Bd. 2, Münster: Lit 2010.

¹¹ AaO., 146ff.

¹² AaO., 147.

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– der „unbescheidenen Vorbildtheologie“ in den Texten des Alten und des Neuen Testaments.

Um hier Klarheit zu gewinnen, müssen wir zunächst den ungeheuren Spannungsbogen erkennen, in dem die Bibel vom Menschen spricht. Der Mensch ist einerseits zum Bild Gottes geschaffen. „Du hast ihn nur weniger gering gemacht als Gott selbst“, sagt der Psalter (8,6). Und doch müssen wir einsehen, dass wir endliche, vergängliche Menschen sind. „Aus Staub bist du gemacht, und zu Staub sollst du werden“ (Ijob 10,9; Ps 104,29 u.ö.). Der Mensch als Mann und Frau ist von Gott zum Bild Gottes ausersehen (Gen 1, 27). Die Menschen sollen die Welt regieren und ordnen, sie sollen die konfliktträchtige Schöpfung im Sinne der göttlichen Liebe und der göttlichen Weisheit gestalten.

Doch die Menschen versagen vor dieser Aufgabe und sind auch durch menschliche Vorbilder nicht auf die Wege Gottes zurückzubringen. Deshalb wird ihnen in Jesus Christus nicht nur das Bild des wahren Menschen, sondern das wahre Bild Gottes vor Augen gestellt. Vor allem aber werden sie durch die Macht des Geistes Christi und durch die Auferstehung seines nachösterlichen Leibes hineingenommen in sein nachösterliches Leben. Die damit verbundene Macht und Herrlichkeit des Bildes Gottes verwandelt und erhebt die Menschen. Die Macht des göttlichen Geistes, die hier am Werk ist, überwindet die Diastase und die Spannung von Bild Gottes und Vorbild. Im Licht von Kreuz und Auferstehung wird diese Spannung aber noch einmal dramatisch beleuchtet.

Von der Erkenntnis her, dass der auferstandene und erhöhte Christus der Herr ist, der Kyrios, der Sohn Gottes, ja dass er „Gott von Gott und Licht von Licht“ ist, gewinnt auch die Botschaft vom Kreuz noch einmal eine tiefere Dimension. Die ungeheure Zusammenballung der Mächte dieser Welt gegen das so vorbildliche Wirken des vorösterlichen Jesus, die ungeheure Gewalt, die sich gegen ihn richtet und an ihm abarbeitet, wird als vergebliche Auseinandersetzung der Welt unter der Macht der Sünde mit dem gütigen Gott wahrgenommen. Im Licht der Auferstehung wird die siegreiche und zugleich behutsame Auseinandersetzung Gottes mit dieser geballten Macht der Welt offenbar. Der christliche Glaube gewinnt aus dieser Konzentration auf das Kreuz Jesu Christi die tröstende Erfahrung, dass Gott auch in noch so großer Not und Angst, in einem noch so tiefen Leiden, in noch so schweren und bedrohlichen Konflikten und selbst jenseits der Schwelle des Todes den Menschen nahe sein kann und ihnen die

Treue halten will. Gott will die Menschen aus der tiefsten Tiefe von Leid und Not heraus retten und hineinnehmen in sein ewiges Leben. Dies führt uns vom Vorbild und von Gottes Bild zur Dimension des lebensschaffenden Geistes, in dem sich Jesus Christus vergegenwärtigt bzw. der in ihm konkrete Gestalt gewinnt.

IV. Jesus Christus als „Lebendigmachender Geist“ und der Menschliche Geist

Im 15. Kapitel des ersten Briefes an die Korinther stellt Paulus fest: „Der erste Mensch Adam wurde zu einer lebendigen Seele, und der letzte Adam wurde zum Geist, der lebendig macht“ (1Kor 15,45). Jesus Christus als lebendig machender Geist – das ist schwer zu fassen, und zugleich müssen wir diese Erkenntnis einholen, wenn wir die „unbescheidene Vorbildtheologie“ der biblischen Texte verstehen wollen, wenn wir nachvollziehen wollen, warum Jesus Christus weit mehr ist als ein Vorbild und warum er doch in vielfältiger Weise eine Ausstrahlung als Vorbild besitzt – im direkten zeugnishaften Bezug auf ihn und über das Leben derjenigen, die ihm nachfolgen, die in vielfältiger Gestalt seine Zeuginnen und Zeugen werden.

Um dies einzuholen, müssen wir versuchen, uns die schwierige Rede vom Geist zu erschließen. Der Ausdruck „Geist“ wird in der deutschen Sprache häufig mit einer menschlichen Persönlichkeit verbunden („Goethe war ein großer Geist“). Er wird aber auch auf eine gespenstische Erscheinung bezogen („Er sah einen Geist und musste sich in Behandlung begeben“). Vor allem wird mit dem Wort „Geist“ eine Instanz, ein Medium, eine Kraft chiffriert, die eine Gruppe, eine Institution, eine Gesellschaft, eine Kultur, eine Epoche in ihrem Denken, Verhalten und Handeln verbindet und orientiert („Der Geist dieser Gemeinde“, „Der Geist unserer Schule“, „Der Geist einer Zeit“).

Um klare Erkenntnisse über den menschlichen und den göttlichen Geist zu gewinnen, ist es hilfreich, zunächst beim Menschen anzusetzen, bei unstrittigen geistigen Fähigkeiten. Schon die vermeintlich einfachen Fähigkeiten, äußere Gegenstände und Ereignisse in unserer Erinnerung und unserer Vorstellungskraft zu beherbergen, werden dem menschlichen Geist zugeschrieben. Die oft so genannte „Abbildung“ des Äußeren im

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Inneren des Menschen ist ungeheuer vielschichtig. Ein Gegenstand bzw. ein Komplex von Gegenständen, eine ganze Umgebung mit verschiedenen Stimmungen und Signalen kann in ein menschliches Erinnerungs- und Vorstellungsvermögen aufgenommen werden. Gegenständliche Sachverhalte, natürliche Ereignisse und Erlebniszusammenhänge werden „vergeistigt“. Sie existieren nun nicht nur in der physischen Realität, sondern auch in geistiger Gestalt im Erinnerungs- und Vorstellungsvermögen eines Menschen. Die geistigen Ereignisse können dann vielfältig kombiniert und variiert werden. Allerdings kann eine sogenannte „geistige Abbildung“ ganz unzureichend sein, unscharf, flüchtig, von Irritationen und Täuschungen begleitet und durchsetzt. Sie bleibt, so heißt es dann, mehr oder weniger weit hinter „der Wirklichkeit“ zurück. Die geistigen Kombinationen können, oft zu ihrem Schaden, den Wirklichkeitskontakt verlieren. Geistige Impressionen können darüber hinaus bedrängend, traumatisierend werden. Sie behindern dann das normale Leben und Erlebensvollzüge, sie beeinträchtigen die seelische Gesundheit.

Doch solche Grenzen und Grenzfälle des Geistigen sollten nicht dazu verleiten, den großen Reichtum, die kulturelle Solidität, die kreative Kraft und den vielfältigen Segen des Geistes und der geistigen Operationen zu unterschätzen. Menschen sind nicht nur in der Lage, Gegenstände, Gegenstandskomplexe und Geschehnisse in ihrem Gedächtnis und in ihrem Vorstellungsvermögen zu beherbergen. Sie sind auch in der Lage, eben diese Inhalte in die Latenz zu entlassen, sie zu speichern, zu bewahren – und wieder aufzurufen. In unendlicher Vielzahl und Vielfalt können diese Inhalte verändert und miteinander kombiniert werden. Menschen herrschen in ihrem Erinnerungs- und Vorstellungsvermögen über ein gewaltiges „geistiges Reich“. Die vergeistigten Wirklichkeiten dienen unserer individuellen und gemeinsamen Unterhaltung und Erbauung, unserer Einbildungs- und Überzeugungskraft, unserer gediegenen Erkenntnis und Orientierung. Eine ganze Welt, ja ein Ozean von geistigen Impressionen und Ereignissen findet in unserem Erinnerungs- und Vorstellungsvermögen Raum. Nicht nur optische, auch akustisch-sprachliche Eindrücke werden in Hülle und Fülle gespeichert, geordnet und in vielfältiger Weise mit der Welt der geistig sichtbaren Bilder und Bildfolgen assoziiert, verbunden und kontrastiert. Auch Gerüche, Töne und Tonfolgen, sogar ins Geistige übersetzte taktile Impressionen beleben und bereichern die geistige Welt. Mit ihnen verbinden sich nachhaltige Eindrücke und starke Emotionen.

Sowohl das reiche Zusammenspiel der Gegenstände und Elemente des Geistes als auch die gute Auswahl und Eingrenzung dieser Elemente ist überaus wichtig. Beides bedingt die Qualität, Kraft und Reichweite der geistigen Operationen. Religiöse Rituale, Literatur, bildende Kunst, Musik und heute vor allem die elektronischen Medien demonstrieren die Macht des Geistes auf verschiedenen Ebenen der Erlebnisverarbeitung und Vorstellungskraft. Abstrakte Symbolsysteme und Symbolbearbeitung in Mathematik, formaler Logik und analytischem Denken lassen Prinzipien, Regeln und Ordnungszusammenhänge in der natürlichen und geistigen Welt entdecken, die die Fülle geistiger Impressionen sinnvoll zu ordnen erlauben und erstaunliche Kräfte der Weltbeherrschung freisetzen.

Die geistigen Potentiale der Menschen ermöglichen es ihnen, hochkomplexe vergangene Situationen, ja ganze Weltzustände zu rekonstruieren und sich viele zukünftige Ereignisse und Ereigniszusammenhänge erwartungssicher vorzustellen und sie vorwegzunehmen. Sie erlauben es uns, auch über weite Distanzen hinweg zu kommunizieren und nicht nur Informationen, Gedanken und Erzählungen, sondern auch komplexe Auren und ansteckende Emotionen zu übertragen und miteinander zu teilen.

Wir können höchst facettenreiche Erinnerungen und Erwartungen koordinieren und damit die Orientierungs- und Organisationsmacht einer gemeinsamen geistigen Welt schaffen. Auf dieser Basis bilden Menschen dann nicht nur geistige, sondern auch geistig-materielle kulturelle Errungenschaften in Hülle und Fülle, mit denen sie ihre Kommunikations- und Gestaltungsprozesse intensivieren und beschleunigen. Die Maschinerien der Wissenschaft und der Bildung, der Forschung und der technologischen Innovationen, der politischen und kulturellen Organisation sind Früchte des menschlichen Geistes. Dennoch muss vor einer ungebrochenen Glorifizierung des Geistes dringend gewarnt werden, so sehr wir die Macht des menschlichen Geistes zu bewundern Anlass haben.

Nicht nur psychotische Grenzphänomene, sondern die vielfältigen Möglichkeiten, geistige Kommunikation bewusst und unbewusst zum Schaden von Menschen, Kultur und Natur einzusetzen, müssen bei der Betrachtung der Phänomene des Geistes in Rechnung gestellt werden. Nicht nur hilfreiche und gesunde gedankliche und geistige Impulse werden weltweit in Umlauf gebracht und massenhaft kommuniziert. Es werden ebenso global ganze Ströme trivialisierender und banalisierender Ideen, Denkformen und Emotionalisierungen geistig transportiert und kulturell

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eingeschliffen. Fanatisierende, verhärtende und zerstörerische Einstellungen und Ansichten werden mit der Macht des Geistes in Umlauf gebracht und gewinnen große soziale und politische Binde- und Ausstrahlungskraft. Brutale Geisteshaltungen greifen, oft unbemerkt, über lange Zeiträume hinweg verelendend und vernichtend um sich.¹³

Zahllose Erscheinungen des Geistes sind also – mit Paul Tillich gesagt – zweideutig und ambivalent. Zahllose Errungenschaften des Geistes wirken in höchst gefährlicher Weise verblendend auf Menschen, ganze Gesellschaften, Kulturen und Epochen ein, kreieren naive Weltbilder oder schwören auf aggressive Ideologien ein. Ein „böser Geist“ regiert dann die Gemüter und setzt die beschriebenen großen geistigen Kräfte zum Verderben menschlicher und geschöpflicher Lebensverhältnisse ein. Es ist also fahrlässig, die geistige Welt von vornherein mit den Assoziationen „gut“, „lebensförderlich“, „freiheitlich“ oder sogar „göttlich“ zu verbinden. Diese ernüchternde, ja erschreckende Erkenntnis nötigt dann zur „Unterscheidung der Geister“ und zur Orientierung am schöpferischen, lebensschaffenden guten Geist Gottes, der sich in Jesus Christus zu erkennen gibt. „Der zweite Adam wurde ein lebensschaffender Geist.“ – Was heißt das?

V. Die Vorbildschaffende Kraft Jesu und Seines Geistes

Ohne die vielfältigen vorbildgebenden Züge seines vorösterlichen Lebens preiszugeben, begegnet uns der auferstandene und erhöhte Christus nicht nur in der Gestalt eines personalen Gegenübers, sondern auch in der Form und Wirkmacht des Geistes, die die biblischen Überlieferungen mit der Figur der „Geistausgießung“ beschreiben. Schon im Alten Testament wird davon gesprochen, dass Gottes Geist „ausgegossen“ wird „auf Männer und Frauen, Alte und Junge, Knechte und Mägde“ (Joel 3). Der Bericht vom Pfingstereignis (Apg 2) nimmt diese Rede auf. Die Ausgießung des

¹³ Die Vergiftung ganzer Gesellschaften und Epochen durch Rassismus und Sexismus, durch imperialistische und kolonialistische Grundhaltungen und Gewaltanwendung ist uns heute unabweisbar und erschreckend deutlich. – Bis in die 60er Jahre des 20. Jahrhunderts konnte man in wissenschaftlichen Textbüchern und Nachschlagewerken lesen, Wasser und Luft seien „unendliche Ressourcen“ und also ökonomisch nicht in Rechnung zu stellen. Ökologischer Brutalismus wurde so geistig „in aller Unschuld“ global propagiert.

Geistes ist revolutionär. In patriarchalen Gesellschaften, in Gesellschaften, in denen nur die Männer und die Alten das Sagen und die Jungen zu gehorchen haben, in Sklavenhaltergesellschaften, wie alle antiken Gesellschaften es waren, ist schon die Ankündigung der Geistausgießung umwälzend. Denn auch den marginalisierten und ausgegrenzten Menschen und Menschengruppen wird nun zugesagt, von Gott Zeugnis geben zu können und einen Zugang zur Wahrheitserkenntnis und zur Gerechtigkeitskenntnis zu haben. Auch die schwachen und ausgegrenzten Menschen werden dazu befähigt, die tragenden Kräfte des Lebens zu erkennen und diese ihren Mitmenschen zu vermitteln, eben geistige und geistliche (und darüber materiale) Prozesse in Gang zu bringen, die die Welt im Sinne Gottes gestalten.

Jesus Christus, der lebensschaffende Geist, bietet diese göttliche Orientierungskraft. Der Reformator Johannes Calvin, dessen 500. Geburtstag 2009 in aller Welt gefeiert wurde, bietet in seiner großen Dogmatik eine äußerst wichtige doppelte Erkenntnis: Jesus Christus, auf dem der Geist Gottes, der Geist der Gerechtigkeit, Barmherzigkeit und Gotteserkenntnis, ruht, gießt diesen Geist auf „die Seinen“ aus.¹⁴ Nachdrücklich betont Calvin in seinem Hauptwerk *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*¹⁵: *Christus, der Messias, sei nicht mit Öl, sondern mit dem Heiligen Geist gesalbt worden, damit er „den Seinen“ Anteil an seiner Macht gebe:*

„Deshalb ist seine Königssalbung nicht mit Öl oder köstlicher Würze geschehen, sondern er heißt der Gesalbte Gottes, weil auf ihm der ‚Geist der Weisheit und des Verstandes, der Geist des Rates und der Stärke, der Geist der Erkenntnis und der Furcht des Herrn‘ ruht (Jes 11,2) ... Das ist ihm ja alles ... nicht für sich allein (privatim) gegeben worden, sondern er soll eben seine Fülle den Hungernden und Durstigen überfließend zuteil werden lassen.“¹⁶

Calvin betont damit die sogenannte „Geisttaufe“ durch den „vom Geist Gesalbten“, die für die frühe Kirche zur bahnbrechenden geistlichen

¹⁴ Vgl. James Dunn, „Towards the Spirit of Christ: The Emergence of the Distinctive Features of Christian Pneumatology“, in: M. Welker (Hg.), *The Work of the Spirit: Pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids 2006, 3-26.

¹⁵ *Institutio Christianae Religionis* im 15. Kapitel des 2. Buches = Unterricht in der christlichen Religion, nach der letzten Ausgabe übersetzt und bearbeitet von Otto Weber, Neukirchener: Neukirchen, 4. Aufl. 2008.

¹⁶ Unterricht, II, 15,5 vgl. II 15, 2.

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Erfahrung wurde und die die weltweite Bewegung der Pfingstkirchen und der charismatischen Erneuerungen im 20. Jahrhundert in das Zentrum ihrer Frömmigkeit stellt.¹⁷ Die zweite Schlüsselerkenntnis Calvins besagt: „Wollen wir wissen, *wozu* Christus vom Vater gesandt ward und *was* er uns gebracht hat, so müssen wir vornehmlich sein dreifaches *Amt*, das *prophetische, königliche* und *priesterliche*, betrachten.“¹⁸ Die Lehre vom „dreifachen Amt Christi“ (*munus triplex Christi*) wird heute in allen christlichen Konfessionen vertreten.

Jesus Christus ist, so sagen die biblischen Texte und die Theologien, die sie aufnehmen, der wahre König. Dieser König ist Bruder und Freund und ist zugleich ein Armer und Verachteter, und er führt eine Revolutionierung von Herrschaftsvorstellungen und Herrschaftsverhältnissen durch, die ganz im Dienst der Diakonie – des Dienstes am Mitmenschen –, der Liebe, der Annahme und der Vergebung steht und so in vielfältiger Weise vorbildgebend ausstrahlt – in die verschiedensten menschlichen Lebensverhältnisse hinein. Das leidenschaftliche Bemühen um freiheitliche demokratische Lebensverhältnisse, um Bildung für alle und Gesundheitsvorsorge aller Glieder einer Gesellschaft steht in dieser Nachfolge.

Jesus Christus steht aber auch in der Tradition der Prophetie. Durch seine Verkündigung und durch sein Leiden und Sterben macht er die bösen Geister und die Mächte kenntlich, die sich bewusst und unbewusst gegen Gottes rettende Gegenwart stellen. Er ist ein Vorbild für Wahrheit und Gerechtigkeit suchende Gemeinschaften, nicht nur in der Kirche, sondern auch in der Wissenschaft, im Recht und in der Zivilgesellschaft. Er ist ein Vorbild für den gewaltlosen prophetischen Widerstand gegen Unrecht und Unterdrückung. Schließlich ist er auch ein priesterliches Vorbild. Indem der Auferstandene die Sakramente Taufe und Abendmahl zur Feier des Herrschaftswechsels von den Mächten der Welt zur Macht Gottes einrichtet, zur immer neuen Erinnerung an sein Leben, Leiden und Sterben und zur Vorwegnahme seiner vollkommenen Offenbarung in Herrlichkeit, orientiert er auch den geistlichen Dienst – nicht nur für die amtierenden Pastorinnen und Pastoren, sondern für die gesamte Gemeinde Jesu Christi und potentiell weit über sie hinaus.

¹⁷ Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids 2006.

¹⁸ Institutio, aaO., 307.

In der Kraft des Geistes ist allen Menschen die Teilhabe an diesem sowohl menschlichen als auch göttlichen Wirken bestimmt. Eine ungeheure Polyphonie des vorbildgebenden Wirkens tritt hier vor unser geistiges Auge. Eine ungeheure Polyphonie des vorbildgebenden Wirkens können wir aber auch dankbar in den wirklichen Lebensverhältnissen wahrnehmen, die sich bewusst und unbewusst an dieser Person und an diesem Vorbild orientieren.

Jesus Christus ist also weit mehr als ein individuelles menschliches Vorbild. Ja, sein Bild wird, wenn wir ihn auf ein individuelles menschliches Vorbild reduzieren, zerstörerisch reduziert und verzerrt. Nach den biblischen Überlieferungen sind es die Dämonen, die unreinen Geister, die nach Jesu ersten spektakulären Heilungen ausposaunen: „Du bist der Sohn des Höchsten, du bist der Sohn Gottes!“ Jesus reagiert nach dem Zeugnis der Evangelien darauf, indem er ihnen zu schweigen gebietet. (Schon Mk 1,34 heißt es: „Er verbot den Dämonen zu reden. Denn sie wussten, wer er war.“) Bis zur Auferstehung soll seine Identität nicht kenntlich gemacht werden, damit er und sein Wirken nicht auf das Vorbild des großen Heilers, das Vorbild des großen Lehrers, das Vorbild in der Annahme der Mitmenschen oder das Vorbild im politischen Widerstand reduziert werde. In Kreuz und Auferstehung scheint Jesus dann dem Suchen nach einem Vorbild und einer entsprechenden Orientierung ganz entzogen zu sein. Erkennen wir im auferstandenen und erhöhten Jesus Christus die Gegenwart des lebendigmachender Geistes in Kontinuität und Diskontinuität zu seinem vorösterlichen Leben, so sehen wir, dass dieser lebendigmachender Geist sich in seinen Zeuginnen und Zeugen materialisiert und konkretisiert. Dann gewinnen wir das Vorbild Jesu – geradezu explosionsartig entfaltet – in der Polyphonie des Geistwirkens und in der Ausstrahlungskraft seiner Zeuginnen und Zeugen zurück.

Genauer: Als „lebendigmachender Geist“ ruft und stellt Jesus Christus zahllose Menschen in seine Nachfolge. Seine Zeuginnen und Zeugen werden zu einem in vielfältiger Weise vorbildgebenden Leben befähigt, mit sehr verschiedenen Gaben und Kräften, – auch im Zeugnis von Geduld und Leiden. Als auferstandener und erhöhter lebendigmachender Geist erhebt Jesus Christus in der Sicht des christlichen Glaubens zahllose Menschen zu Vorbildern in seiner Nachfolge, auch weit über die Kirchen hinaus. Auch deshalb ist er heute und für alle Zeiten weit mehr als ein menschliches Vorbild.

Teofan Mada¹

Nature of Theology in Ernst Troeltsch's Thought

Abstract

Troeltsch's theology is a relativisation of the dogmatic principle of knowledge that is unable to achieve the logic and the full coherence of the historical method. Instead, it proposes the compromise as a phenomenology of involvement. You may assimilate "the compromise involving" only in certain situations. The generalisation of this expression, its extension into areas that can not have any existential status or meaning - as it may be inside the Trinity - lead to corrupted arguments and to the "philosophical" and "etymological" foundation of reasons that are in fact ineffable. "The involvement theology" can not be expressed in terms of "compromise", even if "compromise" is understood in other ways than pejorative. In Theology here are already well-known terms to describe the harmony of the unlimited in the limited and to illustrate the "exception" of the deep, and existential Superrational in space of our bounded thinking and nature. The compromise is an agreement between two or more persons, "an understanding based on mutual concessions". In these conditions, you can not talk about "God's compromise" and to keep within the limits of piety and propriety. What is "the compromise" God made with the world? Troeltsch is not convinced of the Unique Christianity Truth, and this is the result of his a-dogmatic "conscience". Instead, he proposes a system of values that can be configured starting from a "creative synthesis" - that is a "compromise" between the values found in history and "the contemporary ideal of value". Emil Brunner calls Troeltsch's theological program "the dissolution of Protestant dogmatic". The types of compromises he approached are the steps of the secularisation and desacralisation process of the European society! E. Troeltsch announces a great "present cultural synthesis" of humanity that no longer comes: he waits for a revelation, which does not occur.

Keywords

Nature of Theology, Ernst Troeltsch's Thought, Dogmatic History, the Phenomenology of Compromise

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On Truth

In the history of Protestant thought, Ernst Troeltsch's theological system is known as "the compromise theology". It aims to study how the Absolute descended in the history reality and the way the infinite and unlimited harmonise with what is finished and mastered by insecurity. It also studies the harmonisation of Revelation with ancient philosophy - the result being the birth of Theology. Another object of study is the end of the quarrel between the historical forms of Protestantism, and between all Protestantism forms and the dogma. "Compromise is the phenomenology of involvement"². This statement belongs to one of the leading analysts of this "theology of compromise", who witnessed "the collapse of Troeltsch's theology" and tried to see what could be saved of its ruins.

Troeltsch understanding of the expression "God in Christ" as "the highest revelation of God in man" has the direct and necessary consequence of "giving up the traditional Christology, i.e. the Christological dogma of Nicaea and Chalcedon"³.

"The necessary compromise" to the interfaith reconciliation would then be the sacrifice of the traditional dogma: then it is required, on a moderate, but imperative tone, *to sacrifice the Truth*. Under these conditions, "the concept of supreme validity of Christianity" can not be saved and it is changed into a personal belief, unfounded on anything concrete. "The collapse of Troeltsch's theology" is precisely the inability to rationally establish "the ultimate validity of Christianity" in contrast with other religions. This is perfectly understandable: the supreme and absolute uniqueness of Christianity is based on the revealed truth of the divinity of Jesus Christ. Without this confession of faith, Christianity is one of the options of perfect humanism.

However, in Troeltsch's theology there is something to be found that is not restricted to this "negative lesson"⁴ of relativism collapse. Among these ruins, we can find the incentives of further research, and of the new possibilities for compromise: in Benjamin A. Reist's view, it could be "the

² Benjamin A. Reist, *Toward a Theology of Involvement, The Thought of Ernst Troeltsch*, SCM PRESS LTD, Bloomsbury Street London, 1966, p. 161.

³ Ernst Troeltsch, *Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu für den Glauben*, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1911, p. 1.

⁴ Benjamin A. Reist, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

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true legacy of compromise". From our point of view, Troeltsch's system of reasoning starts from forcing the term "compromise": you can assimilate "the compromise involving" only in certain situations. As to its origin and development, the very term of compromise belongs to the political and ideological area. The generalisation of this expression, and its extension into areas that can not have any existential status or meaning - as it may be inside the Trinity - lead to the falsification of the arguments and to the "philosophical" and "etymological" foundation of reasons that are in fact ineffable. "The theology of involvement" can not be expressed in terms of "compromise", even if "compromise" is understood in other ways than pejorative.

For example, in his study Troeltsch speaks of "God's compromise". Thus, he might understand "the involvement" of his existential Absolute in the history relativity, and the concessions that he is forced to make for meeting with our labile being. Yet, "the compromise" can not be identified either with involvement or with oikonomy or with condescension. In Theology here are already well-known terms to describe the harmony of the unlimited in the limited and to illustrate the "exception" of the deep, and existential Superrational in the space of our bounded thinking and nature. The compromise is an agreement between two or more persons, "an understanding based on mutual concessions". In these conditions, you can not talk about "God's compromise" and to keep within the limits of piety and propriety. *What is "the compromise" God made with the world?*

In God, there is *no* compromise, no concession: absolute love is sublime and unlimited, with no shadow of falling! Can we ever imagine, without falling into error, that Father would not make the concession to totally sacrifice the Son, so He would not die crucified, but only His hands would be pierced by nails? Can we imagine such a compromise in which Lord's death and resurrection to be replaced by a temporarily faint?...

God's love is absolute and without shadow of compromise. Who can understand the incomprehensible tearing of the Father Who sends the Son in the latter suffering, the bloody love of the Son, deeply imbued with death and the devastating Glory of the Holy Cross, blowing fires and wind up to the edges of the universe? What "compromise"? What "concession"?

There is no word for what God did for us! Therefore, certain things must be honest in silence and tears: the mind must be stopped to dig up the words. *Cease to seek the illusory light of etymology!* The pale light of

the literature barely manages to preserve a gleam, a glimpse of the glory of Lord's Transfiguration. Then why not try to capture it with our minds and hearts?

Christian existence is rooted and grounded on the mystery of the Trinity. Authentic Christian life begins, continues and completes as work and energy of the Holy Trinity. This is the mystery of freedom and love, of the communion between God and man and the union of the divine and human truth⁵. *There is no compromise in truth!* In this truth, "we were baptised: and we live, know and think through it; we exist and will be forever through it because our being and happy existence come from it"⁶.

The concept of the supreme validity of Christianity is non-existent. The concept that is penetrated by Troeltsch's theology words has only the "inner and personal conviction" that despite everything was confessed, Christianity remains "the religion par excellence". However, how many people came to discover that uncreated light of Tabor, in the privacy of their own soul, in order to join by their own discovery, the Fathers of Synodicon from the Palaeologan era? Eternal memory to those who confess that the light shone on the mountain at Lord's Transfiguration is unapproachable light, infinite light and incomprehensible outpouring of divine splendour. Eternal memory to those who confess that the light is ineffable glory, supreme glory of Godhead, primordial and timeless glory of the Son, kingdom of God, true beauty and worthy to be loved, around the divine and happy nature. That it is the natural glory of God and the Godhead of the Father and the Spirit-shining in begotten Son, as spoke our holy and God-bearer fathers Athanasius and Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom and John of Damascus, for which they glorify this most-godly light as uncreated"⁷.

Starting from piety and sincerity, from pureness of heart and humility and through God Grace we can reach the Truth and talk to the saints and we can reach the consciousness of Christianity supreme validity. But how many people relying only on the fragile purity of their hearts from the beginning (lack any dogmatic or canonical or cult "prejudice") and not on

⁵ cf. M.Καρδαμάκη, *Τό Άγιον Πνευμα και η Θεώσεις της ανθρωπίνης φύσεως*, Αθήνα, 1971, p. 51 și u.

⁶ Sf. Simeon Noul Teolog, *Θεολογικός Α'*, în: Sources Chrétiennes, No 122, p. 128.

⁷ *Synodikonul Ortodoxiei*, trad. de Ioan Ică Jr. în: Mitropolia Ardealului 1985, XXX, nr. 7-8, p. 440-457.

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the divine, existential and dogmatic truth, can go through so that uncreated glory of the Transfiguration of the Lord become an inner reality?

On the Dogmatic Principle

Hartmut Ruddies described Troeltsch's obsession of a lifetime:

"How can the Absolute found history without making it disappear? In addition, how can historicity, which is based on the Absolute, achieve autonomy - in the sense of historical spontaneity [...]? Finally, how could the synthesis of these two problems simultaneously take into account that knowledge of Absolute inside history is included itself in the transient character of the history process?"⁸

In pursuit of his life time obsession, Troeltsch used a historical method based on three principles:

1. The critical attitude principle (i.e. - only the probable judgements are valid; there is no absolute certainty here - unlike the dogmatic tradition).
2. The principle of analogy (between past and present events).
3. The correlation principle (of each historical individuals with the universality)⁹.

Troeltsch believes that "the dogmatic principle is unable to achieve the total logic and consistency of the historical method"¹⁰. However, it is said that he does not fall into the historical relativism temptation precisely because a theologian must understand history as being "the development of divine Reason"¹¹.

The "divine" reason that turns down the dogmatism rather seems to be *the Gnostic philosophers reason* (like Hegel, whom Troeltsch was compared to) than the inexpressible Godhead reason. How can we contemplate the divine reason in the history and its supernatural, prophetic

⁸ Hartmut Ruddies, *La vérité au courant de l'histoire. Réflexions sur la philosophie de l'histoire de Ernst Troeltsch*, p. 30.

⁹ Geneviève Médeville, *L'Absolu au coeur de l'histoire, La notion de compromis chez Ernst Troeltsch*, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris 1998, p. 55; see: Ernst Troeltsch, *Über historische dogmatische Methode in der Theologie*, Gesammelte Schriften, vol. II: *Zur religiösen Lage, Religionsphilosophie und Ethik*, 1913.

¹⁰ Geneviève Médeville, *op.cit.*, p. 59.

¹¹ Ernst Troeltsch, *Über historische dogmatische Methode in der Theologie*, p. 747.

reasons, when - by rejecting dogma - we reject precisely the charisma of prophecy? St. John of Damascus, the dogmatist of the Orthodox Church par excellence, considers disbelief to be the lack of communication with the Universal Church tradition. This point of view is natural, and not "rationalist". In the prologue of his trilogy, Πηγή γνώσεως¹² (Source of Knowledge), and in the second chapter of the Dialectics¹³ - the first part of the trilogy, there is no way he expressed his own opinions. Of course, Troeltsch is not inside and in the spirit of this agreement. Nevertheless, he wants to solve the problem of "the Christian essence" by a historiologic radicalism. This is not an absolute novelty, but it consists of the exclusion of the dogmatic principle: this constitutes the beginning of any sect! Once he excluded the dogmatic principle of knowledge, there come three principles:

1. Do not think "the development of Christianity - from the early church through medieval Catholicism to Protestantism - as a necessary theological development"¹⁴. By this, he takes revenge against the offensive Catholicism and removes it from the apodictic space (of historical necessity), and from the assertory area (by refusing to consider it anymore). Thus he motivates we might fall back into the old dogmatic and ecclesiastical method¹⁵. To note: *dogma fell, and now history too*. We remain within the pure space of virtually, refusing to consider the potential that already turned into reality.

2. To discern the emerging place of the Christianity essence¹⁶ according to this "gnosiological" principle; Jesus' gospel is different from Paul's gospel, which is other than that the theology of the Fathers! Like Harnack,

¹² Sf. Ioan Damaschinul, Εκδόσεις ακριβής ορθοδόξου πίστεως, Θεσσαλονίκη 1994, p. 14.

¹³ Idem, Προοίμιον, PG 94, 525 A și 533 A.

¹⁴ Ernst Troeltsch, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

¹⁵ Western theology, with its historical-critical method, made a total effort to free itself from Church dogma. A hard battle was fought for such a "release" - Befreiungskampf we dogma, as the characteristic A. Schweitzer (Geschichte der Leben-Jesu Forschung, Tübingen, 1951, p. 4). The question was: against which dogmas is this fight? Of course, not dogma of Eastern Church, but about the scholastic prototypes of "the universals" of the Western theology and Protestant principle on literary inspiration of Scripture texts. Consequently, their conclusions on "adogmatic" and "dogmatic" Christianity, are wrong in their own incipient goal.

¹⁶ Ernst Troeltsch, *op. cit.*, p. 408-428.

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Troeltsch believes that the Revelation is only at origin, where the gospel message can be reached in "its freshness and purity". By default, this principle implies that the cultural environment might fundamentally alter the Revelation message to such an extent as to make it unrecognisable!

3. To highlight the future - whose perspective is necessary to define the essence of Christianity. In this sense, the historian becomes a kind of "futurist", an "activist of the possible" or a "configurator".

The doctrine of configuration ("Gestaltung") studies the creative act of combining the objective (universally valid) with the subjective (history conditioned). The Essence of the Absolute "Absolutheit" - requires understanding "the problem of the relationship between history and normative thinking"¹⁷.

Methodological Premises

The methodological premises of the Troeltschian system are as following:

1. Troeltsch's ambition is to be a "scientific" theologian whose method is based on historical analogy and the correlation of critical principles:

This means any dogmatic "bias" is removed from the beginning, except for the infallibility of the scientific reason dogma.

2. The "historical science" method can not support "the old naive dogmatic statements on the absolute and unique character of Christianity".

3. A "modern theology" must take into account the results of historical method, knowing that "Christianity is a religion with the same entitlement as others"¹⁸.

Troeltsch is not convinced of Christianity unique truth and this is the result of *his non-dogmatic "conscience"*. For Ernest Troeltsch mysticism became a mere "sociological category"¹⁹. It contains the belief in the divine presence and in the supernatural power that manifests in all aspects of our world; establishing an inner relationship with God; Christ divine presence felt by mystics. For Troeltsch all these are not the original phenomenon of religion anymore, but they are "dissolution forms of the concrete

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 28-433.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 446-447.

¹⁹ Cf. *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. I: *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen*, 1912.

religion"²⁰. This means that we are witnessing the composition of "God's absence theology". How else to understand these "scientific" premises - crowned with the conclusion: (4) Christianity can be considered "the highest religion" only if we appeal to "the metaphysic of God's idea"[?]²¹

As a philosopher, Troeltsch has two idealistic assumptions:

- There should be an ultimate goal or a value that is universally valid and should be carried out as such;

- The "Knowing subject" is able to synthesise a priori the current historical values in a value system²².

This is an attempt to capture the moral standards by developing a value system based on historical reality. Such a value system can be configured from a "creative synthesis" - a "compromise" between the values found in history and "contemporary ideal of value". The recourse to the values developed throughout history establishes a critique that keeps us away from the absolutisation of our own values²³. Emil Brunner calls Troeltsch's theological program "the dissolution of Protestant dogmatic"²⁴.

Breaking down the old spiritual scale of values would not be possible without a new concept: Troeltsch introduces the concept of "progressive revelation"²⁵. This concept *dethroned* the perennial gospel truths and replaced them with "the historical, ecclesiastical tradition and the religious feeling of the modern world" - that is "the progressive revelation" of rightfulness equal to that of the beginning. Troeltsch builds up his theology

²⁰ Geneviève Médeville, *op.cit.*, p. 82-83.

²¹ Ernst Troeltsch, *Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori*, GS II, p. 784.

²² Idem, *Moderne Geschichtsphilosophie*, GS, p. 708 și u.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 712.

²⁴ Emil Brunner, *Die christliche Lehre von Gott*. Dogmatik 1, Zürich, 1946. Joachim Wach referred at this dissolution of dogmatic into a religious science, in *Types of Religious Experience, Christian and non-Christian*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 5; HR Makintosh suggested that Troeltsch never exceeded, "the foundations of a possible dogmatic system" because "a dogmatic in the history of religions" can only be problematic" („Does the Historical Study of Religious Yield a Dogmatic Theology?", *American Journal of Theology*, 13 oct. 1909, p. 507. We also remind Hermann Diem's critics in *Teologie als Kirchliche Wissenschaft*, vol. 2: *Dogmatik ihr weg zwischen Historismus und Existentialismus*, München, C. Kaiser, 1960, p. 3; Martin Honecker, *Kirche als Gestalt und Ereignis*, München, C. Kaiser, 1963, p. 31-55.

²⁵ Ernst Troeltsch, *Glaubenslehre Nach Heidelberger Vortresungen aus den Jahren 1911-1912*, 2 ed, 1981, p. 40.

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from "the present awareness of religious community". God 's Revelation was replaced by *man's "revelation"*. The purpose of this thinking is "to establish the normative identity of the Christian faith"²⁶.

Dogmatic History

Troeltsch assiduously and unconsciously pursued to find this way a definition of Christian Ethics in order to allow the articulation of universal validity and the historical conditioning. This is already extremely easy to do - because God being excluded from this game of mind, everything is reduced to the balance of ancient philosophy between universal and individual. "The universals bickering" is present again - but in another dress.

Not to have any doubt that God was banished back, we are strongly indicate something that has already become obsessive. Chalcedon is not normative in orientation towards practical life. The Chalcedonian text is "inadequate for the modern world"²⁷. For Orthodoxy, the dogma of Chalcedon "saved" Christian life from the ethics and from the absolutely legalist spirit.

The mystery of the relationship between creative and uncreative and the living experience of tradition and reason measures opened analytically and mainly "negatively" and the right faith forearmed this way²⁸. Therefore, the symbol of the above council is invaluable. At one point Troeltsch said that "It is impossible to look only to this person (Jesus) as the centre of the whole history of the entire humanity"²⁹. Is it so? Is it impossible? Do we not have any chance, any escape? Do we not have at least one hope? Does this "philosopher of virtually history" not allow us soar to the possible? How can you say that is impossible, if I believe, and I am sure, hand on heart, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God is the eternal centre of the world and that "all through Him and for Him were made"?

Ernest Troeltsch is therefore no philosopher: he is an inspired man. In his voice, we can recognise the demon that boundlessly desires to dethrone

²⁶ Idem, *Die Christliche Weltanschauung und ihre Gegenströmungen*, GS II, p. 227-228.

²⁷ Idem, *Judentum und Christliche Antike, Die alte Kirche*, GS IV, p. 91; *Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu für den Glauben*, p. 162; *Logos und Mythos in Theologie und Religionphilosophie*, GS II, p. 817.

²⁸ N.A.Ματσούκα, *Δογματική και Συμβολική Θεολογία*, Θεσσαλονίκη, 1994, Β, p. 309.

²⁹ Ernst Troeltsch, *Über die Möglichkeit eines freien Christentums*, p. 337.

Christ from the centre of the universal history of our world and put himself in His place. His "scientific" arguments are only "Jesuit arts of Protestantism" by which "the old evil" seeks to "compromise" God Himself. Here is already the "abomination of desolation" in the holy place of God from the soul. He speaks to man about "God's compromise," using improper terms where he should be quiet, and keeping in silence on essential things and truths when he should speak ...

"Compromise is the essence of history,"³⁰ says Troeltsch. Then what can we say about the martyrs and theologians who shed their blood for the Truth? On the other hand, does history belong only to those who know how to compromise? Is history still history outside our supernatural lives - filled with the eternal divine grace of Christ alive? Can history be violently detached from the divine reasons of the Logos that make it understandable and bearable?

In Troeltsch's conception, "compromise" is "the phenomenology of Christian commitment in history". In the view of Christianity engagement in the history, the compromise would be just "the phenomenology" of this adventure³¹. Why we can not call involvement (just) "involvement" and commitment - "commitment", but we have to call it "compromise". Unless we want to bring compromise up to God.

5. The Phenomenology of Compromise

The Troeltschian research program starts with the study of compromise between reason and revelation. The author gives up "naivety" in understanding the absolute character of Christianity as foundation of a theological discourse. The compromise lies in a dogmatic construction: in this sense, theology is Christians' compromise with ancient philosophy. Here are several hypostases of compromise:

"The compromise of the two powers": the meeting between the early Christian and the Roman civilisation. This compromise is described as the basis of Christian consolidation. Preaching the Gospel by Christ is

³⁰ Idem, „Politics, Patriotism and Religion”, în *Christian Thought: It's History and Application*, 1923 (red. 1979), p. 166; *Der Historismus und seine Überwindung*, 1924 (red. 1979), p. 105.

³¹ Benjamin Reist, *op.cit.*, p. 161.

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not sufficient to understand Christianity as a religion. The Late Antiquity Christianity is not just the image and "the pure preaching of Gospel" in the Hellenic world. This means that Christian depends on the cultural environment. We are witnessing the encounter of cultural logic (of philosophers) and the Christian legacy. The Logos Christology is described as "a compromise with ancient philosophy" (and here the author thinks like a perfect Aryan!). In addition, there is the compromise of "natural law" and "new law in Christ" (supernatural and therefore impracticable!). There is a tension between the Gospel morality and the (pagan) moral itself from the bosom of modernity³².

2. The compromise as a joint of the double polarity of ethical order between: the subjective side (the formal morality of the consciousness and the logic of autonomous finalities) and objective side of material things (the material morality of cultural values and the theological ethics of the Kingdom of God).

3. The compromise as embodiment of Christian ideas inside the cultural ethos³³. In this perspective, the ethos (the system of values and behaviours) is constantly changing in the society under the influence of Christian standards. Christian Ethics (non-political in its essence) can influence the completion of legal systems of the social and political ethics.

We have to make a parenthesis to this so-called compromise between Christianity (Revelation) and ancient philosophy. A. Harnack, an "exceptional" historical-critical researcher thinks Christianity is an exception in the religions from the history point of view³⁴. He continues in Troeltsch's "spirit" that "the Church appears not as a Christian creation with Greek clothing, but as a Greek creation with Christian clothing"³⁵.

N. Matsouka analysed the Orthodoxy sources and clearly proved how many apprehensions are Greek in the Orthodox faith content, and how

³² Ernst Troeltsch, „Grund probleme der Ethik. Erörtert aus Analab von Hermanns Ethnik“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, ian.-febr. 1902, p. 44-94; martie-aprilie 1902, p. 125-178.

³³ In 1904, Troeltsch offers a demonstration of ethical compromise in the political mechanism in his work *Politische Ethnik und Christentum* (cf. F.W. Graf et H. Ruddies (ed), *Ernst Troeltsch Bibliographie*, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1982, p. 67 și 220.

³⁴ A. Harnack, *Das wesen des Christentumus*, Leipzig, 1906, p. 112.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

many depend on the history of the New Testament³⁶. Harnack, Sohm and other members of their school believe that dogma and later church organisation are not related to the actual contents of church life³⁷. Perhaps this is true for the a-dogmatism of those who need to argue their theological phantasmagoria. However, in accordance to the double methodology of the Fathers (the Patristic method was first of all charismatic knowledge and only then theoretical-theological approach), and taking into account the ontological and liturgical aspect of the charismatic ecclesial communion, such conclusions are groundless even historically speaking.

"The great Byzantine theology comes to transfigure the Hellenistic vocabulary in the light of Revelation. Against the regular "revival" of ancient rationalism and neoplatonian gnosis, the Church always stresses clearly the human unity. It also emphasises a conception of knowledge as a meeting and a personal participation in the Holy Spirit of the humanity transfigured by Christ, which is communicated to us through the Sacraments"³⁸. We talk about the metamorphosis of ontology. "The Greek Fathers, especially the Cappadocian and St. Dionysius, transfigured the Greek ontology vocabulary introduced in Orthodox thought, in the light of Revelation of Nicaea. However, ontology is thus used "allegorically" (J. Danielou) to express the central mystery of Christian revelation: the person mystery".

Let us go on. The compromise between religion and society has two fundamental aspects in Troeltsch's work:

Compromise as a condition of survival of the Christian. This compromise requires abandoning the "old radical doctrine" of the Church - all that is natural and exterior to Christian is corrupted by sin - and seeking an alliance between "autonomous ethical values" of the contemporary world and "the highest values of religion"³⁹. This project to compromise with the

³⁶ N.A.Ματσούκα, *Γένεσις και ουσία του ορθόδοξου δόγματος*, Θεσσαλονίκη, 1969, p. 29-106.

³⁷ A. Harnack, *op.cit.*, p. 68.

³⁸ Olivier Clément, *Biserica Ortodoxă*, Universitas 2000, p. 15.

³⁹ In his essay of 1906: Protestant Christianity and the Church in Modernity (*Protestantisches und Kirche in der Neuzit*, ed, 1906, pp. 253-458; ed. 1909, p. 431-755) and in *The Importance of Protestantism in the Emergence of the Modern World* (*Die Bedeutung der Protestantismus modernen der Welt für die Entstehung*) conference held in German historians Assembly in April 21, 1906., Troeltsch massively uses the term compromise.

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society was continued as a belief by some thinkers, and made them preach a secular, decentralised gospel to a secular nation.

2. Compromise as a means of social productivity of Christian ideas. There are three fundamental sociological types: church, sect, and mystics. According to Troeltsch the Church is a religious organisation that recognises the force of secular society and tries to influence it through compromise, opposition and commitment in order to win it for religion. The sect is a kind of organisation that thinks the world is completely guilty and incapable of salvation, and this imperatively requires detachment from the world.

According to the sectarian concept, man can be saved only by detaching the world (passive or aggressive). Finally, mystics are a sociological category against laxism (as Troeltsch thinks) that takes Christ as model creating a liaison within the inner kingdom of the soul. In all these cases, we are witnessing the compromise between the ideal and the social context⁴⁰.

The compromise between universal and particular seems to be a transmigration of the soul and pagan thinking to the heart of Christianity⁴¹. The compromise lies in "the cultural synthesis" of conscience morality and in the ethics of the cultural values and it recognises the individual freedom to achieve "unity in heterogeneous" or in diversity (Aristotelian idea). As Troeltsch thinks, the compromise between universal and particular has three fundamental aspects:

1. Compromise as a fate of free will. This compromise between reason and nature results in an axiological creation and the responsibility of inventing new moral values. Troeltsch tends to make any genuine moral to be relative.

2. Compromise as an integrator principle of values in a pluralistic world (in Troeltsch's conception, it seems that we live in a true axiological anarchy!).

3. Compromise as a feature of the history. Since the Renaissance, European policy became progressively autonomous from religious ideals⁴².

⁴⁰ *Protestantisches und Kirche in der Neuzeit*, 1906, p. 634.

⁴¹ The last uses of the term "compromise" are found in Troeltsch's English conference held in March 1923 (*Christian Thought: Its History and Application*) in particular that in London on Ethics and History Philosophy and on Politics of Patriotism and Religion.

⁴² Ernst Troeltsch, *Politics, Patriotism, Religion*, C.T., pp. 143-150; H.U., p. 90-95.

The international compromise means giving up to the national absolutism inherited from our ancestors. Thus we could remove this fatal confusion between politics and patriotism. Troeltsch asserts all these, as they are some conquests of the spirit and not *the steps of a process of paganisation and de-sacralisation of the European society!*

6. The Historical Perspectives of the Troeltschian System

Compromise is a concept that serves the dialectical articulation of historical thinking within the Absolute. As Troeltsch asserts the prospects of contemplating the compromise are as following:

1. The ethical perspective - the ethical pluralism of rules, the argumentation systems and the division of moral conscience between the universal demands (principles) and relative cultural values⁴³.

2. The heuristic perspective: the creative engagement of Christianity in history. This view allows the evaluation of the compromise authenticity - thanks to sociological investigation. The sociological and ecclesiological concept of the Church institution makes it possible to verify how the absolute character of the moral goal of the Kingdom of God works in the history. Troeltsch asserts that compromise is authentic only when the ideal (or absolute) can become a real force for setting up and establishing in the core of historical relativity.

3. Future-oriented practice perspective refers to the establishment of meaning and values in terms of European cultural heritage atomisation and on the conditions of the polytheism of values.

It is not only about *axiological polytheism*, but simply polytheism! The mixture of religions - including Christianity that no longer holds the privileged position for Troeltsch the "Christian" - is called with pump "the cultural synthesis of the present". This is a synthesis of empty words because it is unlikely that a Jew, a Muslim or an adherent of Brahman would accept their beliefs to be so mutilated and perverted as Troeltsch "rationally" and systematically did with the Christianity.

Next, Ernest Troeltsch writes on where the concept of compromise can be found and on ethical responsibility field. In a paraphrase, he describes Kant's requirement from "Critique of Practical Reason". According to Tro-

⁴³ Geneviève Médevielle, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

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eltsch's "Kantian" concept, we would have in the following dilemma: we have to choose between universal, which is formal and empty, like an abstract concept, or let us take the current of cultural and historical relativism of private morals⁴⁴. As one already noted, the Troeltschian "formalism" is far from the Kantian moral. Kant's categorical imperative is: "Act in such a way as the maximum of our will (or actual decision) would be at the same time, the principle of universal legislation." This categorical imperative concerns the universal harmony of all individual decisions and is a law of universal consciousness that all people can subscribe to, regardless of their religion or denomination, under the moral law existentially planted in their consciences!

The view centre of his entire system of thought is the concept of personality. According to Trutz Rendtorff formula, the personality is "the vicar of transcendent in immanence"⁴⁵ or locum tenens of the world beyond in this the world. However, individual freedom is to Troeltsch "the empirical vicar of the religious idea of personality". It is understood that personality, as conceived here, is more a desire, a longing of the individual, rather than an actual presence.

In Troeltsch's view, personality is not a fact of life, but a vocation called transcendence. The prime focus of his entire system and what should have given this system existential and metaphysical grounds was precisely the concept of person and personality. If we want to draw up a theological compromise system we must start thinking of a simple structure - even determined by etymology (this is Heidegger's philosophy for whom the words of the old, ancient world still kept something of the now lost spirit of boundlessness and dignity).

Compromise is a settlement and an agreement based on the promise of mutual concessions between persons previously in conflict. So first there is a conflict or a clash initiated by interests, then there are the reflections of each party on necessary concessions to restore peace, and the promise of the concession fulfilment. The compromise problem was as following: *how does it change the personality of each party originally in conflict, after making concessions?*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 277-278.

⁴⁵ Trutz Rendtorff, „Religion et histoire”, in P. Gisel (ed), *Histoire et théologie chez Ernst Troeltsch*, p. 181.

The personality creation and the change of a person through compromise were actually the subject that Troeltsch had to study in a theological compromise system! He had to discover how concession creates behavioural changes and personality (concession by making it "brighter" or darker, "perfect" or hardened). Otherwise, Troeltsch scented well that person and personality is the existential heart of any theological system of compromise. He said: "Fight for auto-create the personality reveals the very essence of morality"⁴⁶. Nevertheless, the end of this struggle for the personality emancipation would lead to a disaster that is the denial of human dignity. The fight for auto-creation would reveal the personality characteristics to the mind: unity, centrality, harmony, consistency, and purity of intention. Troeltsch's moral is

"without challenging the autonomy of moral consciousness he finds its purpose in the absolute of personality - which is a real mystery in the making"⁴⁷.

Ernest Troeltsch reveals the coherence of a lifestyle. Unfortunately, - in order to become "a unified and morally intelligible whole"⁴⁸ - the emancipation of the individual and of the community personality (Kollektivpersonlichkeit) to the contingent data and the natural instincts, is just a Troeltsch's goal that can not be achieved.

Starting from the idea of personality, Troeltsch finds the hermeneutic context able to "reconnect" the history to the absolute and the contemporary culture to the Religion⁴⁹. Our responsibility has as main objective "the composition of cultural synthesis and the establishment of a consensus hoping to find unity by creating the personality as a final fundamental value of assessment"⁵⁰.

Finally, Ernest Troeltsch puts the question of a "common spirit" necessity (Gemeingeist). Without the Holy Spirit, the Western individualities could still join a true community of the ethos. He says that Europeans might feed on the myth that the Middle Ages built a harmonious and conflictless synthesis between its Judeo-Christian-Geek-Roman sources⁵¹.

⁴⁶ Ernst Troeltsch, *The Morality of Personality and of the Conscience*, CT, p. 62; H.U., p. 17.

⁴⁷ Geneviève Médevielle, *op. cit.*, p. 283-284.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

⁵⁰ Cf. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Ethics of Cultural Values*, CT, p. 97; H.U., p. 40.

⁵¹ Idem, *The Commun Spirit*, CT 115-116; H.U., p. 51 și u.

Nature of Theology in Ernst Troeltsch's Thought...

There is an active complementary or rather a state of permanent confrontation between Hellenistic, Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage. Therefore, Troeltsch believes he is entitled to argue that currently, the creation of common spirit should not be conceived in the monistic model: to modernity it is impossible to dream anymore about a monotheistic integration⁵². Even the term "Church" is plurally decline and the Reform became pluralistic. The only way to create a common spirit (Gemeingeist) would be to operate a responsible mediation between the value systems, and the concentric and secant spheres in which we simultaneously live"⁵³.

Trans-historicity of autocreating the personality may be found only inside history. Therefore, "we must have the courage to profess our belonging to the community of historical destiny (Gesamtschicksal) - which is ours because we can not deny our historical roots"⁵⁴.

The construction of a moral value system - based on this responsible mediation according to the plural melange - "will start in silence, in the inner forum of personalities"⁵⁵.

Troeltsch proposes the basic model of Pelagianist auto-creation of personality: the present American myth that states: Behold, "*a self-made man!*" Troeltsch's "self-made man" is not the responsible partner of a free society but *a kind of metaphysical moral genius - a saint without God that fell into temptation of auto-becoming God*. It is normal that the self-construction of the person starts and expends quietly "in the internal forum of personality" as the metaphysical moral genius needs discretion and comfort to grow up. In addition, when it becomes known, there is no perfection in it! Here is the troeltschian history creative genius: "Giving up the old dogmatic and authoritarian compromises, the churches as historical institutions, must embody a different compromise. It must correspond to the new situations of modernity and should allow «the free religion of personality» "⁵⁶. Troeltsch said this is the only price to be paid that Churches become a cultural factor ready to encourage the defending of human dignity and freedom!

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 117 și u.

⁵³ Geneviè Médevielle, *op.cit.*, p. 306.

⁵⁴ Ernst Troeltsch, *Der Aufbau der europäischen Kulturgeschichte, Der Historismus und seine probleme*, GS III, p. 709-710.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Geneviè Médevielle, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

This is the price: *replacing Jesus Christ, the Son of God religion with "the free religion of personality"!* The only thing left from the revealed and unique faith in the Saviour Christ is "the infinite respect for the person"⁵⁷. This is the only relic left in the Western memory of imprinting the eternal universals in the world of contingency and temporal impermanence. One more time Troeltsch proposes "the fidelity to destiny," the only able to give us "the common spirit" of modernity. "History can not overcome within itself and it knows no other salvation [Erlösung] than the hidden one in the form of confident expectations of the other world or the glorious transfiguration of partial salvation. Kingdom of God and Nirvana are out of any history. In history there are only relative overruns, and they vary in their power and depth, depending on the time and circumstances"⁵⁸.

Ernest Troeltsch's intuition was correct: a theological system of compromise must be based on and have as central point, the problem of the person and the creation of the personality. It had to study how genuine compromise transforms a person's behaviour and the ethos (and not economy, involvement and condescension of God, Who is absolute love and transcends any compromise!). "Cultural synthesis" that Troeltsch announced no longer occurs. And this happened despite the enormous price that was paid: giving up at Nicaea and Chalcedon (and their mystical consequences!) led to the replacement of the living Christ and the Logos of God Church with the "church" of free religion of personality (free of any common sense!). Ernest Troeltsch announces a major "cultural synthesis" of humanity that no longer comes: he expects a revelation, which does not occur anymore.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

⁵⁸ Ernst Troeltsch, *The Commun Spirit*, CT, p. 129, H.U., p. 16.

Theodoros Alexopoulos¹

The Filioque-controversy in the 13th Century. A Collection of major Church Fathers' citations advanced by the Byzantine Filioque-supporters (John Beccos and Konstantine Melitiniotes) in order to fortify their theological position. Conceptual consistency with Writers of the Latin West

Abstract

The present study aimed to indicate the major textual sources on the basis of which the Byzantine Filioque-supporters had tried to fortify their arguments and strengthen their theological position. We also wanted to provide the reader with genuine source-material so that he could come alone, after thorough investigation, to safe conclusions concerning the delicate issue of the procession of the Holy Spirit from Father alone or also through the Son.

Keywords

Dogmatic Theology, Filioque, Holy Fathers, Holy Spirit

Thirteenth Century Theologians' main attempt was to show that the Filioque is deeply rooted in the orthodox Patristic Tradition by advancing selected passages from famous Church Fathers. Their firm conviction was the following: Filioque should be explained in an «orthodox» way and in full divergence from the mainstream of Photius' theological line of rea-

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soning. The present study collects and presents the major Church Fathers' citations put forward from the Byzantine Latin-minded theologians for the readers' facility and as basic source-material for a further investigation of the matter.

1) Texts proving a mediating function (Idea of Mediation-Μεσιτεία) of the Son to the procession of the Holy Spirit without damaging the Monarchy of the Father. If the Son does not essentially mediate in the procession of the Spirit, Son and Spirit cannot be distinguished from each other²:

a) J. Damascenus (*De Fide Orthodoxa* I 12b, II, 36, 44-45 Kotter): **προβολεύς γὰρ ὁ Πατὴρ διὰ Λόγου τοῦ ἐκφαντορικοῦ Πνεύματος³** (The Father is through the Son projector of the manifesting Spirit). In the view of J. Beccos and K. Melitiniotes the term projector is equivalent to the term cause. Thus the Father is, perforce, the Spirits' cause and source of his existence.

b) Greg. Nyssenus: (*Ad Ablabium* GNO III/1, 56, 2-10 Mueller):

ὅτι τὸ ἀπαράλλακτον τῆς φύσεως ὁμολογοῦντες τὴν κατὰ τὸ αἷτιον καὶ αἰτιατὸν διαφορὰν οὐκ ἀρνούμεθα, ἐν ᾧ μόνῳ διακρίνεσθαι τὸ ἕτερον τοῦ ἑτέρου καταλαμβάνομεν, τῷ

² Cf. J. Beccos, *De processione Spiritus Sancti* 7, 3 PG 141, 217D: **τίς ποτε δύναται τρία πρόσωπα νοῆσαι ὑφαιστώτα, καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὰ κατὰ τὸ τῆς συναλοιφῆς ἀνώτερον καὶ συγχύσεως, καὶ μὴ νοῆσαι μεσιτείαν ἐν τοῖς τρισίν; Εἰ γὰρ μὴ ἔστι μέσον, οὐδὲ Τριάς· καὶ εἰ μὴ συναλοιφὴ τῇ Τριάδι παρεισφθαρείη, τὸ μέσον ἐν αὐτῇ πάντως ἐστίν!** (Who can ever perceive three in reality existing persons that are also conceived each one by itself and above any confusion and mingling and not perceive any (kind of) mediation within the three? If there is no middle, there is no Trinity; and if no confusion would steal into the hurt of the Trinity to destroy it, the middle exists in it in any case). See also K. Melitiniotes, *De processione Spiritus Sancti Or.* I, PG 141, 1084C: **Ἀνάγκη τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον εἶναι δι' υἱοῦ παρὰ τοῦ πατρός, ὡς ἂν τὸ συνημμένον ἢ Τριάς ἔχοι, καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἀδιάσπαστον, καὶ μὴ διαίρεσις ἐν ταύτῃ νοοῖτο ποσῶς, καὶ διέχεια. Πῶς γάρ, εἰ μὴ τοῦτο τῆς Τριάδος τὸ μοναδικὸν τηρηθήσεται;** (It is necessary that the Spirit comes from the Father through the Son so that the Trinity could possess the unity and the inseparability towards itself and no division could be perceived to a certain extent in it, and also any breach of its continuity. If this does not happen, how the unity of the Trinity will be maintained?).

³ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 53, PG 141, 124C-125A; G. Metochites, *Historia Dogmatica* II, 33 (Cozza-Luci, p. 200); See K. Melitiniotes, *ΛΟΓΟΙ ΑΝΤΙΠΡΗΤΙΚΟΙ ΔΥΟ*, ed. Markos A. Orphanos (Organismos Ekdos. Didaktikōn Biblion, Athens, 1986), f.100v, p. 169, 10-12.

τὸ μὲν αἴτιον πιστεύειν εἶναι τὸ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ αἰτίου· καὶ τοῦ
ἐξ αἰτίας ὄντος πάλιν ἄλλην διαφορὰν ἐννοοῦμεν· τὸ μὲν
γὰρ προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, τὸ δὲ διὰ τοῦ προσεχῶς
ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, ὥστε καὶ τὸ μονογενὲς ἀναμφίβολον ἐπὶ
τοῦ υἱοῦ μένειν καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα
μὴ ἀμφιβάλλειν, τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ μεσιτείας καὶ αὐτῷ τὸ
μονογενὲς φυλαττούσης καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς φυσικῆς πρὸς
τὸν πατέρα σχέσεως μὴ ἀπειρογούσης⁴

[Affirming the unchangeable character of the divine nature we do not deny the difference between that which is cause and that which is caused; and we can conceive that the one is distinguished from the other uniquely since we believe that the one is that which is cause and the other that which is derived from the cause. And in that which is originated from a cause we conceive yet another difference: one thing it is, in fact, to be immediately from the first, another to be through that which is immediately from the first. In this way being Only Begotten abides incontestably in the Son and there is no doubt that the Spirit is from the Father, since the mediation of the Son keeps in Him the being of the Only Begotten and does not exclude (at the same time) the Spirit from the natural relation to the Father].

c) Greg. Nyssenus: *Contra Eunomium* I 378 (GNO I, 138, 5-15 Jaeger):

**Πατὴρ μὲν ἀναρχος καὶ ἀγέννητος καὶ ἀεὶ Πατὴρ νοεῖται,
ἐξ αὐτοῦ δὲ κατὰ τὸ προσεχὲς ἀδιαστάτως ὁ μονογενὴς
υἱὸς τῷ πατρὶ συνεπινοεῖται, δι' αὐτοῦ δὲ καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ,
πρὶν τι κενόν τε καὶ ἀνυπόστατον διὰ μέσου παρεμπεσεῖν**

⁴ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 23, PG 141, 65C; *De processione spiritus sancti* 7, PG 141, 216C; K Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I*, f. 91 (141, 1-8 Orphanos). A sufficient according to my personal assessment solution to the problem offers Gregory Palamas in his: *Logos Apodeiktikos* Β' 54, ed. P. Chrestou/B. Bobrinsky (Thessalonike, 1988) Vol. I, 127, 30-128, 3. For further citations and a more thorough analysis of the matter see T. Alexopoulos, 'Die Berufung der Byzantinischen Filioquisten des 13ten Jahrhunderts auf Gregor von Nyssa zur Begründung des Filioque. Analyse eines Zitats aus *Ad Ablabium* (τὸ μὲν γὰρ προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, τὸ δὲ διὰ τοῦ προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου)' and G. Panagopoulos, 'Die Vermittlung des Sohnes beim Ewigen Ausgang des Hl. Geistes aus dem Vater nach Gregors von Nyssas *Ad Ablabium*' (GNO III/1, 55,21-56,10 Müller)', in V.H. Drecoll/M. Berghaus (ed.), *Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa*, 1 vol., Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 106 (Leiden, 2011), 609-621; 383-397.

νόημα, εὐθὺς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον συνημμένως καταλαμβάνεται, οὐχ ὑστερίζον κατὰ τὴν ὑπαρξιν μετὰ τὸν υἱόν, ὥστε ποτὲ τὸν μονογενῆ δίχα τοῦ πνεύματος νοηθῆναι, ἀλλ' ἐκ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν ὄλων, καὶ αὐτὸ τὴν αἰτίαν ἔχον τοῦ εἶναι, ὅθεν καὶ τὸ μονογενές ἐστι φῶς, διὰ δὲ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ φωτὸς ἐκλάμπαν, οὔτε διαστήματι, οὔτε φύσεως ἑτερότητι τοῦ πατρὸς ἢ τοῦ μονογενοῦς ἀποτέμνεται⁵

(The Father is perceived as without beginning and generation and for ever Father; from him also directly and without any dimension the Only Begotten Son is simultaneously conceived with the Father; through him and with him, before any empty non-existent concept can intervene, the Holy Spirit is also immediately apprehended in close connection, not falling short of the Son as far as existence is concerned, so that the Only Begotten might ever be thought of apart from the Spirit, but himself having the cause of his being in the God of the universe; hence he is the Only Begotten Light which shone through the True Light, cut off from the Father or the Only Begotten neither by interval nor by otherness of nature).

d) Cyrillus Alexandrinus: *Commentarii in Joannem* (I, 68, 13 Pusey):

Συνεῖναι δὲ τῷ υἱῷ τὸν πατέρα νοοῦμεν, διὰ τὸ ἀπαράλλακτον τῆς οὐσίας καὶ τὸ ἄκρως προσεχές τε καὶ ἄμεσον αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ φυσικῶς προελθόν⁶

(we perceive the Father as being in close connection with the Son because of the identity of nature and due to his direct and immediate relation to that which is came forth by nature through him).

2) Texts supporting the idea of transmission of the properties of the Father (natural properties) to the Son through generation:

a) Cyrillus Alexandrinus: *Thesaurus* 14, PG 75, 237C):

ὥσπερ δίδωσι τὸ φυτὸν τῷ ἐξ αὐτοῦ προελθόντι καρπῷ τὴν αὐτῷ κατὰ φύσιν προσοῦσαν ποιότητα φορεῖν, οὕτως ὁ υἱὸς εἰληφέναι παρὰ πατρὸς τὰ αὐτῷ προσόντα νοεῖται, πάντα ὧν ὅσα καὶ ὁ πατήρ, δίχα μόνον τοῦ εἶναι πατήρ⁷

⁵ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 2, PG 141, 636A; *Refutatio Photiani libri* 26, PG 141, 812A.

⁶ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 2, PG, 141, 636C.

⁷ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 10, PG 141, 700D; K Melitiniotes, *Antirr.* I, f. 124 (229, 12-17 Orphanos).

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(Thus, just as the plant gives the fruit that comes forth from it the quality that is proper to it according to its nature, in the same way the Son is perceived that he has received from the Father all the properties belonging to him, being himself everything such as the Father is, except of the property of Fatherhood).

b) Cyrilus Alex. *In Sactum Joannem* II ,6: See J Beccos Epigraphae 10, PG 141, 701A with reference to Cyril of Alex. [In Sanctum Joannem II, 6 (I 326 Pusey)]: **ἔχει γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς ἐκ πατρὸς ὡσπερ τὴν οὐσίαν οὕτω καὶ τὰ τῆς οὐσίας ἀγαθὰ** (Just as the Son has his essence from the Father, he has also the gifts of that essence).⁸

3) The Holy Spirit comes forth from the (essence of the) Son. Many Fathers say so:

a) Greg. Nyssenus, *De oratione Dominica* III (GNO VII/2, 43, 1-2 Callahan): **τὸ δὲ ἅγιον πνεῦμα καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς λέγεται, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ εἶναι προσμαρτυρεῖται** (The Holy Spirit is said also to be from the Father and is testified additionally that he comes from the Son).⁹

b) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Ep. 17 Ad Nestorium* (ACO I,1, 39):
Εἰ δὲ ἔστιν ἐν ὑποστάσει τὸ πνεῦμα ἰδικῆ, καὶ δὴ καὶ νοεῖται καθ' ἑαυτό, καθὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι καὶ οὐχ υἱός, ἀλλ' οὖν ἔστιν οὐκ ἀλλότριον αὐτοῦ. πνεῦμα γὰρ ἀληθείας

⁸ Compare with Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XV 17,29: *sed hoc quoque illi pater dedit, (non iam existenti et nondum habenti), sed quidquid unigenito verbo dedit gignendo dedit. Sic ergo cum genuit ut etiam de illo donum commune procederet et spiritus sanctus spiritus esset amborum.* Ibid. XV 26, 47 and XV 27, 48. This idea had an enormous influence on the Latin writers during the time of Photius, such as Ratramnus of Corbie. See *Contra Graecorum opposita* III 2 (PL 121, 229C): *et sicut accepit de Patre Filius nascendo substantiam, sic itidem a patre ut spiritum veritatis mitteret a se procedendo.* For P. Gemmeinhardt (*Die Filioque-kontroverse zwischen West- und Ostkirche im Frühmittelalter*, Berlin 2002, p. 281, note 397) seems to be unclear, if Photius were aware of this Latin idea. For T. Alexopoulos in the Study, *Der Ausgang des Thearchischen Geistes. Eine Untersuchung der Filioque-Frage anhand Photius' "Mystagogie des Hl. Geistes", K. Melitiniotes' "Zwei Antirrhetic" und Augustine's "De Trinitate"* (Göttingen 2009, 27-29) Photius' reasoning developed in the Paragraphs 38-40 in the Mystagogy, give us a clear indication for the fact that he aimed to confront specifically with that view.

⁹ According to W. Jaeger in his book *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre vom Hl. Geist* (Leiden 1966, 122-153), the preposition ἐκ has been deliberately interpolated in the 9th century from an adversary of Patriarch Photius. See also Chr. Savvatos, **Ἀναφορὴς κατὰ τὸν II αἰῶνα στὸ Βυζάντιο γιὰ ἀλλοιώσεις ἔργων καὶ χωρίων τοῦ Ἁγ. Γρηγορίου Νύσσης**, *THEOLOGIA* 66 (1995), 112-126.

ώνόμασται, και ἐστι Χριστὸς ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ προχεῖται παρ' αὐτοῦ, καθάπερ ἀμέλει καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς¹⁰

(If indeed the Spirit exists in his own hypostasis and he is perceived in himself, since he is Spirit and not Son, he is not foreign to him. For, he has been called Spirit of Truth and Christ is the Truth itself, and he flows from him as well as from the Father).

c) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, In Joelem (I, 337, 23 Pusey):

Ἦ μὲν γὰρ ἐστι θεὸς καὶ ἐκ θεοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ὁ υἱός· γεγέννηται γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς, ἴδιον αὐτοῦ τε καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι, καθάπερ ἀμέλει καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ νοεῖται τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς¹¹

(For, in this way the Son is God and from God by nature; for he is begotten from God the Father; The Spirit is proper to him, in him and from him, just as he (sc. the Spirit) is perceived to be from the same God the Father).

d) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Commentarii in Ioannem*, 10, 2, PG 74, 444B:

Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, τουτέστιν ἑαυτοῦ τὸν Παράκλητον ἀποκαλεῖ. Οὐ γὰρ ἀλλότριον τῆς τοῦ Μονογενοῦς οὐσίας τὸ ἅγιον νοεῖται πνεῦμα, πρόεισι δὲ φυσικῶς ἐξ αὐτῆς, οὐδὲν ἕτερον παρ' αὐτὸν ὑπάρχον, ὅσον εἰς ταυτότητα φύσεως, εἰ καὶ νοεῖτο τυχὸν ἰδιοσυστάτως¹²

(He sc. John calls the Paraclete Spirit of Truth which means his own Spirit. The Spirit is not considered to be foreign to the essence of the Only Begotten, but he comes forth by nature from it, without being something else beside the Only Begotten, so far as with respect to the identity of nature, even though he could eventually be considered in his own hypostasis).

4) The prepositions **ἐκ** and **διὰ** are in many cases (within the patristic texts) mutually exchangeable and have the same meaning.¹³

¹⁰ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 1, PG 141, 616C.

¹¹ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 1, PG 141, 616D.

¹² Cf. K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr.* II, f. 140 (271, 4-8 Orphanos).

¹³ Cf. K. Melitiniotes, *ΛΟΓΟΙ ΑΝΤΙΡΡΗΤΙΚΟΙ ΔΥΟ*, (*Antirr.* I, f.106v, 185, 2- 8 Orphanos): **Ἄλλ' ἡμεῖς ἐπὶ ταύτης οἶδαμεν ἰσοδυναμίαν τῶν προθέσεων τούτων, καὶ τὴν διαφορὰν ἐν ἀκριβεῖα γινώσκομεν· ἰσοδυναμίαν, ἐν οἷς εὐρίσκομεν τοὺς ἁγίους καταχρηστικῶς ἐκλαμβανομένους αὐτάς, ὡς ἀντιμεθισταμένας πρὸς τὰ ὑπ' ἀλλήλων σημαινόμενα κατὰ τὸν μέγαν Βασίλειον· τὴν διαφορὰν**

a) Basilius Caesariensis, *De spiritu sancto* 5, 12 (SC 17, 282, 1-10 Prusche):

ἤδη καὶ πρὸς τὰ ὑπ' ἀλλήλων σημαινόμενα πολλάκις ἀντιμεθίστανται ἢ διὰ καὶ ἢ ἐκ, ὅταν ἑτέρα τὴν τῆς ἑτέρας σημασίας ἀντιλαμβάνη· οἷον ἐκτησάμην ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, φησὶν ὁ Ἄδამ, ἴσον λέγων τῷ, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. καὶ ἑτέρωθι· ὅσα ἐντείλατο Μωϋσῆς τῷ Ἰσραὴλ διὰ προστάγματος τοῦ κυρίου. καὶ πάλιν· οὐχὶ διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἢ διασάφεις αὐτῶν ἐστίν· ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰπεῖν, διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ εἴρηκεν¹⁴

(already with respect to their meaning the prepositions ἐκ and διὰ are in many cases mutually exchangeable, whenever the one receives the meaning of the other. For example Adam says, 'I acquired a man through God', something that is equivalent to: 'from God'. And in another case: Every order that Moses gave to Israel was through the command of the Lord. And again: their interpretation does not occur through God· instead of saying 'from God', he said 'through God').

b) Gregorius Nazianzenus, *Oratio* 39, 12, (PG 36, 348A):

τοῦ ἐξ οὗ, καὶ δι' οὗ καὶ ἐν ᾧ, μὴ φύσεις τεμνόντων (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μετέπιπτον αἱ προθέσεις, ἢ αἱ τάξεις τῶν ὀνομάτων), ἀλλὰ χαρακτηριζόντων μιᾶς καὶ ἀσυγχύτου φύσεως ιδιότητος¹⁵

[As far as 'from him' and 'through him' and 'in him' are concerned, they do not divide natures (in that case there would have been any change neither on the prepositions nor in the ordering of names), but define the properties of the one single and unconfused nature]

c) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *De adoratione* I, 9 (PG 68, 148A):

Τρεπτὸν δὲ οὕτιπου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστίν. ἢ εἴπερ τὸ τρέπεσθαι νοσεῖ, ἐπ' αὐτὴν ὁ μῶμος τὴν θεῖαν ἀναδραμεῖ φύσιν, εἴπερ ἐστὶ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρός, καὶ μὴν καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ οὐσιωδῶς ἐξ ἀμφοῖν, ἤγουν ἐκ πατρὸς δι' υἱοῦ προχοόμενον πνεῦμα¹⁶

ὁσαύτως, ἐν οἷς τὸ παραλλάττον καὶ κύριον τῆς ἀμφοῖν σημασίας διδάσκουσιν.

¹⁴ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 1, PG 141, 629B.

¹⁵ Cf. K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I*, f. 106v, (185, 10-12 Orphanos).

¹⁶ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 20, PG 141, 61CD.

(The Spirit is not changeable at all. Or, if indeed he undergoes any change, the disgrace is transferred upon the divine nature, if he is really the Spirit of God the Father and also the Spirit of the Son, who flows essentially from both, namely from the Father through the Son).

5) The Holy Spirit is proper of the Son or Christ (**ἴδιον τοῦ Υἱοῦ, ἴδιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ**).

a) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Oratio ad Theodosium imperatorem* (ACO I,I,1, 66):

Βαπτίζοντα ἔφη τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐν πυρί, οὐ τὸ ἀλλότριον τοῖς βαπτιζομένοις ἐνιέντα πνεῦμα δουλοπρεπῶς καὶ ὑπηρετικῶς, ἀλλ' ὡς θεὸν μετ' ἐξουσίας τῆς ἀνωτάτω, τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἴδιον αὐτοῦ¹⁷

(He says, that Jesus baptises in fire, imparting those who are baptised the Spirit not as something foreign, slavishly and subserviently but as God with power from above, the Spirit that exists from him and belongs to him).

b) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *De sancta et consubstantiati Trinitate* dialogus VII (PG 75, 1093BC):

Ἐπεμψε δὲ ἡμῖν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ τὸν παράκλητον, δι' οὗ καὶ ἐν ᾧ μεθ' ἡμῶν ἐστι καὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ἀυλίζεται, οὐκ ὀθνεῖον ἡμῖν ἐγγέον, ἀλλὰ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ἴδιον πνεῦμα¹⁸

(He has sent us from heaven the Paraclet; through him and in him He is with us and abides in us without imparting to us something foreign but the Spirit of his own essence and also proper to his Father).

c) Ibid., III (PG 75, 840BC):

Πῶς οὐ παντελῶς ἀταλαίπωρον ἰδεῖν, ὅτι θεὸς ἀληθῶς καὶ τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς οὐσίας ἐκπέφυκεν ὁ υἱός, εἶπερ ἐστὶν ὡς θεός, καὶ οὐχ ὡς ἕτερόν τι κατοικοῦν ἐν ἡμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ¹⁹

(Surely it is not difficult at all to recognize that the Son is truly God and that comes from the essence of God the Father, if indeed is so as God and that his own Spirit abides in us without being something else foreign to him).

¹⁷ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 28, PG 141, 81C.

¹⁸ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 8, PG 141, 673C.

¹⁹ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 8, PG 141, 676A.

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d) Epiphanius Cypri, *Ancoratus* 7 (GCS 25, 14 Holl):

Πνεῦμα ἅγιον, οὐ συνάδελφον, οὐ πατράδελφον, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς οὐσίας πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ. καὶ αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ μονογενῆς λέγει, τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύομενον, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήψεται· ἵνα μὴ ἀλλότριον νομισθεῖται πατρὸς μηδὲ υἱοῦ²⁰

(The Holy Spirit has neither a brother nor is brother of the Father, but he is from the same essence of the Father and the Son. For, the Only Begotten says himself, the 'Spirit of the Father' and that 'he proceeds from the Father' and 'he shall receive of mine' so that no one should consider him as being foreign to the Father and the Son).

6) Everything that is been said about the Son has its reference to the Father as the first and primary cause (**πρῶτον καὶ ἀρχικὸν αἴτιον**).²¹ In this account the accusation launched by 'orthodox' theologians of introducing two principles within the Deity that are contradictory to each other is avoided.

a) Basilius Caesariensis, *Adversus Eunomium* V (PG 29, 728D-729A):

Πνεῦμα γὰρ τῷ ζῶντι λόγῳ συντεταγμένον εἰς τὸ δημιουργεῖν, ζῶσα δύναμις, καὶ θεῖα φύσις, ἄρρητος ἐξ ἀρρήτου στόματος πεφητυῖα, ἀρρήτως καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐμφύσησιν εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀπεσταλμένη, καὶ κατὰ τὸν σωματικῶς ὑπὸ κυρίου δειχθέντα τύπον, αὐθις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ δι' ἐμφυσήσεως ἀποκαθισταμένη (συντρέχειν γὰρ δεῖ τῇ κατὰ ἀρχὴν καινότητι τὴν νῦν ἀνακαινήσιν) καὶ τὴν συνδρομὴν ἐξετύπωσεν ἐμφυσήσας, οὐχ ἕτερος ὢν παρὰ τὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐμφυσήσαντα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς δι' οὗ θεὸς ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐμφύσησιν, τότε μὲν μετὰ ψυχῆς, νῦν δὲ εἰς ψυχὴν²²

(For, the Spirit is put together with the living Logos in the same order in the creating of the world, a living power and a divine nature, unspoken and shown forth from a unspoken mouth, sent to man in an unspoken manner through blowing in and also according to the example given from the Lord in a bodily manner, again restored by him through inflation (for, it is necessary that the original newness corresponds to the present renewal, and he has shown this correspondence by the breathing into man, since he

²⁰ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 28, PG 141, 85A.

²¹ Cf. K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I*, f. 91 (143, 5-7 Orphanos).

²² Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 17, PG 141, 56D-57A.

is not somebody else from the one who blew into the man from the beginning but the same through whom God gave his breath, at that time with the soul, now into the soul).

With reference to the above text John Beccos points out that the expression ‘through him’ can be applied not only in the level of Economy but also in the level of the inner-Trinitarian relations (Theology). Thus again according to Basilus (De spiritu sancto 8, SC 17, 320 Prusche):

ἡ δι’ υἱοῦ φωνῆ ὁμολογίαν τῆς προκαταρακτικῆς αἰτίας ἔχει²³ (the saying through the Son points confessedly to the primary cause).

b) Basilus Caesariensis, *Adversus Eunomium* II 34 (SC 305, 140, 8-142, 22 Sesbouë):

Ἐκεῖνο δὲ τίνι τῶν πάντων ἄδηλον, ὅτι οὐδεμία ἐνέργεια τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀποτετιμένη τοῦ πατρὸς; πάντα γὰρ, φησι, τὰ ἐμὰ σὰ ἐστι, καὶ τὰ σὰ ἐμά. πῶς οὖν τοῦ πνεύματος τὴν αἰτίαν τῷ μονογενεῖ μόνῳ προστίθῃσι, καὶ κατηγορήμα τῆς φύσεως αὐτοῦ τὴν τοῦτου λαμβάνει δημιουργίαν; εἰ μὲν οὖν δύο ἀρχὰς ἀντιπαρεξάγων ἀλλήλαις ταῦτά φησι, μετὰ Μανιχαίου καὶ Μαρκίωνος συντριβήσεται. εἰ δὲ μιᾶς ἐξάπτει τὰ ὄντα, τὸ παρὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ γεγενῆσθαι λεγόμενον, πρὸς τὴν πρώτην αἰτίαν τὴν ἀναφορὰν ἔχει. ὥστε κἄν πάντα εἰς τὸ εἶναι παρῆχθαι διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου πιστεύωμεν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντων αἴτιον εἶναι τὸν θεὸν τῶν ὄλων οὐκ ἀφαιρούμεθα²⁴

(But whom is not clear that no activity of the Son is separated from the Father? For, what is mine, it’s yours, he says, and what is yours, is mine. How now assigns the cause of the Spirit to the Only Begotten exclusively and as definition of his nature takes in account his creation? If he now speaks of two principles bringing the one in contradiction to the other, he will be crushed along with Manes and Marcion. But if he considers the created beings to be dependent on one principle, then the saying that the beings have been created from the Son is referable to the first cause. Thus we do not deny, even though we believe that everything came into existence by the God Logos, that the God of all is the cause of every being).

²³ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 19, PG 141, 60A; De depositione sua, II, 20, PG 141, 996D; K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I*, f. 106v (185, 11-186, 1 Orphanos).

²⁴ Cf. J. Beccos, *De unione ecclesiarum* 9, PG 141, 25D-28A.

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7) Within the Trinity there is a specific sort of order (τάξις) which clearly implies the mediate position of the Son.

a) Athanasius Alexandrinus, *Contra Arianos* III, 24, PG 26, 373B:

Οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα συνάπτει τὸν λόγον τῷ πατρὶ, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὸ πνεῦμα παρὰ τοῦ λόγου τοῦτο λαμβάνει.²⁵ [It is not the Spirit who joins the Word together with the Father, but rather it is the Spirit who receives this (linking) from the Son].

b) Athanasius Alexandrinus, *Epistula ad Serapionem* 21, PG 26, 580B:

Τοιαύτην δὲ φύσιν καὶ τάξιν ἔχοντος τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸν υἱόν, οἷαν ὁ υἱὸς ἔχει πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, πῶς ὁ τοῦτο κτίσμα λέγων, οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἐξ ἀνάγκης φρονήσει;²⁶

(Since the Spirit has the same nature and order with respect to the Son as the Son possesses with respect to the Father, how does the one who characterizes the Spirit as created, not necessarily think of the Spirit the same?).

c) Basilius Caesariensis, *Adversus Eunomium* I, 20 (SC 299, 244, 12-246, 32 Sesbotié):

Ἀλλὰ τάξις ἡ μὲν φυσική τίς ἐστι, ἡ δὲ κατ' ἐπιτήδευσιν. τούτων τοίνυν τὸ πρότερον ἀποκρυψάμενος ὁ Εὐνόμιος, τοῦ δευτέρου εἶδους τῆς τάξεως ἐπεμνήσθη, καὶ φησί, μὴ χρῆναι λέγειν ἐπὶ θεοῦ τάξιν, ἐπεὶ περὶ ἡ τάξις Δευτέρα τοῦ τάττοντος. ἐκεῖνο δὲ ἢ οὐ συνοῖδεν, ἢ ἐκὼν ἀπεκρούσατο, ὅτι ἐστὶ τι τάξεως εἶδος οὐκ ἐκ τῆς παρ' ἡμῶν θέσεως συνισταμένον, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ τῇ κατὰ φύσιν ἀκολουθία συμβαῖνον, ὡς τῷ πυρὶ πρὸς τὸ φῶς ἐστὶ τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ. ἐν τούτοις γὰρ πρότερον τὸ αἴτιον λέγομεν, δεύτερον δὲ τὸ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, οὐ διαστήματι χωρίζοντες ἀπ' ἀλλήλων ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ τῷ λογισμῷ τοῦ αἰτιατοῦ προεπινοοῦντες τὸ αἴτιον. ... τίνος οὖν ἔνεκεν ἀθετεῖ τὴν τάξιν λαμβάνεσθαι ἐπὶ θεοῦ;²⁷

(But there is on one hand an order of nature and on the other an order that is artificially constructed. Eunomius keeps hidden from these two

²⁵ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 4, PG 141, 640BC.

²⁶ Cf. J. Beccos *Epigraphae* 4, PG 141, 641B.

²⁷ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 4, PG 141, 644BC.

sorts of order the first and mentions only the second and says that man should not be allowed to speak of order in God, for the order in respect to whom that sets the order is something secondary. But either he took it not in account or deliberately concealed it, namely that there is some sort of order that exists not because of our position or arrangement but that coincides with the natural sequence just like the light is related to the fire, from which it derives. In these things we define the first as cause, the second as that which comes from the cause without separating them from each other through an interval, but we perceive the cause as being precedent to that which is derived from the cause. By reason of what he now refuses to accept an ordering with respect to God?).

8) It is said from the orthodox theologians (Gregory of Cyprus) that the Spirit proceeds from the Father on the ground of Hypostasis and not on the ground of nature (τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, οὐ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς φύσεως).²⁸In a much different account we maintain the view that the Spirit derives from the Father both in reference to the hypostasis and to the nature, for we do not in any case perceive the hypostasis as something being separated from the nature but always in close connection.²⁹

a) Athanasius Alexandrinus, *De synodis Arimini in Italia et Seleucia in Isauria*, 45 (II, 162 Opitz):

**Οἱ γὰρ τὴν Ἀρειανὴν αἵρεσιν ἀναθεματίσαντες
γινώσκοντές εἰσι, μὴ κτίσμα, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας γέννημα
εἶναι τὸν λόγον, καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ πατρὸς ἀρχὴν καὶ
ρίζαν καὶ πηγὴν εἶναι τοῦ υἱοῦ³⁰**

(Those men who anathematize the heresy of Arius know that the Logos is not a creature but an offspring of the essence and that the essence of the Father is root and source of the Son).

b) Johannes Damascenus, *De fida orthodoxa* (PTS 12b, 36 kottler):

**Ὅταν γὰρ νοήσω μίαν τῶν ὑποστάσεων, τέλειον θεὸν
αὐτὴν οἶδα, τέλειαν οὐσίαν³¹ (When I perceive one of the**

²⁸ Cf. *Apologia*, PG 142, 241D; *De processione*, PG 142, 272A.

²⁹ Cf. K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I*, f.112v (200, 18-201, 1 Orphanos): Ἀμέλει προσβέβουμεν τοῦτον (sc. τὸν Πατέρα) αἵτιον καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος τῷ λόγῳ τῆς φύσεως, καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, οὔτε τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, οὔτε τῷ λόγῳ τῆς φύσεως μόνῳ, κατὰ τὴν ψευδεπίπλαστον τοῦ ματαίου (sc. τοῦ Κυπρίου) διαβολὴν, οὔτε τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ὑποστάσεως μόνῳ, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ φρενοβλαβοῦς κακίστην ὑπόληψιν.

³⁰ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 12, PG 141, 709A.

³¹ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 12, PG 141, 709B.

three hypostasis, I know well that it is perfect God, perfect essence).

9) Additional arguments in support of Filioque: If the Son does not essentially participate in the Procession of the Spirit, then he is degraded. He renders to be a ministering-servant instrument (**ὑπουργικὸν-λειτουργικὸν ὄργανον**)³² of the Father. The denial of the procession also through the Son leads to a lack of distinction between Son and Holy Spirit. The equality of Father and Son imposes that the Son performs exactly the same deeds as the Father, including the bringing forth of the Spirit. In any other case the Son would be subordinated to the Father.

a) J. Beccos: *Refutatio libri Georgii Cyprii*, I 13, PG 141, 885:

ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τῆς δημιουργίας ἢ δι' υἱοῦ φωνὴ δῆλωσιν μὲ τῆς προκαταρκτικῆς αἰτίας ἔχει, οὐ μὴν δὲ καὶ τὸν υἱὸν διαιρεῖ τὸν δημιουργὸν καὶ αἴτιον εἶναι τῶν δι' αὐτοῦ γεγονότων κτισμάτων οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς θεολογίας αὐτῆς, εἰ καὶ ἀρχικὸν αἴτιον υἱοῦ καὶ πνεύματος ὁ πατὴρ λέγεται, καὶ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστίν, αἴτιον, οὐκ ἂν διαιρεθῆι τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱὸς ἐπὶ τῇ προόδῳ τοῦ πνεύματος

(Just as with respect to the creation the saying ‘through the Son’ contains a declaration about the primary cause, but it does by no means exclude the Son from being creator and cause of the creatures brought into existence through him, exactly in the same way one should not with respect to the Theology separate the Father from the Son on the procession of the Spirit, even though the Father is said to be first cause of the Son and Spirit and he is cause of the Spirit through the Son).

10) Identification of the Hypostasis of the Spirit with the gifts of the Spirit. The Spirit is in his gifts totally present. When the opponents say that the gifts of the Spirit can be distributed from the Son, they mean nothing more than the procession of the Spirit also from the Son.

a) J. Beccos: *Ad Andronicum Camaterum* 12 PG 141, 424C:

³² Cf. K Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I* f.100 (167, 20-21 Orphanos); See also *Ibid.*, f. 119 (216, 5-10): **ὁμῶς γοῦν καθάπερ «δι' αὐτοῦ» τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρχὴν ὑπαρξιν, οὕτω δὴ πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν σωθήσεται σημασίαν καὶ τὸ «ἐκ πηγῆς»· εἰ δὲ μὴ, τοῦναντίον πάν, ὡς «διὰ» ὄργανου καὶ οὐχ ὡς «ἐκ πηγῆς», ὅπερ τῆς ἀρειανικῆς μανίας, ... καθέστηκεν and f.101 (170, 12-13): **λειτουργικὸν ὄργανον τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος φανερώσεως, τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς διακονίαν ἀποπληροῦν...****

Λέγων γὰρ ἐν Εὐαγγελίοις ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ὁ παράκλητος, ὃν ἐγὼ πέμψω ὑμῖν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς, οὐχὶ χάριν τινὰ πέμπειν ἐμφαίνει πνευματικὴ, οἶονεῖ τῆς οὐσίας ἀποδιηρημένην τοῦ πνεύματος, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν τὸν παράκλητον, ὅστις θεὸς ἐστὶ τέλειος καὶ ἀληθὴς ὡς ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ὁ υἱός

(for, the Lord saying in the Gospel, ‘when the Paraclete has come, whom I will send you from the Father, makes clear that he does not send some sort of spiritual gift as if it was separated from the essence of the Spirit, but the Paraclete himself, who is perfect and true God such as the Father and the Son).

b) Texts of notes 16 and 17.

c) Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Commentarri in Ioannem* (I, 136, 29 Pusey):

Εἶπερ θεὸς ἐστὶ καὶ ἐκ θεοῦ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ πνεῦμα, οὗ δὴ καὶ μετίσχειν διὰ πίστεως τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν ἀξιούμεθα, θεοὶ χρηματίζομεν, ὡς ἤδη καὶ θεὸν ἔχοντες ἐν ἑαυτοῖς κατὰ τό, ἔνοικῆσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω. ἐπεὶ κατὰ τῖνα τρόπον ναοὶ θεοῦ ἐσμεν, εἰ μὴ θεὸς κατὰ φύσιν τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν,³³

(If indeed the Spirit is God and from God by nature of whom we are deem worthy to partake through our faith in Christ, we bear the name of God, since we possess God in ourselves according to the word ‘I will dwell in them and tarry among you’. For, we are in some way temple of God, if the Spirit is not God according to his nature).

d) J. Beccos in the *Procesione* (11, 2 PG 141, 240A-C) advances two passages³⁴ that are supposed to be from the writings of John Chrysostom. But from a textual examination through TLG (*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*) it cannot be proven that this is the true.

³³ Cf. J. Beccos, *Epigraphae* 8, PG 141, 677A.

³⁴ PG 141, 240AB: τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τὴν μὲν φύσιν ἐστὶν ἀδιαίρετον, ἅτε δὴ ἐκ τῆς ἀδιαίρετου καὶ ἀμερίστου φύσεως προελθόν, ὄνομα δὲ αὐτοῦ πνεῦμα ἅγιον, πνεῦμα ἀληθείας, πνεῦμα θεοῦ, πνεῦμα κυρίου ... (240BC): Λέγεται τοῖνυν πνεῦμα ἅγιον. Αὕτη γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ κύρια καὶ πρώτη προσηγορία, ἡ ἐμφαντικωτέραν ἔχουσα τὴν διάνοιαν, καὶ παριστώσα τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος τὴν φύσιν. {...} ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ἀχράντου δυνάμεως τοῦ ἁγίου ἐστὶ καὶ προσκνητοῦ πνεύματος. ἐστὶ δὲ ἄλλα ὀνόματα οὐ τῇ φύσει προσήκοντα, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ. ... ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῆς τῆς ἀθθεντίας, αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως. ἐστὶ δὲ ἄλλα ὀνόματα, ἃ οὐ προσγράφεται τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, ἀλλὰ τῇ δυνάμει καὶ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ αὐτοῦ ... οἷον αἱ δωρεαὶ αὐτοῦ.

11) Outflanking of Photius' major argument: (Myst. 36 PG 102, 316AB):

**πάν ὃ μὴ ἐστὶ κοινὸν τῆς παντοκρατορικῆς καὶ ὁμοουσίου
καὶ ὑπερφυοῦς Τριάδος ἐνός ἐστὶ μόνου τῶν τριῶν οὐκ
ἔστι δὲ ἢ τοῦ πνεύματος προβολὴ κοινὴ τῶν τριῶν, ἐνός
ἄρα καὶ μόνον ἐπὶ τῶν τριῶν**

(everything that is not a common property of the almighty consubstantial and existing beyond nature Trinity is to be assigned to the one person only. But the procession of the Spirit is not a common property of the three, so it is a property belonging only to the one person among the three).

Answer: There are some properties that may belong to the two persons within the Trinity and not to the third!

a) J. Beccos, *Refutatio libri, Photii* 6, PG 141, 745AB:

**τοῦ δὲ εἶναι τι κοινὸν υἱῷ καὶ πατρὶ, ὅπερ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα
οὐκ ἔχει, πᾶσα γραφὴ μάρτυς ἢ τὸ τοῦ πατρὸς πνεῦμα
καὶ υἱοῦ λέγουσα πνεῦμα καὶ θεολογοῦσα ἐκπέμπειν καὶ
πηγάξειν καὶ ἀναβλύζειν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸν υἱόν, ὥσπερ καὶ
ὁ πατὴρ ἐκπέμπει καὶ πηγάζει καὶ ἀναβλύζει αὐτό... καὶ
διὰ ταῦτα οὐχ οὕτως ἔσται κοινὸν πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ ἢ τοῦ
πνεύματος ἐκπόρευσις ὡς τὰ ἄλλα τῶν κοινῶν, ὧν καὶ τὸ
πνεῦμα συμμετέχει αὐτοῖς**

(To this fact, that there is something common to the Father and the Son of which the Spirit is derived, every Scripture bears testimony by naming and declaring the Spirit as Spirit of the Father and the Son and by also saying that the Spirit is sent, gushes forth and stems from the Son just as he is also sent, gushes forth and stems from the Father... and for this reason the bringing forth of the spirit won't be in this case a common property as the other that the three partake of them one with another in common and of which the Spirit also partakes).

b) N. Blemmydes, *De Procession Spiritus Sancti Oratio* II 11, *Ad Theodorum Ducam Lascarim*, ed. Hugo Laemmer, *Scriptorum Graeciae Orthodoxal Bibliotheca Selecta* (Freiburg, 1864), 159-186, 176f.:

**ἔπειτα καθὼς οὐ δύναται παρ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐκπορεύεσθαι
πάντως, οὐδ' ἀποστέλλεσθαι παρ' ἑαυτοῦ δύναται ἄν,
ἵνα μὴ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἀποστέλλον εἶη καὶ κατὰ ταῦτὸν καὶ
ἀποστελλόμενον, ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ παρὰ πατρὸς ἀποστέλλεται
καὶ παρὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καθὼς αὐτὸς ὁ τοῦ πατρὸς υἱὸς ἐν
Εὐαγγελίοις ἐδίδαξεν, ἔγνωμεν ἰδοὺ τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος
ἀποστολὴν μέσην φυσικῆς τε καὶ ὑποστατικῆς ἰδιότητος**

(Furthermore, as he can in no case be proceeded by himself, he can not also be sent by himself so that the sender could not be simultaneously the same with whom is sent, but since the Spirit is sent by both the Father and the Son as the Son of the Father himself has taught in the Gospel-, see, thus we perceive the mission of the Spirit as something being in the middle between natural and personal property).

12) The necessity of clarifying the relationship between Son and Spirit. A significant touchpoint between P. Gemeinhardt, K. Melitiniotes and Thomas Aquinas.

a) K. Melitiniotes, *De processione spiritus sancti Or I*, PG 141, 1084CD:

Τις δὲ συνόλως ἡ σχέσις υἱοῦ τε καὶ πνεύματος; τοῦ μὲν γὰρ πατρὸς ἤρτηνται, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον ἀμφοτέρω καθάπερ ἐξ αὐτοῦ πλουτοῦντα τὴν ὑπαρξιν, καὶ τὴν σχέσιν ἔχουσι πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν ἐκάστω προσήκουσαν. Πρὸς ἄλληλα δὲ πόθεν αὐτοῖς τὸ ἀχώριστον; ποία δὲ καὶ σχέσις τούτοις ἀποδοθήσεται;

(But, what is in general the relationship between the Son and the Spirit? Both are dependent indeed on the Father and in that way as both become rich with respect to (their) existence from him, both maintain also a relationship with the Father which is proper to each one of them separately. But from where stems their inseparability? What kind of relationship will also be assigned to them?).

b) T. Aquinas: *SCG IV*, 24: Relinquitur igitur unam personam divinam ab alia non distingui nisi oppositate relationis.

c) P. Gemeinhardt, *Die Filioque-kontroverse zwischen West- und Ostkirche im Frühmittelalter*, Göttingen 2002, 296-298: Photius legt bei seiner Fortschreibung der kappadozisch-damaszenischen Theologie den Akzent darauf, dass die beiden Hervorgänge aus dem Vater keinesfalls zu einer dritten Beziehung führen können ... Gegen die drohende Vermischung der Hypostasen und ihrer Eingetümlichkeiten betont Photius die Idiome, welche die präzise Unterscheidung der Hervorgehensweisen garantieren: (Amph. 28). Dies beantwortet freilich nicht die Frage, wie sich der Geist zu der Vater-Sohn-Beziehung verhält, die für eine dritte Person zunächst keine Analogie bietet ... Letztlich bildet daher das trinitätstheologische Modell des Photius einen Winkel, dessen beide Spitzen in keiner Hinsicht miteinander verbunden sind – außer durch das gemeinsame Wesen, das

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den Differenzierungen in Gott vorausliegt und alles umfaßt, was nicht unmittelbar zur Unterscheidung der Hypostasen dient.

13) Relation of correspondence between Theology and Economy in Augustine, Saint Thomas and K. Melitiniotes.

– Augustine, *De Trinitate* V 14, 15. *‘tatendum est patrem et filium principium esse spiritus sancti no duo principia, sed sicut pater et filius unus deus et ad creaturam relatiue unus creator et unus dominus, sic relatiue ad spiritum sanctum unum principium...’* (one should confess that Father and Son are the principle of the Holy Spirit; not two principles, but, just as Father and Son are one God and with respect to the creation one creator and one Lord, thus they are also one (single) principle with respect to the Holy Spirit).

– Thomas Aquinas, *SCG* IV, 25. *‘Pater et Filias sunt unum principium Spiritus sancti, propter unitatem divinae virtutis, et una productione producunt Spiritum sanctum: sicut etiam tres presonnae sunt unum principium creaturae, et una actione creaturam producunt’.* (Father and Son are one principle of the Holy Spirit because of the unity of the divine power. They bring, in one (single action), the Spirit forth. The three Persons are also one principle of the creatures: in one single action they bring the creatures forth).

– K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I* f. 115v (208, 28-209, 3 Orphanos).

‘ἐπεὶπερ δημιουργὸς ὁ Πατὴρ ὑπάρχει δι’ υἱοῦ τῶν δι’ αὐτοῦ γεγονότων, καὶ τοῦ Πνεύματος δι’ υἱοῦ πάντως αἴτιος ὅτι τοῦ πνεύματος προβολεὺς δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶ’.

(Since the Father exists through the Son as creator of the things produced by Him, he is also in all ways principle of the Spirit through the Son, for he is producer of the Spirit through Him).

– K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I* f. 104 (179, 4-7 Orphanos):

εἰ μηδαμῶς ὑφίσταται δι’ υἱοῦ καὶ τὸ εἶναι δι’ αὐτοῦ λαμβάνει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, πῶς αἰδίως ἐκλάμπει διὰ τούτου καὶ ἀναδείκνυται, πρὸς δὲ χορηγεῖται, δίδοται τε καὶ ἀποστέλλεται

– (If the Holy Spirit exists in no way through the Son and does not take its being through him, how does it happen that he shines forth and is manifested through him and also that he is provided, given, and sent?).

– K. Melitiniotes, *Antirr. I* f. 104 (178, 4-6 Orphanos):

Δι’ υἱοῦ γὰρ ἀναντιρρήτως χορηγεῖται καὶ δίδοται καὶ ἀποστέλλεται τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὡς δι’ αὐτοῦ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχον τὴν ὑπαρξιν

– (The Holy Spirit is undeniably provided and given and sent, for he has his being from the Father through the Son).

The present study aimed to indicate the major textual sources on the basis of which the Byzantine Filioque-supporters had tried to fortify their arguments and strengthen their theological position. At first sight all the passages seem to have a probative value and an indisputable authenticity. But as it is widely acceptable, there are two facets to every question. And we get now to the point. Their opponents were blaming them not only for forgery and falsification of the texts (something that it is proven only once)³⁵ but also (and this is in my view more important) for twisting and distorting the meaning of the quotations. Gregory of Cyprus passes strictures upon them for not interpreting correctly these passages, not evaluating properly their meaning and for leaving out of consideration the broader context in which these are written. In addition to that he reproaches them for isolating the Church Fathers' citations deliberately from their context, giving them another meaning from that they actually have and consequently leading the reader to much different assumptions and conclusions.³⁶

It lies in readers' personal estimation to decide if Gregory of Cyprus' criticism is justice and well grounded. We do not have the intention of influencing the reader in favor of the one side or against the other. Our purpose was to provide the reader with genuine source-material so that he can come alone after thorough investigation to safe conclusions concerning the delicate issue of the procession of the Holy Spirit from Father alone or also through the Son. This task won't be very easy. For, one should take seriously in account that even though both sides advance the same texts in order to explain their position, both are lead to different conclusions and to opposite directions. This means that the task of interpreting a text presupposes good theological grounding in the matter and lifting of all eventual confessional prejudices.

³⁵ See above note 8. The so called Latin-minded theologians criticize their opponents for exactly the same reasons. See J. Beccos, *De processione* 12, PG 141, 176BC.

³⁶ Cf. *Expositio fidei contra Veccum*, PG 142, 243AB: τὰς τῶν ἁγίων φωνὰς οὐ πρὸς τὸν ὄρθον τῆς Ἐκκλησίας σκοπὸν ἐκλαμβάνουσι, οὐδὲ θεραπεύουσι τὸ δοκοῦν προσιστασθαι κατὰ τὰς πατρικὰς παραδόσεις, καὶ τὰς κοινὰς περὶ τε θεοῦ καὶ τῶν θείων ὑπολήψεις, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τινα νοῦν ἀπᾶροντα τῶν προκειμένων αὐτὰς ἐκβιάζουσιν, ἢ ψιλαῖς αὐταῖς προσέχουσι, καὶ πρὸς δόγμα ἐντεῦθεν ἐκφερομένοις ἀλλότριον.

Constantin Rus¹

Social Ideas in the Homilies of Saint Basil the Great

Abstract

Saint Basil the Great advocated lawful order, the legitimacy of authority, of work as a foundation of rights. As a part of social life he approved of the citizens' duties to the State – such as paying taxes – only fighting abuses and injustice in enacting them. The idea of homeland was dear to him and the feeling for it prompted him to the struggle for defending the integrity and unity of his homeland, when it was threatened with division. In the monastic life, he promoted the principles of Coenobites, community life, for which he issued rules, organizing it after the model of the lay society, in form that he believed ideal, even for the latter.

Through whatever he did, through whatever he wrote and conceived, Saint Basil the Great has remained – for all Christendom, to this day – a model, an example, a source of inspiration, a criterion for interpreting and living Christian teachings.

Keywords

social justice, philanthropic institutions, poverty, famine, wealth, monasticism, involvement

In a brilliant eulogy of his friend Basil, Saint Gregory of Nazianzos advised his audience to go out, not far from Caesarea, the capital of the province of Cappadocia, and admire what he called “a new city”, a complex of philanthropic institutions, that was founded by Basil. Saint Gregory said: “Walk not far from the city [of Caesarea] and behold the new city, a storehouse of piety, a common treasury of the wealthy, in which surpluses of wealth have been collected, were through his [Basil’s] exhortations all the necessary goods have been stored, which cannot be eaten by moth

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or become the pleasure of thieves, which cannot cause fights because of jealousy and become subject to ruin because of time, where disease is endured philosophically and sympathy is put to test”². Basil was the first episcopo, either of the Christian East or of the Christian West, who systematically organized philanthropic foundations – hospitals, hostels for poor travelers, homes for the aged, orphanages and leprosaria; he was the first who made monasticism a redeeming social force and the Church an influential organization in the several aspects of society – education, welfare, health and Church and state relations.

The question is: what guided Basil to such a social policy and what was the philosophy behind all his activities? We know that Basil wrote profound theological essays, that he was a devout monk who reorganized monasticism and that he was a successful ecclesiastical administrator. How does one reconcile spiritual and theological interests with secular or societal concerns? There is no doubt that Basil was an extraordinary person. In the course of nearly 2,000 years, he remains one of the outstanding Church Fathers, for he possessed great learning, both secular and religious, was a man of deep spirituality, and had considerable administrative and organizational talents. Whether in his early life as a layman or in his later ministry as a clergyman, Basil inspires admiration and even imitation.

As a student, the young Cappadocian possessed an insatiable thirst for knowledge which took him to Byzantium, ‘the chief city in the East’, which as early as the first half of the fourth century was filled with the best teachers and philosophers. From Byzantium he went on to ‘Golden Athens’, the source of many good things³. Basil’s broad education in the Greek classics and in the Christian scriptures shaped his mind and formed his social ethics, which determined the nature of his later ministry, a ministry guided by faith and reason, theory and practice.

Basil possessed a strong and independent personality. As a bishop, he became renowned for his courage before rulers and the powerful of the city; as a theologian, he excelled in the interpretation of Christ’s gospel and as a good counselor and supporter of the faith; as an administrator he proved himself a strong guardian and champion of the Christ’s interest. In the words of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos, Basil was a marvelous “symphony” between faith and deeds, most faithful in the principles of

² Gregory of Nazianzos, *Logos 43, Epitaphios, eis Basileion*, in Migne P. G., 36, 577.

³ *Ibid.*, 513.

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faith and most practical in the external things⁴. ‘Symphony’, temperance, moderation were the principles that guided Basil – principles that reflect his Hellenic inheritance.

In searching for Basil’s social philosophy⁵ we should always remember that there was nothing pretentious, nothing impressionistic or fake about him. He was totally given to the cause of God, with one objective in mind, to benefit God’s people. For Basil, to love God meant to love man, whatever man’s physical condition or background. He knew how to love, and his love was not “in word or speech but in deed and truth” (I John 3, 18). His great concern for the needy, the sick, the suffering, and the forgotten received its inspiration from what John the Evangelist wrote: “he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, he cannot love God whom he has not seen” (I John 4, 20). For Basil, doctrine and canon, worship and ethics, word and behavior were inextricably woven. The Greek concept of *philanthropia* and the Christian understanding of *agape* blended into a powerful ethic which determined his moral philosophy and social involvement. He believed that the Christian theologian or churchman neglects his true role if theology is persuaded in academic, monastic, or ecclesiastical isolation from social existence. Theology exists for the ministry of the Church, and the ministry of the Church exists for society and the world, to personify the critical and transforming energy of human existence.

Basil applies these principles in all aspects of his pastoral ministry, including monasticism. In the conflicts between various forms of monasticism, especially anchoritic and coenobitic, Basil achieved a harmony so that the hermits were not deprived of opportunities to communicate and the activists, of opportunities to be taught⁶.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 513.

⁵ There are several good studies on Basil’s social thought including Panagiotes K. Chrestou, *The Sociology of Saint Basil the Great*, (Athens, 1951); S. Giet, *Les Idées et l’action sociaux de Saint Basile* (Paris, 1941). For a complete bibliography see Konstantinos G. Bonis, *Saint Basil the Great*, (Athens, 1975), esp. p. 170-179 and J. Quasten, *Patrology*, 3 ((Westminster, Md., 1960), p. 204-236. See also, René Coste, *Les Fondaments théologiques de l’Evangile sociale. La pertinence de la théologie contemporaine pour l’éthique sociale*, Paris, Cerf, 2002; Idem, *Les Dimensions sociales de la foi. Pour une théologie sociale*, Paris, Cerf, 2000; Pierre-Antoine Fabre, *Sciences sociales et histoire de la spiritualité moderne: perspectives de recherché*, in “Recherches de Science Religieuse”, t. 97, no 1, 2009, p. 33-52.

⁶ Gregory of Nazianzos, *Logos 43*, in Migne P. G., 36, 577.

In order to appreciate the magnitude of Basil's contributions to Christian sociology, we first need to know something about the conditions, both natural and man-made, that prevailed in the fourth century Cappadocia. (This, of course, is an enormous topic, and here we can only scratch its surface). Poverty was an endemic social phenomenon. The plight of the poor and destitute beggars and the circumstances under which ordinary laborers and artisans lived were extremely difficult, not only because of famines or the apathy of the rich and the arrogance of the powerful, but also because of the climatic conditions that prevailed in the Anatolia. Basil speaks of the extreme cold in winter and the extreme heat in summer. In his letters he constantly complains about lack of communication because of heavy snowfalls that made the roads impassable. He writes of blizzards that buried people in their houses or in their huts: he records furious rains which caused much suffering; he complains of unpredictable hailstorms, cloudbursts, torrents, floods and droughts⁷. Basil's health was affected by these climatic extremes⁸.

While all classes of people were affected by natural catastrophes, the life of the poor was made even more intolerable by additional man-made causes. Basil describes the state of the poor as a shame to the rich Christians. Many poor people walked around in "ill smelling rags" Others had no money and no clothes, and their possessions were worth only a few obols. Some were willing to sell their children into slavery in order to buy bread and prevent the death of other members of the family. Others preferred death to selling any their kin. Great numbers of poor people died of starvation between 368 and 375.

Under the prevailing circumstances, Basil became a social redeemer. He constantly urged state officials, churchmen, and monks and the wealthy and prominent members of society to introduce measures in behalf of the needy or to assist them personally; and he never spared himself in serving the hungry, the naked, and the sick, whose sores he washed with his own hands. He denounced wealthy farmers for their avarice as well as merchants and traders for their greed and unjust measures. Whether

⁷ Basil, *Letters*, nos. 30, 48, 112, 156, 242, 321, in "A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church", second series, vol. VIII, St. Basil: Letters and select works, ed. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978. See also M. M. Fox, *The Life and Times of St. Basil the Great as Revealed in His Works*, (Washington, 1939).

⁸ Basil, *Letters*, no. 216, in "Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers", vol. VIII, p. 255.

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in the country or in the city, an immoral wealthy man was perceived as a poor neighbor, because he persecuted or discriminated against his less prosperous neighbors, forcing them to sell their property.

Basil was merciful to sinners but merciless to sin, such as usury. The law allowed up to 12 per cent interest, but many merchants, traders, and landowners evaded or even violated the law and exacted 15 per cent and even more. Basil not only strongly denounced usurers and their methods but also reprimanded even those of his people who carelessly or unnecessarily incurred debt. Citing the sixth century lyric poet, Theognis of Megara, Basil stressed that it is better for people to live in poverty and in virtue than to allow love of ease and pleasure to make them slaves to the unscrupulous among the wealthy. Like Diogenes and Socrates, Basil preferred inner freedom to attachment to material possessions⁹.

Nevertheless Basil did not condemn material possessions and wealth *per se*; he condemned extravagance, luxury and unethical and selfish use of wealth. In his social homilies Basil used economic or even 'capitalistic' terminology. He pointed out to the rich their duties to the poor and those in distress, but he also emphasized the benefit of the just investment of the wealth. The use of money is good and profitable not only for the investor but also for the public. The more we use the waters of a well, the better for the well and its water. Like the waters, which when not used become stagnant and polluted, unused wealth becomes unproductive and useless¹⁰. When a man uses his wealth in works for the common good, the benefit returns to the giver, just as Solon, the wise sixth century Athenian, had advised that wealth is no end in itself¹¹, Basil counseled the wealthy to imitate the good earth, which produces fruit and vegetables not for its own sake but for all people¹². Wealth in itself is neither benign nor malignant; it is neutral. Wealth is not an end; man is the end, and no man, no matter how poor or socially unimportant, should be manipulated by any person, institution, or state.

In order to understand Basil's social vision and his approach to matters of wealth and poverty, it is instructive to begin by examining his interpretation of the account concerning the rich young ruler and comparing

⁹ Fernard Boulenger, *Saint Basile: Aux jeunes gens sur la manière tirer profit des lettres profanes*, texte établi et traduit, Paris, Les belles lettres, 1935, p. 27-32.

¹⁰ St. Basil the Great, *On Social Justice*, translated by Fr. C Paul Schroeder (Crestwood, New York: Saint Vladimir's Seminary, 2009, Homily 6, p. 61.

¹¹ Fernard Boulenger, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹² St. Basil the Great, *On Social Justice*, p. 61.

his interpretation with that of some other early Christian commentators. How to understand Christ's injunction to the young man, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me," was a subject of considerable discussion in the early Church.

One interpretative approach to the passage that proved highly influential in subsequent Christian thought was proposed in the early third century by Clement of Alexandria. In his oration *Who is the Rich Man that Will Be Saved?* Clement focuses upon the young man's unhealthy attachment to worldly goods. According to Clement, Christ is not asking the young man literally dispense with his possessions, but rather to become a free person by breaking his attachment to them, since the person who is concerned about acquiring or keeping wealth is not truly free. As Clement says, "Christ does not, as some conceive off-hand, bid him throw away the substance he possessed, and abandon his property; but rather bids him banish from soul his notions about health, his excitement and morbid feeling about it, the anxieties, which are the thorns of existence, which choke the seed of life." Clement concludes that the Lord's command aims at "the stripping off of the passions from the soul itself and from the disposition, and the cutting up by the roots and casting out of what is alien to the mind."

In the latter third and early fourth centuries, another reading of the commandment came to great prominence in the Church with the rise of the monastic movement. In contrast with Clement's approach, monastic literature of this period tends to emphasize the need to make a decisive break with the world by fully renouncing and giving away one's possessions. According to the *Life of Saint Anthony*, written by Saint Athanasios, this is precisely what Anthony did after hearing the story of the rich young ruler being read in the church: "Anthony, as though God had put him in mind of the Saints, and the passage had been read of his account, went out immediately from the church, and gave the possessions of his forefathers to the villagers, so that they should no longer be a burden upon himself and his sister."

The thrust of the monastic approach as exemplified by Saint Anthony is not the aid that is rendered to the poor by gifting one's possessions to them, but rather the need to rid oneself of the burden of worldly possessions. In fact, "the poor" as they are referenced in the monastic writings of this period are nearly always the anonymous poor, that is, they remain nameless and faceless, little more than cipher, a receptacle for discarded

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possessions. The tension between these two interpretive constructs - the more figurative approach of Clement versus the more literal approach of the monastic movement - was ultimately resolved within the Church by making a distinction between those who live out their Christian vocation “in the world” as opposed to those who live as monks and nuns. The former are enjoined not to become overly attached to their material possessions, while the latter fulfill the commandment in its literal sense, which is regarded as the way to perfection. This two-tiered approach to the commandment is eventually codified in the formal distinction between “percepts” and “evangelical counsels” found in Western scholastic theology, while in the East it is expressed through the notion of the “Angelic life” in the context of “monastic perfection.”

For all their differences, both approaches are united in addressing the spiritual condition of the young man in almost exclusively individual terms; both understand the root problem as residing in his relationship to wealth and worldly goods per se. When we turn to Basil’s interpretation of this passage, therefore, it is significant to note that Basil understands the spiritual malady of the rich young ruler not as over-attachment to the worldly things, but rather as a violation of the commandment “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” In other words, Basil interprets this story in primarily social rather than individual terms. As he says with regard to the rich young ruler in his treatise *To the Rich*:

“It is evident that you are far from fulfilling the commandment, and that you bear false witness within your own soul that you have loved your neighbor as yourself. For if what you say is true, that you have kept from your youth the commandment of love and have given to everyone the same as to yourself, then how did you come by this abundance of wealth? Care for the needy requires the expenditure of wealth: when all share alike, disbursing their possessions among themselves, they each receive a small portion for their individual needs. Thus, those who love their neighbor as themselves possess nothing more than their neighbor; yet surely, you seem to have great possessions! How else can this be, but that you have preferred your own enjoyment to the consolation of many? For the more you abound in wealth, the more you lack in love.”¹³

¹³ St. Basil the Great, *On Social Justice*, translation by Fr. C. Paul Schroeder, Crestwood, New York, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2009, p. 43.

The commandment to “love your neighbor as yourself,” which Basil describes as “the mother of the commandments,” is thus the basis for Basil’s understanding of Christ injunction of the rich young ruler. The focus is not on the individual’s relationship to wealth and possessions, but rather of the fact that having great wealth others lack daily necessities constitutes a violation of the law of love.

For this reason, Basil explicitly rejects any attempt to formulate a two-tiered approach to the commandment. In Basil’s view, “sell your possessions and give to the poor” is an expression of the law of love, and is therefore equally applicable to all, both monastics and non-monastics. As he states in *To the Rich*:

*Was the command found in the Gospel, “If you wish to be perfect, sell your possessions and give the money to the poor,” not written for the married? After seeking blessing of the children from the Lord, and being found worthy to become parents, did you at once add the following, “Give me children, that I might disobey Your commandments; give me children, that I might not attain the Kingdom of Heaven”?*¹⁴

Moreover, in contrast with the “anonymous poor” found throughout much of the monastic literature, Basil’s homilies are characterized by a deliberate attempt to humanize and personalize the plight of the poor.¹⁵ Basil brings his powerful gift of rhetoric to bear in order to show us the face of our neighbor: the emaciated face of the starving person who has gone blind as a result of malnutrition, the agonized face of a parent forced to sell a child into slavery in order to save the rest of the family from starvation. Basil is determined that the faces of our suffering brothers and sisters should not be ignored or remain hidden from us.

Saint Basil responds to those who ask how they will live and how it could be possible for everyone to sell all, “Do not ask me the rationale behind our Lord’s commands. The Lawgiver knows well how to bring what is possible into agreement with the Law.”¹⁶ To those who say they cannot give, Saint Basil says: “How many could you have delivered from want with but a single ring from your finger? How many households fallen into destitution might you have raised? In just one of your closets

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

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there are enough clothes to cover an entire town shivering with cold.”¹⁷ He concludes: “You showed no mercy; it will not be shown to you. You opened not your house; you will be expelled from Kingdom. You gave not a bread; you will not receive eternal life.”¹⁸

If the commandment to sell one’s possessions and give to the poor is an expression of the law of love and thus binding upon all, then the question may be asked, “How is the commandment to be lived out in practical terms?” We may answer by saying that the first characteristic of the New City, the new community envisioned by Basil, is what might be called the ethic of sustainability. In essence, this means that the law of love requires us to adopt a way of life that is supportable across the entire population. Basil’s social thought is characterized by a commitment to simplicity as a means to ensuring this sustainable way for everyone.

The second homily is on the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12. 16-21, and is entitled “I Will Tear down My Barns”¹⁹. Saint Basil addresses such people: “You have been made a minister of God’s goodness, a steward of your fellow servants. Do not suppose that all this was furnished for your own gullet! Resolve to treat the things in your possession as belonging to others.”²⁰

Basil states that the fair distribution of resources requires that each person take a “small portion” so that there might be enough for all. He emphasizes simplicity in food, dress, and housing as a way of being that allows for resources to be fairly distributed. With regard to housing, he emphasizes that “walls whether great or small serve the same purpose.” With reference to interior furnishings he asks the rhetorical question, “What better service do silver encrusted tables and chairs or ivory inlaid beds and couches provide than their simpler counterparts?” Concerning food and clothing, he says, “Two lengths of cloth are sufficient for a coat, and a single garment fulfills every need with regard to clothing. . . . A single loaf of bread is enough to fill your stomach.” He harshly criticizes the wealthy of his day for their excessive consumption – sumptuous meals, lavish dress, large and ornately decorated houses which he sees as directly linked to the plight of the poor. As he says in *To the Rich*:

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Homily 6, p. 61.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

“You gorgeously array your walls, but do not clothe your fellow human being; you adorn horses, but turn away from shameful plight of your brother or sister; you allow grain to rot in your barns, but do not feed those who are starving; you hide gold in the earth, but ignore the oppressed!”²¹

Like Saint John Chrysostom and many others Fathers of the Church, he believes that God has provided enough food, land, and usable materials to satisfy the needs of all. These resources, however, are limited commodities, and must therefore be shared out equitably. When some people use or hoard excessive amounts of resources, there will necessarily be less for others to use. As he says in the homily, *I Will Tear Down my Barns*: “If we all took only what was necessary to satisfy our own needs, giving the rest to those who lack, no one would be rich and no one would be poor.”²²

To the notion of storing and guarding one’s wealth so that one might take one’s ease, he says: “Therefore, let the end of your harvesting be the beginning of a heavenly sowing.”²³ Saint Basil elaborates:

“[If you scatter your wealth,] God will receive you, angels extol you, all people from the creation of the world will bless you. Your glory will be eternal; you will inherit the crown of the righteousness and the Kingdom of Heaven. All these things will be your reward for your stewardship of perishable things.”²⁴

The great Hierarch paints a picture for his wealthy audience, to bring the suffering of poverty vividly into their imaginations:

“How can I bring the sufferings of the poverty-stricken to your attention? When they look around inside their hovels, ... [and] find only clothes and furnishings so miserable that, if all their belongings were reckoned together, they would be worth only a few cents. What then? They turn their gaze to their own children, thinking that perhaps by bringing them to the slave-market they might find some respite from death. Consider now the violent struggle that takes place between the desperation a rising from famine and a parent’s fundamental instincts. Starving on the one side threatens a horrible death, while nature resists, convincing

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 62-63.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

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the parents rather to die with their children. Time and again they vacillate, but in the end they succumb, driven by want and cruel necessity."²⁵

The corollary to Basil's teaching with regard to the ethic of sustainability is what might be called the "distributive mandate." The content of the distributive mandate is that whatever one has that is "extra," over and above one's actual need, should be given to those who have less. Basil describes this process with a beautiful word which literally means "to restore the balance." The distributive mandate is essentially a responsibility to observe the commandment of love by sharing with others. In one of his most often quoted passages, Basil says:

*"The bread you are holding back is for the hungry, the clothes you keep put away are for the naked, the shoes that are rotting away with disuse are for those who have none, the silver you keep buried in the earth is for needy."*²⁶

Yet the apparent simplicity of the distributive mandate is complicated by the human tendency to adjust the definition of "need" to fit one's current level of income. Those who have more tend to use more. Basil treats this subject in *I Will Tear Down my Barns*, which takes as its point of departure the parable of Christ regarding the foolish rich man who said to himself that he would tear down his barns and build larger ones to store his goods. In Basil's treatment of the passage, "tearing down one's barns" becomes a metaphor for describing an expanding baseline of need. For Basil, the "barn" represents our definition of need, what we think we need to live. Thus, "tearing down one's barns" means redefining our needs based upon a change in our circumstances.

In effect Basil says that if we never have any extra to share, this is due to the fact that whenever we find ourselves in possession of a surplus, we immediately adjust our definition of need to fit new situation. While the foolish rich man in the parable only thought to tear down his barns one time, we are constantly tearing down our mental barns in order to build larger ones, only to tear these down and build them up again:

"(You say) I will put down my barns and build larger ones. But if you fill these larger ones, what do you intend to do next? Will you tear them down yet again only to build them up once more?"

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

What could be more ridiculous than this incessant toil, laboring to build and then laboring to tear down again?”²⁷

Basil goes even further than this. According to him, those who refuse to share with others in the time of urgent need, when starvation and disease pose an immanent threat to human life, may be accounted guilty not only theft, but even murder. As he writes in the homily, *In Time of Famine and Drought*: “Whoever has the ability to remedy the suffering of others, but chooses rather to withhold aid out of selfish motives, may properly be judged the equivalent of a murdered.”²⁸

Saint Basil explains frankly the reason that God has allowed famine: “See, now, how the multitude of our sins has altered the course of the year and changed the character of the seasons, producing these unusual temperature.”²⁹ He continues:

“The reason why our needs are not provided for as usual is plain and obvious: we do not share what we receive with others. We praise beneficence, while we deprive the needy of it ... For this reason we are threatened with righteous judgment. This is why God does not open his hand: because we have closed up our hearts towards our brothers and sisters. This is why the fields are arid: because love has dried up.”³⁰

Interestingly, however, in this homily Saint Basil actually addressed the poor as well. He says: “Are you poor? Do not be discouraged.... Place your hope in God. Can it be that He does not understand your difficult position?”³¹ He also encourages the poor to give to those who are poorer: “Are you poor? You know someone who is even poorer... Do not shrink from giving the little that you have; do not prefer your own benefit to remedying the common distress.”³²

But for the rich, Saint Basil again humanizes the plight of the poor by describing the effects of starvation in vivid terms. It is interesting to note that he considers aiding such people a natural duty, and by no means a case of supernatural Christian love, for he writes:

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

²⁸ Homily 8, *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

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“Let not we who are reasonable show ourselves to be more savage than the unreasoning animals. For even the animals use in common the plants that grow naturally from the earth. Flocks of sheep graze together upon one and the same hillside, herds of horses feed upon the same plain, all living creatures permit each other to satisfy their need for food. But we hoard that which is common, and keep for ourselves what belongs to many others. And then, we should be put to shame by what has been recorded concerning the pagan Greeks. For some of them, a law of philanthropy dictated a single table and common meals, so that many different people might almost be regarded as one household.”³³

Saint Basil ends with a reminder of the threat of hell and the Judgement, which is “not myth, but reality foretold by the voice of truth.”³⁴ As may be noted from this passage, Saint Basil regards the selfishness of human behavior as a kind of anomaly within creation. Although competition within and among species is a normal part of the natural order, only humans compete in such a way as to take more than they actually need or can possibly use, while depriving others of what is necessary for their survival. The world was created by God in order to be shared; for this reason, Saint Basil says that private ownership of resources meant to be held in common distorts our relationships to each other and to the world.

In addition to his homilies and letters, an unsuspected source for a study of Basil’s social thought is his Liturgy, especially several of his very beautiful and profound prayers. Many scholars and ordinary laymen have observed the mysticism of the Liturgy, its theology and its spirituality, but few have written of, or even observed, the Liturgy’s social dimensions. Basil’s Liturgy is a springboard for social action and societal involvement. The petitions and prayers are not meant to be rhetorical exclamations, poetic romanticism, or supplications for God alone to hear; they are meant to penetrate man’s heart and mind and become an impetus for *agape* in *diakonia* – love in practice.

For Basil, the Liturgy was prayer and religious education, but it was also an invitation for the metamorphosis of the congregation as well as of society. The presentation of a common chalice for communion with God

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

and with each other was a reminder to all communicants to see themselves as equals, as members of the same organism, in which all suffer when any one member suffers. The prayers remind the faithful of the poor and the sick, of the weak and the powerless, of the orphans and widows, of the aged and captives, of travelers, and of those in prison, in mines, in hard labor³⁵.

As we have indicated, Basil put his faith into action. When he returned from his studies in Athens, to Caesarea in 356, he was ordained a deacon and served the church there until 360, when he decided to flee to the desert and live like an anchorite. Before his departure, Basil distributed to the poor the larger part of his possessions, which he had inherited from his father. Basil's was a wealthy family, with large estates spread over three provinces, and much of the family's income was used from philanthropic purposes. His social concern, however, was expressed in many ways a few years later when he returned to Caesarea from the desert. After he was ordained in the priesthood, Basil became the foremost assistant of Bishop Eusebios. From 356 to 370, as presbyter on Eusebios' staff, Basil initiated several philanthropic activities. In the great famine of 368, he served as the local church's protagonist in philanthropic works. He delivered a series of sermons against profiteers and against the indifferent rich, while at the same time urging all to come to the assistance of those who were suffering. He himself organized free meals for all the poor, including visiting foreigners, Christians, pagans, and Jews alike. It was during that social crisis that he dispersed the remaining portion of his parental inheritance in order to help the poor³⁶.

Basil's belief that man is a social being led him to emphasize that monastic life should be life in a community that expressed love for one's neighbor. For then on, a major part of Byzantine monasticism's philosophy emphasized social involvement and particular concern with the lowest strata of society. Monasticism was neither monolithic nor uniform, and the mainstream of the monastic movement was not antisocial. Monasteries were built not only in remote regions such as Mount Athos and Mount Olympos in Asia Minor, but also near cities and towns and within the

³⁵ *Liturghier*, Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2005.

³⁶ Gregory of Nazianzos, *Logos 43*, in Migne P. G., 36, 577.

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walls of cities. Constantinople itself had at one time nearly 345 monastic communities³⁷.

The second major institutional innovation introduced by Basil was the systematic organization of philanthropic foundations. Following his ordination in the episcopate in 370, Basil used the inheritance from his mother's side and large donations from wealthy friends and acquaintances, even from his former enemy, Emperor Valens, to establish a complex of institutions – a general hospital, an orphanage, an old-age home, a hospice for poor travelers and visitors, a hospital for infectious diseases, and an institution for indigent people, where Basil took up residence. Collectively, Basil's institutions became known as *Basileias*, located on the outskirts of his see. The staff was composed of both laymen and clergymen. Basil's example was followed by the Byzantine Church for many centuries thereafter. Even today, sixteen centuries later, Basil is rightly revered in the Orthodox world as the father of Christian philanthropy.

In Saint Basil's conception – drawing upon the Scriptures – people see social beings as meant to live in common, in dependence on each other, in mutual solidarity and responsibility. Such elements give consistence to society, make it last, develop and guarantee a happy life to all those who compose it. People are equal, both because they are the sons and daughters of the same heavenly Father, as He wanted them to be, and for the simple reason that they are all human, therefore sharing the same natural endowments, which place them on the same level of rights and duties. Differences between human beings, their division into free men and slaves, into rich and poor, are – according to Saint Basil the Great – anomalies not due either to God or to nature, therefore having to be corrected. Human being equal, they are all entitled to freedom. Being equal they have equal rights to property. That is why Saint Basil vehemently combated wealth and the wealthy and permanently required the restoration of the balance through the joint utilization of assets. He accused the rich giving rise to wars and of generating evils on earth – including the deterioration of morals, the flourishing of usury, avarice, lies, slander and

³⁷ On the social orientation of early Byzantine monasticism see Demetrios J. Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare* (New Brunswick, N. J., 1968), esp. p. 29-41, 88-110; Gilbert Dragon, *Les Moines et la ville – Le Monachisme à Constantinople jusqu'au concile de Chalcédoine* (451), in "Travaux et Mémoires", 4, Paris, 1970, p. 229-276, esp. p. 253-261.

crime. The economic life influences the spiritual and social ones and when the economy is in the hands of merely a few, at the opposite pole there is suffering, totally unfairly.

Saint Basil the Great advocated lawful order, the legitimacy of authority, of work as a foundation of rights. As a part of social life he approved of the citizens' duties to the State – such as paying taxes – only fighting abuses and injustice in enacting them. The idea of homeland was dear to him and the feeling for it prompted him to the struggle for defending the integrity and unity of his homeland, when it was threatened with division. In the monastic life, he promoted the principles of Coenobites, community life, for which he issued rules, organizing it after the model of the lay society, in forms that he believed ideal, even for the latter.

Implementing in actual practice his social ideas and conception, Saint Basil organized relief for the famished in his own town in the times of drought and then set up the Basiliad – a complex institution run through public contributions for sheltering the sick, the needy, orphans, widows and travelers. His institutions provided models for other Churches as well and for other times that perpetuated them, turning social assistance into one of the main reasons for the activity of the Church, in times when governments had not yet assumed that responsibility.

Through whatever he did, through whatever he wrote and conceived, Saint Basil the Great has remained – for all Christendom, to this day – a model, an example, a source of inspiration, a criterion for interpreting and living Christian teachings.

Marius Țepelea¹

Historical aspects regarding conversion to Christianity in the primary Church

Abstract

The period between centuries I-IV is one of the most interesting in the history of Christianity. Between 100 and 400 Christian religion has changed greatly, becoming from a religion outlawed in the Roman Empire a new religion, the same official state not accept it from the outset.

The Church attempted to in Christian Roman Empire, from the outset, but this was not possible from the first century, it happened gradually, requiring three centuries and the ascent of the Emperor Constantine the Great, for Christianity to become favored within the Roman state. To in-Christianization of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, who were pagans, mostly contributed several factors, not just the religious ones. The spread of Christianity has not occurred with the same intensity in all ages and all walks in the Roman society.

Major sources, in terms of this theme, the spread of Christianity, are varied, but not very many, they contain non-Christian and Christian authors and writers, equally important, to study objectively the history of the spread of the Christian religion.

Given that information, come, now almost two millennia, from diverse sources and from different authors, this paper does not aim to analyze linear-Christianization of the ancient world. Also, this paper does not seek to deal comprehensively, as a matter of such importance, also examined in many studies and books.

Keywords

Conversion, Primary Church, Theodoretus of Cyr, St. Simeon the Stylite, Theodosius the Great.

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Christian history is long and full of spectacular events. A History of the Church can not be treated without seeing the hand of God and His intervention in the history of mankind. If excluded, the supernatural character of the Church History of Christianity, would be a simple sequence of data, names and places, dry, identical with the history of any religion. Life of the early Christians and the courage of martyrs and the witness of the non-Christians about the Church show that people from the first centuries lived their life in a religious way.

An overview on the life of Christians and pagans of antiquity we will show some aspects important for the present study, but we could show all sides, important in terms of in-Christianization of the Roman Empire, if we stop, and individual, to the ordinary people, because often a single conversion, the kind of Blessed Augustine, has, and had a greater impact than the conversion of a tribe of Bedouins in the Middle East, of which one no longer remembers.

History of Christianity in the early centuries has sides less beautiful, this is not a novelty but, if we look at episodes of Ananias and Sapphira and that of Simon Magus, from the book of Acts of the Apostles. Information reached until today, about the spread of religion, comes, obviously, from the majority Christian sources, not always objective. If examples, most notably, concern for others, the great mass of ordinary pagans who joined the Christian religion, remained humble in the shadow of the great converts.

If the great personalities such as St. Justin Martyr and Philosopher or Blessed Augustine, are known as many things need to look, we must look towards the body of the Church, not only by the vertices of it. Ordinary people, unknown to anyone, and have changed their life, because in-Christianization. Conversions occurred in secret are often more durable and more useful to the Church than those mentioned in chronicles.

To see such an issue should meditate on the story lived by Blessed Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, in the days when he was still just a priest, at his meeting with St. Symeon the Stylite. Pole where St. Symeon lived was east of Antioch, and on meeting between the two, can be located at the beginning of V century. At Simeon Stylites, people came from all parts of Syria, and even far, attracted by the fame life, her. Here's how Theodoret describes his meeting with a group of Christians who came from very far, at the foot pillar of Simeon:

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"The mere fact of a man standing on a pillar of light, countless thousands of Ishmaelites²), who were slaves of the dark gods, pagan. For, like a lamp, very bright, like a lamp placed, spread its rays, such as the sun, he (Simeon - Ed) saw the Iberians, Persians and Armenians, all coming to receive Divine Baptism. The Ishmaelites came, and they, with the crowds, two hundred or three hundred together, sometimes a thousand, screaming loudly, waived his mistakes, their ancestors. Before that great, light sources, they gave up on the spot, the idols that used to adore him, and denounced the orgies of Venus, for her, accept that until now have served the demons, as Simeon, repeated above, the time to time. Received then, divine mysteries, and accepted rules on which that divine language (Simeon - Ed), to transmit them. Then gave their consent to receive further jobs parents (Church - Ed), and to stop the barbaric cult, the donkeys and camels. I have seen and heard, however, as I heard, and condemnation of the heathen, in their country home, then they received, teaching the Gospel "³).

Theodoret's description of an eyewitness is valuable, it shows how much can influence the life of a saint conversion of thousands of people. Yet, this miraculous conversion, thousands of Bedouin Arabs, did not echo deserved one, Theodoret's contemporaries, nor afterwards. The testimony of bishop from Cyrus does not stop here. He recounts, as he was about to be trampled, standing in too much love, by the Bedouins, newly converted to Christianity:

"Once, I myself was put in a situation dangerous, because Simeon has suggested (Bedouin Ishmaelites - Ed) that should come to me, a priestly blessing, which will shoot very helpful, he said. When this mass of barbarians rushed towards me, a little later, some of them, I drew earlier, some back and some in the side. Most advanced, crowded, knocking him over hands to touch my beard, or clothes, so I finally suffocated, of how violent that surrounded me, if Simeon would not be called up, I left alone "⁴).

² Probably Theodoret refers to the tribes, Arab and Bedouin, in the Middle East.

³ Theodoret of Cyrus, *Historia religiosa*, XXVI, P.G. (Patrologia Graeca) 82, 1476.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XXVI, P.G. 82, 1477.

Theodoret's happening, it might seem funny, but it is conclusive for those times. Bishop of Cyr's account, then only a priest, shows how conversions taking place in the Vth century, in the East. While Theodoret did not understand the language of the Bedouins, he remained puzzled by behavior and their great enthusiasm shown for the new religion, driven course of miracles committed under their eyes from St. Simeon Stylites. These Bedouin Arabs came from over three hundred miles away, attracted by the miracles which they had heard of Simeon, which was considered likely, a powerful magician. The nomads converted by Simeon were originated in southern Syria, in the Djebel Druse, called Auranitis ⁵).

These nomadic tribes, rarely settling into a stable place, had their choice to come to visit St. Simeon, this must be regarded as an exceptional fact. The main deities of these Bedouins were Dusares, who was guarding them and Allat, which help in getting revenge in a tumultuous life, as in the Middle East ⁶).

The episode recounted by Theodoret of Cyrus, and lived on his own account, reveals cultural and religious dimensions, to convert tribesmen, the Bedouin. Even if the Arabs have abandoned heathenism, and old gods, they are unlikely to have undergone a major transformation, and in terms of livelihood, their daily lives, where little would be changed. It is possible that they have continued to take revenge of dear ones, to profane further the corpses of thier enemies and many other things which a Christian in the West or East "civilized" would have been removed outside the Church.

For a Bedouin, these things were normal but they did not affect the relationship with God, which was a covenant, the sacred and unbreakable, sealed by the holiness of St. Symeon. It is likely that these barbarians were converted, not to be understood fully, by Simeon Stylites and even less by Theodoret. But they were impressed by the wonders of misconduct, the hermit Simeon that, looking at sea, Syrian hermit, saw a part of divinity. While Theodoret remained astonished by Bedouin invasion on his person, for her, touching his person, amount to a transfer of holiness, and power, which they perceived in the way of magic. If we think that the Savior was often sought by people, and crowd was just His miracles should not surprise that a few hundred years after, ascension of Christ, other people

⁵ G. L. Harding, *A Safaitic drawing and text*, in *Levant*, nr. 1, 1969, p. 68.

⁶ F. V. Winnett and G. L. Harding, *Inscriptions from Fifty Safaitic Cairns*, Toronto, 1978, p. 109.

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feel, as well as seeking miracle, such as strengthening their faith. If convert these Bedouins, was the true faith can not answer, because miracles, gave rise to conversions, at least in the early centuries.

If so things stood, in terms of conversion, a mass of people, take a look converted into individual who impressed more in antiquity, and remained in the chronicles. Here's how to close, the Church of St. Martin of Tours, one of the most popular saints of antiquity, child of pagan parents:

"Martin, was born in Sabara, in Pannonia, but then moved Ticinum, city located in Italy. His parents were judging mouth world of modest rank, but were pagans. His father was in the beginning, a simple soldier, but then became a military tribune. Himself (father of Martin - Ed), in his youth, following his military calling, was drafted into the Imperial Guard, first under Emperor Constantine, then during Caesar Julian. From the earliest age from childhood, that illustrious child, the longed rather to serve Him, God. Where the age of ten years (Martin - Ed) went to the church, against the wishes of parents, and asked his to be received among the catechumens. Shortly thereafter, becoming, in a miraculous way, all devoted to serving God, he wanted the life of a hermit, and wanted to take this call, submitting the votes necessary, if it had not been quite young, to be received in such a promise. His mind however, always to those of the monasteries or churches, to meditate, during childhood, to those of adulthood, when adult being celebrated as a servant of all true of Christ").

Given these two conversions, one, media and other individuals, we have to think that similar actions have been converted, the inhabitants of the Roman Empire. If on figures such as Saint Martin of Tours and St. Justin Martyr and Philosopher know enough, given the reputation of their lives is important to think about how many converts, like what happened with the tribe, the Bedouins have been preserved in the writings of the Church Fathers and Christian historians. Examples Bedouin tribe can be counted on fingers, unfortunately.

Other converts were made, by no means too "Christian" but so were the times, and people of antiquity. In, 394, after a war, win civil, Emperor Theodosius the Great, was shown, gracious and merciful, to enemies and front of their children, striving to bring them to Christianity, by any means:

⁷ Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogus*, II, 4, P.L. 20, 187.

„Their sons, his enemies (of Emperor Theodosius I - Ed), whose fathers had been killed not long ago, of his command, and stepmother, times of war, escaping and finding refuge in a church, although were not yet Christians, he (Theodosius - Ed) showed, eager to gain an advantage in this situation, to bring them to Christianity, and he treated with Christian love. Not only that he not dispossessed of their property, but allowing them to continue their rule, he charged, with additional honors. Not allowed personal animosities to affect the treatment of man, after this civil war”⁸).

Expanding area conversions, we can see, the return of schismatics Donatist Church as Blessed Augustine characterizes, not true belief, but by the force authorities:

"My point was that nobody should be forcibly brought the establishment of Christ, we must act only by words, to fight only by arguments, and must win by the power of arguments, otherwise, we will see those whom we call heretics Boasting her that it would be Catholics themselves (ie belonging to the Catholic Church - universal - Ed). But this view of mine has been surpassed, not by words but by the courts, on which they relied. For first to set against my popular belief even in my town home which, although once belonged to the Donatists, was brought to the Catholic establishment (universal - Ed), through fear, to the imperial edicts”⁹).

As regards, receiving baptism, it is known that in the first centuries, during the persecutions, there catechumens period that could last, and years of days. After acquiring freedom in, 313, discipline among Christians, began to weaken, and the institution declined catechumens, everyone is received, with minimal training, receiving the Sacraments, Baptism. The desire of many in-Christians as pagans, clergy century, IV caused a decrease in moral quality, those who came to Christianity.

Many conversions were made in-Christianization in the early centuries, because miracles present in the Church, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. One of the episodes to convert, because miracles, is shown in the paper, apocryphal Acts of John, where the Apostle John fails to convert a group of pagans of Ephesus, by miracles, its:

⁸ Fericitul Augustin, *De Civitate Dei*, V, 26, P.L. 41, 156.

⁹ Fericitul Augustin, *Epistula* 93, 17, P.L. 33, 108.

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"And John said to them: If then ye desire not to die, let that which ye worship be confounded, and wherefore it is confounded, that ye also may depart from your ancient error. For now is it time that either ye be converted by my God, or I myself die by your goddess; for I will pray in your presence and entreat my God that mercy be shown unto you. And having so said he prayed thus: O God that art God above all that are called gods, that until this day hast been set at nought in the city of the Ephesians; that didst put into my mind to come into this place, whereof I never thought; that dost convict every manner of worship by turning men unto thee; at whose name every idol fleeth and every evil spirit and every unclean power; now also by the flight of the evil spirit here at thy name, even of him that deceiveth this great multitude, show thou thy mercy in this place, for they have been made to err. And as John spake these things, immediately the altar of Artemis was parted into many pieces, and all the things that were dedicated in the temple fell, and was rent asunder, and likewise of the images of the gods more than seven. And the half of the temple fell down, so that the priest was slain at one blow by the falling of the roof. The multitude of the Ephesians therefore cried out: One is the God of John, one is the God that hath pity on us, for thou only art God: now are we turned to thee, beholding thy marvellous works! have mercy on us, O God, according to thy will, and save us from our great error!"¹⁰).

Even though this writing is apocryphal, no doubt that many pagans have reacted so committed to miracles, the Holy Apostles and their disciples, from the early church. Pagans were particularly impressed by miracles, because they were attached superstitious life, requiring power, the supernatural in their lives. Gradually, entire communities were in the first centuries, Christianity, some pagan, being sensitized by the power of words, those who preached the gospel, others were impressed by miracles, seen with their eyes.

Starting with the II century, Christian communities have matured because of persecution, which had to face, and miracles, although they persisted in the Church began to be replaced, for example life, personal

¹⁰ *Acts of John*, 40-42, in vol. *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, ed. by M. Bonnet, vol II, 1, Hildesheim-New York 1972, p. 170-172.

Many Christians are true models for others. Even during, Redeemer lives, many followed Him, to witness miracles, and healings committed. Only the apostles followed him, a true faith, as witnesses, all his words. Those without Christ understood him, accused him of magic¹¹). If those who were healed by Christ, acknowledging His deity, the Holy Apostles healed pagans were exhorted to make confession, short of faith to not believe that the Apostles themselves are gods.

In time, we see that the ages II-V, the pagans had a common point, with adherents of other religions, seeking the miraculous and supernatural, wish to be helped in life and protected. The big difference between Christians and others was that, for Christians there is only one truth, without nuances, there is one God, when pagans were more willing to accept truths, and many gods, without any problem, conscience.

When we talk about their faith and the need to live miracles in everyday life, must accept that the pagans, had the feeling that the gods are helping in life. One example is the discovery votive made in northern Africa, near Cartagena. Thirty miles of Carthage, was discovered in the early '70s, a votive stele dated in the first half of the century, III, a temple, the god Saturn, which can be read:

"By notice in vision ¹²), and ordered the divinity of Saturn ... held its promise and has dedicated this offering, for faith ¹³), strengthened and restored health¹⁴).

One such inscription may be interpreted in a certain mode, a Christian who will not trust truthfulness of such notes, votives and in another way, a non-Christian, which can take into account the authenticity of the inscription. Making a parallel between this inscriptions and wearing Bedouin of Syria, of St. Simeon Stylites time, we see that both Christians, fresh converts and pagans, are thirsty for supernatural intervention waiting, divine in their lives. What Christian history, can say is that the Bedouins had felt God's help live by miracles, made by Saint Simeon, but votive stele, near Cartagena is the result of a link, direct pagan priest, the deity Saturn they served, not witnesses to certify the aid received. Moreover,

¹¹ M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, San Francisco, 1978, p. 202.

¹² It concludes that the priest of Saturn, was informed by vision.

¹³ It seems that the priest himself was helped, and as has gratitude, offering in the temple, dedicating a god Saturn.

¹⁴ A. Beschtaouch, *A propos de recentes decouvertes epigraphiques dans le pays de Carthage*, în vol. *Comptes rendu de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, 1975, p. 112.

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non-Christians in any serious writing, no public mention of a miracle, accomplished by some ancient deity, which shows the difference between real miracles, which convert pagans, and attended by other “miracles”.

Carefully observing the process of spreading Christianity in the early centuries, we find that Christianity has benefited greatly from a big advantage, which resulted from the new religion that was revealed, but pagans were not conscious of this: Christianity was easy, was not complicated directions to address the soul and heart, bringing the center belief in one God, Almighty and concern for salvation, which in return brought life eternal. Between pagan religions and Christianity, there were large differences in terms of doctrine, worship and moral differences observed best in life day by day, Christians and pagans. A careful researcher can see that the simplicity of Christian, led to a rapid understanding and assimilation of its easing the spread of Christianity.

Sure there were, and complicated transition from paganism to Christianity, such as the famous, conscience, if, St. Justin, or the Blessed Augustine. The intellect of the converted, was higher, the greater was the dramatic conversion, and these details were most tasted as Christians since antiquity. Until today, most Christians, he heard the miraculous conversion of St. Justin, started on the shore, sea, or crisis of conscience of Blessed Augustine in the garden near Mediolanum.

If conversion to Christianity, mostly ancient, it was with great faith, catechumens and neophytes, as body and soul of the new religion. Paganism did not know such an attachment, because it does not report on the dogmatic values, their moral and Christian. Low adherence to a philosophical system that could be changed the pagan world, unaware of the option loyalty to a religion or a god¹⁵).

Analyzing aspects of Christianity spread, between the early Church should not lose, in view some of the views expressed above. Most pagans, in-Christians across the Roman Empire can be compared to the Bedouin tribe, or Ephesians converted by St. John the Evangelist. These people remaining anonymous, poorly known outside of entries, and specialists in ecclesiastical history formed the great mass of Christians Church. Christians, the Church first centuries, with few exceptions, joined the Christian religion, of belief, especially that by the year 313, there is no

¹⁵ A. D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion, from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, Oxford, 1933, p. 14.

advantage to be a worldly Christian on the contrary, a Christian can always be terminated in time of persecution.

If to consider the theological, the in-Christianity, at least until the century, IV, all those who wished to receive Christian baptism, had to go through that institution, the catechumens, in which it is taught, dogmas Christian and evangelical principles. However, most Christians were simple people, with cursory knowledge, but still solid, about God, in which he believed. After church, he received freedom in 313, Christians were concerned about, the Christian tenets, but many who knew to read, thought things were during the sermon in church, so that when the great Christological crisis, there were few Christians who have left the church, for those drawn from the Imperial.

Another observation to be made, is the quality of conversions. If the first three centuries most of catechumens, joined the Christian religion of belief, starting with the fourth century the situation changed dramatically. Beginning with Emperor Constantine the Great, except Julian, all Roman emperors favored religion, Christian, so why not remain without consequences for their subjects, of which many churches have stepped threshold, just to please their masters.

In certain regions and periods of the Roman Empire between the years 313 and 400, the situation may be similar to that of Germany, the Protestant Reformation, when they left, reveal a series of surprises, the Catholic Church¹⁶). The deaf struggle, between Catholics and Protestants, taken to an intellectual level, the great mass of ordinary people remained outside these disputes. In many places in Germany, has discovered that people did not know even basic things, the doctrine of the Church, and many of them not going to religious services. Instead, fall into a kind of subculture, religious beliefs mixed Germanic paganism and impregnated with ornate Christian elements, all to benefit people, to make better and with God, the official and its opposite, with the fallen angel¹⁷).

¹⁶ G. Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation*, Baltimore, 1979, p. 271.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

Kostantinos Fergadiotis¹

The origin and the significance of the frescoes paintings in Tel Kabri (N. Israel) in the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) IIB

Abstract

We assume that the frescoes in the Tel Kabri are part of more complex and short time project with political indications that started and was completed in the MBA IIB. The creation of the frescoes in Tel Kabri are neither result of trade dealings in the Aegean, nor artistic expression of the upper clashes. The era of the frescoe paintings is the sign of the peak of its development, establishing its ruling power in the major region of the Valley of Akko, and proving to be among the greatest cities of the period in Palestine.

Keywords

frescoes, fortified city, paintings

I. Introduction

The results of recent excavations and research in the palace of Tel Kabri deal with fragments of wall paintings, dated in the MBA IIB, that were created by the technique of frescoes paintings. These findings are unique in all Palestine raising lots of challenging questions, and not just arguing about their origin and significance.

Tel Kabri is in North Israel in the valley of Accor, 4 klm east of Nahariya and 12 klm northeast from the city of Acco. Lots of researchers identify Tel Kabri with the ancient Rohob². Rohob is one of the cities refered in the

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² E. Cline, «Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor: Minoans and Mycenaeans abroad», *Aegaeum*

Proscription Texts being under the ruling power of Amorites³ during the whole MBA period.

Excavation research was made in Tel Kabri between 1986- 1991 by A. Kempinski and E. Miron⁴ continued by M. Prausnitz and W. –D. Niemeier⁵ between 1991- 1993. Layers belonged to MBA IIB⁶ were examined under direction of A. Yasur – Landau in 2005. For the moment, since 2006, E. Cline⁷ supervises the excavations in Tel Kabri.

II. The origin of frescoes.

The excavations showed that during the MBA IIB era Tel Kabri was a well fortified town extended to ca. 32ha, presumably being the widest city of the certain period in Palestine⁸. Apart from the houses, it is a palace, extended to 0,4ha, that was found, as well .

The first excavation projects findings contain surprisingly lots of frescoes fragments. The most significant of them were found during the A. Kampinski project in 1987 in the area of the Tel Kabri royal court. It was a part of the floor layer that drew great attention as it indicates a

12 (1995), 266. W.-D. Niemeier, «Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)», *Aegaeum* 7 (1991), 196.

³ E. Cline, A. Yasur-Landau, «Poetry in motion, Canaanite Rulership and Aegean Narrative Art at Tel Kabri», *Aegaeum* 28 (2007), 161.

⁴ A. Kempinski, E. Miron, «Kabri 1986-1987», *IEJ* 37 (1987), 175, «Kabri 1987-1988», *ESI* 7-8 (1987), 104-106. A. Kempinski, W.-D. Niemeier, «Tel Kabri 1989-1990», *IEJ* 41 (1991), 188. A. Kempinski, N. Scheftelowitz, R. Oren, «Tel Kabri, The 1986-1993 excavation seasons», *IEJ* 54 (2004), 75-77. A. Kempinski, *Tel Kabri: The 1986-1993 Excavations seasons*, Tel Aviv 2002. A. Kempinski, W.-D. Niemeier, «Tel Kabri 1992», *IEJ* 43 (1993), 181, «Tel Kabri 1993», *IEJ* 43 (1993), 256-257.

⁵ A. Kempinski, W.-D. Niemeier, «Tel Kabri 1992», *IEJ* 43 (1993), 181, «Tel Kabri 1993», *IEJ* 43 (1993), 256-257. A. Kempinski, «*Tel Kabri: The 1986-1993 Excavations seasons*», Tel Aviv 2002.

⁶ [www.tau.ac.il/humanities/archaeology/projects/kabri/excavations 2005/ html](http://www.tau.ac.il/humanities/archaeology/projects/kabri/excavations%2005/html).

⁷ A. Yasur-Landau, E. Cline, *Preliminary Report on the Results of the 2008 Excavation Season at Tel Kabri*, Israel 2008, pp. 1-9., «*Preliminary Report on the Results of the 2009 Excavation Season at Tel Kabri*», Israel 2009, p. 1-7.

⁸ N. Scheftelowitz, «Kabri», *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 5 Jerusalem 2008, 1894-1895.

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clear relation between Tel Kabri and Aegean area⁹. In specific, this type of floor, dated ca. MB IIA/B¹⁰ proves comparable to the ones in the palace of Knossos¹¹ in Crete island.

These elements made the researchers to repeat the field work in Tel Kabri through the layers of MBA II. The newly found (2009) frescoe fragments are dated in MBA IIB and present common characteristics with the ones in Knossos¹² with an obvious strong Minoan influence, proving to represent the oldest artistic counterpart of Aegean art in Palestine¹³.

This evident analogy of iconographical projects found in both Aegean and Tel Kabri made the archaeologists to look more thoroughly in the colouring analysis, and the techniques of the frescoe drawings. The colouring analysis showed that the material used was identical with the one in the Aegean in the MBA¹⁴. Besides, it seems that the use of chalk plaster and other classifying techniques was not common in Palestine, as frescoes were did found only in Tel Kabri. It is most probable that the painters in Tel Kabri obviously made accurate copies of motifs and used fine techniques still unknown in the area of Near East but well preserved in the Greek region¹⁵. This view is supported also by the fact that the excavations haven't still revealed motifs with local characteristics.

⁹ E. Cline, «Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor: Minoans and Mycenaeans abroad», *Aegaeum 12* (1995), 267-268.

¹⁰ E. Cline, A. Yasur-Laudau, «Poetry in motion, Canaanite Rulership and Aegean Narrative Art at Tel Kabri», *Aegaeum 28* (2007), 160.

¹¹ C. Macdonald, «Knossos», *Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean 2010*, 529-542. V. La Rosa, «Phaistos», *Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean 2010*, 582-598. J. Driessen, «Malia», *Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean 2010*, 556-570. L. Platon, «Kato Zakros», *Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean 2010*, 509-517. M. Shaw, The painted Pavilion of the Caravanserai at Knossos, *Aegean Wall Painting: A tribute to Mark Cameron*, London 2005, p. 91-111.

¹² A. Yasur-Laudau, E. Cline, «Preliminary Report on the Results of the 2009 Excavation Season at Tel Kabri», Israel 2009, 7.

¹³ A. Yasur-Landau, E. Cline, Preliminary Report on the Results of the 2009 Excavation Season at Tel Kabri, Israel 2009, p. 1.

¹⁴ R. Jones, *Technical Studies of Aegean Bronze Age Wall Painting: Methods Results and Future Prospects*, Athens 2005, σσ. 202-210. W.-D. Niemeier, «Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)», *Aegaeum 7* (1991), 198.

¹⁵ A. Chapin, «Frescoes», *Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean 2010*, 223-236. T. Barnes, *Painting the Wine-Dark Sea: Traveling Aegean Fresco Artists in the Middle and Late Bronze Age Easter Mediterranean*, Columbia, 2008 p. 21-26.

This clue give us substantial reason to believe that there are too few or even none probabilities that these frescoes were created by local painters. However, severals support the idea- without being persuasive nor having a profound comprehension of their material- that the fresco technique was initiated in Near East¹⁶. This aspect is based upon the fact that, apart from Tel Kabri, also counterpart motifs were found in other great royal courts as Alalakh, Mari, Qatna and Avaris, the capital of Yksos¹⁷. However, quite soon it was made clear that the fresco technique is simply a “terra incognita” case in Near East region¹⁸.

III. The significance of the frescoes.

The relation between Crete and the people of eastern Mediterranean is depicted in the ancient Ugarit texts. In these texts is being refered the reconstruction of the court of Baal by Housor and Hasis, whose origin was Kaftor, for some this was Crete¹⁹. The coming of Housor and Hasis probably proves the introduction of new building techniques, including that of frescoes decoration. Their significance, while they were first initiated in Near East, seems to be to a great extent as we presume from specific strong references in the myths and legends of ancient Ugarit²⁰.

According to another view, the frescoes presentation is a result of trade market developed in the Aegean Sea region²¹, as it is proved from

¹⁶ E. Cline, A. Yasur-Laudau, «Poetry in motion, Canaanite Rulership and Aegean Narrative Art at Tel Kabri», *Aegaeum* 28 (2007), 165.

¹⁷ M. Bietak,-N. Marinatos, «The Minoan Wall Paintings from Avaris», *Agypten und Levante*, 5 (1992), 49-62. W.-D. Niemeier, «Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)», *Aegaeum* 7 (1991), 196. T. Barnes, *Painting the Wine-Dark Sea: Traveling Aegean Fresco Artists in the Middle and Late Bronze Age Easter Mediterranean*, Columbia, 2008 p. 29-32. L.R. Woolley, *An Account of the Excavations at Tell Atchana in the Hatay, 1937-1949*, London 1955. B. Niemeier,-W. Niemeier, «Minoan Frescoes in the Eastern Mediterranean», *Aegaeum* 18 (1998), 69-97. R. Bigelow, «Time Trials: Implications of the Thera Volcano and Tell el-Dab'a for Egypt (part 1)», *The Ostrakon, The Journal of the Egyptian Study Society*, vol. 16/1 (2004-05), 15-19.

¹⁸ B. Niemeier,- W. Niemeier, «Minoan Frescoes in the Eastern Mediterranean», *Aegaeum* 18 (1998), 72.

¹⁹ Α. Χαστούπη, *Θρησκευτικά Ουγαριτικά κείμενα*, Αθήνα 1986, p. 57-73.

²⁰ B. Niemeier-W. Niemeier, «Minoan Frescoes in the Eastern Mediterranean», *Aegaeum* 18 (1998), 96.

²¹ E. Cline, «Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor: Minoans and Mycenaeans abroad», *Aegaeum*

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information we derive from Mari²² texts. However we do not attain any proofs about such commercial relations from excavations so far²³. This lack of information lead us to the conviction that the frescoes in Tel Kabri were not originated on the basis of any commercial relation.

If we accept the assumption that Tel Kabri is identified with Rohob, we have in advance to take for granted from references in the “proscription texts” that the city was in enmity with Egypt²⁴. The rule of Yksos affected Tel Kabri generally and not just in MBA IIB. Specifically, the obliteration of a stable danger for the region like Egypt, changed the power balance in the region creating a terminus a quo for new political agreements with other district rulers in Near East and Aegean. It was in that ongoing shaking environment of that era that the representation of the Tel Kabri frescoes was created.

Initially, the distribution of the frescoes seems to be related with the customary practice of exchanging gifts between some cities of Near East as a good will gesture, crowning good diplomatic relation²⁵. The exchanging of gifts among kings in Near East was a common practice in MBA, according to Amarna²⁶ and Mari texts. Especially, it is well known in the time was well based the belief that owning precious goods from

12 (1995), 279. B. A. Knapp, «Thalassocracies in Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean Trade: Making and Breaking a Myth», *World Archaeology*, vol. 24/3 (1993), 333-334. K. Ryholt, *The political situation in Egypt during the second Intermediate Period (1800-1550 B.C.)*, Copenhagen 1997, p. 142-143.

²² W.-D. Niemeier, «Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)», *Aegaeum* 7 (1991), 199. E. Cline, «Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor: Minoans and Mycenaean abroad», *Aegaeum* 12 (1995), 273.

²³ A. Kempinski, W.-D. Niemeier, «Tel Kabri 1989-1990», *IEJ* 41 (1991), 188-194. A. Kempinski, E. Miron, «Kabri 1986-1987», *IEJ* 37 (1987), 175-177. A. Yasur-Landau, E. Cline, «The Renewed Excavations at Tel Kabri and New Evidence for the Interactions between the Aegean and the Levant in the Middle Bronze II Period (ca. 1750–1550 BCE)», *The Leon Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies*, vol. 35 (2009), 16.

²⁴ W.-D. Niemeier, «Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)», *Aegaeum* 7 (1991), 196-197.

²⁵ C. Zaccagnini, «Patterns of Mobility among Ancient Near Eastern Craftsmen», *JNES* 42 (1983), 245-264. T. Barnes, *Painting the Wine-Dark Sea: Traveling Aegean Fresco Artists in the Middle and Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean*, σσ. 96-98. E. Cline, «Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor: Minoans and Mycenaean abroad», *Aegaeum* 12 (1995), 270-273.

²⁶ See above

foreign realms was a convincing proof of ruling over them²⁷. Certainly, we should not forget that the texts provide us with vague proofs about a convincing reference of the frescoes as part of such gift giving practice. This practice however is justified by the Tel Kabri ruling power hypothesis over the geographical district during the MBA IIB.

In details, the recent research of A. Bevan in relation with the political geography and the role of the royal courts of Crete provides sufficient documentation about the administration of a broader region where the citadel of the greater city was playing the leading role²⁸. The results of the research are related not only to the Knossos' palace but also to the Alalah and Mari in the Near East during the MBA IIB. However, A. Bevan, for unknown reasons, did not include Tel Kabri in his research, although it concerns the main counterpart of Palestine. We already know that Tel Kabri was extended in MBA IIB to 32 ha ca., proving to be the greatest city in that period of Palestine²⁹. According to moderate calculations the city numbered 4000-6500 civilians, about the 20% of entire Palestine population, that were located in the major valley of Akko³⁰. Besides, the palace where the frescoes were found extends up to ca 0,4 ha³¹.

capital	palace	city	region under command
Knossos	0,95	40-45	4-600000
Alalah	0,5?	20-22	200-450000
Mari	2,4	100+	2-8000000
Tel Kabri	0,4	32	50-60000+

²⁷ T. Barnes, *Painting the Wine-Dark Sea: Traveling Aegean Fresco Artists in the Middle and Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean*, Columbia, 2008 p. 97-98.

²⁸ A. Bevan, «Political Geography and Palatial Crete», *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 23/1 (2010), 27-54. M. H. Wiener, Trade and Rule in Palatial Crete, The Function of the Minoan Palaces, *Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciab, series in 4 XXXV*, Stockholm 1987, p. 261-267.

²⁹ N. Scheftelowitz, «Kabri», *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 5 Jerusalem 2008, 1894-1895. A. Yasur-Landau, E. Cline, G. Pierce, «Middle Bronze Age Settlement Patterns in the Western Galilee, Israel», *Journal of Field Archaeology*, vol. 33 (2008), 17-18.

³⁰ A. Yasur-Landau, E. Cline, G. Pierce, «Middle Bronze Age Settlement Patterns in the Western Galilee, Israel», *Journal of Field Archaeology*, vol. 33 (2008), 17-18.

³¹ *Ibid.*

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The results of the research upon the political geography of Tel Kabri during MBA IIB could be similarly addressed also to Knossos, Alalah and Mari, according to the research of A. Bevan³². We should not argue about the legitimacy of ruling administration of such a small city like Tel Kabri –in contrast to the other major ones in the region – as it was not only controlling exclusively almost the entire valley of Akko and its significant road map, including Via Maris, but also the maritime transportation using the port located in Nahariya and other cities.

These elements justify our assumption that Tel Kabri is one of the most important cities of MBA IIB. The leading strategic location and its rapid development seem to be the main reason of forming a ruling net in the major region Near East and Aegean on the base of contracting diplomatic relation and treaties with other political powers of that period that were concluded and crowned with the common practice of exchanging gifts, in our case frescoes paintings. Although we cannot preserve sufficient documentation about the extent of that political network, still is out of place any assumption about the role of the frescoes paintings and their prolific representation also in other palaces like Alalakh, Avaris, Mari and Qtana as an indication of a project concluding in the centralization of politic rule of Tel Kabri. Such assumptions have no ground even in the case of Knossos, the original source of the frescoes³³.

Another hypothesis, such as the one that originates the frescoes painting from the artistic interests of the upper classes of that era, also it cannot be justified³⁴. The so far excavations indicate that the frescoes painting were of a royal privilege³⁵, as they are located in the palaces not mere civilian houses. We have to keep in mind that Tel Kabri citadel is more significant than it seems as the model of its administration addresses

³² A. Bevan, «Political Geography and Palatial Crete», *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 23/1 (2010), 39.

³³ A. Bevan, «Political Geography and Palatial Crete», *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 23/1 (2010) 41.

³⁴ B. Niemeier-W. Niemeier, «Minoan Frescoes in the Eastern Mediterranean», *Aegaeum* 18 (1998), 96.

³⁵ A. Bevan, «Political Geography and Palatial Crete», *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 23/1 (2010) 27-53. Wiener M., Trade and Rule in Palatial Crete, The Function of the Minoan Palaces, *Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciab, series in 4 XXXV*, Stockholm 1987, p. 261-267

to a major region governance than that of a mere classic developed city-state. The lack of local artistic decorative motifs in Tel Kabri palace proves the political significance of the discovered frescoes and the differentiation of the palace's presence over the rest of Palestine region.

If this is true, the end of the diplomatic relation coincides with the end of frescoes presence in Tel Kabri. Tel Kabri palace and its frescoes were destroyed before 1540 B.C., most probably between 1610-1580 B.C.³⁶ We see also that the fresco decoration in Alalakh palace are too destroyed in the same period, while for the frescoes in Avaris' we date their destruction in ca 1600 B.C.³⁷. The excavations showed that the Tel Kabri frescoes had special treatment. E. Cline, one of the archaeologists that participated in the project in Tel Kabri, in one of his speeches delivered in George Washington University, pointed that «*it is interesting to note that the fresco fragments were found face down on the ground, which helped preserve their color. For some reason, someone had torn the painting off the wall*». If Cline's assumption is true, then the rush of the intruders to destroy the frescoes, the utmost indication of artistic prolific creation in Palestine, proves to give an intense political meaning. This practice was quite common, as the Egyptians destroyed systematically everything that has to do with the rule of Yksos in Egypt.

Conclusions

We assume that the frescoes in the Tel Kabri are part of more complex and short time project with political indications that started and was

³⁶ C. Gates, «The Adoption of Pictorial Imagery in Minoan Wall Painting: A Comparative Perspective», *Hesperia Supplements*, vol. 33 (2004), 30. B. Niemeier-W. Niemeier, «Minoan Frescoes in the Eastern Mediterranean», *Aegaeum* 18 (1998), 73. T. Barnes, *Painting the Wine-Dark Sea: Traveling Aegean Fresco Artists in the Middle and Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean*, 2008 p. 21-22.

³⁷ E. Cline, «Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor: Minoans and Mycenaeans abroad», *Aegaeum* 12 (1995), 268-270, «Rich beyond the Dreams of Avaris: Tell El-Daba and the Aegean World: A guide for the Perplexed», *The Annual of the British School of Athens*, vol. 98 (1998), 199. W.-D. Niemeier, «Minoan Artisans Travelling Overseas: The Alalakh Frescoes and the Painted Plaster Floor at Tel Kabri (Western Galilee)», *Aegaeum* 7 (1991), 197. B. Niemeier-W. Niemeier, «Minoan Frescoes in the Eastern Mediterranean», *Aegaeum* 18 (1998), 70. C. Gates, «The Adoption of Pictorial Imagery in Minoan Wall Painting: A Comparative Perspective», *Hesperia Supplements*, vol. 33 (2004), 30-31. I. Shaw, *Ancient Egypt, A very sort Introduction*, Oxford 2004 p. 34-35.

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completed in the MBA IIB. The creation of the frescoes in Tel Kabri are neither result of trade dealings in the Aegean, nor artistic expression of the upper classes. The era of the fresco paintings is the sign of the peak of its development, establishing its ruling power in the major region of the Valley of Akko, and proving to be among the greatest cities of the period in Palestine. Its exceptional geographical location made it a link between Avaris in the south and Alalah, Mari and Qatnaa in the north and the Aegean Sea region. On the one hand, although the frescoes proved to be a short term case, found in certain cities of Near East, on the other hand due to them Tel Kabri appears among the elite of the cities that preserved similar decorated palaces. The intended destruction of the frescoes follows the complete destruction not just of Tel Kabri but of the entire network of cities that preserved palaces with such kind of fresco decoration, as well.

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Elements of Theology of Love in the Work of Dionysius the Areopagite The Dionysian Universe as Universe full of Love

Abstract

In this study we discuss and analyze several essential elements of Dionysius' cosmology from the perspective of hierarchies and of theology of love which is revealed as the dynamic factor. What we can see is that the term ἐρωζ is preferred to the term ἀγάπη as the fundament of hierarchy in an ontological and cosmological sense, Eros becoming an element of the universal order, driving each created being towards the one which is superior, in its path to perfection. The levels in the Dionysian universe are manifestations of the divine love and they are streamlined by this love and thus Dionysius distances himself from the pagan conception about hierarchies, where we find an indifference of the higher beings in their relations with the lower ones.

First, it must be noted that Dionysius, like other Eastern Fathers, makes a clear distinction between passionate love as "annexation" of human to the material and the "divine" love as a continuous fulfilment of the creature in its longing for "what really is desirable". Love creates a dynamic tension of the created beings towards their Creator, Who hierarchical communicates with them regarding their completion, while He enlightens them to make a distinction between divine and deifying Eros and the irrational desire. Thus, we find in St. Dionysius' work a dynamic of love, full of holiness in hierarchy, deifying love that is transmitted from top to bottom and is attended, imitating the God-loving minds, by the whole rational creation. We find also a "filling" of the creatures in the hierarchical sense with the "divine light", filling that creates a real ascent to the upper levels and though them, to God.

Keywords

the theology of love, Dionysius the Areopagite, hierarchies, the Dionysian universe

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Elements of Theology of Love in the Work of Dionysius the Areopagite Preliminaries

Love as Eros is the fundamental theme of Platonic philosophy and is characterized by a continuous desire which covers the entire world of ideas with the entire nostalgic feeling that surrounds it, which can not be fulfilled by anything in this world.²

In the Platonic philosophy Eros, also turns out to be a form of escape from the world, thus, the world is devalued. The Eros has the force to unite people with gods who, themselves, do not show any love for the people, being above all determinations. Greek philosophy uses the terms Eros and *philia* to express love, the first term is used mainly in Platonic philosophy and the second in Aristotelian philosophy. However, if the first term expresses the love of sensual, irrational for the beauty of the world and in some cases for the ideal beauty of the world of ideas, the second term expresses a spiritual love of man for other people.³

Christianity mainly uses the terms *Agape* and *philanthropy*, but as we shall see, and this is evident in many patristic writings and especially in St. Dionysius the Areopagite, the Fathers of the Church gave to the term Eros a Christian meaning and perspective, taking advantage of it in the perspectives of the Revelation, although sometimes, when they are referring to its pagan connotations, it is distinguished from the implications of the term *agape*, used in the New Testament.

We must note that the term *Agape* isn't used in the works of the pagan authors. But although this term is specific to the Eastern Fathers to express the Christian love, however Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Diadochos of Photiki, the Homilies of Macarius and of Dionysius the Areopagite, use the term to express a burning love. Also, in the writings of some Fathers, Eros and *Agape* are used as synonymous terms and are used the terms "to long" (*πόθος*) and "goodwill" (*εὐνοία*) as synonyms for love.⁴

² See L. Robin, *La théorie platonicienne de l'amour*, Paris, 1908.

³ Magister Pr. Gr. Babus, *Agapa si Liturghia in Biserica primara*, in „Studii Teologice”, (V) 1954, no. 7-8, p. 458. Aristotle distinguishes three aspects in *philia*: a) the love based on virtue; b) the love based on utility and c) the love based on pleasure. (See Pr. Prof. Dumiru Belu, *Despre iubire*, Editura Omniscope, Craiuva, 1997, p. 57).

⁴ Thomas Spidlik, *Spiritualitatea Rasaritului Crestin*, translated by diac. Ioan I Ica jr., Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 1997, p. 334.

Although St. Maximus the Confessor uses the term Agape⁵ to describe these realities, Dionysius Areopagite uses the term Eros⁶, but in a Christian perspective. Some theologians believe that Eros and Agape are two forces which condition each other under a synergism specific for the Eastern Christianity. If by creation, Agape plants in the heart of the rational creature the longing and the striving for the Creator, Eros is precisely this tendency, yearning for fulfillment in agape.

Thus, in Christianity, Eros no longer assumes that between divine and human would be an uninterrupted continuity, that the divine and the human would be two poles of the same reality - and this aspect is outdated also in Dionysian theology although the term Eros is intensively used - but do not leave any of the belief that humanity itself would be totally unable to draw a single intention of orientation and elevation towards God.⁷ Between Eros and Agape as they are perceived in the pagan, respectively in the Christian world, there are both differences and interactions and mutual conditioning. Fr. Sorin Cosma shows a comparative view on the relationship between Eros and agape: **I) differences:** 1) if Eros is characterized by a climb towards fulfillment, Agape is characterized by a descending in order to overflow and fulfill another, 2) if Eros is rooted in lack, Agape is rooted in wholeness; 3) if Eros is the sign of fallibility of human nature, Agape is the evidence of the divine perfection, 4) if Eros expresses the wish to remove emptiness by raising at the contemplation of the supersensible world,

⁵ The term *Ἀγάπη* is used in the Holy Scripture: in the Old Testament we meet ten times used in Song of Solomon and eight times used in the other books of the Old Testament. Jews in order to express love were using the verb *ahab*, and the derived noun *ahabah*. In the New Testament we meet it hundreds of times, in various forms of verbal and adjectival (Prof. Dumitru Belu, *op. cit.*, p. 60). The same, we meet the term *philanthropy* in Acts (27, 3, 28, 2), Titus (3, 4-5) and it involves a number of manifestations of love that can be found in Romans (15, 1, 25-27), Acts (2, 44, 11, 29), I Corinthians (16, 1-3), II Corinthians (8, 1-5), Hebrew (13, 16), James (1, 27), I Timothy (5, 3, 5). See also F Prat, *La Charité dans la Bible*, Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, 2, 1 Paris, 1953, col. 508).

⁶ There is, however, a reserve to this term in the patristic theology, because in the pagan world it had a diverse movement from mythology, cult and philosophy and to characterize the relations between men and women and even to characterize the relations between men and men.

⁷ Pr. Prof. Dr. Isidor Todoran, *Eros și Agape*, Studii Teologice, an VII (1956), nr. 3-4, p. 148.

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Agape reveals the available of God to lean towards His creature; 5) if Eros is unrest and turmoil, Agape is serenity in the endless joy of giving, 6) if Eros is egocentric and always concerned for itself, Agape is selfless and goes till the oblivion of itself; 7) If Eros careless passes by all that could not add anything to its own fulfillment, Agape fulfills the lack of the another; 8) If Eros is only human, the gods do not know it, Agape is divine, it is God Himself; 9) If Eros is man's way to God, Agape is God's way to man; 10) If Eros is trying to manage on its own, Agape gives redemptive power; 11) If Eros can give only the illusion of salvation, Agape really brings salvation; 12) If Eros is eternal frustration of the feeling of worthless and of the absolute tenseness, Agape is the pure joy of giving goodness; 13) If Eros goes towards man only insofar as the man reflects something of absolute beauty, Agape goes towards any man, especially towards those who are weak; 14) If Eros seeks for a higher value in order to assert more power, Agape is devoted to sacrifice, **II) Interactions:** 1) Eros does not contradict the agape, because Eros itself, is the natural orientation towards better, even if it is not sufficient, 2) Eros reaches its fulfillment by leaving the light of Agape to shine upon it, 3) In light of Agape, Eros is free of bondage to futility, 4) Eros is a gift given to man by God, in creation, that is why it tends to God 5) Eros as yearning for God does not butt to the passing things, becoming a condition of communion with God; 6) If there were no long for Agape, it would not be achieved; **III) mutual conditionings:** 1) If Eros is the striving to enter into communion with God, Agape is the very descending of God to man; 2) If Eros without Agape is the toil and turmoil, Agape without Eros is force without fruition, without practical value, 3) If Eros is purified in the atmosphere of Agape, by grace, Agape, in the relation nature – grace, places in nature the upsurge of Eros.⁸

⁸ Pr. Prof. Dr. Sorin Cosma, *Privire comparativă între eros și agape*, Altarul Banatului an XIII (LII) (2002), nr. 7-9, p. 51-68, p. 67-68. See also Emil Bruner, *Eros und Liebe*, Berlin, 1937; Andreas Nygren, *Eros und Agape*, Gütersloh, 1930; Heinrich Scholz, *Eros und Caritas*, Halle, 1929. For Nygren, Eros and Agape cannot coexist. See also M.M. Laurent, *Réalisme et richesse de l'amour chrétien. Essai sur Eros et Agapè*, Roma, 1962. I Eros is a human specific way of loving, Agape, M. Laurent stresses, is a divine way of loving and this way of divine love is anchored in the love of the three Persons of the Trinity (p. 71 ș.u.). See also Aug. Alex. Bidian, *Bhakti și Agape*, Studii Teologice, an X, (1958), nr. 3-4, p. 225-252; Gh. Drăgulin, *Maitri și Agapi*, Ortodoxia, an XI (1967), nr. 4, p. 191-210

After this brief foray in the analysis of the terms of Eros and Agape it is necessary to explain over and see how St. Maximus the Confessor in his writings about the concept of Eros in its many manifestations, in the work of Dionysius the Areopagite. First, is highlighted the Eros of the triune communion, Eros making known the Personas of the Holy Trinity as undivided and unmistakable and that love is the “place” as a way of existence of God. "The relationship of love and erotic coverage, one in the other, of divine Persons rejects any measure of dimensional existence, of the way to be parted, and reveals the Trinity as “beyond place”, “inseparable unity” and “undivided union” without beginning and without ending, without measure or quantity. The place of God is personal relationship of undivided and un- dimensioned love, is the Eros of the communion of the Trinity; distinguish of the hypostases “without time and full of love”, “detached from everything and beyond place” reveals the way of the existence of God, which is love”.⁹

Eros pours itself out in an erotic life-giving movement, without exhaust, movement which keeps all in unity and above all things. “Theologians, according to Dionysius the Areopagite, name God by “His divine appearances”:

“For, of the one, He is Author and, as it were, Producer and Father; but the other, He Himself is; and by one He is moved, but by the other He moves; or (when they say), that He Himself is Procurer and Mover of Himself and by Himself. In this sense, they call Him esteemed and loved, as Beautiful and Good: but again Love and Loving-kindness, as being at once moving and conducting Power to Himself; - the alone - self Beautiful and Good, by reason of Itself, and, being, as it were, a manifestation of Itself through Itself, and a good Progression of the surpassing union, and a loving Movement, simplex, self-moved, self-operating, pre-existing in the Good, and from the Good bubbling forth to things existing, and again returning to the Good, in which also the Divine Love indicates distinctly Its own unending and unbeginning, as it were a sort of everlasting circle whirling round in unerring combination, by reason of the Good, from the Good, and in the Good, and to the Good, and ever advancing

⁹ Christos Yannaras, *Persoană și Eros*, trad. Zenaida Luca, Editura Anastasia, București, 2000, p. 135.

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*and remaining and returning in the same and throughout the same. And these things our illustrious initiator divinely set forth throughout His Hymns of Love, of which we may appropriately make mention, and, as it were, place as a certain sacred chapter to our treatise concerning Love”.*¹⁰

Dionysius the Areopagite writes this: “Love, whether we speak of Divine, or Angelic, or intelligent, or psychical, or physical, let us regard as a certain unifying and combining power, moving the superior to forethought for the inferior, and the equals to a mutual fellowship, and lastly, the inferior to respect towards the higher and superior”.¹¹

Commenting on the text of Dionysius, St. Maximus states that

*“first cause of the heavenly Eros is God, which is beyond all questions and One without beginning, and if this Eros is love, as said before, for it is written that God is love, It is clear that God is the Eros which unites them all, that is love. From there proceeds and goes to the angels; that is why they are called angelic and someone here could very well find that the divine Eros is an Eros of the union, because in the angels there is nothing inconsistent, in the division and nothing to cause riot; then, after the angels, it is also called the understanding Eros, i.e. the one which is in the connoisseurs of God, which are the men of Church (...) physical is called the Eros of the unreasonable beings, love, senses attraction and, of course, the love without reason, by which power the birds fly in covey (...) natural Eros is of the inanimate beings and non-senses, it is possessed as an own innate provision, this is the Eros as a property of those who love the Creator because they are supported by Him through the life-giving movement, inspiring, natural and they turned to God”.*¹²

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136. See also Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Scolii la Despre Numirile Dumnezeiești* P.G. 4, 221A, 261B; *Despre diferite locuri dificile* P.G. 90, 640B; Dionisie Areopagitul, *Despre numirile dumnezeiești* XIV, P.G. 3, 708B, 712AB-713A, X, P.G. 3, 708AB și Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Capete teologice* V, P.G. 90, 1385B (see also, *Ibidem*, nota 357, p. 352).

¹¹ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *Despre numirile dumnezeiești*, IV, P.G. 3, 713B apud Christos Yannaras, *op. cit.* nota 358, p. 352.

¹² Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Scolii la Despre numirile dumnezeiești*, P.G. 4, 268CD-269A apud Christos Yannaras, *op. cit.* nota 359, p. 353.

The Dionysian Universe - a Universe Full of Love

St. Dionysius the Areopagite understands the theology of love in terms of hierarchy¹³ and of creature's participation to love and life of God. This participation called "imitation" or sometimes "union" in a way, which defies creatures that are in communion with their Creator.

The hierarchical structure of creation is unified and unmistakable by the *power* and the *presence* of God in it and this unit makes creature's ascent to God. The harmony of the creation aiming to the Creator reminds us of the theology of St. Athanasius the Great and the Cappadocian Fathers, especially St. Gregory of Nyssa:

“Let us then contemplate a certain One and simple nature of the peaceful Union, unifying all things to Itself, and to themselves, and to each other; and preserving all things in an unconfused grasp of all, both unmingled and mingled together; by reason of which the divine Minds, being united,, are united to their own conceptions, and to the things conceived; and again they ascend to the unknowable contact of things fixed above mind; by reason of which, souls, by uniting their manifold reasonings, and collecting them together to an One intellectual Purity, advance in a manner proper to themselves, by method and order, through the immaterial and indivisible conception, to the union above conception; by reason of which, the one and indissoluble connection of all is established, within its Divine Harmony, and is harmonized by complete concord and agreement and fellowship, being united without confusion, and held together without division. For the fulness of the perfect Peace passes through to all existing things, as befits the most simple, and unmingled presence of Its unifying power, making all One. and binding the extremes through the intermediate to the extremes, which are yoked together in an one connatural friendship; and bestowing the enjoyment of Itself, even to the furthest extremities of the whole, and making all things of one family, by the unities, the identities, the unions, the conjunctions of the Divine Peace, standing of course indivisibly, and showing all in one, and passing through all, and not stepping out of Its own identity. For It advances to

¹³ Vezi R. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order in the Letters of Pseudo-Dionysius*, The Hague, 1969.

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all, and imparts Itself to all, in a manner appropriate to them, and there overflows an abundance of peaceful fertility; and It remains, through excess of union, super-united, entire, to and throughout Its whole self.¹⁴

For Dionysius the reality is structured as a triad, consisting of the One, the Intellect and the Soul from the philosophy of Plotinus. Those triads - Louth notes – are not a static classification, but express a movement which pulses in all, the motion expressed in the triad: the sating the process, the return. Thus, the reality ordered by levels which are mediated and linked to each other takes the form of “hierarchy”. This hierarchy expresses gradual levels of reality, all binding together to a cosmic affinity with each other, which embraces the whole.¹⁵ Proclus's vision is present but Dionysius puts it in a Christian way.

Thus, as in Proclus, Dionysius's vision of reality is full of triads, from Trinity itself and the angelic ones, the three orders and descending to the three ministries of bishops, priests and deacons.¹⁶ Andrew Louth notes that

*“Dionysius (...) curiously does not talk much about creation. It's much more interested in mutual relations of the created order and never speaks of creation ex nihilo, although the idea of creation out of nothing had become at that time the normal and accepted way in which Christians expressed their faith regarding the creation. Dionysius prefers to say that we come from God, rather than that we come from nothing.”*¹⁷

Louth says regarding to this Dionysius's cosmological vision, finding the word *theophany* as the best in expressing the God-world relationship:

“The reason for this is that in his understanding about the relationship to the universe with God, the creation (although real) is not central, but neither in the emanation. We need to find another word for what is central in understanding the relationship between God and the world in Dionysius' vision: a good option would be the word theophany”.¹⁸

¹⁴ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *Despre numirile dumnezeiești*, XI, 2, , în „Opere complete”, trad. Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, Editura Paideia, București, 1996, p. 171-172.

¹⁵ Andrew Louth, *Originile tradiției mistice de la Platon la Dionisie Areopagitul*, trad. Elisabeta Voichița Sita, Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 2002 p. 46.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 123-124.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 124. See also Ghislain Lafont, *O istorie teologică a Bisericii. Itinerar, forme, modele*, trad. Maria Cornelia Ică jr, Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 2003 p. 419.

According to Louth, Dionysius' makes a substantial change in the Neoplatonic doctrine cosmology, in which the emanation is a doctrine about the derivation of the being, being derived from the One, but each creature receives afterwards, the being from the creation who is on the top of it and it can not be restricted to One, but the whole world of creations who emanate from the One is creative.¹⁹ Louth believes that the Neoplatonic pantheism is outweighed by Dionysius who, although takes on a Neoplatonic idea of being scale and also the idea that inferior beings depend on the higher, he rejects any idea that the being is sent down on this scale of being. He shows that all beings are directly created by God.²⁰

Dionysius keeps from his non-Christians predecessors - Proclus – the hierarchical ontology, but uses the concept of *πρόοδος* in another sense²¹. Based on the biblical theology, Dionysius replaces progressive rise relationship of creatures with one of spiritual *participation* of God.²²

Thus, it passes from the necessity to the conception in a participatory dimension of the hierarchy, exceeding thus the Neoplatonic cosmogony features. The foundation of Dionysian theology and cosmology in contrast to Neoplatonic systems is the distinction made between being and energy without which God could be understood in a Neoplatonic way. In the work of Dionysius the divine work does not appear as emanations of God, but full emanations in any order of triads, so that the deification of creation can be achieved by the lowest order, if it has that ability and the capacity to receive and collaborate with the given gifts.²³

So we see that in the Dionysian universe a particular stress is put on *synergy*, which implies personal collaboration thought which is overflowed Plotinus' pantheism. Meanwhile, Dionysius emerges from the Neoplatonic conception of *nous*.²⁴

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Pr. Gheorghe Drăgulin, *Eclesiologia Tratatelor areopagitice și importanța ei pentru ecumenismul contemporan*, Studii Teologice, an XXXI (1979), nr., 2, p. 99-100.

²² Claude Tresmontant, *La métaphysique christianisme et la naissance de la philosophie chrétienne*, Paris 1961, p. 322.

²³ Pr. Gheorghe Drăgulin, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

²⁴ John Meyendorff, *Hristos în gândirea creștină răsăriteană*, trad. Pr. Prof. Nicolai Buga, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1997, p. 104.

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What we can see is that the notion of ἐρώς is preferred to the notion of ἀγάπη as the basis hierarchy in an ontological and cosmological acceptance; Eros became a driving element of the universal order impelling each created being to the top on the way to perfection.

*“But Divine Love is extatic, not permitting (any) to be lovers of themselves, but of those beloved. They shew this too, the superior by becoming mindful of the inferior; and the equals by their mutual coherence; and the inferior, by a more divine respect towards things superior”.*²⁵

The steps of the Dionysian universe are manifestations of divine love and they are streamlined by this love and thus, Dionysius distances himself from the pagan content of hierarchies where we find a higher indifference of beings in their relations with the lower ones.²⁶

First it must be noted that Dionysius, like other Eastern Fathers makes a clear distinction between passionate love as “annexation” of human being on the material and human and “divine” love as a continuous fulfillment of creature’s longing after “what is really desirable”.²⁷

Love creates a dynamic tension of the created beings towards their Creator, Who hierarchically communicates with them in terms of their completion, while enlightening them to make the distinction between divine and deifying Eros and the irrational desire. Thus, we find St. Dionysius dynamics loving holiness in the hierarchy, deifying love that is transmitted from top to bottom and attended by imitating God-loving mind, the whole rational creation.²⁸

We find also a “filling” of the creatures in the hierarchical sense by the “divine light”, filling that creates a real ascent to the upper stairs and through them to God. In this sense, St. Dionysius speaks of an “order” of the hierarchy which is “some of them to purify and to purify of others and to be enlightened and to enlighten the others, to perfect and complete one another.”²⁹

²⁵ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *Despre numirile dumnezeiești*, IV, 12-13, p. 150.

²⁶ Pr. Gheorghe Drăgulin, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

²⁷ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *op. cit.* II, 4, p. 18. See also C.J de Vogel, *Greek Cosmic Love and the Christian Love of God*, *Vigiliae Christianae* 35 (1981), p. 57-84.

²⁸ See also N Janowitz, *Theosis of Divine Names in Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius* in *History of Religions* 30 (1991), p. 359-372.

²⁹ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *op. cit.* III, 2, p. 20.

An examiner of St. Dionysius says:

“The attitude of a loving God towards the creatures - which the patristic doctor found it in the Bible - there may not be imitated by the whole hierarchy. Therefore, its superior members always are concerned to help those on the steps below. The Platonic term “without envy” which defines the spiritual and the moral climate of this action gives to the Areopagite the occasion to correct his system in a Christian sense. Regarding to the pagan content of indifference of the higher beings in their relations with the lower, Dionysius the Areopagite states by above notion the virtue of love, which gives itself from generosity. The impulse which they receive from the divine condescension determines both the modeling descending from the multitude of creatures and return of those to the Creator of all. It is known that the steps of the Dionysian universe are also manifestations of the divine love. This love is addressed to all beings. At any level, without feeling hampered by the presence of higher grade, they respond with the same heavenly loving to the offering Grace, which is given as a gift. Besides the deep meaning of the structured hierarchy willed by God, is that of Christian love in relationships with others”³⁰

This descending action creates the premises for an ascending of the creature to perfection according to hierarchical levels to which it belongs and reveals the central role of love and unity of creature which makes of experience God's love, each step “imitating” God in their own loving relationship with the others. We can say that Dionysius presents the hierarchy theme not only through the prism of love, but through the one of communion, the Dionysian soteriology is not only a mystery of love, but a mystery of communion, the two realities being complementary.

St. Dionysius states:

“yet, on the other hand, persistently urges us to graciously impart to others also whatever is permitted and given to us to learn. Yielding then to these considerations, and neither shirking nor flinching from the attainable discovery of things Divine, but also not bearing to leave unassisted those who are unable to

³⁰ Pr. Gheorghe Drăgulin, *Eclesiologia Tratatelor areopagitice și importanța ei pentru ecumenismul contemporan*, p. 102.

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contemplate things too high for us, we have brought ourselves to composition, not daring indeed to introduce anything new, but by more easy and more detailed expositions to disentangle and elucidate the things spoken by the Hierotheus indeed”³¹

The existence of those created is the above of all things deity and those which are created exist and share God’s love thought participation, which is perceived by St. Dionysius as “union”. By participation, the angelic orders have become above us humans, becoming the new model of participation in God’s love and life. The ascent to “model” on the will of God is done by all creatures, but first by the angels “by the strength of the divine love and enduring”³².

Speaking of the role of angels in the salvation of mankind, St. Dionysius shows that “in the mystery of the divine love of Jesus first were introduced the angels”³³, which not only highlights the centrality of Christ in salvation – a position excellent highlighted by Saint Maximus the Confessor³⁴ - but

³¹ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *op. cit.*, III, 3, p. 20. See also William K. Riordan, *Divine Light: The Theology of Denys the Areopagite*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2008.

³² *Ibid.*, IV, 2, p. 21.

³³ *Ibid.*, IV, 4, p. 21.

³⁴ About the influence of Dionysius the Areopagite over Saint Maximus the Confessor see also A Louth, *St Denys the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor: a question of influence*, *Studia Patristica* 27 (1993b), p. 166-174; P Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius, A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence*, New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press 1993. Saint Maximus the Confessor, through his attitude towards the work of Dionysius the Areopagite determined its acceptance both in Eastern and in Western Christianity. (See also Andrew Louth, *The reception of Dionysius up to Maximus the Confessor*, in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, eds. Sarah Coakley, Charles M. Stang, E.. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 2009, p. 43-54; *The reception of Dionysius in the Byzantine World: Maximus to Palamas*, in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 55-71). About the influences of Dionysius the Areopagite in the Western Christianity see also Paul Rorem, *The early latin Dionysius: Eurigena and Hugh of St. Victor*, in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 71-84; Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The medieval effective Dionysian Tradition* in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 84-103; David Bureli, Isabelle Moulin, *Albert, Aquinas and Dionysius*, in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 103-121; Peter Casarella, *Cusanus on Dionysius: The turn to speculative theology* in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 137-148; Denys Turner, *Dionysius and some late medieval mystical theologians of Northern Europe* in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 121-136; Luis Giron-Negron, *Dionysian Thought in Sixteen Century spanish mystical theology* in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 163-176; Piotr Malysz, *Luther*

also the reality of the divine and loving mystery made by Christ who to which the angels also participated. So, angels are familiar with the divine work regarding the humans and the cosmos, fully participating in this fulfilling God's will.

St. Dionysius presents the heavenly hierarchy as being unitary, marked by a true flow of heavenly beings desire for love and perfection, for sharing God's life. This flow of love moves from top to bottom and then bottom up, from God to the highest stage of creature and from this level to the level up to the end and vice versa at the end to the first as a state of holiness and perfection.

Lowest levels are introduced in the experience of God's love by the highest. To illustrate this flow of love in the Dionysian universe, we have selected two texts which seem eloquent in this regard:

“Yet, things which partake of greater gifts from God, must needs be better and superior to the rest. But if any one assumed the intellectual to be without being, and without life, the statement might hold good. But if the Divine Minds are both above all the rest of beings, and live above the other living beings, and think and know, above sensible perception and reason, and, beyond all the other existing beings, aspire to, and participate in, the Beautiful and Good, they are more around the Good, participating in It more abundantly, and having received larger and greater gifts from It. As also, the rational creatures excel those of sensible perception, by their superiority in the abundance of reason, and these, by their sensible perception, and others, by their life. And this, as I think, is true, that the things which participate more in

and Dionysius: Beyond mere negations in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 149-162). Dionysius' influences in Eastern and Western theology and in modern and contemporary philosophy are significant. (Paul L Gavriluk, *The reception of Dionysius in Twentieth Century Eastern Orthodoxy*, in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 177-194; Mary-Jane Rubenstein, *Dyonisius, Derrida and the critique of Ontotheology* in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 195-212; Tamsin Jones, *Dionisius in Hans Urs von Balthasar and Jean-Luc Marion* in „Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite”, p. 213-224) About the influence of Dionysius the Areopagite in West see also Vladimir Lossky *Vederea lui Dumnezeu*, trad. Maria Cornelia Oros, Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 1995, p. 114) and also John Meyendorff, *Hristos în gândirea creștină răsăriteană*, p. 120; *Teologia bizantină. Tendințe istorice și teme doctrinare*, trad. Pr. Conf Dr. Alexandru I Stan, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1996, p. 42).

Elements of Theology of Love in the Work of Dionysius the Areopagite the One and boundless-giving God, are more near to Him, and more divine, than those who come behind them (in gifts)”.³⁵

The theology of Dionysius expresses love in antinomian terms that is unity in diversity. The other text reveals exactly how the hierarchical orders remain linked in their ascent to God and how they distinctly share the love and life from God:

“But Holy and Kings and Lords and Gods, the Oracles call the higher orders in each, through whom the inferior in participating the gifts from God, multiply the simplicity of their distribution around their own diversities, the variety of which, the superior orders carefully and divinely collect to their own Oneness”.³⁶

The flow of love that creates this link between hierarchies, which shares the love of God Himself, creates the creature the opportunity to participate in the life of the Creator.³⁷

In this description we can identify the dynamism of creature's love for the Creator. Father Stăniloae describes the hierarchy of love in the vision of St. Dionysius in terms of communion, showing that “the most advanced live the responsibility to communicate to those below them the higher level they reached in the experience of God through, by fulfilling the duties to the level below, and the lowers live, in the love of those above toward them, the higher closeness of those to God. This advancing of all in the experience of God through communion with each other is presented by Dionysius Areopagite as a submission of all around God, in a spiral way. God works directly on all on one hand, but on those who are the most closed to Him from a shorter distance, and on the least approach to Him, from a greater distance, which results that He works on those which are least advanced through the ones who are most advanced. Therefore He is represented as a column that rises in the midst of all, the most advanced being closer to Him by the way of the ascent spiral in order to approach mote to the column of the divine presence.³⁸

³⁵ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *op. cit.* XIII, 3, p. 32-33.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, XII, 2, p. 31. See also E Perl *Hierarchy and Participation in Dionysius the Areopagite and Greek Neoplatonism*, American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly 68 (1994), p. 15-30.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, VII, 1, p. 23.

³⁸ Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Note la ierarhia cerească 1*, în Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, „Opere complete”, p. 61.

The passing of beings through the hierarchy of levels ascending to God is not done under a law, but has love as its engine, the long for God that includes freedom. The beings have in their nature the possibility of opening to communion, to love and those who uses best this opportunity get closer to God. Therefore in St. Dionysius work we see a world engaged in God's love, a free ascent to God. Father Stăniloae shows that

*“for this continuous advancing in the light and love of God He made the universe or for its eternal deification. He did not made it in His full closeness from the beginning, but gave it the opportunity and joy to make this advance driven by its desire and freedom – i.e. people and angels – and He could not make it from the outset as Himself, a universe of infinite gods”.*³⁹

This love is called “lust” (Deuteronomy 6, 5, Proverbs 4, 6). St. Maximus the Confessor in his Scholia at the work *The Celestial Hierarchy* of Dionysius explains that by *lust* we must understand “the unrestrained love for God”, a love not connected to matter,⁴⁰ a craving for communion with God, desire unmixed with foreign matter.

This dynamic leads to perfection, to what St. Dionysius called “deification”. The Scripture, observes St. Dionysius, calls gods both the heavenly beings, and “all loving men of God”, that is the saints who participate in the life of God in love that is they stay in union with God.⁴¹

Describing the way of love of the first level, Dionysius the Areopagite shows that they are clean and unmixed with any lowering their “always support their own and unitary unwavering movement, to the unchanging love for God”.⁴²

Therefore we must see them as spiritual seer and not as ones that could contemplate the spiritual views as sensitive symbols. They are overwhelmed by the beauty of the divine light.⁴³ Father Stăniloae referring to the love of the angels from the first order presents them in emotional terms, noting that

“the first three orders are alight by the love of God, being in direct relationship with God without any mediation. They see

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴⁰ Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Scolii la Ierarhia cerească* în Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, „Opere complete”, p. 44.

⁴¹ Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, *Despre ierarhia îngerească*, XII, 3, p. 31.

⁴² *Ibid.*, VII, 2, p. 24.

⁴³ See also W. Volker, *Kontemplation und Ekstase bei Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita*, Wiesbaden, 1958.

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only Him and feel Him as they only One higher than them. They are alight by the bright love, but un-passionately. Because this love raises them, not lowers them. But they warm those below them. Warm those below to love through their own love. For he who loves not only warms from love that he has for the one above him, but also warms the one below him with his love. In the Cherubim are, in addition to the warmth of their love, the wisdom gained from the sight of God, which also hands down to the three orders below. And in Thrones the most evident aspect is the fact that they are the highest "place" of the rest for God through their love for Him, and they communicate this quality of them to the others".⁴⁴

How this communion in love with God is realized is described with details and in plastic images by St. Maximus the Confessor, who expounded the words of St. Dionysius, shows that the first orders stand and move around in circle, having God as the center.

This movement of beings around the center is a movement around the desire and the love of God, a circular motion that St. Maximus calls it "round dance".

"So, according to being, in each mind there is the desire for God and for itself as a dance around the Center. It is a motion and stability as a circle around its center point or from which it took its subsistence. In fact, through the natural need, each of those which are moving dances around God, wanting to exist by the existing itself. Thus, all are around the Emperor of all, and because of Him all exist and He is the cause of all goodness. And by saying that the first order dances closely around God, as having nothing between God and itself, shows that those in the second and third orders, that the sensitive ones dances, as said, according to them, around God through the intercession of those above them".⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Note la Ierarhia cerească* 13 în Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, „Opere complete”, p. 65. About the concept of *Eros* in the works of Dionysius the Areopagite and its implications in understanding the dynamism of the hierarchies see also C Osborne, *Eros Unveiled*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1994; J Rist, *A Note on Eros and Agape in the Pseudo-Dionysius*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, 20 (1966), p. 235-243.

⁴⁵ Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Scolii la Ierarhia cerească* în Sfântul Dionisie Areopagitul, „Opere complete”, p. 50.

Thus, this dance of love brings up into communion with God all creation in love with the King or the Center from which all existence shares.

If the first triad of angels is made up of those in whose love God rests, that is the Thrones, the Seraphim burns of fire of divine love and the Cherubim which adds to the fire of love the light of wisdom, the second triad shares especially the character of Lord and Master and Powers. The third triad transmits to people the will and loving plan of God, even a power of God through, which the believers are filled with the love of the Trinity revealed in Jesus Christ.

Signaling the ecstatic character of divine love in the Dionysian universe, Father Stăniloae explains the personal and Communion implications of this love.

*“Itself, I do not belong to you or you to me but both to a common “us”. I am exceeding myself in the link of love with you, I am no longer closed in me, but somehow between me and you, I am out of the circle of my own propriety, as you from the circle of your own property, creating a unit that is no longer reduced to the propriety of one, mine or yours, and yet not out of us both. (...) Therefore my relation with you can not be expressed as your incorporation in me or mine in you, but as “meeting” as my escaping out of myself and ours out of yourself, I stand before you opened and you opened in front of me. This mutual opening is also a mutual membership and freedom at the same time. I can not exist without living thought you and you cannot exist without living me. I grow spiritually by living yourself and you the same. It is a replenishment of me through you and yours through me”.*⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ascetica și Mistica Bisericii Ortodoxe*, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2002, p. 362.

BOOK REVIEWS

Pr. Dr. Ioan Valentin Istrati, *Taina veacurilor - unirea timpului cu eternitatea în rugăciunea Bisericii*, Editura Doxologia, Iași, 2010, 518 p.;

The work of father Ioan Valerian Istrati, *Taina veacurilor - unirea timpului cu eternitatea în rugăciunea Bisericii* [The mystery of ages – the union of time with eternity in the Church's prayer] has appeared recently at Doxologia Publishing House. As it is mentioned on the back cover of the book, the author of this work is the successor to several successive generations of priests, is graduate of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology “Dumitru Stăniloae” from Iași and Doctor of Theology of the Faculty of Theology “Andrei Șaguna” from Sibiu. He is a permanent member in 2 associations: *Societas Liturgica* and *International Association for Mission Studies*. He is also priest of the parish “Nașterea Maicii Domnului-Talpalari” from Iași, editor-in-chief of the “Teologie și Viață” journal, expert in the Cultural Sector and media communications of Archdiocese of Iași, editor-in-chief of *doxologia.ro* portal of Archdiocese of Iași, visiting junior teaching assistant at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology “Dumitru Stăniloae” from Iași and collaborator for “Lumina” newspaper. He is the author of many studies, articles and translations in the journals of the Church and also of 3 books, besides the one described herein: *Odele lui Solomon – rugăciuni creștine din secolele I–II* [The Odes of Solomon – Christian prayers of the I-II centuries] (Anastasia Publishing House, 2003), *Sfântul Ierarh Nicolae – Mirul iubirii lui Hristos* [Saint Hierarch Nicholas – the Myrrh of the love of Christ] (Pars pro Toto Publishing House, Iași, 2007) și *Metaforele Duhului Sfânt* [The Metaphors of the Holy Spirit] (to be published). Father Ioan Valerian Istrati is also the translator of the book written by Ioannis Zizioulas, the metropolitan of Pergamon, *Euharistie, Episcop, Biserică* [Eucharist, Bishop, Church], published at Basilica Publishing House of the Romanian Patriarchate, in 2009.

In the present book, the author tries to go thoroughly into “the rationale for the presence in time of the Son of God” (p. 21). The approach of this

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work is extremely important for the contemporary world, a world that the author describes as being dominated by a “pluralist society hurt by the death of its own comfortable sufficiency” (p. 21). In such a reality, “the understanding of time – crossroad of life and mysterious bearer of its own immortality, can open new perspectives on human civilization and can answer affirmatively to the fundamental question of humanity: which is the destiny of the human being?” (p. 21).

The present work is structured in 10 chapters which are unequal in length. The first chapter, entitled *A mystagogy of the personal interiority – argument for a theology of time and of eternity* comprises a motivation of the approached theme's importance (p. 9-24). In the 2nd chapter, there are specified the preliminaries to a theology of time (p. 24-31). The 3rd chapter, entitled *The time in the history of ideas* refers to the mythical time (p. 31-35) and to the time as it appears emphasized in the Greek culture and in the Occidental culture (p. 31-42). The 4th chapter, entitled *The hermeneutics of the biblical time* “contains a theological analysis of the time in the Holy Scriptures, as the basis of the ecclesiastical temporality, as it was experienced and understood in the Church” (p. 21). The research continues with the evaluation of time and of its liturgical value in the 5th chapter (p. 131-157) and with a “short articulation of the theology of time at the Holy Fathers who developed and extended the divine revelation from Scripture and Tradition by always considering it in relation to the human being's interiority” (p. 21) in the 6th chapter of the book. The conclusion that results from this chapter is that “the holiness is the key of the plenary theological understanding of the time took upon oneself and transfigured through love in the light of history and the presence of Christ in the world through the Holy Spirit” (p. 21). In the 7th chapter, the Christological temporality is analyzed, as it is present in the Seven Praises (the Daily Cycle of divine / Church services) (p. 196-209), as daily expression of the Church's liturgical rhythm of impregnation with eternity. The author considers that in the “hymns and readings of Vespers, Matins, Midnight Office etc. is articulated the Church's pneumatological respiration as life of Christ in it” (p. 22).

The theology of the personal presence of Christ in time will continue in the 8th chapter with a hermeneutics of the Holy Sacraments and of the most important services of blessing (p. 216-259) as unitary and unique modes of communion with Christ, the Mystery of ages and the Light of

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eternity (p. 22). The complementarity of the Church Sacraments “speaks in a self-evident way about the time's hidden power of offering the Life of Christ who is risen from the dead to the human being. The Church's services of blessing will show the extension of Redeemer's presence to the entire universe as eternal Life and Meaning of the temporary things and the modes of the Spirit's works of sanctifying the human life and the cosmos” (p. 22).

The next chapter, the 9th, entitled *The theology of time in the Church's feasts* “will analyze theologically the Christian feasts' value of meaning as time eternized by the love of Christ and as extension of His immortal Life in saints” (p. 22). At the beginning of this chapter there are analyzed the feasts of Early Church (p. 265-269) and the liturgical synchrony of the ecclesiastical year (p. 269-274). Thereafter, the main feasts of the ecclesiastical year are presented: the Great Feasts of Redeemer, the Triodion (the Pre-Lenten and Lenten) Period and its entire liturgical structure, and the Mariological feasts. At the end of this chapter, the author's conclusion is that “the Christian feasts are Church's mystagogical entrances in the Paschal and eschatological life of the Kingdom of God” (p. 22).

As a unique mode of self-devotedness of Christ in history, in the 10th chapter, is thoroughly presented, in a theological way, the eternal meaning of the Divine Liturgy as “moment of eternization of human being and of history's entrance in the Church” (p. 22). This research is crowned with this chapter.

The work presented by us represents the doctoral thesis in theology of father Ioan Valentin Istrati. As the author considers, the most important dimension of his theological approach is “the permanent interdependence and theological identity between dogmatic (the sum of Church's doctrinal formulations) and liturgics (the Church's doxological treasure). The eventual accentuated dogmatic component of this work comes from the conscience of this inclusive and integral complementarity. The present work is a dogmatics of the divine cult because it discovers and interprets the deep meaning of the Christian message (kerigma) in their liturgical manifestation, lived doxologically and effectively in the Church through divine serving. Also, it is a liturgics of the dogma because it shows and presents thoroughly the liturgical necessary basis of the doctrine and the mystical diversity of the dogma in the Orthodox hymnology. This hymnology is a theological summary from the Judaic psalmody, the

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liturgical expressions of the New Testament and the ecclesiastical mystical developments” (p. 22).

Instead of presenting our conclusions, we will present a synthesizing passage which shows the purpose of the present work: “The cult is... a living and doxological dogmatics, and the dogmatics is the substantial cult exposed systematically, from methodological and pedagogical reasons. It is important to notice that the liturgics without dogma is an spiritualistic effusion without content and which do not open perspectives to the presence of Christ in the world through Liturgy, and the dogma without liturgics can become an unintelligible doctrinal fossil and a restrictive system of affirmations (as, regretfully, happened in history through the scholastic separation between theology and spirituality, between magisterium and the mass of believers etc.). Without the cult, the dogmatics remains in the shelves of the Church's immense libraries, as an impenetrable corpus which is accessible only to a technical minority” (p. 23).

The present book succeeds not only to set alarm bells ringing on this issue, but also to solve the things, in the sense of an attempt to approach the things from the dogmatic-liturgical and liturgical-dogmatic perspective, and it brings an important contribution to the understanding of the Orthodox theology as a doxological theology that twins equally the Orthodox confession and the right living, in accordance with this confession, this fact being confirmed by the Church's liturgical life expressed in its services and rules. We consider that, from this perspective, the book accomplished the desired purpose and we recommend it warmly for reading and meditation.

Rev. Ph. D. Lucian Farcașiu

Jean-Yves Leloup, *Profunzimile uiate ale creștinismului. Convorbiri cu Karin André de Guise*, translated by Gabriel Sandu, Editura Curtea Veche, București, 2008, 191 p.

In recent years there have been put in the public debate some issues that have confused many Christians, putting their faith to the test. We refer to some of the Gnostic themes, professed by some sectors in the first centuries after the appearance of Christianity, and not shared by the Church, even firmly rejected as heretical. We know how much fuss certain books made, such as *The Da Vinci Code* and *Gospel of Judas*. In such cases, subjecting such issues to the attention of the readers outsiders of the Gnostic phenomenon, so strongly rooted in the earliest centuries in some Christian communities, raises many questions for the present reader.

The book was born from the talks of the journalist and philosopher *Karin André de Guise* with Jean-Yves Leloup, “one of the most original thinkers of our time” (p. 9). With an impressive work, which includes works such as *L’Évangile by Marie L’Thommas Évangile of L’Évangile dePhilippe* in which he interprets texts from Nag Hammadi, Jean-Yves Leloup focuses on the specific Gnostic issues in light of the recent discoveries. His approach was “neither controversy nor dogmatic, but always careful in relation to the text itself,” as stated in the introduction (p. 9), remaining always opened to ideas that transgress the limits of teaching the faith of the Church. Like Camus, he wants to worry about the damned like Judas or to highlight the role of women such as Mary Magdalene, trying to draw our attention to how they perceived the female figure in the dawn of Christianity.

Chapter II, entitled *Canonical and Apocryphal Gospels and* refers to what the author calls the discovery of forgotten depths of Christianity, that is, of those documents (apocryphal writings) of the first centuries to which the Christian tradition will never make reference. The author believes that these early Christian documents highlight characters, like Mary

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Magdalene, unknown and unjustly treated by history and who would be “the feminine essence at all stages of its becoming” (p. 16). The idea of this chapter is that Christianity is a religion known and poorly understood, especially in the origin and its first manifestation. According to Jean-Yves Leloup, the remedy of this situation would be made by recourse to the apocryphal statement with which we disagree, because we don’t know the Apocrypha texts, or at least in part, and the information provided to us is simply how certain communities separated by the early Church (schismatic or heretical communities) have understood the Saviour Christ, the Holy Apostles and the general life of the Church. In his doctrinal nonconformity, the author sustains the value of truth that other interpretations of life and work of Christ may have, from the Apocrypha, in general, and from the recently discovered at Nag Hammadi, in particular, not necessarily the canonical texts that make up the New Testament. The author can support such a thesis starting from the postmodern plurality of truths. Here is what he says, “the plurality of canonical and apocryphal gospels reminds us the plurality of the communities that were meeting in the name of Jesus, and the diversity of interpretations made in relation to him and his teachings” (p. 97). This does not mean that all these interpretations of Jesus’ life were really true.

The third chapter discusses *Mary Magdalene archetype*. In drawing the female types, the author starts from the canonical Gospels testimony about this woman, to reach eventually the Gospel of Mary, an apocryphal text. In these texts, Mary Magdalene appears as a wise woman, as a disciple always found near the Master, serving to transmit the most subtle teachings (p. 41). Hence the surprise of the followers of Jesus, that could not explaining how the Saviour transgresses the rules of the time which did not offer the woman such a status. The author is wrong to make the feminine archetype of Mary Magdalene, located near the Saviour, showing opening for some meanings of the kind expressed by Dan Brown in *The Da Vinci Code*. No word, however, about feminine deified in the person of Mother of God, the true image of women. The presence of the male-female polarities and their reconciliation in *Anthropos* is another idea that is linked more to androgynism than to Christian theology. In this he said, “In Mary Magdalene we see a woman who integrates her male size, becoming capable of expressing by word her arguments (in front of Peter, for example) without losing her feminine qualities ...” (p. 45).

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Chapter IV discusses the figure of Judas Iscariot, according both to the canonical Gospel and to the Apocrypha, in which Judas is portrayed as the character closest disciple of the Lord and the only one who understood His mission, for which he puts himself into the service of providence and sells Him. Christian theology will never agree to such a statement. From a seller and a traitor, Judas is transformed into a privileged disciple, into an initiated in the salvation mystery brought by Christ, which implies the Cross, as well. The Gnostic Gospel mentioned by St. Irenaeus of Lyons in *Adversus lucarea Haereses* 31 C, 180, sees Judas as the only character able to discern the true origin of Jesus “(p. 103).

From *the Gospel of Judas*, of clear Gnostic influence, we understand that Jesus enjoys being liberated of the “perishable shell”, idea which is not to be found in the canonical Gospels (p. 89). Judas is seen as an “actor necessary to the revelation of the new Messiah, without him, there had been no trial, no conviction and death, resurrection and Christianity had not intervened.” (p. 101).

The comments that Jean-Yves Leloup make even on a true events, related by the canonical Gospels, such as the kiss of Judas or appellation of “friends” that Jesus uses it at the apostle are exaggerated, trying to suggest the theses of the Gnostic *Gospel of Judas* (p. 93). Judah’s behavior vis-à-vis the apostle Jesus is explained by his membership to the group of Zealots, which is probably because they know the aversion that the Zealots had for the Roman ruling, and Christ the Savior, the Messiah, was not their idea of political Messiah “ his disappointment, says the author, would be infinite. Jesus no longer meeting his expectations, will think to sell Him. Before being a traitor, Judas is a man betrayed, betrayed in his expectations, in his hopes “(p. 95). The author states that he makes Judas the human archetype of the betrayed, disappointed human, and therefore dangerous. It would be the “archetype that” best fits “the historical reconstruction of Judas Iscariot, or Judas the Zealot” (p. 95).

Chapter V refers to gnosis and Gnosticism, classifying gnosis as being knowledge as compared to “one” (monism), compared with “two” (dualism), compared with the intermediate state (imago) and integration of three (theosis, transfiguration) (p. 110). According to thinkers called “Gnostic”, and Schuon and Guénon, Gnosticism, whatever the spiritual space it manifests itself “is a net of speculation more or less delirious, of manicheic origin” (p. 112). They prefer, instead, true gnosis. Gnosis, as op-

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posed to Gnosticism, not looking for enlightenment, but for an intellectual understanding. The author analyzes all types of gnosis mentioned above.

The short chapter called *Dogma and dogmatism* defines dogma and refers to the seven Ecumenical Councils which have developed the main dogmas of Christianity (p. 141-149).

The book concludes with several appendices about gnosis seen as esoterism, as syncretism, as phenomenology, as a philosophical truth in Clement of Alexandria or as an experience of the uncreated light at St. Seraphim of Sarov.

While referring to some so-called forgotten depths of Christianity, with a compelling title and a summary, our view is that these “depths” were not forgotten, but they were not deliberately withheld by the Christian tradition, as not essential. Instead of the archetype of Judas the Church tradition has the archetype of the apostles of the Lord, and the Mary Magdalene feminine, a feminine restricted within the female human limitations, was replaced by a female deified in the person of the Virgin Mother. However, the book has its value, challenging ideas from the first centuries Gnosticism and again began to be currently circulating through various books of echo. Nothing new under the sun!

Deac. Caius Cuțaru

**Mircea Păcurariu , *Romanian Theological Culture*,
Editura Basilica a Patriarhiei Române, București, 2009,
582p.**

The systematical research of the ancient history of the church represents a life-long preoccupation of the great teacher of Romanian Theology, Professor Doctor Priest Mircea Pacurariu. The fundamental studies of the History of the Romanian Orthodox Church prove it as well as the impressive number of studies, articles, reviews, lectures and communications or even interviews published in the country and abroad. The acrivia and the accuracy of his writings contributed to the election of our illustrious teacher as corresponding member of the Romanian Academy.

Being over the level of the expectations of those who proposed and chose him in the Pantheon of the Romanian culture , Christ's valuable servant coming from the ancient county of Hunedoara, continued his mission ,working tirelessly at the cultural and spiritual building up of the Romanian people. As a recent proof of those already mentioned is the publication of his book „Romanian Theological Culture”.

This writing , divided into seven chapters , presents a systematisation of all the contributions and efforts of the Romanian theologians for the setting up and the development of the history of the national culture from the Daco-Roman epoch up to the contemporary epoch. Revised and adequately completed with the latest bibliography, his previous studies are a natural succession of the studies made by Nicolae Iorga, Sextil Puscariu , of the patrologist I.G. Coman and the metropolitan Nestor Vornicescu ,gathered in a new book counting 307 pages.

The first chapter entitled „The Beginnings of the Christian Culture on the Romanian Territory of Today” informs the reader about the first christian literary manifestations on the Romanian territory as they result from the acts of the martyrs and the works of the theologians from Scythia Minor. Then it presents the first Slav manuscripts of monks and priests from

all the territories inhabited by the Romanians. All these together with the first original Romanian theological writings make up the second chapter of the book.

The third chapter is about the libraries founded next to the great monasteries of our country ,about the original theological works in Slav language and the Romanian manuscripts of the 17th century, but especially about the importance of the printing in Slav language at the beginning, then,little by little in Romanian , due to the iero –hermit Macarie,to Dimitrie Liubavici or the deacon Coresi.

The last manifestations of the Slav culture in Anastasie Crimca's metropolitan time ,the activity of the Greek culture representatives and the Romanian writings in manuscript of the first half of the 17th century are to be found in the fourth chapter of the work.The reader gets aware the efforts made by the metropolitans Teofil and Stefan to make the religious books Romanian and finally printing the first Romanian edition of the NEW TESTAMENT in the city of Balgrad (Alba Iulia) , using a Romanian language understood by everyone, presenting the theological works of Varlaam, metropolitan of Moldavia and the faith Confession of Petru Movila , metropolitan of Kyev.

In order to understand the complex activity which developed in the second half of the 17th century the book presents the printed bi-lingual and Romanian books , the works of Dosoftei , the metropolitan of Moldavia , the Bible from Bucharest and the achievements of the metropolitan Antim Ivireanul whose merit is that of having succeeded in introducing the Romanian language in the cult. The end of this chapter briefly presents not only the works of the great scholars Nicolae Milescu and Dimitrie Cantemir but also the cloistral schools existing at that time.

The fifth chapter is a systematical exposure of the Romanian culture manifestations due to the efforts of the bishops ,metropolitans , many monks and priests having theological preoccupations who lived in the 18th century.

The complex activity developed in the 19th century by personalities such as the metropolitans Veniamin Costachi of Moldavia, Grigore Dasca-lu of Wallachia and Andrei Saguna of Transylvania or the bishop Melchisedec Stefanescu of Roman who did their best to found Romanian schools of all degrees and took care of the teachers who had to be trained and the books used as well as the elaboration of books of speciality and the whole

cultural, social and national activity developed by all the Romanians in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century is described in the sixth chapter of the book.

The work ends with the presentation of the most well-known hierarchs, priests or teachers of theology and their contributions to the development of the theological training, of the ecclesiastical press and theological works, cronologically divided into three periods: 1918-1948 ;1949-1989; from 1989 till now.

Hierarchs, men of culture, defenders of orthodoxy, guides of editorial life, teachers and fighters for the cultural and national-political rights of the Romanians are presented in a unique manner in a work which is meant to point out their role in creating the Romanian language, in developing the national culture and spirituality. Emphasizing the importance of the church and its servants to the affirmation of our Romanian national identity the public is offered the possibility to access information and point out the complex activity developed throughout our whole existence.

Rev. Ph. D.Valeriu Gabriel Basa

Writing requirements for the studies included in the “Teologia” review

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The description of the theoretical framework of the theme

- accuracy in description and presentation;
- present interest and relevance of the bibliography used in connection with the theme;
- relevance of the information regarding the theme;

The aim of the study

- accuracy of expression;
- originality;
- relevance of the aim for the analysis and the innovation of the suggested theme;

The objectives of the study

- accuracy of expression;
- relevance and operational degree according to the stated aim;
- relevance regarding the stated theme;

The advanced hypothesis and the considered variables

- accuracy of expression;
- relevance of hypothesis according to the stated theme, aim and objectives;
- correlation between hypothesis and variables;

The description of the research methodology

- accuracy of building up research techniques;
- accuracy in applying the research techniques;
- relevance of the used methodology according to the theme, aim and objectives;

The presentation of the resultus of the investigation

- relevance of the results according to the theme, aim and objectives;

- quality of the results and their presentation according to the stated aim;
- quantity of results;

Interpretation of the results obtained

- relevance of interpretation according to the hypothesis, aim and objectives ;
- relation of the interpretation with the theoretical framework of the theme;
- accuracy, originality and extent of interpretation;

Suggestions

- innovative degree of suggestions;
- capacity of the suggestions to solve the identified problems;
- transferable value of the launched suggestions;

Remarks:

- the author is obliged to specify the domain of the scientific research of the study;
- the consultant and the editorial staff reserve the right of publishing the article according to the epistemic or/and the editing requirements;
- each article will be analyzed according to the requirements of the domain it belongs to, the above requirements being the reference framework;
- the editorial staff guarantees the author the feedback right, during the first week after receiving the article;
- the editorial staff will, confidentially, send and comment both the positive and the negative feedbacks;
- the consultant and the editorial staff will accept for publication the rejected articles, in an improved form.

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Contributions should be written in English, German, French or Italian. The article should not be longer than 12.000 words, including footnotes.

Articles should be accompanied by an abstract (max. 150 words), preferably in English. The abstract should present the main point and arguments of the article.

The academic affiliation of the author and his e-mail address must write at the first note of the article.

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF A FULL ARTICLE

- Title
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Main text:
 - Introduction
 - Methods
 - Results
- Conclusion

MAIN TEXT

Authors are kindly asked to submit the final form of their article, carefully edited according to the instructions below, proofed for language, spelling and grammar. Articles with spelling and grammatical errors cannot be accepted.

Please use Normal Style, with Times New Roman, 12 point font, single line spacing, justified, first line indented at 0.8 cm. (0.32 in.). For headings use Heading 2 Style.

For Hebrew and Greek quotations please use Bible Works fonts (BWhebb, BWgrkl), Hebraica, Graeca, or Scholars Press fonts (the latter can be downloaded from the Biblica site)

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Footnotes are numbered continuously, starting with 1.

Footnote numbers in the text should be inserted automatically (Insert footnote), placed in superscript after the punctuation mark. Do not use

endnotes or other methods of inserting notes. For Footnotes use Footnote Text Style with Times New Roman, 10, single, justified, hanging indent at 0.5 cm. (0.2 in.).

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Please avoid unnecessarily long quotations, unless they are very important for your point. Quotations shorter than four lines should be included in the text, between quotation marks, followed by the footnote indicating the source.

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The last name of the author(s) should be written in SmallCaps, the title of the book, article, periodical, volume in italic.

Books:

DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, *Spiritualitate și comuniune în Liturgia ortodoxă*, EIBMBOR, București, 2004, 109.

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DAVID E. AUNE, Magic in Early Christianity, in „Aufstieg Und Niedergang Der Römischen Welt”, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1980, 1510.

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Ambrosius, Expositio evanghelii sec. Lucam II, 87, PL 14, 1584D-1585A.

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