

THROUGH YEARS AND DENOMINATIONS
English Volume of the Conference of Junior Theologians
and Doctoral Students 2018-2021

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Editors:
Béla Levente Baráth, Gábor Kiss, Alexandra Mikó-Prém

Debrecen Reformed Theological University
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Through Years and Denominations.

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LECTORI SALUTEM!

Debrecen Reformed Theological University (DRTU) is now publishing a volume that aims at providing possibilities for Ph.D. students of Theology to publish the outcome of their research in divinity studies and humanities in English language thus providing a forum of internationalizing research findings. Also, we wish to support and enliven the dynamics of professional discourse going on among different denominations and different disciplines by publishing the present volume.

The diversity of themes among the studies of the volume is clearly illustrated as we read about the contextualization of Latin American liberation theology in the contemporary Hungarian social context (pp. 257 – 270) beside God's water metaphors in the Book of Jeremiah (pp. 89 – 114) or about the outcome of a seminar of gerontagogy aiming at the motivation of the elderly in old age learning (pp. 303 – 316), and also about the role of children in ancient Jewish families with special respect to the Qumran findings and the Hebrew Bible (pp. 31 – 42).

The Rules and Regulations of the Doctoral School of DRTU states that one of the aims of our Ph.D. programme is to support the unfolding of new or hitherto unknown interrelations among the different disciplines of theology (and other sciences) – the present volume exceeds the task by collecting studies by the representatives of different denominations, disciplines, and schools, and presents them to the reader. I wish our readers a fruitful and entertaining journey among the findings of the young scholars of the future.

Dr. Béla Levente Baráth

Rector

Debrecen Reformed Theological University

PREFACE

Dear Reader,

The present volume contains the lectures presented at the Conferences of Junior Theologians and Doctoral Students between 2018–2021. It is our greatest pleasure to say that the 11th conference was organized by the Debrecen Reformed Theological University. The conference-series has gradually gained international recognition over the years amongst theology students and researchers. The DRTU – the organizer of the latest conference – in now publishing the English version of the high-quality publications of the previous years.

Accordingly, this volume contains English publications in various fields of theological studies with authors of different denominations. Therefore its title is *Through Years and Denominations. English Volume of the Conference of Junior Theologians and Doctoral Students 2018-2021*. By publishing this volume the Debrecen Reformed Theological University provides the possibility to doctoral students for foreign-language publication. Thereby the volume contributes to the Hungarian doctoral students' international professional research. The volume contains 28 studies.

This volume could not have come into existence without the help of the Ministry of Human Resources, the Both Antal Theological and Cultural Foundation along with the Debrecen Reformed Theological University for which we are all beyond thankful. I am wholeheartedly saying thank you to all members of the Theology Department for contributing to the volume's success with a considerable amount of time and energy.

Alexandra Mikó-Prém,
Department of Theology President

2018

Christ in the Midrash? “True Messiah Ephraim” in Early Rabbinic Judaism

The narrative of Jewish disinterest

In late medieval and early modern times, Eastern European Jewry was, for the most part, physically, linguistically and spiritually isolated from the Christian society. Therefore, we are inclined to believe that it had always been so¹ ever since Judaism and Christianity turned their backs on each other, mostly because early rabbinic literature mentions Christianity by name only sporadically.² This view is supported by a traditional scholarly narrative, which is summarized by Annette Yoshiko Reed and Adam Becker as follows:

In this model Judaism and Christianity are likened to two paths that branched off from a single road, never to cross or converge again. Even as their common origin is affirmed, [...] it is generally agreed that there was a fateful turning point in the first or early second century C.E., after which “there were no relations between Jews and Christians except hostile ones.” As a result, most research on Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages has progressed on the assumptions that (1) Judaism and Christianity developed in relative isolation from one another and (2) the interactions between Jews and Christians after the second century were limited, almost wholly, to polemical conflict and mutual misperception.³

This narrative also claims the following:

Under the religious leadership of the Rabbis, Jews would choose to live in self-imposed isolation from the rest of the Greco-Roman world, just as indifferent

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- 1 Robert Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 194.
 - 2 Burton L. Visotzky, “Jesus in Rabbinic Tradition,” in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 580.
 - 3 Annette Yoshiko Reed and Adam H. Becker, “Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions,” in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the*

to Christians and “pagans” as these Gentiles allegedly were to Jews and Judaism. Even when the Roman Empire became Christian and the enemy “Esau/Edom” truly took on the garb of a brother, Christians and Christianity remained far outside the bounds of Jewish concern, interest, or even curiosity, such that classical Judaism successfully resisted any influence from Christian traditions, beliefs, or practices.⁴

Historians, both Jewish and Christian, almost equivocally shared this view until the late 1970s.⁵ For example, Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson claims that after the defeat of the Bar-Kokhba revolt, “decisive steps were taken to cut off Christianity from Judaism” and Judaism “defended itself vigorously against inroads on the part of the Christians by refraining from all contact with them.”⁶ Paul Johnson wrote that the destruction of the Temple, the failure of the Bar Kokhba revolt and the spread of Christianity caused Judaism to “turn in on itself” and to become “oblivious of its richer past, unaware of any intellectual ferment in the world outside, for hundreds of years,”⁷ as if Jews and Christians were living in two hermetically sealed universes.⁸ Additionally, both religious traditions have had a doctrinal interest in maintaining the old narrative. As Poorthuis, Schwartz and Turner highlight, Orthodox Jewish circles have wished to represent Judaism as unaffected by Christian influences, and traditional Christian theology has held the supersessionist view that Judaism was a preparation for Christianity.⁹ No wonder Israel Jacob Yuval observed that “this perception is so deeply rooted that it is difficult for people to imagine that Jews had any knowledge of Christian ceremonies or

Early Middle Ages, ed. Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 1–2. The authors cite George Dix, “The Ministry in the Early Church,” in *The Apostolic Ministry: Essays on the History and Doctrine of Episcopacy*, ed. K. E. Kirk (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1946), 228.

4 Reed and Becker, “Introduction,” 4–5.

5 Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society: 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 182.

6 Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 325.

7 Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 220.

8 Israel Jacob Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. Barbara Harshav and Jonathan Chipman (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 203.

9 Marcel Poorthuis, Joshua Schwartz, and Joseph Turner, “Introduction,” in *Interaction between Judaism and Christianity in History, Religion, Art and Literature*, ed. Marcel Poorthuis, Joshua Schwartz, and Joseph Turner (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2009), 1.

that Christians knew anything about the religious language and customs of the Jews.”¹⁰

Ephraim Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati

However, as Reed and Becker note, “much of our evidence simply does not fit into this appealing and clear-cut narrative.”¹¹ A striking example is a collection of Jewish homilies for Sabbath titled *Pesiqta Rabbati*, recorded in the seventh century but probably going back to earlier times, presumably to the 4th century.¹² The texts belong to a genre called midrash, which is a comprehensive name for rabbinic literature of biblical interpretation and commentary in the form of homilies, fiction and religious law.¹³ The title *Pesiqta Rabbati* means “Greater Sections” in Aramaic. It is a collection of rabbinic homilies for the festivals and special Sabbaths of the entire year, missing only Sukkot, which part is probably lost.¹⁴ Four of its texts, Sections 34 to 37, which might be the earliest chapters, probably originating in as early as the 2nd century,¹⁵ contain apocalyptic visions featuring a particular Messiah Ephraim son of Joseph. His description includes a surprisingly large number of Christological features as if they were copy-pasted from the New Testament. Almost all the Messiah Ephraim’s attributes have parallels in the Gospels, the Acts of Apostles, Paul’s letters, the letter to the Hebrews, and the book of Revelation. Besides, the homilies cite texts from Psalm 22 and the Prophets, which Christians understand to refer to Jesus.

Assembling the descriptions of the Midrashim into a coherent narrative, we learn that Messiah Ephraim son of Joseph is the light, God’s first creation, His Son, in whom He takes delight, and whose works God had already

10 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 203–204.

11 Reed and Becker, “Introduction,” 18.

12 William G. Braude, ed., *Pesikta Rabbati: Homiletical Discourses for Festal Days and Special Sabbaths*, trans. William G. Braude (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 26; H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. Markus Bockmuehl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 300; Rivka Ulmer, ed., *A Bilingual Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati. Volume 1: Chapters 1–22*, trans. Rivka Ulmer (Berlin / Boston: De Gruyter, 2017), 28.

13 Moshe David Herr, “MIDRASH,” ed. Fred Skolnik, *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Farmington Hills: Macmillan Reference, 2007), 14:182.

14 Daniel Sperber, “PESIKTA RABBATI,” ed. Fred Skolnik, *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Farmington Hills: Macmillan Reference, 2007), 16:12–13.

15 Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, 300; David C. Mitchell, *Messiah Ben Joseph* (Newton Mearns: Campbell Publications, 2016), 145; Ulmer, *A Bilingual Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati. Volume 1: Chapters 1–22*, 5.

contemplated before the creation of the world. At this primordial time, there is a conversation between God and Ephraim:

“There are souls that have been put away with thee under My throne, and it is their sins which will bend thee down under a yoke of iron and make thee like a calf whose eyes grow dim with suffering, and will choke thy spirit as with a yoke; because of the sins of these souls thy tongue will cleave to the roof of thy mouth. Art thou willing to endure such things?”

To this, the Messiah answers:

“Master of the universe, with joy in my soul and gladness in my heart I take this suffering upon myself, provided that not one person in Israel perish; that not only those who are alive be saved in my days, but that also those who are dead, who died from the days of Adam up to the time of redemption; and that not only these be saved in my days, but also those who died as abortions; and that not only these be saved in my days, but all those whom Thou thoughtest to create but were not created. Such are the things I desire, and for these I am ready to take upon myself whatever Thou decreest.”

As soon as Ephraim accepts this mission, “the Holy One, blessed be He, will appoint for the Messiah the four creatures who will carry the Messiah’s throne of glory.” Upon seeing this, Satan is shaken, falls upon his face, and acknowledges Ephraim to be the Messiah, who will send him and his angelic servants to the Gehenna. Ephraim is born to the earth from a blessed womb, but first, he is indicted and imprisoned upon his demonic enemies’ inspiration. His sufferings begin in the month of Nisan.

“Then he will cry and weep, and his voice will rise up to the very height of heaven, and he will say to God: Master of the universe, how much can my strength endure? How much can my spirit endure? How much my breath before it ceases? How much can my limbs suffer? Am I not flesh-and-blood?”

However, God and the Patriarchs comfort him. After coming out of prison, he rides into Jerusalem on an ass and stands on the Temple’s roof to proclaim Israel’s redemption from there. When he thus reveals himself, “all the kings of the nations of the earth will be at strife with one another,” and “all the nations of the world will be agitated and frightened, they will fall upon their faces, and they will be seized with pangs like the pangs of a woman in labour.”

Although “no nation or people will be able to withstand him” and “even seas and rivers will yield to his power,” the earth’s kingdoms attack him, but he destroys them with the breath of his mouth and gains victory in the war against Gog and Magog. Then he brings about a second redemption for his people likened to his bride.

“And this latter redemption will not be like your previous redemption, for following your previous redemption, you suffered anguish and enslavement by the kingdoms; as for this redemption—following this one, you will have no anguish or enslavement by the kingdoms.”

Ultimately, death will be swallowed up forever, and God “will wipe away tears from off all faces.”¹⁶

Jewish traditions behind Messiah Ephraim

How is it possible for such an undisguised Christology to appear in rabbinic literature? For the answer, we need to first bear in mind that the figure of Messiah Ephraim is based upon ancient Jewish traditions that seem to be widespread in the Second Temple Judaism, subsequent extra-Rabbinic forms of Judaism, and possibly even in some Rabbinic circles. One of such inherently Jewish concept is the idea of two messiahs. It claims that besides the messiah son of David, there is a messiah Son of Joseph, “a secondary messianic figure, whose coming precedes that of the Messiah, son of David, and who will die in combat with the enemies of God and Israel.”¹⁷ The *Babylonian Talmud* mentions Messiah, son of Joseph, the precursor of Messiah son of David in Succah 52a, where he is spoken of as slain, and Messiah son of David is victorious.¹⁸ Exodus 40:11 in the interpretative “para-rabbinic”¹⁹ Aramaic translation of *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, presumably compiled not earlier

16 All citations are from Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, 677–690.

17 Harold Louis Ginsberg et al., “MESSIAH,” ed. Fred Skolnik, *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference, 2007), 14:112; Peter Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus: How Judaism and Christianity Shaped Each Other* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 236–237. For more on his figure, see Charles C. Torrey, ‘The Messiah Son of Ephraim,’ *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66, no. 3 (September 1947): 253–277.

18 Israel W. Slotki, “Sukkah,” in *The Babylonian Talmud: Seder Mo’ed*, ed. Rabbi I. Epstein, vol. III (London: The Soncino Press, 1938), 246–47.

19 Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 104.

than the 7th century C.E.,²⁰ also speaks of Messiah, son of Ephraim. He is a descendant of the biblical figure Joshua, who led the conquest of Canaan, “by whom the land of Israel is to be divided,” and “through whom the house of Israel is to be victorious over Gog and his associates at the end of days.”²¹ His figure seems to have been originated in the “Suffering Servant” of Isaiah 53, the identification of whom with the Messiah was probably not alien from the Judaism(s) of Jesus’ time.²² According to Schalom Ben-Chorin, it might have originated even earlier and developed, for example, into the figure of the “teacher of righteousness” of the Qumran community.²³

The other religious concept Messiah Ephraim is related to is the idea of the “two powers in heaven,” which seems to derive from in the enigmatic statement about the antediluvian patriarch Enoch, who did not die but “he was no more because God took him” (Genesis 5:24, NRSV). To this, the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* adds that “he ascended to the firmament at the command of the Lord, and he was called Metatron, the Great Scribe.”²⁴ It seems that in Jewish mystical tradition, Metatron was identified with the “Son of Man” in the throne vision of Daniel 7, the angel of Exodus, and the personified Wisdom of Proverbs 8, and was granted the title “the Lesser Adonai/Lord” (*YHWH ha-qatan*).²⁵ The concept might have originated earlier than the first century,²⁶ and evidence suggests that by the time of Jesus, there were Jews who had been worshipping a second God under the names *Logos*, *Memra*, *Sophia*, *Metatron*, or *Yahoel*, who was regarded as a kind of mediator or interface between the Godhead and the material world,

20 Bernard Grossfeld and David S. Sperling, “BIBLE: TRANSLATIONS: ANCIENT VERSIONS,” ed. Fred Skolnik, *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Farmington Hills: Macmillan Reference, 2007), 3:591.

21 Martin McNamara, Kevin Cathcart, and Michael Maher, eds., “Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus,” in *Targum Neofiti 1 & Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus*, trans. Michael Maher (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 273.

22 Daniel Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ* (New York: The New Press, 2012), 132.

23 Schalom Ben-Chorin, *Brother Jesus: The Nazarene through Jewish Eyes* (Athens / London: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 128.

24 Martin McNamara, Kevin Cathcart, and Michael Maher, eds., *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, trans. Michael Maher (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 36–37.

25 Gershom G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1965), 41; Alan F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports About Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 65–67; Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 90; 97; 134; 141; Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 143–144.

26 Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 43.

being transcendent and immanent at the same time.²⁷ For Daniel Boyarin, it amounts to “significant evidence [...] that in the first century many—perhaps most—Jews held a binitarian doctrine of God in the form of a Father-person and a Son-person.”²⁸

Although according to Boyarin, these traditions “may be among some of the most ancient ideas about God and the world that the Israelite people ever held,”²⁹ the Midrash remarkably merges them to build the character of Messiah Ephraim. For example, Rivka Ulmer highlights that the portrayal is unique because it combines the Jewish warrior and saviour messiahs (ben Yosef and ben David).³⁰ However, Schäfer, argues that besides blending the figures of the two messiahs, the homilies also draw from a “Messiah Ephraim” tradition, which is different from “the standard Jewish tradition” of dual messianism and survived only in *Pesiqta Rabbati*.³¹ Irrespective of which explanation is more plausible, what David C. Mitchell notes seems to be sure: Ephraim is given an apocalyptic role in the form of a victorious second coming, and the texts suggest that the two messiahs are in fact one.³² Thus, the Midrash does the same thing as the New Testament, where, as Schalom Ben-Chorin emphasizes, both roles are amalgamated in Jesus: he is the Son of David and the Son of Man at the same time: when he enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, he is greeted by the crowd as “son of David” (Matthew 21:9), and during the last supper, he identified himself as the son of Joseph, the “Son of Man” (Matthew 26:24).³³ Thus, Messiah Ephraim’s description in *Pesiqta Rabbati* combines the single Messiah with the “Two Powers” tradition’s second divine power.

However, this merger could still have been traditional within ancient Judaism because, according to Boyarin, there might have been non-Christian Jews who had identified the second divine person with the Messiah by the time of Jesus.³⁴ As support, Boyarin cites the Targums, which also interpret

27 Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 92; 112.

28 Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 131; 135. However, Peter Schäfer strongly disagrees with this statement and calls it an “insinuation.” (Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 65–67.)

29 Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels*, 158.

30 Rivka Ulmer, “The Culture of Apocalypticism: Is the Rabbinic Work *Pesiqta Rabbati* Intertextually Related to the New Testament Book *The Revelation to John?*,” *The Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 14, no. 1 (2011): 55.

31 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 237.

32 David Mitchell, *The Message of the Psalter: An Eschatological Programme in the Book of Psalms* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 269.

33 Ben-Chorin, *Brother Jesus*, 128.

34 Daniel Boyarin, “Two Powers in Heaven; or, The Making of a Heresy,” in *The Idea of*

the Son of Man as the Messiah.³⁵ Another Jewish text from the Second Temple period where such a unification of the Messiah and the second divine power appears is the New Testament. However, the tradition might have survived in rabbinic and extrarabbinic Judaisms as well³⁶, only to be declared as a Jewish heresy by the rabbis roughly at the same time when Monarchianism, the belief in “one power in Heaven,” was declared as a heresy of Christianity.³⁷ Thereby the homilies of *Pesiqta Rabbati* go far beyond the boundaries of rabbinic messianism and come dangerously close to the message of the New Testament,³⁸ where Jesus is identified as “the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power³⁹ and coming on the clouds of heaven.” (Matthew 26:64 and Mark 14:62, cf. Daniel 7:13–14).

The pretence of tradition as polemics

However, as Peter Schäfer highlights, the description of Messiah Ephraim in *Pesiqta Rabbati* only “pretends to be traditional” but actually it is “radically new within the context of rabbinic Judaism,”⁴⁰ and lists features of the suffering Messiah Ephraim that are absolutely unheard of in any known Jewish tradition: (1) as a preexistent being, he is with God when he creates the world, (2) he is indispensable because (3) redemption is brought about not by God but by him (4) by accepting suffering for the sins of humans, (5) which even makes the creation of humankind possible. Then, (6) God exalts the Messiah and (7) gives him his own throne of glory; (8) the Messiah is incarnated as a human from a blessed womb, (9) tortured under a heavy object put in his neck, (10) prays in agony, (11) doesn’t die in the battle against God’s enemies but (12) returns and (13) brings about a second redemption, (14) throwing Satan into the Gehenna and (15) puts an end to death.⁴¹

Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel, ed. Hindy Najman and Judith E. Newman (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2004), 339–344.

35 Sigmund Mowinckel, *He That Cometh: The Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism*, trans. G. W. Anderson (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1956), 357; Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 136.

36 Peter Schäfer, “The Jew Who Would Be God,” *New Republic* 243, no. 9 (June 2012): 39; Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 89.

37 Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 130.

38 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 19; 254–255.

39 In first and second century Judaism, Power (*Dynamis*) was often used as a synonym for God (Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition*, 67.).

40 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 35.

41 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 264–268.

What reinforces the polemical nature of the midrashim is that their Scriptural prooftexts are neighbouring the one Jesus is reported to read in the synagogue of Nazareth on a Sabbath at the beginning of his activity. Sections 36 and 37 are homilies for Sabbath, and they are based on haftarot, portions from the Prophets read after the reading from the Torah on Sabbaths, festivals, and fasting days.⁴² The homilies are based on Isaiah 60:1–22 and Isaiah 61:10, respectively, which are haftarot for the weekly Torah portions *Ki Tavo* (Deuteronomy 26:1–29:8) and *Nitzavim* (Deuteronomy 29:9–30:20) respectively.⁴³ These haftarot surround Isaiah 61:1–2, which, according to the Gospel, Jesus read in the synagogue and developed into a messianic midrash referring to himself (Luke 4:14–27).⁴⁴ Besides, in section 34 of *Pesiqta Rabbati* the Messiah's followers are called "Mourners of Zion" from Isaiah 61:3, the verse Jesus did not read; this designation appears nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible. What *Pesiqta Rabbati* seems to do is that, like a knife-thrower, it meticulously shoots around the "Jesus Haftarah." Moreover, Rivka Ulmer points out that sections 34–37 of *Pesiqta Rabbati* are called "Holy Spirit" (*Ruah ha-Kodesh*) homilies, which can be interpreted as a Jewish apologetic reflection to the third person of the Holy Trinity. All this further supports rabbinic familiarity with Christian tradition and the reversal thereof for their own polemical purposes.

As to his unique features, it seems certain that the Messiah Ephraim of *Pesiqta Rabbati* is closely related to the Messiah Jesus of the *New Testament*; thus, we are dealing with an instance where Rabbinic Judaism engages with the Christian narrative. Ulmer concludes that the Midrash is "interrelated with the book of Revelation" by combining elements of Christian and Jewish messianism⁴⁵ and regards the homilies of *Pesiqta Rabbati* as a "replication

42 Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, "HAFTARAH," ed. Fred Skolnik, *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference, 2007), 8:198.

43 Michael Fishbane, *The JPS Bible Commentary: Haftarot* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002), 217; 220. Braude says the homilies belong to Torah portions *Nitzavim* and *Vayelech* (Deuteronomy 31:1–30), see Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, 677; 684.)

44 The Isaiah section Jesus read according to the Gospel account is not read today in the synagogue as a haftarah. Hananael Mack is of the opinion that it is deliberate because of its appearance in the New Testament ("What Happened to Jesus' Haftarah?" in Haaretz, 12 August 2005, <https://www.haaretz.com/news/what-happened-to-jesus-haftarah-1.166699>). However, according to Jared S. Klein and Max Reinhart, the translators and editors of Schalom Ben-Chorin's *Brother Jesus*, it is also conceivable that Jesus deliberately changed the standard haftarah to make point about his own mission, which might also explain why "all in the synagogue were filled with rage" (Luke 4:28) (Ben-Chorin, *Brother Jesus*, 195.).

45 Ulmer, "The Culture of Apocalypticism," 69.

of some aspects of Christian theology,” and the figure of Messiah Ephraim a “blatant evidence” of “Jewish response to Christianity.”⁴⁶ This engagement, she maintains, is realized through a “process in which an element of another culture is incorporated, but changed,”⁴⁷ thus the Midrash is an example of a “cultural transformation and inversion of Christian themes [...] by affirming that Judaism had a related version of salvation.”⁴⁸ She calls Messiah Ephraim “an ideological inversion of Jesus” responding to the “Christian view that Jesus was the only messianic figure who suffered and died in pain while bringing salvation to the righteous. This rabbinic text demonstrates that there will be a Jewish Messiah who fulfils the same paradigm.”⁴⁹ This is in line with the findings of Israel Jacob Yuval, according to whom the Rabbinic Messiah son of Joseph is an “internalization of the messianic figure of Jesus” to “rebut the opponent while internalizing his symbols.”⁵⁰

Christ against the grain

This polemic strategy was used not only in late Antiquity or early Middle Ages but seems to be a recurring paradigm of Jewish-Christian relationship throughout history. Writing about Jewish-Christian relations in medieval Europe, Yuval maintains that the rivalry between Jews and Christians primarily took two forms. One is desecration, where a religious community openly attacks the sanctity of the rival’s symbols, which happened in *Toledot Yeshu*, the medieval Jewish parodistic “counter-gospel,” which supports the old narrative of hostile confrontation.⁵¹ However, Yuval mentions another strategy: “to adopt the Christian language and to ‘Judaize’ it, as if to say ‘ours is greater than yours,’ thereby to expropriate and take control of the opponent’s symbols.”⁵² Writing about the Jews of Medieval Ashkenaz, Ivan Marcus calls this phenomenon “inward acculturation.” He defines it as an

46 Rivka Ulmer, “The Contours of the Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati,” *Harvard Theological Review* 106, no. 2 (April 2013): 124.

47 Ulmer, “The Contours of the Messiah in Pesiqta Rabbati,” 139.

48 Ulmer, “The Culture of Apocalypticism,” 69.

49 Rivka Ulmer, “Psalm 22 in Pesiqta Rabbati: The Suffering of the Jewish Messiah and Jesus,” in *The Jewish Jesus – Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation*, ed. Zev Garber (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2011), 106.

50 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 16; 28.

51 See more in Michael Meerson and Peter Schäfer, eds., *Toledot Yeshu: The Life Story of Jesus. Volume I: Introduction and Translation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

52 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 203.

internalization of Christian cultural elements and their transformation “in a polemical, parodic, or neutralized manner” to reinforce Jewish identity.⁵³ Elisheva Baumgarten calls it “appropriation,” containing the sense of an “ongoing process” of “taking possession” “performed on multiple levels.”⁵⁴

In her analysis of Abraham Geiger’s relationship to Jesus, Susannah Heschel calls Geiger’s “Judaization” of Jesus a “counterhistory” based on Amos Funkenstein and David Biale. They took the term counterhistory from Michel Foucault, who understood it as the alternative historiography of the oppressed that challenges the mainstream histories of kings and sovereignty “as a protest, a critique, an oppositional discourse,”⁵⁵ and coined it with Walter Benjamin’s definition of the historian’s task: “to brush history against the grain.”⁵⁶ For Funkenstein, counterhistory is a “systematic exploitation of the adversary’s most trusted sources against their grain,” i.e. its initially intended purpose, the aim of which is the formation of a counter-identity by the “distortion of the adversary’s self-image, of his identity, through the deconstruction of his memory.”⁵⁷ Heschel concludes that Geiger wished to undermine the *raison d’être* of Christianity as an independent religion by severing its link to Jesus and claiming that he taught nothing more than Pharisaic Judaism. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 34-37 can be perceived as doing the same thing: their authors try to pull the rug from under the Christians’ feet by constructing a Jewish Messiah figure very similar to the Christian Messiah and splitting him from Christianity, thus “writing a counterhistory of Christian counterhistory.”⁵⁸

To achieve this, they needed more than just the appropriation of Christian Christological elements; they had to *reappropriate* something inherently Jewish that the Christians took from Judaism even if it became alien to

53 Ivan G. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood: Jewish Acculturation in Medieval Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). Marcus contrasts identity-strengthening premodern “inward acculturation” with modern “outward acculturation,” where a blurring of identity occurs, for example in modern Jewish assimilation.

54 Elisheva Baumgarten, ‘Appropriation and Differentiation: Jewish Identity in Medieval Ashkenaz,’ *AJS Review* 42, no. 1 (April 2018): 41–42.

55 Michel Foucault, “*Society Must Be Defended*” – *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 71.

56 Walter Benjamin, ‘Theses on the Philosophy of History,’ in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 257.

57 Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), 36; 38.

58 Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 14–15.

Judaism over time. Already in 1976, Ben-Sasson wrote that the revival or re-emphasizing of ancient Jewish concepts was a way how medieval Jews reacted to the Christian surroundings.⁵⁹ Twenty years later, Ivan Marcus noted concerning the Jews of Ashkenaz that a form of their denial of Jesus was the remembrance and reconfiguration of ancient Jewish traditions⁶⁰, and their polemics were “drawn from ancient themes and images.”⁶¹ What they actually did was blending Christian themes with ancient Jewish traditions and considered the product to be authentically Jewish.⁶²

It seems this is exactly what happens in the Midrashim of *Pesiqta Rabbati*. According to Peter Schäfer, the suffering Messiah Ephraim is not only a “deliberate Jewish reception” but also “the bold reappropriation” of originally Jewish “ideas that had been usurped by Christianity and had for a long time been regarded as exclusively Christian.”⁶³ As we have seen, one of such ideas was elevating human figures to divine status using the “Son of Man” image of Daniel 7 in reaction to the Christian elevation of Jesus, such as in the Enoch-Metatron tradition. Another was the concept of the suffering Messiah based on Isaiah 53 countering its Christian interpretation. They originally belonged to the Second Temple period but were eliminated from or marginalized in the emerging rabbinic Judaism. Later, confronted by the Christian use of these ideas, the rabbis started to emphasize that “not only did they *originally* belong to them but that they *still* belonged to them” (italics mine).⁶⁴ Thus, as Schäfer notes, in the process of polemics, these originally Jewish ideas embraced by the Christianity and therefore suppressed in Judaism made their way back to Judaism in *Pesiqta Rabbati* as if nothing had happened: the New Testament had not been written and the “usurpation” had not taken place.⁶⁵ The aim was the building of Jewish religious identity, and the message was polemic: “we are better than the other; they have nothing that we don’t have; we are the real Israel, whatever they may say; and we do not need Jesus for our salvation.”

59 Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*, 555.

60 Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood*, 2.

61 Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood*, 6.

62 Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood*, 12.

63 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 270; 287.

64 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 10.

65 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 17–19.

Conclusions

This interpretation is also supported by newer historiography. For example, Paula Fredriksen and Oded Irshai emphasize that a tradition of openness characterized the communal life of the Mediterranean city of Late Antiquity in terms of religious interactions. Celebrations were open and public, and there was a knowledge of and interest in other traditions' religious activities. This "comfortable social and religious intimacy" was so deep that Christian masses were regularly visited by pagans, heretics and Jews, despite the clergy's objections. For example, in the mid-fifth century, Proclus, the Archbishop of Constantinople, "complains about Jews attending his sermons, and then criticizing their content to Christians in the congregation".⁶⁶ Irshai also mentions Caesarea, "an important outpost on the frontline of the Jewish-Christian encounter," where Rabbi Abahu, "who was acquainted with the Greek culture and language, provided his daughters with Greek education and was a constant visitor to the home of the Roman governor". He also encouraged Jews to study the Bible to be able to answer the Christians' arguments. At the same time, Origen advised a Christian friend to do the same so that he would be able to refute "Jewish claims and interpretations"⁶⁷ they might raise from the Christian Scriptures, for the possession of which by the Jews we have evidence.⁶⁸

Besides, archaeology also attests that Jews and Christians lived, worked, and practised their religion close to one another, allowing for intimate encounters. For example, in Capernaum, the church was 25 metres from the synagogue.⁶⁹ In Sardis, the shops and houses of Jews and Christians were not segregated, and there is no sign of any attempt to eliminate business competition on religious grounds.⁷⁰ In Dura Europos, an Eastern outpost

66 Paula Fredriksen and Oded Irshai, 'Christian Anti-Judaism: Polemics and Policies,' in *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Volume Four: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. Steven T. Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1006–1007.

67 Oded Irshai, "Confronting a Christian Empire: Jewish Culture in the World of Byzantium," in *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, ed. Robert Bonfil et al., (Leiden / Boston: Brill, 2012), 30–31.

68 James Carleton Paget, "The Four among Jews," in *The Written Gospel*, ed. Markus Bockmuehl and Donald A. Hagner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 219.

69 Anders Runesson, "Architecture, Conflict, and Identity Formation: Jews and Christians in Capernaum From the First to the Sixth Century," in *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee*, ed. Jürgen Zanzenberg, Harold W. Attridge, and Dale B. Martin, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 233.

70 John S. Crawford and Steven Fine, "Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in Late-Antique Sardis," in *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue: Cultural Interaction During the Greco-Roman Period* (London / New York: Routledge, 1999), 175.

of the Roman Empire, the church and the synagogue were just two blocks away, in a neighbourhood far away from the pagan temples and sanctuaries. Also, in 256 CE, Jews and Christians defended the city side by side against the Persian siege.⁷¹ In Antioch, the Jewish community was also in intense interaction with its non-Jewish environment.⁷²

Efron, Weitzman and Lehmann even claim that much of Jewish life was indistinguishable from the surrounding non-Jewish culture in late Antiquity. Moreover, because of the physical proximity of the two communities and their places of worship, there is evidence of close social relations and influence to such an extent that “Jews certainly adapted their culture to a Christian context.”⁷³ This assertion is consistent with the findings of Shaye Cohen and Robert Chazan. They highlight that the Jews were indistinguishable from the Gentiles in terms of looks, clothing, speech, names, or occupations. In the Middle Ages, until it was forced on the Jews by law, there was no characteristic Jewish dress, which facilitated “the closest kind of intimacy” with their Christian neighbours.⁷⁴

In line with Boyarin’s statement that the old narrative of Jewish disinterest in Christian society is a “serious error,”⁷⁵ Yuval proposes that we should revise our understanding of the mental world of the Jews who lived among the Christians. They can no longer be regarded as a closed and distrustful social isolate but as one that managed to maintain a “lively and open dialogue with the Christian milieu,”⁷⁶ which seems to be true not only for the medieval and the modern periods but for Antiquity as well. Besides scholarly and archaeological evidence, the Midrashim of *Pesiqta Rabbati* also support a new narrative: the rabbis were aware of the Christian discourse, the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament, and the New Testament more profoundly, and relied on them to develop Jewish religious identity to a

71 Leo Duprée Sandgren, *Vines Intertwined: A History of Jews and Christians from the Babylonian Exile to the Advent of Islam* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 416.

72 Isabella Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 46–47.

73 John Efron, Steven Weitzmann, and Mathias Lehmann, *The Jews: A History* (London / New York: Routledge, 2013), 118–123.

74 Shaye J.D. Cohen, “‘Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not’: How Do You Know a Jew in Antiquity When You See One?,” in *Diasporas in Antiquity*, ed. Shaye J.D. Cohen and Ernest S. Frerichs (Atlanta (GA): Scholars Press, 1993), 3–10; Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 184–185.

75 Boyarin, “Two Powers in Heaven,” 5.

76 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 28–29.

greater extent than we formerly thought. It also indicates that the spiritual and ideological borderline between the two rivalling sisters,⁷⁷ *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga*, was far from so rigid and impermeable as it seems for the first sight, but they “engaged in a profound interaction during late antiquity” to shape their own identities.⁷⁸

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77 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 69.

78 Schäfer, *The Jewish Jesus*, 1.

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Childhood In The Hebrew Bible Of Qumran

The discovery of the Qumran Scrolls is one of the most significant discoveries in biblical archaeology. It is surprising, but the very productive childhood studies of the last century did not even take into consideration this outstanding written finding of the Judeo-Christian culture. The first study discussing the Hebrew Bible's conception of children was published in 2013.¹ By analysing the childhood related texts of the Hebrew Bible found in Qumran, I am searching for the answer to how children were treated and what was typical of an adult-child relationship. We can conclude that in the community of Qumran there was indeed a concept of childhood and being a child, and it was different from the "miniature adult" approach; it is a construct regarding social relations, gender, family relations as well. The image of children in the Hebrew Bible was not characterized by a great difference between the ideal and the reality. Analysing the texts from the perspective of a child can lead to new information to better understand the contents of childhood in a given period and culture.

Childhood studies

The birth of childhood studies as a new scientific discipline is linked to the beginning of the sixties. This is the time when Ariés' book, the *Centuries of Childhood*² was published, and it had an extremely inspiring effect on childhood research and theories. Its effect can be called "enigmatic"³, since Ariés was not the first studying the historical changes of views and conceptions regarding childhood, and he was not the first either to talk about the historical and cultural definiteness of conception of children. Almost half a century

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- 1 Parker, Julie Faith, *Valuable and Vulnerable: Children in the Hebrew Bible, Especially the Elisha Cycle* (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 2013)
 - 2 Ariés, Philippe, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vintage, 1962)
 - 3 Ben-Amos, Ilana Krausman, *Adolescence as a cultural invention: Philippe Ariés and the sociology of youth*. *History of the Human Sciences* 8, No. 2 (1995): 69–89.

before George Payne's book was published in which the author attempted to "trace in consecutive and co-ordinate fashion the development among races and nations the progress of the human race in its attitude toward children"⁴. There is another book as well, its author is Jan Hendrik van den Berg, which was written earlier than the *Centuries of Childhood*. In the work of Van den Berg⁵, as it was pointed out by Béla Pukánszky, "we can find a number of similarities with the thesis discussed later by the French historian. Berg's book has almost completely remained outside of the interest of those concerned with the subject, even though the accuracy of his analyses and the definiteness of his conclusions in many cases exceed that of Ariés' work."⁶ It states that before Rousseau none of the works concerning childhood mention the phase of maturation, and he thinks the reason for this is due to the maturation phase not existing in the form it exists today. It is similar to Ariés' statement, which inspired the arguments and researches leading to the evolution of childhood studies as a discipline: "in medieval society the sentiment of childhood did not exist"⁷.

Since its beginnings, childhood studies became an independent discipline. Many comprehensive works have been published. The six volumes of *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family*⁸ were published in 2010, and it discusses the same topics from the antiquity to modern times: the cultural, social, economic, religious, medical and political changes in domestic life. Another overview titled *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*⁹ summarizes the main questions and viewpoints, and further possible perspectives of the studies. The pages of *Oxford Bibliographies Childhood Studies*¹⁰ provide regularly updated overview of the literature.

Influenced by Ariés, first the conception of children in the Medieval Age was discussed, and later the times of the Roman Empire and the early Christian period was examined. The comprehensive handbook of Grubbs

4 Payne, George Henry, *The Child in Human Progress* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), 6.

5 Berg, Jan Hendrik van den, *Metabletica of Leer der veranderingen. Beginselen van een historische psychologie* (Nijkerk, 1956)

6 Pukánszky Béla, *A gyermek a 19. századi magyar neveléstani kézikönyvekben. Iskolakultúra*. (Pécs, 2005), 13.

7 Ibid, 125.

8 Foyster, Elizabeth and Marten, James, eds., *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family: Volumes 1-6*. The Cultural Histories Series. (Bloomsbury Academic, 2010)

9 Qvortrup, J., Corsaro, W. and Honig, M., eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)

10 "Oxford Bibliographies Childhood Studies", accessed March 5, 2018 <http://oxfordbibliographiesonline.com>

and Parkin¹¹ discusses childhood research studies regarding the period starting from the archaic Grecian Age to the early Christianity.

The most comprehensive list of childhood studies was compiled by Ville Vuolanto's¹² team, it lists over 2000 bibliography items.

Childhood studies regarding ancient Israel

Before moving to the childhood studies discussing the Hebrew Bible, I think it is worth briefly highlighting the most significant works discussing or mentioning the education of children, pedagogy practices and traditions in ancient Israel. The early works regarding ancient Israel usually did not pay much attention to children. But there are exceptions. Almost one quarter of *The Culture of Ancient Israel*¹³ by Carl Heinrich Cornill, published in 1914, discusses the education of children. Roland de Vaux¹⁴ tried to describe what it was like to be a child in ancient Israel by using biblical texts regarding children and anthropological comparisons. André Lemaire¹⁵ examined what role schools and study materials used in them played in the evolution of the biblical canon. Crenshaw¹⁶ also discuss the matter of schools, and the hypothesis regarding their existence, mostly based on the analysis of wisdom literature of Israel. A newer and great review in this topic is Demsky's excerpt, published in 2007 in the 6th Volume of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*¹⁷. In 2012, a book was published discussing the conception of children in Judaism,

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- 11 Grubbs, Judith Evans and Parkin, Tim, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*. (Oxford: University Press, 2013)
 - 12 Vuolanto, Ville, ed. "Children in the Ancient World and the Early Middle Ages." Accessed November 30, 2020. https://www.academia.edu/16942580/Children_in_the_Ancient_World_and_the_Early_Middle_Ages_A_Bibliography_2015_?auto=download
 - 13 Cornill, Carl Heinrich, *The Culture of Ancient Israel* (Chicago: Open Court, 1914) (The referred chapter: The Education of Children in Ancient Israel, 68–100)
 - 14 De Vaux, Roland, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961)
 - 15 Lemaire, André, *Les Écoles et la Formation de la Bible dans l'Ancien Israël* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981)
 - 16 Crenshaw, James L., *Education in Ancient Israel. Across the Deadening Silence* (New York: Doubleday, 1998)
 - 17 Demsky, Aaron, "Education in the Biblical Period." in *Encyclopedia Judaica*. 6. ed. Skolnik, Fred (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007) 381–398.

Christianity and Islam, compiled by Bunge¹⁸; the studies of Dorff¹⁹ and Sasso²⁰ in the book discuss the theme of child in the law and Jewish traditions.

Childhood studies regarding the Hebrew Bible

The analysis of the Hebrew Bible from the point of childhood had been absent from the scientific interest for a long time. The first work discussing this matter specifically was published a few years ago.²¹ Before that time, the concept of children in the Hebrew Bible was usually mentioned only in passing, in works with more comprehensive subjects. These more comprehensive subjects typically were the following: society in ancient Israel, role of women in biblical Israel (especially regarding marriage, pregnancy, giving birth, role of a mother, relations to the child), and of course the topic of ancient Hebrew family. Cohen compiled *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*²². Parts of his book^{23 24} discuss the role of children in a Jewish family. The study of King and Stager builds on texts and archaeological findings²⁶, primarily discussing the life of boys; the work of Borowski²⁷ also builds on texts and archaeological findings, and it briefly discusses the life of children in the chapters about family and

18 Bunge, Marcia J., ed., *Children, Adults and Shared Responsibilities. Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives* (Cambridge: University Press, 2012)

19 Dorff, Elliot N., "The concept of the child embedded in Jewish law." in *Children, Adults and Shared Responsibilities. Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. ed Bunge, Marcia J. (Cambridge: University Press, 2012) 19-38.

20 Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg: *Children's spirituality in the Jewish narrative tradition*. in *Children, Adults and Shared Responsibilities. Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. ed Bunge, Marcia J. (Cambridge: University Press, 2012) 39-58.

21 Parker, Julie Faith: *Valuable and Vulnerable: Children in the Hebrew Bible, Especially the Elisha Cycle* (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 2013)

22 Cohen, Shaye J.D., ed., *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*. (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 1993)

23 Reinhartz, Adele, "Parents and Children: A Philonic Perspective." in: *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*. ed. Cohen (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 1993) 61-88

24 Kraemmer, Ross S., "Jewish Mothers and Daughters in the Greco-Roman World." in: *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*. ed. Cohen (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 1993) 89-112

25 Martin, Dale B., "Slavery and the Ancient Jewish Family." in: *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*. ed. Cohen (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 1993) 113-129

26 King, Philip J. and Stager, E. Lawrence, *Life in Biblical Israel*. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001)

27 Borowski, Oded, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*. Society of Biblical Literature Archeology and Biblical Studies 5. (Atlanta, 2003)

life cycles. The life of girls is described in the book of Ebeling²⁸. The study of Block²⁹ discussed the role of children in society and the language of the Hebrew Bible regarding children. The work of Zuck³⁰ is the first which has the child as its main topic, but it must be added that it uses not only the Hebrew Bible, but also the writings of the Old and New Testament. The *Child in the Bible*³¹ is an outstanding collection of essays.

The Qumran findings and the Hebrew Bible

The papyrus and pergamen findings known as the Qumran or Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered between 1947 and 2017. The two terms are not interchangeable, since the Dead Sea Scrolls contain other findings as well besides the archaeological finding discovered in the twelve Qumran Caves. The texts found in the caves originate from the 3rd Century B.C. and the year 68 A.D. Except for the Book of Esther, the texts contain parts of all the writings of the Hebrew Bible. The significance of the findings is well underlined, not only by their number, but by the fact that they are more than 1000 years older than the so-called Masoretic Texts.

Using the term Hebrew Bible has a number of reasons. First of all, it defines exactly the writings belonging to this category, and second, it decreases the connection to theological interpretations or traditions originating from other terms (for instance Old Testament). But the expression is not fully accurate, since it does not contain writings in the Hebrew language only.

The questions and the purpose of the study, and the methodology applied

The main question of the present study is what the remains of the Hebrew Bible tells us about the concept of children in the Qumran community. A linguistics analysis is not enough on its own to understand the childhood concept of a given era, but it allows us to get more familiar with how people of that age thought of children. This study uses only the texts found in Qumran. Naturally, in the future, the other text fragments shall be evaluated besides

28 Ebeling, Jenny R., *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (London: T&T Clark. 2010)

29 Block, Daniel: "Marriage and Family in Ancient Israel" in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*. ed. Campbell, Ken M. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity. 2003)

30 Zuck, Roz B.: *Precious in His Sight: Childhood and Children in the Bible*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker. 1996)

31 Bunge, Marcia J., ed., *Child in the Bible*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008)

the Hebrew Bible for the childhood analysis of the Qumran community's heritage.

The Qumran biblical texts were provided by the work of Eugene Ulrich³² of 2010, and also the work of Abegg, Flint and Ulrich³³ published ten years earlier, together with the English translation.

I have made a list of texts, which apply to childhood or young age. I have sorted them into groups, analysed them in their context, and wherever it was possible, examined their etymology. I have used the resources of the application Blue Letter Bible³⁴, containing, among others, concordances, Hebrew and Aramaic dictionaries (for instance the German translation of Genesius and English translation of Tregelles), and commentaries.

Besides, I have also tried to evaluate certain passages from a child-centred viewpoint.

Results

Dimensions of view and concept of children in the Hebrew Bible

Béla Pukánszky³⁵ separates the concept of childhood into two parallel dimensions: the idealized view and the practical conception of children. There are a number of texts that depict the child ideal with the characteristics of a perfect child (obeys parents, respects mother and father, does not follow the path of evil, etc.) Beside this point, the child as a human being is considered to be the creation and the image of God. The child's dignity comes partly from this, partly from that the child is the representative of God on Earth in Creation.

The view of children in the Hebrew Bible is parallel with the view of man: the relation of the child to the parents is the preview of the relation of adults to the Heavenly Father. The image of the child is also used as a symbol for the entirety of the nation and Israel, as the children of God.

Even though the Hebrew Bible sets the standards high for raising children, and for the ideal of childhood and manhood, it does not turn them into a

32 Ulrich, Eugene, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants* (Leiden: Brill, 2010)

33 Abegg Jr., Martin, Flint, Peter and Ulrich, Eugene, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time* (San Francisco: Harper, 1999)

34 <https://www.blueletterbible.org/> accessed November 20, 2020

35 Pukánszky Béla, *A gyermek a 19. századi magyar neveléstani kézikönyvekben.* (Pécs: Iskolakultúra 2005)

myth. Expectations always portrayed as promises of God, and they suggest that the only solution in realizing the ideal is the dependence on God.

Another group of texts discusses the nature of children. One of the typical statements can be found in the Proverbs: *“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”* This statement joins the anthropological dimension of the Hebrew view of children (the human nature is corrupted) with the dimension of the conception of children which describes the practices of educating a child (*“rod of correction”*).

The conception of children in these writings reflects the Hebrew Bible’s mentality regarding raising a child. It can be described as “redemptive pedagogy”. The purpose of pedagogy is to familiarize the children with the Hebrew Bible’s image of God, to have the children internalize this image, because this sets the relationship of man to God on its correct course, meaning that the mentality and character of man will be in line with the law of God, and ultimately that is the reflection of godlike character.

Words of childhood and youth in the Hebrew Bible

The Qumran community had a rich set of expressions with regard to relationship with children. One group of terms describes phases of life: infant/child nursed (*yanek*), child no longer breastfed (*gamul*), toddler (*taph*), small child (*owlel*), boy in puberty (*elem*), young girl/boy (*na’ar, na’ara*), boy (*yeled*), virgin (*betula*), maiden (*almah*), bachelor (*bachur*). It must be noted, as a good example that childhood and youth is the ideological and sociological product of each historical age a special and structural ingredient of the given societies, that females were called not only maiden prior to marriage, but also virgin. But, there is no mentioning of virginity for males as the synonym of unmarried state.

Looking into distinguishable lifetime phases there is another custom besides the circumcision of boys when they are eight days old, which had taken place in every family. Book of Genesis 21:8 states that Abraham had a celebration when Isaac was separated from his mother’s breast. Both Jewish and Christian sources mention the age of 12 to 13 years old as a lifetime phase of adulthood (*bár micvá; Jesus in the temple when 12 years old*), but the Hebrew Bible does not know about this. The texts distinguish the 8th day, becoming one month old, 5 years old, and also 20 and 60 years old. Ecclesiastes and Psalm 110 uses the terms of childhood (*yalduwth*), and youth (*bechurrowth* and *shacharuwth*). These abstract terms marking life cycle phases can be found in the Hebrew Bible only in these locations, but they show that the age between 5 and 20 was also broken into a number

of phases. Ezekiel compares Jerusalem to the development of a girl, when he describes the lifetime phase where her body grows, she decorates herself with jewels, her breasts develop and she lets her hair grow long.

Another group of words are connected to the fact that the child is the successor of the family: son (*ben*), daughter (*bath*), seed (*zehrah*), firstborn (*bakar*). The expression „*na'uwv*” can also be found, a general term meaning the childhood and young age together; it refers to the fact that the person still lives in his/her father's house. There is also an expression meaning an orphaned child (*yathowm*). The analysis showed that there is no definite line between childhood, young age and adulthood. There is no ritual marking the beginning of adulthood. Not even marriage means the beginning of adulthood, but it means a significant change due to moving to the family of the husband. We can conclude that they knew about the various phases leading to adulthood, and these were further distinguished based on gender.

The use of words also reflects the status in the community and prestige as well. The male children are mentioned almost ten times more frequently than female children, well reflecting the mentality of a patriarchal society.

The Hebrew Bible on the value of children

Ancient Jews considered children to be very valuable. It is underlined by the rich set of words applying to various lifetime phases, and also by the fact that according to narratives still in existence the birth of a child is always connected to the image of a Creator God.

The concept of conception is also present in the texts, as the seed of the man conceived in the fertile womb of the mother, but the ability to conceive is always the result of the intervention of God.³⁶ The child is a gift from God, but it is also the heritage of God. Parents are responsible for the heritage entrusted to them.

The Hebrew Bible on the education of children

The scrolls of the Hebrew Bible were considered inspired, “sacred” in the Qumran community as they were advice from God to be followed and realized. These contain sections directly concerning the education of children. Other sections let us glimpse indirectly into how ceremonial rules, celebrations, or the knowledge of “sacred” history influenced the mentality of children. These latter topics have not been discussed in childhood studies.

36 Block, Daniel, “Marriage and Family in Ancient Israel.” in: *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*. ed. Campbell, Ken M. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity. 2003)

Even though they provide much valuable information for the reconstruction of the perspective of children, and the child centred interpretation („childish”, „childist”, „childism” or „NYA” *not-yet-adult* – the terminology is not yet uniform) of the Hebrew Bible. First, I will discuss these in a few examples, next I will move onto the texts directly discussing educating children. Most of these are also discussed by existing literature.

Israel’s community celebrations meant an important indirect tool in educating the children. Three times a year they went to Jerusalem for celebrations. For men and boys, it was mandatory, but usually the entire family accompanied the patriarch. These occasions, in the early spring, in the middle of summer and immediately following harvest at autumn. They must have made a serious impression on the children. The pilgrims had to evoke Israel’s “sacred” history and the proof of being led by God. They could learn the songs of the nation, they heard the repetition of God’s commandments chanted, and these, therefore, were memorised. This experience was intertwined with the effects of the environment and the feeling of social interaction. In Jerusalem, celebration must have inspired the imagination and emotions of the children. The celebrations lasted approximately a whole month. These happenings, ceremonies, influences, the question of the children and the answers received were important tools in education. The social nature of the events, the interest and the natural inspiration of imagination all supported the internalising and deepening of the knowledge.

Examining the texts directly concerned with educating the child, the following can be concluded, in time sequence from the conception of the child. With regards to pregnancy, only one advice remained: the mother of Samson followed the rules of the Nazarenes. The description of what to do at childbirth can be found at *Ezekiel 16:3-4*. Hebrew children might have been breastfeeding until the age of three or longer; the nurse may have played a very significant role in the life of the child or the family (for instance Deborah, the nurse of Rebecca).

Education started at a very early age; in the scroll of Isaiah, it is stated that it must be started when the child had just stopped breastfeeding. The term used here (*yarah*) means teaching, directing, helping one to reach the target, passing on knowledge; it carries the meaning of knowledge and discipline together. The *Fifth Book of Moses* emphasizes the most the importance of educating children, and summarizes the “law” that all fathers must teach their children. Amongst the findings of the Qumran Community thirty copies of this book were found, which shows very well how seriously God’s instructions were taken to educate children and youngsters. The only book

that had more copies found was the *Book of Psalms*, with 36 copies (which is a book of songs helping teach as well).

We can conclude that the “*houseful*” of the patriarch meant both school and religious community. Besides the mother, the male members of the family were also obligated to take part in providing the preparation for life ahead and religious education. The most outstanding proof of this is the *Book of Proverbs*, which contains the teachings, advice and remonstrance of a father to his child. Block analyses this book in detail from an education point of view, and looks at the terminology used (regarding students, approach to studies, teaching methodology, etc.). Based on the examination of the Qumran texts, I did not find any new knowledge compared to that.³⁷

I consider noteworthy the *6th verse of 22nd Chapter of Book of Proverbs*, which says “*Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.*” The expression translated as “train up” is *chanak* in Hebrew, which means literally to put something into someone’s mouth, to make him/her taste it, but it also means to start off, to initiate. The next part of the sentence means in literal translation: the mouth, beginning, entrance of his/her way. The meaning of the text, reminding us almost of a pun, that at the beginning of development the teachings shall be adjusted to the child just as carefully as solid food are given to a toddler in the beginning.

Summary

The Hebrew Bible has a number of statements regarding children, therefore, analysing it from a childhood study point of view is worthwhile. The concept of being a child is a construct reflecting social relations, gender and family relations as well. Analysing the Hebrew Bible from the more detailed and comprehensive, child centred perspective can lead to information to better understand the contents of childhood in a given period and culture.

37 Block, Daniel, “Marriage and Family in Ancient Israel.” in: *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*. ed. Campbell, Ken M. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity. 2003)

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Plant Ethics and Theology

„Rand-Dasein” of plants

Understandably, plants are not the main focus of traditional systematic theological thinking, and plant ethics are even less so. Nevertheless, with the apperception of the uncomfortable and threatening effects of our current ecological crisis arises a considerable and pressing need for the articulation of ecclesial and theological positions (e.g. in relation to the emerging ethical dilemmas of genetic modification and genome editing techniques, the drastic decline in biodiversity in modern strategies of agriculture addressing global and local food issues, or the rapidly developing hybrid technologies of biorobotics).

Neglecting plants is not specific to theology: the dimension of plant existence is generally outside the interest of human sciences. Plants form only a background, a staffage. They do not have any influence on the noblest human activity and the upright thought, their existence is insignificant, negligible and marginal, possessing only a “Rand-Dasein”.¹ This approach is also typical of our everyday attitude to plants, as James H. Wandersee and Elisabeth E. Schussler point out in their analysis of the phenomenon of “plant blindness”.² They argue that the vast majority of the American population is more interested in animals than in plants and often, they do not even acknowledge the very presence of the plants surrounding them. The term “plant blindness” refers to: the inability to recognize plants in biosphere and human relationships, the insensitivity to the aesthetic beauty and unique physiological characteristics of plants, and the belief that plants are inferior to animals, not worthy of human attention. In the light of recent findings,

1 Ulrich H. J. Körtner, “Bioethik nichtmenschlicher Lebensformen” in *Handbuch der Evangelischen Ethik*, eds. Wolfgang Huber, Thorsten Meireis and Hans-Richard Reuter (München: C.H. Beck, 2015), 621.

2 James H. Wandersee and Elisabeth E. Schussler “Toward a Theory of Plant Blindness,” *Plant Science*, 47, no.1 (Spring 2001): 2–9.

plant blindness is most probably of ancient origin: we pay instinctively more attention to our fellow humans and to animals than to plants (moreover, we often do not even realize that plants around us are actually *living* beings). Although it may seem at first a modern phenomenon, plant blindness was present throughout history: the antique and medieval botanical interest also focused on the benefits of plants (primarily in the field of food and medicine) instead of researching the specificities of vegetal life forms. In Matthew Hall's words, plant blindness harks back to a deeply ingrained "cultural-philosophical attitude".³

Our increasing alienation from nature, the constraint of regulation and dominance of the processes of non-human living organisms makes us insensitive to other forms of life. The artificially created distance, at the same time, arouses nostalgia for lost ancestral nature (the lost garden of Eden). This paradox is reflected in the biophilia- and biophobia-theories of the late twentieth century. On the one hand, the fear of nature drives us to subjugate nature, and the destructive dominance over nature legitimizes the contempt of nature, creating a vicious circle.⁴ On the other hand, according to Edward O. Wilson's biophilia-hypothesis, humans have "an innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes", i.e. they are genetically and instinctively attracted to other organisms, their physical and mental wellbeing depends on the wide range of natural stimuli.⁵ Although the vast majority of the biomass on Earth is made up of plant organic matter (phytomass), most people are not aware of the importance of plant presence and ignore the need for diversity in the plant environment. Since plants do not change their location, they are usually uniformly green (except for short periods of seasonally flowering), or, in most cases, do not pose a direct threat to man, they do not automatically raise human curiosity.⁶ However, when we are looking for "nature", we mean primarily green: trees, bushes, grassy groves (and by no means crowded zoos). Should we become more sensitive to the spatial and temporal rhythm and delicacy of non-human and even non-animal existence beyond ours,

3 Matthew Hall, *Plants as Persons: A Philosophical Botany* (New York: State University of New York, 2011), 6.

4 David W. Orr, *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect* (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 1994); Stephen Kaplan „Review of the Biophilia Hypothesis,” *Environment and Behavior* 27 (1995): 801–804.

5 Edward O. Wilson, *Biophilia: The Human Bond with Other Species* (Harvard University Press, 1984).

6 The arguments above are also referred to as the psychological explanation of plant blindness. See Yiannis Manetas, *Alice in the Land of Plants: Biology of Plants and Their Importance for Planet Earth*. (Berlin–Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2012), 8f.

despite the threats of our current ecological crisis, we could envision a better chance of a common future come true based on a supportive and sharing diversity.

However, in contrast to the historical and everyday-life's insensitivity to plants, in the philosophy of the last decade, we find a new and growing interest in the theoretical re-evaluation of vegetal existence and of human-plant relationship.⁷ Philosophical volumes on this topic emphasise the coexistence and mutual interdependence of plant and man, the (especially from an ethical perspective) previously less discussed phenomena of co-evolution processes, and present vegetal existence in the sense of a "radical otherness". Moreover, in accordance with modern requirements of scientific knowledge, in the context of Critical Plant Studies, philosophy is only one of the participating and collaborative disciplines. Paco Calvo, a cognitive science philosopher and plant intelligence researcher at the University of Murcia, points out that besides the deepening of traditional relationships between different disciplines, the involvement of seemingly distant methods of investigation is essential in order to get to know more about plant life.⁸ In the future research of the specificities of plant life, then, certain humanities (such as philosophy, human ecology or behavioural sciences) are likely to play an increasingly important role. With the spread of inter- and trans-disciplinary approaches, theology can contribute to the issues related to plant ethics with its own perspective and specific methodology. At the same time, theology is given the opportunity to review its own way of thinking in the light of newly gained knowledge and of conscious social-ecological challenges.

Plants in theology

As we have seen, during centuries of Christian theology, plants have mostly been on the margin of the orientation horizon, they did not occupy a central position based on their own existence or value. Some Scripture texts, however, make it clear that the appearance of plants (although only in the form of a

7 See (among others) Michael Marder, *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*. (Columbia University Press, 2013); Luce Irigaray and Michael Marder, *Through Vegetal Being*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Karen Houle, „Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: Ethics as Extension or Becoming: The Case of Becoming Plant,” *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1–2 (2011): 89–116.

8 Paco Calvo, „The Philosophy of Plant Neurobiology: A Manifesto,” *Synthese* 193, issue 5 (May 2016): 1323–1343.

“Rand-Dasein”) is not completely incidental. The Bible does acknowledge the creaturely status of plants, the third day of creation is only about green plants. They might not receive a special blessing, but they fit in the proper order of the created world (not just implicitly, but based on God’s affirmation), as depictions of the “creaturely banquet”, the peaceful eating together of all living beings at the end of the active phase of the creation shows us (Genesis 1:29–31). This concept is also reflected by the scriptural passages displaying the glorifying chorus of creatures, sounded in different voices but driven by a common goal (in the Psalms 19 and 148 or in the “Song of the Three Children” in Daniel 3:52–90).⁹

The theological adaptation of the ecological approach in modern theology and the newfound sensitivity to non-human creatures is demonstrated by the concept “Mitgeschöpflichkeit” (co-creatureliness) introduced by Fritz Blanke in 1959. Instead of ranking different living beings in the sense of a ‘scala naturae’, it places the primary emphasis on the common creatureliness of all earthly existence. Moreover, as Rachel Muers puts it, “co-creatureliness, for earth and its creatures at least, is not merely the incidental shared possession of a certain characteristic (being created), but rather as *co*-creatureliness, a determining feature of proper creaturely being.”¹⁰ Creatures are not separate items, but they are parts of a system, of an integrated whole.¹¹ Reflecting on the interconnectedness and functional inseparability of created beings, the widely used concept of co-creatureliness also paves the way for the deconstruction of the hierarchical world-view deeply rooted in (both scientific and theological) tradition; this endeavour will eventually be the focus of liberation and feminist theologies.

Because of the goodness of creation, every creature is valuable – the most basic common property of creatures is that they individually deserve God’s attention. One of the contemporary notions of this God–creature relationship is “creaturely dignity” (Würde der Kreatur). The notion of creaturely dignity can be found in Art. 120/2 of the Swiss Constitution of 1999.¹² (The

9 NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION CATHOLIC EDITION; also known as ‘Benedicite’, see *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (London: Church House Publishing, 2000), 778–79.

10 Rachel Muers, „Creatures” in *Systematic Theology of Climate Change: Ecumenical Perspectives*, eds. Michael S. Northcott and Peter Scott (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 99.

11 One typical example of this integrative thinking is Sally McFague’s work introducing the created world as God’s body. Sally McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

12 <https://www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/19995395/index.html#a120> (Last

official English version, however, includes the expression “dignity of living beings”. Translation differences also highlight the difficulty of inserting an inherently theological concept into a secular context.) In the ethical debate on the wording of the Swiss Constitution – unfolding at the beginning of the 2000s – several experts emphasized that the phrase “Würde der Kreatur” or “kreatürliche Würde” is not a novelty: it also appears in the Genesis commentary of Karl Barth not just in general, but explicitly as the dignity of plants.¹³ (Of course, we must not forget that, contrary to the later use of the term, Barth does not deny the traditional hierarchical approach to nature’s order. In fact, he regards the equal ranking of animal-vegetative and human forms of life as an inadmissible boldness. The dignity of man will continue to be a distinct characteristic that is fulfilled by one’s own responsibility.)

In the ethical literature of the last two decades (both in the theological and secular contexts), some sort of consensus was established over the notion of creaturely (and also plant) dignity, considering it genuinely relevant and appropriate in the ethical discussion of genetic modification and genome editing issues.¹⁴ This new concept of dignity is also based on the recognition of a plant’s aspiration to “flourishing”¹⁵ (which means the undisturbed actualization of the plant’s potential of growth and reproduction and which is often used as an alternative to the concepts of “well-being” or “happiness” of animals or persons). Although the interpretation of plant dignity is not independent from interpretations of human dignity, we cannot consider it as a simple extension of the concept of human dignity. As the conclusion of the Swiss debate on plant dignity reveals important questions, such as the individuality of plants, the sensitivity of plants (in a pathocentric sense) or the ethical significance of plant communication, have not yet been sufficiently clarified.¹⁶

As we could see the in the descriptions of the concept of dignity, in order to elaborate creaturely (animal and plant) ethics it is essential to define what

accessed: 10.07.2018)

- 13 Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik III/1*. (Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G. Zollikon, 1948), 170.
- 14 See, inter alia Heike Baranzke, *Würde der Kreatur? Die Idee der Würde im Horizont der Bioethik*. (Würzburg: Verlag Königshausen & Neumann, 2002); Sabine Odparlik, *Die Würde der Pflanze. Ein sinnvolles ethisches Prinzip im Kontext der Grünen Gentechnik?* (Freiburg – München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2010).
- 15 Angela Kallhoff, *Plants in Ethics: Why Flourishing Deserves Moral Respect*. homepage. univie.ac.at/angela.kallhoff/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Kallhoff_Plants-in-Ethics.pdf (Last accessed: 10.07.2018)
- 16 http://www.ekah.admin.ch/fileadmin/_migrated/content_uploads/d-Broschure-Wurde-

kinds of characteristics are relevant in the process of attributing a moral role for different creatures. Based on their perspective, we distinguish (to varying degrees) between anthropocentric and bio- or eco-centric approaches. Anthropocentric theories tend to highlight that only man is regarded as a moral actor and all other existents are at most the subject of moral consideration. On the other hand, bio- and eco-centric ethics argue for the equality and the resulting equality of rights of all living beings, rejecting the tradition that distinguishes mankind from other living entities by his morality.

In the wording of the Austrian ethicist Ulrich Körtner, morality and moral behaviour are actually based on intersubjective-interpersonal accountability (*Rechenschaftspflicht*), detectable in verbal communication.¹⁷ In the light of recent interdisciplinary plant research, however, the question may arise: can we be sure that intersubjectivity and interpersonality can only be interpreted between man and man? Furthermore, does the only partially mapped and even less understood communication of non-human species have some kind of evaluative dimension that affects the behaviour of interacting individuals? Surprising insights that have emerged in the last few years concerning the sensitivity, multilayered and interspecies communication, learning and memory capacity of plants, provide a good reason to doubt man's distinctiveness to other creatures, even if we do not yet present an elaborate methodological and epistemological alternative to the approaches stuck in the anthropo- vs. eco-centric debate.

Creaturely existence and plant-human relation in the modern theology

The detailed listing and exegesis of biblical loci depicting non-human beings as moral agents will have to be done another time.¹⁸ In this paper, we examine how the newfound sensitivity to non-human beings (primarily to plants) can shape systematic theological thinking. Recent essays dealing with creation theology and related ethics mostly use the concepts of creation, nature,

Pflanze-2008.pdf (Last accessed: 10.07.2018)

17 Körtner, *Bioethik*, 601–602.

18 For this work, the following volumes can be helpful: Ute Neumann-Gorsolke and Peter Riede (Hg.), *Das Kleid der Erde. Pflanzen in der Lebenswelt des alten Israels*. (Stuttgart, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Calwer-Neukirchener Verlag, 2002); Petra von Gemünden, *Vegetationsmetaphorik im Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt: Eine Bildfelduntersuchung*. *Novum Testamentum et orbis antiquus* 18. (Freiburg, Schweiz: Univ.-Verlag, 1993).

creatures, evolution and history in general, and do not outline in detail the specific ethical embedding of plants or animals as creatures.

The chapter on the created world in Wilfried Härle's *Dogmatics* deserves mentioning because it also gives a perception of the moral status of different creatures in addition to rendering a comprehensive systematic theological summary.¹⁹ Contrary to previously standard theological practice, Härle does not only discuss creatures within the framework of theological anthropology, but introduces arguments by critiques of anthropocentrism fueled by the ecological, philosophical, and religious motivations of the 1970s and 1980s.

In the chapter dealing with the diversity and unity of creatures, Härle concludes that the artificial separation and confrontation of "man" and "nature" is erroneous, since – due to our inevitable participation in metabolic processes – we are and remain part of the surrounding world during our lives and even after death. According to Härle, the dissimilarity and diversity of creatures are not the opposite of, but rather the preconditions for the unity of creatures. In addition to conceptual unity, we can also talk about a very concrete, lifelike unity. Creatures are not only passive elements of a great systemic network, but also, in their mutual dependence, operators of its working processes. The most important purpose of the differentiated unity of the created world is the praise of the Creator. The special situation of man means that he is the only one who can make different choices: he can meet this goal, but he may also denounce this purpose, and may also bring other existents to the position of not being able to meet their original mission. The exploitation and instrumental use of non-human creatures is the consequence of forgetting of the systemic network. Man's mandate for reign, however, can only be realised in the medium of love. The above statement of Härle is not insignificant from the point of view of plant ethics either: that real cognition can only be a love-based cognition. Although it is primarily about cognition among people, it can be extended in an analogous manner to human cognition processes for animals and plants.²⁰

The fact that not only animals, but plants are lovable creatures can be surprising, although the poetic description of Martin Buber from the encounter with the tree opens this theological perspective already at the beginning of the 20th century. The sight of a tree can cast in the viewer well-practiced reflexes of instrumental cognition. However, through grace, it may also happen that their relationship becomes suddenly transformed: the tree

19 Wilfried Härle, *Dogmatik*. (Berlin–New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 410ff.

20 Härle, *Dogmatik*, 261.

ceases to be “It”.²¹ This relationship is not an illusion but a true reciprocity. The encounter with the tree is a kind of pre-language relationship, which – according to Buber – becomes a specific “I–Thou” relationship by connecting to the eternal Thou.

Paul Santmire calls attention to the natural aspects of the “I–Thou” relationship described by Buber.²² Santmire claims that the relationship between man and nature generally appears as “I–It” relation in theological conceptual thinking. For the capture of ecological and cosmic conceptuality, Santmire proposes a third type. In his view, the richness of relationships between persons and natural existences could be described as a particular “I–Ens” relationship.²³ Ens is primarily presence, rather than object.²⁴ In Santmire words: “The I–Ens relation is not a juxtaposition of a mere subject over against a mere object. It refers to a subjective pole bound together in an intimate community.”²⁵ Breaking these poles apart, they fall back to the “I–It” relationship. Santmire points out: “The Ens is characterized by its givenness. An Ens is something that does not fit the utilitarian description of the world.”²⁶ The “Ens” indicates a kind of mysterious activity or spontaneity so we cannot predict how it will behave at a next moment. Its inevitable property is also the beauty that derives from its integrity: form the inherent harmony between diversity and unity. We cannot look at it without admiration. In this case, admiration means that we are turning to the “Ens” with total openness and full attention. Admiration presupposes the disposition of humility and retreat, in other words that we allow space for the existence and unfolding of another. Admiration is accompanied by selfless gratitude. The “Ens” cannot be owned: it belongs to the Creator alone. As Santmire summarizes: “In encountering the Ens, I am captivated by its openness to the infinite, by its openness to a dimension that lies behind and permeates its givenness, its spontaneity, and its beauty.”²⁷ Thereafter, presenting a modern parallel of the glorifying psalms, the author quotes the almost ecstatic outburst of the Scottish–American conservationist, John Muir seeing a group of California

21 Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, 2nd ed. (London–New York: Continuum, 2004), 14.

22 Paul Santmire, *Nature Reborn: The Ecological and Cosmic Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2000).

23 From the Latin participle for „being”

24 Santmire, *Nature Reborn*, 68f.

25 Santmire, *Nature Reborn*, 69.

26 Ibid.

27 Santmire, *Nature Reborn*, 72.

redwoods: “Every tree seemed religious and conscious of the presence of God.”²⁸

This attitude, which can neither be identified with the instrumentalising “I–It” relation, nor with the “I–Thou” relation reserved for the interpersonal connections, places the reciprocity and cooperation of human and non-human beings on a new basis. At the same time, it allows us to go beyond the hopeless struggle with the apparent inextricability of anthropocentrism.

Plant ethics is thus not a means of simply eradicating anthropocentrism in favour of propagating a radical biocentrism. It is rather an integrative endeavour that takes into account the self-worth, dignity and autonomy²⁹ of non-human creatures, as well as the reciprocal relationship between human and non-human beings. Contrary to the widespread concern by which man’s freedom and acquired rights are jeopardised by the extension of the rules and rights of other non-human beings, the fundamental principles of plant ethics do not result in the abolition of modern agriculture or the drastic limitation of scientific research and experimentation. The reassessment of our attitude to plants, however, allows us to rethink the aims and opportunities of human activity in the very tangible context of the ecological crisis.

The silent language of plants

When discussing bioethical issues related to non-human life forms, U. J. Körtner finds with some strangeness that the volume on plant ethics of Barbara Kallhoff employs a kind of “soft” formulation, the goals are presented as recommendations, and the text exhibits a frequent use of the subjunctive mood.³⁰ Contrary to the formalities of scientific publications, in Sabine Odparlik’s book on the dignity of plants, most of the titles of chapters and subchapters appear as interrogative sentences.³¹ Despite his criticism, Körtner acknowledges that these characteristics of linguistic formulation harmonise with the subject of plant ethics. In the further development of plant ethics it is worth keeping in mind and preserving this gentle and

28 John Muir, *The Writings of John Muir*. 8 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1917–18), „Our National Parks”, 328. – quoted by Santmire, *Nature Reborn*, 82.

29 As a possible interpretation of plant autonomy see: Matthew Hall, „Plant Autonomy and Human-Plant Ethics”, *Environmental Ethics*, 31 (2009): 169–181.

30 See Angela Kallhoff, *Prinzipien der Pflanzenethik. Die Bewertung pflanzlichen Lebens und Philosophie*. (Frankfurt–New York: Campus Verlag, 2002).

31 Sabine Odparlik, *Die Würde der Pflanze. Ein sinnvolles ethisches Prinzip im Kontext der Grünen Gentechnik?* (Freiburg–München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2010).

affirmative character that can simultaneously address the various registers of diversity and unity. These stylistic differences are therefore closely related to plant contents, primarily with the various modalities of non-verbal communication exercised by plants. Plant communication occurs through channels of different plant hormones, electrical signals, information packets perceived by humans as olfactory or visual stimuli, or the multitude of recently discovered bio-acoustic signals. As Monica Gagliano and her co-authors point out, the latter forms of communication can be considered the *intrinsic* language of plants, opposed to the extrinsic (scientific, artistic and other) descriptions used by humans about plant existence.³² If we talk about the language of plants, we need to use a concept of language that is primarily non-linguistic and non-verbal.

In the inclusive language approach of biosemiotics as a rather young, almost one-hundred-year-old discipline that studies pre-linguistic meaning-making and production and interpretation of codes among living beings, language is present in all life forms,³³ and involves all the complicated forms of dialogue of human and non-human (plant) individuals and species. (One of the research areas of biosemiotics is phytosemiotics,³⁴ which examines plant signal usage/vegetative semiosis.) Whether the use of signs and codes that is characteristic of all living beings can be called a language, or whether the use of signs necessarily involves some abstract conceptuality remains the subject of discussion. However, the results of recent phytophysiological research suggest that communication of plants with their environment has in many respects similar characteristics to human languages.³⁵ The population biologist Richard Karban argues that plant signals can also mediate symbolic content, and that just as humans and some other animals, plants are able to

32 Monica Gagliano, John C. Ryan and Patricia Vieira (eds.), *The Language of Plants: Science, Philosophy, Literature*. (Minneapolis–London: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), xvii.

33 Wendy Wheeler and Hugh Dunkerley, „Introduction” in *Earthographies: Ecocriticism and Culture*, eds. Wendy Wheeler and Hugh Dunkerley, *New Formations* 64 (2000): 7–14. [8.]

34 The term „phytosemiotics” was coined by Martin Krampen in 1981. See Martin Krampen „Phytosemiotics”. *Semiotica* 36 (3/4): 187–209.

35 See Richard Karban, „The Language of Plant Communication (and How It Compares to Animal Communication),” in Gagliano, Ryan and Vieira: *The Language of Plants*, 4.

differentiate between self and nonself, which was previously considered to be the ability of higher-order “intelligent” species.³⁶

This approach to language, which is open to non-human forms of life, seems to be in many ways contrary to the traditional logocentrism of theology. However, in the Scripture and in various streams of the vast corpus of theological literature we can find the silent, but not insignificant, voices that testify to sensitivity to non-human life forms including vegetal being.

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³⁶ Ibid. 11.

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Church on the Colony

The Lutheran and the Roman Catholic Church in the Nama and Herero Uprising (1904-1907) in German South West-Africa

The Historical Context of German Colonialism

Germany was one of the youngest national states in the 19th century. The concept of Lesser Germany (*Kleindeutsche Lösung*) was born as the outcome of Prussian militarism and German nationalism. In 1848 the German liberals wanted to create a unified German state of those bigger and smaller German monarchies. The German pre-March revolution (*Vormärzrevolution*) in 1848 had the Free City of Frankfurt (today *Frankfurt am Main*) at its centre: The *Reichstag* took place there according to traditions of medieval and early modern German political customs.

The German politics was deeply divided. The German Confederation belonged to the weakest states of Europe: this political-territorial unit was born in 1815. The purpose of the foundation was the re-establishment of absolutism. The Russian Empire, Prussia and Austria were its founders, all of whom enjoyed the support of Great Britain and France. However, the German Confederation was an anachronistic phenomenon, because the 19th century had seen liberalism and nationalism awaken. The German civic movements wanted to create a strong and unified Germany.

Their wishes were represented in March 1848. Although this revolutionary assembly of Frankfurt knew its weaknesses: no serious power supported this political event, the Germans were divided by religion (Northern Germany was predominantly Lutheran, Southern Germany was predominantly Roman Catholic and the Calvinism had strong communities in remarkable German imperial cities), and the Slavic people (Czechs, Moravians, Sorbs and Poles) wanted to establish their own national states without German dominance. These weaknesses guaranteed the short life and the tragic collapse of the revolutionary ideas, romantic nationalism and liberal republicanism.

According to the agreements of Holy Alliance, Prussia had the duty to abolish the revolutionary assembly of Frankfurt. The well-trained Prussian Army entered the city and destroyed the revolutionary assembly. Thereafter,

German intellectuals had to flee to America or recognise the bitter fact: the German unity will be born in the shadow of Prussian boots and rifles.¹

Austria was the main rival of Prussia in case of the German unity. As a ruling dynasty, the Habsburg were the highest esteemed. Regardless of this unique position among the royal families of Europe the Austrian Empire was the weakest political construction in the first half of the 19th century. The Hungarian Revolution of 1848 showed its reality: only the intervention of Russian Empire could save the fragile unity of the Habsburg rulers. The Austrian economy was suffering from high public debts, the Habsburg Army was divided among its national diversity and backwardness. Despite the suspension of the historical constitution of Kingdom of Hungary (1853-1861) the Habsburg Empire was not a serious player on the chessboard of European politics, not even in Germany.

The German nationalist intellectuals were waiting for the upcoming Prussian dominance. The Prussian leadership in Berlin has received the message. The German land was step-by-step conquered by Prussia, and in the battle of Königgrätz-Sadowa in 1866 Austria had lost all its hope of leading role in a unified Germany. The Austrian Empire was not attached to territories which were conquered by Prussia. The last step was the Franco-Prussian war 1870-1871, and Wilhelm I as first emperor of Germany turned the Prussian royal throne into German imperial throne, incorporating the Southern states like Bavaria, Württemberg and Baden.²

This late-born German national state was an incredibly successful in the era of industrialism but it had not colonies. The huge number of people in the cities and the performance of the German industry predestined the German Empire to be world power.³ However, the German Empire had neither a remarkable navy, nor had colonies. In last third of the 19th century a European scramble for Africa culminated in imperialism: Great Britain, France, Portugal all built great colonial empires.

In German politics too the to become a colonial empire of new generation had shown a growing influence as the colonial issue became part of the political debates of Reichstag.

1 Heinrich August Winkler, *Németország története a modern korban I.*, trans. Judit D. Molnár (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2005), 79–124.

2 Winkler, *Németország története a modern korban I.*, 125–195.

3 Németh István, *A Német Császárság 1871-1914: Összegzés és dokumentumok* (Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó, 2009), 30.

As chancellor Otto von Bismarck wanted to keep France isolated, and he carried friendly relations towards Great Britain. The British colonial empire was the largest, and the chancellor knew that this balance requires careful foreign policy.

The strategy of building a colonial empire had different forms. Great Britain could take the most valuable colonies. The Portuguese wanted to keep their early modern times colonies in Africa and Asia. Lisbon had very good relations with London, the friendship of England and Portugal is one of the oldest in European history.⁴ The Portuguese royal throne belonged to the Saxe-Coburg dynasty, which was the family of prince consort Albert. The husband of queen Victoria was duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld. This medieval-based friendship was confirmed in dynastical form too.

While, Spain and Portugal, two of the old colonial powers were suffering from the collapse of their South American empires in the 19th century, France held its strong position in colonialism. The French pride was hurt by the Prussian intervention during the Paris Commune (1871), because Prussia annexed Alsace and Lorraine.⁵ The French political elite felt the weakness of France, and the colonialism served as a great tool of rebuild of national pride. French colonialism had many advocates until 1968. In the 19th century Georges Clemenceau, *The Tiger* was the most remarkable figure of French colonialism. The left-wing politician wanted to give Cochinchina (today Vietnam) to Germany as compensation for of Alsace and Lorraine. Bismarck refused this solution, because then the Rhine was a strategically important geographical part of Germany. Therefore, the French colonial empire started to be built in Northern and Western Africa. These territories had not remarkable mineral sources or cultivated lands, nevertheless the new French territories were large of maps.⁶

Germany and Italy as newborn national states wanted to get colonies before the whole world comes under British and French domination. The Italians invaded Lybia and Somalia, and Germany got colonies in Africa and Oceania. The majority of these territories were not valuable, however, these new colonies gave some importance to these newborn national states in the international politics.

4 The Anglo-Portuguese Alliance (Windsor Treaty 1373) has been written in the medieval times.

5 Németh, *A Német Császárság 1871-1914*, 132.

6 J.D. Fage, *Afrika története*, trans. Csaba Antóni (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2005), 273, 335.

Bismarck hesitated a lot.⁷ But Adolf Lüderitz bought the territory in Angra Pequena, today Namibia. This tiny coast of a bay in South West -Africa was the first sign of German political appearance in 1883. But Lüderitz was not the first German there, German Christian missionary groups had arrived to Southern Africa in precolonial period.

The first Whites reached South West-Africa in the late of 15th century: Diogo Cão Portuguese explorer and navigator had put a cross on the coast. This action served a double purpose; it was a sign both of Christianity and a geographical position: the South West-African coast is covered by shoal. This feature makes the navigation of ships extremely difficult, many ships were unable to dock there. The broken ships created a terrible look of the coast, the old wooden bodies were lying there without people. Hence, got the South West-African territory the name Skeleton Coast. Besides the weak conditions for shipping the rest of the territory was a huge desert, and the native Khoi and San people were living as nomadic societies. The first White inhabitants arrived during the time of Great Trek of 1836. These Afrikaner People created peasant societies with huge farms. During the Great Trek which was led by 'Boer' called Afrikaner some parts of Coloured community came there too and founded the city Rehoboth. As a result, the descendants of interracial marriages between Dutch colonialists and Black natives are called in historical documents 'Rehoboth Bastards'. The Afrikaner and Coloured people were Afrikaans speaking and Calvinist communities.

The first Germans came to South West-Africa as missionaries: the Protestant London Missionary Society⁸ brought here the German Lutheran mission, the Rhenish Missionary Society in 1840.⁹ This religious group is the most influential one even nowadays. This German Lutheran community helped the German colonization, and they were building the majority of social and religious institutes like churches, hospitals and schools.

In the 1880s came the idea of colonization. Bismarck was under pressure in Reichstag and he had to support the colonial plans of Adolf Lüderitz.¹⁰ On the other hand the German foreign policy had to avoid the hurting the British interests. The British and the Portuguese were generous in case of South West-Africa, because the territory between the two rivers

7 Németh, *A Német Császárság 1871-1914*, 51.

8 Fage, *Afrika története*, 288.

9 Klaus Dierks, *Chronologie der namibischen Geschichte: von der vorgeschichtlichen Zeit zum unabhängigen Namibia (2000)* (Windhoek: Namibia Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft, 2003), 13.

10 Németh, *A Német Császárság 1871-1914*, 51.

of Cunene and Oranje was given to Germany: South West-Africa had no valuable parts, this is why Great Britain was satisfied with Cape Colony and Portugal with Angola.

The old colonial powers were rather interested in the Congo-issue. The Congo basin and river promised fruitful opportunities in the times of 'Scramble for Africa.' Great Britain and Portugal made an agreement to justify their interests. However, this agreement disregarded the interests of all other colonial powers. Bismarck did not want to make a straight protest. Soon the German foreign policy received an unforeseeable gesture from the French: France outraged against the Anglo-Portuguese action. Bismarck openly did not support France but called up on other nations against London and Lisbon. The 'Iron Chancellor' led a successful tactic, consequently, Great Britain and Portugal were condemned by every sovereign nation of Europe and the United States of America in the Berlin Conference of 1885.

Congo was taken up as private colony of King Leopold II of Belgium. The King of Belgium had colonial dreams in Congo.¹¹ This solution justified the right of free trade on Leopold II's colonial territory (Article 1). So were the navigation on Niger and Congo also free. The slave trade was forbidden (Article 9) and persecuted in most of Africa. The conference regularized the most urgent issue, the scramble in Congo basin. This solution recognized the colonial rights of that power, which put its flag on the territory. This method guaranteed the avoidance of conflicts. The final form of the General Act of the Berlin Conference was signed on the 26th February 1885.¹²

The northern and southern borders of German South West-Africa were completed according to the General Act. The Atlantic Ocean as western border was given by the nature, only the eastern border was not regularized. Germany had to negotiate only with Great Britain in the eastern border issue. In the meantime German diplomacy had a remarkable change: Wilhelm II the German emperor changed Bismarck for Leo von Caprivi. This new chancellor better served his imperialism.¹³

In an age of navalism the eager emperor of Germany wanted a new huge high sea fleet. This was a clear message to Great Britain: Germany wants to break the British hegemony. One of first steps was an agreement: Germany changed Zanzibar for Helgoland. In this agreement was assigned the eastern

11 Fage, *Afrika története*, 278.

12 "General Act of the Berlin Conference on West-Africa, 26 February 1885," last modified May 16, 2019, <https://loveman.sdsu.edu/docs/1885GeneralActBerlinConference.pdf>.

13 Németh, *A Német Császárság 1871-1914*, 59–61.

border of German South West-Africa. There is a special territory in this agreement: the Caprivi strip. This tiny territory was named after the German chancellor. The German diplomacy wanted to have rights over Zambezi, and the Article III has recognized this will of Berlin.¹⁴ The final form of the borders of German South West-Africa were assigned in 1890. The port of Walvis Bay was part of the colonial empire of Great Britain.

The German Churches in late 19th Century

The historical German territory was the field of reformation. Martin Luther, the former monk achieved a whole revolution in German Christianity: the translation of the Bible made his movement the base of German nationalism. His translation created the German national language, the so-called *Hochdeutsch*. This quasi artificial language became the *lingua franca* in German territory.¹⁵ The nationalists of the 19th century expressed the German nationalism in two major ways: through racial purity, the theory of which is based on Tacitus and through the German lingual territory („*Ist's wo die deutsche Zunge klingt*”).

The Hohenzollern dynasty unified the German nation. This historical action verified the priority of Lutheran confession. The Prussian king was the German emperor and the head of the German Lutheran Church. The rule of Hohenzollern created the context of meaning of German, that is still influential nowadays: the Protestant, militaristic, hard-working nation.¹⁶ In this system obedience is the keyword. In pyramid of obedience on the top stands the *Kaiser*, and below the German workers. The German imperial society had its class structure strongly bounded with ethnicity, especially in the industrial area: the Ruhr in Westphalia turned into Roman Catholic, because the Polish people who migrated to West from their poor and rural Russian-ruled country, made this Northern German province Roman Catholic again.¹⁷

14 “Anglo-German Treaty (Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty) 1890,” German History in Documents and Images, last modified May 16, 2019, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/606_Anglo-German%20Treaty_110.pdf.

15 Márton Mészáros, *Reformáció, közvetítés, nyilvánosság* (Budapest: Fiala Írók Szövetsége, 2014), 13–35.

16 Norbert Elias, *A németekről: Hatalmi harcok és habitus fejlődése a tizenkilencedik-huszedik században*, trans. László Györi (Budapest: Helikon Kiadó, 2002), 191.

17 Wolfgang Zank, *The German Melting Pot: Multiculturalism in Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 139.

This background of religious issues had a deep effect on the German colonization in South West-Africa. While, the industrial and southern parts of Imperial Germany were Catholic, the rural northern part was predominantly Lutheran.

The purpose of the German colonization was the creation of a German settler colony, in order to decrease the high number of German migration to North America. The Namibian Desert was a really poorly cultivated territory, only the western part of the country had limited opportunities for agricultural activities. The German settlers had to preserve their racial purity, which was deeply supported by the Lutheran Church. The Catholic Church also showed racist tendencies, for instance among bishops in Africa there was an absolute pure White majority, but the Roman church showed recognition of racial equality. Although the Lutheran and Calvinist churches supported racial policy, the American Protestants had Black pastors in their missionaries.

The German colonial masters wanted to create a colony for rural settlers. The leadership of the German Colonial Society was bothered by the interracial relationships of German soldiers, because the young soldiers had native partners, especially Herero women. The interracial relationships were not authorized by the churches, these were called in official documents as 'liason' or 'concubinage' or in some cases 'prostitution'.¹⁸ The racially mixed children were called 'bastards' in documents, that meant according to the German scientific views a lower grade of evolution.¹⁹ This degradation category recommend fewer rights to them than those of White citizens of the colony. Meanwhile, this form of coexistence turn into a mass phenomenon, German colonial politicians started to recruit German peasant women, especially from those of poor and agricultural part of Germany, which were ruled by the Prussian upper-class, the *Junker*.

The *Junker* elite practised a leadership role in Germany. This late 19th century period is called in history as *Gründersjahre* or *Gründerzeit*. It does not have a strict translation into English, although it can be characterized within its parts: founder's period. The society had seen a drastic change: The French war debt from 1871 was spent on industrial development. According social historians in this period we can talk about a developing or blooming civic

18 Dag Henrichsen, „>>unerwünscht im Schutzgebiet... nicht schlechthin unsittlich<<“, in *Frauen in den deutschen Kolonien*, ed. Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Mechthild Leutner (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2009), 81–82.

19 Emmerich Schubert, *Landwirtschaft und Nebenbetriebe in Südwestafrika: Dissertation* (Heidelberg: Verlag Winter, 1913), 36.

society. But the motivations were already different than those of the British or French bourgeoisie: the German had the nobility as their motivation.

Berlin was being the legislative, cultural, scientific and Protestants religious centre of Germany, the German bourgeoisie wanted to be Prussian noble or officer. This Prussian way had its guarantee to keep the rural militaristic elite in power, because everybody wanted to be one of them. However, the Prussian way of social development could not turn Germany into civic society, and the Prussian militaristic nobleman was the ideal German in the end of the 19th century.

The German Lutheran bourgeoisie was not egalitarian and proud in its attitude. As Norbert Elias concluded German bourgeoisie could not transform the German society into a bourgeoisie society, as it happened in the English society. The sociologist saw the difference in the imperial courts of London and Berlin: from the colonial era the English court was ruled by navy officers, a group which had more bougeoise-alike attitudes. In Berlin the infantry was the most influential part of the army, with aristocratic roots from the medieval ages.²⁰ Bismarck for instance had also knowledge of his medieval ancestors; the family trees were proofs of social ranks. Meanwhile, Elias' point of view has a strong base; the difference was in the religious background as well: the English reformation was ordered by the king, while the German reformation was led by charismatic leaders, who were either supported or expelled by local German monarchs.

The English king had a centralized power, the Holy Roman empire had a long collapsing period.²¹ From the start of the rise of nationalism, German nationalism was bounded with Lutheranism, although the French race theorist Arthur Gobineau gained more influence in the German scientific community. This extraordinary coexistence of militaries, racial purity and superiority and Lutheranism ruled the imperial court of Berlin.

The German society was divided by class and religion. The German colonization could only been as an incredibly racist and oppressive one. In our recent views, all colonial masters had racist and unequal views toward indigenous societies, but the tendencies showed remarkable differences.

The French colonialists gained an extra motivation after the Franco-Prussian war and began to establish more colonies in West-Africa. The influence of Gobineau was not so serious like in Germany, because the idea of a Francophone civilization was officially colour-blind: the French

20 Elias, *A németekről*, 8-9, 16, 191-193.

21 Elias, *A németekről*, 11.

masters had the mission to make the natives of other continents French. The Portuguese colonial masters had a similar mindset. The Portuguese made a distinction between *assimilado* and *indigenao* according to attitude of natives,²² and even the miscegenation was an accepted phenomenon. The racial mixed descendants tended to be rather Portuguese than native.

Interesting facts can be observed in the differences between Germanic and Romanic colonial masters, the Germanic colonial masters were always deeply racist by their attitudes. According to the Dutch author Eduard Douwes Dekker's Max Havelaar²³ stories of Dutch colonial masters in East India, the Dutch called the indigenous people 'liplap' because of their strange language. The British colonial masters introduced a mixed rule in their colonial administration, because the English conservative colonial policy was not interested in the development of local societies.

The religious backgrounds of the colonial masters were different, although it was common for the churches to be in defence of nationalism of the motherlands. The *Kulturkampf* and the divided empire made sure, that Catholicism can have only a marginalized role²⁴ in it, and that the Lutheran Church is the "church of masters."

The expansion of the Lutheran and Catholic churches in German South West-Africa

Churches were following the path of the colonial masters. The German colonial rule was a mixed form of the British indirect and the French direct colonial administration. For these old colonial powers, the church was a tool of colonialism, the head of Anglicans was the British monarch, and in France was the Catholicism as national religion until 1907.

The German colonialism needed both the Lutheran and Catholic Church to satisfy the needs of the German settlers. The missions among native Africans were not important in the eyes of Berlin. Irrespective of this low importance the churches were still supported in their mission, as through them the German emperor could enjoy broader power on the colony. Although the Catholic missionaries were primarily serving the power of

22 Linda Heywood, *Contested Power in Angola, 1840s to the Present* (York: University Rochester Press, 2000), 92–93.

23 Multatuli, *Max Havelaar*, trans. Roy Edwards (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), 83.

24 Németh, *A Német Császárság 1871-1914*, 37.

the pope, the new worshippers were indirectly Germanized. Africans were mostly given biblical names were even popular in German lingual territory.

The German expansion was not a brutal one. In the beginning the German colonial leadership signed an agreement with the different local tribes. This provided the chiefs of natives and Coloureds (Rehoboth Bastards) their own legislation and jurisdiction to some extent, but at the same time the legal texts guaranteed not only the superiority of German law, but favoured the German court of justice in the legal cases of German settlers and Africans.²⁵

This early period was largely a peaceful part in the German colonization. The local chiefs accepted the power of the well-equipped colonial masters, and they let the Germans establish their cities. In the cities the Lutheran and Catholic missionaries had missionary houses and parishes built. As the infrastructure of the German South West-Africa began to develop, the missions could be also more influential and more efficient. In the German colonization of South West-Africa the railway had a remarkable role: this was the single most important tool in transportation in the 19th century. Railway was the symbol of development. German engineers connected Swakopmund and Windhoek at the turn of the century. Meanwhile, the city of Windhoek started to gain some form of a German administrative headquarter, and Swakopmund became the most important city with its coastal location. In any German military action, this port played an important role for the German colonial army, the *Schutztruppe*. Beside the railway transportation was also solved by horses, as the Germans had to face the challenge of the huge distances and poor infrastructural facilities combined with dry hot weather.

In terms of bilateral agreements the German administration was helped by the layman Ernst Heinrich Göring, the father of Hermann Göring, who spoke Dutch well (the native Africans spoke the Afrikaans because of the 'Great Trek'), and German missionary Carl Gotthilf Büttner.²⁶ Until 1886 the city of Gibeon was the centre of the Rhenish Missionary Society in German South West-Africa, where the first missionary station has been established in the middle of the 19th century.

The first conflicts between colonialists and natives started in the late 1880s. Göring and Nama chief Hendrik Witbooi disagreed about the mining rights of tribal territories, so the German administration ordered the colonial army

25 *Denkschrift über Eingeborenen-Politik und Hereroaufstand in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, Königliche Hofbuchhandlung, 1904), 24–25.

26 Dierks, *Chronologie der namibischen Geschichte*, 44–47.

to German South West-Africa. The Lutheran mission was already to make a compromise but the German military presence seemed more successful.

Gibeon is located in the southern-central part of what is today Namibia. This part of the country was the historical Namaland. The missionaries wanted to expand in the northern direction, towards Hereroland and Ovamboland. The Ovambo tribe carried a nomadic lifestyle; its people migrated across the river of Cunene. The Herero tribe had a permanent territory, and according to some contemporary census this tribe represented the relative majority of the native African population in German South West-Africa.

The Finnish Missionary Society was also a Lutheran mission. This society was based in Ovamboland, Ondangwa.²⁷ The northern part of the colony seemed peaceful, compared to Namaland, where the German Lutherans had their important centres established. The Finnish example was followed by their German brothers, and the Rhenish Missionary Society established in 1891 the first missionary station of Ovamboland in Uukwanyama.²⁸

Otto von Bismarck had to resign from chancellorship. Wilhelm II was an incredible ambitious imperialist, who wanted to give up the balance-oriented foreign policy of Bismarck. His resignation meant the end of *Kulturkampf* against the Roman Catholics. As for the colonization of German South West-Africa, the first effect of this event was shown in the foundation of first Roman Catholic mission in Ovamboland, Cimbebasia.²⁹ This activity of the Catholic Church was called *propaganda fide*.

The Nama tribe led by chief Hendrik Witbooi organized an insurgence against the German colonialists in 1893. This insurgence was the first guerilla war in the history of Africa. The insurgence had its end in 1897. The fights ended when the Nama tribe had to face a greater challenge: cattle pest by Chinese migrants brought the pest into East Africa. The pest mutated and produced a form, which killed the livestock. In the 1890s the pest reached Southern Africa, and most of the cattle died. This was an incredibly painful lost for the native people of Southern Africa, for whom their cattle was a symbol of wealth in their culture.

27 Dierks, *Chronologie der namibischen Geschichte*, 54.

28 Dierks, *Chronologie der namibischen Geschichte*, 56.

29 Dierks, *Chronologie der namibischen Geschichte*, 56.

The Herero uprising (1904-1907)

The Nama insurgence ended in 1897 without any serious loss for the German troops. It was followed by a period of building infrastructure throughout the colony. The infrastructural development naturally also meant a wider German expansion. The German settlers and their administration was not respectful towards the native Africans, and brutality soon become part of daily life in the province.

In 1903 the German court of justice made a mistake. Two German merchants killed Herero people. At first the court of justice in Windhoek jailed them but one month later both were discharged. As colonial governor Theodor von Leutwein mentioned in it a letter, sent to Wilhelm II. the Herero chief found it outrageous not surprisingly as the German settlers celebrated the merchants as heroes.³⁰

Samuel Maharero, the chief of Herero tribe contacted with other African chiefs, he sent letters. Although his anti-colonial attitude was mostly rejected, the chief of Witbooi-Nama tribe, Hendrik Witbooi decided to join him.

The Herero uprising started on 11-12th January 1904. The Herero soldiers and auxiliary troops of Hendrik Witbooi ruined the infrastructure of Okahandja.³¹ Samuel Maharero ordered the killing all German farmers. His soldiers went on to killing German farmers, as well as robbing and scorching their farms.

The High Command of the German Army decided to take a serious revenge. Alfred von Schlieffen, the chief of German General Staff was talking about a racial war „in which one of belligerents has to die” and he called for resignation of Theodor von Leutwein. The imperial chancellor, Bernhard von Bülow found it unnecessary, Schlieffen was able to convince Wilhelm II. The High Command declared the territory of German South West-Africa a war zone, Leutwein had been removed, and the German Imperial Expedition Army was sent to German South West-Africa.³² General Trotha was expelled the Herero and Nama soldiers to the Kalahari.

30 *Denkschrift über Eingeborenen-Politik und Hereroaufstand in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 96.

31 Steffen Eicker, *Der Deutsch-Herero-Krieg und das Völkerrecht: die völkerrechtliche Haftung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland für das Vorgehen des Deutschen Reiches gegen die Herero in Deutsch-Südwestafrika im Jahre 1904 und ihre Durchsetzung vor einem nationalem Gericht* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2009), 60.

32 Eicker, *Der Deutsch-Herero-Krieg und das Völkerrecht*, 62.

The battle of Witwaterberg was lost by the Herero and Witbooi-Nama soldiers. On the 11-12th August they capitulated. The German general von Trotha declared the „annihilation order” (*Vernichtungsbefehl*):

„I, the great General of the German troops, send this letter to the Herero people. The Herero people are no longer German subjects . . . The Herero people must leave the country. If the nation doesn't do this, I will force them with the Groot Rohr [cannon]. Within the German borders, every Herero, with or without gun, with or without cattle, will be shot. I will no longer accept women or children, I will drive them back to their people or I will let them be shot at.”³³

This proclamation of general von Trotha destabilized the government coalition of conservatives and national liberals in Berlin. The chancellor Bernhard von Bülow called Trotha's action unchristianlike, and called upon the churches to help to make peace in German South West-Africa.³⁴ The churches took up the challenge, and sent medical teams to the colony. They established so called 'native lazarettes', which served as temporary hospitals for the injured natives.³⁵

Trotha served in office as omnipotent governor until 1907. Under his leadership the Germans established their first concentration camps in history. The main camp was located on Shark Island, which is a peninsula in the near of Lüderitz. The German settlers and inhabitants of Lüderitz were shocked by what they saw: the incredible misery of the Nama people as the German military was driving them into the concentration camps in 1906. The rest of Nama and Herero people were captured and put into concentration camps in Kalahari, where the lack of water and food combined with forced labour (they were obliged to restitute the ruined infrastructure) were responsible for the 75-80% death rate of Herero and 25-30% death rate of Nama.³⁶

This shocking event was witnessed and described in the diaries of several German missionary people. Seeing the march in masses of „living black

33 “German Vernichtungsbefehl („annihilation order”) against Herero and Nama people: 'Every Herero will be shot,' Imaging Genocide, last modified June 19 2019 <https://imagingenocide.wordpress.com/2013/05/02/german-vernichtungsbefehl-annihilation-order-against-the-herero-and-nama-people-every-herero-will-be-shot/>.

34 Eicker, *Der Deutsch-Herero-Krieg und das Völkerrecht*, 70.

35 Jonas Kreienbaum, >>Ein trauriges Fiasko<<: *koloniale Konzentrationslager im Südlichen Afrika, 1900-1908* (Hamburg: Verlag des Hamburger Instituts für Sozialforschung, 2015), 237.

36 D. Chanaiwa: “African initiatives and resistance in Southern Africa,” in *General History of Africa VII.: Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935*, ed. Adu A. Boahen (California:

skeletons” to Shark Island lead the German Lutheran priests to pleading for mercy and stop this action of the *Schutztruppe*. Colonel Dame, a German military officer was overwhelmed by letters from them.

Many of the primary sources written by German witnesses, recognized this phenomenon it as a genocide-alike action. Karl Emil Raaf, who was a missionary of Rhenish Mission Society pointed it out in his diary: „If it is continuing the [Nama] people is going to be extinct.”³⁷ Raaf was living in Lüderitzbucht in 1907, he could clearly saw the prisoners in Shark Island.

Lutheran Missioner Meier from Windhoek was writing the following text in his diary: „People [who are wearing] despicable clothing but some of them are naked and all are emaciated like skeletons.”³⁸ The terrified missionaries took the wish of chancellor Bülow seriously and began to help the prisoners, and some of them has sent letters to the officers of *Schutztruppe*.

General Lothar von Trotha was Catholic. He gave his words during the war, that he is going to handle the Catholic Church in a supportive way.³⁹ This mindset created a rivalry between churches, however the Roman Catholic missions were healing the wounded native African too.

The letters were read and recognized by colonel Dame. He wrote in his letter „The *Schutztruppe* takes the heaviest duty besides the guarding of concentration camps, the labour education of prisoners, to make them useful elements, who are useful in further development of the colony. Besides all these the backsliders have to be handled with discipline and rigor, and about the health of their body and moral education have to be cared for.”⁴⁰ This attitude was different from the previous period. The Germans wanted to rebuild the colonial infrastructure for obvious reasons. But the novum is visible in the economic mindset: the native Africans are now taken seriously as future workers of the colony. This clearly shows, how German colonialists were planning with a coexistence for the further term with division of labour. The Southern Africa was one of the most targeted part in the ‘Scramble for Africa’: the allure of the gold and diamond fever attracted the adventurers and the imperialist European colonial powers.

Heinemann, UNESCO, 1985), 219.

37 Kreienbaum, >>Ein trauriges Fiasko<<, 128.

38 Kreienbaum, >>Ein trauriges Fiasko<<, 223.

39 Lothar Engel, “Die Stellung der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft zu den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen Südwestafrikas und ihr Beitrag zur dortigen kirchlichen Entwicklung bis zum Nama-Herero-Aufstand 1904-1907” (PhD diss., University of Hamburg, 1972), 191.

40 Kreienbaum, >>Ein trauriges Fiasko<<, 141.

The churches took the responsibility of caring for the native prisoners. Meanwhile, the government of Berlin was attacked by an opposition of the left-wing SPD and the Catholic Centre Party. The 'Bülow-Block' (coalition of the German Conservative Party, the National Liberal Party and the left liberal Progressive People's Party) won the *Reichstag* elections in 1906. Bülow's new government understood the broad hostility towards the racial war of generals Alfred von Schlieffen and Lothar von Trotha. Therefore Bülow established a new Secretary Office for Colonial Affairs and the designated the national liberal banker bourgeoisie Bernhard Dernburg designated as the first chef of this office. Dernburg closed all concentration camps in 1907, and introduced a new policy with a development-oriented and more humanistic approach.

Conclusion

This part of colonial church history belongs to the darkest episodes of German history. Although the churches were acting in a humanistic way in the Herero war, this historical era is widely regarded as one that shares similarities with the horror methods of Nazi Germany.

The dead bodies of Herero were brought to Germany. Eugen Fischer, the German professor of racial biology, collected the skulls of Herero people for scientific purposes. The old skulls were given back to Namibia in 2018. Beside the concentration camps and von Schlieffen's and von Trotha's racial war, the scientific racism is the third main element, why this historical episode is regarded as a pre-Nazi antecedent.

In historical analysis the diaries have got important roles. The political and war history of Herero war are very well-wrought by literature basis. These diaries from the Herero war are a remarkable addition to our understanding of this tragic event. The subjective interpretations of German witnesses should be analyzed in a critical way to know the mindset, attitude and mentality of colonial missionaries.

The Herero war was a caesura in German colonial history. The Imperial Colonial Ministry of Germany was established for the purpose of avoiding such uneasy situation in following years. Although this period ended in 1915/1919, the German colonization was seeking to show its humanistic face: well-known scientists arrived to colonies, who were collecting data about life and customs of African tribes, and the first and nowadays also widely used scientific collections and books were made in first decades of the 20th century. These German authors made a huge contribution.

The main question of this history is the evaluation of the Herero war. The Namibian government is seeking a reparation from Germany. The Namibian politicians are talking about genocide, German historians too share this point of view. The German leadership in foreign policy does not recognize the genocide, due to its anachronistic nature and the presence of Coloured auxiliaries on the German side of belligerency in the Herero war.

Debates have been sparked again since 2015. Germany is facing hard talks with the Namibian government, activists and experts with activist attitude. The Namibian public opinion is also divided: Christian religion is playing an important role in the Namibian daily life, and Germany is investing a lot of money into the Namibian economy.

The churches have a positive presence in Namibia. After the 1970s even the Lutheran church gave up its racial policy and fought against apartheid. These institutions are now highly respected in one of the most unequal societies.

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Action and contemplation as a laic's spirituality Comparison of spiritual concepts of Franciscan Richard Rohr and mystic Madeleine Delbr el.

Introduction

The Catholic Church is going through the process of purifying. Pope Francis, a successor to the Apostle Peter, has accepted the invitation of Jesus to "Stand out into the deep water..." (Luke 5, 4). In the same way as Saint Francis, the pope has responded to an emergency need for revision of actions inside the Catholic Church. One of the two authors which we will analyze in this paper - the Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr - wrote about the Holy Father Francis a few months after his election as follows: "Francis is indeed a true traditionalist in teaching us not new doctrines or moralities, but a new way of knowing that is deeply formed by the Gospel. Up to now, Catholicism has largely emphasized metaphysics ("what we think we know") and has severely neglected epistemology ("Exactly how do we know what we think we know?"). Francis is not telling us what to see but how to see and what to pay attention to. Somehow, he is telling us that true seeing is first seeing through the eyes of love and mercy. And this is Christianity itself."¹ The question and one might say the "fundamental" of Christian spirituality: seeing through the eyes of love and mercy - which means - seeing through the eyes of Christ, is a way of acting that requires "letting the Holy Spirit shape Christ in us so that His face is reflected in our features"². Finally, that is what the Church uses to call Contemplation.

Reflecting the Rohr's point of view of the pope's spiritual motives for acting and conducting our Church in its „third Millennium teens“, this article shows the examples of two noticeable persons who more than asking what to see, have been searching for how to see. Richard Rohr, the Franciscan Friar, the

1 Richard Rohr, "It will be hard to go backward after Francis' papacy," *National Catholic Reporter*, September 24, 2013, <https://www.ncronline.org/news/vatican/it-will-be-hard-go-backward-after-francis-papacy>

2 "Paths of Contemplation," Opus Dei, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://opusdei.org/en/document/paths-of-contemplation/>.

founder of New Jerusalem Community in Cincinnati (Ohio, USA) and later the director of Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque (New Mexico, USA) and Madeleine Delbr el, Venerable woman in the process of beatification, one of the greatest spiritual European figures of 20th century.

Enzo Bianchi, the lay prior and founder of the ecumenical monastic community of Bose wrote in the introduction to the Italian edition of Delbr el's correspondence collection: today's man believes more in witnesses than in the masters, he trusts more of experience than of doctrine, more of experience than of theories. Madeleine understands all this and poses, in all simplicity, without too many "theorizing", a new way of proclaiming the Gospel, based on a "domestic" dimension, witness of faith: a form of fraternal, "seminal" Christian presence, far from every effort of aggregation as per any temptation to isolation. Neither "escape from the world" nor construction of structures that claim to be Christian, visibly impressive in the context of social life.³ This characteristic holds not just for Delbr el but certainly also for Richard Rohr. Both are certainly witnesses of faith, worthy of following.

Regards bibliography⁴ resources: apart from *Ville Marxiste, Terre de Mission*, and some articles scattered in various magazines, Madeleine had not published anything. Notes, lecture texts, and suggestions intended for the teams, that she had written during her life, were collected and then (at around 30 years from her death) were published in multiple editions. In 1966 was published a first volume entitled *Nous Autres Gens des Rues* (eng. transl.: We, the ordinary people of the streets). Its success was encouraging, and two other volumes saw the light successively: *La Joie de Croire* in 1968 and *Communaut es selon l' vangile* in 1973. Recently, in 1991, some unpublished works were reunited with the title *Indivisible Amour*. From 2004 has begun the publication of the complete author's work which has already been published in not less than ten editions.⁵

Among several biographies, the very valuable is biography compiled by Gilles Fran ois and Bernard Pitaud: *Po te, assistante sociale et mystique*. This biography is an essential reference point for the Delbr el study. The book, a result of many pieces of research realized in various archives, describes the life of Madeleine from the origins of the family to her experience with the

3 Madeleine Delbr el, *Abbagliata da Dio. Corrispondenza - 1910-1941* (Milano: Gribaudi, 2007), 7.

4 One of the motivations for this paper was a lack of academic studies about Madeleine Delbr el realized in Slovakia. The most part of the studies about Delbr el's life and work are published in French, Italian, Spanish and German language. Very useful among online sources is a website: www.martaemaria.it/index.php.

5 Bernard Pitaud, *Madeleine Delbr el. 15 meditazioni* (Milano: Gribaudi, 2014), 10-11.

poor in Ivry-sur-Seine. The second one is a biography written by Christine de Boismarmin originally entitled *Madeleine Delbr el, rues des villes chemins de Dieu* (1904-1964). Christine de Boismarmin wrote just those things that she and her friends had seen, understood, and read during their thirty years of common life with Madeleine. The work represents the unique direct testimony of Madeleine's life and the inspiration for all other subsequent biographies.⁶

In contrast with a lack of Delbr el's publications, Rohr is known all over the world as one of the bestseller authors of religious and spiritual books for the last thirty years. This Franciscan Friar has written over thirty books including *Everything Belongs*, *Adam's Return*, *The Naked Now*, *Falling Upward*, *Immortal Diamond*, etc. His newest book is *The Universal Christ* published in 2019.⁷ In the foreground are themes based on the pillars of Christian mysticism and the Perennial Tradition. The main lineage of Rohr's theology includes: "Bible" of Nature and Creation, Hebrew Scriptures interpreted by the Prophets, Gospels, Incarnation, Paul as first Christian Mystic, Desert Fathers and Mothers, Bonaventure and Duns Scotus, The Trinitarian theology. Moreover, the author analyses Non-dual thinkers of all religions, Orthopraxy in much of Buddhism and Hinduism, and Unique witness of mythology. Despite the rich content with theological character, Rohr enriches his works with most of Jung's psychology and the very criticized theory of Enneagram.⁸

The context of the French Church in the first half of the 20th century

During the half-century before the Second Vatican Council, many theological works arose in France. This fact is even more remarkable, since the "eldest daughter of the Church," France, has been completely sterile throughout the two centuries. But this doesn't apply to piety; there were saints like the Parish Priest of Ars (Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney) or Saint Theresa of Lisieux with her great theology provided by Carmel. The force of her thoughts forced Catholic thinking to awaken from the crisis of *modernism*.⁹

6 "Biografie," Martaemaria.it, accessed June 18, 2019, <http://www.martaemaria.it/index.php/per-appfondire-Delbr el/9-biografie-Delbr el.html>.

7 "Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM," Center for Action and Contemplation, accessed June 18, 2019, <https://cac.org/richard-rohr/richard-rohr-ofm/>.

8 "Lineage and Themes," Center for Action and Contemplation, accessed June 18, 2019, <https://cac.org/living-school/program-details/lineage-and-themes>.

9 Alain Besan on, "Cesty katolick eho ateismu," *Impulz – revue pre modern u katolicku*

For centuries, a monastic or clerical state was represented to the Catholic as the state of gospel perfection.¹⁰ Alain Besançon, a significant French philosopher, and historian told about the state of the priesthood in the era of Madeleine, that at a time when the French Church was in dispute with the hostile doctrine of Leninist communism, the French Christians were forced to explain their thinking. Communism represented a coherent vision of the world capable of rejecting Christianity in the name of reason, history, and justice. It was necessary to respond and sometimes to dialogue, but the priesthood was not prepared for this kind of struggle. According to Besançon, the fate of Christianity seemed to depend on the quality of its discourses and apologetics.¹¹

The Church in France has distanced itself from Communism, and Christians were closed to social ghettos. The clergy, as mentioned, built a “defensive wall” and tried to lead an apologetic one-sided dialogue from behind that. The experience of layperson Madeleine, as well as the many priests of the Mission de France movement, was different. They did not make a way of separation, but on the contrary, they lived their Christianity openly in an atheistic society influenced by the Communists. Delbrél was convinced that the atheistic society is for Christians a good place to make their faith better and to proclaim it. When Christians close to ghettos, they lose contact with their atheist surroundings and become alienated. They no longer speak the same language, and instead of proclaiming faith are focusing on keeping their customs. This way, however, their faith weakens, stops growing, and dies. Madeleine understood that evangelization is not an added value to Christian life but its fundamental dimension. She clearly distinguished between the living faith and the Christian mentality, which at first glance looked similar, but in difficult life situations or when encountering militant atheism, it failed, and the Christians often left their confession. Delbrél understood that in the first place there is a need for a living belief - a living relationship with God. She witnessed that the Christian mentality was not enough.¹²

kultúru 13, no. 1 (2017): 117–118. The article originally published in french: Besançon, Alain. “Les voies de l’athéisme catholique.” *Commentaire* 160, no. 4 (Winter 2017): 749.

10 Madeleine Delbrélová, *Člověk mezi vírou a ateismem*, trans. and edit. Pavlína Bílková (Praha: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 2019), 8.

11 Besançon, “Cesty katolického ateismu,” 119.

12 Delbrélová, *Člověk mezi vírou*, 6–7.

Madeleine and the atheism

Madeleine arrived in Ivry in 1933, in the atheist and communist circles of the Parisian suburbs. For two decades Nietzsche had formulated the statement that had also fascinated the young Madeleine: "God is dead!" and, God had died for many men and women of those generations. In these years of the dechristianization of France, Madeleine finds herself in a social situation that aims for the rejection of God. In that climate and in that place, she spent more than thirty years. Madeleine defined laymen, who lived in that context - the "people of the street" who lead a humble, obscure, anonymous daily life. According to her experience, they perceived the models of sanctity (martyrdom, monasticism, diaconia) too distant from their daily life experience. Generally, people believe more in witnesses than in masters. They trust more their own experience than the doctrine and theories. Madeleine understood all this, and accompanied her contemporaries in all simplicity, witnessing faith in Christ with a fraternal presence, far from any pressure, and from any temptation to isolation from the world. Assiduous in listening to the word of God contained in the Gospels, she was able to narrate the word of life to each human being with authenticity and simplicity. Together with the few companions, Madeleine made the radical demands of the Gospel free from schematism and heaviness. The members of her community "Charite de Jesús" used to proclaim: "We are free of all obligation, but we are totally dependent on one necessity: charity."¹³

Jacques Loew stated: "Madeleine was very attentive to the signs of providence. I see one of them in her name and her saint patron. On Easter morning, the women found an empty tomb. (...) But Mary of Magdala disagrees with this empty, disagrees with the disappearance of the Lord. (...) In the same way, facing a refusal of the atheists, Madeleine was seeking deeper. She relied on Christ's words, and until she got an answer, she didn't leave the place that seemed to her as an empty grave."¹⁴ According to her, one of the lessons, that the confrontation with atheism brings to the Christians, is entering the reality of fraternal love. Teaching about faith, separate from the proclamation of the gospel and from the witness of life - the life that exists through God, could make the germs of evangelization among Christians barren. Thus, the temptations of atheistic context motivate Christians to

13 Delbr el, *Abbagliata da Dio*, 6-7.

14 Stefano De Fiores and Tullo Goffi, *Slovník spirituality* (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 1999), 1139.

replace passive discipline to the Church with live obedience, manifesting by love lived amongst Christians.¹⁵

The love towards the unbeliever, which becomes evangelization, must be fraternal. Considering this, Madeleine points out that Christians do not come to the unbelievers as fairs among sinners, not even as intellectuals among illiterates. Christians come to speak of a common Father, whom one knows and the other not. They should not come as sinners but as those who have been forgiven. Like those who were lucky enough to be called to faith.¹⁶

Against the claim, that the atheistic milieu negatively affects Christians and stop them from living their faith and grow in love, Delbrêl claims: “The atheistic milieu contradicts us that much, how much we believe in God. And in contact with us (Christians), it becomes a continuous question. The actions, researches, and acts of the atheistic milieu still ask us questions and the believer himself become the subject of questioning. We are confused because we are hit (...) in faith in God, which we have practically almost not practiced because the faith seemed a little redundant to us. We are disconcerted because atheism seems to judge us properly. (...) To regain the integrity of our faith, its field of vision must be restored.”¹⁷

From a choice to live a Christian life at the age of 29 to death¹⁸, Madeleine lived a contemplative and active dimension at the same time. Spiritually inspired by Charles de Foucauld and Saint Therese of Lisieux, her art of name profound dimensions of Christian vocation was unrepeatable. This fact noticed Mons. Sartre, Archbishop from Madagascar. He asked Madeleine to write down her ideas, and life experiences with the evangelization in a communist milieu. It was titled “Atheism and Evangelization”. This piece of work was used in the preparatory phase of the Second Vatican Council. This way, one of a few women and a few laymen, contributed not just to the problem of dialogue with atheism but undoubtedly also to the question of the Apostolate of laics – the topics that rank among the most important contributions of the Council.¹⁹

15 Madeleine Delbrêl, *Athéismes et évangélisation* (Bruyères-le-Châtel: Nouvel Cité, 2010), 135-136.

16 Delbrêl, *Athéismes et évangélisation*, 150.

17 Delbrêl, *Athéismes et évangélisation*, 231–233.

18 Madeleine, „the pioneer of laic spirituality“, died on 13 October 1964; paradoxically, the same day, when for the first time after many centuries, a layman made a speech at the Council. And on top of that, the first time when a layman spoke to the bishops about the Apostolate of the Laity. Kateřina Lachmanová, *Laická spiritualita Madeleine Delbrelové* (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 2004), 7.

19 “Anne-Marie Madeleine Delbrêl,” Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019, The witnesses, accessed June 19, 2019, <http://www.october2019.va/en/testimoni/i-testimoni/>

Action and contemplation

While Madeleine Delbr el lived in a communist environment, Rohr lives in a capitalist society. He points out that a materialistic society projects a sense of own value almost exclusively on things. „ Finally, as a result of looking at human beings as consumer goods, God becomes the „property” of the human ego. Everything, including God, becomes the subject of judgment. According to Rohr, contemplation is the only way that can bring man to the place of „the experience of unity with ourselves, the experience of radical unity with all humanity, and this way to the experience of unity with God”.²⁰

It is not obvious from the New Testament that Jesus used to have a concrete plan for a perfect society. However, he mediated the way of building the community. It is a way of listening and union – a way of truth.²¹ It is the way of action and contemplation based on the Gospel.

For describing what the word contemplation means Richard Rohr prefers a definition of Jesuit theologian Walter Burghardt – a “long, loving look at the real.”²² Contemplation is not a naive or utopian paradigm. Rohr explains: “The contemplative, non-dual mind is not saying - ‘Everything is beautiful’ - even when it is not. However, you do come to ‘Everything is still beautiful’ by facing the conflicts between how reality is and how you wish it could be.”²³

As a director of the Centre of Action and Contemplation, Richard explains that “most of us (Christians) must begin with contemplation or a unitive encounter with God and are then led through that experience to awareness of the suffering of the world and solidarity with that suffering in some form of action. I do think that’s true for many people, but as I read the biblical prophets and observe Jesus’ life, I think it also happens in reverse: the first action, and then needed contemplation”²⁴. Thus, we can hardly say which of the two spiritual disciplines are more important. About the name of the mentioned center, Rohr wrote: “The most important word in our Center’s name is not Action nor is it Contemplation, but the word *and*. We need both action *and* contemplation to have a whole spiritual journey. It doesn’t matter

anne-marie-madeleine-delbrel-protagonista-dell-avventura-mission.html.

20 Richard Rohr, *Slobodn  od slobody: letting go*, (Doln y Kub n: Zrno, 1997), 76-79. (originally published as: *Von der Freiheit, loszulassen: letting go*. M nchen: Claudius, 1997).

21 Rohr, *Slobodn  od slobody*, 76.

22 Vinita Hampton Wright, “A long loving look at the real,” accessed June 20, 2019, <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/6277/a-long-loving-look-at-the-real>.

23 Richard Rohr, “Contemplation and action,” published May 13, 2016, <https://cac.org/contemplation-and-action-2016-05-13>.

24 Rohr, “Contemplation and action.”

which comes first; action may lead you to contemplation and contemplation may lead you to action. But finally, they need and feed each other.”²⁵ Delbr el described the relationship of action and contemplation in 1958 in her spiritual testament addressed to members of the Charit e de Jesus: “Dear daughters, whatever the degree of participation that the Lord will give you to his suffering, to his mission or the daily life of his Gospel - I am asking you to always go to the end of your possibilities, as prayer did not exist; but not to undertake anything without praying, as if only the prayer existed.”²⁶

Richard points out that exists a danger of misunderstanding the true meaning of these spiritual terms. “Some might attach to contemplation or action for the wrong reasons. Introverts can use contemplation to affirm quiet time, not working, and leisure-class navel-gazing while activists can see action as an affirmation of their particular agenda.”²⁷ However, contemplation is closely linked with action. The Christian needs to find an equilibrium between action and contemplation. Active engagement into reality is needed just as solitude, reflection, and prayer. In this way, one can fully participate in the action of the Holy Spirit in the world. Rohr points out that spirituality does not mean sitting in the forest and thinking about Jesus. This incomprehension of spiritual life would be a contradiction of Jesus’ incarnation and way of life. Jesus was not just a contemplative man. He drew in prayer and consequently engaged actively among people and responded to their needs. Thus, the true spiritual transformation does not realize during spiritual exercises, but in an active confrontation with everyday reality, fortified by the spiritual experience drawn in seclusion.²⁸ “Action does mean a decisive commitment toward involvement and engagement in the social order. Issues will not be resolved by mere reflection, discussion, or even prayer. God “works together with” all those who love (see Romans 8:28).”²⁹

Thomas Merton, a contemporary of Madeleine and one of the biggest inspirators of Richard Rohr, clearly clarified the consequences of contemplation missing in action. “What is the relation of [contemplation] to action? Simply this. He who attempts to act and do things for others or

25 Rohr, “Contemplation and action.”

26 Delbr el, *Abbagliata da Dio*, 37.

27 Richard Rohr, “Contemplation and action,” *The Mendicant* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 1.

28 Richard Rohr, *Div y mu . Duchovn e prihovory o oslobod n  mu a*, trans. M ria Vargov  (Doln y Kubin: Zrno, 1997), 60–61.

29 Rohr, “Contemplation and action,” *The Mendicant*, 1.

for the world without deepening his own self-understanding, freedom, integrity, and capacity to love, will not have anything to give others. He will communicate to them nothing but the contagion of his own obsessions, his aggressiveness, his ego-centered ambitions, his delusions about ends and means, his doctrinaire prejudices and ideas. There is nothing more tragic in the modern world than the misuse of power and action.”³⁰

In the book *Adam's return*, Rohr stressed that most of the time Jesus stayed out of the official sacred space: in the streets, in private homes, in the countryside, etc. He had no problem meeting the dead bodies, the sick, the public or the hidden sinners, the ritually unclean or the lepers. He was not a priest and he did not come from the Levites. He was a layman, even without formal education. The Church has created the Order of the Liturgy so that Christians worship a man who has never asked people to worship him. All Jesus wanted from people was to follow him. Considering Jesus' speech in Matthew 23, it means to avoid any kind of rejection or hostile attitude towards reality. The prophets did so. They learned to say “yes” to God and life before they dared to say “no” to anything that would change their goal.³¹ This “yes” resides in abandoning human certitudes and keeping life in God's hands. The purpose of contemplation is the acceptance of reality. “A loving look at the real” means to act free from judgment, attack, and the need to control everything.³²

Elements of lay spirituality

Madeleine's authentic interpretation of the Christian vocation has shown that fidelity to the Gospel does not depend on the state (clerical, laic, ...) or the surroundings. The walls of monasteries or seminars have never been a guarantee of an authentic life faithful to the gospel. Delbr el pointed out that the measure of faithfulness to the Gospel is the intensity of life with Christ.³³ Madeleine demonstrates it through the interpretation of the two essential disciplines of the spiritual life: silence and solitude. Madeleine explains that “silentium” is always available, and the only reason for its absence is that the man was not able to create it. All the noise that surrounds him in the

30 Thomas Merton and Lawrence S. Cunningham, *Thomas Merton: Spiritual Master: Essential Writings* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1992), 375.

31 Richard Rohr, *Adamov n avrat*, trans. Pavol Petr ik (Bratislava: Serafin, 2005), 162–165.

32 Rohr, *Slobodn i od slobody*, 80–84.

33 Delbr elov a, * lov ek mezi v irou*, 8.

world causes much less hum than the man creates himself. The real noise is the response to the facts around us. What disturbs us, therefore, does not necessarily have to be a talk. When one moves through the streets crowded by the crowd, his soul becomes a space of silence in which the Word of God can be heard.³⁴ Silence is sometimes not-speaking, but it is always listening. If a person does not listen to the Word of God, the mere absence of noise is not the true silence of spiritual life. In this context, a day full of noise and communication can be a day spent in silence - in case that the noise of the outside world becomes for people a sound of God's presence and the voices of people become God's messages and challenges. According to Madeleine, a man still varies between the silence that destroys love and the explosion of words that cross the boundaries of truth. However, silence is love and truth. So, if we repeat with our mouths the invitation of the Word of God, which we meet deep in heart, we leave the silence undisturbed.³⁵

Madeleine, in her reflection on laymen and silence, in an authentic way, contextualized this tool for spiritual growth, using examples from the everyday life of "the people of the street". She compares the "lofty" symbols of the natural space of silence to the hustle and bustle of the everyday experience of laypeople: "Why should we feed our silence with the lark singing in the field, the insect chirping at night, or the buzzing of bees in the thyme - and not with the people of the street, the voices of the women on the market, the voices of the men at work, the laughter of the kids in the garden and the singing in the bar? Everything is the sound of creation that is coming to its destination. All of that is the echo of God's house that is in order or mess. Everything is just a signal of Life that blends with our lives".³⁶

The second essential discipline of spiritual life is solitude that implies an encounter with God in seclusion. Madeleine explains that solitude does not mean the absence of the world but the presence of God.³⁷ Madeleine wrote: „If you love the desert, remember that God prefers people“³⁸. God is everything and in everything, so the whole world is a chance to meet God face to face. The solitude is the encounter with Christ in "all his little ones". It is a meeting with refused Christ in thousands of faces marked by sin.

34 Madeleine Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires* (Bruy eres-le-Ch atel: Nouvel Cit , 2009), 24.

35 Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires*, 166.

36 Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires*, 167–168.

37 Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires*, 25–26.

38 Madeleine Delbr el, *Alcide, Guide simple pour simple chr tiens* (Paris: Seuil, 1968), 61.

The solitude with God is hidden in fraternal love - the man is Christ serving Christ. Christ in the man who serves and in the one to whom he ministers. In this context, Madeleine asks: why should be an active apostolate perceived as something that pulls people out of solitude?³⁹ Rohr's explanation is grounded in the reality of the Incarnation of God, in which God connects perfectly with the people. He says Jesus' incarnation confirms that God is meeting us where we are. If one wants to find God, he does not have to despise the world and leave his human nature. Living amid the world gives man the chance to participate in Christ's victory over the world. According to Rohr, it is necessary that man accepts human nature and understands the world as a place where God can speak to him. As the book of Job says: "in my body, I will see God" (Job 19: 26).⁴⁰

The Christian does not realize the eternal value of "small solitudes" amid the world. According to Madeleine, the people are too attached to time and do not perceive that God is above time and he can touch an open soul in a single moment. Daily life offers many opportunities for a small solitude⁴¹: "The solitude of the street that separates our house from the subway station; (...) a few minutes of a solitude when we light the stove; the solitude in the kitchen over a bowl of vegetables; (...) hours of solitude during ironing"⁴². It follows that the heart of the lay Christians living in the world has the same potential to become the space for the silence and praise to God as the sacred space of monasteries. People sent to live in the world can make from their heart the "cave of silence" - the space of the dwelling of the Word of God, which should emanate into the everyday life of laypeople.⁴³

If we want to understand the key to Madeleine's spirituality, we will find it in the expression that she used to repeat. It involves a deep harmony of prayer and work: a truly loving action - *l'action vraiment amoureuse*.⁴⁴ According to Delbr el, Christianity itself is effective if the Christian lives the reality of life, which he received. He must pass on the message of the Gospel, and in the light of faith, he takes suffering as a part of daily work.⁴⁵

39 Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires*, 26.

40 Richard Rohr, *Nahy Boh: Obhajoba krestanstva z tela a krvi* (Doln y Kubin: Zrno, 2005), 13-14.

41 Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires*, 165.

42 Delbr el, *La saintet  des gens ordinaires*, 164.

43 Madeleine Delbr el, *Nous autres, gens des rues* (Paris: Seuil, 1998), 24.

44 Gilbert Fran ois, "Une charit  concr te pour tous les hommes," *Il est vivant* 304, no. 5 (May 2013): 24-27.

45 Madeleine Delbr el, *Indivisible amour: pens es d tach es in dites* (Paris: Centurion, 1991), 23-24.

Rohr's understanding of spirituality is similar. He writes: "Contemplation is simply an openness to God's loving presence in "what is" right in front of you. (...) Experiences of great love and great suffering can and will lead anyone to the union. Every time you let your kids pull love out of you or when you let a relationship pull suffering out of you, you are present and surrendering to the flow."⁴⁶ Richard's understanding of spirituality breaks a wall between laymen and clergy or consecrated. He describes his experience from the Center of Action and Contemplation: „I do have a wonderful staff who, I think, love me. I surely love them, but I don't have to love them. I can go home and shut the door. But if you are a parent or a partner, you can't go home and shut the door to your loved ones. For all of us—whether we live alone or with others—the invitation is to open ourselves to the needs and suffering around us."⁴⁷

According to both, Venerable Madeleine Delbr el and Franciscan Richard Rohr, action and contemplation result as two interdependent paths of lay Christian's spirituality. The concreteness of Madeleine's writings based on her „ordinary“ experiences and Richard's mastery of preaching and teaching, remain as the key for understanding a necessity of action and contemplation in the “ordinary life of ordinary people from the streets”.

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Trust in Distrust Water Metaphors in the Book of Jeremiah¹

Reading title of the present paper, one can immediately ask why we have chosen the water metaphors when in fact the book of Jeremiah is full of other fascinating metaphors. Furthermore, the reader might have the impression that we are dealing with already well-known metaphors and issues. This seeming familiarity with the water metaphors, however, comes from the gospel of John where we find a couple of references to the expression ‘living water’ (מַיִם חַיִּים) being applied to Jesus or to God in the eschatological sense (cf. Jn 4,10; 7,38). We can go even further to the Hebrew Bible where we can notice a development in the interpretation of the ‘living water.’ First, the expression מַיִם חַיִּים simply means the fresh, running water. Its special value is understandable based on the geographical and climatic conditions.² Second, in the book of Canticles, the expression creates an allusion to the garden of Eden – the ideal garden that is full of living water.³ Third, in the book of Zechariah the ‘living water’ is part of an eschatological vision.⁴ Consequently, we can assume that although the expression ‘living water’ in relation to God sounds familiar to us, it is not a frequently used expression in the Bible.

Against this background, the present article aims to study the water metaphors of God in the book of Jeremiah with the hope that we can contribute to the understanding of the biblical ‘living water’ tradition. The מַיִם חַיִּים ‘living water’ as a metaphor for God seems very special for two reasons: first, it occurs only twice in the whole Bible, and second, both of these occurrences are in the book of Jeremiah. Reading the book of Jeremiah, we can see an additional water metaphor, i.e., a contra-metaphor

1 A reworked Hungarian version the present article was published: Otilia Lukács, “Vízmetaforák a Jeremiás könyvében,” in *Keresztény-Zsidó Teológiai Évkönyv 2019*, ed. Szécsi József (Budapest: Keresztény-Zsidó Társaság, 2019).

2 Gen 26,19; Lev 14,5,50; Num 19,17.

3 Song 4,15

4 Zech 14,8

that identifies God with the deceitful water (Jer 15,18). Hence, altogether we have found only three water metaphors regarding God: Jer 2,13; 15,18 and 17,13. According to E. K. Holt, these verses are intertexts, nevertheless, she further claims that their images are randomly taken from the common pool imagery. Hence, she denies the intentional intertextuality between them.⁵ This article intends to challenge this statement on the basis of the unique character of this metaphor. Our exegetical study on the water metaphors in Jeremiah intends to use the cognitive linguistics as hermeneutical framework in order to understand better the mentioned metaphors in their macro- and micro-contexts. Thus, cognitive linguistics allow us to gain insight into the intertextual relationship between the chosen metaphors as well as into their hidden cultural and religious aspects.

The Cognitive Linguistics' Definition of the Metaphors

Although the cognitive linguistics is relatively young discipline, it is a part of a huge interdisciplinary discussion. Hence, we rely only on the works of George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Mark Turner and Zoltán Kövecses⁶ in order to examine biblical prophetic metaphors with cognitive linguistics. We have chosen these prominent linguists because work together, and thus, they represent the same point of view in the cognitive linguistics theory of metaphors. Furthermore, in order to complement this approach with a more exegetical character, we use also Job J. Jindo's work who applies the cognitive linguistics as exegetical approach.⁷ Jindo argues that the role of prophet is essentially similar to the role of poet. He assumes that the idea of prophets as poets has a long history; nevertheless, the newness of this idea in the context of his study, consists in the emphasizes the conception

5 Else K. Holt, "The Fountain of Living Water and the Deceitful Brook: The Pool of Water Metaphors in the Book of Jeremiah (MT)," in *Metaphors in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Pierre Van Hecke, BETL CLXXXVII (Leuven: University Press, 2005): 99–119, 111.

6 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, IL; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980, ²2003); Zoltán Kövecses, *Language, Mind, and Culture* (Oxford: University Press, 2006); Id., *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: University Press, 2010); George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1987); George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago, London: University Press of Chicago Press, 1989).

7 Job Y. Jindo, *Biblical Metaphor Reconsidered: A Cognitive Approach to Poetic Prophecy in Jeremiah 1-24* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010).

of poetic metaphors as a means of communication in biblical prophecy.⁸ Like the poets, the prophets use metaphors and figurative images in order to share their “prophetic reality”⁹ with the reader but the metaphors are no longer considered poetic devices or ornaments. The elements of the shared ‘prophetic reality’ include the prophet’s perspective on his historical context, on his inner experience or perception of his reality and on prophet’s aim to reveal the divine perspective and experience.¹⁰ Thereby, we as readers are able to reconstruct the prophet’s reality with the help of metaphors.

In brief, cognitive linguistics deals with the relationship between human cognition and language. According to this view, linguistic metaphors are expressions of metaphorical concepts, which are parts of people’s conceptual system. In other words, linguistic metaphors are manifestations of conceptual metaphors.¹¹ Cognitive linguistics considers metaphor as a key in understanding human cognition as well as the society in which the examined metaphors are used. The metaphors shape not only the everyday thoughts and activities of people, but also the thoughts of the biblical writers. Thus, the prophets’ way of speaking about their experience of God is metaphorical in nature.

According to Lakoff and Johnson, a metaphor is “[...] principally a way of conceiving of one thing in terms of another, and its primary function is understanding.”¹² With regard to the structure of metaphors, our scholars assume that each metaphor consists of a source domain, a target domain, and a source-target mapping:¹³

Metaphor is principally a way of conceiving [= mapping] of one thing [= conceptual domain, which is called target domain] in terms of another [= conceptual domain, which is called source domain], and its primary function is understanding.¹⁴

The source domain is that conceptual domain from which the metaphorical expressions are drawn.¹⁵ The source concept, according to Kövecses is a

8 *Ibid.*, 4, 46, 250.

9 *Ibid.*, 46.

10 *Ibid.*, 46–47, 250, 266.

11 Kövecses, *Language*, 122.

12 Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors (1980)*, 36; Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 4.

13 Lakoff, *Women*, 276. For further discussion see Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason*, 53, 60; Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 265.

14 Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors (1980)*, 36. For further discussion see Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 4.

15 Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 4.

“more concrete and more delineated concept,”¹⁶ and it provides the source domain used in metaphorical reasoning. The target domain is that conceptual domain which we try to grasp or understand with the help of source domain, more precisely through the manner by which the source domain is used.¹⁷ According to Kövecses, the target domain “tends to be fairly abstract and less-delineated,”¹⁸ and forms the subject of the metaphors.¹⁹ There is an “experiential correlation”²⁰ or a “set of systematic correspondences”²¹ between the source and the target domains. This correlation is described with the technical term “mapping”.²² Due to the experiential basis and cognitive nature of conceptual metaphors, the mapping is usually automatic and unconscious.²³ For the mappings they use the following formula: “CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN A IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN B” or in brief, “A IS B.” A is the target domain and B is the source domain.²⁴ Consequently, the metaphorical mapping is the intended “internal structure”²⁵ of metaphors. This internal structure includes the way of mapping from one conceptual domain (source domain) onto another (target domain). Thus, mapping has a three-part structure: the first endpoint (source domain), the bridge (the mapping itself) and the second endpoint (the target domain).²⁶ The detailed mapping or the internal structure of metaphors has three aspects. First, the slots (relations, properties and knowledge) in the source-domain schema are mapped onto slots of the target-domain schema. This correlation either exists independently or is created through the mapping, e.g., LIFE IS JOURNEY metaphor: mapping the ‘PATH slot’ of the JOURNEY schema onto the domain of life leads us to understand the events of life in relation to the events of path, which immediately creates a ‘COURSE OF LIFE slot’ in the LIFE domain.²⁷ Second, the mapping is always partial, namely, not all the

16 *Ibid.*, 17, 77. See also Id., “Metaphor and Emotion,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Raymond W. Gibbs Jr. (Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 380–396, 381.

17 *Ibid.*, 4.

18 *Ibid.*, 17, 77.

19 Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors* (2003), 265.

20 Lakoff, *Women*, 278.

21 Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 7, 14.

22 Lakoff, *Women*, 278. For further discussion see Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 7, 14; Id., *Language*, 224.

23 Kövecses, *Language*, 224.

24 Id., *Metaphor*, 4, 91.

25 Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason*, 63.

26 *Ibid.*, 203.

27 *Ibid.*, 63–64.

elements of the source domain are mapped onto the target domain.²⁸ Finally, the “principle of unidirectionality” which expresses that the source and target domains in the great majority of everyday metaphors are not reversible. In other words, the metaphorical process is from the more concrete (source domain) toward the more abstract (target domain) and not the other way around.²⁹

In sum, metaphor is composed of two different conceptual domains: a source and a target domain. They form an internal structure in such a way that one conceptual domain is understood in terms of another. The partial systematic structure of one domain (source domain) is mapped onto the whole systematic structure of another domain (target domain). Likewise, the whole logic of one domain is mapped into the whole logic of another.³⁰

GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER

כִּי־שָׁתִּים רָעוֹת עָשָׂה עַמִּי אֹתִי	for my people have committed evils:
עָזְבוּ מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים	they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water,
לְחַצֵּב לָהֶם בְּאֵרוֹת	in order to dig out cisterns for themselves,
בְּאֵרֹת נִשְׁבָּרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִכְלוּ הַמַּיִם	cracked cisterns that will not be able to hold water. ³¹

The Macro-Context of the Water Metaphor: Jer 2,1-3,5

The first water metaphor is a central image of the so-called divine lament (Jer 2,1-3,5),³² which details Israel’s present reality and the bad outcome of

28 Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 10. The partiality of mapping is also expressed through the basic characteristics of the source and target domains, which include: the “metaphorical utilization,” which refers to the fact that we are using only some aspects from the source domain in order to understand the target domain; and the “metaphorical highlighting and hiding,” which expresses that in the metaphorical understanding we are focusing only on some aspects from the target domain, meanwhile the another aspects remain hidden. 91–93, 103.

29 Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 7, 11.

30 Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason*, 103.

31 The English translations generally follow the NRSV and NJPS editions but include some emendations for the purposes of highlighting the topic of the present paper.

32 A.R. Pete Diamond and Kathleen M. O’Connor, “Unfaithful Passions: Coding Women

the current tendencies.³³ The broader context (Jer 2,1-4,4) includes three moments: indictment against Israel (2,1-3,5), call to repentance and divine judgment (3,11-4,4).³⁴ The divine lament opens a historical retrospection exploring the idyllic past of the covenant between God and Israel. In this section, the covenant is presented with the help of marital and agricultural metaphors (2,1-3).³⁵ The following section includes God's lawsuit (2,4-13). The greatest sin of Israel is the "exchange of gods" (v. 11) which implies political misfortunes.³⁶ Carroll asserts that here the 'change of gods' matches with ideological changes, which means that the 'YHWH-alone ideology' is reshaped and turned into the 'baalistic understanding of YHWH'.³⁷ That is, Israel enters into alliance with the neighbouring great powers instead of relying on the covenant with YHWH. This is explicitly stated in the rhetorical question of v. 18 (cf. v. 36), when drinking the waters of the Nile and Euphrates involves a new type of dependency different than the dependency on the "living water," namely the political alliance or vassal status of Egypt and Assyria (as we know from historical circumstances).³⁸

Coding Men in Jeremiah 2-3 (4.2)," in *Troubling Jeremiah*, eds., A.R. Pete Diamond, Kathleen O'Connor and Louis Stulman, JSOT SS 260 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1999), 123-145, 128. See also Walter Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile & Homecoming* (Grand Rapids, MI, Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans, 1998), 32.

- 33 Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 32. For a more detailed analysis of the structural aspects of Jer 2,1-4,4 see Terence E. Fretheim, *Jeremiah* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2002), 61-74:
 Jer 2,1-3 – a divine memory of a joyful past relationship
 Jer 2,4-13 – a classical prophetic lawsuit on changing gods
 Jer 2,14-19 – Israel is exposed
 Jer 2,20-37 – Israel's apostasy detailed
 Jer 3,1-5 – the divorce (an official end of the covenant)
- 34 Fretheim, 59. See further Gary E. Yates, "Jeremiah's Message of Judgment and Hope for God's Unfaithful 'Wife,'" in *BS 167* (April-June 2010): 144-165, 145-146, 160. Yates argues that the purpose of this section is not to condemn the people of Israel, rather to bring about restoration of the relationship between God and Israel (especially emphasized in chapters 3,14-18 and 4,1-4).
- 35 E.g., COVENANT IS JOURNEY OR LOVE IS JOURNEY and GOD IS HUSBAND/BRIDEGROOM, ISRAEL IS THE FIRST FRUIT AND GOD IS HARVESTER. For a more detailed discussion of these metaphors see Elizabeth R. Hayes, *The Pragmatics of Perception and Cognition in MT Jeremiah 1:1-6:30: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 162.
- 36 Cf. Jer 2,16.18-19.36.
- 37 Robert P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1986), 126-127. See also Joep Dubink, "Getting Closer to Jeremiah: The Word of YHWH and the Literary-Theological Person of a Prophet," in *Reading Jeremiah: A Search for Coherence*, ed. Martin Kessler (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 25-39, 30.
- 38 Fretheim, 67. See also William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1: A Commentary on the Book of the prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1-25* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 93-94. Holladay

Although the fundamental issue here is religious, we cannot separate it from the political issues.³⁹ Accordingly, GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER functions as a culmination of the surrounding verses: it is connected to God's complaint against Israel and the unmaking of the covenant, having spiritual, environmental and political implications. The unmaking of the covenant by Israel is expressed in different metaphors, all suggesting that Israel's sin has an irrevocable consequence, such as the deprivation of the land of water.

The Micro-Context of the Water Metaphor: Jer 2,13

Jer 2,13 is shaped to be the climax of God's first indictment in vv. 9-13.⁴⁰ Accordingly, the micro-context are the two accusations concerning the two evils (כִּי־שָׁתִים רָעוֹת) ⁴¹ summed up as Israel's sins, i.e., they have forsaken God, the fountain of living water, and they have dug out cracked cisterns. It introduces two new metaphors: the metaphor of living water and that of the broken/empty cisterns. We call them 'new' because, contrary to the marital metaphors which run throughout Jer 2,1-3,5, the living water and empty cistern appear only in v. 13. Both of them belong to the group of water

provides the historical background of v. 15: "It is the conclusion of the present study that "lions" here [v. 15], like "Assyria" in vv. 18 and 36, refers to Babylon, which had taken Nineveh in 612 and defeated the remainder of the Assyrian army again at Haran in 610. Egypt marched through Palestine in 609 to help what was left of the Assyrians against the Babylonian; Josiah was killed at Megiddo, and the Egyptians had de facto control of Palestine – they deposed Jehoahaz after three months of rule and placed Jehoiakim on the throne as an Egyptian vassal. Thereupon the Babylonians defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish in 605 and routed them southward, defeating them again near Hamath, so that Jehoiakim transferred his vassalage to Babylon. The Babylonians have "roared" against Judah." And with regard to v. 18 he states that even if the covenantal language is not assured (drinking the waters of Egypt and Assyria) "the metaphor still implies some kind of treaty obligations." (*Ibid.*, 95). See also Joseph M. Henderson, "Jeremiah 2-10 as a Unified Literary Composition: Evidence of Dramatic Portrayal and Narrative Progression," in *Uprooting and Planting: Essays on Jeremiah for Leslie Allen*, ed. John Goldingay (New York, NY; London: T & T Clark, 2007), 116–152, 142.

- 39 Fretheim, 67; Yates, 148; Peter C. Craigie *et al.*, *Jeremiah 1-25*, WBC 26 (Dallas, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1991), 24; David J. Reimer, "Redeeming Politics in Jeremiah," in *Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah*, eds. Hans M. Barstad and Reinhard G. Kratz, BZW 388 (Berlin; New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 121–136.
- 40 Holt, "Fountain," 101; Id., "... Ad Fontes Aquarum: God as Water in the Psalms?" in *Metaphors in the Psalms*, ed. Pierre Van Hecke and Antje Labahn, BETL CCXXXI (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 71–85, 83; Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 36.
- 41 Holladay, 91; Jack R. Lundbom. *Jeremiah 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible 21A (New York, London, Toronto: Doubleday, 1999), 267–268; Craigie *et al.*, 29; Holt, "Fountain," 101. Holt interprets it as "double stupidity".

metaphors, although they stand in contrast to each other. The questions could now be put thus: What is the purpose of the water metaphors in this poetic section? How are the water metaphors and the marriage metaphors related? Do the water metaphors provide us with extra information regarding the marital metaphors and the covenantal relationship? Why is water used to conceptualize the (broken) covenantal relationship between God and Israel?

Several scholars agree that מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים simply refers to the “natural spring of running water”.⁴² Two concepts, however, should not remain unmentioned when we try to understand the meaning of GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER metaphor: the מְקוֹר חַיִּים “fountain of life”, known from the wisdom literature⁴³, and the אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים “living God”.⁴⁴ Some scholars hold the opinion that the metaphor of “living water” suits the expression “living God”.⁴⁵ Hence, Holladay believes that Jeremiah consciously plays on the double meaning of the חַיִּים, “living water” and “living God.”⁴⁶ In this regard, we would complement Holladay’s conclusion with the idea that the living water reflects similarity or perhaps influence not only from the “living God” but also from the “fountain of life”. In fact, these expressions/metaphors overlap each other since God is the only source of life for Israel in ironic contrast to the Baal which cannot provide life-giving resources for Israel even if he is worshipped as the god of fertility and rain (e.g., Jer 4,22).⁴⁷

Against this background, we can assume that the metaphor God is the fountain of living water implies the mapping between the domain of horticulture/climate and that of God’s relation to Israel:

42 Cf. Gen 26,19; Lev 14,5.50; Num 19,17; Song 4,15; Zech 14,8; Jer 17,13.

43 Cf. Ps 36,10; Pro 10,11; 13,14; 14,27; 16,22

44 Cf. Deut 5,26; 1 Sam 17,26.36; Jer 10,10; 23,36

45 Lundbom, 267; Holladay, 92; Georg Fischer, *Jeremia 1-25* (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2005), 162.

46 Holladay, 92.

47 Fretheim, 66–67; Craigie *et al.*, 30; Charles R. Feinberg, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 35.

SOURCE:	TARGET:
Fountain of living water	God and the relationship between God and Israel
<i>natural phenomena: fountain/spring</i>	=> <i>the basis of this relationship: God Himself</i>
<i>fountain: source of water</i>	=> <i>God: source of life</i>
<i>fountain: perennial</i>	=> <i>God's constant presence in Israel's life</i>
<i>living water: running/fresh water</i>	=> <i>God is constantly taking care of his people</i>
<i>water as central life-sustaining element</i>	=> <i>God's protection towards Israel throughout the whole history</i>

The elements of FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER are mapped onto the elements of God, and also, onto God's relationship to Israel, that is the covenant. The purpose of the mapping is to reach a deeper insight into God's attitude towards Israel. Compared to the marriage metaphors, the metaphor GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER elaborates other aspects of God-human relationship. The marital metaphors were able to show us the covenantal relationship and its history in two cases, i.e., in the initial phase of the relations (vv. 2-3) and in the later phase of divorce (2,4-5.8-32, 3,1-5). However, the water metaphor provides us a deeper insight, i.e., God is the living water to Israel which means that Israel's need of God is the same as her physical need for water to sustain her life. Thus, the need for God and His covenant is grasped through the need of water.

In order to understand the crucial role of this water metaphor we should keep the geographic and weather conditions of Israel in mind. For instance, in a period of six consecutive months there is no rain in Israel.⁴⁸ Consequently, the water was not only crucial in sustaining the life of human beings, animals, plants, but also in the economy of Israel, which was depending on agriculture, hydrology and climate. Moreover, apart from the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee, the primary water sources of Israel were/are the natural phenomena

48 King describes the three stages of rain in Israel: first, the early rain of autumn (October-November) which prepares the ground for seeding; second, the most important heavy winter rain which soaks the ground and fills the cisterns; and third, the later rain (March-April). See further Philip J. King, *Jeremiah: An Archeological Companion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 143-144. See also Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, eds., "Gods, Goddesses," in *DBI* (Downers Grove, IL, Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 1998), 336-340, 930.

of seasonal wadis, springs, and the artificial water-catchments, such as wells, cisterns, dams, pools, wadi barriers and reservoirs.⁴⁹ Jeremiah was evidently familiar with the climate and water sources of Israel and opted for water as a basic metaphor to express his message, namely, the importance of the balanced covenantal relationship with God.⁵⁰

Interestingly, the prophet uses similar images to express the presence and the absence of God in Jer 2,13. The divine absence, caused by Israel's turning away from God, is depicted by the 'building cistern' and the 'broken cistern' metaphors. These two metaphors express the end of the covenant and its consequences, respectively.

The first metaphor of BUILDING CISTERNS IS BREAKING THE COVENANT:

<p>SOURCE: Building cisterns</p> <p><i>artificial phenomenon: dug out of cistern</i></p> <p><i>the cistern does not contain living water</i></p> <p><i>result of human work</i></p>	<p>TARGET:</p> <p>Breaking the covenant refusal of the "natural"</p> <p>=> <i>relationship initiated by God</i></p> <p>=> <i>breaking, unmaking the covenant</i></p> <p>=> <i>disabled covenantal relationship, the result of Israel's endeavour to take her fate into her hands</i></p>
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The broken covenant is conceptualized through the act of building cisterns. Like the previous metaphors, this mapping also provides us with a deeper insight into Jeremiah's understanding of the covenant. First of all, the cisterns are not a natural phenomenon but the result of artificial human work to secure a constant supply of water during the dry season. Here, one can argue that neither the covenant is a "natural phenomenon." However, we would like

49 Philip J. King and Lawrence Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, KY, London: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 122–123; King, *Jeremiah*, 143; R.E. Clements, "מִיַּם," in TDOT 8, eds. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgern and H.-J. Fabry (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1997), 265–288, 276; Gerald A. Klingbeil, "water," in NIDB 5, ed. K. D. Sakenfeld (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 818–821, 819; John L. McKenzie, S. J., ed., "water," in *Dictionary of the Bible* (Milwaukee, WI: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1965), 921–922, 921; Ryken *et al.*, "water," 930; John Peter Oleson, "water works," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6, ed. D. N. Freedman (New York, London, Toronto: Doubleday, 1992), 883–893, 883; Michael Grisanti, "מִיַּם," in NIDOTTE 2, ed. W. A. VanGemeren, 929–934, 929.

50 Cf. Jer 2,13; 3,3; 5,24; 4,12–13; 6,7; 10,13; 14,3 51,16

to emphasize that in a certain sense the covenant is a “natural phenomenon” because it is not the result of human effort but is initiated by God. Second, even if the cistern is intact and contains water, the quality of this water is far inferior to the quality of the running water of fountains.⁵¹ Moreover, as human constructions, cisterns run the risk of being damaged at some point.

The image of “broken cisterns” expresses the abovementioned risk of damage. It points out to the vulnerability of human life through the BROKEN CISTERN IS HUMAN VULNERABILITY metaphor:

SOURCE:

Broken cisterns

TARGET:

Human vulnerability

broken cistern: does not contain water anymore

=> *broken covenant is not the source of life anymore*

absence of water

=> *absence of the covenant: the human life becomes vulnerable*

Accordingly, the elements of the BROKEN CISTERN are mapped onto HUMAN VULNERABILITY. In other words, human vulnerability is the consequence of the loss of God’s protection, namely, the broken covenant between God and Israel. The broken cistern means the absence of water and implies the human suffering caused by the drought. Consequently, there is a parallel between the fountain of living water and the cracked cistern. The fountain of living water means the presence of water and life, which conceptualizes the vivid covenant between God and Israel. The cracked cistern means the absence of water and life, which conceptualizes the absent covenant.

51 Julian Koelbel, “Survey and Assessment of Ancient Cisterns in the West Bank,” [http://www.arij.org/files/admin/2009/Survey%20and%20assessment%20of%20ancient%20Cisterns%20in%20the%20West%20Bank.pdf. Accessed: June 11, 2018]. Koelbel reaffirms the qualitative inferiority of the water from the cisterns based on his survey on 83 analysed cisterns from the area between Bethlehem and Hebron (Al-Khalil). He further states that the water from cisterns is intended for agricultural and domestic uses. Hence, only the water which is gathered from the roofs (maintained and cleaned roofs) and controlled artificial catchments is acceptable as drinking water. See also Michael J. Harrower, “Hydrology, Ideology, and the Origins of Irrigation in Ancient Southwest Arabia,” in *Current Anthropology* 49/3 (June 2008), 497–510; Paolo M. Costa, “Notes on Traditional Hydraulics and Agriculture in Oman,” in *World Archeology* 14/3 (February 1983), 273–295; Charles Burney, “Urartian Irrigation Works,” in *Anatolian Studies* 22 (1972), 179–186.

To sum up, the metaphor *GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER* has a crucial role in the understanding of God's indictment assumed in Jer 2,1-3,5. Hence, Jer 2,13 formulates two divine accusations against Israel expressed by the very common everyday experience of water in order to address his audience and to allow his message to attain its goal. The uniqueness of *GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER* metaphor consists in the application of the conventional expression "fountain of living (running/fresh) water" to God as a metaphor, highlighting God's role in the covenantal relationship with Israel.⁵² Moreover, Jeremiah develops this idea even further. In order to express the essentiality of the covenant, he uses two further metaphors related to the water, *BUILDING CISTERNS IS BREAKING THE COVENANT* and *BROKEN CISTERN IS HUMAN VULNERABILITY* as counterpart-examples to the "fountain of living water." The "living water" implies the notion of life-giving, fresh, running water, whereas the waters of cistern imply still, old, lacking the life-giving proteins. Furthermore, the "living/running water" might be connected to the pouring out of blessings as the water is an important element of divine blessings/promises with regard to the Promised Land.⁵³ In contrast, the still water of the cistern and the broken cistern lack the movement, the act of pouring blessings, i.e., the covenant is broken which denotes that no divine blessings are received anymore. Instead Israel is stuck at one level, relying on her own strength and on the alliance of neighbors, such as Egypt and Assyria.

52 Jer 2,13; 17,13 cf. Gen 26,19; Lev 14,5.50; Num 19,17; Sol 4,15; Zech 14,18

53 In the Hebrew Bible, we can find a clear separation between the blessing and the curse concerning water: on one hand, the assurance of water/rain by God is the sign of Israel's obedience to the covenant and on the other hand, the withdrawal of water/rain by God is the sign of curse for Israel's disobedience which is mainly related to the sin of idolatry (e.g., Ex 23,25; Lev 26,19; Num 24,7; Dt 8,7-9; 11,11; 28,12.23-24; 1 Kgs 8,35; Am 4,7-8; Job 5,10; 38,32; cf. Jer 3,3; 4,23; 5,24; 6,8; 12,10; 14,3-6.22; 31,10-14; 51,43). For further discussions in this regard, see: Grisanti, 929; Klingbeil, "water," 819; Marie-Emile Boismard, "water," in *DBT*, ed. Xavier Léon-Dufour (London: Champan, 1969), 565-567; William H. Propp, "water," in *OCB*, eds. B. M. Metzger and M. D. Coogan (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 792-793, 792.

17c-18: complaint, accusation against God

19-21: God's answer.⁵⁸

The Micro-Context of the Water Metaphor: Jer 15,18

Verse 18 begins with the so-called 'why-question' (לָמָּה) which is typical for the individual lament psalms. The interrogative "why", which is called the "tone of an extreme crisis"⁵⁹, introduces the sequence of lament, on the one hand, and the protest because of the incomprehension of the present suffering, on the other hand.⁶⁰ The formal "why" expresses deepest perplexity and desperation.⁶¹ Furthermore, the "why" is also an evident indication of the paradoxical character of the lament since, even if lament is an accusation against God, it also remains within the boundaries of prayer because of the direct address to God.⁶²

What kind of suffering is expressed by the question "Why is my pain unceasing" (v. 18a)? Is it a physical suffering as described by physical images (increasing pain, incurable wound) or a spiritual suffering, if we consider the water and body images as metaphors? The word expressing the pain – נֹכַח – is a *hapax legomenon* in the book of Jeremiah.⁶³ In the Bible, the first occurrence is related to the pain that Shechemites experienced on the third

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 39–40; Id., "Struktur und Geschichte der Klage im Alten Testament," ZAW 66 (1954), 44–80; Id., *The Praise of God in the Psalms* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1965), 66–67; O'Connor, *Confessions*, 41; Robert P. Carroll, *From Chaos to Covenant: Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 116.

58 Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 146–148. See also Fretheim, 237; John Bright, "A Prophet's and Its Answer: Jeremiah 15:10-21," in *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies*, ed. Leo G. Perdue and Brian W. Kovacs (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1984), 325–337, 328–330.

59 Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 230.

60 Walter Brueggemann, *Deep Memory, Exuberant Hope: Contested Truth in a Post-Christian World* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2000), 78.

61 Thomas Hieke, "Schweigen wäre gotteslästerlich. Zur Phänomenologie und Theologie der Klage in Alten Testament," *Bibel und Liturgie* 71 (1998), 287–304, 293.

62 Paul Ricoeur, "Lamentation as Prayer," in *Thinking Biblically: Exegetical and Hermeneutical Studies*, eds. André LaCocque and Paul Ricoeur (Chicago, IL; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 211–232, 218.

63 Holladay, 460–461: Holladay states that this word expresses both the physical, as well as the psychical pain. See also Fischer, 510.

day after circumcision⁶⁴. In the book of Job, **כְּאֵץ** is related to physical and mental torment.⁶⁵ Interestingly, the “incurable pain” in Isaiah is linked to the sin of people because they have forsaken God.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, Jeremiah maintains his innocence in contrast to the Isaiah passage. We can assume that the body images describe physical suffering, but without any doubt, they also refer to the mental torment experienced by Jeremiah because of the tension between the content of the prophetic message and solidarity towards his fellow people.⁶⁷

With regard to the image of ‘deceitful brook, (unfaithful) water’ (**כְּאֵץ מַיִם**), many exegetes agree that it refers to the “waterless stream (bed)” or wadi.⁶⁸ This image is very common to those who are familiar with Israel’s geographical and weather circumstances. Many brooks or streambeds have water only after a downpour (during the rainy season of winter), but at other times, especially during summer, these brooks are dry.⁶⁹ Furthermore, in the context of the book of Jeremiah this image clearly refers back to its counterpart in Jer 2,13, where God assures to be the fountain of living water in contrast to other waters and wilderness (Jer 2,18.31).⁷⁰ In agreement with Holladay, we can assume that God’s rhetorical question – “Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of thick darkness?” (Jer 2,31) – is addressed affirmatively back to God by Jeremiah, stating that God became a dry wadi to him. Holladay discusses this question further and maintains that both rhetorical questions are related to the “metaphorical identity of Yahweh,” being the fountain of the living water for Israel, namely: “what Yahweh rhetorically has asked of Israel (“Have I become a wilderness to Israel?” 2:31) [Jeremiah] now turns back affirmatively onto him with regard to their own relationship.”⁷¹

64 Cf. Gen 34,25

65 Cf. Job 2,13; 16,6; Ps 39,3; Isa 65,14: **כְּאֵץ לֵב** “pain of heart”

66 Isa 17,11

67 McKane, 356. See also Lundbom, 746; Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 147.

68 Lundbom, 746. See also Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 147; Fretheim, 239.

69 Feinberg, 121; Lundbom, 746; Craigie *et al.*, 211; Mark S. Smith, *The Laments of Jeremiah and Their Contexts: A Literary and Redactional Study of Jeremiah 11-20*, SBL 42 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 14.

70 Fretheim, 241; Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 147. For further discussion see A.R. Pete Diamond, *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context: Scenes of Prophetic Drama* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1987), 75: Diamond considers the v.18 as ‘a parody’ of **מִים חַיִּים** of Jer 2,13 and 17,13 and as a ‘direct denial’ of God’s promised reliability.

71 Holladay, 461. See also Leslie C. Allen, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 184.

The *כִּמוֹ אֶזְבֵּב מַיִם לֹא נֶאֱמָנוּ*, “like a deceitful brook, waters that are not faithful/reliable,”⁷² is a complex metaphor with two components (deceitful brook and failing waters) applied to God. Due to these two components, we have the impression that here are two metaphors; nevertheless, the second component (“unfaithful water”) is in fact an explanation or an emphasis on the first component (“deceitful brook”). Moreover, the ‘deceitful brook’ and the ‘unfaithful waters’ are inspired by the same experience, and they are from the same source domain. These imply the mapping between the following domains, that of water as source and that of God’s relation to Jeremiah as target:

SOURCE:	TARGET:
deceitful brook, unfaithful/ unreliable waters	the relationship between God and Jeremiah
<i>natural phenomena: waterless streambed, wadi</i>	=> <i>the relationship: God and Jeremiah</i>
<i>waterless streambed: surface/no depth</i>	=> <i>lack of God’s support to Jeremiah in his mission</i>
<i>waterless streambed: water (rainy season)/dry (summer)</i>	=> <i>God’s presence or support is not permanent</i>

72 Based on a short qualitative research on the verb *אמן* in *niphal* form, we can assume the following possible translations: the first most frequent translation is “faithful,” thus the literary translation is “waters that are not faithful” (Deut 7,9; 1 Sam 2,35 (2x); 22,4; Neh 9,8; 13,13; Pss 78,8; 101,6; 111,7; Prov 25,13; Isa 1,21.16; 49,7; Jer 42,5; Hos 12,1); the second most frequent translation is “sure,” thus our translation could also be “waters that are not sure” (1 Sam 25,28; 7,16; Pss 19,8; 98,5; Isa 33,16; 55,3; Hos 5,9); third, the translation “trustworthy” occurs five times, “waters that are not trustworthy” (Num 12,7; 1 Sam 3,20; 7,16; Job 12,20; Prov 11,13); and fourth, a number of other translations occur only once or twice: “reliable” (Isa 8,2); “firm” (Ps 89,29); “confirmed” (1 Kgs 8,6; 2 Chr 6,17). In the book of Jeremiah, the *niphal* form of *אמן* occurs twice. In Jer 15,18, it refers God as ‘unfaithful water’. Similarly, in Jer 42,5, it refers to God as ‘faithful witness.’ Cf. BDB, “אמן,” 52–53. The BDB classifies the Jer 15,18 and 42,5 into two different groups according to the meaning of *אמן*. Thus, in Jer 15,18 the *אמן* means “made firm, sure, lasting”, whereas in Jer 42,2 means “reliable, faithful, trusty.” These meanings, however, are synonyms.

SOURCE:

waterless streambed: untrustworthy, deceitful

TARGET:

=> *characterization of the covenantal relationship between God and his prophet or “Is God is untrustworthy”? God’s protection and support towards Jeremiah throughout his prophetic vocation should be the sign of covenant as election, promise and fulfilment*

failing water: untrustworthy and even non-existent

=> *(a) failing relationship (the experience of the divine absence)*
 => *(b) unsecured physical and spiritual prophetic life*

The elements of the deceitful brook and the unfaithful water are mapped onto the elements of the target domain, God and God’s relationship to Jeremiah with the purpose of gaining a deeper insight into that relationship. Contrary to God’s promises present in the prophetic call (Jer 1,4-19), Jeremiah opts for the metaphor God is deceitful brook/unfaithful water as means to conceptualize his present experience of God.

In fact, the source domain of God is deceitful brook/unfaithful water is the same as the source domain of the metaphor God is the fountain of living water.⁷³ Furthermore, not only the source domains are related to each other, but also the target domains. Both metaphors point to a (covenantal) relationship between God and Israel as well as God and Jeremiah. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between these metaphors. While the former expresses the divine presence and its effect on human life on the communal level, the latter expresses the divine absence and its effect on human life on the individual level.

⁷³ Holt, “Fountain,” 111.

GOD AS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER

מְקוֹה יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה	O well of Israel, LORD!
כָּל-עֹזְבֵיךָ יִבְשׁוּ	All who forsake You shall be put to shame;
(יְסוּרֵי) [יְסוּרֵי] בְּאֶרֶץ יִכְתְּבוּ	those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth,
כִּי עָזְבוּ מְקוֹר מַיִם-חַיִּים אֶת-יְהוָה	for they have forsaken the fountain of living water, the LORD.

The Macro-Context of the Water Metaphor: Jer 17,1-13

Jer 17,13 is part of the section Jer 16,19-17,13⁷⁴ which is composed by different poems.⁷⁵ Each of these poems support the common theme of human beings' dependence on the one, living God,⁷⁶ more precisely, the theme of comparing those human beings who are dependent on God to those human beings who are dependent on another person.⁷⁷ This topic is especially present in the last wisdom poem (vv. 5-13), which is based on the contrast between trusting in God and trusting in man-made safety.⁷⁸

74 *Ibid.*,107.

75 M. E. Diddle, *Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature: Rereading Jeremiah 7-20*, Studies in Old Testament Interpretation 2 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996).

76 Holt, "Fountain," 107–108: "[d]ifferent voices sing together, each in their own tune creating a complex symphony and adding different features to its final form. When played together the tunes interact with each other and give new meanings to each other."

77 The broader context is constituted by the following passages: (1) creed/thanksgiving and God's answer, i.e., dialogue between God and the nations (Jer 16,19); (2) the judgment oracle against Judah (Jer 17,1-4); (3) minor wisdom poems or collection of proverbial sayings (Jer 17,5-13). See further Holladay, 490; Fretheim, 255; Timothy Polk, *The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self*, JSOT SS 32 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1984), 131–134.

78 The poem develops this topic throughout all its three sections: vv. 5-8, vv. 9-11 and vv. 12-13. Holt, "Fountain," 108. See also Fischer, 544; Lundom, 789; Craigie *et al.*, 228–229; Brueggemann, *Jeremiah*, 160; Allen, *Jeremiah*, 200; Holladay, 497–499; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 355–356; and McKane, 398–402.

The Micro-Context of the Water Metaphor: Jer 17,13

Verse 13 opens with the expression מְקוֹה יִשְׂרָאֵל, which is normally translated as “hope of Israel.” Holladay highlights the multiple meaning of מְקוֹה as “pool”⁷⁹, “hope”⁸⁰ or “security”⁸¹, then concludes that both vocatives, addressing God as “source of hope for Israel,” as well as “true pool of water for Israel” are legitimate here.⁸² However, Dahood⁸³ and Van Hecke⁸⁴ proposed a secondary, more preferable interpretation. Dahood appeals to the context of v. 13 to prove that the understanding of מְקוֹה as “pool” fits into this context. Moreover, he interprets v. 13 as a commentary on God’s rhetorical question mentioned above (2,31).⁸⁵ He also mentions other biblical passages where מְקוֹה is translated as “pool, reservoir.”⁸⁶ Therefore, he concludes that the translation of “pool of Israel” is more adequate here.⁸⁷ Van Hecke provides a more detailed explanation based on the meanings of the root קוה as “hope”⁸⁸ and “to gather,” having its specific meaning as “gathering water.”⁸⁹ And he opts for the translation of “well of Israel” instead of the pool because, according to his explanation, after the period of drought obviously God is addressed as “well” when he provides water.⁹⁰ Furthermore, similar to Dahood, he mentions that the two occurrences of the root in the book of Jeremiah are in the context of water and drought.⁹¹ Thus, the preferable reading in this context is the “well of Israel.”⁹² To strengthen this position, I would like to refer to the previously discussed “living water” metaphor, whereby running water and the fountain are exceedingly important. This is yet another intertextual element to justify the translation of מְקוֹה with “well.”

79 Ex 7,19

80 Ezra 10,2

81 1 Chr 29,15

82 Holladay, 433, 502. See also Holt, “Fountain,” 106. For further discussion see Mitchel Dahood, “The Metaphor in Jeremiah 17,13,” in *Biblica* 48 (1967), 109–110, 109.

83 Dahood, 109–110.

84 Pierre Van Hecke, “Metaphorical Shift in the Oracle against Babylon (Jeremiah 50-51),” in *SJOT* 17/1 (2003), 68–88.

85 “Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of thick darkness?” (Jer 2,13)

86 Gen 1,9; Ex 7,19; Isa 33,21

87 See further Dahood, 109.

88 Ezra 10,2; 1 Chr 29,15

89 Gen 1,9,10; Ex 7,19; Lev 11,36; Isa 33,12

90 1 Kgs 18

91 Jer 17,13 cf. Jer 14,8

92 Van Hecke, 71–72. See also Holt, “Fountain,” 106; Lundbom, 797; Dahood, 109.

The key verb in this verse is עֲזַבְיָהוּ “all who forsake You” that brings Jer 1,16, as well as Jer 2,13 to mind.⁹³ It should also be underlined here that עֲזַב “to forsake, abandon” is not only the key verb of three related verses⁹⁴ but could also be one of the key verbs for the whole book of Jeremiah. Based on statistics,⁹⁵ the verb עֲזַב appears most frequently in the book of Jeremiah with a total occurrence of 25 times.⁹⁶ The first occurrence of the verb עֲזַב is in Jer 1,16 and the succeeding occurrence can be found in Jer 2,13. Jer 1,16 assumed the sin of the people as a program for the whole book as shown by the qualitative statistics. Thus, Jer 2,13 and 17,13 share the same idea, i.e., the people of Israel have forsaken God to worship other gods, idols which are made by human hands.⁹⁷ Thus, Jer 17,13 similar to Jer 2,13 picks up again the issues of Jer 1,16.

To conclude, the suggested interpretation of v. 13 is well suited to God is the fountain of living water metaphor and to its macro-context. Although the poems of the macro-context seem to be independent from each other, we can assume that the cognitive approach to the water metaphor in v. 13 can contribute to the understanding of common theme of these poems (16,19-17,13), which places the human's dependence on God at the centre. They describe this theme through different images, namely, (a) the strict contrast between the way of life and the way of death, denying the middle

93 Holladay, 502. See also Allen, *Jeremiah*, 201, and Lundbom, 797.

94 Jer 1,16; 2,13 and 17,13

95 *BibleWorks for Windows 10*, עֲזַב.

96 Another important thing to consider concerning the frequency of עֲזַב in Jeremiah is that except for verses 48,28; 49,11; 49,25; 51,9, all the other occurrences can be found in the first part of the book (Jer 1-25), which contains poetic oracles ascribed to Jeremiah (so-called Source A) (Freiheim, 27.) Furthermore, with regard to the object and the subject of the verb עֲזַב, we have found interesting results as well. First, the object of forsakenness in the four texts mentioned above pertain to foreign cities and Babylon (48,28; 49,25 and 51,9) and orphans (49,11). Second, in the first part of the book, the object of forsakenness is explicitly God with the people as the subject (1,16; 2,13.17.19; 5,7.19; 16,11 (2x); 17,13(2x); 19,4; 22,9). There are a few exceptional verses though in which the object is not God (4,29 – the left town; 14,5 – the doe which forsakes its new-born fawn; 17,11; 18,14 – the snow leaves the crags; 25,38 – lion has left its covert). Third, in two other related cases, the people have forsaken God's law (9,12) and God's land (9,18). Verse 9, 12 obviously refers to God being forsaken by the people because in vv. 9,12-13, the same pattern of sin is evoked like in Jer 1,16 or 2,13. Israel left the law of God and turned to foreign gods. Fourth, in vv. 9,1 and 12,7, interestingly, we have two examples with just the opposite situation, i.e., God will forsake/has forsaken his people.

97 Holladay, 93. Holladay argues that Jer 1,16 and 2,13 are parallel dictions. Moreover, based on Holladay's arguments, Fischer states that the idea of the forsakenness of God in Jer 1,16 is broadened by the idea of “God as the fountain of living water.” See further Fischer, 162.

way between them (vv. 5-8); (b) the idea of God's righteous judgment based on His function as tester of the inner world of the human beings (vv. 9-10); (c) a direct affirmation that there is no escape if somebody has accumulated his wealth in unjust ways (v. 11); and (d) the consequences of forsaking God could be only the death because He is the fountain of living water (more explicitly expressed in v. 13). Thus, parallelism between God and water is again crucial because through the metaphor of God is the fountain of living water, the poet points out the importance of God in human life. Here we have the same metaphorical mapping as in Jer 2,13. Thus, it is not necessary to give the same mapping as it was done before.

Conclusion

The present article argued for an intentional intertextuality between the analysed metaphors and also for a conscious application of these metaphors in the book of Jeremiah given the fact that the expression "living water" is used as metaphor for God only in Jer 2,13 and 17,13 in the Hebrew Bible. As a result, we arrived at the following conclusions:

In the first place, we intend to draw attention on the conscious use of the water metaphors which manifests itself in the prophetic vocation. It was mentioned that the program of the whole book is found at the beginning of the book of Jeremiah. This program culminates in the divine accusation summarized in Jer 1,16: Israel has forsaken God and turned to the idolatry. Jer 2,13 and 17,13 pick up this same topic and broaden it by the God is the fountain of living water metaphor.

Second, in the light of the prophetic call and promises (to Israel and to Jeremiah), the metaphor GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER helps us to understand the desperate situation of Jeremiah in his relationship with God. The experience of God's absence is conceptualized through the GOD IS DECEITFUL BROOK/UNFAITHFUL WATER metaphor. Similarly to Jer 2,13, the water metaphor aims at highlighting the crucial need for God in human life.

Third, in Jer 2,13 the same water metaphor is considerably developed compared to the one in 17,13 (by contrasting it with the metaphors of building cisterns and broken cisterns). This observation can show us that in Jer 17,13 the water metaphor is an allusion to 2,13.

Finally, there is a dynamic development within these metaphors. In Jer 2,13, God is the speaker who affirms that He is the fountain of living water for Israel. In 15,18, Jeremiah is the speaker who refutes the above claim of

God and states that God is like a deceitful water for him. In 17,13, Jeremiah is again the speaker who now repeats and affirms God's original claim as the fountain of living water for Israel. These statements develop on two levels: (1) God is the fountain of living water on the communal level (God – Israel), and (2) God is the deceitful brook on the level of the person (God – Jeremiah). These two levels are presented from different perspectives (from God's perspective and from Jeremiah's perspective respectively). However, if we uphold that there is an intertextual link between 2,13; 15,18 and 17,13 as we have been arguing, then we can conclude that Jeremiah's perspective in 17,3, i.e., *God being a fountain of living water for Israel*, holds true also for Jeremiah himself since he belongs to the community of Israel.

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The census of Quirinius

Introduction

Regarding the *census* of Quirinius, Luke states the following in *Luke* chapter 2, verses 1-2:

In those days it occurred that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that a census (απογραφω) should be taken of all the inhabited earth (οικουμένη). This was the first (πρωτη) enrollment taken while Kurenios was governor (ἡγεμονευω) of Syria.¹

Many researchers have already tried to determine the date of the *census*, as it is the date that Jesus' birth is based on the above-mentioned verses. Depending on how much they accepted Luke's data accurate, results fall between 12 B.C.E. and 6 C.E. No consensus has been established so far. We can see scientific debates back from the 1860's about as little details as Quirinius could be *proconsul* in the province of *Asia*. In his book, Wieseler states² that Quirinius could not be *proconsul* in *Asia* around 6 B.C.E., since - regarding Florus³ - Quirinius was the *proconsul* of *Africa* at that time, and no one that we have knowledge of held an office twice in Roman history. But even if someone had done, leading a campaign against the Homonadenses in *Cilicia* would have been too far from a province without a legion. For this, Wieseler assumed that the war against the Homonadenses took place around the time Jesus was born. However, no more than a year later, Thomas Lewin replied⁴ oppositely to all of these arguments, and said that Quirinius could have been *proconsul* in *Asia*. With the debates continuing up till now, Brindle

1 Translation mine.

2 Karl Wieseler, *A Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels*(London: Bell and Daldy, 1864),130-1.

3 Flor. *Epit.* IV.12.40

4 Thomas Lewin, *Fasti Sacri, Or A Key to the Chronology of the New Testament* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1865), 133.

sees the root of the problem in that Luke's description seemingly cannot be conciliated with the historical facts.⁵

Enrollments of Augustus

In order to determine the date of the *census*, first of all one has to review the enrollments concerning the whole Empire ordered by Augustus.

According to the *Res gestae Divi Augusti*,⁶ Augustus ordered three imperial enrollments, one in 28 B.C.E., which was too early for us to take account of, one in 14 C.E. which was too late correlated with the date of Herod's death, remaining the only possible date is the third one in 8 B.C.E.

Therefore the birth of Jesus must have taken place between the time of execution of the imperial census (around 8 B.C.E.), and Herod's death (approx. 4 B.C.E.). Some scholars are trying to simplify the question stating that Jesus' birth in Matthew is not consistent with Luke's writing, based on that it is clear from *Mt* 2:1 that Herod was alive at the time of Jesus' birth, but in Luke it is not self-evident. However, one doesn't need to suppose this to resolve the problem.

According to Luke's words, lots of questions are raised. Is it possible to hold a *census* under Herod, before Israel became a Roman province? Is Publius Sculpicius Quirinius the only person who could be behind the Greek word *Kurenios*? There are indeed other candidates as well, some are serious (like Caius Sentius Saturninus), some are not. For example, Rist states that *Kurenios* is Quinctilius Varus,⁷ but his arguments are demolished by Barnes, who states that this theory is simply nonsense, making "the evidence say what he wants it to say rather than what it actually says".⁸

Kurenios as Saturninus

Before I move on, let's discuss the question of the person of *Kurenios* mentioned by Luke. A possible nominee is Saturninus who was legate of Syria between 9 and 7 B.C.E., the exact same period of time during which Jesus was born. In

5 Wayne Brindle, "The Census and Quirinius: Luke 2:2.," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 27/1 (1984):43.

6 Aug. RG 8:3-4.

7 John M. Rist, "Luke 2: 2: Making sense of the date of Jesus' birth," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 56, no. 2(October 2005): 489-91

8 Timothy D. Barnes, "'Another Shall Gird Thee': Probative Evidence for the Death for Peter," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, ed. Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2015), 76-7.

7 B.C.E., Saturninus was sent away (most likely to *Germania*),⁹ and Publius Quinctilius Varus arrived to replace him with four legions from *Africa*, around the autumn of 6 B.C.E.¹⁰ That would make Saturninus a proper candidate.

Waltz, for example, is one of the scholars who thinks that Saturninus can be the person that is mentioned by Luke.¹¹ Waltz states that the latin S was often written similarly to Greek sigma for the sake of easier engraving on stone. Sigma was written as C in most uncial texts, and C could be (easily) falsely transliterated as K, for which we can find numerous antique examples. However, most latin translations write “Cyrino” to which the nearest Roman name is Quirinius, obviously. Moreover, we do not have any specific source at all that would prove Waltz’ supposition, which also counts with significant corruption of the text, moreover it explains only the first letter, therefore this speculation remains only a weak hypothesis.

Brown also thinks it is possible that Kurenios means Saturninus, and invokes Tertullian for his argument, but also acknowledges that this theory doesn’t have any written evidence.¹² And without a manuscript that translates directly Kurenios to Saturninus, this alteration would mean too much text deterioration, therefore one can exclude it.

Tertullian about Saturninus

The picture gets complicated again when Tertullian also ties the time of Jesus’ birth to Saturninus. Tertullian writes the following:¹³

But census was made during the time of Augustus in Judea by Sentius Saturninus, that serves as a proof to us in reference to Jesus’ family.¹⁴

Thus Tertullian considers Saturninus the person in charge in the time of the census when Jesus was born. Furthermore, Tertullian gives the nomen

9 Ronald Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 85.

10 Edward Dąbrowa, “The Date of the Census of Quirinius and the Chronology of the Governors of the Province of Syria,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, Bd. 178 (2011): 140; Emil Schürer, Fergus Millar and Géza Vermes, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (Oxford: Bloomsbury, 2014)vol I., 257.

11 Robert B. Waltz, *The Bible in History – A chronological and biological guide to the Hebrew and Greek Testaments* (Robert B. Waltz, 2013), 45.

12 Raymond Edward Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1977), 553.

13 Tert. Adv.I. 4:19.

14 Translation mine.

(Sentius), too, while Luke writes only the cognomen (Quirinius). This also shows the relevant fact that Tertullian must have had access to independent (roman) historical proofs in connection with the census under Jesus' birth was born. *Nota Bene*: even he himself refers to such data that they are generally accessible.

However, since Tertullian had never ever questioned the authenticity of the Bible, how could he ignore that Luke didn't mention Saturninus? (Because, for example, Tertullian and Iustinus must have had the word "Kurenios" in their Greek Bible, and not the Latin version). Tertullian would not alter a biblical name without explaining the reason behind it.¹⁵ One can see how faithful he is to the text when one considers that Tertullian calculates Jesus' birth to Augustus' 41. year,¹⁶ which contradicts the dates of all of the *censuses*, but aligns with Iustinus¹⁷ and it is clearly based on a word-by-word translation of Lk 3:1 and 3:23, which says that Jesus was 30 years old (ὥσει ἑτῶν τριακοντα) in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (29 C.E.). But the words of Luke here means more like "Jesus was about 30 years old" instead of an exact definition.

Furthermore, if we presume that Tertullian had a text containing Saturninus in Lk 2:2, in this case it is also not likely that Tertullian did not have any other sources and didn't even mention the multiple possibilities. Tertullian knew the work of Iustinus¹⁸ well, who mentions Lk 2:2 as Jesus having been born while Quirinius was *procurator* in Syria.¹⁹

We can only conclude that Tertullian must have interpreted the sentence of Luke 2:2 in a way that Luke tells us about a *census* made *before* Quirinius was the governor in Syria. And in this case he had to translate the word *prote* using its meaning "earlier" instead of its other meaning "first". I am going to return to this grammatical question later on.

The titulus *Tiburtinus*

There is a marble slab (it can be found in the Vatican Museum currently), which was found in 1764 near the ancient Tibur, that contains the *cursus*

15 Kokkinos Nikos, "The Relative Chronology of the Nativity in Tertullian," in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos II. Chronological, Nativity and Religious Studies in Memory of Ray Summers*, ed. E. Jerry Vardaman (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1998), 122.

16 Tert. *Adv. Jud.* 8.

17 Iust. *Ap.* 46.

18 Michael E. Hardwick, *Josephus as a Historical Source in Patristic Literature through Eusebius* (Atlanta GS: Scholars Press, 1989), 47–50.

19 Iust. *Ap.* I.34.b; 46.

honorum of a Roman officer. Figuring out the man who is referred in *titulus Tiburtinus* caused not once fierce debates among historians. For example, Kokkinos connects the slab with Saturninus, as a much more likely candidate than either Titulis, Quirinius or Piso.²⁰ Answering to this suggestion, Eilers completely denies Saturninus in favor of Piso.²¹ Alföldy – in the light of the above – argues that the person referred by the slab is no other than Quirinius, since²²

- the “*legatus ... iterum Syrian ... optinuit*” should be understood that the person before became governor in Syria, was a *legate* somewhere else.
- Agreeing with Syme, also states that the offices are in ascendent order instead of reversed order.
- The senator mentioned by the text was awarded with medal of triumphator, which indicates that the person had to be a consul first.
- The candidate had to be consul between 18 B.C.E. and 8 C.E., and his first office as a *legate* must have been under Augustus. The man was still alive after Augustus had died, and buried in Tibur.
- In general, the *cursus honorum* of the person fits perfectly to the life of Quirinius, and matches with no other known general. Piso, for example, can be excluded, since his second *legate* was in Thracia instead of Syria. Alföldy also convincingly excludes basically everyone else (C. Valgius Rufus, C. Caelius Rufus, Galus Sulpcius, Q. Fabricius) with the argument that they were not mentioned at all by the famous roman historians (e.g. Cassius Dio, Velleius, Suetonius), and the person referred by the *titulus Tiburtinus* must be one of Augustus’ greatest general. These arguments were widely accepted later on.²³

The legate and census(es) of Publius Sulpicius Quirinius

Among the Syrian *legates*, there’s only Quirinius left as our candidate, whom we know that he became governor in Syria in 6 C.E., and in the same year

20 Nikos Kokkinos, “The Honorand Of The Titulus Tiburtinus: C. Sentius Saturninus?,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 105 (1995): 21–6.

21 Claude Eilers, “C. Sentius Saturninus, Piso Pontifex, And The Titulus Tiburtinus: A Reply,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 110 (1996): 207–26.

22 Géza Alföldy, “Titulus Tiburtinus. A legtöbbit vitatott római felirat problémái,” *Antik Tanulmányok* 42 (1998):117–28.

23 E.g. Dąbrowa, “The Date of the Census,” 138.

he conducted a *census* in Israel.²⁴ The events shocked the people of Israel and even led to a revolt. Grüll argues that the main cause of this revolt was the new kind of oath and the raising cult of the Emperor.²⁵

In case we translate *Lk 2:2* as Jesus was born during this *census* in 6 C.E., we will come to a contradiction, because Herod had long been dead by then, but both Matthew, both Luke (in *Lk 1:5*) mentions Herod. Moreover, in this case Jesus would have died years before he was 30, but Luke states in *Lk 3:1* and 23 that Jesus started his ministry (in 29 C.E.) in his thirties. Actually, Jesus was almost 40 years old when he died, which can be seen even from a dialogue in *Jn 8:57*, when the people around him state that he is “not yet fifty” - a strange observation if Jesus wouldn't be even 30, or even about 23 years old.

One can resolve this contradiction only if he assumes either that Quirinius was *legatus* when Jesus was born (and therefore he held another *legatus* position in *Syria* afterwards), or *Lk 2:2* mentions an earlier *census*, prior to the one that was conducted in 6 C.E. The first possibility already contradicts with the text of *titulus Tiburtinus*, as I pointed out, but this question is so significant that further arguments must be considered to be able to exclude it without any doubt.

The Lapis Venetus

Although it became obvious that *titulus Tiburtinus* describes the career of Quirinius, there must be other considerations to be examined to exclude the possibility of Quirinius being *legatus* in *Syria* prior B.C.E.

First, there was a little time difference between the end of Saturninus' governance (7 B.C.E.) and Varus' arrival (6 B.C.E.), which time could have stretched from 6 months to 18 months. Because of this, it is possible that Quirinius – who was in *Libia* at that time – gained a temporary control over the region. This would absolutely solve the problem of *Lk 2:1-2* verses, and doesn't require Quirinius to conduct the *census* in person, since that would mean that Luke is only referring to Quirinius as a dating reference point, to which I'll come back a bit later, but first let's discuss the question of the *Lapis Venetus*.

Another inscription which mentions Quirinius (this time directly) is an epitaph, the so-called *Lapis Venetus*. According to this epigraph, a roman

24 *Ios. Ant.* XVII.13.5, XVIII.1.1, II.1

25 Tibor Grüll, “A „hetvenes” zsidó háború történelmi emlékezete,” *Vallástudományi Szemle* 5:3 (2009): 207–8.

officer (called Quintus Aemilius Secundus) performed a *census* of Apamea, commissioned by no other than Quirinius, who was the *legate* of Syria at that time. The genuineness of the epitaph was quickly questioned after it was found, but in 1880, another piece of it was discovered and scattered the doubts. The text says:

Quintus Aemilius Secundus, son of Quintus, of the Palatine tribe, in the camps of the divine Augustus, when Quirinius was the imperial *legate* of Syria, was decorated with honors, prefect of a cohort from the I. August legion, prefect of the second fleet, also conducted a *census* by the order of Quirinius in Apamene city of 117 000 citizens; also I was sent by Quirinius against the ituraeans, on the mount Lebanon I captured their fortress; and before I was in the army and *prefect* of craft works, I was delegated by the two consuls to run the treasury, then in a colony as quaestor, aedile twice, duumvir twice, and pontifex. Laid to rest here Q. Aemilius, son of Quintus of the Palatine tribe, Secundus (other son?), and Aemilia Chia freedwoman. This tomb must have no more heirs!²⁶

Iturea was suffering continuously from raids at that time (possibly by Arabian tribes)²⁷, therefore Secundus didn't just punish one single hostile action or revolt, as it is sometimes referred. About dating the events, Brown notes that there are absolutely no proofs that the *census* in Apamea did not take place around 6 to 7 C.E.²⁸ Cotton also regards it as self-explanatory that the events happened in 6 C.E.²⁹ Moreover, if the revolt had taken place before 1 C.E., Quirinius must have been governor in Syria twice. But as we have seen it regarding the *titulus Tiburtinus*, it is not the case. Another argument is that the time between the government of Saturninus and Varus is maximum 1.5 years, which is simply too short for a *legate* to hold without leaving the position as a fallen politician,³⁰ and Quirinius surely didn't fall into that category, since his rank and reputation was growing steadily through time.

26 Translation mine, and is partially based on Tibor Grüll, "A kövek kiáltanak – 50 dokumentum az Újszövetség tanulmányozásához." (Budapest: Szent Pál Akadémia, 2009), 39.

27 Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C. – A.D. 337* (London, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 273–4.

28 Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 553.

29 Hannah M. Cotton, "The Roman Census in the Papyri from the Judaeen Desert and the Egyptian katV oivki,an avpograph,," in *Semitic Papyrology in Context. (Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, vol. 14.)*, ed. Lawrence E. Schiffman (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003), 106-7.

30 Dąbrowa, "The Date of the Census," 141.

Alföldy adds to this that we have no knowledge of anyone in roman history to hold the same province twice.³¹

Quirinius as secondary leader behind Saturninus

As the next step, in theory it is possible that Quirinius was not a *legate* at the time when Jesus was born, but instead, a co-leader. In this case, we know that at the time of the Augustine *census* in 8 B.C.E., Saturninus was the *legate* in *Syria*, therefore Quirinius must have been an officer under Saturninus for a short while. This is strengthened by the fact that Quirinius had a special relation with Augustus, as a person who had strong merits in the economic, organizational and military fields at the same time. This would mean that he was a *procurator* in *Syria* at the time when Jesus was born. And it was pretty common that military leaders and officers were helping the government to collect the census data.³²

Iosephus writes in several places about Saturninus and Varus being governors at the same time.³³ This is surely not a slip of the pen from him, because regarding Varus and Silanus, Iosephus never mentions multiple governments.³⁴ *Legates* had the right to nominate *procurators* above a specific area within the province. The best example for this is *Iudaea* itself, and getting a *procurator* also means a partially independent state. Apart from this, assignment of general co-rulers within a single province was not a custom in the Roman Empire at all.³⁵ That means that – it is more than likely – Volumnius was only *procurator* under Saturninus. ³⁶Volumnius held his office until 8 B.C.E.,³⁷ which gives time to Quirinius to be *procurator* when Jesus was born.

The word governor in *Lk* 2:2 (ἡγεμονευω) does not mean only *legate*, but instead, multiple offices, e.g. *procurator*. Quirinius had several titles in his

31 Alföldy, “Titulus Tiburtinus,” 121.

32 Jack Pastor, *Land and Economy in Ancient Palestine* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 239.

33 *Ios. Ant.* XVI.9.1, 10.8

34 *Ios. Ant.* XVII.5.2., 9.3; XVIII.2.4

35 Andrew Lintott, *Imperium Romanum: Politics and Administration* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1993), 43.

36 See *Ios. BJ* 27.1.2. This supposition is also supported by the fact that Iosephus is inconsistent about the naming of Volumnius’ office, once he calls it *epistratounton* (*Ios. BJ* I.27.1), and once *stratopedarkhen* (*Ios. BJ* I.27.2). See: Schürer, Millar and Vermes, *The History of the Jewish People* vol. I., 257.

37 William Horbury, *Messianism Among Jews and Christians: Biblical and Historical Studies* (London, New York: T&T Clark LTD, 2003), 117; John Robinson, *A Theological, Biblical*

life:³⁸ governor in *Crete* and *Cyrene* (14 B.C.E.), was chosen as *consul* (12 B.C.E.), *legate Galatia* and *Pamphylia*(6/5-3 B.C.E.), *proconsul* of *Asia* (~2 B.C.E. - 5 C.E.),³⁹ chief advisor of Caius (grandson of Augustus, in 2 B.C.E.) and *legate* of *Syria* from 6 C.E.

Luke uses the same word (ἡγεμονεῦω) in *Lk* 3:1 regarding Pilate, with the same phrase as it appears in *Lk* 2:2. But contrary to Quirinius, Pilate was *praefectus Iudaea* and not a *legate*.⁴⁰ The difference is that the *praefectus* was performing public administration tasks, while the *procurator* was mainly a treasurer, and is directly under the emperor.⁴¹ The word (ἡγεμονεῦω) means mostly *praefect*, but sometimes other leaders, e.g. *procurator* (like Felix is in *Lk* 23:24). Luke and Iosephus were close together in time and in style, too, and Iosephus also called *praefect* a *procurator*.⁴² Based on that and the fact that Tacitus also writes the same way, one can conclude that with the introduction of the *procurator* title, Claudius didn't create a genuine office, but (at least the early) *procurators* were also *praefects*.⁴³

And the picture gets even more complicated when one takes into account that there was not only a provincial *legate* office, but the leaders of the legions were also called *legates*, when there was more than one legion in a *province*. The *legatus legionis* was the head of a legion, while the *legatus pro praetore* was a leader of a *province* when there was no legion, or only one legion stationed in the province.⁴⁴

All this means that the actual type of government in the text of Luke can be understood in multiple ways regarding the position of Quirinius. Based on these, several scholar tried to justify that Quirinius was indeed *procurator*. This paper shows only one, Vardaman's.

and *Ecclesiastical Dictionary* (London, Sherwood: Gilbert, & Piper, 1835), 328.

38 Richard R. Losch, *All the People in the Bible: An A-Z Guide to the Saints, Scoundrels, and Other Characters in Scripture* (Cambridge, Michigan: Grand Rapids – Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), 352.

39 Alföldy, "Titulus Tiburtinus", 125.

40 James Vardaman, "New inscription which mentions Pilate as 'prefect'", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81.1 (March 1962), 70–1.

41 Steve Mason, *Flavius Iosephus, Translation and Commentary. Vol. 1B.*(Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008), 16.

42 Ibid. 80.

43 Ibid.

44 Géza Alföldy, *Római társadalomtörténet*(Budapest: Osiris, 2000), 120.

Iustinus and Jerry Vardaman about Quirinius being procurator

Although Iustinus himself refers to Quirinius as a *procurator*,⁴⁵ this cannot be an accurate term. A *procurator* is only chosen from the lower *equestrian* order, and if we only consider the description of Quirinius by Tacitus,⁴⁶ Iustinus had to be inaccurate in his wording.

Jerry Vardaman is one of the few who thinks that Iustinus had been in lesser position since 11 B.C.E. till Herod's death. This is based on a non-published finding of "micro letters" on a small coin. Nonetheless McRay accepted Vardaman's state without any critic.⁴⁷ Vardaman himself also cited these "results",⁴⁸ but the scientists remained sceptic and refused both the concept of the micro letters and – as a result – the dating of Jesus' birth to 12 B.C.E., too.⁴⁹ As Ogg states, it is no question regarding that Quirinius was a *legate* in *Syria*, and Luke didn't mention another office he held there before 6 A.D.⁵⁰

With no other possibility remaining, Quirinius must have been *legate* in *Syria* at the first time in 6 A.D., and he wasn't a regional leader at the time of Jesus' birth.

Lk 2:2 states a census before Quirinius was legate of Syria

If Luke didn't mean a prior office of Quirinius at the time of Jesus' birth, then logically the only possible explanation is that Luke used the word *πρωτη* not in the sense of "first", but in the meaning of "before" or "earlier". This view is accepted widely.⁵¹ So the verse should be translated like this:

"This enrollment happened earlier when the governor in Syria was Quirinius."

45 Iust. Ap. I.34.b

46 Tac. Ann. 3:48

47 John McRay, *Archaeology and the New Testament.*, 154

48 Jerry Vardaman, "Jesus' Life: A New Chronology," in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos. Nativity and Chronological Studies Presented to Jack Finegan*, ed. Jerry Vardaman, Edwin M. Yamauchi (Winona Lake IN: Eisenbraus, 1989), 66-7; Robert W. Smith, "New Evidence regarding Early Christian Chronology: A Reconsideration," in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos II. Chronological, Nativity and Religious Studies in Memory of Ray Summers*, ed. Jerry Vardaman (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998) 133-9.

49 See for example Joseph David Rhodes, *The First Nativity (Part II): History and Theology of Our Incarnate Lord and Saviour* (Rhodes' Educational Ministries, 2015), 234.

50 George Ogg, "The Quirinius Question To-day," *Expository Times* 79(1968): 232.

51 Most of the authors that are mentioned in this paper share this opinion. One of the few objections is of Klaus Rosen's, who thinks the word order is the same as the word

Or

“This enrollment happened earlier of Quirinius being the governor of Syria”

Barnett describes this option as a “less attractive” but possible one, and he also argues for it.⁵² Armand Puig I Tàrrach sums up brilliantly the pros and cons, then argues that translating the word as “before” is totally legitimate, referring to lots of scholars, such as Husch, Porter, Lagrange, Heichelheim, Camps, Turner and others.⁵³

But can we translate the sentence like this? We can state the following:

- In Greek, using the word *prwth* in this meaning is not uncommon, especially in the works of Luke. In the Bible, e.g. John 1:15 and 30 is using the word similarly, and it is not without other example in Luke’s work, if we consider Acts 1:1.⁵⁴
- The sentence structure is only seemingly Genitive Absolutus, while it is in fact an Active Participle.

To sum up, we can state that though the above sentence in Greek is a bit unusual (generally speaking), it can be interpreted in the above meaning without grammatically corrupting the text, since none of its elements are irregular or unprecedented.

The two censuses of the Bible

The book of *Acts* ch 5 verse 37 obviously refers to the *census* which was taken by Quirinius in 6 C.E. Luke states that this was “The census”, by which Luke differentiates this census from the one mentioned in Lk 2:2. Nota Bene: the person referred in *Acts* 5:37 (Judas of Galilee) is also mentioned by Iosephus

order of the common *census* notes. See: Klaus Rosen, “Jesu Geburtsdatum, der Census des Quirinius und eine Jüdische Steuererklärung aus dem Jahr 127 n.C.,” *Jahrbuch für antike Christentum* 38 (1995), 5–15. The main objection against Rosen’s argument is that it shows a possibility, assuming that the sentence is in Genitive Absolutus, but in my opinion it’s not the case.

52 Paul Barnett, *Is the New Testament Reliable?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 150.

53 Armand Puig I Tàrrach, “Why Was Jesus Not Born in Nazareth?” in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011), 3428–9

54 Noah Webster, *The holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, in the Common Version* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1833; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1987), 1862. Citation refers to the Baker House edition.

in reference to the *census* in 6 A.D.⁵⁵ One big difference between the two *censuses* is that the second one cannot be linked to a world-wide *census*, since it was in connection with creating the new Iudaea province.

Géza Alföldy and others (for example István Hahn) argue that the author in Lk 2:2 sets the two *censuses* against each other, where the later one (in 6 A.D.) turned to be the darkest hour of Israel, when the country lost its freedom, while the first census (took place when Jesus was born) became the greatest divine visit.⁵⁶

About the censuses of Rome

The *census* of Augustus didn't finish within one calendar year at all (considering the whole empire). The first enrollment happened in Gaul (Gallia) in 12 B.C.E.,⁵⁷ which was followed by the idea of an empire-wide census, in 12 or 11 B.C.E.⁵⁸ In the following years censuses were held in Syria-Cilicia (probably in 9-7 B.C.E.),⁵⁹ Egypt in 9 B.C.E.,⁶⁰ Rome in 8 B.C.E., Cyrene in 7 B.C.E.,⁶¹ and sometime about then in Israel, too, but the exact date was not recorded, therefore it must be calculated from other circumstances.

Comparing the censuses of 8B.C.E. and 6C.E.

There had been changes in the Roman Empire by the time of 6 C.E., namely the income of August started to decline, when he established a new military treasure, the *aerarium militare*,⁶² and he needed new sources for filling it. In the light of this, reorganizing Israel into a province was partially a financial need, too. During this event Coponius took over the place of Archelaus, the *ethnarch*, and Quirinius was appointed as *legate* of Syria and by this, he was legate of Israel too, considering that Israel became part of Syria.

55 Jos. *Ant.* XVIII.1.6.

56 Alföldy, "Titulus Tiburtinus," 119.

57 Vardaman, "Jesus' Life: A New Chronology," 64.

58 Dio 54:35:1

59 William Mitchell Ramsay, *Was Christ born at Bethlehem? A Study on the Credibility of St. Luke*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1898), 154-56. According to Ramsay, Tertullian could not have written about Saturninus and the *census*, unless he was aware of the *census* in Syria in 9-7 B.C.E.

60 William Mitchell Ramsay, *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), 25.

61 Vardaman, "Jesus' Life: A New Chronology," 64.

62 Sara Elise Phang, *Roman Military Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 163.

As we can see, this was a totally different *census* than the one when Jesus was born. During the first *census*, it is presumable that Herod used the inner administration of the Jewish state, where everyone was registered according to the land of the ancestors of the people.⁶³ The kings of Judea were treated as Roman governors,⁶⁴ therefore the Kingdom of Judea (as a partner kingdom) was included in the *census* of Augustus.

The *census* in 6 C.E. was conducted rather differently. As Tàrrech concludes, the *tributum soli* (tax based on property) was introduced.⁶⁵ This makes the *census* of Quirinius to be the first real Roman *census*.

Censuses in Egypt

It is seemingly uncommon for Rome to ask the people of the land to go to the place of their origin for a *census*. However, it was the case in Egypt too, where there was a *census* held in every 14 years from 34 C.E.⁶⁶ This is related to the fact that people were registered above the age of 14.⁶⁷ In Egypt, the Roman leadership kept the local customs that the people should return to the land of their ancestors for the *census*. Therefore we can assume that Rome kept the local customs in Judea when it was only a partner kingdom to Rome.

Date of Augustus's oath of allegiance in Israel

Iosephus mentions an event when the citizens of the country had to take an oath of allegiance to Augustus, which was refused by 6 000 Pharisees.⁶⁸ Although Iosephus didn't mention the word *census*, instead he writes that Herod reacted with a fine to this refusal, by which one can assume that this was a *census* event. That this event was a *census* indeed, is suggested by many scholars, from Osorius⁶⁹ in 5th century to Barnett in the 21st.⁷⁰ Iosephus

63 Num 1:18, Lev 25:10

64 Gerard Gertoux, *Herod the Great and Jesus: Chronological, Historical and Archaeological Evidence*, (Lulu.com, 2015), 27.

65 Tàrrech, "Why Was Jesus Not Born in Nazareth?," 3426–7.

66 Jack Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 260.

67 Grill, *A kövek kiáltanak*, 37.

68 Ios. *Ant.* XVII.2.4

69 Oros. *Hist.* VI.22.7, VII.2.16.

70 Paul Barnett, *Jesus & the Rise of Early Christianity: A History of New Testament Times* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 107; Paul Barnett, "Apographe and Apographesthai in Luke 2:1-5," *Expository Times* 85 (1973/74): 378-79.

places the time of this oath of allegiance not long before the inauguration of Varus in 6 B.C.E.,⁷¹ and a short time after the letter of Augustus in 8 B.C.E.⁷²

During the lawsuit of Alexander and Aristobulus, the *procurator* of Syria was Volumnius, therefore this event took place in 8 B.C.E.⁷³ Soon after – under Saturninus – Antipater went to Rome, so it was in 7 B.C.E., and we know that it was late in that year, since after 7 months of his departure he wrote a letter to his father Herod that he was going to travel back already,⁷⁴ and from the fact that as soon as he got back, he found himself in front of a jury, which was under Varus, who arrived in the fall of 6 B.C.E.⁷⁵ And because the oath was around the leave of Antipater, plus Tertullian also mentions Saturninus when Jesus was born, therefore all data correlates with the year of 7 B.C.E. The *census* must have been conducted within one calendar year.⁷⁶

From all of these events we can conclude that the augustian-herodian oath of allegiance was conducted in 7 B.C.E., and this oath is the very same as the *census* we are looking for.

Is it possible to hold a roman census under Herod?

For this, I start with a war of revenge which Herod led against arabian hordes in 9 B.C.E.,⁷⁷ which is called the second Nabatean war.⁷⁸ Despite the fact that Saturninus was aware of the action, Herod was impeached before Augustus, who sent a message to Herod (in 8 B.C.E.) in which he stated that Herod is no longer his friend anymore, moreover, Israel lost its freedom as an independent kingdom, and from now on it became a tax-payer member state.⁷⁹ From this point, Herod did everything in his power to conciliate Augustus, for example he sent two delegations one after the other. In the same year (8 B.C.E), two sons of Herod went to Rome for a trial. This is consistent with the fact that Herod agreed that a *census* should be held with an oath of allegiance to both himself and Augustus.

71 Ios. *Ant.* XVII.2 4., XVII.4.3.

72 Samuel Rocca, *Herod's Judaea: A Mediterranean State in the Classical World.*(Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008),151–2.

73 Ios. *BJ* 1. 27.

74 Ios *Ant.* XVII.4.3.

75 Ios. *Ant.*XVII.5.1–3; Ios. *BJ* I.31.5 – I.32.1.

76 Brook W. R. Pearson, “The Lucan Censuses, Revisited,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61 (1999): 275.

77 Ios. *Ant.* XVI.9.3.

78 Rocca, *Herod's Judaea*, 151–2.

79 Ios. *Ant.* XVI.9.3.

It is not without example that independent kingdoms held *censuses* in a Roman way: Tacitus mentions one in *Cappadocia* under king Archelaos.⁸⁰ The *censuses* formed the basis of the two different direct taxes to Rome, the *tributum capitis* (tax based on income) and (the one introduced in *Judaea* later) *tributum soli* (tax based on property). Before 6 C.E., therefore the base was the *tributum capitis* (avpograph), where each citizen paid an equal amount and not based on property.

In general *censuses* come with oath of allegiance, and there is no reference for an oath without a *census*. Moreover, Brown argues that the fact that Iosephus mentions it twice that Herod decreased the amount of tax for part of the citizens follows that there had to be *census* records.⁸¹

Conclusion regarding the roman censuses

We can state that the Roman *censuses* came with oaths of allegiance, and there were no oaths taken without a *census*. Therefore we can identify the oath mentioned by Iosephus with the *census* conducted when Jesus was born. And in case Herod died in 4 B.C.E., the date of this *census* was in 7 B.C.E., therefore we have to make sure whether the usual dating of Herod's death is valid.

Date of Herod's death

Now we need to clarify one remaining question to settle down: the commonly accepted date of Herod's death, which is traditionally 4 B.C.E., is questioned by some scholars recently. Although according to Iosephus, the question seems self-evident,⁸² objections have been raised by the scholars.

The first objection is that since Herod died not long before Pesach, and after a lunar eclipse,⁸³ in the year of 4 B.C.E., the time difference is too short between the two events for conducting the funeral.⁸⁴ But for example, in 1 B.C.E., it would be plenty of time for that. This argument is possible, but only a presumption.

80 Tac. *Ann* 6.41.

81 Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 552.

82 Ios. *BJ* I.33.8; Jos. *Ant.* XVII.8.1.

83 Ios. *Ant.* XVII.9.3, Jos. *BJ* II.1.3

84 For example: Ernest L. Martin, *The Star that Astonished the World* (Portland, OR: Academy for Scriptural Knowledge, 1991), 101-4; Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. ed. (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1998), 300.

The breviarium totius imperii

Another argument that Augustus introduced is a new kind of *census* in 2 B.C.E. According to Tacitus, Augustus prepared the *breviarium totius imperii*, a list of the resources of the Roman and allied territories, containing the exact number of the local forces, fleets and economic resources, including local taxes, direct and indirect expenditures.⁸⁵ As a consequence, it is probable that a *census* was held in Israel and Luke mentions this in *Lk* 2:1, therefore it still must have been under Herod. This argument is also a presumption, but also a possibility.

The War of Varus

The next argument is according to the so-called “War of Varus”, which is mentioned by Iosephus⁸⁶ and the Seder Olam, too,⁸⁷ but this war is completely missing from the Roman records and the work of historians. From this region and period there is only one war recorded from the Roman side, the Armenian campaign of Caius Julius Caesar,⁸⁸ who was wounded during the campaign in 3 C.E. Since this is the only occasion mentioning a war from this period, Gertoux argues that this was the war of Varus, therefore Herod must have died only at the time when Caius was appointed as the commander of the Eastern forces, in 1 B.C.E.⁸⁹

Moreover, there was a general period of peace in the Roman Empire until 2 B.C.E., which makes it harder to allocate the war of Varus to 4 B.C.E., since – according to Tacitus – it happened right after Herod’s death.⁹⁰ But Syme argues that the circumstances refer to a general peace period at this time.⁹¹

85 Tac. *Ann.* I:11,4

86 Ios. *Ap.* I:34

87 Sed. Ol. 30. mentions the war, which is most probably the war of Varus, see e.g. Heinrich Walter Guggenheime, *Seder Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 262-3.; Kenneth R. Atkinson: “Herod the Great as Antiochus Redivivus: Reading the Testament of Moses as an Anti-Herodian Composition,” *Of Scribes and Sages: Early Jewish Interpretation and Transmission of Scripture. Volume 1: Ancient versions and traditions*, ed. Craig A. Evans (London, New York: T & T Clark International - A Continuum imprint, 2004), 140.

88 Peter Michael Swan, *The Augustan Succession: An Historical Commentary on Cassius Dio’s Roman History Books 55-56 (9 B.C.–A.D. 14)* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 127.

89 Gertoux, *Herod the Great and Jesus*, 42.

90 Dio V.9.

91 Ronald Syme, *Roman papers Vol. 3.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 912.

Interestingly the lack of the recorded data may be the solution for these assumptions. From the Roman history, the documented events are mostly entirely missing between 6 B.C.E and 4 C.E. (which is why historians called this era the “dark decade”),⁹² and – interestingly – this is almost the very same case with Iosephus, who lacks detailing the period from 4 B.C.E. to 6 C.E. We can observe the same oddity at Dio, too.⁹³

Arguments favour 4 B.C.E.

Dio and Iosephus both confirm that the son of Herod, Arkhelaos started to reign in 4 B.C.E. instead of 2 B.C.E.

Barnes argues that⁹⁴

- according to coins from that period, Arkhelaos, Antipas and Philip all started to reign in 4 B.C.E.;
- Varus was the legate of Syria (6 B.C.E. - 4 B.C.E.) at the time of Herod's death;
- Caius Caesar attended a hearing of Herod's three sons after Herod's death. After that, Caius remained in Rome for a while, until 2 B.C.E., when he was sent to the Limes at the river Danube, which makes 1 B.C.E. as year of death of Herod impossible.

None of the assumptions which question the date of 4 B.C.E. provide any proof, but on the other side, the arguments that confirm 4 B.C.E. are all consistent with each other, therefore we must not question them. As a conclusion, we can state that the missing Roman records regarding the war of Varus only further strengthen the fact that in the Roman history, there was indeed a period of time between roughly 6. B.C.E. to 4 C.E. which is called the dark decade because of lack of data.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, we can say the following:

- The person Kurenios is without any doubt Quirinius in Lk 2:2;
- Tertullian links the birth of Jesus to Saturninus, about which Tertullian had sources apart from the Bible.

92 Timothy David Barnes, “The Victories of Augustus,” *The Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 64 (1974): 22.

93 Syme, *Roman papers*. 3, 912.

94 Timothy David Barnes, “Date of Herod's death,” *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 19.1 (1968): 204-9.

- The census when Jesus was born can be distinguished clearly from the census of 6 C.E.
- There was a Roman census under Herod, as an execution of Augustus' decree;
- Every other possibility can be excluded, for example Quirinius being governor in Syria twice, or Quirinius being procurator of Syria, etc.
- Luke is aware of both censuses, which he distinguishes, therefore he couldn't link the first one to Quirinius, neither the global one to the second census. All other data in Luke is consistent and further strengthen this (mentioning Herod in Lk 1; remarks on Jesus' age; the short mention of the second census in Acts 5:17). As a result, Luke and Matthew don't contain any contradiction.

The conclusion is that Lk 2:2 must be understood as the following:

“This enrollment happened before the governor in Syria was Quirinius.”

Since the oath of Augustus in Iosephus' work can be linked to the first enrollment, its year is the same as the year of Jesus' birth, which is 7 B.C.E.

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Abbreviations of ancient authors and works

Aug. RG	Augustus	<i>Res Gestae</i>
Acts		<i>Acts of the Apostles</i>
Dio	Cassius Dio	<i>Historiae romanae</i>
Flor. <i>Epit.</i>	Florus	<i>Epitome de Tito Livio</i>
Ios. <i>Ant.</i>	Iosephus Flavius	<i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i>

Ios. <i>Ap.</i>	Iosephus Flavius	<i>Contra Apionem</i>
Ios. <i>BJ</i>	Iosephus Flavius	<i>De Bello Iudaico</i>
Iust. <i>Ap.</i>	Iustinus Martyr	<i>Apology</i>
<i>John</i>		<i>Gospel of John</i>
<i>Lev</i>		<i>Leviticus</i>
<i>Luke</i>		<i>Gospel of Luke</i>
<i>MT</i>		<i>Gospel of Matthew</i>
<i>Num</i>		<i>Numeri</i>
Oros. <i>Hist.</i>	Orosius	<i>Historiae adversus paganos</i>
<i>Sed. Ol.</i>		<i>Seder Olam Rabbah</i>
Tac. <i>Ann.</i>	Tacitus	<i>Annales</i>
Tert. <i>Adv.</i>	Tertullianus	<i>Adversus Marcionem</i>
Tert. <i>Adv. Jud.</i>	Tertullianus	<i>Adversus Iudaeos</i>

Some Perspectives in the Filioque Debate as a Field of Confrontation for Theology and Politics

In my research I focus on the Filioque-debate in the theological discourse of the 20th century, more specifically on the ways some political ideologies, like nationalism, hinder the ecumenical dialogue with this respect. I argue that the Filioque is not merely a theological issue, but exploring the political processes that have shaped the theological discourse allows us to find new paths towards an ecumenical understanding of this difficult dogmatic issue. In what follows, I propose a brief overview of my research at its present stage.

Orthodox theologians commonly argue that the procession of the Holy Spirit is the most important dogmatic disagreement between Eastern (Orthodox) and Western Christian Churches.¹ As Jean Meyendorff shows,

„even at a later period [after 1054], when the separate development of the two theologies was bound to create new problems, one finds many prominent Byzantines failing to raise any issue in their anti-Latin treatises other than that of the procession of the Holy Spirit.”²

However, in this paper, I will not discuss the Filioque-debate from a systematic or historical point of view, but I will address briefly its role in contemporary theological-ecumenical discussions. The issue is highly relevant for contemporary ecumenical dialogue between the East and the West. I find the issue all the more relevant as I myself come from Transylvania, a region of Romania where a majority Orthodox Church co-exists with Western, Catholic and Protestant Christianity.

1 For example, Christos Yannaras deduces every differences between the two Churches from the different view of divine substance and personhood. Christos Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West*, trans. Peter Chamberas and Norman Russel. (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), 33–43.

2 John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1987), 95.

In the Catholic Church, it is rather common to claim that the Filioque is no longer a major issue, since historically the question was settled by the Council of Florence in the 15th century, whereas from a theological perspective the 20th century Catholic documents have overcome the main disagreements. The 1995-clarification of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *The Greek and Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, which can be tracked back to the Klingenthal Memorandums, is a milestone in Catholic theology. This proposes an understanding of the Filioque, which does not contradict the monarchy of the Father in terms of some origin (*archē, aitia*) of the *ekporeusis* of the Spirit.³ In 1998, the Pro Oriente Foundation has analyzed this document in a conference,⁴ and has proposed to the Western Churches to use the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed without the Filioque interpolation. The document of the PCPCU traces back the roots of the problem to the differences of Greek and Latin theological language and interpretation, and proposes as possible solution the theology of Maximus the Confessor. The American Orthodox theologian, Edward A. Sicienski, in his historical-theological analysis of the Filioque-debate, has come to the same conclusion.⁵ The optimistic Western perspective emerging from the document of the Pontifical Council was matched by the 2003 Joint Agreement of the North American Orthodox and Catholic Churches, welcomed with a similar enthusiasm. This statement proposed a detailed biblical and historical review of Filioque-issue, and formulated some proposals, calling equally for clarification of the linguistic and historical misunderstandings.⁶

At this point, I return to Meyendorff, who remarks that the lengthy inter-confessional discussions did not penetrate the substance of the debate:

“The question was whether tri-personality or consubstantiality was the first and basic content of Christian religious experience. But to place the debate on

3 The Pontifical Council for Promoting the Christian Unity, „*The Greek and the Latin Traditions Regarding the Procession of the Holy Spirit*”, Information Service, no. 89 (II-III: 1995): 88–92.

4 Alfred Stirmemann, Gerhard Wilflinger, ed., *Vom Heiligen Geist: der gemeinsame trinitarische Glaube und das Problem des Filioque*, (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, Wien: Stiftungsfonds Pro Oriente, 1999).

5 Edward A. Sicienski, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 73–86.

6 North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation, „*The Filioque: A Church Dividing Issue?: An Agreed Statement*”, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/orthodox/filioque-church-dividing-issue-english.cfm>. 2003.

that level and to enter into a true dialogue on the very substance of the matter, each side needed to understand the other's position. This unfortunately never occurred.⁷⁷

I think that Meyendorff's pessimistic conclusion is well founded, because at a local level the ecumenical dialogue faces many obstacles. Whereas the divergences are mainly theological in nature, serious contemporary political obstacles resulting from historical traditions obstruct the dialogue.

In my view, the political factor is a major obstacle for ecumenical dialogue, and therefore I find it necessary to address the Filioque-debate from this perspective, too. To illustrate my point with a very dramatic example, I remind that Christopher Catherwood⁸, Mitja Velikonja⁹ and many others have pointed to the presence of the Filioque, as an element of self-identification, in the Balkan-wars at the end of the 20th century. In what follows, I will illustrate the intertwining of politics and Filioque-debate through the works of Dumitru Stăniloae, the best-known Romanian Orthodox theologian.

I will address the views of Stăniloae from the perspective of the models elaborated by the American sociologist Rogers Brubaker regarding the relationship between religion and nationalism, in his paper *Religion and Nationalism; Four Approaches*.¹⁰ Brubaker is well acquainted with the situation in Romania and the Balkans, as he has studied for many years the regional political developments. In his paper, Brubaker draws up four complementary models, which describe the interconnection between nationalism and religion. According the first one, nationalism and religion are analogous phenomena: both have a system of symbols and rites and a set of values and emotions, they advance the 'salvation' of the community, and in terms of function, both aim to create a sense of identity and belonging, and to shape the society and private life. According to the second model, religion explains some elements of nationalism and contributes to its understanding. Thus, religion contributes to the development of nationalism providing religious narratives and motifs, like the myth of chosenness, of

7 Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 94.

8 Christopher Catherwood, "Nationalism, Ethnicity and Tolerance: Some Historical, Political and Biblical Perspectives, Transformation", 14.1. *Gospel to the Nations: Reflections on Christian Political Praxis*, no. 14,1 (1997): 10–16.

9 Mitja Velikonja, *Religious Separation and Political Intolerance in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, trans. by Rang'ichi Ng'inja, (College Station, TX: A & M University Press, 2003)

10 Rogers Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches", *Journal of the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism, Nations and Nationalism*, no. 18. 1 (2012): 2–20.

ethnic election, or by shaping new ways of imagining socio-political realities and culture (as in the case of Protestant confessionalization). According to the third model (to which I shall return) religion and nationalism may be imbricated or intertwined. The fourth model treats religious nationalism as a distinctive kind of nationalism, which promotes national cohesion through emphasis on the traditional understanding of the family, of sexuality, social and private life.

I return now to the third model, which I apply in this paper. According to it religion and nationalism are intertwined. In the hard version, the boundaries and frames of a religion coincide with ethnic boundaries: only the followers of the same religion belong to a nation. In a broader version, the limits of the *local* religious community coincide with those of a nation, and religion becomes for the nation an element of self-identification, but religion itself encompasses a larger area compared to that of the nation. The first approach is individualist and exclusive, while the second is territorial and inclusive. Another pattern of intertwining between religion and nationalism occurs when religion does not necessarily define the borders of the nation, but provides myths, symbols and metaphors, which determine decisively its identity and play a central role in its representation and definition. Religion answers thus the question “*who are we?*”. The answer elaborates thus on the nation’s distinguishing elements, but it also involves a religious inflection of the political-nationalist discourse.

I now turn to the Stăniloae, the prominent Romanian Orthodox theologian from Transylvania, who has authored several articles about the Filioque-question. He treated this dogmatic question from the perspective of Palamite theology, and under the influence of some Romanian philosophers of religion (e.g. Nichifor Crainic); he discussed the Filioque-debate in a nationalistic framework.

Stăniloae saw a direct connection between the spirituality of a nation (specifically that of the Romanian people) and its position concerning the Triune God. He defined his own conception of the nation as modern nationalism, aiming to express and consolidate national spirituality:

“The aim of present-day nationalism is not freedom, understood in some physical sense, but developing the specific features of the nation and living out its own spirituality, with the certitude that this spirituality has an eternal value.

(...) Today's nationalism is aware that the people serves God by developing its own traits through hard work."¹¹

It is obvious that in Stăniloae's view faith, the nation and the state are almost synonymous; their boundaries coincide, just like in Brubaker's third model. From this perspective, his understanding of the Filioque has a well-defined place:

"A Romanian conceives society in the image of the Church. (...) The relationship between the individual and society mirrors the dogma of the Trinity. (...) The West had corrupted the original faith concerning the Trinity. Accordingly, the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but from the Son as well. This has a major importance in one's way of thinking and acting."¹²

Thus, we notice the close relationship between the Church, Trinitarian theology and the national ideal. In his view, this complex view of the truth as a whole belongs only to Orthodox thinking, because the West has lost this ability:

„All these characteristics find their reflection in Orthodox ecclesiology, while to a great extent these same things are missing from Catholic ecclesiology and from Western Christianity in general because of the *filioque*. In the West ecclesiology has become an impersonal, juridical system, while theology, and in the same way the whole of Western culture with it, has become strictly rational.“¹³

We have to understand that for Stăniloae, the Romanian people is not a rational, juridically defined community, but a spiritual one, with a strong consciousness of its mission in the world.

11 „Azi naționalismul pleacă de la convingerea, dovedită și științific, despre caracterul specific al fiecărui neam și din credința într-o misiune spirituală proprie a neamului tău. Azi naționalismul nu mai are ca scop libertatea, înțelegă oarecum fizic, ci dezvoltarea însușirilor specifice ale neamului propriu, realizarea spiritualității tale proprii, cu convingerea că această spiritualitate are o valoare eternă.” Dumitru Stăniloae, “Naționalismul în cadrul spiritualității creștine”, *Telegraful Român*, no. 84. (36: 1936): 1. (Source: Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ortodoxiei și naționalism*, <http://www.nouadreapta.org/Doctrina%20-%20Pr.%20Dumitru%20Staniloae%20-%20Ortodoxie%20si%20nationalism.pdf>32.) Transl. Sz.A.

12 Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și românism*, Sibiu, 1939 (Source: Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și naționalism*, 43.) Transl. Sz.A.

13 Dumitru Stăniloae, *Theology and the Church*, transl. Robert Barringer (Crestwood: St.

„Through the Orthodoxy our people played a central role, defending the European East and West. Whereas Europe ruled through crusades and in other ways over the Eastern peoples, our people had a positive role for both the European West and East.“¹⁴

This missionary capacity of the chosen people emerges from preserving the true faith, the *ortho-doxia*. Western Christians lost this ability, because of the Filioque-doctrine; they do not understand the relation between the Triune God, the personhood and the love of the heavenly Father for the people.¹⁵ Stăniloae formulated the concrete duty for the national movement:

„It is our belief that the Holy Spirit compels us to decide for love, incomparable with the uniatism, which – as a condition of obstruction the inter-church love – is a sin against the Holy Spirit.“¹⁶

However, Stăniloae's fight against the Greek-Catholic Church is very controversial, and it needs a separate presentation.

To conclude, the ecumenical dialogue about the Filioque- should be reinitiated and deepened, but more importantly, the topic has to be addressed in a broader framework. Analyzing the biblical and patristic texts time and again is no longer enough. These statements have to be understood within the contemporary context, and contemporary debates about the Filioque should be seen as part of a broader national and political discourse attempting to defined and consolidate national, cultural and religious identity, often through delineation from a corrupt and heterodox Western world.

Vladimir Seminary Press, 1980), 107.

14 Dumitru Stăniloae, „De ce suntem ortodocși”, *Teologie și viața*, Serie nouă, anul I (LXVII), no. 4-8, (aprilie-august, 1991): 15–27. (Source: Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și nationalism*): 184–185. Trans. Sz.A.

15 Stăniloae, *ORTODOXIE ȘI NAȚIONALISM*, 193. TRANS. SZ.A.

16 Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania*. Încercare de dezbinare a poporului român, (București: Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1973), 214. http://ftp://ftp.logos.md/Biblioteca/_Colectie_RO/4_uniatism.pdf. Transl. Sz.A.

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Hasidic Wisdom Tales in an Interreligious Setting

The Use of Wisdom Stories in Interreligious Dialogue

When encountering the different challenges raised by the practice of interreligious dialogue, first of all we face the very important and crucial question: why exactly would we want to embrace as well as to engage in profound dialogue with people of other faiths (and ideologies or world-views)?¹

Unfortunately, many times we just get stuck with these as well as with similar difficulties, treated and tackled especially by the so-called “theology of religions” within the subject of systematic theology (and of course within fundamental theology at the same time).

To give just one important example this time: when our soteriology happens to teach that Truth, and that all truths, can be found only in our midst, within the realm and religion of Christianity, then it does not seem very difficult to get lost in self-righteousness as well as in a kind of self-sufficiency.

Scientific research and of course thorough theologising conducted in the wide field of the theology of religions, however, is not more than just a kind of small antechamber for the much bigger process of interreligious dialogue itself.

It certainly seems to us that a significantly braver approach would be to put the question of ‘who can be saved and by what’ in parentheses, or to let others to deal with it in details; and to just throw ourselves into the stream and dynamics of intercultural dialogue.

1 Some of the crucial ideas of the introductory part of the article are included in the following abstract: Szabolcs Nagypál, “Interreligious Dialogue as Mutual Enrichment: Reading Together Spiritual and Wisdom Literature,” in *Fiatal Kutatók és Doktoranduszok IX. Nemzetközi Teológuskonferenciájának rezümékötete (Abstracts of the 9th Conference of Junior Theologians and Doctoral Students)*, ed. Gábor Kiss (Budapest: Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége (DOSz), 2019), 19–23.

According to the conceptual historian Reinhart Koselleck (1923–2006), there are asymmetric counter-concepts repeatedly appearing in history, which tend to rule our thinking. In his works, Koselleck recognizes three main such pairs in human history.

These are Hellenic and Barbarian, Christian and Pagan (or, later, Heretic), as well as Human and Non-Human. By calling people of other faiths simply “Pagan”, one seems to gain a kind of conceptual power over them, as well as gets able to dismiss or even ridicule any of their truth claims.

The genuine encounter of different world religions (and of people of these diverse faiths), which transcends many long-lasting conflicts as well as peaceful coexistence, may be conducted at the same time on various levels.

Convivence can lead to very practical cooperation (including even common witness), and later it may flow into the discussion on teachings and doctrines. The process may culminate in a spiritual encounter as well as in a mutual enrichment in wisdom in the largest sense (and maybe even in common celebrations).

It is indeed a very moving recognition as well as quite a life-changing experience that all the great world religions produced spiritual texts and wisdom literature (we try very hard to avoid here the use of the word ‘mysticism’, because of its heavy loadedness and its too wide range of meaning).²

Genuine wisdom always comes from a very close connection with Reality. Wisdom is not at all based on rational argumentation, but on profound insight. Wisdom is not only “spiritual”, but always very-very practical. Wisdom helps us to find meaning in different situations, through finding meaning in our whole life.

An important field of interreligious encounter can be when we read together the collected highlights of the spiritual as well as wisdom treasury of many world religions, many important cultures as well as many distant ages.

Getting to know the various spiritual as well as the manifold wisdom traditions, and the subsequent bewonderment at the existing parallels deep inside are to be of crucial importance in the process of interreligious dialogue.

2 More about Jewish Mysticism: Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (Jerusalem: 1941).

An Important Branch of Jewish Mystical Literature

Hasidic wisdom is the very attitude of piety transformed into a style of life through genuine and profound spiritual experiences. Hasidism is a spiritual movement within Judaism, founded by Baal Shem Tov (1700–1760).

The renowned Jewish thinker and philosopher, Martin Buber published his great book in 1946, gathering many-many stories of the Central and Eastern European Jewish thought cultivated between the XVIIIth and XXth centuries, right before the almost total elimination of this colourful culture during the Shoa.³

Among the fifty-eight famous Hasid wonder-rabbis, there are—apart from Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the whole school—the Great Maggid, Yitzhak Eyzik of Nagykálló (thus in Hungary!), Pinhas of Koretz, the Visionary of Lublin, Elimelekh of Lisensk, Slomo of Karlin, the Yehudi, or Simha Bunam.

The Hasidim have been convinced that the spiritual power the righteous persons obtain is such that all peoples and nations thriving for redemption can profit from it, not only their own nation, religion and spiritual movement.⁴

Indeed, the spiritual significance of Hasidism goes far beyond the borders of Judaism in a strict sense: it is now part of the global wisdom of humanity, to be humbly approached by all searching for the closeness and blessings of God.

We are deeply immersed in the world of different aphorisms in Hasidic *magical realism*, of metaphors, analogies, symbolic tales, miracles, secrets, paradoxes and contradictions; also, bitter and bitter-sweet humour, an unrestricted and rampant mystical life, reaching many times even delirium and ecstasy.⁵

The sharing of a Hasidic story or tale with other people is in itself an event, which indeed has the dignity of a most holy act. One might firmly hope that a text dealing with Hasidic stories has also the same kind of dignity.

These Hasidic stories have a kind of holy essence and core, a sparkle of profound spiritual wisdom in them, which continues its being through the

3 The original collection of Jewish tales is the following: Martin Buber, *Die Erzählungen der Chassidim* (Zürich: 1946).

4 An excellently written book on the very founder of the school is the following: Dan Ben-Amos and Jerome R. Mintz (eds.), *In Praise of the Baal Shem Tov* (Bloomington: 1970).

5 The first version of some of the coming parts of the article was published in the following book chapter: Szabolcs Nagypál, “Prayer is our Identity: Spiritual Values in Hasidic (Jewish) Wisdom,” in *Dreaming our Neighbour: The Shoa (Holocaust) and the Utopia of Yesterday. Ecumenical Anthology V of the WSCF Central European Subregion (CESR)*, eds. Szabolcs Nagypál and Peter Šajda and Rebecca Blocksome (Warszawa: BGÖI – WSCF-CESR, 2006), 73–82.

retelling of these stories, jokes, anecdotes and spiritual riddles, again and again.

The way a story is put together and told is such that it may help and assist people in their everyday spiritual lives, when making moral and ethical decisions, and in times of opting for a general betterment in holiness and wholeness.

There can be different subgenres discerned within this large and quite unique mythology. For example, a *short story* depicts a possible destiny; an *anecdote* fills with light a whole new life; while a *legendary anecdote* sheds light onto the point and meaning of human life in a highly condensed and pointed form.

One of the main subgenres of these Jewish sagas is the so-called *dialogical parable*: in these the master, when asked, provides a much broader answer than what was expected from her or him by the inquiring disciple.

Or in yet another important subgenre, the yarer's aim is to *scandalize* her or his listeners by the primitivism or by the profanity of the stories, in order to stir up their shortcomings and to call forth their reflection or surrender.

Both the participants of these peculiar events, as well as the very people who make them present by sharing them with other people and groups of people, are filled with God's *Spirit*: their whole being in the world is spiritual and pneumatic.

The righteous people live in a kind of spontaneous and genial improvisation, of appropriation, application, concretisation as well as explication of the Holy Scriptures. The stories of their deeds and of their thoughts ignite the Divine spark in the souls of all who ever happen to make contact with them.

The enormously huge Hasidic legendary circle is a wide-ranging mythology of wisdom impetuses, a history of various spiritual effects, which have ever made a difficult-to-forget impact on one of their participants.

It is always expected from the listener, from the reader and from the receiver to open herself or himself up for a similarly cathartic as well as life-changing experience as those people and actors who are depicted in the very story.

The Role of Community and Tradition

The righteous people, when encountering ideas similar, adaptable and compatible with those of their own, manage to fill them with their own vitality as well as to ensure their firmly rootedness in the *Tradition* (with a capital T).

The faithful people are always ardently seeking the exact *meaning* of the various phenomena found and encountered in the world. Their firm endeavour is aimed at tracing back the teachings as well as the insights to their cores and origins.⁶

At the same time, the righteous people attempt to strike root in their final destination, as well. Divine revelation itself tends to institutionalise and to turn into a mere habit, so the role of the faithful in this respect is to revitalise it from time to time, from generation to generation, by their special *charisma*.

Even the most respected divine commandments can by some people be turned into a mere idol or into an empty superstition. Therefore, God is always to be approached as God, in God's own way, not in our own human ways.

Those who are touched in their very core by this effective spirituality, and therefore decide to join the *community* are appealed to die to their old life as well as to their old way of life, and are up to resurge to a brand new life. When doing so, these kind of people are absolutely not afraid to appear either pathetic, or lunatic, or even ridiculous to the outside, secular or profane world.

Interestingly, a master from time to time can pretend to lift the authority and validity of the Tradition from above the community, in order to create occasionally—again and again—a new and open possibility for their choice and decision.

This surprising and sudden procedure refines and redefines the people's sense of responsibility, as well as this confirms the firm commitment and serious engagement of the whole community to the case in question in the story.

In overemphasized individualism, even though wisdom still can be cherished in many-many ways, holiness is unable to ripen and to be held fast. So we build the temple (church) of love with each other as living stones.

Therefore, the spiritual logic of *unity* in the community is usually the following: one must wash away everything from oneself, which can divide or is able to separate one from the others; then one must be united with the community; and—finally—, all these steps may open the way towards unity with God.

As a unique relationship within the community, a *marriage* between a woman and a man lived in a holy way embodies, embeds, entails as well as

6 There are other similar collections of the philosopher Martin Buber on this very topic: Martin Buber, *Erzählungen von Engeln, Geistern und Dämonen* (Gerlingen: 1934).

configures the relationship of Eve and of Adam in the Paradise, long before the tragedy of the fall.

I and Thou in Dialogue

Another very significant element in these enlightening texts is that they are always born out of an *encounter*, and in that way also Martin Buber could see in them the fulfilment of his own philosophical thinking concerning the realisation of the Self through *I and Thou*, via encounters and *dialogue*.⁷

An enormous emphasis is laid on the insight that the relationship between God and the human must be mutual and reciprocal: dialogue must take place among I and Thou; as well as Thou and I; and—furthermore—from both sides again.

One is basically unable to say “I” about oneself in a proper sense, since the word “I” can only refer to the one God. So, when preparing for the vocation, first one has to hide, and only afterwards, when one is ready to go out to teach, should one reveal oneself as well as the message entrusted to her or him.

Human relationships are based on mutual giving and receiving, in mutual interconnectedness, on the psychosomatic as well as on the spiritual (or pneumatic) level. The role of the master is to ignite the spark of the disciple’s heart as well as soul, which is already there before their encounter and dialogue.

Silence as well as solitude are somehow vessels filled with an invisible essence: whoever approaches them with solid dedication and wide openness, can indeed have a sip of them. One’s silence and solitude can be as much a means of reconciliation as a mute scream from somewhere deep down.

The spiritual master offers herself or himself fully and totally as a pot and as an earthen vessel to God, detaching and emptying out herself or himself in a kind of kenotic way, and through this re-transforming Something back into Nothing, in order to be fully at the very disposal of God.

Prayer and Sacrifice

God, the Great Pedagogue, not only limited Godself in the process of creation, but also continues to limit Godself, in order to be useful for God’s beloved children, humankind, who are always to be raised and to be educated.

7 This is the title of one of Martin Buber’s most famous books: Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (Berlin: 1923).

Prayer can easily be a visionary exaltation, a meditation, a contemplation or a concentration, but faith in general is much purer than vision. In prayer, externals and formalities are almost totally avoided: our dialogue with God is like an insightful as well as enriching conversation with a close friend.

The feelings and emotions towards God and towards the style of our relationship can be so intensely intimate that the praying person uses even tender and affectionate confessions of love, or the powerful invocation: *Daddy (Abba)*.⁸

Notwithstanding, before praying any prayer, one has to prepare oneself even for her or death, since in prayer one offers oneself fully as a *sacrifice* to God. The noble and the sublime soul lifts up the various ordinary souls of other people, and somehow sanctifies all the objects around her or around him.

When once a master was tragically hit and suddenly killed by a bullet while praying, it was considered a most beautiful way of dying, since the person can continue her or his prayer in the other world as well, bridging the gap between the two mirroring worlds.

The other great master prayed with such fervency as well as strength that despite his quite scraggly figure, he was considered to be a great military leader, even a mighty spiritual warlord by the others.

8 An excellent and difficult-to-interpret story, by which the whole tradition is much-easier to understand, is by Rabbi ISRAEL of Koznitz, and is called *The Story of the Cape*. It is well worth it to discuss the wisdom tale with others, sentence by sentence.

»A common woman came to Rabbi Israel of Koznitz, and told him, with many tears in her eyes, that she had been married for a dozen years, and still had not borne a son. "What are you willing to do about it?" he asked her. She did not know at all what to say. "My mother", so the Rabbi Israel of Koznitz told her, "was aging and still had no child. Then she heard that the holy Baal Shem Tov was stopping over in the town of Apt in the course of a journey. She hurried to his inn, and begged him to pray that she might bear a son. "What are you willing to do about it?" he asked. "My husband is a poor book-binder", she replied, "but I do have one fine thing that I shall give to the rabbi." She went home as fast as she could, and fetched her good cape, which was carefully stowed away in a chest. But when she returned to the inn with it, she heard that the Rabi Baal Shem Tov had already left for his own town.

So my mother immediately set out after him, and since she had no money to ride at all, she walked from town to town with her cape until she came to the town. The Rabbi Baal Shem Tov took the cape and hung it on the wall. "It is well," he said. My mother walked all the way back, from town to town, until she reached her town. A year later, I was born." "I, too," cried the woman, "will bring you a good cape of mine, so that I may get a son." "That will not work," said the Rabbi. "You heard the story. My mother had no story to go by." «

Our prayer is to be thoroughly cleansed from our human desires, and we are to meticulously concentrate all the forces of our personality upon the only desire to be one with God in God's presence, the *Shekina*, here and now.

When the whole community prays together, the somewhat frailer prayers are lifted up by the honesty, frankness as well as brightness of the others. Some people even deemed it their very special duty to resuscitate, resuscitate and elevate the agonizing prayers in the community as well as in the wider world.

In our assiduous study as well as hard-working contemplation, nothing else exists, only the wisdom and the knowledge that we are slowly approaching; and in our prayer nothing else exists than our self-giving service of God for other people.

One is called to fully devote oneself to prayer, by identifying oneself with the words, with the meanings and with the intentions of the prayer itself. Thus, we are gradually transfigured to serve as an altar *coram Deo*, so in the very sight of God.

The Master-Disciple Relationship

The good pedagogue illuminates trust from within, and its light brings into being the hidden treasures of her or his disciples. The master profoundly shakes the soul of her or his disciples, and keeps them in boiling and in ebullience.

God's will and intention is revealed most of all by the *prophets*, among others, living even today—as well as in the future—among us. Their special vaticinal abilities make it possible for them to see through—and within—one's soul. While their guests and visitors dwell in their personal aura, they feel at home in the very presence of God.⁹

If someone really speaks, and another one really absorbs the spoken words, then only *one* single word is totally enough: the world can be uplifted by one single word; and one single word is enough to cleanse the world from all its sins.

A possessor of the proper name (for example, the founder of the Hasidic school) enjoys the trust of her or his people. This person is particularly and in a special way entrusted to live fully in her or his God-relation, also on behalf of the other people.

9 If anyone wanted to get to know more about the prophetic dimensions of Hasidism, see the following book: Martin Buber, *Der Glaube der Propheten* (Heidelberg: 1941).

The questions and inquiries of the disciples are crucial and essential for the response of the master finally to be born. In that happening, the master serves as the epicentre of a certain wisdom event, where the Spirit emanates in vibrating waves.

Some people emphasize that the teacher must carry the bookshelves on behalf of the whole righteous community, meaning that it is not enough to hold the Holy Bible in one hand and the newspaper (or anything else) in the other, but we should also carry a rucksack full of meaningful books on our back.

The teacher cannot—and therefore should not—explain the nexus and the coherence of the elements of a given situation, but she or he leaves it to the disciples or the community as a whole to hermeneutise, understand as well as interpret the totality of the picture from the tiny fragments here and there.

On the other hand, as in a shiny mirror, the duty and the responsibility of the disciples and of the students is to seek and find their proper and apt master: the one and probably only one, who is able to help and assist them uniquely.

First, before accepting anyone, as in a kind of private and intimate confession, the master inquires and listens to the possible and hopeful future disciple's repentance, her or his spiritual struggles, temptations as well as challenges.

Afterwards, the disciple turns towards her or his master with a firm and lifelong commitment and dedication. In order to bring about the message to all in their service and in their apostolate, as a kind of effective sign and powerful symbol, the newly-accepted disciples are given a belt as well as a stick.

Some of the disciples can be regarded as kinds of bright and shining commentaries to the master. Ironically, though, some of the masters would really need good commentaries; unfortunately, however, usually none ever gets written down.

The spiritual teaching itself is only for those who indeed have ears to listen. The clever can gain a lot from the teaching, almost everything they would need, but the fool can end up even more foolish than before listening to it.

As the human soul is for the body, so are the righteous people for the world. The vocation of the righteous persons is to receive the fire (but not to interpret it), as well as to transfigure it into light (but not to traject or project it).

Dynamics of Joy and Love

The everyday life that the Hasidic worldview recommends to the righteous people is one of *spirited joy*, of sunniness and of serenity, of dynamism and of motivation, as well as of a soul constantly lifted up to the Divine, also by songs, by cheerful dances and even by a kind of childlike playfulness.¹⁰

There are no valid circumstances possible, where this kind of joy and happiness of the close God-friendship cannot be experienced, if in deep humility, in purity and in cleanness, one fully gives oneself to its ardent quest.

This peculiar kind of *blessed naïveté* harshly challenges all forms and types of earthly vulpinism as well as fraudulency. Also, through all this, the devout persons bring more joy to God, and in a way try to make God “happy.”

When people love one another, the very presence of God, that is the Shekina, dwells among them. And it would be totally unworthy towards one’s love, if it depended in any ways on the relations of other persons towards us.

In general, the duty of any righteous person is to be substantially open as well as to love each and every living being in the world, wherever in God’s creation. *Animals* are also to be loved, since their *anima* also originates from the very Spirit of God.

Furthermore, the person must try to love even more the hateful as well as the evil persons, in order to complement the hiatus (or the vacancy) caused by them, that is, the unstitching of love in that very place of the world.

Some saintly persons went so far as to be rather reluctant to regard Evil as anything other than good. Therefore, prayer for our enemies seems to be a spiritual must: the opposite stance and behaviour ruins the slowly appearing buds of our rose-souls.

Certainly, in Hasidism as a tradition, one can indeed feel the Reign of God in action, a glimpse of that very Heavenly dwelling, which is destined to be so different from how it is commonly imagined and described in literature.

Peacemaking, healing as well as reconciliation are special charismas from God, received by many masters and righteous people. Some persons even have the blessing to resolve conflicts by “just” saying a prayer in the place of the quarrel.

One important spiritual school emphasizes the giving up of one’s will for the sake of the divine will. On the other hand, another wisdom school stresses the adherence to one’s own will, inasmuch it is the emanation and pouring out of the divine will.

10 There are other interesting collections about the tradition of the Hasidic Rabbis: Elie Wiesel, *Souls on Fire: Portraits and Legends of Hasidic Masters* (New York: 1972).

One should not reach anything without God, and also without one's own efforts and personal cooperation. In any way, the righteous people serve as a bridge: they introduce God to the world, and they also acquaint God with the world.

In an actively and at the same time contemplatively lived spiritual life, one can reach even such a coherence of one's strength and one's forces that each of one's senses could be able to proxy for the functions of all the other senses.¹¹

Even if our heart is broken, it is not denied by God; but—at the same time—the heart should be one full entity, too. The storm of the heart is to be calmed down, so that the pugnacious feelings and fierce emotions would recognize God as well as God's ever-presence.

Serving the World: Compassion and Justice

One's conscious life conduct is to be centred on the Absolute as its permanent source as well as engine. One's whole life, even one's drinking of a glass of water, is considered to be a holy act, a liturgy at its best, calling forth the presence of God on Earth.

In this sense, one gets acquainted closely with the value of the *hic et nunc*, of the here and now: we are called to be authentically and profoundly present in the given moment as well as in the act we are currently performing.

Our whole human existence should be undivided (or atomic) as well as playfully spontaneous. Thus, it is the mature personality of the master, which makes a lasting impression on all the righteous persons around her or him.

Though asceticism has been always present in Hasidism, its main thrust is much more the day-by-day help and dealing with people in need. The helper is to intensively identify herself or himself with the helped one, their stature and their destiny.

A righteous one can serve humanity in any positions. For example, one teacher worked in a tiny little shop for decades, from where he sent many times customers to other, even smaller shops, in order to support the poorer storekeepers.

Even the transcendental territories of Heaven as well as of Hell take place in the very sanctuary and in the hidden abyss of the human soul. Heaven as

11 Mystical elements are further emphasized in this monograph: Rivka Schatz Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism: Quietistic Elements in Eighteenth Century Hasidic Thought* (New Jersey: 1993).

well as Earth got divided exactly because of our human failure and sin. They will reunite, when people will make the world, which is entrusted to them, similar to Heaven again. The same way as God is infinite, so is God's service.

One has to aim at order and at impartial justice in human community and society; but when one reaches during this endeavour the dimension of human relationships, one immediately must *escape forward* into love and dialogue, because divine justice is far beyond human imagination and discernment.

In the Hasidic spirituality, the faithful can perceive the interconnections of all things beyond time and beyond space. Therefore, their *compassion* and empathy are not at all limited to their contexts only. Through *intuition* and through *empathy*, they engage in healing wounds and correcting whole existences.¹²

God stands beside all those, who visit God in justice and righteousness: but God is most of all there in the value of justice itself, not primarily in any other ways. The search for justice can only happen through justice, and never through falseness or deceit.

Judgement as well as pity form one single compact unit in God's infinite and never-ending compassion. On the other hand, compassion always also includes some kind of suffering: if during our travelling and our pilgrimage we find our neighbour in a swamp, we have to get dirty in order to help her or him out.

Suffering and Conversion

As a general rule, what arrives from the proper and right side is surely destined to have an opposition. To confront this opposition, a certain master in a lifelong martyrdom took upon himself the appearance of sin, in order to somehow build trust in Satan, cheat her or him, and gain from her or him the very secret of sin.

Among the grand Hasidic spiritual and wisdom-related values, we indeed notice the assumption of human *suffering*, reaching even as far as the *sacrificial death* for others, including and involving their failures as well as sins.

12 An interesting debate took place in the literature about the Jewish mystical elements: Jerome I. Gellman, "Martin Buber's Blunder: Martin Buber's Replies to Gershom Scholem and Rivka Schatz Uffenheimer," *Modern Judaism* no. 1. (2000): 20–40.

Notions very close to sacrificial death are those of *conversion*, of repentance, and of the metanoia of the righteous persons, which are even possible for the sake of and *on behalf of* all one's neighbours and fellow human beings.¹³

In this case, the sanctity of the believer sheds light on all people around her or him, making the Shekina, so the concrete presence of God dwelling in the world, plausible, possible as well as more believable in their being, too.

Obviously, in this spiritual milieu the whole of existence is holy, from the molecules right to the galaxies. God can use even the death of the just person for attaining enlightenment for all those standing around her or his deathbed.

The teaching of God makes its presence in all the parts and parcels of a righteous person's spiritual and psychosomatic being. The divine spark enables us to turn every little inch inside us again in the very direction of God.

Sublimation means making our intentions noble. In line with this beautiful idea, the pious are not asked or not recommended to destroy their desires and their passions, but to reconnect them to God and towards the Divine.

In this way, there is wisdom, teaching, knowledge as well as behest revealed in each phenomenon of life, but only for those happy ones who have eyes to see, and for those blessed persons who indeed have ears to listen.

These great masters of the past bequeathed their spirituality to their disciples most of all in the form of short stories as well as anecdotes, and later times and ages collected them together, and at the same time edited them.

It is an enormously huge challenge even for the persons of the XXIth century to read and to discuss them together, in various forms of small circles, and to humbly make some of these timeless wisdom tales indeed their own.

One should not argue at all about texts on wisdom, that would be very counter-productive. But hereby we reach the heart of interreligious dialogue: it is about marvelling the ways how the Creator is at work in the soul of those, who are yearning for God.

13 Nikolai Berdyaev dealt with the whole of the Buberian life oeuvre in his article: Nikolai A. Berdyaev, "Martin Buber: Die Chassidischen Bücher; Ich und Du; Zwiesprache; Königtum Gottes," *Journal Put'* no. 38. (1933): 87–91., in berdyaev.com/berdiaev/berdlib/1933_385.html.

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The sacrament of holy orders and the religious vow as a turning point in human life

The topic of my research, “The sacrament of holy orders and the religious vow as a turning point in human life,” belongs to the field of religious ethnography. It is religious because it is based on the religiosity of mankind. In the centre of the research are the events of deacon ordinations, priest ordinations, first masses, and religious vows. Furthermore, it is ethnographic, because we observe particular customs at these events which are related to ethnography: these activities are not officially regulated or recommended by the church, but they are habits and traditions formed by the people and participants.

According to Sándor Bálint, religious ethnography has

“the task of examining how people respond to Catholic regulations”¹

In the literature of ethnography, A.von Gennep created the expression “rites of passage”, which indicates rites associated with important transitions in human life.² According to the *Ethnographic Lexicon*, passages are needed because

“they ease life crises caused by change, slow down the transition, and make individuals ready for community forms and roles”³

My research began in 2013, and now I have about one hundred informants. Based on the information they have provided, it is too early to draw far-

1 Tekla Dömötör and Mihály Hoppál, eds., *Népszokás, néphit, népi vallásosság* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988), Bevezető, accessed April 9, 2019 <http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02152/html/07/211.html>

2 Gennep Arnold van, *Átmeneti rítusok* (Budapest: L'Harmattan: MTA Néprajzi Kutatóintézet; Pécs: PTE Néprajz-Kult. Antropológia Tanszék, 2007), 7–25.

3 Gyula Ortutay and Tibor Bodrogi, eds., *Magyar néprajzi lexikon* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), átmeneti rítusok, accessed <http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/1-420.html>

reaching conclusions (for example, to show regional differences), but we can get a general overview of which customs have become traditions over the decades, and which customs have transformed over the years and are possibly changing nowadays, too.

My research concerns the following events: permanent deacon ordinations, transitional deacon ordinations, priest ordinations and first masses, and, in connection monks, the religious vows and the path to it.

I got the data for my research from people who were Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic deacons and priests, and their family members, monks and nuns, and the people who attended these events, by number: 6 Roman Catholic permanent deacons, 2 Greek Catholic permanent deacons, 1 Roman Catholic transitional deacon, 1 Greek Catholic transitional deacon, 23 Roman Catholic priests, 15 Greek Catholic priests, 10 male monks, 28 nuns, and members of these families: 1 sister, 2 brothers, 3 wives, 1 father, and 5 other participants (musicians, guests).

I would like to show a comprehensive picture of these added customs that are worth researching from an ethnographic point of view, and at the same time outline the information given by my informants on the following topics:

Invitation

Firstly, I must state that throughout history, deacon and priest ordinations or religious vows have not always been public. Elderly monks tell me that their ordinations had to be done in the greatest possible secrecy, though in less strict cases they were only done unobtrusively. Later, transitional deacon ordinations were often held in a closed family circle, because they did not attach much importance to this, as they were soon ordained into the priesthood. Nowadays, this has changed, and transitional deacon ordination is also a public event.

Usually there are “invitations” to these events. The invitation is made by the prospective deacon or priest himself but may be helped by his relatives (parents, wives of permanent deacons or Greek Catholic priests) or by his parish priest (for example, by parish announcement or circular bulletin), and the monks can be helped by the superior.

In most cases, the prospective deacons and priests prefer personal invitations. Many times a printed invitation card is made and handed out as a personal invitation; however, they cannot reach everybody personally, so they can also invite others to the event by post (or letter), over the phone, and

nowadays via the Internet (by email invitation, on social network, Facebook message, or create a Facebook group for the event).

Participants of the events

It depends on the candidate how many guests are invited to the events. Nowadays, participants at all events will include the relatives (parents, wives of Greek Catholic priests and permanent deacons, children, grandchildren, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, godparents, cousins, “everyone whose address we had”⁴) the priesthood, friends and acquaintances (for example, colleagues of permanent deacons, people from the parish, mayors, choral members, deacons, etc.) as well as locals and people from nearby villages. In villages, those who have not been invited will also go to the event:

“we have this honour, they come because they know me... such an event, like an ordination, is an important event for them as well.”⁵

At deacon and priest ordinations the bishop participates, of course, because he celebrates the liturgical service. At the first masses, however, he is not always present.

“The bishop is invited to the first mass out of respect, but he does not come out of respect,”⁶

a Roman Catholic deacon told me. This is so because if several priests have first mass at the same time, the bishop does not want to offend anyone. However, most of the invited guests are at the first masses, as the first masses are always organized by the newly ordained priest (and his family members); he decides on the date, in cooperation with the parish priest and the parish church community.

In the case of a religious vow, the date is decided by the superior of the order, the general superior or prioress, or a suitable date for the vow is found together with the one taking vows. Monks have more vows, and every order has different habits, with some vows closed and others public.

4 A.H., Facebook message to author, June 10, 2015.

5 Tamás Bakos, Facebook message to author, June 8, 2015.

6 Zsolt Bógár, Facebook message to author, October 25, 2018.

There are orders where the first vow is also public, but in some orders only the eternal vow is public. For example, with the Dominican nuns:

“The closer family can be at the introduction of a candidate, only the nuns were here when I put on the monastic vestment; my close circle participated at the first vow; on the renewals of the vows only just the nuns; and the final vow is public, anyone can come.”⁷

Office-holders

Apart from the bishop(s), priests, deacons, altar boys and choristers—who are always participants at masses—there are also other office-holders at a first mass.

An old, now-forgotten role was the so-called altar-mother or altar-godmother. According to a report from Szeged, it was a tradition in the first decades of the last century that before their ordinations the poorer priests chose for themselves an altar-mother who took care of his needs (clothing, lingerie, furniture, chalice) and also the cost of the “priest wedding”⁸

The participation of bridesmaids in the first masses is also almost forgotten. (In Poland, it is still customary; they accompany the newly ordained priest to the church.)

The manuductor is one (or more) older priest who has a close relationship with the newly ordained priest. He is asked by the new priest to perform this office. He will be responsible for the ceremony, watching that everything goes well, and, if necessary, shows the newly ordained priest what to do. (For example, with Greek Catholics the manuductor can be his father, who is also a priest, or his uncle.) The same person may be the ceremony master, but it may be a different person.

The first mass speaker may be a friend or a superior of the newly ordained priest, who asks him to preach at the first mass.

Decoration of the church

The decoration of the church depends mainly on where the event is organized. A cathedral or basilica is usually not decorated in any particular way, or with

7 Andrea Beáta Berecz, Email message to author, June 18, 2015.

8 Sándor Bálint, *A szegedi nemzet. A szegedi nagytáj népélete* (Szeged: Móra Ferenc Múzeum, 1980), 229.

just the usual Sunday decoration. More special decoration can be seen in smaller places.

The church may be decorated by church workers, sacristans, and people from the parish church community, a youth group from the village, acquaintances, friends, or family members, for example, siblings, using candles, green branches and flowers. White flowers are common; they may be lilies or gladiolus.

The church is specially decorated for the first masses, namely the altar itself, the pulpit (in Roman Catholic churches), and sometimes the church pews as well. In many places, the main gate or entrance is decorated with flowers, as is customary at First Communions. Occasionally, the church also receives new tablecloths (for example, as a present from the newly ordained priest).

Usually, the taking of religious vows is also celebrated with flowers. The decoration can be done by the responsible nun, who is also a member of the order, or the sacristan of the church, or they together.

Parental blessing, procession

At the rites of ordination for a deacon or a priest, entering the church is solemnly performed with the bishop and assistant, according to the liturgical regulations (the prospective deacon or priest goes with the bishop at the end of the procession), for example, from the sacristy.

However, it is customary in many places—mostly in villages—that at the event of a first mass, the solemn procession starts from the parental home. There is no official rule or regulation for this. Before the procession starts, the local parish priest asks the parents for the newly ordained priest. This is an imitation of the procedure at a marriage, but it is simplified. The newly ordained priest kneels in front of his parents or stands in front of them and the parents say goodbye and bless their priest son by putting their hand on their son's head, or drawing a cross on his forehead. But this moment is not sad, not grieving at all (as it is customary at weddings). The focus is not on the pain, and the family does not feel the loss of their child because of his decision.

At the seminary in Eger, the text which the parent can say for the occasion is given from hand to hand, but they can say something spontaneously too: Greek Catholic parents can quote, for example, Psalm 128, which is also said at the time of marriage,

“May the Lord bless you from Zion; may you share the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life; and live to see the children of your children. May all be well in Israel.”

The parish priest or the priest preaching at the first mass blesses the first chasuble, and the newly ordained priest accepts it or takes it to the church in his hand. It may happen that the parish priest is not there but is waiting for the procession and the newly ordained priest in the church with cross, salt, and bread.

In the solemn procession comes first the cross and then—if there are any—banners; next come the altar boys, the theological students, the priests, and finally the newly ordained priest with his parents and siblings. This is not like a wedding processional, but rather a procession in preparation for a mass.

In Moldavia, young girls usually strew flowers along the road in front of the new priest during the procession, and the side of the road is decorated with green branches from the priest’s house to the church, and carpets are even put on the fences along the way.⁹

When they arrive at the church for the first mass, the new priest can go in either with his parents, or with the parish priest and the manuductor.

In some cases, the newly ordained priest goes in alb and stole in the procession, and in the church his new chasuble for the mass is unfolded, which is usually given to him as a gift. The speaker at first mass blesses the chasuble, he puts it on, and the mass begins.

There are places where the procession starts only from the parish or clergy house, and the parental blessing is held there, or in cities it takes place in the church at the beginning of the first mass.

For monks, this moment happens in a completely different way. There is no organized farewell and blessing by the parents, at least not a spoken one. The separation from the parents happens gradually.

Seating order in the church

At all events the close relatives usually sit in the front in the church, where there are labelled or reserved seats for them. This means that parents and wives (if they have one) sit in the first pews.

9 Ildikó Szatmári, “A moldvai csángó lakodalom szokásvariánsai” (PhD diss., University of Babeş-Bolyai, Faculty of Letters, 2001), 27–28.

At first masses where only one person is being celebrated, the parents and close relatives can sit on one side, while the invited priests sit on the other side; or at a Greek Catholic first mass, for example, the new priest's family can sit on one side, and his wife's family on the other side.

At religious vows, the members of the order can sit in front on one side and the family members sit on the other side, or the family members can sit behind the celebrated nuns.

Order of communion

At the ordination of a deacon, the order of communion is not often planned beforehand.

At priest ordinations and first masses, first the closer relatives and then the more distant relatives come to communion: first the wife (if there is one), second the parents (the mother and then the father), then the grandparents, then the brothers and sisters, afterwards the other relatives, and then the friends, and finally the other participants.

At the celebration of religious vows, first the members of the order, (first the prioress or the celebrated, then the other members) and then the family members and the other participants come to communion.

Offerings outside the church

After the event, it sometimes occurs that even those who have not been invited are offered food at the church, at the parish or clergy house, or in the courtyard. This is usually the case when only one person is ordained at a time in a village or on the occasions of first masses. Usually, the local people of the parish church and women offer sweet or savoury pastries or scones, and refreshments or wine.

Love feast

Guests can have lunch or dinner, depending on the time of the event. The location of catering—if the ordination is in a basilica or in a cathedral—can be at the bishop's palace, in the seminary, in a religious education centre, in a pilgrimage house, or in restaurants.

The love feast may be at the invitation of the bishop or organised privately, but the family may receive a room, for example, in the seminary and there is catering.

The location of the catering for the first mass can be very varied, as it is held in the village or town of the newly ordained priest, and there is a need to adapt to the local conditions.

Earlier, there used to be a tent erected in the courtyard of the new priest's house (as was done at a wedding), but nowadays it can be in a restaurant, in a community centre or community hall, in a marriage hall, in a school or in its dining room, or in a parish or clergy house or in its courtyard, in a religious education centre, or wherever such an event can be organized and 40-200 people can be hosted.

The chefs may also depend on the location: for example, in a bishop's palace the kitchen staff of the bishopric may prepare the meal; in a restaurant the staff of the restaurant does the job.

In the past, the family and relatives prepared the food (including the fattening of pigs in advance), often with the help of the whole village, but nowadays the preference is to order the meals prepared. Often the relatives and the villagers bring cakes and it has occurred that a rosary company provided the cakes.

In monastic orders, food can be prepared by kitchen staff, nuns, or the parish community in the dining room of a monastery, in a school, or in a religious education centre.

The menu may be sausage with mustard and bread, cold dishes or sandwiches, if a standing reception is held. If tables are set, either a one-course meal or a multi-course festive menu may be provided. For a first mass, there is often a special so-called "wedding meal" (shell-shaped noodle soup, cooked meat, stuffing, stuffed cabbage, or veal and pork, and cakes and pastries).

Seating order at the party

At the party, the seating arrangement depends not on the event but on the organization. The standing reception is more informal and freer, but if tables are set, the celebrated person is seated at the main table. The bishop, the parents, the parish priest, the first mass speaker or the manufacturer can sit next to him. Greek Catholic priests sit next to their wives.

In some orders, it is customary that the vow-taking nun does not eat with the guests after the vow but with the other nuns, so she sits next to the members of the order.

Prayers and toasts

Greetings can be heard in the church after the ordination or after the first mass from the participating priests and from members of the parish church community. At that time, children usually recite poems.

In the case of catering, meals are always opened with a blessing or with a prayer beforehand, and toasts are also common during catered events. It can be said by the newly ordained priest (he says thanks to the bishop for the ordination and gives thanks to the family and the village for their participation and help), the bishop, the parish priest, any priest, relatives or family members, for example, his father or his godfather, or his friends, council members, mayor, etc.

Priest wedding

For Roman Catholics, the name of the feast after the first mass is the “priest wedding”:

“The love-feast (agape) after the first celebrated mass of the newly ordained priest, in his village or in his hometown.”¹⁰

Greek Catholic priests also have a meal or feast after their first mass, but this is not a “priest wedding” because the vast majority of priests have already had a real wedding celebration before the ordination (because there is married priesthood there). Thus, the feast after their first mass—though in some aspects similar to a real wedding party (for example, seating order, menu)—still does not contain as many elements from a wedding as Roman Catholics have.

Although Roman Catholic priests give up marriage and choose celibacy, tradition nevertheless ensures that they do not remain without a wedding. Ildikó Szatmári calls the “priest wedding” a “substitute wedding” because, as she claims, the wedding is the most solemn ritual of human life, which is so important in the life of a person that if for some reason it is left out, it must be replaced.¹¹

Most of the time, the first mass is in the afternoon so that the invited local priests can take part in the event, and the meal is therefore rather a dinner than a lunch. According to the choreography of an upcoming priest-

10 Balázs Huszár, Facebook message to author, October 3, 2018.

11 Szatmári, *A moldvai*, 8.

wedding in the Palóc region, the first mass begins at 4 o'clock in the church, the dinner at 6:30 pm and ends about at 9 pm, and then—I quote—

“the priest wedding will really cut loose and last as long as we can stand on our legs, maybe till dawn.”¹²

Let's have a look at the features of the priest weddings:

The main organizer of the priest wedding is the newly ordained priest and his family. Some of them already start organizing a year earlier, but by their own admission, this organizing is just to give out the jobs and determine who will be responsible for each task. So the parents and the siblings will have most of the tasks, usually because the prospective priest is still preparing for his exams.

The invitation card for the priest wedding is usually attached to the invitation to the priest ordination and first mass.

Usually there is no specially appointed functionary (bridesman); the first mass speaker speaks only at the first mass and has no role in the priest wedding. At a priest wedding in the Délvidék region, an older priest reported the next event.

It is still a living tradition in the area of Tyrol and Salzburg that the church, as the bride of the newly ordained priest, is personalized by an 8-12-year-old girl. This little girl can be the newly ordained priest's sister or his very close relative.¹³

Usually there is some music at the priest weddings but not always. If there is, you can find no difference from the general wedding music; there are the most diverse songs, but within the limits of good taste. And there are songs about priests, such as the

“The city of Eger is the city of priests, monks go there in wooden clogs, kipi-ki-ki-kop, in nomine patris, he takes a brandy under his cassock. I am not a monk, I love alcohol, I give my cassock for it, I give my prayer book for it, I hug and I kiss my lover.”

And there are even songs about girls, such as:

“To love you, to love you, I loved you, but I never married you, the bridal veil goes on your head, if it goes on, my heart will fall into sorrow.”

12 Zsolt Bógár, Facebook message to author, October 25, 2018.

13 Sztalmári, *A moldvai*, 23.

If there is dance, it usually begins after the bishop (if he is there) and the main priests have left. There are places where the newly ordained priest starts dancing with his mother. Then he dances with his sisters or cousins, but usually he does not dance with any other women.

At a priest wedding, if there is no opening dance with the mother, the priests shout amongst themselves:

“Long live the young bachelor!”
—and then the music for dancing begins.

It is up to the newly ordained priest to have a special cake or not. There are places where this priest-cake is a gift to him, and the newly ordained priest accepts this and cuts it just like newly-weds cut the wedding cake at their wedding.

The priest usually wears festive clothing, a priest shirt or a suit, because priest weddings are usually in June. But

“the ones who can stand the heat”¹⁴
or monk priests, can wear a cassock or monastic vestments.

To sum it up, we can say that the priest wedding is different from the usual wedding party in that: there is no bride, there is not always music and dancing, it does not always last until midnight or longer, no money is collected like for the young couple, and nobody wants to steal the priest.

But it is still similar to a common wedding in that: those who have accompanied him throughout his life are present at this ceremony, and if there is music and dancing, it is the same as in the weddings. The bridal dance can be seen in the dancing of the priest (there are only a few differences to the bridal dance, for example, the first dance is with his mother, and no money is collected), and similarly the cake, the cries of “Long live the young bachelor!”, the giving of gifts, and even the menu parallel events in traditional wedding. In addition to being married and being a priest, the person receives a vocation and grace from God.

¹⁴ Balázs Huszár, Facebook message to author, October 3, 2018.

Gifts

For ordinations and first masses, guests often give gifts to the celebrated.

These may be objects in connection with the priesthood (stole set, liturgical vestments, tablecloth for the church, set for anointing of the sick, incense, chalice, etc.), religious objects (pictures, cross, statue, icon, candle, candlestick), souvenirs or smaller items of use, technical items (for example, microwave oven) or practical gifts (for example, dinnerware, cups), but may be various publications, such as books or some art or church music publications. In addition to these, a good wine is also suitable. In addition, a gift can be, for example, paying the restaurant bill, giving money, or helping with moving expenses.

A deceased father remembered the lunch after his first mass in 1954:

“During the lunch my parish priest told me he would give me his two bookcases. I was very pleased because I was thinking it would come with the books, but it turned out that it was only the bookcases, no books.”¹⁵

Monks usually receive a gift at their vows, but it is not easy to give a present for members of this kind of community because—as they told me—

“we have expressed several times; we have everything, even more than we need.”¹⁶

Therefore, the gift is usually of religious content (book, candle) or it can be some other type of personal item (such as a paint set). They can also receive bouquets of flowers, but occasionally vow-taking nuns express their gratitude to their parents with a bunch of flowers.

There are orders where no personal gift is given, and what the relatives bring is given to the community because

“there is no personal property after the vow.”¹⁷

There are monks who ask the invited guests to avoid giving any present at all. It is also interesting that there are orders where there is no opportunity

15 Lajos Gróf, *Az ígéret gyermekei* (Miskolc: Keresztény Értelmiségiek Szövetsége Miskolci Csoportja, 1999), 341.

16 Éva Klára Czopf, Email message to author, June 27, 2016.

17 Sister Livia, Email message to author, July 6, 2015.

to present gifts at the time of vows. Just the next day, the so-called “speaker” can present a gift.

The newly ordained deacons and priests, and sometimes the newly vowed monks, may give a picture card—or memory card—as a remembrance gift for the guests.

Memory cards

In two of his books, Zoltán Szilárdfy writes about the history of holy images printed on paper and describes the purpose of these sacred images throughout history. People were happy to keep these between the pages of their prayer books, where they could also be bookmarks. They were given as a reward during education in faith, or they were supposed to compensate for evil effects. With such images the Jesuits popularized their own saints and gave the cards as gifts to promote the reputation of the names of shrines. These images have also reached the illiterate, and so the impact on the common people is almost impossible to measure.¹⁸

There are permanent deacons who prepare memorial cards, and there are those who do not; it depends on the individual. Those who have them printed usually buy a smaller amount (100-500 pieces). Transitional deacons rarely prepare them (though it does occur); they rather do this for their priest ordination and for their first mass.

A transitional deacon who ordered memory cards supported his decision, saying that during his 1-year diaconal ministry, he had been repeatedly invited to say homily, so he can speak about it in his sermon and gave the memory cards at the end of the mass.

Almost everyone makes memory cards for the priest ordination and for the first mass.

Perhaps a unique book in the world was published in 2016 by István Ivancsó. It is based on the priest record book of the Diocese of Hajdúdorog and contains copies of memory cards (more than 400 images) from Greek Catholic priests.

In the past, when they were handwritten, the cards were prepared separately for the two events (priest ordination and first mass), and there was less information on them. Nowadays, they are printed, the same picture is

18 Zoltán Szilárdfy, *Barokk szentképek Magyarországon* (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1984), 9–24.

made for the priest ordination and the first mass, and we can read the name, date, place, and a holy motto on them.

The quantity of the memory cards can be from a couple of hundred to four thousand pieces; those who have more distribute them for several years.

The handing out of the memory cards happens after the deacon ordination, priest ordination, or first mass; in the last case, it is after the blessing of the first mass. It can be given by the newly ordained priest personally, inside the church or at the door of the church. Sometimes he trusts someone (usually an altar boy, but he can ask church service staff or his relatives, for example, his brothers and sisters or cousins) to help him in the assignment.

For monks this is variable. There are orders where it is not customary to do memory cards at all; there are orders where it is customary; and in some orders the vow-taker decides if he or she wants to distribute cards or not. There are orders which have memory cards for the ceremony of dressing the monastic vestment and also for each vow, and there are orders where it is just for the eternal vow. There are orders in which the memory cards are given to the vow-taker as a gift from the superior of the order.

In the Cistercian women's order, the vow-taking nun does not give but gets the card from the members of the order. I quote:

“We don't make memory cards, but in every step in the community we surprise her with a little picture we make ourselves, one with a quotation or decoration.”¹⁹

Expected dressing

A few sentences about changing clothing: the deacons and priests take the cossack well before the ordination; the liturgical vestment changes in accordance with the ordinances.

And for monks, we can say in connection the clothing “there are as many habits as there are orders.”

The Second Vatican Council also made a change in the requirements for attire, saying that:

“Laws which seem less suited to the reformed liturgy are to be brought into harmony with it, or else abolished; and any which are helpful are to be retained if already in use, or introduced where they are lacking. [...] the territorial

19 Sister Henriett, Email message to author, October 19, 2015.

bodies of bishops are empowered to adapt such things to the needs and customs of their different regions.²⁰

There are orders where there is no special attire, just one emblem (for example, cross, necklace, badge, medal) that indicates the monk or the nun is a member of the community or that he or she has taken vows. There are orders where there are no special clothing, but the members do have the same dress and, for example, attend in costumes.

We can find orders where they have special clothing, but the final religious habit does not differ from the one that has been worn previously, and there are orders where a piece of clothing is changed during the vows.

And here are two examples of changes in wearing clothing.

Cistercian Sisters: the candidate gets a dark blue vest; after the first vow it is taken off; after the other vows she gets a white dress, the white veil is exchanged for a black one, and she receives a white belt; and at the eternal vow she gets one more piece of clothing, a long-sleeved, hooded garment.

Sisters of Premontre: the candidate receives a blue canon collar (short perelin) and a blue veil with a white border; the novicia gets a white dress, scapulary and necklace; after the first vow she gets a white collar with two blue buttons; and at the eternal vow she gets two more blue buttons on the collar and the white cingulum is replaced by a blue one.

The typical colors of the monastic vestments are black, white, gray, blue and brown.

An interesting question is the appearance of the wedding dress for nuns. Traditionally, a wedding dress was not worn when taking the vows but during the dressing-up ceremony. This indicated that the person is giving up the world when she takes off the bridal dress and puts on the nun's habit. After the Second Vatican Council (after 1965), most orders broke with this tradition, in parallel with the other reforms in Catholicism. Today, it is still a tradition in the contemplative and traditionalist orders.

Another interesting aspect are the customs surrounding the ring: there are orders where the wearing of the engagement ring is not a tradition; there are orders where it is a custom but not obligatory; and in some orders everyone gets one. And there are also orders where only the prioress gets the ring.

20 Second Vatican Council: *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium solemnly promulgated by his holiness Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963*. Nr. 128. last modified April 9, 2019, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html

New names of the monks and nuns

It differs also from order to order whether the members receive a new name after the vow, and if so, who chooses it.

There are orders where members do not get a new name; there are some orders where it used to be the case but nowadays it isn't; and in some orders the monk can decide to have a new name or not.

In some orders, a nun only receives a new name if her first name is already used by a member of the community, and it is possible that they only get a new name if it helps them to break away from their past. In some cases, the vow-taker will automatically be given a new name.

The new name can be chosen by the monk or nun for him/herself and approved by his/her superior, or it may be chosen by his/her superior. They can also be asked for their wishes, and sometimes the person writes a few names, and the community chooses a new name for him/her. There are nuns who fully entrust the decision to the community, and there are orders where the new name will be their confirmation name.

In the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Mary is the name everyone receives, and in the Little Brothers/Sisters of Jesus, everyone gets a new family name, "Little Brother/Sister of Jesus". And in the community of Saint Francis of Little Sisters, they are not only given a name but also a secret, for example, Sister Katalin is named the Resurrection of our Lord—and all this comes to light just during the liturgy, when she is dressed.

The new name is not included in the official documents, only in the documents of the order.

Summary

Finally, I would like to mention that I have just observed the most important and interesting moments. A separate study could be written on each of these topics.

My future plans include finding more informants and thus drawing deeper conclusions on these topics, discovering regional differences, fully describing and analysing the occurrence of objects (for example, candle, cross, Bible), making comparative analyses in connection with orders, describing Armenian Catholic or Orthodox customs, comparing Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic customs, and describing all of the themes of bishop ordinations and possibly including foreign customs in the description.

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Commensality in the Gallery

What does a table fellowship, and a laid table do in a contemporary art gallery? Is it present as an art object, like one of Daniel Spoerri's 1960s *Snare Pictures (Tableau Pièges)*? Does it appear as the subject of an image as in a classic Flemish still life painting? Does it serve as an integer part of a performance, like the table in Marina Abramović's 2010 work, *The Artist Is Present*? Or does it turn up as an essential element of an image depicting a table fellowship scene like in Andrei Rublev's *Trinity*?

As we go on with our bets, we are getting closer to our subject. Yet, before attempting to answer the initial question, we need to raise some more. Why do we need contemporary art exhibitions at all? Exhibitions create opportunities to share and see art that otherwise, in the artist's studio or a private collection, as well as in the specific arrangement and context would not be visible to many. Art exhibitions create opportunities for works of art to be reborn as such, by the act of leaving the studio, entering an accessible place, and establishing interactions with the viewers there. But why do we need such encounters? As Santiago Zabala has recently captured it by paraphrasing Martin Heidegger's famous statement: because art can save us.¹ And in our world of emergencies, that sounds like a valid and tempting promise. Finally, why do we need to talk about a contemporary art exhibition at a conference of theology? The answer is simple: to share our learnings with those who had no chance to visit, see and converse with the art pieces exhibited. Let me emphasize the latter, the dialogue we can have with a work of art. The American art historian, Daniel A. Siedell reminds us of the possibility of such conversations by pointing at Martin Luther's approach: "For Luther, it is not what we see, but what we hear from paintings, as we live and feel the pressure of life and the strained relationships with our neighbour."² Let

1 Santiago Zabala, *Why Only Art Can Save Us? Aesthetic and the Absence of Emergency*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

2 Daniel A. Siedell, "Luther, Evangelicals, and Modern Art." *Patheos*, September 25, 2012.

me then attempt to make an account and summarise the learnings of an exhibition difficult to explain, of works of art nearly impossible to powerfully describe in words.

Although the title of this paper resonates to Siedell's 2008 book, *God in the Gallery*³, I do not intend to comment on that specifically. I do, however, attempt to cover what the title of this paper suggests: investigating the topic of the performative act of consummation and conversation in the framework of a contemporary art gallery exhibition. Yet, Siedell's writings, just like those by James Elkins from the same side (art history), and William Dyrness, Jérôme Cottin or Dr Sándor Békési from the other side (theology and theological aesthetics) of this field usually marked as contemporary or modern sacred art, as well as the support of my professors, J. A. Tillmann, Márton Szentpéteri and Bálint Veres at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, encouraged me to start and continue my doctoral research.

The first major element of curatorial work related to my doctoral research—an experiment of artistic research—was the contemporary art exhibition *puritanus–pure art* at Hegyvidék Gallery, Budapest, September 7 to 22, 2017. The exhibition, which was part of the annual *Ars Sacra Festival*, serves as the case for this paper.

The idea of the exhibition stemmed from my readings, experiences, studio visits, and, directly, a series of lectures entitled *Design/art and Ethics*, at the Doctoral School of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design. The latter offered valuable influences from Epictetus to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, all tangible in formulating the concept of the exhibition: “artistic experiments of achieving maximal wholeness with minimal intervention, balancing on the edge of nothing and something.”

The exhibited works of art came from sixteen contemporary Hungarian artists of different age (twenty-two to seventy-five years old) and represented different artistic approaches, as well as many genres, including painting, print, installation, sculpture, photography, and video. Some of the works I knew, others were created for this exhibition. Although some of the artists knew each other, most of them had not met before and had not exhibited together. All the works on show, though, shared the idea and attitude, which the British architect, John Pawson, whom most of us in Hungary would recognise as the re-designer of the interior of the Basilica of St Martin in the Benedictine Monastery of Pannonhalma, formulated in his book *Minimum*:

3 Daniel A. Siedell, *God in the Gallery*. (Ada, MI: Baker Academic. 2008).

“The minimum could be defined as the perfection that an artefact achieves when it is no longer possible to improve it by subtraction. This is the quality that an object has when every component, every detail and every junction has been reduced or condensed to the essentials. It is the result of the omission of the inessentials.”⁴

The works of art on show by Emese Benczúr, Kati Bódi, Gábor Erdélyi, Anikó Herbert, Gyöngyi Hegedűs, Tamás László Kovács, István Losonczy, Fanni Luzsicza, Robert Pasitka, Géza Szócs, Miklós Szüts, Dezső Váli, Antal Vásárhelyi, Beáta Veszely, Dóra Votin, and Bea Zoltai, independent of their genre or style, exhibited and proved the common attitude of striving for perfection with minimal intervention.

As I mentioned, I considered the exhibition as part of my doctoral research. As a doctoral student of design culture studies in the Doctoral School of the Moholy-Nagy University of Arts and Design, where designers and theorists study and work together, it seemed as an obvious choice to engage into the practice of curating, experiment with ideas and concepts raised previously in theory, gain first-hand experience, and later work on drawing the consequences thereof. This method offers a unique and useful chance to experiment in the form of practice-based research, engaging into what Ken Friedman calls “developing theory out of practice.”⁵

My initial aim was to prove 1) that engaged, honest, progressive contemporary sacred art exists and has a place in an art gallery, even in the framework of a festival with a very broad spectrum of genres and approaches; and 2) that artists of different age, genre, style, awareness or fame, gender, religiosity, as well as their art can communicate with each other, creating together more than what their separated effect would allow them. The framework or medium for this attempt is the exhibition, or rather an “*exposition*,” as Dr Sándor Békési tagged it in his opening speech, highlighting the act of standing up for a mutual cause experienced through the works of art on show.

The program of the exhibition was also designed to create several opportunities for the interaction of the visitors and the exhibitors, more than the habit of an opening only. Guided visits, youth programs and multi-genre

4 John Pawson, *Minimum*. (London: Phaidon Press. 1996), 7.

5 Ken Friedman, “Research into, by and for design.” *Journal of Visual Arts Practice*, Volume 7, Number 2 (2008): 154.

events, like a talk on related contemporary sacred music and its performance, *Adam's Passion* by Arvo Pärt and staged by Robert Wilson were offered.

The closing event of the exhibition served as an attempt of creating a performative act. It was unique in such a setting: a commensality or table fellowship event with the exhibiting artists, the visitors, the gallery staff and the curator. The event was advertised on social media and at all the other events of the exhibition. On a late September evening, a large table was laid in the middle of the gallery, surrounded by chairs. Bread baked by the curator and wine was offered. As one of the exhibiting artists could not attend personally, the commensality was extended by connecting her online. Within an hour or two the bread and the wine were gone, and after a deep and meaningful conversation on art, creeds, relations to works and making art, as well as to religion, confession and the divine, the participants returned home, and the exhibition was closed.

It sounds simple, yet it created a memorable moment. Commensality or table fellowship is a well-known phenomenon. Food and company are both basic needs, and people tend to eat together, at one table with others, irrespective of culture or geography. Although for a long time the phenomenon was addressed in the social sciences mostly from the points of religion and rituals, recently several other modes of scholarly approach have appeared, including sociology, cultural anthropology, and environmental psychology. Claude Fischler investigates the recent problems related to the subject in his paper *Commensality, society and culture*⁶, and several fresh viewpoints appear in *Commensality from everyday food to feast* edited by Susanne Kerner, Cynthia Chou and Morten Warmind.⁷

Social feasting has been recorded as a widely spread practice since the Antiquity. In Plato's *The Symposium*⁸ we can read about the drinking party, set at the house of Agathon with the intellectual elite of the period, including Phaedrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, Aristophanes, Socrates and Alcibiades, discussing *eros*, and the ability to compose comedy and tragedy. The frequency of the practice of commensality in the life of Jesus tells us how important sharing a table with others to connect was for him. We are also aware of how radically the concept of the open commensality practised

6 Claude Fischler, "Commensality, society and culture." *Social Science Information*, Vol. 50 (2011): 528–548.

7 Susanne Kerner, Cynthia Chou, and Morten Warmind, eds. *Commensality from everyday food to feast*. (London–New Delhi–New York–Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2015).

8 Plato, *The Symposium*. Edited by Margaret Howatson and Frisbee Sheffield. Translated by Margaret Howatson. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

by Jesus changed hospitality, which was customary in the Mediterranean Antiquity. Paul Louis Metzger notes that “One of the many qualities that people admire about Jesus was his open posture toward people who were often excluded from the table.”⁹

Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography by John Dominic Crossan, the Irish-American New Testament scholar, devotes an entire chapter to the subject interpreting Jesus’ parable of the wedding feast.¹⁰ Quoting Peter Farb and George Armelagos he points at the importance of the act of commensality on a personal level: “... To know what, where, how, when and with whom people eat is to know the character of the society.”¹¹ Citing Lee Edward Klosinski’s words he also underlines the social significance of the act: “... Eating is a behaviour which symbolises feelings and relationships, mediates social status and power, and expresses the boundaries of group identity.”¹² With his summarising statement, he claims that “... Jesus lived out his own parable...” and that

“The Kingdom of God as a process of open commensality, of a non-discriminating table depicting in miniature a non-discriminating society, clashes fundamentally with the honour and shame, those basic values of ancient Mediterranean society.”¹³

At the closing event of the exhibition, we had a very similar “non-discriminating,” inclusive, and participative experience. By sharing a table, bread and wine, as well as their thoughts and beliefs, the participating artists and visitors who in our currently unfortunately deeply divided society in Hungary would otherwise not (or not have a chance to) talk (and exhibit together) due to their strongly different views in (cultural) politics, religion, beliefs or social status, could realise that not only the works of art can communicate when exhibited on the walls or in the space of the same gallery.

Open commensality in a contemporary art exhibition offers much more than the usual forms of hospitality at an exhibition opening when after the opening speech and perhaps music, guests would rush to the buffet table for

9 Paul Louis Metzger, “Jesus’ Open Posture and “The Open Table.” *Patheos*, April 11, 2014.

10 John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*. (San Fransisco: Harper One, 1994), 74–79.

11 Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, 77.

12 Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, 77.

13 Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, 78.

the customary glass of wine and the small savouries before quickly leaving. Around the table, we can take time to talk, break bread and boundaries. Randall Frederick suggests such healing interaction of the table fellowship:

“To the very end, the Gospel of Mark and the rest of the Gospels show a pattern of behaviour that Jesus is trying to bring restoration to all peoples through the intimacy of a meal and that there is a healing interaction taking place whenever and wherever food is taking place.”¹⁴

This “healing interaction” is what was experienced as a result of the performative action of the exhibition and the connecting performative events, including the closing commensality event. Completely aware of the fact that this was an isolated and one-time event, it is my sincere hope and duty to continue my research, and attempt creating similar events of breaking boundaries. Art and the gallery is a highly suitable field to research in hope of mediating and radiating the message of our belonging together. Just as Arthur C. Danto wrote: “The art world stands to the real world in something like the relationship in which the City of God stands to the Earthly City.”¹⁵

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14 Frederick Randall, “Table Fellowship as Expressed in the Gospel of Mark.” *Theology & The City*, March 13, 2013.

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2019

“You are children of lust and your deity is a crucified bastard”

The anti-Christian rhetoric
of medieval Ashkenazic Jewry and its background

The traditional narrative of passive Jewish martyrdom

According to the Hebrew chronicles on the First Crusade, a military unit led by Count Emicho of Leiningen arrived at Mainz on 25 May 1096. Two days later, contrary to the archbishop's orders, the burghers opened up the city's gates for Emicho, and the Crusaders massacred the Jews, who had sought refuge in the archbishop's and the burgrave's palaces. One of the Jewish community leaders, a certain David ben Rabbi Nathaniel, found shelter in a priest's courtyard together with his family. When the priest told him that all the Jews in the city have been either killed or converted to Christianity, he called for Emicho's men saying that he also wanted to convert. However, when the Crusaders arrived, David ben Rabbi Nathaniel began cursing them with the expression cited in this paper's title. He and his family members were slaughtered immediately.¹

Such a provocative and open Jewish stand against Christians may sound strange to contemporary ears. Its reason appears to be that according to the widely held image of the living conditions of Jewry living in medieval Western Europe, Jews were under constant Christian oppression and persecution, which they tolerated with passive resignation. This narrative has become popular mainly since the nineteenth century in the wake of influential Jewish thinkers and historians like Heinrich Graetz. He represents late medieval diaspora Jews as weak, subordinated, despicable, and degraded (*italics mine*):

Only too soon was the Jewish race to realize the awful truth that it possessed no home on earth, and that it was only tolerated in the lands of its exile. [...] When religious hatred was aroused, *torture and martyrdom fell upon Israel*, and

1 Robert Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 241, 261–62.

again he was compelled to grasp the wanderer's staff, and with bleeding heart depart from his dearly beloved home. [...] The French and the Germans rivaled the savage Moors in the energy with which *they strove to enfeeble still more the weakest of the peoples*. Hitherto persecutions of the Jews had been few and far between; but from the year 1146 they became more frequent, more severe, and more persistent. [...] *This period of suffering imprinted on the features of the Jewish race that air of suffering, that martyr's look, which even the present age of freedom has not effaced.*²

As a result of this unimaginable martyrdom, Graetz's representation goes, Jews got accustomed to their humiliation, lost all their self-respect, and became cowards as if they were under divine punishment:

They became more and more accustomed to their ignominious position, and lost all feeling of self-respect. They neglected their outward appearance, because *they were nothing but a despised, dishonored race*, which could not have even the least claim to honor. They became more and more careless of their speech, because they were not admitted to cultured circles, and in their own midst they could make themselves understood by means of a jargon. They lost all taste and sense of beauty, and *to some extent became as despicable as their enemies desired them to be. They lost their manliness and courage, and a child could place them in terror*. The punishment which Isaiah had prophesied for the house of Jacob was fulfilled to the letter: 'Thou shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust.'³

Until the end of the twentieth century, most historians took the narrative of Jewish martyrdom tolerated with serene acquiescence for granted. This narrative seems to derive from two primary sources. One of them is the collective Jewish historical memory, based on the works of twelfth-century synagogue poets chanting about blood libels and pogroms.⁴ A striking example is Judah Halevi, "the greatest neo-Hebraic poet,"⁵ apparently a source for Graetz. Although Halevi was Sephardic and never lived under Christian

2 Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1902), III:347–48.

3 Ibid., III:512.

4 Ivan G. Marcus, 'A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz', in *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York: Schocken Books, 2002), 451–52.

5 Graetz, *History of the Jews*, 1902, III:347.

rule, he contrasts East with West, where even pleasure is pain and tranquillity is a torment because Jewry (Zion) is kept prisoner by Christianity (Edom):

My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West
How can I taste the food I eat, could it bring me any rest?
The vows and oaths I've sworn, can I heed them as I must
When Zion's bound with Christian rope and I with Arab chains?
It seems as easy in my eyes to leave the charms of Spain,
As precious as my eyes would find the ruined Temple's dust.⁶

The same attitude appears in the description of the also twelfth-century Sephardic traveller Benjamin of Tudela. Starting from northern Spain, he travelled southern Europe and the Middle East and wrote the following in his description of Constantinople:

So the Greeks hate the Jews, good and bad alike, and subject them to great oppression, and beat them in the streets, and in every way treat them with rigour. Yet the Jews are rich and good, kindly and charitable, and bear their lot with cheerfulness.⁷

The result is a narrative in which Gentiles are on the offensive and Jews are on the defensive. Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson has an entire chapter on this topic in *A History of the Jewish People* titled “Effects of Religious Animosity on the Jews,”⁸ and according to Paul Johnson,

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- 6 Yehuda ha-Levi, ‘Libi Ve-Mizrah’, *Soul and Gone*, accessed 16 March 2019, <http://www.soulandgone.com/2012/11/05/libi-ve-mizrah/>. The opposition of east (*mizrah*) and west (*ma'arav*) echoes Psalms 103:12: “as far as the east is from the west (*kirḥok mizrah mimma'arav*), so far he removes our transgressions from us” (NRSV), by which Halevi puts diaspora life into the context of God's wrath and forgiveness, and of Israel's sins. According to the literary critic Vivian Eden, the poet describes the state of *anhedonia*, where he is unable to experience pleasure and blames it on external circumstances – the current political situation. The only way out from his unhappiness into happiness would be to leave the materially bountiful but spiritually depressing Spain for something that is materially depleted but spiritually invigorating, i.e. the ruins of the Temple in Jerusalem, even if a mosque has been dominating the site for about 500 years. Interestingly, Eden interprets the line “Zion in Edom's ropes” (*Tziyon beḥevel 'Edom*) as Jerusalem being in the hands of the Bedouin. (Vivian Eden, ‘Longing for Zion, as Clinical Depression’, *Haaretz*, 2 June 2015, <https://www.haaretz.com/life/books/longing-for-zion-as-depression-1.5368068>.)
- 7 Marcus Nathan Adler, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: Critical Text, Translation And Commentary* (London: Henry Frowde, 1907), 14.
- 8 Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

one can see medieval Judaism as essentially a system designed to hold Jewish communities together in the face of many perils: economic disaster, plague, arbitrary rule, above all the assault of two great imperialist religions. [...] They had renounced resistance by force in the second century, and did not resume it until the twentieth in Palestine.⁹

Discussing the Jewish reactions to the Rhineland massacres, Léon Poliakov argues that medieval Jews chose “a purely passive resistance” of a firmness never seen before in history.¹⁰ Their accumulated adrenaline was transmuted into “Jewish professions” related to money, an escape from reality into zealous Torah study and popular superstitions taken over from Christians.¹¹ Concerning Polish antisemitism, Poliakov also counts “absolute disdain for physical exercise and prowess” among specific Jewish characteristics, and it seems he endorses the Polish proverb “as useful as a sword to the Jew.”¹²

However, as Norman Roth observes, the traditional narrative of the continual oppression of persecution of the Jews “has nothing to do with the medieval experience” but seems to derive from the fact that from the late Middle Ages to the Holocaust, Ashkenazic Jews mostly lived in physical, linguistic and religious segregation from the Christian society.¹³ According to Daniel Lasker, this narrative is comfortable because it supports the traditional Jewish self-image that, on the one hand, Jews are tolerant towards other religions in lack of provocation¹⁴ and on the other hand, they are passive victims of Christian violence. Lasker highlights that it is distressing for “today’s Jewish apologists” to conceive that their ancestors could have

University Press, 1976), 403–20. Norman Roth argues that as a representative of the Zionist ideology, Ben-Sasson is interested in stressing that “Jews can only live a normal existence in their ancestral homeland, and consequently the entire history of the Jews in the Diaspora was one of persecution and intolerance.” (Norman Roth, *Daily Life of the Jews in the Middle Ages* (Westport, CT / London: Greenwood Press, 2005), 181.)

9 Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 199.

10 Which, if true, would be a polemical internalization of Jesus’ teachings about how to “exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the pharisees” by turning the other cheek “if anyone strikes you on the right cheek” (Matthew 5:20, 38).

11 Léon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism. Volume One: From the Time of Christ to the Court Jews*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1965), 87–88, 90.

12 Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism*, 254.

13 Roth, *Daily Life of the Jews in the Middle Ages*, 180; Robert Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 194.

14 See also: Jeremy Cohen, ‘Medieval Jews on Christianity: Polemical Strategies and Theological Defense’, in *Interwoven Destinies: Jews and Christians through the Ages*, ed. Eugene J. Fisher (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 80.

polemized offensively as well against Christianity.¹⁵ However, today we live in a “post-polemic” age when religious debates have been replaced mainly by dialogue. Therefore, it is easier to conduct a less emotional and intellectually more profound discussion of difficult questions, and we might question the traditional narrative for a historically more accurate description.¹⁶

In this paper, I wish to examine the everyday relations between Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages, Jewish hate speech and real or imagined violence against Christians in light of the Christian hate speech against the Jews and seek the reasons for such a language, and why we still might find Jewish hate speech more shocking than the Christian one.

Amicable everyday relations vs hate speech

As a background, we can be more attentive to evidence from all across medieval Western Europe, including England, France, Italy and Spain.¹⁷ They testify amicable relations between Jews and Christians, who were neighbours, business partners, often friends, and even criminal accessories.¹⁸ Robert Chazan highlights that “the specific focus of the decree [of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215] on sexual intimacy suggests the most intense human contact.”¹⁹ Also, we have evidence of how closely the Jews knew Christian society and its power relations, customs and religious symbols,²⁰ and how interested they were in

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- 15 Daniel J. Lasker, ‘The Jewish Critique of Christianity: In Search of a New Narrative’, *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 6, no. 1 (2011): 4.
 - 16 Israel Jacob Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb – Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. Barbara Harshav and Jonathan Chipman (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 21.
 - 17 Jonathan Elukin, *Living Together, Living Apart: Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 75–76; 88.
 - 18 In 1272, a Cambridge Jew organized a gang of Christians and drove away the cattle and sheep of one of his debtors and gave them back only when the debt was settled. In Lincoln, two Jews and two Christians broke into a barn and stole a large number of fish, which they hid in the house of a Jewish couple. In 1286, in Norfolk, Jews and Christians looted churches together to such an extent that king Edward I himself had to deal with the situation. (Robert Mundill, *The King’s Jews – Money, Massacre and Exodus in Medieval England* (London / New York: Continuum, 2010), 119–20.)
 - 19 Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 184–85. It seems that from the antiquity until the Fourth Lateran Council, Jews were indistinguishable from the general population, see Shaye J.D. Cohen, “‘Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not’: How Do You Know a Jew in Antiquity When You See One?’, in *Diasporas in Antiquity*, ed. Shaye J.D. Cohen and Ernest S. Frerichs, *Brown Judaic Studies* 288 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 1–45.
 - 20 Marcus, ‘A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz’, 461.

medieval Christian culture. For example, they read romances the same way as Christians did: a version of King Arthur's legends was translated into medieval Hebrew in 1279,²¹ and in the 14th century, Rabbi Immanuel ben Jacob Bonfils, a French Jewish physician, mathematician and astronomer, translated the legend of Alexander into Hebrew from Latin.²² Jews also had their own version of Aesop's fables adapted by Berechiah ben Natronai Krespia ha-Nakdan with the title *Mishley Shu'alim* (Fox Tales). Besides translations, they also wrote their own romances modelled on Christian ones.²³

It is also clearly visible from the chronicles bearing witness to the pogroms and blood libels that their authors could distinguish between hostile and amicable Christians despite their basically negative attitude. For example, the Hebrew chronicles of the Rhineland pogroms use pejorative terms, sometimes taken from the Bible, for hostile Crusaders. Still, they use neutral expressions for burghers and villagers helping them. What is more, in the chronicles of the Blois blood libel of 1171, the phrase "Christian friends" (Hebrew: *ha-goyim ha-ohaveyhem*, "the Gentiles that love them") appears²⁴. Also, the Hebrew chronicles of the pogroms of the first Crusade of 1096 attest that the Jews realized that the atrocities they suffered were caused by external provocation, without which the burghers would not have turned against them. For example, we find the following in the account of the events in Mainz (*italics mine*):

The enemy Emicho made an announcement to the citizenry that they surrender and remove the enemy [the Jews] from the city. [...] *Then* all the gentiles gathered against the Jews in the courtyard, in order to destroy them totally.²⁵

21 Marcus, 'A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz', 486–88. See also: Curt Leviant, ed., *King Artus: A Hebrew Arthurian Romance of 1279*, trans. Curt Leviant (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

22 Richard Gottheil and Isaac Broydé, 'BONFILS, IMMANUEL BEN JACOB', JewishEncyclopedia.com, accessed 21 June 2019, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/3530-bonfils-immanuel-ben-jacob>; Immanuel ben Jacob Bonfils, *The Book of the Gestes of Alexander of Macedon. Sefer Toledot Alexandros Ha-Makdoni: A Mediaeval Hebrew Version of the Alexander Romance.*, ed. and trans. Israel J. Kazis (Cambridge, MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1962).

23 Norman Roth, ed., *Medieval Jewish Civilization: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 407–8.

24 Marc Saperstein and Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Jews in Christian Europe: A Source Book, 315–1791* (Pittsburgh, PA: Hebrew Union College Press & University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015), 94; Abraham M. Haberman, ed., *Sefer Gezerot Ashkenaz Ve-Tzarfat – Divrey Zihronot Mivney Ha-Dorot Sheba-Thufat* (Jerusalem: Sifrey Tarshish, 1945), 125 (קכה).

25 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 253. Chazan highlights that in the chron-

In Cologne, the Jews found refuge from the attacks in the homes of their Christian neighbours during the festival of Weeks (Shavuot, the Jewish counterpart of the Christian Pentecost):

It came to pass on the fifth of Sivan, on the eve of Shavuot, that the report reached the city of Cologne, a lovely city which had hosted the ingathered flock, in which had collected the ingathered flock. [...] When they heard that the [Jewish] communities had been killed, they all fled to gentile acquaintances. They remained there for the two days of Shavuot.²⁶

Also, Robert Chazan highlights that the same narratives that detail the persecution offer evidence that before the pogroms, Jews and Christians lived in a warm and caring relationship with each other; the burghers even killed a Crusader to protect the Jews.²⁷ Jews were also emotionally attached to the localities where they lived. The 1096 Chronicle calls Cologne “a lovely city which had hosted the ingathered flock, in which had collected the ingathered flock” (sic),²⁸ and according to Jonathan Elukin, they did not wish the diaspora to end.²⁹ Also, Norman Roth notes that if the conditions had been intolerable for the Jews, they could easily have moved to Muslim lands.³⁰

At the same time, the Ashkenazic Jewry’s documents, for the most part, show a hostile rejection of the Christian majority society. Their Hebrew language is characterized by pejorative, often vulgar expressions for the elements of the Christian religion. Besides liturgical texts and polemical works, the denigration of Christianity also permeates more “neutral” texts such as prayers, rabbinic responsa (written decisions of rabbis in response to questions addressed to them), business documents and chronicles.³¹ According to Anna Sapir Abulafia, these expressions were an integral part of the medieval Hebrew language and a common characteristic of Jewish

icles we have a description of an organized military operation, not just the outbreak of some random violence (Ibid., 59).

26 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 273–74.

27 Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 187.

28 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 273.

29 Elukin, *Living Together, Living Apart*, 83.

30 Roth, *Daily Life of the Jews in the Middle Ages*, 209.

31 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 33–34; Marcus, ‘A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz’, 470; Lasker, ‘The Jewish Critique of Christianity: In Search of a New Narrative’, 6.

literary works.³² We do not know how they called the Christian symbols in the medieval local vernaculars³³, but it seems that there were no other expressions available for them in the Hebrew language.³⁴ Medieval Hebrew texts often depict Jewish physical and verbal violence against Christians and display a vindictive messianism envisioning Gentiles' extermination as opposed to the more peaceful, "converting" messianism, apparently more characteristic of the Sephardim.³⁵

Before examining these expressions, we must bear in mind that political correctness and the tolerance of people and communities of other faiths and customs did not even exist as a mere concept in the premodern age. When it appeared, it was probably deemed a weakness, even disloyalty to God and Christianity, a partaking in the infidel's sin, and a subversion of the society. Luther labels "weak Christians" even those who stop to dispute with the Jews.³⁶ Therefore, in medieval public discourse, what we today consider

32 Anna Sapir Abulafia, 'Invectives against Christianity in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade', in *Crusade and Settlement. Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East and Presented to R. C. Smail*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff: University College Cardiff Press, 1985), 67.

33 One late piece of written testimony might be the short story titled *The Carnival Legend* (*In a karneval nakht* (איין א קארנעוואל נאכט)) by Sholem Asch, published in Yiddish in 1909, where the cross is *kreytz* (קרײץ), the sermon of the preacher is *drashot fun di prediger* (הייליגער דרשות פון די פרעדיגער) and St. Peter's Cathedral is *heyliker Petrus-kirche* (פעטרוס־קירכע) (Sholem Asch, *Children of Abraham: The Short Stories of Sholem Asch*. (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 63–65., Sholem Asch, *Gezamelte Shriften*, vol. 6 (New York: Shalom Ash Komite, 1923), 167, 170.) However, the text is from the early twentieth century, and the author wishes to present Jesus in a sympathetic manner so does not use denigrating vocabulary, if there was any. An example for a vernacular invective cited by Matthew Hoffman is the popular Yiddish name for Jesus as *Yoyzl Pandrek*. The surname is a distortion of *Pandera*, Jesus' alleged Roman father in the Talmud. It also means "Mr. Shit" in a mixed Slavic-Yiddish language, alluding to the boiling excrement where Jesus is being punished for his sins according to the Talmud, and to the medieval Jewish superstition about him that he haunts the latrines in Christmas time (Matthew Hoffman, *From Rebel to Rabbi: Reclaiming Jesus and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2007), 5; R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1903), 37–41; 67–71; Marc Shapiro, 'Torah Study on Christmas Eve', *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, no. 8 (1999): 334; Peter Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 13.)

34 Sapir Abulafia, 'Invectives against Christianity in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade', 67. Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (London / New York: Routledge, 1995), 70–71. Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 220.

35 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb – Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, 94–95.

36 Martin Luther, 'On the Jews and Their Lies', in *Luther's Works*, ed. Franklin Sherman, trans. Martin H. Bertram, vol. 47 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 177. See also pages 272–281.

shocking hate speech was routinely used against anyone who was of a different faith or appeared to be threatening, be they Jewish, Cathar, Waldensian, Muslim or Mongol.³⁷ Both Christianity and Jewry considered themselves the trustees of absolute theological truth, and their adherents mutually despised each other's faith. The leaders of both communities consciously encouraged enmity, and often articulated, from today's perspective, invectives and hate speech against the other. On the Christian side, we find the extreme anti-Jewish outbursts of John Chrysostom and Martin Luther, as well as the accusations of deicide, well-poisoning, cannibalism, the desecration of the host, and blood libels. They accused the Jews of trespassing exactly those commandments of the Torah which they revered the most.

In *Contra Iudaeos* by Saint John Chrysostom, Jews are represented as rejected, dishonoured, and condemned (I.III.7) effeminate, a great rubbish heap of harlots (I:I:7), delirious, raving mad charlatans (II: lost part), “the most miserable and wretched of all men” (IV:I:1), beasts that are unfit for work but fit for killing (I:II:6). For Chrysostom, the synagogue is a brothel, a den of robbers, a lodging for wild beasts, a dwelling place of demons (I:III:1), a ridiculous and disgraceful place of idolatry (I.III:3, 7). In general. “demons dwell in the very souls of the Jews and in places in which they gather” (II:III:5).³⁸

In his treatise titled *On the Jews and Their Lies*, published in 1543, Martin Luther even offers an *Endlösung* for these “rejected and condemned people.” He recommends that “their synagogues and schools” be set on fire; “their houses be razed and destroyed;” “all their prayer books and Talmudic writings be taken from them;” “their rabbis be forbidden to teach;” all Jews be deprived of free movement; all their money and treasure be confiscated from them; and they be abased to forced labour, and finally be expelled from the country

to their land and possessions in Jerusalem, where they may lie, curse, blaspheme, defame, murder, steal, rob, practice usury, mock, and indulge in all those infamous abominations which they practice among us, and leave our government, our country, our life and our property; much more leave our Lord the Messiah, our faith, and our church undefiled and uncontaminated with their devilish tyranny and malice.³⁹

37 Elukin, *Living Together, Living Apart*, 92–93.

38 Saint John Chrysostom, ‘Eight Orations Against Judaizing Christians’, Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations, accessed 17 March 2019, <https://www.ccrj.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/chrysostom>.

39 Luther, ‘On the Jews and Their Lies’, 268–76.

Contrary to the Christians, Jews knew that it is dangerous to act and speak openly disrespectfully against the majority culture. Even private articulation of anti-Christian sentiment could be hazardous.⁴⁰ However, it does not mean they did not have their own hate speech. It is mostly the elements of the Christian religion that the Medieval Hebrew language depicts in pejorative, often vulgar expressions, with some exceptions denoting people such as “priest” (כומר), “nun” (כומרת),⁴¹ “archbishop” (הגמון) and “pope” (הפפיום). Below are some graphic examples from the chronicles of the 1096 Rhineland pogroms, which use extremely denigrating vocabulary, especially for Jesus, because the entire Crusade leading to the massacre or forced conversion of the Jews was initiated in his name:⁴²

Baptism	צחן	getting stunk
Baptismal water	מי צחנה	stenching water
Christianity	תעתוע	deceit, delusion
	אדום הרשעה	the wicked Edom
	רומי הרשעה	the wicked Rome
Crusaders	תועים	errants
	ערלים הטמאים	unclean uncircumcised
Jesus	נצר נטעב	disgusting offshoot
	בן הנידה	son of the menstruant
	בן הזימה	son of lust
	פגר מובס	trampled corpse
	השיקוץ שלהם	their abomination
	התלוי המחולל והמשוקץ	the defiled and detestable hangee
	The Pope	השטן

40 Robert Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity in Medieval Western Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 282.

41 These are neutral terms used for non-Jewish priests and priestesses, see paragraphs 202, 242, 259, 260, 261, 262, 402, 811, 1348, 1349, 1359, 1809 of the Parma Manuscript (‘Sefer Hasidim Manuscript Browser’, accessed 11 July 2019, https://etc.princeton.edu/sefer_hasidim/manuscripts.php.)

42 Sapir Abulafia, ‘Invectives against Christianity in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade’, 66. See also Haberman, *Sefer Gezerot Ashkenaz Ve-Tzarfat*, 24-60 (כד-ט).

Sometimes wordplays appear; for example, the twelfth or thirteenth century *Book of Hasidim* uses the Hebrew word *tiflah*, meaning abomination, for Christian prayer, twisting *tfilah*, the Hebrew word for “prayer.” Other examples from the *Book of Hasidim*:⁴³

Christian book	ספר פסול	invalid book
Christian prayer	תיפלה	abomination (תפילה = prayer)
Christians	ערלים	uncircumcised
	תועים	errants
Church building	בית תיפלה	house of the abominable prayer
	בית תרופותם	the house of their idols
	בית תועבותם	the house of their errors
Church singers	מנבחים	barkers
Church songs	נביחות	barkings
Holy Sepulchre	שוחה	pit
Jesus	פגר	corpse
	צלם	idol, image

In the thirteenth century, we encounter expressly vulgar wordplays in the apologetic work titled *Sefer Nitzahon Yashan* or *Nizzahon Vetus*. The Gospel is “sinful writing” (*avon gilayon*), Mary is *Harya*, which means “stool” in Aramaic, and Saint Peter is *peter hamor*, the firstling of the ass, which, according to Exodus 34:20, must either be redeemed or its neck broken. Here, Jesus has the much less vulgar but still pejorative designation *oto ha-ish*, “that man,” treating him like Voldemort, “He Who Must Not Be Named,” in Harry Potter. Examples from this book:⁴⁴

Cathedral	תהום	abyss
Good Friday	יום השישי מקולל	accursed Friday
Gospel	עוון-גיליון	sinful writing

43 Parma 3280 H Manuscript, paragraphs 35, 63, 131, 193, 201, 224, 250, 272, 305, 402, 420, 465, 668, 681, 682, 756, 815, 816, 826, 953, 1004, 1084, 1348, 1349, 1350, 1351, 1352, 1355, 1359, 1361, 1436, 1514, 1531, 1646, 1651, 1791, 1862, 1878, 1925, 1967 (*Sefer Hasidim Manuscript Browser*.)

44 For a full list, see Mordechai Breuer, ed., *Sefer Nitzahon Yashan: Sefer Vikuah Neged Notzrim* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1978), 195.

Holy Ghost	רוח הטומאה	spirit of impurity
Jesus	אותו האיש	that certain man
Priests	גלחים	shaved ones
Sacramental bread, host	לחם מגואל	defiled bread
Saint Peter	פטר חמור	the firstling of the ass
Virgin Mary	חריה	stool

Jewish violence against Christians

According to Heinrich Graetz, such harsh language was the only weapon Jews were able to use against Christianity:

“Nothing now remained for the Jews of Christian countries but to take up the weapons of mockery; they accordingly made merry over their enemies behind their backs, which has everywhere and at all times been the manner in which the weaker party has attempted to lighten its burdens. At times also they made use of coarse jokes to express their feelings with regard to Christianity.”⁴⁵

However, medieval Ashkenazi texts often depict physical violence against Christians as well, especially in the 1096 Chronicles. In Mainz, for example, Jews led by Rabbi Kalonymous ben Rabbi Meshullam donned armour, took weapons, and clashed with the Crusaders. When they were defeated because they were exhausted from fasting, they fled to the courtyard of the archbishop’s palace, took up arms again and fought with the Crusaders, joined by the burghers, whom Emicho of Leiningen had called to extradite the Jews. By that time, archbishop Ruthard and his men had already fled because the Crusaders sought to kill him as well for standing up for the Jews, so the Crusaders and the burghers freely entered the courtyard, where they massacred the Jews. However, the Jews stoned a Crusader to death because the attackers had torn a Torah scroll apart.⁴⁶

The aforementioned Rabbi Kalonymous survived the bloodbath and, with several other Jews, got to Rüdeshheim, a village where the archbishop had fled. Ruthard was happy to see him and told him that he could not save him and his friends unless they would be baptized. Kalonymous asked for time to

45 Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1893), II:620.

46 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 252–53, 260.

think, returned to his fellows, and killed his son to save him from becoming Christian. When the archbishop learned this, he became so enraged that he was no longer willing to help the Jews. Kalonymous planned to assassinate the archbishop but his plan was compromised, and the archbishop’s men killed him together with several other Jews. In response, Rabbi Senior, another leader of the Jewish community, murdered a Christian, and as a reaction, the villagers lynched him.⁴⁷ Later, the Chronicle tells that a prince rushed to the Jews’ relief in an unnamed city with one thousand horsemen, and five hundred Jews armed with swords joined them. The army defeated the Crusaders and the burghers, and only six Jews were killed; it is not clear from the text whether from among the prince’s army or the community for which they fought.⁴⁸

There are other reports of physical violence on the Jews’ part against Christians. In the Hebrew chronicle on the ritual murder accusation at Blois in 1171, published in *A Book of Historical Records (Sepher zekhirah)* by Ephraim ben Jacob of Bonn, we read that thirty-three Jews were condemned to be burnt in a wooden house. However, the fire snapped the cords around the hands of two prominent rabbis, who started to struggle to get out and almost managed to drag a Christian with them into the burning house, but they were rescued.⁴⁹ Israel Jacob Yuval mentions two more events of this kind. In a text titled *Miraculous Deeds (Ma’asey Nissim)*, published in Worms in the seventeenth-century, we read that the Jewish community was accused of well-poisoning during the plague of 1349. Its leaders appeared before the city council with daggers hidden in their clothes. When the death sentence was pronounced, they attacked the council members and killed several of them. A similar event is depicted in a sixteenth-century work titled *Scepter of Judah (Shevet Yehudah)* by Salomon ibn Verga.⁵⁰

According to Robert Chazan, these reports are “somewhat suspect”, but they apparently show that there were rumours about armed Jewish resistance against the pogroms, and we can be sure that there were situations when Jews took arms to protect their lives.⁵¹ Concerning this, Ivan Marcus claims that the chronicles, composed a generation after the events, tell more about their authors’ cultural

47 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 269–70.

48 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 294.

49 Saperstein and Marcus, *The Jews in Christian Europe: A Source Book*, 92, 95.

50 Israel Jacob Yuval, “‘They Tell Lies: You Ate the Man’: Jewish Reactions to Ritual Murder Accusations”, in *Religious Violence between Christians and Jews: Medieval Roots, Modern Perspectives*, ed. Anna Sapir Abulafia (London / New York: Palgrave, 2002), 87.

51 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 98–99, 294.

self-perception than the actual events.⁵² According to Israel Jacob Yuval, the martyrology of the stories is an identity-building “counternarrative.”⁵³ Although the heroism of the Jewish characters of the pogroms might be exaggerated, the texts show at any rate that in the twelfth century, there were Jews who at least considered using physical violence against persecution, and they disseminated this idea in popular works.⁵⁴ All this raises whether Ashkenazic Jews truly lived under such oppression as we traditionally think and whether they genuinely tolerated their persecution as passive martyrs.

Besides physical violence, the documents report verbal abuse as well. One form of it is when Jews insult Christians and openly tell them what they think of them. The aforementioned David ben Rabbi Nathaniel launches a verbal attack on the Crusaders, thus provoking his own and his family’s martyrdom. No wonder the Crusaders became enraged at his words because he said the following according to the Chronicle:

You are the children of lust. You believe in a deity who was a bastard and was crucified. [...] I know the truth. If you kill me, my soul will reside in paradise, in the light of life. But ‘you will descend to the nethermost pit,’ ‘to everlasting abhorrence.’⁵⁵ In hell you shall be judged along with your deity and in boiling excrement, for he is the son of a harlot.⁵⁶

Besides, the chronicles also display the vindictive messianism more characteristic to Ashkenazim, according to which the Messiah, upon his coming, will exterminate the Gentiles and leave only Israel alive.⁵⁷ The 1096 chronicles contain the following concerning this vindictive messianism, invoking God’s wrath against the crusaders using a curse against God’s enemies from Psalms 79:6-7:

52 Marcus, ‘A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz’, 467.

53 Yuval, “‘They Tell Lies: You Ate the Man’: Jewish Reactions to Ritual Murder Accusations”, 99.

54 Concerning the bearing of arms by medieval Jews, see Markus J. Wenninger, ‘Bearing and Use of Weapons by Jews in the (Late) Middle Ages’, *Jewish Studies* 41 (2002): 83–92.

55 The text seems to be purposefully citing from Psalms 55:24 and Daniel 12:3, both interpreted in Christianity as referring to Christ’s anguish before his execution and his glorious victory over his enemies.

56 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 262.

57 Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 94–95. Per Yuval, it is in contrast to the more peaceful, converting messianism characteristic to Sephardim, which says that upon the advent of the Messiah, Jews will have a theological victory: Gentiles will become convinced that Judaism has always been the true religion, and they will convert to it.

Pour your fury on the nations that do not know you, upon the kingdoms that do not invoke your Name. May he give us our vengeance in our hands. [...] Requite their deeds upon them as they did to us. [...] May he deliver us from this exile under wicked Edom speedily in our days. May our true messiah arrive. Amen—speedily in our days.⁵⁸

In the liturgy, the cursing of the Gentiles appears even more forcefully. The very same scriptural text, with which the author of the 1096 Chronicles cries for divine vengeance against the Christians, is part of the Passover Haggadah down to this day, combined with Psalms 69:25 and Lamentations 3:66:

Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not acknowledge You, and upon the kingdoms that do not call upon Your Name. For they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his habitation. Pour out Your indignation upon them, and let the wrath of Your anger overtake them. Pursue them with anger, and destroy them from beneath the heavens of GOD.⁵⁹

Behind the invectives and the violence

Therefore, the documents give rise to a more differentiated narrative, according to which there indeed existed a permanent intention to oppress Jews on Christianity’s part. It manifested itself in pogroms and expulsions from time to time, and against which, although Jews held that the revenge would come in the messianic age,⁶⁰ the idea of armed resistance appears to have surfaced. However, on the other hand, Christian Europe offered financially favourable opportunities to the Jews, who relocated there and developed good relations with ecclesiastical and secular authorities and, in everyday life, the population.⁶¹ Therefore, we can imagine a fundamentally liveable environment, which, in peaceful times, did not differ very much from today’s world.

If everyday life was relatively tolerable and positive relationships developed between Jews and Gentiles, what can be the background of the

58 Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*, 272–73.

59 Rabbi Jacob Immanuel Schochet, trans., *Haggadah Shel Pesach: Haggadah for Passover* (New York: Merkos L’Inyonei Chinuch, 2019), 51.

60 Yuval, “‘They Tell Lies: You Ate the Man’: Jewish Reactions to Ritual Murder Accusations,” 84.

61 Marcus, ‘A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz’, 450; Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 5; Stephen Sharot, *Comparative Perspectives on Judaism and Jewish Identities* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2011), 30–32.

ambivalent attitude towards Christians? What could be the purpose of the extremely offensive language, which amounts to hate speech today? Upon examining the situation more closely, the emerging picture shows that Jewry was closely connected to Christian society via several threads in the Middle Ages. They regarded their environment as basically sinful but considered its cultural achievements and business opportunities extremely attractive and realized that their subsistence depended on the Gentiles in many respects.⁶² The Jews were aware that, although it would be desirable, total segregation is impossible, and they are unable to observe even the most rudimentary Talmudic precepts concerning it. The Jewish communities in Babylonia and the Holy Land, where the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmuds (Bavli and Yerushalmi) developed, were of a sufficiently high number to be self-sufficient, but that can hardly be said about medieval Europe where Jewish communities were small.⁶³

However, the dominant religious culture presented a constant theological challenge for the Jewry because of its doctrines incompatible with Judaism (e.g. the Holy Trinity, the original sin, the Torah's invalidity, the collective damnation of the Jews) on the one hand. On the other hand, it appropriated sanctums regarded as unalienable from Judaism (the name "Israel," Israel's God, the patriarchs, the Hebrew Bible, the prophetic promises regarding Israel and the concept of the Messiah), whereby it threatened Jewish identity.⁶⁴ In this understanding, the aggressive Hebrew rhetoric aimed to set the medieval Jews' attitude towards the Christian world surrounding them. Acting as a kind of "linguistic vaccine," it reduced the assimilation pull arising from the cultural dominance of the Christian religion and society. Also, it made the permanent anti-Judaistic Christian attitude and the persecutions flaring up from time to time tolerable. Thus, the Ashkenazic communities were able to survive critical and peaceful times alike, and as a result, the world's largest Jewish community could emerge.⁶⁵ In Robert Chazan's words,

"it is immediately puzzling that the Jewish population of medieval Christian Europe – allegedly the most hostile of all the environments Jews have

62 Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 5–6; Sharot, *Comparative Perspectives on Judaism and Jewish Identities*, 19.

63 Marcus, 'A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz', 450–51; Sharot, *Comparative Perspectives on Judaism and Jewish Identities*, 19.

64 Lasker, 'The Jewish Critique of Christianity: In Search of a New Narrative', 7–8.

65 Sapir Abulafia, 'Invectives against Christianity in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade', 66–70.

encountered – should have grown steadily throughout the period between 1000 and 1500, laying the foundation for what became the largest Jewish community in the world. Were the Christian population of medieval Europe implacably hostile to Jews and were violence in fact a constant of Jewish life, it would be difficult indeed to account for the ongoing Jewish population growth.”⁶⁶

Chazan accepts the data published by the historian Salo Baron in 1928, according to whom the number of Ashkenazic Jewry grew from 650,000 in 1650 to 8.5 million in 1900, which is a 13-fold increase, while the general population of Europe grew from 100 million to 400 million during the same period, a 4-fold increase.

That is, the Jewish rate of increase from 1650 down to the beginning of the twentieth century (when the mass of Jewry was still unemancipated) was three times the rate of Gentile increase. Furthermore, in the same period European Jewry built the great American center.⁶⁷

The growth of a population is, evidently, the interaction of several factors. However, according to Chazan, “Steady Jewish population growth should at least raise some doubts about the widely purveyed sense of intense and constant anti-Jewish violence during the course of the European Middle Ages.”⁶⁸

Why we might find this shocking

In the Introduction to *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, Susannah Heschel analyses why Geiger’s representation of Jesus as a Pharisaic Jew infuriated nineteenth-century German theologians. She draws on the analogy of the painting *Olympia* by Édouard Manet, which was scandalous not because the woman depicted in the picture is nude⁶⁹ but because Manet

66 Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 158.

67 Salo Baron, ‘Ghetto and Emancipation: Shall We Revise the Traditional View?’, *The Menorah Journal* 14 (1928): 521. Baron is arguing against the understanding that became popular upon Graetz’s influence, according to which the French revolution and the emancipation brought redemption from the horrifying nightmares of the Jews, who had been vegetating in extremely miserable conditions due to a permanent persecution.

68 Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe*, 159.

69 As Heschel observes, it was nothing more than a reworking of *Venus of Urbino* by Titian.

“reversed the gaze.” The nude woman stares out at the viewers, “a posture that appeared in the 1860s to be insolent and uncivilized.” Heschel argues that “Geiger’s arguments touched a raw Christian nerve” because he wrote about Jesus “from an explicitly Jewish perspective”, and this “daring reversal of the usual theological gaze” was a “rebellious effort,” “a revolt of the colonized [...] against Christianity’s intellectual hegemony.”⁷⁰ Heschel argues that the traditional behaviour of Christianity is that of the “theological colonizer:”

The theological relationship of Christianity toward Judaism had been, since the first century, one of annexation, subjugation, and control of Jewish scriptures and central religious ideas.⁷¹

Paula Fredriksen, a Jewish scholar of early Christianity and the historical Jesus, complains that hidden Christian anti-Judaism and supersessionism still prevail in Christianity. One of its striking examples happened to her at a conference of the Society of Biblical Literature in the early nineties. Fredriksen strongly questions the historicity of the report in the synoptic gospels that the “cleansing of the Temple” by Jesus would have infuriated the Jewish religious leaders to such an extent that they had Jesus crucified by Pilate.⁷² She accepts John’s chronology, according to which Jesus was in Jerusalem several times,⁷³ based on which she assumes that Pilate and the religious leaders knew Jesus well and were very much aware that he had been a harmless apocalyptic preacher. With the crucifixion, per Fredriksen’s theory, Pilate simply wanted to set an example for the Passover masses who were in a heightened mood of waiting for the Messiah (possibly originated from Jesus himself), thus preventing a riot from breaking out. Fredriksen starts from the anomaly that crucifixion was the punishment of political insurgents, but Jesus’ followers were not crucified; what is more, the early Christian community moved its headquarters from Galilee to Jerusalem, where they existed untroubled by the Roman authorities for decades.⁷⁴ When

70 Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 1–3. See also: Susannah Heschel, ‘Revolt of the Colonized: Abraham Geiger’s Wissenschaft Des Judentums as a Challenge to Christian Hegemony in the Academy’, *New German Critique*, no. 77: Special Issue on German-Jewish Religious Thought (1999): 61–85.

71 Heschel, ‘Revolt of the Colonized’, 61.

72 Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47

73 John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 10:22; 12:12

74 See Paula Fredriksen, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews: A Jewish Life and the Emergence*

Fredriksen presented her arguments at the conference, the first question she received from the scholars was "Are you saying then that the Jews did *not* kill Jesus?" (italics hers).⁷⁵

The situation of Jews in medieval Western Europe seems to be similar to that of African Americans at the time of slavery and the subsequent segregation. The African American feminist and social activist bell hooks (sic) reminds us that the power relations of white slave owners and black slaves denied black slaves the right to gaze, and slaves were regularly punished just for looking. Later, black men were often murdered or lynched only for looking at white women as though they had raped them. Since "there is power in looking," looks were seen as a kind of confrontation, resistance and challenge. Looking is perceived as dangerous because the looker can tell what they see, and "narration places the spectator in a position of agency." No wonder the right to look was an essential element of the black civil rights movement. In general, gaze has been the resistance of the colonized.⁷⁶

Telling how you see the other from your viewpoint can be considered an act of ultimate defiance because you communicate that your perspective is as valid as (or more valid than) the other party's. In a society where only subordinate relationships exist, especially between the majority and the minority, a medieval Jew who calls Jesus "a crucified bastard" challenges the view that Christianity is superior to the Jewish faith, thereby questions society's order. It is always upsetting when the oppressed looks into the oppressor's eyes and takes the courage to confront them squarely with their opinions. The anti-Christian language of medieval Ashkenazic Jews may sound more shocking than Chrysostom or Luther because the oppressed dares to look back and does not endure their oppression with patience.

Also, it might prove that, as opposed to the traditional narrative endorsed by Jews and Christians alike, there was no permanent oppression, and Jews felt, as Shaye Cohen notes, "secure enough to denounce Christianity in the strongest, most vituperative language. Not Jesus, nor his mother, nor

of Christianity (New York: Vintage, 2000).

75 Paula Fredriksen, 'What Does Jesus Have to Do with Christ? What Does Knowledge Have to Do with Faith? What Does History Have to Do with Theology?,' in *Christology: Memory, Inquiry, Practice*, ed. Anne M. Clifford and Anthony J. Godzieba, vol. 48, Annual Publication of the College Theology Society (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 4.

76 bell hooks, 'The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators,' in *Movies and Mass Culture*, ed. John Belton, Rutgers Depth of Field (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 248–50. hooks highlights that this "right to look" and its narrative power also gave rise to the independent black cinema.

his ancient followers nor the Catholic clergy escaped the most scathing rebuke.⁷⁷ Also, in critical times, Jews behaved just the same as Christians towards other faiths' representatives. From the fact that David ben Rabbi Nathaniel's tirades are from the Talmud and the *Toledot Yeshu* tradition,⁷⁸ we can assume that they were not random curses. It seems that kind of language was commonplace among Jews at the time.

Today otherness is a value to be respected, and Christian triumphalism and "religious colonialism" is by large of the past, at least on a conscious level and in intent. However, its remnants might be so strong in our thinking that we might find it unusual that a Jew, given the choice of death or conversion, does not look down and saves his back. Instead, with his head high and in awareness of his sure fate, he tells a fully armed Christian some truths and attacks the religious symbols, held most sacred by the culture having the upper hand. Apart from the myth of Jewish tolerance toward other religions, medieval Jewish hate speech might also be shocking because Christians got used to being the observer and not the observed. As it happened in both Geiger's and David ben Rabbi Nathaniel's case, the reversal of the gaze is an outright challenge to such a colonialist perspective.

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Reception of Sándor Imre in the Protestant Review¹

Introduction

After reviewing the relevant bibliography, it can be concluded that dealing with the work of Sándor Imre, a professor and a „cultural politician” following in the footsteps of István Széchenyi, has never been so topical. Since the start of his career at the turn of the 20th century, there has not been a decade when in pedagogical circles his doctrines were not discussed. The reception of his work was mostly positive, but the personal involvement of his reviewers, the valid public thinking, and the *Zeitgeist* always presented him in a different way. In this paper, the author examines Imre Sándor’s reception in contemporary press in order to arrive at the most objective judgment of his work. The variety of sources results in an inspiring, yet mosaic-like set, so the nature of this research carries risks, and sometimes overshadows the usual narrator about the educator. One of the branches of 20th century Hungarian educational science derives from Protestant theological roots. Protestant values have been, and still are, inherited and passed over by educators. Since this period (the beginning of 20st century) is of paramount importance for pedagogical research, we also emphasize how the importance of cultural memory, micro storytelling and source analysis has changed over time. The reception of works published by Sándor Imre in Protestant Review gives us insights into these changes. Our aim is to explore how the puritan character of Sándor Imre fit into the expectations of the once popular Protestant press in Hungary. Our research can also contribute to a more differentiated view of Sándor Imre’s pedagogical career.

Even before the turn of the century, the name of Sándor Imre was mentioned in the Protestant Review regarding his first scientific work, his doctoral dissertation on the life of a Hungarian pastor in Kassa (1898), and

1 Acknowledgements: This work was „supported by the ÚNKP-20-3 New National Excellence Program of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology from the Source of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund”.

as his career had progressed, writings about his work became more and more frequent.

The educational significance of Protestant traditions in the works of Sándor Imre

Max Weber starts his famous work *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* with following observation:

„A product of modern European civilization, studying any problem of universal history, is bound to ask himself to what combination of circumstances the fact should be attributed that in Western civilization, and in Western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which (as we like to think) lie in a line of development having universal significance and value.”²

Weber's position is that Protestant ethics, among other things, played an insignificant role in the formation of the capitalist economic system.

In our view, the statement is also valid in Hungary, given the local history, of course, but not in the way as in Western Europe. The protestant movement has had a significant impact on Hungarian cultural policy over the centuries and on teachers as well, but in a different way.³ According to Béla Pukánszky, without understanding the traditional human ideals of the Protestant religion, the ideas of Protestant educational theories are difficult to understand. Pukánszky also referred to Max Weber's work on sociology of religion as a point of reference for the outline of this Protestant human image, as a basis of his reference study:

„a virtuoso believer can assure his state of grace by being either a blood vessel or a tool of divine power. In the former case, he leans towards his religious life, towards the mystical emotional culture, in the latter case toward ascetic action. Luther is close to the former, Calvinism to the latter.”⁴

2 Max Weber, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1930), 1.

3 See more: Hegedűs, Lóránt, “Protestant Values – Protestant Education,” [Protestáns értékek – protestáns nevelés] in *Values and Schools* [Értékek és iskolák], ed. Ákos Komlóssy (Szeged: TIT, 1992), 59–90.

4 Béla Pukánszky, “Hungarian Educational Science – Protestant Pedagogical Traditions,” [Magyar neveléstudomány - Protestáns pedagógiai hagyományok.] in *Tradition and Renewal in Hungarian Education: Conferences on History of Education* [Hagyomány és megújulás a magyar oktatásban: neveléstörténeti konferenciák] ed. László Balogh (Budapest, Országos Pedagógiai Könyvtár és Múzeum, 2002.) 94.

A prominent representative of the Calvinist-Puritan ideal was János Apáczai Csere, a scholar from Transylvania, a forerunner of Hungarian education. The outstanding values of Apáczai Csere's work are mainly in his pedagogical ambitions. He is recognized as the first advocate of progressive Hungarian educational science, who, in his struggle with ignorance, fought both extraordinarily for the improvement of education, for the modern school system and for the recognition of the teaching profession.⁵

Sándor Imre may be mentioned as an admirer of János Apáczai Csere. Imre received his habilitation in the 1904/1905 school year. The appointment as a private tutor at the University of Kolozsvár was confirmed in 1910 teaching subjects on History of Hungarian Education. During this period, he gave a solemn speech at the VI. General Assembly in the Reformed College of Kolozsvár, on 23 May 1907, on the anniversary of the Institute's three hundred years of existence:

„I am impressed with the work of János Apáczai Csere, the first Hungarian teacher, who has remained among his disciples throughout his life. He was a true teacher, whose fragile body and miserable destiny did not prevent him from spiritual ascendance, for which the school wall was no barrier, the sunset did not mean a break in duty or his passing the end of the world.”⁶

As we mentioned, Sándor Imre wrote his doctoral dissertation on the life of Péter Alvinczi, a Hungarian pastor in Kassa. His dissertation appeared in print in Hódmezővásárhely at the end of the 19th century. Due to the thorough presentation of the life and work of the protestant pastor Péter Alvinczi, the significance of the dissertation in literary science and historical research is indisputable. In his work, Imre presented an extremely outspoken driven by principles personality that, served him in his career:

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- 5 See more: Sándor Iván Kovács ed.: *I think, therefore I am: Memory of János Apáczai Csere: A Selection of 350 Years of Literature on Apáczai: Presentations of the Budapest Conference Cogito ergo sum* (November 13, 2003) with translation of Apáczai's doctoral dissertation. [„Én gondolkodom, azért vagyok”: Apáczai Csere János emlékezete: válogatás 350 év Apáczai-irodalmából: a budapesti „Ego cogito ergo sum”-konferencia előadásai (2003. november 13.) Apáczai doktori értekezésének fordításával.] Budapest, 2004. Selected pedagogical texts of János Apáczai Csere [Apáczai Csere János válogatott pedagógiai művei.] Latin texts edited and translated by Lajos Orosz. (Budapest, MIT, 2003.)
- 6 Sándor Imre, *Apáczai Cseri János: Ceremonial 250th Anniversary Speech at Kolozsvár* [Apáczai Cseri János: ünnepi beszéd kolozsvári székhelyfoglalásának 250.] (Kolozsvár 1907.) 3. http://epa.oszk.hu/00900/00979/00175/pdf/1907_24_03_137-146.pdf

“We dealt with the writer and we returned to the politician, a concept that is always associated with pastors. [...] His entire life he fought, and for the adversary’s sake, due to the circumstances, this battle was a small success. The two leaders express the aspirations of their parties. Pázmány fought for the prerogatives of the Hungarian Catholic Church, while Alvinczi fought for the freedom of conscience of Hungarian Protestants. Pázmány’s ultimate goal was to revive the Roman Catholic Church, Alvinczi’s the political and spiritual freedom of the Hungarian nation. That is why Pázmány visited Vienna so many times and why Alvinczi resided in Kassa.”⁷

Imre Sándor’s first appearance in the Protestant Review can also be attributed to Péter Alvinczi, as Imre published interesting details of his life in the journal:

It is known that the famous teacher of Kassa „was not only troubled” by Peter Pázmány, but was confronted more than once by the members of his own denomination. In 1619, at the Parliament of Pozsony, Bishop János Kanizsai Pálfi from Transdanubia addressed him from the pulpit because he was giving the sacrament with a wafer and speaking the opposite of Calvin, so that at the end Alvinczi had to prove himself before Bethlen. This issue also appeared in print in 1622, entitled A Short Promise of the Lord’s Supper.

Earlier in 1614, Michael Bussaeus, a German pastor of the Church of Kassa, had continued the series of accusations. He complained Alvinczi did not wear an alba, did not keep the whispered confession, so he must be a Calvinist. The accusations from both sides naturally hurt Alvinczini. Being accused of „being Calvinist and at the same time Lutheran” offended him as in this classification he saw the disruption in Hungarian Protestant Church. Alvinczi has a clear purpose in all his actions and writings. In his debating papers and his political role played, as well as in ecclesiastical rhetoric and pastoral conduct, he serves the same purpose: to strengthen and secure the two Protestant churches, and thus the Hungarian homeland, against the Roman Catholic priesthood, that he considered the enemy of the country. At last, he did not see the struggle as sufficient, as the internal strengthening that would have occurred after the unification. It was a nice intention, but rather a huge task.”⁸

7 Imre, Sándor, “From the life of Peter Alvinczi” [Alvinczi Péter életéből]. *Protestant Review* [Protestáns szemle], no. 10. (1898), 515–525.

8 Imre, “From the life”, 515–525.

Until his death, Sándor Imre published several articles in the journal *Protestant Review*. As a respected author, his works were almost published; the two maybe most known were *Educational Aspects of the Pastoral Care*⁹ and *Protestant Spirit and Reconstruction*.¹⁰

In these studies the topic of national education well known from his pedagogical writings appeared. According to Imre, it is only from the educational side that the task of the church and its ministers can be judged correctly. The cultural intentions of the Protestant churches were not a starting point in his works, but natural consequences. In the widespread issue of religious education, the known contradictions do not preclude agreement at all. Understanding the situation, studying the relationship between churches and education, does not mean an endless struggle for principles, if not an open observation of the facts.

This time, however, Imre's concept of national education was limited to the active Protestant community, which, by virtue of its inherent compulsion, dealt with the spiritual life of its members. He did not care for or fight with other religions or atheists. According to Imre's belief, the other peculiarity of protestant education is that the work of the pastor's is made unique by the fact that every member of the community ought to be educated. Neither age or social status nor literacy makes a difference. In principle, the pastor is in the same relationship with a community of diverse elements, with each of its members. He represents the church and he is largely responsible for how some feel, and form their relationship with the church. There can be no constant coexistence here, as in family education, or so much attention to details as in formal education. It is not limited to certain aspects of life either, such as the educational influence of the administration, but the pastor is on the one hand free and on the other hand more in touch with his community than any other educator. At the end, even if the overall result of the pastoral work is easily recognizable, its details are less traceable.

In the present study, I do not go into the presentation of his further work.

9 Imre, Sándor, "Educational Aspects of the Pastoral Care" [A lelkészi hivatás nevelési szempontjai]. *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 39 (1930) 355-370.

10 Sándor Imre, "Protestant Spirit and Reconstruction" [Protestáns szellem és újjáépítés.] *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 34 (1925) 281-290.

A brief history of the Protestant Review

The Protestant Review was a quarterly journal of the Hungarian Protestant Literary Society in Budapest.¹¹ Until 1920 the journal mainly had dealt with ecclesiastical and theological topics, but from 1924 it became an important cultural organ of Protestant scholars and started publishing literary works, literary history, philosophical, historical, sociological writings, art and literature reviews. It was one of the defining sources of the culture between the two world wars. In the first issue of the Review, Károly Szász addressed the readers:

When the idea of the formation of the Protestant Literary Society¹² was born, and the call for contributions was signed by the bishops and superintendents of the Protestant churches in Hungary, everybody saw that the society, though at first by title

„Scientific, intended not only to publish its books, but to publish a periodical which responds to its members ideas, and not only to report on scholars activity from time to time. Because it is in Protestantism essence and nature not only to produce from time to time, albeit larger and more enduring creations, but also to maintain the continuity of its life and operation by an uninterrupted movement.”¹³

Imre's early appearances in the journal refer to the accounts of Protestant Literary Society related to memberships and contributions from 1900, where it was reported that Sándor Imre, with his grandfather of the same name, Sándor Imre did not have any debts.¹⁴ Sándor Imre continued to be an active member of the society, which various documents testify.¹⁵

11 Since 1992 the journal of the Hungarian Protestant Public Education Association.

12 Many members of the Hungarian Protestant Churches were united under the name of the Hungarian Protestant Literary Society from 1888, with the aim of cultivating Hungarian Protestant scholarly literature and especially Protestant Church history, as well as to promote the establishment of church libraries and religious texts.

13 Károly Szász, “To the Readers” [Olvasóinkhoz]. *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 1. (1889), 1.

14 Henrik Bendl “Amounts deposited in the treasury of the Hungarian Protestant Literary Society from September 1 to September 30, 1900.” [A Magyar Protestáns Irodalmi Társaság pénztárába 1900. évi szeptember 1-től 30-áig befolyt összegek kimutatása.] *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 12. (1900) 126.

15 *Chronicle of the Nagyvárad Assembly* [A nagyváradai gyűlés krónikája]. Protestant Literary Society Memorial [Protestáns Irodalmi Társaság Emlékkönyve], (Nagyvárad, 1903.) 65.

The critics published in Protestant Review

Five years later, Ödön Szélényi, a Lutheran Lyceum teacher, published „The Idea of Protestant Pedagogy”, a niche creation in the history of 20th-century education, containing important statements:

It is my firm conviction that just as there is a naturalist or socialist worldview and a Catholic worldview, there is a concept of life and world that is rightly called Protestant and one that represents the Protestant school and forms its spiritual atmosphere. This view of the world is in close proximity to the other two, but in essential respects, it is separate from them. The roots of the Protestant worldview can be found in the Reformation, but it can be identified with neither the original Lutheranism nor Calvinism, although it naturally embodies their basic principles. For, however praiseworthy the great works of these two great historical figures (Luther and Calvin) are, we must admit that our pedagogical and philosophical ways of thinking cannot be identified in all things, for they were in some ways still children of medieval times.¹⁶

Ödön Szélényi majored in Hungarian and German, from 1899 he worked as a teacher in Mezőtúr, Lőcse and Késmárk. From 1909, he was a philosophy teacher at the Lutheran Theological Academy in Budapest until its dissolution in 1923. In 1912, he wrote a review of Imre Sándor’s work titled National Education, which was one of the most significant criticisms of its kind:

„Since the publication of Sándor Imre’s first large-scale study (on Széchenyi as an educator in 1904), there is hardly a more formal advocate of Hungarian national education. [...] His great work, presented in lectures at the Hungarian Social Science Associations open academy in 1910, is far from being worthy of praise at this place. In the introduction, Imre presents the fashionable slogans of pedagogical individualism and socialism. In his view, no one who speaks of individual and community perceptions as two possible directions is aware of the scope and function of educator thinking. To reach his goal Imre starts from the theoretical basis of educational socialism.”¹⁷

It is wise to explain that the aspirations here are not all educational-based. They can be divided into four groups according to the basics from which they emerge; these are followers of practicality, economic, political

16 Ödön Szélényi “The idea of Protestant pedagogy” [*A protestáns pedagógia eszméje*]. (talk at the National Protestant Teacher Association on 10th June 1908) [Elhangzott az Országos Ág. Hitv. Ev. Tanár Egyesületnek 1908. június 10-ikén Eperjesen tartott közgyűlésén.] Eperjes, 1908.

17 Ödön Szélényi, “Imre Sándor: Education of the nation” [Nemzetnevelés]. *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 25. (1913) 278-280.

and scientific aspects, all calling themselves social. Education is seen as a community, but there is a great deal of contradiction in the fact that that community is very different in the eyes of individuals. As for smaller social groups (family, municipality, religious denomination or social class), none of them can be the embodiment of the community, only the concept of nation is appropriate. Moreover, the nation is the union of those individuals, by virtue of their geographical relations and their common past, together form the universal circle of humankind, united with other similar entities, with a distinct organization. Education must emphasize this connection to the individuals. The ecclesial community can only be subordinate to the national community. In order to be understood, we only need to emphasize one of Imre's works. It is rich in ideas, that even if he is against the denomination, he is not an enemy of religion and religiousness, because he expressly says, „personal religiousness is not contrary to the idea of national unity, but belonging to a denomination is a stumbling block, even if it is not intended”.¹⁸

He also writes:

„with no religious denomination, religion is not excluded from school, because neither religion itself nor its great influence can be misappropriated. Imre's ideas soar to incredible heights; it is impossible for his work to remain just a cry in the wilderness and not to fertilize Hungarian educational thinking!”¹⁹

Sándor Karácsony, a university professor of pedagogy and one of the most prominent figures in Hungarian philosophical thinking, the successor of Gyula Mitrovics, professor of pedagogy at the University of Debrecen published also a review of Imre's work. Karácsony's main work was the Handbook of Educational History, a book that deals in detail with the history pedagogy:

„its original pedagogical concept draws on a number of Hungarian and foreign sources. In his works, he combines elements of contemporary pedagogical endeavors - reform pedagogy and new psychological concepts - with his ideas for the revival of Protestantism. In addition to the philosophy and pedagogy of the Protestant Karácsony, the influence of existentialism and Hungarian folk tradition is present.”²⁰

18 Szelényi: „*Imre Sándor*,” 278-280.

19 Szelényi: „*Imre Sándor*,” 278-280.

20 Béla Pukánszky „Pedagogy of Sándor Karácsony,” [Karácsony Sándor pedagógiája] in *History of Education* [Neveléstörténet], eds. István Mészáros, András Németh and Béla

In his review, Karácsony, after a brief biographical review, highlights the tragic, goodness-oriented and pragmatic nature of Sándor Imre's work, emphasizing the concept of national education. He depicted the national education project as a practical, collective activity and sought to organize it with the involvement of the family, but also emphasized the central role of the individuals as well. Sándor Imre was mentioned as the main promoter of public education, who not only regarded social education as important in theory, but also took practical care of the schools of his ecclesia: Sándor Imre is a highly respected speaker today. Especially the gospel movements respect him. Sándor Imre was one of the first to relieve the socialism-based education of its class struggle bias. The missionary aspiration is to conquer the souls who are alienated from the greatest ideas: he can comfort himself in the company of the greatest Hungarians who admire the power of personality. The mission is at the forefront of the fight carrying the banner of Jesus Christ: it is good to see that Sándor Imre in the prime of his life wants to testify to the highest ideals.²¹

„The editor asked for an article to be published in a Memorial Book devoted to Sándor Imre and I tried to draft his character. But the editor returned the manuscript on the account that they do not publish memoirs. But my goal was to describe his personality.”²²

One year before Imre's death, László Ravasz wrote this text in a footnote of his study about his friend.

Laszlo Ravasz was a pastor in the Reformed Church, and his name can be mentioned alongside Lajos Ordass and László Pap, when we list the exemplary persons of Hungarian Protestantism during the party-state period. From 1921 until his forced resignation in 1948, Ravasz was a bishop of the Danube Church District, held several secular and ecclesiastical positions. After the death of Bishop Dezső Baltazár, he became the most influential member of the Reformed Church between the two world wars. Laszlo Ravasz wanted to organize a modern church. He realized that opportunities to publish and appear in various media (mostly press) were important to the Church:

Pukánszky. Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1996. Accessed June 1, 2019. <http://mek.oszk.hu/01800/01893/html/09.htm#Heading31>

21 Sándor Karácsony, “Imre Sándor,” *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 37. (1928), 636-640.

22 László Ravasz, “Imre Sándor”. *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 53 (1944) 161.

“I was the editor-in-chief of every known paper,” he wrote sarcastically in his memoirs.²³

At the request of László Ravasz, Sándor Imre held a newly formed position of educational commissioner. Sándor Imre gave in the synod of the church comprehensive reports on the activities of secondary schools and teacher training institutes.²⁴

Like Karácsony, he began his introduction with the Imre family genealogy, where he found a common analogy between Protestant Puritans: Those who have known the Imre family for 3 or 4 generations confirm that they have a strong family resemblance. They are similar in appearance: their hair, complexion, voice, writing, and movements look alike. They are all characterized by a puritan attitude that often seems outdated, a very strong ethical code, an instinctive and same time passionate teaching inclination, and an increased sense of responsibility. The Calvinist tradition, which has been nurtured for generations, probably since the beginning of the Reformation is strong in this family. This spirit also dominates most of the families with whom they have come in contact by marriage. Imre had thirteen children, twelve of them were married, nine had a Reformed, and three had a Lutheran wife. Twelve studied in Reformed High School and four were teachers at the Reformed Church schools. It can be stated that the family was imbued with the spirit of Protestantism.²⁵

These features can be found largely in Sándor Imre’s life. Puritanism was his concept of life, rather a simple way of life, a high ethical standards, love for teaching, a great sense of responsibility for the community, and a willingness to help those in need. In addition to this, he has an increased sensitivity and he is usually serious. In Sándor Imre’s life, acquiring knowledge was not a simple curiosity, nor was it to entertain the familiar instinct, but was a serious moral task. He built a very precious world of knowledge: it constituted honor, goodness and a life worthy of man. Therefore, nothing is so removed from Sándor Imre as skepticism, which does not take seriously the truths of himself or of others. For Sándor Imre, truth is both sacred and fatal, so he reviews and examines his final statements repeatedly, but insists on his conviction. He always watched with special interest the lives of people who

23 László Ravasz, *Memoirs* [Emlékezéseim]. (Budapest, Kálvin Kiadó, 1992), 187.

24 Gáborné Varga: “László Ravasz and the Reformed Education Policy in Hungary between the Two World Wars” [*Ravasz László és a református oktatáspolitikája Magyarországon a két világháború között*] (PhD thesis). Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 2011. Accessed June 1, 2019. <http://doktori.btk.elte.hu/hist/vargagaborne/tezis.pdf>

25 Gáborné, “László Ravasz”.

had the courage to confess the truth to the masses or the mighty ones. This is why he was attracted to István Széchenyi, János Apáczai Csere, and Péter Alvinczi. Sándor Imre's ideals are always solitary, abandoned and struggling people who, in an incomprehensible and even hostile world, cling onto great truth and stand or fall with it."

Ravasz mentioned logic, courage, and honor among Imre's qualities, which were also reflected in writing. He was strong and emotional, but not sentimental, not allowing any insight into his private life.

„To sum it up: I have never seen Alexander Imre a diplomat, a frivolous, bohemian, glamorous, proud or skeptical man; he was always brave, straight, open, and honest, a man of responsibility, independence, and service. Puritan, simple, transparent man whose conviction is a matter of conscience and his truth. He is reluctant to be seen more than he is, but it hurts him if his conviction is not appreciated. He is not a philistine but a puritan, his manners are impeccable and appearance is stylish. He is by all means a teacher, but not merely a theoretical man; a practical spirit drawn to science; dissatisfied with the world but confident of a better future; not an artist, not a comedian, not wise man, but a meliorist who wants to improve his world above all, a mixture of a prophet and a teacher's, a special kind of a man: an educator.”²⁶

In Ravasz's opinion, Sándor Imre's work can be divided into three major parts: his scientific work, his teachings, and his administrative work. Ravasz described Imre's professional success in the creation of independent and self-developing education and in the scientific justification of the idea of national education. According to Ravasz, Sándor Imre is, after all, a child of enlightenment. This enlightenment influenced him as a living family tradition in the educational principles that his ancestors had professed and applied for generations. [...] Sándor Imre was greatly influenced by Széchenyi's mindset that was formed by English thinkers. Social responsibility, universal goodwill, the happiness of people, literacy and spiritual independence, were ideals of Széchenyi adopted from 18th century English ethics.

Another great achievement of Imre's scientific work is the conceptual clarification of educational ideas and its connections with national education. Sándor Imre came to this idea at the beginning of his career through contemplation and historical experience. He was a student of István Schneller, whose basic idea was pedagogy based on personality. According

26 Gáborné, "László Ravasz".

to this, the culmination of the development of the human idea, in the view of „pure self” is the „ethical personality in Christ”. Sitting at the feet of his master, Sándor Imre noticed that this concept atomized education and thus disintegrated his unity and universality. He has conducted very thorough social pedagogical studies; he clearly saw that education is a community enterprise and its purpose is to serve the community itself. He was therefore seeking a community that could be the both the former and subject of unified, general and compulsory education. He found this in the whole nation. At the same time, he dealt very thoroughly with the thoughts of great Hungarian national educators, first with Széchenyi, then with Miklós Wesselényi, János Apáczai Cseri and Miklós Zrínyi.”²⁷

Summary

Sándor Imre is a prominent figure in the history of 20th century education and is therefore an excellent subject of our pedagogical research. The present study paints a portrait of a family practicing Protestant tradition, and provides many additions to the teacher training current narrative. Imre’s professional reviewers and friends have captured his significant theoretical and practical life in educational columns, not only through his essays, but through also taking into account his personality and family heritage. Imre followed his Protestant ideals, and his activities were both traditional and innovative. Closing our study with László Ravasz, it is no exaggeration to say that Sándor Imre was one of the greatest educators of Hungary.

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27 László Ravasz: “Imre Sándor”. *Protestant Review* [Protestáns Szemle], no. 53 (1944) 161–170.

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The Identity of the Samaritan Kingdom's Deity

Introduction

In view of sociological research principles, one can distinguish three levels of religiosity in the ancient Near East: official religion, regional religion and personal / family religion. While these forms of religiosity evidently intersect each other, they nonetheless embody different segments of the cultic life.¹ The official religion is in fact a cult empowered by the king. This cult, consisting of the honoring of the kingdom's supreme deity, the pantheon's supreme god, is beneficial for the people and for the kingdom as well. In some regions, however, different gods may be at the center of the religious life, depending on the economic / political profile of the area in question. For instance, in the coastal regions of a kingdom, the sea god can play a central role, even if the kingdom in question is worshipping another god as its supreme deity. When it comes to personal / family cult, the experiences and the religious belief of the ancestors play a major role in choosing a deity as the core of worship. In case of the king and the capital city, all three levels could – but need not – be linked to the same deity.

In the present study, we examine the first level, the official religion as depicted in Samaria and the Northern Kingdom, aiming to answer the following question: who was the main deity of the Samaritan cult?

From political, economic and social perspectives Israel, the Northern Kingdom is argued to have been more influential than the smaller neighboring Judah.² In contrast to this significance, however, when it comes to the historical sources, only a few of them are known in the case of Israel. Moreover, even the surviving annals of the kings of Israel and their chronicles were added to the Old Testament (OT) in the adaptation of the

1 Angelika Berlejung, "Geschichte und Religionsgeschichte des antiken Israel," in *Grundinformation Altes Testament*, ed. Jan Christian Gertz (Stuttgart: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 67–68.

2 See Israel Finkelstein, *Das vergessene Königreich: Israel und die verborgenen Ursprünge der Bibel* (München: C. H. Beck, 2014).

Judean editors of the *Deuteronomistic History* (DtrG). At the same time, the texts deriving from two prophets, Hosea and Amos, active in Israel in the 8th century and whose prophecies could be used as sources, were significantly revised by Judaeen redactors.

In the view of the Deuteronomistic movement, which according to M. Noth's classical writing reached its climax in the 6th century (together with the composition of the DtrG),³ there is only one legitimate form of religion, the worship of Yhwh, and one cultic place, namely in Jerusalem. Any other religious manifestation is interpreted as deflection, often depicted as some form of polytheism. The national religion, or we could even call it the official religion of the Northern Kingdom, is no exception from this general rule.

However, because of Israel's role in the history, it would be important to reconstruct the nature of this religion by means of a critical evaluation of the available sources.

Biblical sources

Regarding the biblical sources, mention should be made of the accounts of the DtrG, which includes – among others – a roughly abridged version of the annals of Israelite Kings (1Kgs 14:19; 15:31, etc.). In each case we ask the following question: what is the basic abstracted material and what is its Deuteronomistic evaluation?

However, this is not an easy task. According to 1Kgs 12:28-29, after the two kingdoms were separated, Jeroboam I made two golden calves and placed them at Dan and Bethel. As these cultic dispositions were ordered by the king, it is likely that one should view these measures as concerning the official, national religion. According to 1Kgs 12:28-29, it seems that the image of the bull was related to the national religion. Of course, it would be difficult to decide whether the verses in question are only tendentious descriptions of the first northern king's reign, or whether they represent contemporary conditions. It is therefore necessary to analyze similar reports. Several OT passages contain descriptions of the veneration of bulls among Israelites. One of the most cited pericopes is the story of the golden calf, Ex 32, where Aaron himself prepares the object of worship, and everybody turns his back to Yhwh. The point of the story is that the sons of Israel worship a bull instead of Yhwh. This episode is referred to by Neh 9:18, which is mostly

3 Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien: die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1943).

a quotation of Ex 32:4.8. It is more than likely that these two texts are based on the tradition of 1Kgs 12:28.⁴

In the biblical presentation of the story of Israel, the story of the golden calf proleptically points to Jeroboam I, who honored bulls, and it also prepares the theological evaluation of his deeds, while the later text of Nehemiah summarizes the events. There is an important statement regarding the bull:

Behold your gods, Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt.	1Kings 12:28 הַנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!	Ex 32:4 אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt.	Neh 9:18 זֶה אֱלֹהֵיךָ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם

4 Christoph Levin, *Der Jahwist* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 367. John Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers* (Kampen: Peeters Publishers, 1994), 295–301. Klaus Koenen, “Eherne Schlange und goldenes Kalb. Ein Vergleich der Überlieferungen,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 111 (1999): 367. Hans Christoph Schmitt, “Die Erzählung vom Goldenen Kalb Ex 32* und das Deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk,” in *Rethinking the Foundations. Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible*, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Thomas Römer (Berlin/ New York: De Gruyter, 2000), 238–240. Jan Christian Gertz, “Beobachtungen zu Komposition und Redaktion in Exodus 32–34,” in *Gottes Volk am Sinai. Untersuchungen zu Ex 32–34 und Dtn 9–10*, ed. Matthias Köckert and Erhard Blum (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001), 91–95. Youn Ho Chung, *The Sin of the Calf: The Rise of the Bible's Negative Attitude toward the Golden Calf* (New York/ London: T & T Clark, 2010), 49–50. Frank Ueberschaer, *Vom Gründungsmythos zur Untergangssymphonie: Eine text- und literaturgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1Kön 11–14*. (Berlin/ Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 266–268. Joanne N. M. Wijngaards, *The Formulas of the Deuteronomistic Creed. (Dt 6/20-23: 26/5-9)* (Tilburg: Reijnen, 1963), 23. Herbert Donner, “Hier sind deine Götter, Israel!,” in *Aufsätze zum Alten Testament aus vier Jahrzehnten*. ed. Herbert Donner (Berlin/ New York: De Gruyter, 1994), 68. Heinrich Pfeiffer, *Das Heiligtum von Bethel im Spiegel des Hoseabuches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 1999), 38. Klaus Dietrich Schunk, *Nehemia* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2009), 265.

The texts are almost entirely identical. Deviation occurs mainly in the number of gods who have brought the sons of Israel out of Egypt. Nehemiah is evidently speaking of one God, while Exodus clearly talks about more gods. Otherwise these texts depend on the original, providing explanations for it. But 1Kgs 12:28 is ambiguous. Both the noun *god* and the related verb are formally plural. This plural form can, however, be interpreted here as abstract plural (Gen 20:13; 35:7; 2Sam 7:23; 1Chron 19:2; 2Chron 32:15),⁵ in which case the text would still presuppose a single god and his act of salvation. Otherwise a single act of salvation attributed to several gods would be both logically confusing and unusual within a mythical world where an entire pantheon never manifests itself at the same time. If that is true, it would highlight a tradition in the OT connecting bull worship and the exodus from Egypt.

According to the current view of tradition criticism, the oldest document attesting the cult of the bull can be found in 1Kgs 12:28. We have good reasons to assume that this verse is an allusion to the official cult of the kingdom.

In the Book of Hosea, we read about the bull in several places. In Hos 8:5-6 there are plans regarding the destruction of the bull statues. God condemns his people, and the bulls are not exceptions to this. A similar topic appears in Hos 10:5, where the people and the priests are mourning the loss of the bull statue, while Hos 13:2 makes fun of those people, who worship the bull statue and “kiss calves.”

Regarding the texts of Hosea, the main question is, whether they depict folk religiosity, or whether they have something to do with official religion. The latter is suggested by the fact that in Hos 8:6 the bulls are not simply presented, but they are called the calves of the capital city, Samaria (עֵגְלֵי שִׁמְרוֹן).

In addition, Hos 2 is based on a metaphor, in which the sons of Israel have to sue their own mothers. J. J. Schmitt and B. Kelle argue that this metaphorical mother is not the country or the people, but the capital city, Samaria.⁶ Their claim is based on the analysis of the metaphor of the woman and the mother in the Book of Hosea and outside of it. This means that Hosea

5 Wilhelm Gesenius, Emil Kautzsch and Gotthelf Bergsträsser, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Hildesheim: Olms Verlag, 2013) § 145 i

6 John J. Schmitt, “Yahweh’s Divorce in Hosea 2 – Who is that Woman?” in *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 9 (1995): 119–132. Brad E. Kelle, *Hosea 2: Metaphor and Rhetoric in Historical Perspective* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), passim.

does not necessarily focus on the folk but on the official religiosity which is connected with the bull cult as well.

It is striking, however, that the texts that speak about the bull do not call the deity by its name. This brings up the following question: which god was honoured in the image of the bull? In the Syro-Palestinian area, the teriomorphic image of the bull is primarily related to two deities: El and Baal. In the Ugaritic texts, El is always addressed as “bull El.”⁷ Therefore some scholars believe that in Israel as well the deity worshipped by the image of the bull can be associated with the supreme god of the Canaanites, El.⁸ But the bull is the symbol of the storm throughout the Near East, and we find many representations of the storm god riding a bull, pictures of a bull pulling the chariot of the storm god, or images in which the bull is the deity itself.⁹

Since the Canaanite region's storm god is Baal, many believe that the parts describing the bull cult of the Israelites speak about Baal.¹⁰ This identification is also supported by the OT texts which report the presence of the Baal cult in the monarchic period: for instance Hos 2:10, 15, 18, or the Elijah cycle

7 KTU 1.1 III 26; 1.2 I 16.33.36; III 16–17.19; 1.3 IV 54; V 10.35; 1.4 II 10; III 31; IV 1.39; 1.6 IV 10; 1.14 I 41; II 6.23–26; 1.16 IV 2; 1.17 I 23; 1.92 15.

8 Adrian H. W. Curtis: “Some Observation on ‘Bull’ Terminology in the Ugaritic Texts and the Old Testament,” in *In the Quest of the Past: Studies on Israelite Religion, Literature and Prophetism*, ed. A. S. Van Der Woude (Leiden/ New York/ København/ Köln: Brill, 1990), 17–31. Wesley I. Toews, *Monarchy and Religious Institution in Israel under Jeroboam I.* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1993), 41–69. Karel Van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria and Israel: Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life* (Leiden/ New York/ Köln: Brill, 1996), 321–328. David Tasker, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature and the Hebrew Scriptures about the Fatherhood of God* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 62–63. Nicolas Wyatt, *The Mythic Mind: Essays on Cosmology and Religion in Ugaritic and Old Testament Literature* (London/ Oakville: Routledge, 2005), 79–91. R. Scott Chalmers, *The Struggle of Yahweh and El for Hosea's Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 42–51. John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 34–39. Stephen L. Herring, *Divine Substitution: Humanity as the Manifestation of Deity in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 147–148.

9 Silvia Schroer, *Die Ikonographie Palästinas/Israels und der Alte Orient: Eine Religionsgeschichte in Bildern. 2. Die Mittelbronzezeit* (Bern: Fribourg Academic Press, 2008), 50. 232–241.

10 Gunnar Östborn, *Yahweh and Baal: Studies in the Book of Hosea and Related Documents* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1956), 23–26. Hans Walter Wolff, *Hosea* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1976), 179. Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 493. Jules Francis Gomes, *The Sanctuary of Bethel and the Configuration of Israelite Identity* (Berlin/ New York: De Gruyter, 2006), 163–165. Joy Philip Kakkanattu, *God's Enduring Love in the Book of Hosea: A Synchronic and Diachronic Analysis of Hosea 11,1–11* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 111–117. Chung, Sin, 108–166.

in 1Kgs 17–19. We can notice a strong polemic against Baal in these texts. The Baal cult was undoubtedly present in Israel. The question is whether it was practiced at a national level, or rather at a regional or familial level. Furthermore, we must find out whether the bull statues set up during the reign of Jeroboam had anything to do with the Baal cult? To put it simply: was the Baal cult the national religion of Samaria, or did the texts, written against Baal, intend to disgrace folk religiosity?

The first option seems to be supported by 1Kgs 16:32, according to which Ahab set up an altar for Baal in the Temple of Baal, which he built in Samaria. According to this passage, there was a Baal temple in the capital city, Samaria, which was built by the king. However, it is worth taking a closer look at the text because it sounds quite cumbersome in both English and Hebrew:

He set up an altar for Baal <i>in</i> the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria.	וַיִּקַּם מִזְבֵּחַ לְבַעַל בֵּית הַבַּעַל אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה בְּשֶׁמְרוֹן
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It is remarkable that in the MT the “temple of Baal” is not preceded by a preposition. We have three options to explain the current text: (1) The phrase “temple of Baal” includes an implicit בְּ preposition.¹¹ (2) We are dealing here with an apposition, identifying the altar and the temple.¹² (3) The text is either deteriorated, or intentionally modified.

Assuming that the text presents a case of apposition would, however, be problematic in view of the subordinate clause starting with אֲשֶׁר, which contradicts the logical flow of the sentence.¹³ Beside the syntactical problems, it still remains a question why the text would equate the altar and the temple, while in the ancient Near East the altar is evidently an object of the temple and not the temple itself. Therefore, additional, more likely options must be searched for.

11 See for instance KJV: “And he reared up an altar for Baal *in* the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.”

12 “And he erected a place of sacrifice to Baal, *even* the temple of Baal which he built in Samaria.” Cf. John Gray, *I-II Kings* (Philadelphia, Westminster John Knox Press, 1963), 333.

13 Cf. Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1991) § 131.

Concerning the textual history of the Book of Kings, comprehensive studies have led to the conclusion that in most cases of textual discrepancy between the MT and the LXX, the Greek version offers an older reading.¹⁴ In the LXX variant of 1Kgs 16:32, the noun which stands for the word “temple” (οἶκος) appears with the ἐν preposition. But in the Greek translation it is not the house/temple of Baal, but the temple of his idol / god:

<p>And he set an altar for Baal in the house of his offences which he built in Samaria. (NETS)</p>	<p>καὶ ἔστησεν θυσιαστήριον τῷ Βααλ ἐν οἴκῳ τῶν προσοχθισμάτων αὐτοῦ ὃν ᾠκοδόμησεν ἐν Σαμαρείᾳ</p>
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The Greek text is clearer than the MT. It is also striking that the Greek version does not name the god for whom he set up an altar in the temple, it is only referred to as προσόχθισμα. The LXX thus translates the neutral word בַּיְתֵי־אֱלֹהִים (1Kgs 11:33) or the polemic פִּגְרֵשׁ (Deut 7:26; 2Kgs 23:13; 24), but never Baal’s name. It is possible therefore that the presumably older version of 1Kgs 16:32 provided by the LXX was later transformed by the MT into a polemic against Baal. On the one hand, this solution fits into the general model of textual reconstruction regarding the Book of Kings, and on the other hand it offers an explanation for the problems regarding the Greek and Hebrew texts of 1Kgs 16:32.

According to the presumably original reading reconstructed based on the LXX, Ahab set up a Baal altar in the temple of his god. Some researchers assume that the temple was not primarily Baal’s temple, but Ahab took Baal into an already existing temple during a reform, where he came to be honored together with another god as *theos synnaos*.¹⁵ We can draw three

14 Cf. Adrian Schenker, *Älteste Textgeschichte der Königsbücher: Die hebräische Vorlage der ursprünglichen Septuaginta als älteste Textform der Königsbücher* (Freiburg/Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg/ Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).

15 Stephan Timm, *Die Dynastie Omri. Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Israels im 9. Jahrhundert vor Christus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 35. Herbert Niehr, “The Rise of YHWH in Judahite and Israelite Religion: Methodological and Religion-Historical Aspects,” in *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwism to Judaism*, ed. Diana Vikander Edelman (Kampen: Pharos, 1995), 56. Matthias Köckert, “YHWH in the Northern and Southern Kingdom,” in *One God – One Cult – One Nation: Archeological and Biblical Perspectives*, ed. Reinhard Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann (Berlin/ New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 365. Israel Finkelstein and Thomas Römer, “Comments on the Historical Background of the Jacob Narrative in Genesis,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 126 (2014): 329–330.

Concludingly, the official religion of the Northern Kingdom – by which we mean the religion endorsed by the king, not the folk religion – was the cult of Yhwh. Yhwh was venerated in the image of a calf.

There are two more problems that need to be clarified: the obvious presence of controversy and the symbol of the calf. The first is certainly the result of the Deuteronomistic movement, which challenged the legitimacy of every cult that was not practiced in Jerusalem, i.e. on the place chosen by the Yhwh (Deut 12 *passim*). Therefore, worship was considered as erroneous primarily because of its place and not because of its object or its form.

As for the symbol of the calf, we have several texts that bear upon the issue. In ancient theophany texts, which are considered to be the oldest parts of the OT (Jud 5; Hab 3; Deut 33; Ps 68), the appearance of Yhwh is accompanied by lightning, thunder, wind, and clouds. This suggests that Yhwh may have been originally a storm god.¹⁸ This observation harmonizes well with the fact noted earlier, namely that in the ancient Near East the storm god was often symbolized by the bull. The calf imagery and the representation of Yhwh in ancient poetry merge into an original picture of Yhwh as a storm god. We may conclude therefore that in Samaria Yhwh was honored as a storm god, being depicted as a bull.

Non-biblical sources

The imagery of the bull has been present in the Near Eastern region from the Middle and the Late Bronze Ages,¹⁹ as confirmed by statues, cult objects, seals, and decorations found on different objects. However, they are difficult to identify with divinities because none of these objects contain the name of the deity they represent. Therefore a clear classification is impossible. The analysis above hints at that two storm gods were honored in Israel: Baal and Yhwh. The former was probably dominant at the level of folk religiosity, while the other was probably dominant at a national level, until the syncretism

18 Manfred Weippert, "Jahwe," in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* V. (Berlin/ New York: De Gruyter, 1976–1980), 246–253. Albertz: *Religionsgeschichte*, 80–85. Pfeiffer, *Heiligtum*, *passim*. Köckert, "YHWH," 81–126. Martin Leuenberger, "Jhwhs Herkunft aus dem Süden. Archäologische Befunde – biblische Überlieferungen – historische Korrelationen," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 122 (2010): 1–19.

19 Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole: Neue Erkenntnisse zur Religionsgeschichte Kanaans und Israels aufgrund bislang unerschlossener ikonographischer Quellen* (Freiburg: Herder, 2010), 215–219. Angelika Berlejung, "Die Anfänge und Ursprünge der Jahweverehrung. Der ikonographische Befund," *Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift* 30 (2013): 152–153.

of the two took place sometimes during the era of the kingdom. With this in mind, and taking the methodological constraints into account, let us take a look at Samaria's archeology.

Unfortunately, in terms of excavations, we possess little evidence regarding the cultic life of Samaria, yet some interesting pieces of information emerge that are relevant for both the temple of Samaria and the bull symbolism. Archeologists found five objects representing bulls on the Samaritan acropolis: a lapis lazuli scaraboid, two seals, and two bullheads.²⁰ Although these are not clearly cultic objects, they certainly prove that the symbol of the bull was present in Samaria. In addition, a reinforced building was discovered outside the city wall, where archaeologist found 120 depictions of animals, and 23 depictions of females, 2 riding figures and a cult stand. It can be concluded that the building was a cult place, and it was presumably used by the ordinary people.²¹

Archaeologist did not find any evidence for a cultic place on the acropolis, but they came across an imposing building, presumably the remnants of the royal palace, which had a room which could have served as a cultic place for the aristocracy.²² We must also note that in the ancient Near East the cult was always linked to a cult place, and the thought of a temple-free religion for an already settled community would be uncommon. The cult always manifested itself in a place, which was especially established for this purpose. Of course, we should not think about impressive, enormous temples, because in most cases the cult took place in small booths situated at the entrance to the chamber gates, where the travelers could ask for the gods' blessing. There were also smaller cult places within the city.

20 Othmar Keel, *Corpus der Stempelsiegel-Amulette aus Palästina/Israel: Von den Anfängen bis zur Perserzeit* (Freiburg/ Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg/ Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1995), 70. Keel and Uehlinger: *Göttinnen*, 216–218. John Winter Crowfoot, Grace Mary Crowfoot and Kathleen Mary Kenyon, *The Objects from Samaria* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1957), 81. Nr. 34.; 37.

21 John S. Holladay Jr., "Religion in Israel and Judah under the Monarchy: An Explicitly Archeological Approach," in *Ancient Israelite Religion*, ed. Patrick Miller Jr., Paul D. Hanson and Samuel Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 249, Richard Hess, *Israelite Religion: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 298–314. Rainer Albertz and Rüdiger Schmidt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 466–470.

22 Timm, *Dynastie*, 149–156. Albertz, *Religionsgeschichte*, 135. Niehr, "Rise," 55–58. Köckert, "YHWH," 365. Finkelstein and Römer, "Comments," 328–329. Detlef Jericke, *Regionaler Kult und lokaler Kult. Studien zur Kult- und Religionsgeschichte Israels und Judas im 9. und 8. Jahrhundert v.Chr.* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 47–57.

In the 9-8th centuries archeologists revealed some ruins that are to be interpreted as cult places, in the following locations: Tel Dan, Megiddo, Taanach, Jerusalem, Lachisch, Ḥirbet el'Āseq, Tell Abū Qudēs, Tell el'Aṣī; Tell eṣ-Şārem, Makmiš, 'Ain al-Ḥuṣb.²³ If there are tangible pieces of evidence regarding cultic activities in so many cities, there must have been some kind of cultural arrangement in the capital city as well.

Finally, we should take a closer look at the non-biblical theophoric nomenclature, dating from Iron Age II. A total of 33 artefacts with names written on them, were found in Samaria: 16 with the name of Yhwh, 9 with Baal's name, 3 with El's name, and 5 other names ending in theophoric elements.²⁴ A comparison of these numbers clearly shows the dominance of Yhwh: 50 percent of the theophoric names are Yahwistic. If we take into account the fact that both Baal and El can be used as common names – which could simply mean “lord” or “god”, thus referring to Yhwh – the ratio might be even higher. The record also highlights Yhwh's prominence compared to other gods in Samaria.

The 41st Samaria ostrakon deserves even greater attention, as it contains the name *יגל*, which means “Yhwh's bull”. This name not only contains the name of Yhwh but also connects it with the image of the bull. The possible concept in the background of this name is that the bull is the bearer of the person to whom it refers, that is, the bearer of Yhwh.²⁵ But at the same time the name contains the well-known topos of the storm god often shown as riding a bull. This fits well the other biblical and non-biblical sources which present Yhwh as storm god, represented by a bull.

Summary

The data available for the reconstruction of the national religion of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, is limited. Texts deriving from the north were included into the OT in versions revised in Judah, and a strong polemic can be observed against the religious manifestations of Israel. Ever since the Deuteronomistic movement, all cult practiced outside Jerusalem was

23 Jericke: *Kult*, 75–101

24 Mitka Golub, “The Distribution of Personal Names in the Land of Israel and Transjordan during the Iron II Period,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 134 (2014): 621–641.

25 Jeaneane D. Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew: A Comparative Study* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 120. Keel and Uehlinger, *Göttinnen*, 219.

considered illegitimate, and this view was imposed retrospectively as well. However, the contour of the original religion still pervades these texts.

According to several OT texts, the god of Israel was conceived as a bull, which is a characteristic description for the storm god. Even if those biblical texts do not name the god, he is nevertheless functionally depicted in relation to the exodus. This is the first step towards the identification of the deity with Yhwh, who led his people out of Egypt. It is also striking that the theophoric names of the Samarian kings and their children, who are assumed to have worshipped calves, predominantly include the element Yhwh in their onomastics.

1Kgs 16:32 also reveals that honouring Baal in Israel's national cult is the result of a later syncretistic religious reform. But Baal was not originally the addressee of the cult of Israel. In addition, the earliest texts of the OT describe Yhwh as a deity whose appearance is accompanied by theophany, characteristic for the storm god.

The bull symbolism was present in the region of Israel from the Late Bronze Age, including on five objects from the acropolis of Samaria. The nomenclature also strengthens Yhwh's prominence over other gods in the area. If we take into account the frequency of the bull representations and Yhwh's priority with respect to other divinities, the prominence of Yhwh above Baal is obvious, though this latter was certainly present as well. Both the biblical and the non-biblical sources endorse the view that Israel's national god was the storm god, Yhwh.

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Interreligious Dialogue involving Muslims in Hungary

The following paper is on interreligious dialogue and cooperation involving Muslims in Hungary. It consists all in all of four main parts. First, the present article gives a very short overview on and introduction to the religiosity in Hungary in general, especially on the five (or six) main world religions present in the country of Hungary, with a special focus on the situation and position of Muslims in this area.

The second part of the paper deals with the legal regulations in Hungary concerning the various religions. The third part is about the current European migrant and refugee crisis, obviously not taken seriously enough by many leaders in the continent. Finally, the paper states that interreligious dialogue in Hungary can serve as a model for other countries as well.

World Religions in Hungary

The state of Hungary is a predominantly *Christian* country and nation. What makes religiosity and religious life in Hungary rather different from many other countries in the Central European (CE) region is that Hungary has both Protestant (Calvinist-Reformed and also Evangelical-Lutheran), as well as Roman Catholic historical roots.¹

Furthermore, apart from its firm Christian basis, Hungary is somehow an interreligious miracle in Europe: the (five or six) great *world religions* are all present in the country in an eloquent and powerful way.²

1 More about the religions and denominations in Europe and in Central Europe: Nagypál, Szabolcs, "The Ecumenical Condition and Dialogue in Europe: »Go in Peace, and be Healed of your Trouble«,” in *Talitha Cum! The Grace of Solidarity in a Globalized World*, ed. Mario DeGiglio-Bellemare and Gabriela García Miranda (Hong Kong: World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), 2004), 108–121.

2 As for the great world religions, it is especially the monotheist traditions that face great challenges when encountering each other: Edward T. Oakes, "The Monotheists: Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Conflict and Competition," *First Things (FTh)* no. 2 (2004),

For example, as far as the great *Hinduism* is concerned, this Central European country has by far Europe's biggest Hindu bio-farm (the so-called Krishna-valley near the village of Somogyvámos). They run the continent's only Hindu (in fact, Krishna-consciousness) University—with an affiliated partner-university even in the Northern European country of Finland! The main challenge here for this India-based religion is certainly inculturation.

Coming to the next religion, Hungary has the only accredited *Buddhist* university in the continent. There is a very close cooperation among Buddhist traditions (or denominations): they have their united religious organisation, and they run their institutions together.

Going further, to *Judaism*, the state has the continent's main Jewish university; together with the second (or third) biggest synagogue in the whole world (Zionism was coined here, in Budapest, by Theodore Herzl (1860–1904)).

In comparison with many other parts of the world, Hungary is very clearly a part of the Christian (or Western Christian) civilization and culture. In fact, it is not “*religiosity*” (or “religious faith”) that influences the character and quality of Magyar (Hungarian) society the most, but rather (Western) Christian culture or civilization.

Hungary is generally not at all that “religious” as Poland or as Slovakia (or as Slovenia or Austria) in the region of Central Europe (CE); but not as “non-religious” or “non-affiliated” as the Czech Republic. As for the effective influence of real living faith (or of real living religion) on the Magyar (Hungarian) society and culture, we can rightly say that the country is somewhere just above the middle on a scale: there are many other influences existing as well.

Muslims in Hungary

After the new law on religions of 2011, currently there are two “established”—that means legally recognized as well as supported by the government and protected by the legal system—Muslim *communities* in Hungary, plus one Muslim religious organization. “Magyar (Hungarian) citizen”, naturally, in all contexts means any Magyar (Hungarian) citizen, regardless of their worldview (or of their religion and of their denomination): Magyar (Hungarian) Muslims are included in this, most naturally, as well.

<https://www.firstthings.com/article/2004/02/the-monotheists-jews-christians-and-muslims-in-conflict-and-competition>.

The non-Muslim Magyar (Hungarian) people mostly get the information about Muslims and the *knowledge* about Islam from the (written and electronic) media.³ Intelligentsia studied something about Islam in the school or from books and journals. Very few non-Muslim people actually read Muslim texts, or even have ever met real Muslims. We can guess that it is the same situation concerning Christianity, or Judaism in Muslim-majority countries.

The various *relations* and different connections between the non-Muslim—religious or non-religious—Magyar (Hungarian) majority and—on the other hand—their Magyar (Hungarian) Muslim neighbours are rather very rare and infrequent, since there are only a couple of thousands of Muslims living in Hungary.⁴ The Magyar (Hungarian) religious Muslim community is in fact extremely small at the moment. The few people who have ever met Muslims, behave with them politely and nicely. There are no real conflicts whatsoever among non-Muslims and Muslims, and the fifteenth most secure country on the Earth is Hungary.

The Muslims in Hungary for sure try to do their very best to mitigate possible sad, and even tragic *historical memories* about Islam in the country—since Hungary was ruthlessly occupied and colonized by the Muslim Ottoman Empire from 1526 till 1699.⁵ We could rightly expect in the future that the small Magyar (Hungarian) Muslim community will be more vocal in firmly and harshly condemning the terrorist attacks in Europe in public life—and elsewhere—connected somehow to extremist political Islam or Muslim extremism.

In general, there is *no negative stigma* or any discriminative stigmatisation whatsoever concerning Muslims and concerning Islam in Hungary. But provided the continuous mass migration from another civilization (in this

3 When we talk about dialogue and encounter, it is not at all without precedent in ecumenical history: World Council of Churches (WCC), *Issues in Christian–Muslim Relations: Ecumenical Considerations* (Genève (Geneva): World Council of Churches (WCC), 1992).

4 Sometimes dialogue is not so fluent as it ideally should be, so in order to ensure its flow, mediation might be necessary: Nagypál, Szabolcs, “Assisting Interreligious Dialogue by Intersubjective Mediation,” in *Affectivity, Agency and Intersubjectivity*, edited by Ceslav Peter Šajda OP et alii. (Budapest: L’Harmattan Kiadó, 2012), 217–234.

5 One can read more about the Ottoman occupation here: Moór, Valéria, “A keresztény vallás muszlimok ellen folytatott ideológiai harca a törökkorban,” in *A vallási tapasztalat megértése: Jog, bölcsélet, teológia (Békés Gellért Ökumenikus Könyvek (BGÖK) II.)*, ed. Bányai, Ferenc, and Nagypál, Szabolcs, and Bakos, Gergely (L’Harmattan Kiadó—Békés Gellért Ökumenikus Intézet (BGÖI): Budapest—Pannonhalma, 2010), 219–232.

case from Islam) reaches the country, and tries to change its way of living as well as ways of thinking, it will greatly affect the everyday life of all Magyar (Hungarian) citizens. Thus we must be very hesitant to call the average Magyar (Hungarian) person's opinion on Islam as a "negative stigma".

The actual and active involvement of the Magyar (Hungarian) Muslims in the process of *interreligious dialogue* in Hungary is—of course—extremely important for all involved parties—including of course the Muslims themselves.⁶ Islam is truly one of the great world religions, so a real multifaith interreligious cooperation is unimaginable without their active and committed participation.⁷ Of course, we can be absolutely convinced that it is quite necessary as well as very urgent for the different members of the other religions to organize interreligious dialogues with Magyar (Hungarian) Muslims, both in a bilateral, as well as in a multilateral way.⁸ For those engaged in and committed to interreligious dialogue from among the Magyar (Hungarian) people, it is certainly of an elementary and of a crucial importance to promote interreligious dialogue with the Magyar (Hungarian) Muslim community, of course.

As many different elections, various polls and multiple surveys show, Hungary clearly would not want to be a Muslim-majority country, but it is neither stigmatisation nor xenophobia: it is just *healthy life-will*, expected from all nations, I guess (of course, Muslim-majority nations are also included). As for the Magyar (Hungarian) citizens who happen to be Muslims, much depends on how they relate to Magyar (Hungarian) culture and its protection and defence; to mass migration, Islamisation and extremist political Islam. Since Muslims in Hungary seem to be very temperate and moderate, and religious terrorism is virtually non-existent in the country, there is no threat that their daily life should be touched, especially when mass migration is successfully stopped by the European community, once and for all.

6 Dialogue among Muslims and Christians should be conducted on many levels simultaneously: Tarek Mitri, "Reflections on Muslim-Christian Dialogue," (*Unpublished Lecture*) (Genève (Geneva): World Council of Churches (WCC), 1999).

7 One possible topic of interreligious dialogue with Islam is the following: Marko P. Djurić, "What shall we Talk about Today? Righteousness as an Important Issue of Christian and Islamic Dialogue," *Religion in Eastern Europe (REE)* no. 4 (2000): 1–10.

8 Another excellent topic for monotheistic dialogue (including Judaism) are the parallels present in the great wisdom literature: Nagypál, Szabolcs, "Mester és tanítvány kapcsolata a sivatagi öregeknél, a szúfiknál és a haszidoknál," in *A lélek gondozása és vezetése (Embertárs 2009/2.)*, edited by Sárkány, Péter and Nagypál, Szabolcs and Bakos, Gergely (Budapest: Jezsuita Kiadó, 2009). 137–145.

Legal Regulations in Hungary concerning Religions

The current Magyar (Hungarian) *government* (having served now for more than eight years, and recently elected for another four) and administration—fortunately—fully supports the concerns of interreligious dialogue, both in (big) words as well as in everyday practice. They have their own official and sometimes also international (bilateral or multilateral) meetings and events to organize. Furthermore, regularly—from time to time—there are various funds as well as different supports offered by the state government for organizing different grassroots or semi-official interreligious events.

For example, the three main youth trainings of the Fellowship for Interreligious Dialogue would not have been possible at all without the fruitful financial support of the current government. Fortunately, there is neither any legal nor any administrative barrier whatsoever to organize and conduct interreligious dialogue events and programs in Hungary. On the absolute contrary: these projects and these kind of religious engagements are fully supported and deemed extremely important by many political leaders.

The recently promulgated Magyar (Hungarian) Fundamental Law (adopted in the year of 2011) has the following important things and principles to say about the proper regulation of *diversity* (in its different meanings):⁹ Magyars (Hungarians) rightly do believe that their national culture is a very rich contribution to the diversity of European unity. Furthermore, the Fundamental Law (which is an equivalent to a constitution in other countries) says that Magyars (Hungarians) respect the freedom and the culture of the other nations, and—accordingly—they shall strive to cooperate with every other nations of the world.

Finally, this important legal document states the following as well: the country of Hungary shall recognise and shall protect the freedom and diversity of the press and the media, and shall always ensure the conditions for the free dissemination of information that is necessary for the formation of democratic public opinion.

The Magyar (Hungarian) Fundamental Law (2011) has the following things to say about the regulation of *religion*, religious tolerance and interreligious relations: Magyars (Hungarians) value the various religious traditions of their country. In accordance with this, each and every person shall have the right to the freedom of thought, of conscience as well as of religion.

9 This chapter is a summary of related paragraphs in the Fundamental Law of Hungary (2011), which can be read in full in the following link: <http://www.kormany.hu/download/e/02/00000/The%20New%20Fundamental%20Law%20of%20Hungary.pdf>.

This very right shall include the freedom to choose or to change one's own religion or other belief; as well as the freedom of everyone to manifest, to abstain from manifesting, to practise or to teach her or his religion or other belief through religious acts, through rites or through otherwise, either individually or jointly with other people, either in public or in private life.

The Fundamental Law also states clearly that people sharing the same principles of faith may—for the practice of their religion—establish different religious communities, operating in the organisational form that is specified in a cardinal act. The state and the religious communities shall operate separately.

Thus, religious communities shall be autonomous. But the state and the religious communities may cooperate to achieve different community goals. At the request of a given religious community, the Magyar (Hungarian) National Assembly shall decide on such cooperation. The various religious communities participating in such cooperation shall operate as established religions.

The state shall provide various specific privileges to the established religions with regard to their participation in the fulfilment of the tasks that serve to achieve various community goals. The important common rules relating to religious communities, as well as the conditions of cooperation, the established churches and the detailed rules relating to established churches shall be also laid down in a separate cardinal act.

The right to freedom of speech may not at all be exercised with the aim of violating the dignity of the Magyar (Hungarian) nation, or of any national, any ethnic, and any racial or any religious community. Different persons belonging to such communities shall be entitled to enforce their various claims in court against the expression of an opinion, which violates the community, invoking the violation of their human dignity, as provided for by a separate act.

Hungary shall, upon request, grant asylum to non-Magyar (non-Hungarian) citizens, being persecuted or having a well-founded fear of persecution in their native country or in the country of their usual residence, for reasons of race, of nationality, of membership of a particular social group, of religious or of political belief, if they do not receive protection from their very country of origin or from any other country.

Hungary shall guarantee the fundamental rights to everyone without discrimination and in particular without discrimination on grounds of race, of colour, of sex, of disability, of language, of religion, of political or of other

opinion, of national or of social origin, of property, of birth or of any other status.

And finally, there is a very interesting paragraph in the Fundamental Law that states that as long as the state debt exceeds half (i.e. 50%) of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the Constitutional Court may, within its powers set out, review the acts on the central budget. The Constitutional Court shall have the unrestricted right to annul also acts having the above subject matters, if the procedural requirements laid down in the Fundamental Law for the making and for the promulgation of those acts have not been met.

The Constitutional Court may also set out the implementation of the central budget, of the central taxes, duties and contributions, of the customs duties as well as the central conditions for local taxes for conformity with the Magyar (Hungarian) Fundamental Law exclusively in connection with the rights to life and to human dignity, to the protection of personal data, to freedom of thought, of conscience as well as of religion, or with the rights related to Magyar (Hungarian) citizenship, and it may annul these acts only for the very violation of these rights.

The Current European Migrant and Refugee Crisis

The political as well as the sociological *awareness-raising* (we should not like the stigmatising word “propaganda” for it) regarding migration (“refugees” are very different than—economic— “migrants”) properly represents the Magyar (Hungarian) people’s perception of the threat of another civilization arriving in masses to the continent. It could be any other civilization, but in fact currently it is mostly the Muslim civilization arriving—since it is the neighbouring one for Europe from whichever directions.¹⁰

Magyar (Hungarian) citizens are well aware of the fact that most of the refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants arriving to the continent come from a far-away Muslim-majority country.¹¹ There is no any negative stigma whatsoever on “refugees”. There are two-three thousand people arriving annually in the last thirty years, who seek legal refuge in Hungary.

10 One cannot deny that the Muslim–Christian encounter indeed has a lot to offer as far as challenges are concerned: Robert Louis Wilken, “Christianity Face to Face with Islam,” *First Things (FTh)* no. 8 (2007), <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2009/01/christianity-face-to-face-with-islam>.

11 Dialogue offers many fruits and results, as well as some problems to be tackled and maybe solved: World Council of Churches (WCC), “Christian–Muslim Conversations: Summary of the Results,” *The Ecumenical Review (ER)* no. 3 (1969), 270–271.

Importantly, some of them are not Muslims at all, but they are Christians escaping exactly from Muslim oppression or discrimination in their very home-countries.¹²

Effective political and sociological awareness-raising effectively helped Magyar (Hungarian) people to *understand* better the very hard questions of mass migration, which is the main question deciding the future of the continent. Of course, Magyar (Hungarian) people do not have any problems whatsoever with Muslims building their own culture and making it flourish in their own countries—especially if they truly respect the rights of ethnic minorities and minority religions there.¹³

We can firmly hope that Magyar (Hungarian) people want to live in peace and harmony with other cultures and civilizations, in dialogue and great respect, each in their own states and countries. We can also rightly hope that Magyar (Hungarian) people sooner or later recognize better the great and enormous role Islam religion played in building up one of the great civilizations of the Earth, contributing effectively to global culture and to humanity as a whole.¹⁴

Intercultural dialogue itself is only made possible, viable and plausible, if there are (more or less homogenous) cultures to serve as gifts and mutual enrichments for each other. Magyar (Hungarian) culture is indeed a relatively small one in the globe (it entails not more than fifteen million people worldwide).

And as such, this community is extremely vulnerable to being totally swept away by other, much bigger and much stronger cultures and civilizations; or just globalisation as such. Of course, each culture is a very precious gift to other cultures and to the world as a whole: each of these cultures thus should be safeguarded from being wish-washed by other, overwhelming influences.¹⁵

12 An enlisting of the challenges and difficulties in the Muslim–Christian dialogue: Gerald Shenk, “What Went Right: Two Best Cases in Islam,” *Religion in Eastern Europe (REE)* no. 4 (2006), 1–14.

13 An excellent outline of the monotheist encounter: Spengler, John. “Christian, Muslim, Jew: Franz Rosenzweig and the Abrahamic Religions.” *First Things (FTh)* no. 8 (2007). <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/10/003-christian-muslim-jew>.

14 The ecumenical chart recognized the importance of the questions in connection with Islam and immigration: Conference of European Churches (CEC), and Council of European Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE), *Charta Oecumenica: Guidelines for the Growing Cooperation among the Churches in Europe* (Strasbourg: Conference of European Churches (CEC), and Council of European Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE), 2001).

15 Intercultural and interreligious dialogue appears as a key topic in the landmark ecu-

It seems, Magyar (Hungarian) people in general clearly oppose and even fight against mass migration of people, and they are rather unhappy that the European Union (EU) —which union the country currently is a member of—seems totally unable to *defend* effectively its own *borders* against the challenges of the times.

They are also unhappy that the European Union (EU) finds it extremely hard ideologically to support its own self-defence—even though it seems slowly to change in the last couple of weeks and months in 2018. The Magyar (Hungarian) state border has been open for and welcoming refugees in any which ways.

Hungary has always been promptly fulfilling her international legal duties as well as responsibilities concerning refugees. On the other hand, the current regulation of the refugee system in the world seems to be rather misused and highly dysfunctional. Hungary tries to play a pivotal, important and standard-setting role in helping the global community to rethink this whole question.

Interreligious Dialogue in Hungary

Interreligious dialogue (some people in the scientific and academic community and in humaniora also call it “interfaith dialogue”) is a great as well as a proper task for the future of the whole world.¹⁶ Interreligious dialogue as a process and as a method has been initiated more than fifteen or twenty years ago by young as well as middle-aged representatives and also leaders of all the six great world religions currently present in Hungary.¹⁷ These initiators indeed include all of the great world religions: such as, Christianity (including the Orthodox, the Protestant as well as the Roman Catholic denominations), Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism as well as the youngest one, Bahai Faith.¹⁸

menical anthology as well: Michael Kinnamon and Brian E. Cope, eds., *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices* (Genève (Geneva): World Council of Churches (WCC), 1997).

16 My monograph on the methodology of interreligious encounters: Nagypál, Szabolcs, *Párbeszéd-tükör: A vallásközi találkozások módszertana (Vallástudományi Könyvtár (VK) VII.)* (Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó—Magyar Vallástudományi Társaság (MVT), 2013).

17 The page of the Fellowship for Interreligious Dialogue is the following: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/vallaskoziparbeszedtarsasaga>.

18 Interreligious dialogue as well as the world religions appear as entries in the trend-setting ecumenical dictionary: Nicholas Lossky and José Míguez Bonino and John Pobee and Thomas (Tom) F. Stransky and Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb, eds., *Dictionary of*

The various *programs* of the interreligious events—in general—can be organized in many levels and can be put together with multiple main aims.¹⁹ As for the interreligious fellowship, it has regular meetings at least once a month. Furthermore, they are regularly invited to and welcome in several elementary and secondary schools and educational institutions, and they organised three youth interreligious trainings.

The organisation is extremely proud to have published at least three or four books on the very topic of interreligious dialogue. One could imagine many other ways (annually there are various interreligious events organized by the government of the country, for example): it is indeed only a question of time, of energy as well as of enthusiasm.

We can firmly believe that these mentioned events and these important publications on the long run can modestly or even more effectively influence the Magyars' (Hungarians') perception towards Islam and understanding of Muslims in Hungary and elsewhere in the world. We can especially mean here the various testimonies and different witnesses of the non-Muslim participants about their encounter and their starting dialogues with their Muslim neighbours and acquaintances.

The most important difficulties and main *challenges* to be solved in organizing these very important and sometimes long-lasting interreligious events are primarily of an organisational and of a structural nature: such as, how to find proper date and perfect time, which is appropriate for everyone involved.²⁰

The frequently repeated main challenges involve also different ways of how to find active and engaged people who really work for and indeed serve the fellowship, and who are already deeply engaged in various activities and events in their own religion. The most enthusiastic people to participate in these interreligious events as organisers as well as resource persons are usually middle-level leaders as well as thinkers and theologians of the great world religions.

These people should not be at all overburdened in their own community, and are also open to others' different thoughts, arguments as well as ideas.

the Ecumenical Movement (Genève (Geneva): World Council of Churches (WCC), 2002).

19 About interreligious dialogue in general: Stanley Jedidiah Samartha, ed., *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Interfaith Relationships* (Genève (Geneva): World Council of Churches (WCC), 1981).

20 On various issues and challenges concerning interreligious dialogue see the following book of key importance: S. Wesley Ariarajah, ed., *Not Without my Neighbour: Issues in Interfaith Relations* (World Council of Churches (WCC): Genève (Geneva), 1999).

Generally, it is not easy, we can state, to find appropriate participants and even less organisers for these events. The reason for this is that one has to be firmly grounded in one's own religion (having required knowledge about it, too); and at the same time one has to be open to and curious about other religions, be really interested in them, and be able to apply the rules of dialogue in real-life practice.²¹

The colourful press and the *media* of the country is also heavily involved in interreligious dialogue in Hungary in many ways. For example, there is a homepage made, there is a series of articles published and there is a page present and active in the most popular social media site that weekly comes up with new questions to religious thinkers from among the five main world religions: it is called "God Knows" (Isten tudja).²²

There are already two fully edited books officially published from the clever and wise answers given to the different questions by the thinkers in the last three or four years. Furthermore, the fellowship invites different members of the media to their roundtables. And vice versa: different leaders and members of the organisation are invited to the state and private televisions, to the radios and to the press to talk about interreligious dialogue, either one by one, or together as a group.

As for *international* working-together and for intercultural cooperation globally, the fellowship is a cooperation circle (CC) in the United Religions Initiative (URI).²³ Also, the interreligious organisation has close contacts with especially the world conference of Religions for Peace (RFP).²⁴ Thus, at its own level (i.e. at the level interreligious dialogue) the fellowship does have some contacts with Muslim-majority countries. It is extremely important to have cooperation with other Muslim countries to establish interreligious dialogue in Hungary. The Muslim communities present in Hungary have also severe ties with several Muslim-majority countries.

21 About dialogue as a not-so-easy method to be applied: Nagypál, Szabolcs, "The Ministry of Kenotic Reconciliation: Dialogue as a Method in the Ecumenical Movement," in *Reflecting Diversity: Historical and Thematic Perspectives in the Jewish and Christian Tradition*, edited by Losonczi, Péter and Xeravits, Géza (Münster—Wien—Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2007), 208–227.

22 The different articles of God Knows (in Magyar (Hungarian): Isten tudja) can be reached following this link: <https://istentudja.24.hu>.

23 The homepage of the United Religions Initiative (URI) can be reached through the following internet link: www.uri.org.

24 The world conference of Religions for Peace (RFP)—naturally—also has a much-read international website: <https://rfp.org>.

The different members of the interreligious fellowship regularly evaluate and decide upon various *follow-ups* concerning the results of the events together, in several follow-up meetings. According to my opinion, the mere fact that these religions have been working together for fifteen or twenty years in peace and in understanding, is itself a miracle and a model for others to follow the footsteps and their example.²⁵

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25 It is not only the mere existence of interreligious dialogue that is important, but its high quality, too, which must be ensured: Nagypál, Szabolcs, "A vallásközi párbeszéd minőségének biztosítása," in *Kezdetben van a kapcsolat: Interdiszciplináris dialógus a dialógusról*, edited by Farkas, Edit (Budapest: JTMR Faludi Ferenc Akadémia, 2013), 213–243.

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2020

The application of methodology of the Latin American liberation theology to Hungarian postmodern context

The purpose of the research

This research is aimed to find a possibility of applying the methodology of Latin American liberation theology to Hungarian postmodern context. The base of this study is to determine ways to talk about God, church and faith with young people. The communication should be meaningful, understandable and relevant. Our audience are Hungarian high school students who do not have any relationship or only a weak relationship with the church. This communication raises the question of inculturation and contextualization. The hypothesis of the research is that the Hungarian high school students' image of God and church is medieval and catholic dominated, and they are not aware of the theological results of the reformation, nor of the improvement, which has happened since then. The causes are diverse and complex. We can suppose that the media and the methodology of teaching History have a deep influence on them regarding this issue.

To answer the main question, seeking for a methodology is needed which can help to explore the problem. We have decided to use the Latin American liberation contextual theologies as a method. This method is relevant because the Latin American liberation theology is one of the first contextual theologies and it has been part of the theological discourse for about 50 years, so it is well reflected, analyzed and criticized.

Introduction to Latin American liberation theology¹

Latin American liberation theology has different streams. Black, feminist or Korean minjung theology are also part of it. All of them are dedicated to the problem of oppressive situations and liberation is a keyword in all of them.

¹ partially Alexandra Prém: Strukturális és egyéni felszabadítás Leonardo Boff teológiájában, essay for OTDK (2016)

Every liberation theology has the same root: Latin American liberation theology. That is why we usually understand liberation theology as the Latin American stream.² Regarding the predominant point of view, Latin American liberation theology was formed in 1968 in Medellín (Columbia) during the CELAM conference.³ In that time, the catholic theology began to use the language of the Latin American social movements and their social-analysis.⁴ The council condemned capitalism and the exploitation of the poor in their proclamation.⁵

David Bosch described two types of liberation theology in his work titled “Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission”. Bosch considers Latin American liberation theology part of the socio-economic group, and the revolutionary type as its part. It is important to mention that liberation theology forms from beneath the previous tendency of theology. The followers of the traditional theology were non-believer intellectuals, and its source was philosophy, while the followers of the liberation theology are the oppressed social classes and its source is sociology. That is the reason why contextual theologies consider themselves an epistemological break with traditional theologies.⁶

At the beginning, the message of liberation theology was about the church being accountable for social injustices, and the need of its support of the poor, the oppressed and the peripheral. Liberation theology underlines that the social role of the church in Latin American context is the opposite of the church’s message or the Christian (liberating) gospel. While the church was proclaiming the gospel and God’s love, it did not help the oppressed and did not do anything to end the oppression, but it was part of the oppressive system. Latin American liberation theology is influenced by its historical and social context, and it studies themes such as institutional oppression, critics of social systems, which produce the poor and other social injustices

2 McGrath, Alister E., *Bevezetés a keresztyén teológiába* (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 109.

3 Acronym: Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano – Latin American Episcopal Council.

4 Gál Ferenc, “A felszabadítás teológiája,” in Boff, Leonardo, *Miatyánk. A teljes felszabadítás imája* (Budapest: Ecclesia, é.n.), 12–13.

5 Chopp, Rebecca S. and Regan, Ethna, “Latin American Liberation Theology,” in *The Modern Theologians. An Introduction to Christian Theology since 1918*, ed. Ford, David F. – Muers, Rachel (Malden – Oxford – Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, ³²⁰⁰⁵), 470.

6 Bosch, David, *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1999), 420–425.

like famine, lack of medical care, underpayment and unemployment.⁷ Sin is principally structural for liberation theology.⁸

Therefore, liberation theology is ecclesial and ethical. It examines Jesus Christ's role in the church during the oppression. As a result, social-analysis and social sciences have an essential role in theology. This is the point where we have to mention the connection between liberation theology and Marxism.

The goal of liberation theology is making changes in society and forming the social status quo, ending social injustices and defending human dignity. Liberation theology has absorbed new questions, so recently it deals with issues such as eco-theology and women's rights. It still emphasizes the responsibility of the church, and still copes with the condition of the poor. The work of Pope Francis presents the importance of liberation theologies; thus, he has similar ideas and proclamations of the current theology stream.⁹

The Argentine school, called *teología del pueblo* (theology of the people) has got an important role in today's Latin American liberation theology. Pope Francis considers himself the disciple of this school as well.¹⁰ There is no consensus among the researchers about the connection between the Argentine school and the Latin American liberation theology. According to Juan Carlos Scannone, the former forms part of the latter.

Liberation theology is known about its special methodology, which is the object of the present study. In this method, *praxis* has priority against theology and theory, which is called *orthopraxis*, and social sciences have a vital role and deep impact. The process of interpretation in liberation theology is tied to the hermeneutic circle and is composed of three elements: praxis – theory – praxis. These three elements are always in a dialectic connection with each other.¹¹ It starts from everyday life, the social and congregational practice (e.g., perception of social problems), then in the stage of the theory, it reflects professionally on seeking for a solution. Lastly, it returns to the

7 Chopp and Regan, "Latin American Liberation Theology," 469.

8 op. cit. 471–472.

9 Fogliatto, Débora, "»Yo soy del movimiento de Jesús.« Entrevista con Leonardo Boff" interview by Leonardo Boff, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.pensamientocritico.info/index.php/articulos/otros-autores/espanol/328-yo-soy-del-movimiento-de-jesus>

10 Scannone, Juan Carlos, "El papa Francisco y la teología del pueblo," *Mensaje* 63, no. 631. (2014): 14–21.

11 Miguélez, Xosé, *La teología de la liberación y su método. Estudio en Hugo Assman y Gustavo Gutiérrez* (Barcelona: Editorial Herder, 1976), 84.; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 425.

praxis, and makes concrete steps practically to solve the current social problem. Accordingly, the emphasis is on the theological act, contrary to the traditional order, praxis is preferential. However, the priority of praxis does not mean the rejection of the theory. Orthopraxis and orthodoxy are in dialectical relationships.¹²

“the fact of the matter is that there is no praxis without theory, even where the theory is not spelled out.”¹³

Context (the situation of the oppressed, the poor and the experience of the Third World) is the new source of theology, new hermeneutical key or new hermeneutical place.¹⁴ *Lugar teológico* is used to express this in Spanish professional literature, which we can find in catholic studies as *locus theologicus*. This is the starting point or perspective used to understand the Holy Scripture. In the case of Latin American liberation theology, the *lugar teológico* is the praxis and the oppressed social status. That is why it is called *teología apartir del pueblo* – theology understood from the people.

The most important theologians, who wrote about the methodology of the liberation theology are Clodovis Boff („Teología de lo político”¹⁵) with his brother Leonardo Boff („Cómo hacer teología de la liberación?”¹⁶), Juan Carlos Scannone, Xosé Miguez („Teología de la liberación y su método”¹⁷) and Sergio Silva. Liberation theology is mainly a roman-catholic movement, but we can find some protestant representatives (?) too. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, Hugo Assman, José Comblin, Enrique Dussel, José Miranda, Juan Luis Segundo, Jon Sobrino are catholics, while José Miguez Bonino and Elsa Tamez are protestants. Liberation theology takes history seriously. Solidarity and preferential options for the poor are the key.¹⁸

According to the characteristics of the Latin American liberation theology we can mention that its main issue is the poor, the economically oppressed, who are described as the historical manifestation of God (in human history?). God appears voluntarily in the poor.

12 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 424–425.

13 op. cit. 431.

14 op. cit. 425.432.

15 Theology and practice – The epistemological foundations of liberation theology

16 How to do theology of liberation?

17 Liberation theology and its method

18 Chopp and Regan, *Latin American Liberation Theology*,” 475–478.

This theological stream was criticized, as well. A big part of European theologians received it negatively because it was interpreted as a wrong theological reflection and political movement. It was blamed with temporal/terrestrial Messianism and connecting the kingdom of God to a political case. Bosch criticizes that kind of liberation theology which allows and justifies violence or accepts the idea of permanent revolution of Marxism (fe.: Kairos Document), but this is not determinative in the stream. Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak agree with Bosch and stand up for nonviolence. Besides, Juan Luis Segundo reflects on Gutiérrez's theology critically, because he does not agree with him in regards that the nation cannot replace the church, since the latter is a social category. Bosch says that liberation theology is wrong in considering poverty originally good.¹⁹

Scholars agree that liberation theology has been in crisis since the 1990s because of the fall of the Berlin Wall. They are convinced that its economic critics are weakened, and that its new emphasis is an escape to spirituality. Chopp and Regan disagree with this point of view. Socialism and communism are not main parts of liberation theology. The preferential option for the poor (not exclusive) is the heart of the Latin American liberation theology. The authors' opinion is more adequate than the expression of crisis: liberation theology and the option for the poor has to face new challenges in a new economic situation: neoliberalism.²⁰ Bosch also defends liberation theology because it uses Marxism selectively and critically as a society analysis method and philosophy of history without accepting its ideology. Good examples are José P. Miranda and José Miguez Bonino, two liberation theologians who criticized Marxism. Later, liberation theology moved away from Marxism, while black theology started to use Marxist analysis. Bosch thinks that it is accurate to use Marxist analysis as a method, but he asks, do those theologians who use Marxism adapt the ideology or not? His answer is no. He argues that every liberation theologian refuses the atheism of Marxism, because they are tied to spirituality and transcendence. This is the reason why Bosch writes that philosophers of atheism are closer to Marxist ideology than the liberation theologians.²¹ There were other critics too. Some theologians criticized the stream, because of its unilateral interpretation of

19 op. cit. 469–484.; Bosch, *Paradigm shifts*, 441–442; Silva, *La teología de la Liberación*, 136–143.

20 Chopp and Regan, "Latin American Liberation Theology," 469–484.

21 Bosch, *Paradigm shifts*, 440–442.

oppression. Oppression is more complex and capitalism is not the only form. It can be sexual oppression or racism – they said.²²

The formation of the Latin American liberation theology is connected to the Vatican Council II, since the assembly of the CELAM²³ in 1968 in Medellín intended to reach a creative reception of Vatican Council II for Latin America, and they achieved it. In this process, *Gaudium et Spes* had an important role. The novum of Medellín was taking the poor of the continent seriously, and that the CELAM labeled the social differences unjust.²⁴ The other assemblies of CELAM were held in Puebla (Mexico, 1979), Santo Domingo (1992) and Aparecida (2007, Brazil). In the era of Puebla appeared the issue of popular culture and inculturation in Latin American theological discourse, and Lucio Gera and his movement called the *Argentine school* or *popular religion* started to influence more. The assembly of Santo Domingo criticized liberation theology by using Marxism and reducing the Christian liberating message to its political dimension. It was then that the Argentine school and liberation theology came near to each other. Thanks to this change, liberation theology integrated new themes such as ecology, and questions of native, black and feminist theologies. In the period of Aparecida more theologians talked about the relationship between Latin American liberation theology and Marxism, and they were convinced that socialism could not be a method for theology and Christian faith anymore. Liberation theology can only fight for a just society. Liberation theology still criticized the market, the oppression and the devastation of nature. Then emerged the new streams of liberation theology in Asia, Africa, and North America, the native, feminist and black theologies.²⁵ During the assemblies of CELAM, we can observe that Latin American theology moves away from liberation theology. Liberation theology received lots of criticism inside of the Catholic Church, and the catholic leadership tried to remove the liberation theologians from church positions in order to avoid their influence.

Liberation theology is still a determinant stream in Latin American theology. Recently it studies ecology, migration, just society, women's rights, and actual social questions in general. Liberation theology has similar characteristics to liberal theological streams such as social gospel or political

22 cf.: Silva, *La teología de la Liberación*

23 assembly of Latin American bishops

24 Silva, Sergio, *La teología de la Liberación de América Latina* in *Anales de la Facultad de Teología LXVI*, no. 106. (Santiago de Chile: Facultad de Teología, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2016), 96–105.

25 op. cit. 143–164.

theology. All of them are more anthropocentric than theocentric; however, there is a significant difference between them. Liberation theology builds from beneath, while liberal theologies are still the elite's theologies, and they maintain the status quo. They do not require a radical change. Besides, while liberal theologies ask if talking about God still makes sense, liberation theology is rather naive, sometimes Biblicist (which is one of its criticism, and it asks which side God is on. That is a postmodern question – says Bosch – and it is closer to the traditional Barthian theology.²⁶

Bosch emphasizes that contextual theologies cannot be absolute, since contexts are diverse and temporal. Similarly, contextual theologies are temporal, thus they should avoid contextualism, universalizing and demanding totality to their own theological position, which happened to western theology (more exactly: theology contextualized in the western world) in the time of colonization. Ecumenical or mainstream theology and contextual ones should be in dialectical relationship, thereby *theologia localis* and *theologia oecumenica* can serve each other. The danger of relativism is the opposite, because of too much contextualization; every context makes up its own theology.²⁷

Methodology of the Latin American liberation theology

Liberation theology is known for its special methodology, in which praxis is preferential for theology. This is called *ortopraxis*, which gives a significant role to social sciences. In liberation theology, the process of interpretation is the hermeneutical circle or with Bosch's words: hermeneutical circulation. The method of Latin American liberation theology is composed of three steps: praxis – theory – praxis. These three steps of „location” or „phase” are in constant dialectical relationship. It starts from the everyday life, the experience of congregations and society (for instance: the perception of social problems), then in the phase of theory it analyzes the problem with academic reason, reflects on it seeking for a solution, then it returns to praxis, and makes practical steps according to the results of theory. Therefore, the emphasis is on the theological action. Opposed to the traditional order, in this case, praxis is above theory, but it does not mean refusing theory: *orthopraxis* and *orthodoxy* are in dialectical connection.²⁸

26 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 438–439.

27 op. cit. 427–428.

28 Xosé, *La teología de la liberación*, 84.; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 424–425.

Latin American liberation theology can be divided into three different levels: professional – pastoral – popular, that is academic level, pastoral level of the congregations and popular level. The content of all of them is the same; the only difference is in the appearance.

“The difference between the theological levels can be found in the logic and the formulation.”²⁹

The expression of the popular level is spontaneous, it uses the common language by oral tradition, on the other hand, the academic level is conventional, strict, and it uses analytic language and logic.³⁰ Liberation theologians say that liberation theology stands with one leg in the theological sciences, while with the other leg it stands in the community’s life.³¹ This attitude determines the whole stream and its methodology as well.

“This is the place (the work table of the theologian), where he/she rethinks the experience of the community critically, it reflects scientifically and he/she formulates professional conceptions to it, strictly inside professional frames.”³²

Inside the level of theory, three other steps can be identified: 1. step: Ver (see) – Socio–analytic consideration, 2. step: Juzgar (judge) – Hermeneutic consideration, 3. step: Actuar (act) – Practical consideration.³³ The Boff brothers introduced the three steps of theory first; later Clodovis Boff developed this method in his dissertation.³⁴

0. Praxis – A pre-theological step

The first step in the method of Latin American liberation theology is always before theology, because the stream is convinced that before making theology it is essential to make liberation and solidarity in the community to the followers of the gospel (in this case, with the poor). This means physical contact, serving among them. Thus, praxis has priority in theology.

29 Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, *¿Cómo hacer teología de la liberación?* (Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1985) 24. own translation

30 Boff and Boff, *¿Cómo hacer?*, 26–27.

31 op. cit. 30.

32 op. cit. 31.

33 op. cit. 36.; Silva: *La Teología de la Liberación*, 123.

34 Boff, Clodovis: *Teología de lo político*; Silva: *La Teología de la Liberación* 123–124.

1. See – Socio–analytic consideration

The *locus theologicus* of the Latin American liberation theology is the oppressed. So liberation theology observes the situation of the oppressed, its real circumstances, and searches its causes. The oppressed have diverse faces for liberation theology, but it is viewed as economically oppressed (poor), but Puebla³⁵ said, that the oppressed could be children, women, elderly, workers, youth, Indians, unemployed and farmers.³⁶ During the socio–analytic consideration theologians use social sciences, sociology (some of them Marxism), in order to describe the real circumstances of the oppression, and to search it historically as well. Applying social sciences is vital in liberation theology.

2. Judge – Hermeneutical consideration

In contrast to the former, it studies God's side, not that of humans. What does God's Word say about the observed phenomenon or problem? This is the second step of the theological construction. The hermeneutical circle in Latin American liberation theology is in the constant interaction between the poor and the Scriptures. It would like to use the transforming power of the Scriptures (conversion – revolution³⁷). It emphasizes the social context of the biblical message. Its preferred books are the Book of Exodus, the prophets, the gospels, the Acts of Apostles and the Book of Revelation.³⁸ Regarding liberation theology, the task of theology is to synthesize, and create new expressions and formulas in accordance with today's challenges. With this process, it composes the new code system of Christianity with the purpose of evangelization.³⁹

3. Act – Practical consideration or dialectical relationship of theory and practice

It examines the issue of acting. Its goal is to explore the ways of acting, which are appropriate to God's plan, in order to defeat social problems and injustices, which is oppression.⁴⁰ Finally, the method of liberation theology returns to its starting point: the praxis. This circle, this reversion is decisive in the stream.

35 Assembly of CELAM

36 Boff and Boff, *¿Cómo hacer?*, 36–37.

37 not in political sense, but regarding social reforms and changes

38 Boff and Boff, *¿Cómo hacer?*, 46–49.

39 op. cit. 53.

40 op. cit. 36.

“The interpretation is concentric, because every new element of the reality obligates us to reinterpret God’s revelation, in order to form the reality consequently, then reinterpret it again and so on.”⁴¹

Strategies, tactics and micro-actions have an important role in this level, however the Boff brothers emphasize that faith is always more and above the praxis.

The task of theology is to take the theologian’s reality seriously – historical, economic, political, social and cultural reality –, and reflect on it. The hermeneutic circle connects the theologian’s present to God’s Word.⁴² Clodovis Boff calls the method of Latin American liberation theology integral theology, because it incorporates every theological topic, but from a specific point of view (from its *locus theologicus*).⁴³

Xosé Miguélez examines Gustavo Gutiérrez’s and Hugo Assmann’s theological work, analyzing the dialectical, critical method in both. According to its studies, Gutiérrez’s *locus theologicus* is the praxis, the church’s life. Gutiérrez’s theology applies the division described by the Boff brothers. First, faith gives theological impulses from the practice, and then the theologian reflects on them according to certain critical aspects. Gutiérrez states that hermeneutical consideration must be critical; however, theology is still secondary for him as well (*acto segundo*⁴⁴). Lastly, transplanting theological reflections to the practice is in the end of the process in his theology too. In his view, the result of this dialectical process is a temporary, changing and progressive theology.⁴⁵ The *locus theologicus* in Hugo Assmann’s work is the historical situation, which precedes the Bible as a starting point for the interpretation. Obviously, we cannot agree with this statement, because we are tied to Calvinistic dogmatic theology. Thus, we can identify a harmful shift in Assmann’s theology. Besides, we can find a strong Marxist influence in his work, since he declares himself a Marxist. The elements of the method described above can be found in Assmann’s work too, such as there is no theory without practice, liberating theory emerges from practice and theory is in dialectical connection with practice.⁴⁶

41 Miguélez, *Su método*, 121. – own translations

42 Ibid.

43 Silva, *La Teología de la Liberación*, 122.

44 second act – chronologically

45 Miguélez, *Su método*, 85–89.

46 op. cit. 96–102.

The method of liberation theology had a determinant influence in the documents of CELAM: Medellín (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992), Aparecida (2007).⁴⁷ After Medellín we can see it distancing from liberation theology in the assemblies and their documents as well, however every document applies the method of three steps of liberation theology: analyzing the reality, theological reflection, and pastoral consideration.⁴⁸

The Boff brothers present the method of Latin American liberation theology with an example in their book. The illustration is the fictional „theology of the land”. In this fictional example, the *locus theologicus* is the group of farmers. It studies their problems, and interprets the gospel for them. In this process the pre-theological step is living among the farmers, working with them, and knowing their situation and problems. After that, the first step of the theory is the socio-analytic consideration (see), when the theologian examines the actual situation of agriculture and the farmer, and observes how the community reacts to its own problems. The second step is the hermeneutic consideration (judge), during which the researcher raises the question of how the Christian faith faces the problem posed by the agricultural land. What does the Bible say about the land (symbol, heritage, God’s gift, promise of new land etc.)? And what does tradition say about this issue (in the case of Protestant theology we do not mean tradition in its catholic interpretation, but the relevant works of protestant theologians such as Calvin, Luther, Barth, Bonhoeffer and others, including the Church Fathers)? The last step of theory is the practical consideration (act), in which – according to the Boff brothers – trade unions, alignments or assemblies have an important role. In this period the need of agrarian reform should be considered, flags can be chosen, and tasks must be divided between the participants.⁴⁹ This point raises some questions. Because VJA (see, judge, act), namely the three steps of theological construction, which is preceded and followed by praxis. However, the examples mentioned by the authors belong more to praxis than practical consideration. The steps of practical consideration could be the theoretical elaboration, consideration and critical reflection of practical steps.

47 cf.: Silva, *La Teología de la Liberación*

48 cf.: op. cit.

49 Boff and Boff, *¿Cómo hacer?*, 57–58.

Conclusions

The main question of the research is how high school students see the teachings (ministry) of the church and God, besides how we can talk about God and different theological topics in plain terms with the youth of today's society. In other words, how can we respond simply, relevantly and clearly to the youth's question. We raised this question because the language of the Bible and the classic phrasings of the theological doctrines are strange and hard for them to understand. A gap is sensed between the language of the Bible and today's communication and thinking. The hermeneutic circle should bridge them. The goal of the research is to examine certain theological doctrines in respect of these viewpoints following the methodology of the Latin American liberation theology and make some conclusions on how to elaborate new expressions of faith and theology with the help of an empiric research and theological studies in the issue of inculturation and contextualization. According to the principle of "sola Scriptura", these new phrasings cannot supplant the words of the Bible, only its interpretations and explanations, and the reinterpretations of classical theological topics, which try to fulfill today's challenges.

The methodology of the Latin American liberation theology does not differ a lot from Calvinistic systematic theology and ethics. Social sciences have an important role in our tradition of systematic theology. However, the method of Latin American liberation theology is analytically reflected and well described. We have chosen the methodology of Latin American liberation theology to use in our research because as a contextual theology it is a good example for studying contextualization and inculturation. Liberation theology, including its different streams such as black, feminist and minjung theology and so on, takes part in the theological discourse for half a century, and it reached relevant and significant results in Latin America and remarkable results worldwide. Therefore, it seemed relevant applying the method of liberation theology in the Hungarian context.

The method of liberation theology can be connected easily with the missiological orientation and goals of this research, because it goes from praxis to praxis, from congregation to congregation, from social status to social status, but not avoiding the professional scientific level, besides its purpose, the evangelization. Our research corresponds to the second step of the method of the Latin American liberation theology: theory. We can apply this method to our research this way: first, we have to define the *locus theologicus* of the research, which in our case is the youth (high schools students) of today's society. We should study how we can describe the

hermeneutic circle regarding our issue, and we have to develop the three steps of theory: see, judge, and act. In the phase of socio-analytic consideration, we have to describe the *locus theologicus* of our research. It is essential to make the analysis of the context (describing the reality) using the right and relevant methods of sociology and making an empiric survey. The second step is the hermeneutic consideration, where we reflect the theological topics appeared during the empiric survey. Besides, we are planning to study the dogmatic roots of contextualization and inculturation in detail (incarnation, accommodation, adaptation and so on), and the theological discourse of the possibility and impossibility of talking about God, in other words the debate of Barth and Brunner. We also would like to examine the work of Tillich and the metaphor and parabola as ways of expressing Christian thoughts. The last phase is the practical consideration, when we describe our reflections regarding the point of views of how to talk about God and theological topics to the youth of nowadays.

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Virtues in Academic Life

A different View on Doctoral Student–Professor Academic Relationship

Introduction

Completion of any graduate and especially doctoral degree is a hard and challenging task that plays an important role and significantly marks a person's life. The years of active academic life are often spent in a hurry to get a degree or in an almost complete commitment to a research topic to the extent that it sometimes seems that the time was wasted in regard to all other aspects of life. All the same, there is another way to look at this demanding task: precisely because of its exigence it can become an opportunity for nurturing character habits oriented toward the good and personal flourishing. In this paper we are going to focus on this possibility in the very specific context of the doctoral student–professor academic relationship.

The doctoral research path often has numerous barriers, self-doubt and complications.¹ It is one of the most challenging educational experiences with a very high attrition rate: Cochran et al. (2014) estimated it to be between 40–60% of all doctoral students.² Several factors contribute to the failure to achieve a doctoral degree, such as dealing with insufficient time to dedicate to research, burnout, exhaustion, feelings of isolation and lack of the adviser's support or mentorship. In fact, it has been found that mentorship experience can alleviate these problems.³ Moreover, Sugimoto underlined that the relationship between a doctoral student and their advisor is the most critical element in one's doctoral education.⁴

1 Cf. Linda Creighton et al., "Mentoring to degree completion: expanding the horizons of doctoral protégés," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 18, no. 1 (2010): 39–52.

2 Cf. Justin D. Cochran et al. "The Role of Student Characteristics in Predicting Retention in Online Courses," *Research in Higher Education* 55, no. 1 (2014): 27–48.

3 Cf. Judie L. Brill, et al., "Best Practices in Doctoral Retention: Mentoring," *Higher Learning Research Communications* 4 no. 2 (Jun 2014): 26–37.

4 Cf. Cassidy R. Sugimoto, "Are you my mentor? Identifying mentors and their roles in LIS

The relationships, experience and knowledge that students gain during both their undergraduate and graduate years shape their lifetime personal and career outcomes.⁵ Research has shown that supportive relationships with mentors, advisors and other caring adults at university have been an important aspect of college experience and, at the same time, a critical one for young adults' development and academic success.⁶ Interaction with college faculty members helps students in greater social integration and better academic performance.⁷ That is particularly noticeable in the research focused on first-generation, low-income and ethnic minority students in the United States, where supportive relationships help to demystify the new academic setting, promote the sense of belonging and social adjustment.⁸ Furthermore, a survey with over 30,000 graduate students in the United States has shown that identifying one adult mentor at college predicted greater work engagement and subjective well-being in the years after graduation.⁹ Both in the literature and practice there is a distinction between different ways in which professors can follow and support the academic path of graduate students.

Different levels of student–professor academic relationship

In European context, the most common academic relationship between a professor and a doctoral student is the one with the doctoral advisor or moderator of the doctoral dissertation. In the North American context, a mentor–protégé relation is often mentioned, where the mentor is not exclusively, or not at all, an advisor of the doctoral dissertation.

doctoral education,” *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 53, no. 1 (2012): 2–19.

5 Cf. Elizabeth Raposa et al., “Predictors of close faculty–student relationships and mentorship in higher education: findings from the Gallup–Purdue Index: Predictors of college mentoring relationships,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1483, no. 1 (2020): 1–15.

6 Cf. Matthew A. Hagler, Jean E. Rhodes, “The long-term impact of natural mentoring relationships: a counterfactual analysis,” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 62 (2018): 175–188.

7 Cf. George D. Kuh et al., *What matters to student success: a review of the literature*, National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, 2006.

8 Cf. Hagler, Matthew A., “Processes of natural mentoring that pro-mote underrepresented students' educational attainment: a theoretical model,” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 62 (2018): 150–162.

9 Cf. *Gallup–Purdue Index 2015 Report*, Great jobs, great lives: the relationship between student debt, experiences and perceptions of college worth, Washington DC: Gallup; *Gallup–Purdue Index 2014 Report*, Great jobs great lives. Washington, DC: Gallup, 4.

There is ambiguity and inconsistency regarding the term *mentoring*. In the university context, one of the major differences between supervision and mentoring is that the first one is task-oriented toward the completion of a doctoral thesis and research, while the latter takes into consideration the individual's long-term development.¹⁰ According to a great deal of research, the relationship between the advisor and their doctoral student is one of the most important determinants of persistence in academia.¹¹ Advisors can help doctoral students navigate intellectual, methodological and ethical norms of their discipline.¹² Additionally, good relationship with an advisor has been associated with higher completion rates. Generally, the role of advisor is focused on identifying appropriate courses, books and other aspects important for the completion of the curriculum, while mentors provide guidance on many social and political details preparing students for their career. Mentors are the ones who should systematically introduce graduate students to people, places and opportunities that could lead them to a sustainable and satisfying career; they should share their professional skills and networks.¹³

De Welde and Laursen specify that “mentors [are] advisors who [respond] to and [see] the student as a whole person... not simply as another graduate student in a sea of semi-anonymous others.”¹⁴ According to Anderson and Shannon, a mentoring relationship is a “nurturing process in which a more skilled or experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person.”¹⁵ A mentoring relationship is focused on the student's academic career, but

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- 10 Cf. Sandra Acker, “The hidden curriculum of dissertation advising,” in *The hidden curriculum in higher education*, ed. Eric Margolis (New York: Routledge 2001). 61–77.
 - 11 Cf. Benita J. Barnes, “The nature of exemplary doctoral advisors' expectations and the ways they may influence doctoral persistence,” *Journal of College Student Retention* 11, no. 3 (2010): 323–343; Cristelle Devos et al., “Doctoral students' experiences leading to completion or attrition: A matter of sense, progress and distress,” *European Journal of Psychology of Education* 32, no. 1 (2017): 61–77.
 - 12 Cf. Laura Galles et al., “Mentoring is Ethical, Right?: Women Graduate Students and Faculty in Science and Engineering Speak Out,” *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology* 11, no. 1 (2019) 109.
 - 13 Cf. Beronda L. Montgomery et al., “Guiding the Way: Mentoring Graduate Students and Junior Faculty for Sustainable Academic Careers,” *Sage Open* (October–November 2014) 4.
 - 14 Kristine De Welde, Sandra L. Laursen, “The Ideal Type Advisor: How Advisors Help STEM Graduate Students Find Their ‘Scientific Feet,’” *The Open Educational Journal* 1 (2008): 49–61.
 - 15 Cf. Eugene M. Anderson, Anne Lucasse Shannon, “Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 39, no. 1 (1988): 38–42.

also personal growth; it is more than just advising the development of doctoral research, rather it provides an opportunity for learning beyond specific research, lab or classroom.

According to the National Council of Graduate Schools and the National Institutes of Health in the United States, mentors are advisors who are willing to share their knowledge, supporters who offer emotional and moral encouragement, tutors, supervisors, trainers who teach about professional responsibility, sponsors or sources of information about opportunities, as well as role models for the qualities and ethical values that academics should possess.¹⁶ The interaction on all these different levels can help a student to develop a sense of belonging in their university and in the chosen profession. Mentoring includes undergraduate as well as graduate students and faculty members. Because of its wider purpose, it involves both planned scheduled meetings or formal mentoring programs, and unplanned conversations, unscheduled lunches, allowing a better student–professor interaction.¹⁷ Monthomery et al. describe the mentoring relationship as “a dynamic bilateral exchange and transfer of knowledge in true collaborative thinking, planning and action for the mentee’s career trajectory.”¹⁸ Supervision and mentoring are both important and enriching but not always as ideal as described.

2. *Emerging ethical aspects from supervision and mentoring*

It is often emphasized in the literature that a faculty advisor should not only be a valid source of information but also a role model for students in professional and ethical behavior. However, “if an advisor does not fully recognize a student’s best interest or they are unaware of how to be an ‘ethical mentor’, they may overlook the unique social capital of the graduate student (e.g., background, culture) and jeopardize the research relationship.”¹⁹ Some authors have proposed ethical principles that should guide supervision and

16 Cf. Zelditch, Morris, “Mentor Roles,” in *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Western Association of Graduate Schools*, (1990). Cited in R.C. Powell, G. Pivo, *Mentoring: The Faculty–Graduate Student Relationship*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona, 2001.

17 Lillian T. Eby, Jean E. Rhodes and Tammy D. Allen, “Definition and Evolution of Mentoring,” in *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring. A Multiple Perspectives Approach*, ed. Lillian T. Eby, Tammy D. Allen, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007). 15–16.

18 Montgomery, Beronda L, Jualynne E. Dodson, and Sonya M. Johnson, “Guiding the Way: Mentoring Graduate Students and Junior Faculty for Sustainable Academic Careers,” *Sage Open* (October–November 2014): 3.

19 Galles et al., “Mentoring is Ethical, Right?” 108.

mentoring, Johnson speaks about six ethical mentoring principles, namely, beneficence, nonmaleficence, autonomy, fidelity, fairness, and privacy.²⁰ In this optic, Galles et al. studied women graduate students' understanding of ethical mentoring within research relationships. Graduate students and faculty members were most aware of the principles of beneficence and fidelity in the perspective of helping others, achieving career goals and preserving the sense of loyalty to each other.²¹ Results also showed that the principles of privacy and fairness were mentioned the least. When it comes to nonmaleficence, faculty members were aware that power dynamics between a mentor and a mentee could have adverse effects on students, particularly regarding criticism. Some students saw criticism as a necessary part of improving their work, but they also affirmed that a mentor should know the difference between criticizing one's work and a personal attack on one's abilities and intelligence. Even when criticizing, a mentor should show appreciation for the student's hard work.²² It is interesting to notice that all participants showed the awareness of the power imbalance that exists in this type of relationship.

Three main aspects have emerged from the study: the importance of effective communication; how power imbalances are reinforced between the advisor and student, and how awareness of hidden expectations within the research culture can shape research relationships.²³ In both mentor–protégé and advisor–advisee relationship, it is important to consider explicit and implicit expectations that one person can have from another, especially if they have different cultural backgrounds. Unintentional harm in mentoring relationship often results from the lack of awareness of the partners; it is suggested that mentors should be aware of their students' unique talents, backgrounds, experiences, professional and personal needs. It would be expected that the person with more power in the relationship shows more awareness for the specific needs of the other individual. In fact, awareness has to be shared through effective communication.²⁴ In their answers, participants in the study of Galles et al. suggested that both mentor and

20 Cf. Brad W. Johnson, *On being a mentor: A guide for higher education faculty*, (New York: Routledge 2016).

21 Cf. Galles et al., "Mentoring is Ethical, Right?" 121.

22 Cf. Galles et al. 117–123.

23 Cf. Galles et al., "Mentoring is Ethical, Right?" 127.

24 Cf. Galles et al. 124. Most participants did not know what resources could they use if the mentorship dysfunction would occur.

mentees should be approachable and trustworthy, ready to listen to each other in a supportive and sympathetic way.

In the context of doctoral education, Winston and Polkosnik argued that a successful advisor should fulfill five essential roles and be a reliable information source, departmental socializer, advocate, role model and occupational socializer. They also underlined that the roles of mentor and friend are desirable in an advisor, but they cannot be required.²⁵ Literature on mentoring often assumes that the student's doctoral advisor is also the mentor, which certainly is not always the case. Friendship between an advisor and an advisee can be difficult because of the position of power and authority professors hold regarding doctoral students, but also because of little time. Current academic circumstances often do not leave enough time and space for this both formal and informal relation because of the competing role demands on a university professor, who has to teach, conduct research and have many additional professional roles and activities. It is understandable that a high-quality and well-organized mentoring relation with doctoral students can suffer. Johnson and Huwe underline that this opens the door to potential relational problems, such as conflict, and even mentor neglect or mentor exploitation.²⁶

The survey from Fried et al. revealed gender differences in the mentor-protégé relationship. For example, women were more likely to report that their mentors used the protégé's work to benefit the mentor instead of the protégé.²⁷ There are also relevant differences between research fields: in the arts and humanities, research is typically conducted with fewer resources and often in a more individualistic and solitary way, which consequently impacts the student's needs and relationship type with the advisor and mentor. An aggravating circumstance in a doctoral student-professor relationship is the competitive academic environment which reinforces self-promotion, personal competition and individualized career advances. Academia is seen as "an individualistic arena in which one seeks to make

25 Cf. R. B. Winston, Jr., M. C. Polkosnik, "Advising graduate and professional school students," in *Developmental Academic Advising: Addressing Students Educational, Career, and Personal Needs*, ed. R. B. Winston Jr., T. K. Miller, S.C. Ender, and T. J. Grites (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 1984). 300.

26 Cf. Brad W. Johnson, Huwe, Jennifer M, "Toward a typology of mentorship dysfunction in graduate school," *Psychotherapy: Theory/research/practice/training* 39 (2002): 44-55..

27 Cf. Rose Gail, "Group Differences in Graduate Students' Concepts of the Ideal Mentor," *Research in Higher Education* 46, no. 1 (2005): 63.

singular contributions to be worthy of individual merits and rewards.”²⁸ But such attitude goes against the nature of the human being and the purpose of scientific knowledge seen as “community effort comprising innumerable interdependent contributions.”²⁹ There should be more productive and integrated approaches instead of the currently prevailing individualistic and competitive one; Monthomery et al. propose the approaches that would include understanding and consideration of students’ cultural heritage and background.³⁰

Different problematics and questions that have emerged from the studies of supervision and mentoring academic relationships are a call for further reflection on this important and rich reality of academic life.

3. *Virtues and personal flourishing in academia*

Everyday talk about happiness and what makes people happy and fulfilled does not usually include a mention of “ethics”, which is often perceived as a merely regulatory or constraining reality, a number of rules distant from the “real life”. However, ethics has a much deeper meaning and ability to lead human beings toward authentic human flourishing. Aristotle already underlined the importance of *eudaimonia*, frequently translated as “happiness” and more appropriately as “flourishing”. This aspect could still sound strange from the perspective of professional ethics that is oriented toward ethical regulations within different professional disciplines and is generally focused on ethics codes favoring mostly Kantian, utilitarian or principlalistic approach. On the other hand, the long marginalized virtue ethics derived from Plato and Aristotle focuses on the question of the character or what sort of person should one be. It emphasizes the importance of “‘personality traits’ that are the products of a fine balance or the mean between ‘vice’ and ‘excess’ and that promote human flourishing.”³¹ Nowadays, there are different concepts and understanding of human flourishing. VanderWeele sustains that “flourishing, however conceived, would, at the very least, require doing or being well in the following five broad domains of human life: (i) happiness

28 Montgomery, Dodson, and Johnson, “Guiding the Way“ 2.

29 Arturo Casadevall, Ferric C. Fang, „Reforming science: methodological and cultural reforms,” *Infection and Immunity* 80, no. 3 (2012): 893.

30 Cf. Montgomery, Dodson, and Johnson, “Guiding the Way“ 2.

31 Annie Pullen-Sansfacon, “Virtue Ethics for Social Work: A New Pedagogy for Practical Reasoning”, *Social Work Education* 29, no. 4 (2010) 403; Cf. Richard Hugman, *New Approaches in Ethics for the Caring Professions*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan 2005).

and life satisfaction; (ii) health, both mental and physical; (iii) meaning and purpose; (iv) character and virtue; and (v) close social relationships. All are arguably at least a part of what we mean by flourishing.”³²

In the virtue perspective, a good person does not act just out of the principles or duty but because they are good. An honest person will not steal, not because of the principle or the bad consequences this act could bring, but rather because they do not want to be the sort of person who steals. This emphasizes that the formation of a person’s character can play an important role in the academic context of intellectual and scientific development, which should not disregard personal growth and flourishing.

According to Alasdair MacIntyre, a virtue is an acquired human quality developed through strength of character that has to be practiced in order to become a part of one’s life. A practical reasoner has “the ability to evaluate, modify or reject [his/her] own practical judgments; to ask whether what [he/she] takes to be good reasons for action really are sufficiently good reasons.”³³ And it is through habilitation that the virtues or positive character traits such as justice, temperance and honesty develop and enable people to act morally. Moral character achieves to perform a virtuous act in an easier way in any situation. But to achieve excellence according to this view, both intellectual and moral virtue are necessary, together with practical wisdom.

Intellectual virtues are traits of character or dispositions aimed at cognitive goods, such as truth and knowledge. As all virtues, they are means between extremes as, for example, intellectual humility is between undue self-deprecation and arrogance.³⁴ An intellectually virtuous person values knowledge and truth and intends to achieve them.

On the other hand, moral virtues in the Aristotelian terminology reflect a balance between rationality and emotionality;³⁵ they include courage, justice, temperance, honesty, compassion and kindness. In this classical virtue concept, a special place is occupied by practical wisdom or phronesis, both intellectual and moral virtue that can be defined as “an appreciation of what is good and bad for us at the highest level, together with a correct

32 Tyler J. VanderWeele, “*On the promotion of human flourishing*,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences U.S.A. (2017): 2. Our emphasis

33 Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*, (Chicago: Open Court 1999). 83.

34 Other intellectual virtues would be intellectual courage and rigour, open-mindedness, etc.

35 Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, trans. S. Broadie and C. Rowe, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). 109.

apprehension of the facts of experiences, together with the skill to make the correct inferences about how to apply our general moral knowledge of our particular situation, [...] quickly and reliably.”³⁶

In the perspective of the doctoral student–professor relationship, beside the university’s ethical codes that are procuring “moral minimum”, virtue ethics could be the one to offer the call for the “moral excellence” in view of the path toward the authentic human flourishing of both the advisee and advisor, protégé and mentor.

MacIntyre underlines that “the human beings need to learn to understand themselves as practical reasoners about goods, about what on particular occasions it is best for them to do and about how it is best for them to live out their lives. Without learning this, human beings cannot flourish.”³⁷ In fact, humans cannot prosper without connection with others and learning from them about specific ways of human flourishing. Human relationships at the beginning of life are fundamental for the good and healthy development and they continue to have a significant role during the whole life and particularly in the educational process. During the doctoral program, the relation with the supervisor and mentor, as already mentioned, is crucial and it has a significant role in the development of the intellectual virtues as well as the moral ones.

Every relationship makes people vulnerable and supervision or mentoring are not an exception. McIntyre goes as far as to say that being vulnerable is an essential feature of human life. There are many situations in our life in which we are vulnerable and dependent on others, and if humans are essentially dependent “then the goods of human life are manifested within and through human vulnerability.”³⁸ In fact, we cannot understand the goods of human life or virtues that manifest these goods without attending to vulnerability. Moreover, “in some respects, our dependencies and vulnerabilities are inseparable from some of the goods of human life.”³⁹ The friendship, for example, cannot be separated from vulnerability and dependence; being a friend means making oneself vulnerable, but it is a vulnerability that enriches one’s life. Similar connotation is also valid for the supervision and mentoring relationships. The particular vulnerability of the graduate

36 D. S. Hutchinson, “Ethics,” in *The Cambridge companion to Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). 207.

37 MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals* 67.

38 Aaron D. Cobb, “Acknowledged Dependence and the Virtues of Perinatal Hospice,” *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 41 (2016): 29.

39 Cobb, “Acknowledged Dependence” 29.

student can be recognized in their relation with the advisor or mentor. In empirical research, the perception of unequal power has already emerged and whenever there is an unequal distribution of power the “weaker one” is also the more vulnerable one. Every doctoral advising relationship makes the advisee vulnerable; the advisor is someone who is more educated and experienced in the scientific field and someone on whom the consecution of the doctoral dissertation depends. “Knowledge admittedly creates power”,⁴⁰ writes May, but at the same time “the knowledge explosion has also produced an ignorance explosion” and even experts in one domain have to ignore almost all others and therefore become dependent in them. Certainly, we can speak about different vulnerabilities that every scholar has, but in this particular relational prospective, students seem to be more dependent and “vulnerable”. Eventually, introducing the virtue perspective in the student–professor relationship is promising inasmuch as it does not change the structure of the relation but opens it to the exercise of virtues for the personal flourishing of oneself and others.

MacIntyre does not only underline human vulnerability but also introduces the “virtues of acknowledged dependence” or “dispositions to appreciate one’s own indebtedness to the gifts of compassion and care that have fostered within the person a capacity for engaging in practical reasoning oriented toward flourishing.”⁴¹ The value of these virtues could be particularly relevant in the perspective of academic supervision and mentoring. Furthermore, the Scottish philosopher sustains that even traditional virtues are realizable only in the space of social relationships, which lead us to recognize that the role of academic social relationships in a person’s development of a virtuous life should not be easily overlooked. “What we do all day habituates and orients us in profound ways that over time impress a pattern on our emotional and intellectual life”,⁴² this is why one’s academic life and relationships cannot merely be part of daily routine, but rather one of the sources of a person’s identity. In this perspective, ethical reasoning is not only about specific decisions but also how we frame our “professional or academic selves”.⁴³ The virtues as constant character traits can enable the flow of one’s “ethical” self

40 William F. May, “The Virtues in a Professional Setting,” *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* 4 (1984): 73.

41 Cobb, “Acknowledged Dependence” 29.

42 Cf. Russel Muirhead, *Just work*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2004). 28.

43 Cf. George Cheney, “Encountering the Ethics of Engaged Scholarship,” *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 36, no. 3 (2008): 288.

to every aspect of the person's life leading them toward a more authentic human flourishing.

In his article about virtues in professional setting, May emphasizes two virtues, namely, perseverance and integrity, whose importance can also be acknowledged in our context. Perseverance is described as “a lowly virtue but indispensable to the acquisition of technical competence under the trying conditions of lengthy professional training today.”⁴⁴ Aquinas defines it “as denoting long persistence in any kind of difficult good” that “moderates certain passions, namely fear of weariness or failure on account of the delay,”⁴⁵ and is annexed to fortitude.⁴⁶ As a virtue, perseverance is a habit that inclines a person to persevere despite difficulties and it can be seen as one of the fundamental virtues necessary for the completion of the doctoral path. Adopting the habitus to persevere in “difficult good” that helps a person to achieve the desired goal also provides inner satisfaction and self-confirmation that one is able to persist and pursue certain “difficult good”. The supervision or mentoring relationship is not only an occasion for the student to develop the habit to persevere, but also an opportunity for the advisor and mentor to exercise the habit and improve it. Namely, accompanying students, mostly for years in their academical research, a dissertation or wider area of their life is certainly not a simple and always enjoyable task. Looking at the supervision and mentoring relationship from the “virtue” optic can add a new quality level to this relationship and renew the strengths in the sometimes monotone and difficult process.

Integrity is another particularly important virtue that enables “a wholeness or completeness of character, and as such it makes possible the fiduciary bond between the persons”⁴⁷ of the student and professor. Integrity viewed as a virtue evokes the necessity to develop such a disposition that is particularly tested in the situations of competition for advancement or reputation. The virtue of integrity gives a person moral posture to not bow in front of the more powerful or influential person, not to act out of pressure or to get benefits at the expense of other colleagues and students. May states that “nothing so demonstrates the indissoluble link between the virtues and objective principles and ideals as the virtue of integrity.”⁴⁸

44 May, “The Virtues in a Professional Setting,” 84.

45 Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, Chicago 1952, II-II, Q. 137, a. 1.

46 Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 137, a.2.

47 May, “The Virtues in a Professional Setting,” 85.

48 May, “The Virtues in a Professional Setting,” 86.

Academic milieu can also be a fruitful place to develop the virtue of benevolence or disposition to care about other people's flourishing.⁴⁹ At the very first sight, it may seem primarily as an opportunity for the advisor or mentor, but it is certainly not limited to them, since it also offers a chance for the student to practice this disposition toward colleagues and professors. The virtues as constant character traits can enable the flow of one's "ethical" self to every aspect of the person's life leading them toward a more authentic human flourishing.⁵⁰

One another "academically" precious virtue is thoughtfulness since it embodies the qualities of being intellectually reflective and critical as well as being ethically sensitive and considerate. It draws upon the virtues of intellectual fidelity and rigour and ethical fidelity to the needs and concern of others (students, colleagues etc.). It does not support intellectual and ethical abuse of power by others or toward others⁵¹ and as such it also requires the courage or the strength of character to stand for something despite and in front of difficulties and fear. If we continue, we could list many other virtues that can be developed and practiced in the context of academic relations, such as honesty, sincerity, magnanimity, loyalty and fidelity, gentleness, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, etc.

A commitment to academic work and doctoral research surpasses learning and teaching in one's own field. It recognizes the importance of collaboration with colleagues and students and commitment to integrate the entire academic practice. And the last one includes the interpersonal collaboration and acceptance that the "principles of *collegiality and consideration* govern relations with the whole spectrum of staff, students and all external persons with which one's academic projects are engaged."⁵² Virtues perspective can shed a new light on all these relations and create an opportunity for further social and personal development and therefore become a path toward one's flourishing.

Finally, there are no ideal circumstances for the exercise of virtues, but rather in every aspect of the life, in spite of and precisely because of it, learning and exercising a virtuous life is possible. Virtues are being born and

49 Cf. Heidi Li Feldman, "Prudence, Benevolence, and Negligence: Virtue Ethics and Tort Law," *Georgetown Law Faculty Publications and Other Works* 78 (2000): 1440.

50 Cf. Greg Light, Roy Cox, *Learning & Teaching in Higher Education: The Reflective Professional*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing 2009). 41.

51 Cf. Light, Cox, *Learning & Teaching in Higher Education* 41.

52 Light 42.

perfected in the midst of adversity and once faced with life challenges, we are not only moral agents but rather authors of our very being.⁵³

Conclusion

This paper strives to offer a different ethical view on the relationship between doctoral students and their advisors and mentors. The intention was to deepen reflection about the possibility of authentic human flourishing in the academic field, particularly regarding the collaborative relationship between a young and a more expert scholar. The idea of the human flourishing used in this paper is not understood as simply a synonym of certain moral perfectionism but is meant to include a broader dimension of human maturation, walk toward and accomplishment of profound happiness. The same term of human flourishing is a broad concept, and it would be presumptuous to think that an agreement on this topic would be possible in the postmodern pluralistic world. Nevertheless, even if we cannot agree or precisely define every determinant of human flourishing, it would be rather disputable to claim that a specific person is an example of human flourishing and at the same time that they are not virtuous.⁵⁴

Furthermore, it is suggested that working on forming good character and personal flourishing should have more space in the academic educational environment. To our knowledge, this is the first contribution to virtuous life in the graduate student-professor relationship that aims to open what we believe could be a fruitful area for further reflection.

Academic supervision or a mentorship relationship can become a privileged position for enhancing oneself and growth in intellectual and moral virtues. Even though the roles of advisor and mentor are separate, both can be oriented toward the academic and personal flourishing of the advisee or mentee, with no disregard for the possibility of enhancing own virtuous life. This kind of role model could have a promising positive impact on students and their way of realization of interpersonal and professional relationships. Virtues do not merely equip us with habits we should practice; they also model what we ought to be.⁵⁵ Moreover, considering today's pluralistic ethical arena, the virtue approach has the potential to become one of the common ethical languages in academia.

53 Cf. May, "The Virtues in a Professional Setting," 75.

54 Cf. VanderWeele, "On the promotion of human flourishing," 1–9.

55 Cf. May, "The Virtues in a Professional Setting," 75.

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Promoting the Birth of New Leaders In the Church Based on Barnabas' Example

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of the problem

Finding new leaders is a constant struggle for the Church. The fact that most evangelical Churches have an administrative electoral system means that decisions about appointing new leaders are made rapidly, sometimes in a matter of hours. Based on apostolic practice, what biblical principles can we find in the birth of new leaders? God calls people to lead, but what role do humans play in divine calling? What is the responsibility of officeholders and the congregation in this process?

1.2. The purpose of this paper

This paper aims to present a biblical perspective on the birth of new leaders within the Church and to outline some principles that may be implemented in current Church practices for appointing new leaders.

1.3. Significance

In most Eastern European countries, there is a dearth of individuals sufficiently prepared for the role of Church leader. In the communist era, the appointment of leaders was determined using secret methods. Thus, leadership choices were not discussed and remained taboo in the Church. Finding and training new leaders was regarded as distrust in God's providence. When a leader was elected, they were expected to be prepared to lead for life. These beliefs persist in some local churches. The majority of Church elders have been elected repeatedly for decades and there is no motivation to find and train new leaders. It is hoped that this paper will raise awareness and change current practices in such countries, including Hungary, the country of this author. As a leader, it is the personal responsibility of this author to help implement the biblical principles discussed herein.

1.4. Method

The first part of this paper will analyse a passage from the book of Acts that describes the discovery and mentoring of Saul by Barnabas. We shall take Acts 9:26-30 and 11:22-26 as one passage, being descriptions of the same story. In this exegetical section, we shall attempt to determine the intention of the author of the passage under discussion. What was the author trying to say? Based on this critical analysis, we will then go on, in chapter III, to formulate the biblical principles that inform the passage, looking into the author's beliefs. In chapter IV, we will suggest ways in which these principles might be implemented by the Church to generate new leaders. This method will provide a valid biblical foundation rooted in the exegetical analysis of a relevant passage that recognises the challenges of a rapidly changing Church. It is hoped that drawing on biblical principles in this way will validate the new approach proposed.

1.5. Limitations and delimitations

The exegesis of the selected passages from Acts will focus only on the appointment and finding of leaders. Other aspects of Church life discussed in the text will not be addressed. The purpose of this analysis is to highlight the circumstances in which a new leader can emerge; the details of leadership will not be covered in this paper. Further, there is no intention to broach the subject of training existing or newly-elected leaders.

2. The Intention of the Author—The Message of the Passage

2.1. The wider context of the passage

To analyse the meaning of the passage, we must determine the purpose of the author, the placement of, and the main character of the passage. We may then focus on a short exegesis of the text. The purpose of this section is to discover what the author intended to convey.

2.1.1. The purpose of Luke

To analyse the focal passage from Acts, we must embed it in the wider context of Luke's writings. Luke's gospel was written to the Gentiles. He is the only gospel writer who followed the spread of the gospel. For him, the spread of Christianity was prophetic. The purpose of his second book was to demonstrate the fulfilment of the prophecies about a messiah who would bring salvation to the Gentiles. In Acts, Luke shows that the evangelisation of the pagan nations was not just the inevitable outcome of circumstances but

God's intention.¹ Travel is a central component of the narrative, demonstrating the geographical spread of the gospel. Acts begins in Jerusalem, the capital of Judaism (as stated in Acts 1:8), and ends in Rome, the centre of the Roman Empire, and the pagan world.²

Luke's interest in the salvation of the nations is highlighted by the importance Luke attributes to Paul, who was appointed by God to bring Christianity to the Gentiles. The early Church accepted the mission of spreading the word, but it was Paul's ministry that achieved this goal. In this context, discovering, empowering and introducing him to the ministry is a crucial point and relates to the purpose of the book of Acts. The appointment of leaders is a central element of Acts, which presents the genesis of the first church.

The book of Acts follows two epochs in the history of the Church: the time of the earliest Church, and the time of Paul's mission in the world. Luke has a special understanding of history and is able to find the meaning of the whole in individual events.³ In writing a historical account of the beginnings of Christianity he remains true to the facts whilst also allowing his words to serve a theological purpose. It is for this reason that he focuses on some points to the exclusion of others.⁴

2.1.2. The placement of the passage in the book

As stated, we shall take Acts 9:26-30 and Acts 11:22-26 as one passage since the latter verses pick up the story begun in the former verses. This is not a personal opinion but a logical deduction based on the structure of the book.⁵ Luke leaves Paul in Tarsus at 9:30 only to pick up his story from that location again in 11:25. This is more than just a literary technique. It reflects the manner in which a Hellenistic historian approaches his material, according to regions and the ethnic groups that inhabit those regions.⁶ Therefore, based on this rationale, we shall study the two passages as one.

1 Francois Bovon, *Luke the Theologian*, 2nd ed. (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2006), 366.

2 Loveday C.A. Alexander, *Acts in Its Ancient Literary Context* (New York: T and T Clark International, 2005), 69-71.

3 Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 43.

4 I. Howard Marshall, *Acts, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 37.

5 Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke—Acts* (Augsburg: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 124.

6 Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles, A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 326.

2.1.3. *The person of Barnabas*

The main character in the focal passage is Barnabas. Acquainting ourselves with Barnabas' personality is important if we are to understand the message here. The chosen passage offers only a few words on Barnabas' character but they are very significant (Acts 11:24). He is the only man in the book of Acts described as "good."⁷ Luke uses this same word "ἀγαθός" in his gospel to describe Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:50). Acts 11:24 also tells us that Barnabas is full of the Holy Spirit and faith. These are traits also attributed to Stephen. He rejoiced (χαίρω) and encouraged them because he was full of the Holy Spirit. The ability to rejoice in the success of others is a sign of the Spirit. Barnabas not only encourages them but also participates in the evangelism. Through his preaching, many more were converted, according to Acts 11:24.

Barnabas is mentioned in Acts 24 times; 14 times together with Paul. Of these, seven refer to "Barnabas and Paul," and seven to "Paul and Barnabas." Barnabas appears more or less independently only nine times.⁸ The only passages that present him as a central figure are Acts 4:36-37 and Acts 11:22-26. He appears to be an influential but minor character.⁹ Barnabas' original name was Joseph. He became known as Barnabas because his co-workers gave him that accolade. This was because Barnabas means "the son of encouragement." This propensity to encourage others is demonstrated in three different stories in Acts.¹⁰ Acts tells us that Barnabas was born in Cyprus into a Jewish family descended from the tribe of Levi. Living in a diaspora outside of Palestine, he would have been relatively fluent in Greek. This bicultural background likely made him more sensitive to the challenges faced by "outsiders" and others who struggle to find acceptance.

2.2. *Exegesis of the text*

Given the geographical structuring of the book of Acts described above, we should view our focal passage as a journey, structuring our analysis around the cities mentioned: Jerusalem, Tarsus and Antioch.

7 Ibid, 370.

8 Markus Öhler, *Barnabas* (Budapest: Kálvin János, 2007), 7.

9 Paul Moots, *Becoming Barnabas* (Herndon, Virginia: Alban Institute, Inc., 2004), XVI.

10 In the first, Barnabas sells his land and donates the profits for the care of the poor and widowed—this act is presented in contrast to the dishonesty of Ananias and Sapphira. In the second, his spiritual gift is evident when he encourages Paul into ministry. In the third incident in which Barnabas showcases his gift for encouragement, he chooses to include John Mark in plans for an upcoming trip, despite John Mark having earlier abandoned the group. The use of this spiritual gift may be related to his background.

2.2.1. Jerusalem

In our passage, we find Paul back in Jerusalem. When he left Jerusalem in Acts 9:1-2, he was persecuting Christians but has since been converted following a vision in Damascus (Acts 9:3-25). Being persecuted as a Christian himself, he left Damascus and sought refuge with the local Christian community. Here, he found a larger congregation than we would expect from the report in Acts 8:1. We must assume that there has been further evangelisation on the part of the apostles or returning disciples who previously fled Jerusalem.¹¹ We can compare this account with Paul's report of the same period. According to Gal. 1:17-18, three years passed between Paul's conversion and his arrival in Jerusalem. These years were passed in Damascus and Arabia. In the Galatians account, this visit to Jerusalem is his first. This contradiction between Luke's and Paul's reports has led some to denounce Luke's historical credibility and portray him rather as a theologian who altered the facts to fit his message.¹² However, in his New Testament commentary, Howard Marshall argues that Luke reported historical facts accurately and remained faithful to his sources, but was subject to stylistic revisions.¹³ The majority of conservative scholars sustain the one-Paul view that Acts and the Epistles of Paul complement each other as historical accounts of the life of Paul.¹⁴

Paul and Luke wrote with different purposes and for different audiences. Paul wrote letters to certain congregations to address particular needs. It was not his aim to write an autobiography. In Galatians, he attempts to show that his authority as an apostle comes to him directly from Christ, not from Jerusalem. This explains why Barnabas is not mentioned in Gal. 1:18, in contrast with Gal. 2:1, which reports his visit to the council in Jerusalem (Acts 15). Paul was keen to establish his own credentials and independence.¹⁵ Conversely, Luke, as a Hellenistic historian, is interested in highlighting significant events relating to the general purpose of his message. He was under no obligation to include episodes that did not contribute to the spread of the gospel.¹⁶ In Acts 9:26-30, Barnabas is the central figure. He is presented as a mediator between Saul and suspicious apostles who fear that he is only claiming to be a disciple so as to continue his persecution of Christians. We

11 Scott Spencer, *Journeying Through Acts* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers LLC, 2004), 111.

12 Joe Morgado, „Paul in Jerusalem,” *JETS*, 37 no. 1. (1994): 55.

13 Marshall, *Acts, Tyndale Commentaries*, 57–68.

14 Morgado, „Paul in Jerusalem,” 56.

15 Witherington, III, *Acts of Apostles*, 323.

16 *Ibid.*, 324.

are not told how Barnabas knows about Saul. Did he hear reports? Or, being the “son of encouragement” did he choose to trust Saul? They did not meet in Damascus. However, according to Lenski, both attended the University of Tarsus years before.¹⁷ The time that they may have spent together in Tarsus would explain the natural affinity between them that we see in Jerusalem, but this hypothesis cannot be proved. A better explanation is given in the text. Barnabas “got hold on Saul” (9:27), investigated him and was convinced. It is notable how Barnabas presents Saul to the apostles. In his presentation, he uses three arguments: Saul had seen the Lord, the Lord spoke to Saul, and Saul spread the gospel in Damascus in the name of Jesus. This was not just a way to present Saul to the leaders of the Church. Through the presentation of these points, Barnabas answers some questions that have not been addressed. How is such a radical conversion possible and what was God’s intention in appearing to Saul? By asserting that Saul has seen and spoken to the risen Lord, Barnabas declares that Saul is not just a newly converted disciple but qualifies as a fellow apostle, chosen by the Lord.¹⁸ It is for this reason that Saul is taken to the apostles rather than the congregation. Luke stresses the extreme importance of Barnabas here. He was the first Church leader to recognise the future leader in Saul and stand up for him. It was this attitude that made it possible for Saul to start his public ministry in Jerusalem. He was not only accepted but also treated as an apostle by the leaders of the Church. In Acts 11:28, the reference to Saul “going in, and going out” means that he engaged in familiar social intercourse.¹⁹ He was regarded as a member of the flock and became well known by the congregation. The initial fear and suspicion dissipated. His activity ended in Jerusalem because of his conflict with the Hellenists and he left for Caesarea and Tarsus.

2.2.2. Tarsus

There may have been additional reasons why Saul was sent to Tarsus. Acts 9:31 states that, after Saul left Jerusalem, the Church had peace. This suggests that the presence of Saul was a serious provocation to the enemies of the Church. It was wise to send him away to a place where he had a greater chance of acceptance. Tarsus was Saul’s native land, so it was logical that his

17 R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1934), 374.

18 *Ibid.*, 374–375.

19 J. Calvin, *The Acts of the Apostles 1-13 (Calvin’s Commentaries)* (Edinburg: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), 273.

ministry would be most successful there, among the Gentiles. At that time, Tarsus was a famous cultural centre.²⁰ Acts does not tell us anything about Saul's activity in Tarsus. This is odd as, knowing Luke's intentions, it is hard to believe that Saul's success in spreading the gospel among the Gentiles would go unmentioned. There is no evidence that Saul established a congregation during his time in Tarsus and Cilicia. For almost a decade, he performed a minor role in the ministry and seemingly did nothing worth reporting. For more than ten years after his conversion and call to ministry (Acts 9:15) Saul appears to have taken no steps to fulfil his special mission.²¹ We can assume that he was treated by his relatives like Jesus in Nazareth. Whatever the answer, the scriptures are silent on the matter, leaving us with a gap of eight years in the account of Saul's life. Only Acts 22:21 gives some assurance that leaving Jerusalem was not Saul's intention but God's plan. Here is also the promise of a new calling. However, Saul had a long wait for this promise to be fulfilled.

2.2.3. Antioch

Antioch was called "the third among the cities of Roman world" by Josephus, after Rome and Alexandria.²² It was the provincial capital of Syria, with a population of half a million and a well-established Jewish community. Being the first metropolis outside of Israel, it was of great strategic importance for the growth of the early Christian Church.²³ The spread of the gospel represented a new development both geographically and ethnically.²⁴ In previous chapters, Luke reports that the gospel had made its way into Gentile territory but with modest results. Peter and Philip each baptised a foreign official. The scene was radically changed by presenting the multitude of Greek and Jewish believers in Antioch.²⁵ The mission was not initiated by Church leaders but by those who fled Jerusalem and, among the Greek-speaking Gentiles, by unnamed men from Cyprus and Cyrene (Acts 11:19-20). It was for this reason that Barnabas was chosen by the apostles to investigate the situation. Barnabas was also from Cyprus (Acts 4:36) and knew the language and culture. Barnabas found nothing to correct but "saw

20 Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 75.

21 Lenski, *Interpretation*, 377.

22 Witherington, III, 366.

23 Ibid.

24 Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, 146.

25 Spencer, *Journeying*, 129.

the grace of God” (v.23). He again lived up to his moniker by encouraging these unknown fellows instead of censuring them. Seeing their great success, he could have been jealous but was instead joyous. This joy, free from envy, is evidence of sincere godliness. Here again, we see Barnabas’ visionary outlook. He saw a great opportunity in an unprecedented situation. Luke does not take this ability for granted. He adds an editorial comment in Acts 11:24, explaining Barnabas’ attitude as saturation with the Holy Spirit, as previously mentioned. His personality compelled his interest in the growing movement in Antioch. He was completely open to this new congregation but his presence also demonstrates the value of unity. The right of the apostles to supervise and coordinate each new mission is not questioned.²⁶

Barnabas is once more presented as a visionary leader when he discovers more potential in Antioch. He goes to Tarsus to seek out Paul (Acts 11:25). After almost a decade, he remembers Saul and invites him to join the ministry. We mentioned previously that Saul had no reportable success in Tarsus. This may have been the reason for leaving him in Tarsus. It is possible that he was not trusted to become an effective worker. Yet, Barnabas intervened once more, providing Saul with another chance, a new challenge and a fresh opportunity to serve. In this instance, Barnabas was not just present, as in his first encounter with Saul in Jerusalem. He took the initiative and travelled more than one hundred miles to Tarsus to find Saul and invite him to Antioch.²⁷ This would be the best place for Saul to gain experience in ministry, in a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles. Barnabas was again the “son of encouragement,” finding Saul a place where his success was guaranteed and offering him new hope that his commission from the Lord would be fulfilled (Acts 9:15). Barnabas found a place of ministry to fit the strengths and spiritual gifts of Saul. He introduced Saul in Antioch in the same way as he had in Jerusalem, attesting to his bridge-building capacity yet again.²⁸ Barnabas not only found the best place for Saul’s ministry but mentored him for a whole year. He was not afraid that Saul might outshine him, or that his role would be diminished.²⁹ His decision to introduce Saul into the ministry was crucial, not just for Antioch but for the future of the entire Church. Their fellowship was blessed and honoured by God’s miracle of adding a “multitude” to the congregation and by originating the name of

26 Lenski, 453.

27 Spencer, 131.

28 Witherington, III, 370.

29 Calvin, *Apostles 1-13*, 331.

“Christians” in that place. Harmonious ministry that takes the spiritual gifts of the ministers into account has long-term effects.

3. Principles of Leadership—The Author's Beliefs

Based on our exegesis of the chosen passage and taking into consideration the wider context of the book of Acts, we can formulate some principles about the generation of new Church leaders based on Luke's beliefs.

3.1. Empowered leaders discern and empower new leaders

Leaders do not appear from a vacuum. By emphasizing Paul's two encounters with Barnabas and the apostles, Luke intends to demonstrate that ministry is not independent from the Church. Paul's connection to the apostles is not an incident for Luke, nor is it his intention to relativise Paul's authority. All of the missionaries in Acts “are brought into connection with the Jerusalem leadership as quickly as possible.”³⁰ This is true despite Paul's attempt to demonstrate his apostolic authority, coming as it does from God's personal calling rather than the apostles. As mentioned earlier in this essay, this was raised by Paul during a controversy where his apostolate was questioned by the congregation. Barnabas acts as a mediator between the new leader and the Church. Even Barnabas is presented by Luke as submissive to the twelve in his donation of the money from the sale of his land and his acceptance of a new name given by the apostles. His role is to connect Saul to the organised Church. His first visit to Jerusalem shows the unity between the missionaries and highlights his acceptance by the whole Church.³¹ He invites Saul to Tarsus and the ministry as a delegate from the Church of Jerusalem. This is not an isolated occurrence in the book of Acts. Luke tells us how Paul empowered Silas and how Barnabas did the same with John Mark (Acts 15:37-39). This view of leadership is based on Luke's ecclesiology. God's calling does not raise anyone above the organisation. God's calling is repeated and enforced by the organisation. Nobody can claim a higher authority without his calling being discovered by the Church. In such discoveries, empowered leaders like Barnabas have an indispensable role. At the same time, the organisation

30 Luke Timothy Johnson, *Sacra Pagina: The Acts of the Apostles* 5th ed. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 174.

31 *Ibid.*, 175.

cannot replace God's calling and must recognise that God may use a variety of methods to call leaders.³²

3.2. The ministry of encouragement creates the best environment for the emergence of new leaders

Barnabas lived up to his nickname as the “son of encouragement” given to him by the apostles. Leadership in its traditional form is practised to control and correct others. To take over is a sign of authority. In contrast, the ministry of encouragement is the “art of supporting others in the discovery of their own spiritual gifts call to discipleship.”³³ Barnabas encouraged Saul when the apostles were suspicious. When he was sent to Antioch to set things right in a problematic situation begun by unknown and unauthorised Greeks, Barnabas reassured them and expressed joy, acknowledging their ministry and recognised that their success had come from God. He encouraged Saul by offering him an important task after eight years of ineffective ministry and working closely with him for a longer period. “In any church where spiritual as well as numeric growth is happening, this ministry of encouragement is being exercised even if it is called by a different name.”³⁴ Luke leaves no doubt that encouragement is not merely a learned ability but a consequence of a spirit filled with life. As with every spiritual gift, however, it can and should be developed.

3.3. Every new leader needs a good mentor

Barnabas demonstrates the qualities that every mentor should have. He shows humility by seeking support for his ministry in Antioch, which also indicates acceptance of his own limitations. He also shows integrity and lives up to his name. In Antioch, he lived as he preached. A mentor leads others by being more than by doing.³⁵ They are a model for others to emulate. Trust is also an important quality in a mentor. Barnabas demonstrates his trust in Saul when others have none and this trust is apparent again when Barnabas invites Saul to Antioch. Trust generates trust. Saul's response was trusting acceptance of Barnabas leadership as a delegate of the organised Church. Barnabas manifests trust in another difficult situation when he offers John

32 Bob Gordon and David Fardouly, *Master Builders* (Chichester, England: Sovereign World, 1990), 5.

33 Moots, *Becoming*, 2.

34 *Ibid.*, XII.

35 Steve D. Cassimy, *A Guide to Effective Pastoral Ministry* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishings, 2009), 19.

Mark a second chance, despite Paul's refusal to do so (Acts 15:37-39). The relationship between mentor and mentored is constantly developing. First, Barnabas was Saul's sponsor in Jerusalem. Later, in Antioch, he becomes his partner in ministry. Luke initially refers to them as "Barnabas and Paul." In the second part of Acts, they are "Paul and Barnabas." The change in name order indicates a change in roles. Paul has become the senior partner of Barnabas.³⁶ The mentor has stepped back to allow the mentored to grow and shine. The hardest part of a mentor's role is allowing oneself to be "laid aside." However, the need to do so was demonstrated by Paul, and he advises others to do the same, having learned from his own experience.³⁷ He replicated the process he had learned from his own mentor.³⁸ Paul goes on to notice Timothy in Lystra and involve him in ministry in the same way as Barnabas involved him (Acts 16:1-4). Another duty of a mentor is to provide tasks fitted to the spiritual gifts of the mentored individual, leading them to success. This is the context in which leaders grow.

3.4. Becoming a leader is not just the appointment but an ongoing, continuous learning process

Good leaders do not appear fully formed. The birth of a leader is a long process. Saul was appointed by God on the road to Damascus, but he did not become a leader in that moment. The journey motif in Acts is relevant to the development of leaders. First, Saul changes from the persecutor to the persecuted, learning that the proclamation of the gospel is dangerous. The next step in his formation is his encounter with the apostles in Jerusalem, where he gains experience that helps him handle the pain of rejection, especially by those from whom he expected encouragement. Disappointment is an important phase in the development of a leader. Saul's eight years in Tarsus also represents rejection but his solitude nourishes his spiritual development. Gordon and Fardouly compare the call to ministry to a seed that must be nurtured. This nurture comes through simple obedience to God, with silent preparation time.³⁹ Another element in Saul's development as a leader comes from his relationship with Barnabas. Saul learns that the key to successful leadership is working in partnership with others. First as a disciple, then

36 Moots, *Becoming*, 28.

37 "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2.2, TNIV)

38 Rowland Forman, *The Leadership Baton* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2004), 109.

39 Gordon and Fardouly, *Master Builders*, 6.

as an equal partner, and finally as a leader with full responsibility when the other steps back. Appointment to the position of leader is just the starting point, the process of becoming is long. On this journey, a mentor is crucial.

4. Application of the Principles—The Present Truth

In this author's native country⁴⁰ the issue of leadership arises only when the Church is struggling to find appropriate leaders at short notice. The lack of new leaders is a consequence of misunderstanding God's calling as exclusive to those who lead. Another reason for this dearth of suitable leaders is the lack of training. Attending leadership courses without having been elected as a leader is regarded as is considered hubris, or as a desire to replace an existing leader. There is also a lack of opportunities to gain leadership experience before being appointed by the congregation. The purpose of this essay is to address this problem in accordance with biblical principles. This chapter will focus on some possible applications of the principles identified in the previous chapter. We will look at the three most urgent of these that are relevant to the Church: equipping potential leaders, implementing a wider mentoring system and promoting a shared-ministry leadership culture.

Equipping and empowering others is a common goal for any growing ministry.⁴¹ It is an investment in the future. Good leaders have a discerning eye for potential leaders and recognise the spiritual gifts of others. They allow those who aspire to the role to express their desire to become leaders and challenge them to develop their potential, giving them the opportunity to grow. Every church leader needs to "equip [...] pastors with leadership qualities." Pastors also need to empower and assist church members to become potential elders. Leadership training seminars need to accommodate this special situation. Forman calls this a Church-based training where "people development occurs in and through the real-life, on-going ministry activities of a local church; it includes life-on-life mentoring in the context of real community."⁴² Candidates for training might include young people and new believers, emerging leaders who have some leadership characteristics but need development and existing leaders, who are already serving in a

40 The author writes from Hungary and uses the Seventh-day Adventist Church as an example.

41 Gordon and Fardouly, 223.

42 Forman, *The Leadership Baton*, 55.

leadership role.⁴³ Every local church needs to develop its training strategy. The format of practical leadership training leads us to the second application: a wider mentoring system.

As stated in the introduction, in the present author's home country of Hungary, it is assumed that the outcome of the election process is a prepared leader. Mentoring new leaders requires biblical principles; thus, new initiatives need to be implemented. As we have a mentoring system in the internship program for pastors, so we need to have a preparatory system for prospective new leaders both at the conference level for pastors and at the local church level for elders. Gifted and experienced mentors need to be appointed to train new leaders. Training leaders requires than just theoretical courses. It is a "one-on-one discipleship" process.⁴⁴ Coleman,⁴⁵ (cited by Fast) describes the process from selection to imitation: "I do—you watch; we do together; you do—I watch and then you do."⁴⁶ The cycle requires multiple repetitions on the part of the disciple. This is the proper way to provide experience and guide new leaders to success. According to Forman, a mentor's task is to identify prospective leaders by building spiritual friendships and then to guide them through imitative living, the passing on of wisdom, involvement by coaching, and finally, releasing the disciple.⁴⁷ The last step is very important and potentially painful, like the separation of Barnabas and Paul—yet the end of their peer-mentoring relationship resulted in two new teams (Acts 15:39-40).

The last of our three applications is the practice of shared ministry. Traditionally, leaders were defined as those fully "in charge," with everyone else taking the role of followers. Pearce calls this "vertical leadership."⁴⁸ Research indicates that high-performing teams exercise "shared leadership."⁴⁹ This is leadership shared between team leaders and team members, rotating to the person most equipped to solve a particular issue. It requires fully engaged team members and fully developed empowerment within the team. Shared leadership is the best choice for tasks that are highly interdependent,

43 Ibid., 103.

44 Dennis Fast, „Making Space in Ministry for Mentors,” *Ministry Compass*, 33 (2004), 102.

45 Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Westwood, NJ: Rewell, 1964).

46 Fast, „Making Space in Ministry for Mentors,” 102-106.

47 Forman, 105–111.

48 Craig L. Pearce, „The Future of Leadership,” *Academy of Management Executive*, 18 (2004), 48.

49 Craig L. Pearce and H.P. Sims, „Vertical Versus Shared Leadership,” *Academy of Management Executive*, 6, 172-194.

complex and require creativity.⁵⁰ At the local church level, the system of electing department leaders promotes vertical leadership. Appointing leader teams instead of departmental directors would facilitate the shared leadership model. The departmental committee system of “voting then going home members” is not equivalent to a leadership team with equally engaged and empowered team members. It does not eliminate the vertical leader heading the team, secure resources or communicate a united vision. The development of shared leadership can be facilitated by organisations training team members, implementing reward systems and developing a culture of shared leadership.⁵¹ Shared leadership makes it possible for local pastors to delegate responsibilities, creating a system that does not revolve around the pastor. Involving new volunteers in ministry offers others the opportunity to grow. There may be some fears about delegation; some may worry about another person doing a better job than them; they may fear that they will no longer be needed; that another person will destroy their work; they may fear that they cannot train another person or that delegation would be interpreted as work avoidance.⁵² These fears need to be addressed and responded to by the organisation. Shared leadership can also be applied in ministry by appointing minister pairs in pastoral districts. There are some mega-churches where team-ministry is practised but in most small European evangelical pastoral districts, it is not financially viable to appoint more than one minister. However, enlarging the districts would make it possible to delegate two ministers able to complement one another. On the other hand, shared ministry may have some problems: one member becoming subordinate to the other, competition between ministers, unresolved conflicts, or the organisation itself becoming dysfunctional. However, vertical leadership provides opportunities to intervene in such situations.

5. Conclusion

Empowering new leaders is a constant challenge in a Church with an administrative electoral system. The example given by the fast-growing, dynamic apostolic Church is relevant today.

An exegetical analysis of Acts 9:26-30 and 11:22-26 (taken as one passage) has offered insight into Luke’s interpretation of the process by which new

50 Pearce, “The Future of Leadership,” 48.

51 Pearce, 52.

52 Gordon and Fardouly, 260.

leaders are discovered. As a gifted mentor, Barnabas recognised the potential future leader in Saul. He spoke out on Saul's behalf, expressed trust in him, and eventually invited him to ministry and assisted him with this.

Based on what we were able to infer about Luke's beliefs, we formulated some principles relating to the formation of new leaders. These are:

- Empowered leaders discern and empower new leaders;
- The ministry of encouragement creates the best environment for the emergence of new leaders;
- Every new leader needs a good mentor;
- Becoming a leader is not just the appointment itself, but a long and continuous learning process.

Each principle can be applied and adapted to the present situation. The three most urgent applications relevant to my conference are: systematically equipping potential leaders with the necessary knowledge, implementing a wider mentoring system and promoting a shared-ministry leadership culture.

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Learning and Motivation in Old Age

Third Age Learning in Hungary: Presentation of a Seminar Course

The education of the elderly is a special segment of adult education that is gaining popularity in today's world day by day. The ELTE¹ University of the Third Age programme series aims at popularising life-long learning as well as supporting the elderly in learning processes based on active participation, via various seminars and lectures. In my paper, besides presenting the characteristics of third age learning – using Hungarian and international sources also –, I will also touch upon the structure and details of such a seminar I have organised, examining the realisation of the Wlodkowski Motivational Model in practice.

Gerontagogy – Third Age University

Pedagogy, andragogy and gerontagogy constitute separate fields of research within the science of anthropagogy. While the first deals with children and the second with adults, the third concentrates on members of a special, separate group that constitutes an independent category of adult learning: the elderly – more precisely, the education of the elderly.² The task of gerontagogy is to prepare for processes that accompany old age, and to facilitate the conditions of active, harmonic old age via learning and cultivation of the mind. Nowadays, various national and international programmes are available in order for the elderly to participate in different trainings.³ Third Age University

1 See for details: Eötvös Loránd University – Faculty of Education and Psychology: <https://www.ppk.elte.hu/en/>

2 Mászlai Olga, „Az idősek tanulási sajátosságai,” *Felnőttképzési Szemle* 1 (2015): 18.

3 Kovács Zsuzsa, Bene Ágnes, Schiller Emese and Hornyák-Kövi Franciska, „Tanulás időskorban. A Harmadik Kor Egyeteme szemináriumainak tapasztalatai,” in *Felnőttkori tanulás. Fókuszban a szakképzés és a munkaerőpiac*, ed. Csehne Papp Imola and Kraiciné Szokoly Mária (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2020), https://mersz.hu/hivatkozas/m762ft_132#m762ft_132 (2021. 03. 24.)

seminars advertised by the Faculty of Education and Psychology of ELTE have a double objective: to provide opportunities for elderly participants for active learning, and to provide educational practice for university students preparing for andragogy. On these occasions, motivation and learning are realised in two dimensions: participants would like to learn, whereas doctoral students who are giving the lessons would like to learn to teach (as well).

Topicality and Problems of the Subject

In the past few decades, the aging of population throughout Europe can be observed. A society is sustainable if its structure converges towards the structure of an ideal pyramid: in this case, more people are born than children born previously, who are, again, more numerous than the young before them and so on. If this is the case, continuous development and the sustainability of society can be provided.

Characteristics of a greying society are that the average age and the number of older people are rising. Until the 19th century, the average age of the population had been around 30-35 years. Nowadays it has doubled: it is around 75-85 years. This is why the upper limit of economically active age *is extending* and retiring age *is rising*, thus, institutionalised adult learning concerns and should concern older generations more than we have previously been accustomed to. This process does not only affect health and pension systems and social security but also the job market: the elderly age group, too, gets a decisive role in this area, and job market education becomes necessary for previously inactive generations (60+ years of age).

However, *ageism* – stereotypical thinking based on age – is strongly present in societies. We have a tendency to be biased, to think in stereotypes and, unfortunately, sometimes even to discriminate by age – and although on hearing this expression, we primarily think of the elderly, the young are also discriminated against.⁴ As for the elderly, we can talk about cognitive (“the elderly is a burden on society”), emotional (“I don’t like being with the elderly”), and behavioural (“I avoid the company of elderly people”) components of ageism.⁵ This type of dismissive behaviour can be explicit (conscious) or implicit (unconscious), as well as negative and positive

4 Michael D. Barnett and Cassidy M. Adams, „Ageism and Aging Anxiety among Young Adults: Relationships with Contact, Knowledge, Fear of Death, and Optimism,” *Educational Gerontology* 44, no. 11 (November 2018): 1-2.

5 Kolos Krisztina, Kenesei Zsófia, Kis Kornélia et al. , „Az ageizmus kialakulására ható tényezők a magyar fiatalok és idősek körében,” *Demográfia* 63/1 (2020): 11.

stereotypes such as “the elderly are slow” or “the elderly are wise”. One thing is for sure: an important formative factor of social network systems is transgenerational connection. Seminars and lectures of the Third Age University aspire, among others, to bridge the gap between existing generational differences and to promote the catching up of the elderly.

Active Old Age

But who is an elderly learner? According to the classification of the World Health Organisation⁶, the stages of human life cycle are the following:

1. The age of transition: from 45-50-to 55-60 years
2. aging: 60-75
3. old age: 75-90
4. very old age: 90-100
5. age of Methuselah: above 100

It is important to note that the above is merely a generalised classification because the nature of aging largely depends on the lifestyle that the person has led, the state of their mind, body and spirit and also on their previous knowledge; the process of aging is influenced by both external (social, cultural and financial) and internal (genetic) factors. Upon analysis of Hungarian data, one can establish the characteristics of learning activities of elderly age groups: based on these we can state that the learning capability of 50-year-olds is characterised by a relative decline; international research also proves that these capabilities are optimal until the age of 50 but the decrease that happens afterwards is not sudden either.⁷ Despite (or because of) this, science marks the start of ageing, that is accompanied by biological, sociological and psychological changes, at the age of 50.

“Active ageing” is a recurrent concept in the most important documents issued by the WHO and the EU on the elderly. By this, we mean a social and individual practice that improves the quality of living for the elderly. On an individual level, it means living an elderly life that does not only entail being economically active and staying on the job market but also encompasses active participation in social, cultural and civil life, as well as social

6 WHO, „Active Aging: A Policy Framework” (2002), https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/active_ageing/en/ (2021. 03. 24.)

7 Bajusz Klára, Jászberényi József, „Az időskori tanulásról,” *Kultúra és Közösség* 4/3 (2013): 60.

reintegration.⁸ When the older generation satisfies their intellectual need and the need for culture in their free-time, when they live active intellectual lives by gaining new knowledge, their mental ageing can slow down; all these can have positive effects on the health of their body and mind. Research trials and control group trials have already proven that participation in at least one one-semester-long course has an impact on the well-being and self-interpretation of elderly applicants.⁹ Continuous expanding of knowledge is an essential condition of successful ageing.

Third Age Learning and Motivation

Although third age learning constitutes a special part of adult learning, third age learning and thus, third age teaching differs a lot from the learning and teaching of average adults. When organising a course, one has to take into account the age of participants and the amount and type of experience deriving from it. Moreover, one should not overlook mental capabilities because the deterioration of senses and memory loss can impede elderly learning. Because of all this, the process, the method and pace of the elderly's learning process all differ from that of adults in its aim and motivation.¹⁰

1. As for the nature of learning, instead of formal, education system type of learning, the elderly prefer non-formal or informal learning, places where learning is going on almost unseen. By creating a more relaxed, more informal atmosphere, the ice can easily be broken, and they can be integrated into practical exercises. Fortunately, in Hungary, there are various popular programmes and courses available for elderly citizens (and many of these opportunities are free of charge). The most popular among them are on internet usage and language learning but there are also courses that offer sporting opportunities or creating art, and numerous trainings of open universities exist as well.

8 Sz. Molnár Anna, „Az idősek tanulásának társadalmi megítélése,” in *Neveléstudomány – reflexió – innováció*, ed. Szabolcs Éva (Budapest: Gondolat, 2010), 118-119.

9 See for details: Rocío Fernandez-Ballesteros, Mangeles Molina, et al., „Promoting Active Aging through University Programs for Older Adults,” *GeroPsych* 25, (2012): 145-154.

10 Bajusz Klára, „Senior Academy: The Social Impacts of Learning in Third Age,” in *Learning Cities and Culture Working Together*, ed. Németh Balázs (Pécs: University of Pécs, 2019), 5-8.

2. The persona of the lecturer is a decisive factor in the success of a course or training. In this case, the traditional teacher-student relationship is replaced by partnership and equality, the teacher is not necessarily and not exclusively present in a leading role. Lectures are characterised by learner-centeredness and participant-centeredness, one has to be prepared for continuous dialogue and answering questions that arise. Elderly learners have a penchant for sharing their experience on given topics, they also enjoy a greater degree of independence. Thus, the teacher has to be prepared for incidental debates: it is important to prepare, direct and close the conversation properly and pedagogically. It is worth having shorter or longer breaks during a lengthier seminar – if students require so.
3. The teacher should take into account the peculiarities of elderly learners that mainly derive from their age and life experience. On the one hand, it is necessary to survey their previous knowledge, and on the other hand, it is worth continuously repeating and referring back to what has already been said. It is also strongly advised to prioritise activating educational forms and to use various visual aids so that the lecture is well seen and heard, and at last but not least, so that it becomes enjoyable and the curriculum engages their attention. It is already a challenge to retain the attention of the younger generation for 45 or 90 minutes; and because of the above-mentioned facts, it is obviously even more difficult in case of the elderly.
4. Psychologically, motivation can be interpreted as an incentive of human activity; an inner state of mind that inspires people to act or not to act in a certain way.¹¹ In the present paper, I do not aim to provide an all-encompassing presentation of the concept of motivation, I would merely like to touch upon its main characteristics. One thing is for sure: it is a decomplex concept, one that undergoes constant change during our lives. As children, we start school with great enthusiasm and, in most cases, this enthusiasm decreases due to developmental psychological reasons and because of external pressure.¹² The most

11 Anita Pierog, „Explore Adult Learning Motivations of Various Training Levels,” *International Journal of Engineering and Management Sciences* 2, no. 4 (2017): 433.

12 Bencsik Andrea, Trunkos Ildikó, „Életen át tartó tanulás, de tudunk, és főleg akarunk-e idősebb korban tanulni? Életkor és tanulási motiváció egy magyar vizsgálat tükrében,” in *Gazdaság és morál: tiszta társadalom, tiszta gazdaság*, ed. Róbert Péter (2012), 4-5.

popular classification distinguishes internal (primary, intrinsic) and external (secondary, extrinsic) motivation.¹³ However, in my opinion, these categories are not fixed, as in many cases, these two types are in correlation with each other. For example, the feeling of internal calling might be formed in an individual by an external motivation. Our ever-changing world requires change, adaptation and development on our part: and in this case, many people start to learn something new due to an external stimulus or pressure, yet they do not experience pressure as negative because an inner “voice” is already working in them. What is also sure: the change in motivation is statistically related to age, yet, numerous general suppositions (more specifically: with ageing, our motivations become increasingly interior) do not always turn out to be true. Hungarian research has also proven that, although there is a significant difference between the ages of intrinsically and extrinsically motivated people, this turns out to counter our expectations: the elderly are more extrinsically motivated, while the young are more intrinsically motivated.¹⁴ To sum up: adult learning does not exist without lasting motivation.

So what can motivate the elderly in learning? Why do they choose to attend courses or programmes? The answer is manifold, as is the concept of motivation.

The first and foremost reason is perhaps the need to communicate, as the elderly are more and more under the influence of loneliness. The accompanying feeling of “being redundant” can make one ill in mind and spirit. Venues of learning are perfect for participants to gain new knowledge and get to know new people, perfect for retaining old friendships as well as being a way to form social networks.

In this connection, the opportunity of spending one’s free-time usefully is also worth mentioning because with the onset of old age, people have more free-time. It is important for this period no to be inactive, as it is easy to sink into self-pity or doing nothing. It is a perfect time to learn something new or to be acquainted with an old and forgotten area of knowledge and catch up with ourselves: we can make up for something that we did not have time before.

<https://kgk.sze.hu/konferenciakotet2012> (2021. 03. 24.)

13 Bajusz Klára, „Tanulni hatvan felett,” *Tudásmenedzsment* 2 (2016): 11-12.

14 Bencsik, „Életen át tartó...,” 7.

The state of their health can also motivate the elderly: courses can help in combatting a pre-existing illness or preventing a new one. These programmes rejuvenate both the body and the spirit.

Cultivating a shared professional past can also motivate participants in applying for various courses: they can develop themselves academically and can keep in touch with their ex-colleagues as well.

Technological changes should not be overlooked either: the Internet and the fast-paced development of digital devices requires new knowledge from the elderly, too. More and more old people wish to learn how to use computers, mobile phones and the Internet properly.

In my opinion, we should also mention modernisation brought about by the globalised world, as everyone has to adapt to it to some extent. Sudden changes, the quick flow of a lot of information, the simplification of travelling opportunities and “internationalisation” bring about the importance of gaining fresh knowledge. Adaptation to the unfolding situation is not only an opportunity but also a duty in today’s world.

Presenting the Third Age University Seminar

In 2019, I have given a seminar for the Third Age University entitled *Cultural Diversity: Similarities and Differences*. Usually, there are five applicants for these seminars but in this case, there had been more than ten students.

In order to fulfil the active learning role of the course, I have used the Wlodkowski model that encourages learning motivation.¹⁵ This model had been a decisive factor in my self-reflection and the course of the seminar itself. I have taken into account the four major factors of motivation:

1. Creating an accepting environment (inclusive acceptance);
2. attitude;
3. inspiring understanding;
4. developing competences.

As in the case of adults, learning environment, the teacher’s and participants’ respect for each other are also decisive for the elderly. If an attachment to a specific group is formed, it is easier for them to share their opinions and thus, we can create a more relaxed atmosphere. Fortunately, in my case, this

15 Raymond J. Wlodkowski, *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn a Comprehensive Guide for Teaching All Adults* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008)

was a well-acquainted group whose members knew each other from long ago. When there are new applicants, I try to support and consider them as members of the group as soon as possible. On the very first occasion, everyone introduced themselves, shared some important information about themselves and why they registered for the course, what their aims are upon completing it. At this point, the reflection on other participants and mapping of points of intersection had already started. It is very important to strengthen positive attitudes to learning and to uphold personal interest in the learning material. I could reach this by continuous feedback, recapitulatory questions and praise. They could see that what they were doing was good, useful and that their knowledge was expanding.¹⁶ The third element of the model is the interpretation of learning experience, that is, a new element of knowledge connected to the previous knowledge; our objective here was also to facilitate involvement. Finally, the feeling of competence development should also be mentioned because if we are successful in something important to us, it also motivates us.

The birth of the seminar was motivated by the thought that in a postmodern, globalised society it is essential to get to know other cultures that are, at first sight, different from our own. One of the reasons for this is that we are living, travelling and working in a globalised part of the world where borders are not defined. Because of globalisation and increased mobility, today, patterns of intercultural co-existence have also appeared besides national cultures, and due to them, “the world is expanding”; people can travel relatively easily, quickly and cheaply and can come into contact with far away cultures that they would not have been able to do so before.

In the course of these seminars, participants could get to know these variegated cultures and in many cases, the religions that form the bases of those cultures. The education of the elderly is outstandingly important in this regard, as many of them do not speak other languages, have not travelled far abroad and have not met people whose cultures were different from theirs. Because of all these, we have to take into account their incidental bias, which also makes their learning and education more difficult. The sensitising factor of the seminar’s topic is crucially important – I have used the results of numerous international and Hungarian research projects as foundations.

In Hungary, we can discern a sort of division in the attitude to other cultures which can also be explained by the lack of necessary knowledge: we

16 Sally Dench, Jo Regan, *Learning in Later Life: Motivation and Impact* (London: Department for Education and Employment, 2000)

do not know exactly what we refuse or what we accept. Thus, in a postmodern society, it is not only an opportunity to get to know groups whose cultures are different from ours but also an everyday necessity, and the possession of such knowledge is not merely an opportunity either but already a duty.¹⁷ A lot of research have been conducted on the phenomenon of xenophobia in Hungary and many of them have arrived to the same conclusion: it is not only age that matters in creating a xenophile or xenophobe attitude but also the level of education. It can be stated that the less educated are more likely to be xenophobic than the more educated and also that church-going reduces the chances of xenophobia.¹⁸ The same study also sheds light on the issue how “social contact” and knowledge influence the formation of xenophobia. It turned out that those who personally know people from other cultures, are more tolerant, and that personal acquaintance and proper knowledge (in other words: why do I consider that “other” person different?) decreases xenophobia. Another international research from 2013-14 also emphasises lack of knowledge, fear of the unknown and worrying about changes among factors that strengthen stereotypes and xenophobia, while also underlining that personal experience, being acquainted with topics and cultural knowledge exchange are the pillars of creating a more welcoming society.¹⁹

The course primarily centred on getting to know the five major world religions and in a wider sense, we have put under microscope the notions of culture and religion in the East and West, while analysing historical events where the encounters of cultures have played a significant role. We have focussed on similarities and differences of cultures during the seminars. Among competences to be developed were: objective point of view, openness, empathy, readiness to co-operate, independent gaining of information and life-long learning.

The aim of each lesson had been getting to know each religion/culture at a time. On each occasion, a presentation helped in guiding them within

17 Hornyák-Kövi Franciska, „Cultural Diversity in Adult Learning. Knowledge among Teachers of Lutheran Schools,” in *Volume of the 10th Jubilee Conference of Junior Theologians and Doctoral Students*, ed. Kiss Gábor (Budapest: DOSZ, 2020), 229.

18 Sík Endre, Simonovits Bori, and Szeitl Blanka, „Az idegenellenesség alakulása és a bevándorlással kapcsolatos félelmek Magyarországon és a visegrádi országokban,” *Regio 2* (2016): 81-108.

19 Beams (Breaking Down European Attitudes Towards Migrant/Minority Stereotypes) Project: <https://menedek.hu/projektek/beams-breaking-down-european-attitudes-towards-migrantminority-stereotypes> (2021. 03. 24.)

the material, and besides these presentations, each lesson was accompanied by either a theme-specific practical group work or an individual task. Throughout the semester, the individual work of students have been decisive, and played an outstanding role, due to the special schedule of the course itself. It had also been a requirement for the successful completion of the course. On the last occasion, participants presented to each other a cultural or religious topic that was of special interest to them or that had not been discussed during the lessons; it could happen individually or in groups.

The content of the seminar and its topics (6 x 90 minutes)

11 October	Let's Begin! Getting to know each other, introduction, clarification of concepts; Survey of previous knowledge and interests
25 October	People of the Book Judaism, Christianity and Islam as Religions and Cultures
8 November	Cultures of India Hinduism and Buddhism
22 November	Cultures of the Far-East Taoism, Shintoism and Confucianism
6 December	Summary, Questions and Answers Religious Challenges of Modernity
13 December	Presentation Presentations of Students

As can be observed from the chart above, we delved into a different culture each occasion; on the first lesson, in order to create a positive atmosphere, we merely got to know each other and the requirements of the semester. I considered it important for the curriculum to be as personality-oriented as possible and that members of the group form a sort of community. Of course, in this specific case I did not have to make a great effort because the seminar members had already known each other. This was also the time when I presented the basic concepts that constituted a solid base for the successful completion and understanding of a course with such topic: besides the pairs of concepts *religion* and *culture*, *East* and *West*, we also analysed expressions such as *monotheism*, *polytheism*, *henotheism*. Due to the fact that adult and

elderly learners possess an enormous amount of previous knowledge, by clarifying basic concepts, I also received an outline of this knowledge as well as of their interest and motivation.

On each occasion, I presented the relevant literature from which students could start preparing their individual research, preparation and reports. I considered it important that they could indeed reach back to authentic sources and learn authentic information for the future. I brought these books for classes, passed them around and if they were available online, I sent them to the students as well. During the lessons, I attempted to make the material clearer and more colourful by using PowerPoint presentations and relevant videos. Also, for each lesson, I prepared playful practical exercises for the participants that we checked together. The students always participated actively in the solving of these tasks, took interest in them and sometimes asked questions as well.

When analysing the Religions of the Book, they received a chart in which they were to fill in the characteristics of three major monotheistic religions, according to a previously compiled set of key words: founder, foundation date, holy scripture, holy place, celebrations etc.. In case of the cultures of India, they had to pair concepts with Buddhism or Hinduism, and in the case of Far Eastern religions, we interpreted messages of hitherto learned “religions” based on a Chinese fable. In the case of modern age challenges, we got acquainted with the term “religious mixture” via a series of exercises where we read syncretist and superstitious expressions and sayings. The last lesson had been about the self-directive learning process of participants: taking into account their interest, they chose a topic that they shared with the others: some talked about reminiscences, some reviewed books. Rather interesting dialogues unfolded among participants based on each topic; listening to the others, getting to know various points of view and experiences as well as the practice of reflecting upon each other are especially important in the case of sensitive topics like religion and culture.

Summary, Experiences

Third Age University seminars play an outstanding role in active old age learning. By meeting multiple times (more specifically: six times) during a semester, and actively spending ninety minutes together, we contributed to the practice of life-long learning. In my opinion, we need these programmes because there is demand for them: on the one hand, it has become a routine for them and they consider these occasions good opportunities to go out,

and on the other hand, we can provide a community for participants where they feel that they are important, where their presence and opinion count, where we listen to them. All in all, the course lays down the foundations for spending time actively in old age, while continuous dialogue and connection both contribute to decreasing the feeling of “being redundant”.

I reckon it is important to uphold motivation because their original intention when applying had been to learn something new; in a nutshell, it is not compulsory to be present on each and every occasion but they are still attending. This is a gift to be cherished, a relationship based on trust that should be valued and kept. A very difficult but noble task. Despite all this, I was prepared for dropouts, too. On this specific seminar, there had always been at least six to nine students present so I would say that it had been quite successful.

Via learning, we can master new viewpoints and acquire new information; I think this had happened likewise in the present situation. Based on the feedback, I did manage to give something to participants in addition to their pre-existing knowledge. One person managed to read a textbook on world religions that had been on the shelf for decades with the help of concepts we discussed during class, and happily prepared from it for the last class. Another person reckoned that his or her openness towards other cultures has increased and there were people who encouraged the continuation of the seminar, from an aspect of religious art perhaps. Of course, I had to pay attention not to overwhelm them with new information, as it is easy to feel lost upon hearing the complex systems of cultures and religions. It is perfectly understandable to receive a reaction at the end of the course that says: “I feel I don’t know anything,” as we acquired so much new knowledge in such a short time that has yet to sink in, the bases of this knowledge will reappear routinely in our everyday lives. As for lectures, the situation is even more difficult because as research suggests, students will remember only 5% of what had been said.

Seminars of the Third Age University are also important because learning is realised in two dimensions: besides the learning of participants, doctoral students who are giving lessons are learning to teach, so this is a mutually beneficial process. Principles of both life-long learning and Third Age University are for preparing the elderly for the challenges of a modern age, as the world is ever-changing. To a certain extent, everyone has to adapt to these changes. I think that seminars of the Third Age University have, so far, been indeed preparing students for life, so that they find their place in our modern, globalised world.

It is both the interest of *society* and the *individual* to retain the social activity of the elderly for multiple reasons, one of them being that the elderly – due to their social labour – can contribute to solving the problems of a greying society. In the meantime, old people will not feel that they, as pensioners, are excluded from the very same society that they had sustained and shaped earlier.²⁰

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Montanism in Perspective The Second-Century Struggle for Authority*

Introduction

In the last two centuries scholars painted many pictures of the New Prophecy movement (henceforth: NP), later to be labelled by its enemies as Montanism.¹ It seems to me that all these different presentations can agree on the point that the controversy around the movement was about authority and power in the second century church. Such conviction lead me to address in this paper the question of how the early Phrygian-type NP challenged the authority of the already established monoepiscopate in the first decades of its existence. In order to answer this question, I feel obliged to present primarily how the office of the monoepiscopate emerged within the Christian church up until the end of the second century, then to describe the basic doctrinal and disciplinary characteristics of the NP. Only in light of these two factors can attention be paid to the real “clash” between the bishops and the adherents of the Prophecy.

I will argue that the teaching and practice of the NP movement posed serious challenges to the authority of the monoepiscopate at least at two main points: the ecstatic prophecy and the idea of progressive revelation threatened the authority of the bishops in the interpretation of the Christian tradition, and the more rigorous ethical standards of the Prophets questioned the authority of the bishops in defining the Christian way of living. These two challenges were realised by the first opponents in Asia Minor – without exceptions: all bishops and presbyters – and resulted in the rejection, condemnation and excommunication of the movement.

* Some parts of the present paper are based on my Master Thesis “Montanists and Bishops” submitted in fulfilment for the degree Master of Theology (MTh) at The University of Edinburgh in 2018 under the supervision of Dr Sara Parvis to whom I thank the encouragement for the research of the topic.

1 For a full overview of the modern scholarly interpretations of Montanism, see my paper Homoki Gyula, “Montanizmus – értelmezési kísérletek a kutatás történetében,” *Collegium Doctorum* 16, no. 2 (2020): 236–268.

I. The Emergence of the Monoepiscopate in the Early Church

I.1. The Apostolic Period

When we turn our attention to the canonical writings of the New Testament, it becomes clear that the institutionalization process of the newly formed ἐκκλησία had been started from the beginning. Thus, the thesis of Adolf von Harnack² – which influenced generations of Protestant scholars afterwards³ – according to which the early Christian communities were in a state of a “mild and spiritual anarchism” enjoying all the benefits of the “spiritual democracy” in contrast to the later institutionalised organisation cannot be maintained. Instead, it is evident that the members of the Jerusalem community – being Jews – had already started to organize their circles according to the Jewish synagogue-model which they were most familiar with.⁴ If we are to believe the reports of Luke, soon after its establishment, the post-resurrection community had already “started down the road from ideology to institution” by introducing the collegial office of elders [זְקֵנִים, πρεσβύτεροι].⁵

The picture is slightly different in the Hellenistic setting (most notably in Antioch), where there is no information whatsoever that the Jerusalem model would have been adopted there. According to Acts, within the Antiochene church, it is not presbyters who fulfil prominent official positions but *prophets* and *teachers* (13:1) who are chosen not by prominent human agents but directly by the Spirit (13:2).⁶ Not surprisingly, Paul, who joined the Antiochene congregation still in its infancy adopted such a loosely-knit

2 Adolf von Harnack, *The Constitution & Law of the Church in the First Two Centuries*, trans. F. L. Pogson (London: Williams & Norgate, 1910), 23f.

3 Cf. Jonathan Draper, “Weber, Theissen and ‘Wandering Charismatics’ in the Didache,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 4 (1998): 544–545. Hans Von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*, trans. J. A. Baker (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 57–58. Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 201. Harry O. Maier, *The Social Setting of the Ministry as Reflected in the Writings of Hermas, Clement and Ignatius* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991), 110.

4 James Tunstead Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 274. Bruce Chilton and Jacob Neusner, *Types of Authority in Formative Christianity and Judaism* (London: Routledge, 1999), vii–viii.

5 Peter Ivan Kaufman, *Church, Book and Bishop: Conflict and Authority in Early Latin Christianity* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1996), 12.

6 Francis A. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops: The Development of the Episcopacy in the Early Church* (New York: Newman Press, 2001), 63. W. Telfer, *The Office of a Bishop* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1962), 29.

form of leadership on his missionary campaign to the Gentiles, but with certain modifications.⁷ Although it is indisputable that his understanding of leadership was in fact Spirit-focused, shortly after he established the house-churches, “as a matter of empirical necessity”, certain forms of community-structure and governance came into existence within these communities: a fact which did not seem contradictory in his eyes to the reality of the Spirit.⁸ From a sociological point of view, the importance of the household-setting in the formation of the leadership in these early Christian communities cannot be overemphasised, since the influential and well-to-do owners of the οἶκος “provided the leadership and economic resources necessary for the group’s survival”.⁹ It is accurate to argue that during Paul’s ministry the institutionalisation of charismatic authority was already becoming an accepted reality in the emerging Pauline churches, and that this development was not detached from the apostle.¹⁰ In light of this, it is not surprising that in his last epistle he greets the ἐπισκόποι and διάκονοι of the church in Philippi (1:1).

While the Jerusalem community adopted the Jewish synagogue model for organising its leadership, the Pauline Gentile churches followed the pattern of the Hellenistic οἰκονόμος where the ἐπίσκοπος served as the manager of the household, while many servants (διάκονοι and δοῦλοι) were under his guidance.¹¹ Paul seems to be affirming the legitimacy of such a model and the authoritative functions of the Christian stewards and servants of the congregation. These designations, however, do not mean sacral offices or absolute power *per se*: the ἐπίσκοποι, διάκονοι and other prestigious persons together with the household-church were still under the authority of the apostle himself. More importantly, they functioned as a collegial body without any leading figure on the top.¹²

7 Nicholas Hugh Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem: A Study in Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 93. Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 70.

8 Joseph B. Tyson, *A Study of Early Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 302.

9 Maier, *Social Setting*, 101.

10 Cf. Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 195. There are several instances when Paul himself exhorts the community to acknowledge, respect and honour the labour of these household-owners (1 Cor 16:15; 1Thess 5:12; Rom 16:1,3-5,22; Philem 2).

11 Frances M. Young, “ΟΝ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΟΣ ΑΝΔ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΣ,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 45, no. 1 (1994): 144. Ritva H. Williams, *Stewards, Prophets, Keepers of the Word: Leadership in the Early Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006), 76f.

12 Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 69.

1.2. *The Sub-Apostolic Period*

With the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of the leading apostolic characters, the Christian communities faced the coming of a new era in which the leadership of the household-congregations had to be re-interpreted in light of the various challenges brought by new circumstances. The documents of the period: the *Didache*, *1 Clement*, and the *Pastoral Epistles*, are to be examined in this section in order to see how these congregations underwent the structural development of ministry.¹³

While scholars tend to argue for a late date for the reduction of the *Didache*, it is the general consensus that the preserved traditions can originate from as early as the middle of the first century, probably from Antioch.¹⁴ The congregation(s) to whom this church manual was written is still familiar with that type of charismatic-leadership of the early days we have mentioned above. Itinerant apostles and prophets to whom well-defined and regulated hospitality must be offered are expected to visit the church (11.1), and the residential ecstatic prophet who once proved to be genuine “has a right to a livelihood” including the first-fruits and the tithe of the members (13.5). In case there would be no such charismatic leadership, however, *bishops* and *deacons* can serve as substitute for “carrying out the ministry of the prophets and the teachers” (15.1). The exhortation not to “esteem them lightly” suggests that the Antiochene community was still having a hard time accepting the more settled, local form of leadership.¹⁵ The Didachist, though, advocates a certain *status quo* within the congregation, a “chaordic” life within the community by which the charismatically called, and the democratically chosen, leaders are “able to function alongside and in cooperation with each other”.¹⁶ Yet, one cannot avoid the impression that the *Didache* puts more emphasis on the charismatic leadership, while seeing the settled form of ministry “only as a support for this”.¹⁷ In such setting, the

13 All quotations of the Apostolic Fathers are from: *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers*, trans. Taniforth Maxwell, ed. Andrew Louth (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987).

14 Jonathan A. Draper, “The Apostolic Fathers: The Didache,” *The Expository Times* 117, no. 5 (2006): 178.

15 Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 201.

16 David A. Clark, “Order and Chaos in the Didache,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 25, no. 2 (2016): 289–290. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 201.

17 Patrick Burke, “The Monarchical Episcopate at the End of the First Century,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 7, no. 3 (1970): 513.

idea of one dominant figure as the leading bishop is extremely far from the thoughts of the writer.

Sometime after the composition of the *Didache*, presumably in 96 AD, an epistle commonly known as *1 Clement* had been written on behalf of the Roman Church to the Corinthian Christians. The occasion that motivated the formation of the letter was the “odious and unholy breach of unity” (1.1) among the Corinthians caused by certain “hot-headed and unruly individuals” who deposed some of their presbyters. The focal point and the main exhortation of the writer is unmistakably clear: “... make your submission to the clergy... Learn to subordinate yourselves” (57.2). *1 Clement* is important in our investigation, not only because this is the first known instance in Christian literature when a clear distinction had been drawn between *clergy* and *laity* (40.5), but also because the theological and ideological reasons provided by the writer to underpin his imperative are rather innovative compared to contemporary and previous sources.¹⁸ Clement is at pains to point to *every* possible direction in order to make the Corinthian rebels admit that humility, submission, and obedience is a divinely instituted order: the Old Testament figures (9-12), the Scriptural witness (13-15) and Christ himself (16-18) are examples of these virtues. Moreover, he is even ready to use the Stoic notion of *ὁμόνοια* and *εἰρήνη* of the created universe (19-20) and well-known military images (37) to combat the Corinthian disorder.¹⁹ His most compelling move, nonetheless, is still the eagerness to prove that the two-tiered leadership of the *ἐκκλησία* is of divine origin: the Father commissioned Christ, Christ commissioned the apostles and they not only appointed “bishops and deacons” to proclaim the Gospel (42.4) but left instructions concerning their succession as well (44.2). Accepting this “tradition of peaceful harmony” (51.2) is to surrender “to the will of God” (56.2). The theory, according to which the apostles themselves appointed leaders in the congregations, was most probably the historical justification of the already existing leadership-pattern in the sub-apostolic writings (Acts 20:17).²⁰ In this sense, Clement presents the widespread conviction of his era. What the letter offers in addition to such reaffirmation of the historical roots of the two-tiered leadership, is a theological justification

18 Maier, *Social Setting*, 106.

19 Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, trans. Michael Steinhauser (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 208–215.

20 John Fuellenbach, *Ecclesiastical Office and the Primacy of Rome: An Evaluation of Recent Theological Discussion of First Clement* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1980), 124. Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 91–92.

by which it is placed in a much broader spectrum: an “all-embracing divine world order”.²¹ The apostles are presented not merely as the founders of the church, but also of the church office. This theory of origin becomes “a piece of a sacred knowledge” within the wider organisation.²²

1 Clement testifies that by the end of the first century, the right church order and submission to it, was becoming more or less equal to the “right” doctrinal beliefs.²³ In contrast to the earlier Pauline and *Didachist* model in which authority was somewhat fluid and mostly rested in the hands of the congregation, *1 Clement* witnesses to the “thickening” of the institutional order by which the collegial leadership (now to be called “clergy”) of presbyters/bishops and deacons exercise the main authority within the household-setting.

The pseudo-Pauline *Pastoral Epistles*, dated around the same time as *1 Clement* (ca. 100 AD) represent a somewhat similar stage of theological thinking of the two-tiered ministry within the churches in Asia Minor.²⁴ The terminology of the epistles for designating church officials is rather flexible, since the words *presbyter* (1Tim 5:17,19; Tit 1:5) and *episcopos* (1Tim 3:2; Tit 1:7) are used interchangeably to describe one and the same title.²⁵ The leaders (presbyters/bishops and deacons) are portrayed as the governing collegiate of the local congregation. Their main function consisted of battling against different types of heretical views which “destroy the faith of some” (2Tim 2:18) by sticking firmly to the apostolic teaching described as “sound doctrine” (Tit 1:9) and the sacred writings (2Tim 3:10-16). In light of the increasing reality of certain Jewish, Docetic and Gnostic threats, the high appraisal of the teaching ministry rooted in the apostolic tradition, and more emphasis on the importance of clearly ordered leadership, are not surprising

21 Fuellenbach, *Ecclesiastical Office*, 126.

22 Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 87. Fuellenbach, *Ecclesiastical Office*, 130.

23 W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984), 134.

24 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Structured Ministry of the Church in the Pastoral Epistles,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (2004): 582.

25 Since *1 Clement* is also comfortable to refer to the members of the clergy with both names (1.3, 44.4), it is probable that the idea of presbyterate originated from the Jewish synagogue and the Hellenistic model of *episcopos* of the Greek household at some point over the course of the years became interwoven to such an extent that by the end of the century it was common to refer to the leaders of the household-churches with both names – L. Floor, “Church Order in the Pastoral Epistles,” *Neotestamentica* 10, no. 1 (1976): 84. Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 56. Fitzmyer, “The Structured Ministry,” 589; Young, “On ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ,” 148–149.

phenomena.²⁶ While the moral, juridical, social and sacramental roles and functions of the presbyter-bishops and deacons of God's household (1Tim 3:15) are clearly defined within the *Pastorals*, it would be a misinterpretation to regard these functions merely as some sorts of deteriorated posts.²⁷ Firstly, because the writer puts high moral expectations to those who aspire to leadership-status (1Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9), and secondly, because the charismatic empowerment is also a necessary requirement to carry out the task of overseeing (2Tim 1:6). The writer, who is familiar with the Pauline ideal of Spirit-focused leadership within the congregation, now presents the presbyter-bishops as legitimate charismatic leaders who receive the necessary charismas by the laying on of hands through the act of prophecy (1Tim 4:14). The primary locus of the Spirit, therefore, is the collegial leadership of these gifted men without any designated monarchical leader who would rise above his fellow-ministers.²⁸ Such attempt soon would be made by a prominent *episcopus* from Antioch to whom attention must be paid now.

I.3. Ignatius of Antioch

The centuries-old scholarly debates concerning the different recensions and the dating of the Ignatian corpus seem to have come to the following conclusion: today the majority of scholars accept the so-called *Middle Recension* consisting of seven letters as genuine writings of the Antiochene bishop from the year 107 AD.²⁹ Previously, it was assumed that these letters, written to the churches of Asia Minor, are proof that the idea of a single *episcopus*, surrounded by a collegiate of *presbyters* and *deacons* to watch over the members of the congregation, by this time had become a given and accepted system of leadership.³⁰ A more careful analysis of the epistles,

26 Marshall Howard, "Congregation and Ministry in the Pastoral Epistles," in *Community Formation in the Early Church and the Church Today*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 124.

27 Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 112.

28 Ernst Käsemann, "Unity and Diversity in New Testament Ecclesiology," *Novum Testamentum* 6, no. 4 (1963): 292.; Floor, "Church Order," 85.

29 The Middle Recension include The Epistle to the Ephesians (*Eph.*), Magnesians (*Magn.*), Trallians (*Trall.*), Romans (*Rom.*), Philadelphians (*Phild.*), Smyrneans (*Smyrn.*) and one addressed to Polycarp (*Pol.*) – William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 4–5. Paul Foster, "The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch (Part 1)," *The Expository Times* 117, no. 12 (2006): 489. Christine Trevett, *A Study of Ignatius of Antioch in Syria and Asia* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 9, 15.

30 Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 46. Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 99.

however, suggests that the ideal of Ignatius and the reality of the churches in Asia Minor concerning church governance did not overlap entirely.

It is not difficult to see why many readers took it for granted that the prominence of the single bishop was an already established reality in the Asian churches. For example, Ignatius speaks of bishop Onesimus in Ephesus (*Eph.* 1.3) to whom his “respected clergy” is attuned “like the strings of a harp” (4.1) and whom the congregation likewise ought to regard as the Lord Himself (6.2). The church in Magnesia on the Maeander is exhorted to pay “every possible respect” (*Magn.* 3.1) to the “saintly bishop Damas” (2.1) by which Ignatius means real obedience, not only “mere lip-service” (4.1). Similarly, the Trallians are praised for their obedience to their bishop and exhorted further not to act independently of him (*Trall.* 2.2). For Ignatius, standing by the bishop, becomes the true sign that one really belongs to God and Jesus Christ (*Phild.* 3.2) since the office “was conferred upon him by the love of God” (1.1). Neither the Eucharist nor baptism or love-feasts can be celebrated without his presence (*Smyrn.* 8.1) and whoever holds a separate meeting behind his back is to be regarded as the “servant of the devil” (9.1). Thus, it would be easy to conclude that by the early second century the office of the monoepiscopate became an accepted form of governance within the churches “without controversy”.³¹ However, the question must be raised: Is the picture of the well-established governance by a single bishop a goal in Ignatius’s letter, or rather, is it something that the Antiochene churchman propagated? I would suggest, it is the latter.

The clearest illustration that Ignatius’s portrayal is more normative than descriptive is the countless call for acknowledgment and obedience to the bishop. It is not unreasonable to state that there is hardly any paragraph within the letters which one way or another does not command the subordination of the congregation to the single *episcopos*. This frequent imperative does not suggest a scene “without controversy”. It is more likely that the churches in Asia Minor were not really familiar with the idea of a one-man leadership and expressed their distaste to Ignatius. The most striking proof for such resistance must have happened in the same area where some decades later Montanus took a stand: in Philadelphia. In his letter to the church there, Ignatius tells his somewhat bittersweet experience according to which his message “Be loyal to your bishop and clergy and deacons” generated suspicion rather than total submission in the hearers. While he is insisting that his utterance “was the preaching of the Spirit” who instructed them

31 Chadwick, *Early Church*, 51.

“never to act in independence of the bishop” (*Phild.* 7.1), certain members were still rather hesitant in accepting the novel message about one bishop instead of the already well-known collegiate system (8.2).

It is a generally accepted fact that in and around the region of Philadelphia, Christianity “operated in a context in which prophesying and the utterance of prophetic oracles were considered the norm”.³² It is also known, especially in Philadelphia, that the prophetic succession of Amnia, Quadratus, and the daughters of Philip in the neighbouring Hierapolis, had been long remembered by the end of the second century.³³ Additionally, the somewhat loosely-knit ecclesiology of Johannine Christianity, with its constant emphasis on the ultimate guiding force of the Paraclete, is to be known as extremely influential within the local churches.³⁴ Likewise, as it has been pointed out above, the writer of the *Pastoral Epistles* found it necessary to underline the charismatic nature of the collegiate leadership. In such environment, it is no wonder that Ignatius’s idea of a centralized leadership did not find fertile ground. It is very probable, that, during his journey to Rome, not only did Judaizers and Docetic Christian heretics made his “campaign” ineffective, but a third party challenged his novel ideal of a centralized leadership as well which insisted on a more traditional prophetically-lead, charismatic, ecclesiology.³⁵ This case becomes even more probable if we regard the rather lengthy apologia of the “silence” of the bishop (*Eph.* 6.1-2, 15.1-2) as refutation of the view of such Christians who expected more charismatic performances and less “dry” words from the mouth of their leaders.³⁶

Given this background, the Antiochene disruption which resulted in Ignatius’s arrest and the peace which had been brought to the Syrian church after his departure (*Phild.* 10.1; *Smyrn.* 11.1; *Pol.* 7.1) can be interpreted in a considerably different way. It is not inconceivable that the bishop himself proved to be the source of such disturbance when he intended to establish

32 William Tabbernee, “Asia Minor and Cyprus,” in *Early Christianity in Contexts: An Exploration across Cultures and Continents*, ed. William Tabbernee (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 315–316.

33 Trevett, *of Ignatius of Antioch*, 93.

34 *Ibid.*, 309.

35 Christine Trevett, “Prophecy and Anti-Episcopal Activity: A Third Error Combated by Ignatius?,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 34, no. 1 (1983): 16. Christine Trevett, “Apocalypse, Ignatius, Montanism: Seeking the Seeds,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 43, no. 4 (1989): 319–320.

36 Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Martyr Bishop and the Origin of Monarchical Episcopacy* (London: Continuum, 2007), 30f. Trevett, “Prophecy and Anti-Episcopal Activity,” 9-10.

his more centralised view of leadership in the Antiochene church.³⁷ The proposed church order of the Syrian which drew creatively on the rhetoric of the Second Sophistic and the cultic liturgy of the imperial cult thus seemed unacceptable to the Didachist-type congregation in Antioch. Consequently, the growing tensions and quarrels within the walls started to attract the attention of the authorities in the city who arrested the main leader.³⁸

“Ignatius was a man ahead of his time” states Trevett.³⁹ Yet, times would soon catch up with Ignatius. In the following decades, when the Gnostic and Judaizing tendencies became a conquering power in the Christian churches in Asia Minor, the united front against the heterodox beliefs and praxis within the ever-growing household-system of the churches in the urban areas would soon call for one prominent figure whose life, teaching, personality and charisma prove to be compelling enough to result in acceptance of his dominance among the leaders. Ignatius’ dream of the monoepiscopate would become a reality in the church by the end of the century.

1.4. The Monoepiscopate as Reality

The influence of the varieties of Gnostic Christianities on the second-century Christianity cannot be overemphasised. In face of their attempt to legitimize their beliefs by introducing the well-known philosophical notion of διαδοχή (succession) according to which their secret teaching could have been traced back to the apostles and to Christ, the church was forced to realise “what authoritative ground their doctrines could be refuted”.⁴⁰

They chose to react to the threat by using their enemy’s technique: namely by developing the idea of apostolic succession. In this way they meant to demonstrate that the teaching and practice of the worldwide-church share the same nature from the beginning. In this chain of argumentation, the office of the single bishop (together with the emerging *regula fidei* and canon) played a major role. From the mid-second century, church writers not only had to deal with minor local disturbances in order to establish the authority

37 Paul Foster, “The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch (Part 2),” *The Expository Times* 118, no. 1 (2006): 4. Trevett, *Study of Ignatius of Antioch*, 57. Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 21–22.

38 Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch and the Second Sophistic: A Study of an Early Christian Transformation of Pagan Culture* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 319f.; Allen Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian* (Boston: Brill, 1999), 210–250. Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 42.

39 Trevett, *Study of Ignatius of Antioch*, 53.

40 Chadwick, *Early Church*, 41. Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 158.

of the officials in the given congregation, but also had to demonstrate the historicity and reliability of the already more or less accepted form of the three-tiered ministry (bishop-presbyters-deacons). It was, in the narrowest sense of the phrase, history in the making.

The first known example of one who took the quest of compiling such succession-list was the originally Palestinian Jew, Hegesippus, who in five (now lost) books summed up “how when travelling as far as Rome he mixed with a number of bishops and found the same doctrine among them all” (*HE* 4.22.1). Arriving at Rome during the time of Anicetus (*ca.* 155-166 CE), he could formulate such list in the capital (*HE* 4.22.3). Although the fragments of his possibly monumental writing do not tell us the clear motivation for the work, it must be assumed that Hegesippus’s quest was fuelled by the zeal to confute the heretical Gnostics by offering the unbroken chain of bishops in Rome as a guarantee of the unbroken tradition and teaching.⁴¹

Only some years after Hegesippus, the influential churchman later to become bishop of Lyon in Gaul, Irenaeus, argued against the Gnostics in similar lines. In his magnum opus *Against the Heresies*, he is at pains to show that, through the chain of nameable bishops, the teaching of the apostles is mediated up until contemporary times.⁴² Unlike the Gnostics who cannot boast of such firmness in their teaching (III.4.3), this *διαδοχή* for Irenaeus “is a complete proof that the life-giving faith is one and the same, preserved and transmitted in truth in the churches from the apostles up till now” (III.3.2).⁴³ It is striking, though, that he presents the succession of the episcopate from Linus to Eleutherus in Rome as if the idea of single-leadership above the fellow-clergy would have been the only reality back in the apostolic age. Irenaeus surely looks at the past through his own lenses with special eagerness to demonstrate the authority of the right doctrine in the person of the single-bishop.

Thus, by the end of the second century, we arrive to a more and less “united federation of urban communities with a hierarchical organisation” lead by possibly a prominent and educated bishop surrounded by his clergy in whose person the traditional Christian teaching and practice are safeguarded.⁴⁴ It took almost a century that the church in battles against the

41 Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 164.

42 Paul Parvis, “Who was Irenaeus?” in *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, ed. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 14–15.

43 Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Against the Heresies* (London: Routledge, 1997), 95.

44 W. H. C. Frend, *Town and Country in the Early Christian Centuries* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980), 2.

different sects which claimed alternative interpretation of Christianity found its main authoritative pillars in the person of the single bishop. This is the setting where Montanus, Maximilla and Priscilla appeared.

II. The Basic Doctrinal and Disciplinary Characteristics of the New Prophecy

II.1. Ecstatic Prophecy

Looking at the earliest reports concerning the beginning of the activity of the founding figures of the NP, it is indisputable that the biggest stumbling block for the contemporary “official” churches in Phrygia proved to be the unnatural behaviour which accompanied the prophesy of the Three. The Anonymous reports that

“... a recent convert named Montanus... was filled with spiritual excitement and suddenly fell into a kind of trance and unnatural ecstasy (παρεκστάσει). He raved, and began to chatter and talk nonsense, prophesying in a way that conflicted with the practice of the Church handed down generation by generation from the beginning” (HE 5.16.7-8)⁴⁵

Similarly, his female companions, Maximilla and Priscilla, “chattered crazily, importunately, and widely” (HE 5.16.9). Those who heard these “sham utterances” were divided: while some rebuked Montanus immediately, others believed that it was genuine prophecy through the Holy Spirit (HE 5.16.8). This untraditional manner of prophecy led some of the bishops in their attempt to exorcise Maximilla and Priscilla (HE 5.18.13; 19.3), and local church gatherings to judge their activity profane and consequently excommunicate the adherents from the Church (HE 5.16.10).

The local leadership, therefore, quickly came to believe that the ecstatic activity of the three was “false prophecy” (ψευδοπροφητεία), a designation used to describe pagan prophecy (HE 5.16.9,18; 17.2).⁴⁶ Montanus’ recent conversion from paganism, might have served in the hands of the apologists as a further explanation for the roots of his “non-Christian” way of prophesying.⁴⁷ Such assumptions which tended to see the NP as a

45 For citations from Eusebius’ *Historia Ecclesiastica* and Epiphanius’ *Panarion* I use Heine’s translation in his collected sourcebook – Ronald E. Heine, *The Montanist Oracles and Testimonia* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1989).

46 Alistair Stewart-Sykes, “The Original Condemnation of Asian Montanism,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 50, no. 1 (1999): 9–10.

47 Laura Salah Nasrallah, “An Ecstasy of Folly”: *Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity*

modified continuation of the native Phrygian cult of Attis-Cybele had been reaffirmed in previous scholarship as well.⁴⁸ While many of the local and wider contemporary pagan movements and phenomena (most notably Lucian's portrayal of Alexander of Abounteichos and Peregrinus Proteus) *might* serve as parallels and possible influences to the NP, its character, roots, and message, *must* be seen as essentially Christian.⁴⁹

The few oracles of the Three (as they are quoted by the Anti-Phrygian⁵⁰) witness that their ecstatic behaviour was understood by them as a genuine possession by God. Montanus' oracle, "Behold, man is like a lyre: and I flit about like a plectrum; man sleeps, and I awaken him; behold it is the Lord who changes the hearts of men and gives men a heart" (*Panarion* [henceforth: *Pan.*] 48.4.1), is not the words of someone "who is mentally deranged, and who is not in possession of his understanding" (*Pan.* 18.4.3), but a legitimate Christian depiction of the ecstatic prophecy used by contemporary sources likewise.⁵¹ These, and similar first-person oracles of Montanus and Maximilla by which the divine made his presence evident in the person of the prophet were generally accepted self-commendation formulas in Christian circles in the second century churches.⁵² As David Aune in his mammoth work on early Christian prophecy argued, *The Odes of Solomon*, together with *The Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Didache* and the *Apocalypse of John*, all feature similar ecstatic behaviour and trance in the process of deliverance.⁵³ And the Three too saw themselves in line with the traditional biblical understanding of prophecy. The Anti-Phrygian's lengthy exposition of the biblical passages

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 10.

- 48 Wilhelm Ernst Schepelern, *Der Montanismus Und Die Phrygischen Kulte: Eine Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1929), David Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1979), 189.
- 49 Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Viking, 1986), 241–261. Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 10.
- 50 For the unidentified source of the fourth-century heresiological treatise *Panarion* written by Epiphanius I use Nasrallah's designation "Anti-Phrygian", see Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 46f.
- 51 James L. Ash, "The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church," *Theological Studies* 37, no. 2 (1976): 238.
- 52 Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 181.
- 53 David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 292–313. David F. Wright, "Why Were the Montanists Condemned?," *Themelios* 2, no. 1 (1976): 17. Frederick Klawiter, "The New Prophecy in Early Christianity: The Origin, Nature, and Development of Montanism, A. D. 165-220" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1975), 156–157.

where both Old and New Testament figures were said to be in a state of ecstasy betrays the fact that biblical evidence had been shown on the side of the NP in order to demonstrate that their ecstatic prophecy was in fact scriptural (*Pan.* 48.4-6; 7-8). The prophets, furthermore, claimed that not only Scriptures, but tradition was on their side as well. They were convinced that they were true successors of the well-known prophetic figures in Asia: Agabus, Judas, Silas, the daughters of Philip, Ammia in Philadelphia and Quadratus (*HE* 5.17.3-4).⁵⁴

The prophets, thus claimed that their prophecy was authentically Christian and in line with biblical and post-biblical prophecy. This self-interpretation is clearly evident in Maximilla's statement: "The Lord has sent me as partisan, revealer, and interpreter of this suffering, covenant, and promise. I am compelled to come to understand the knowledge of God whether I want to or not" (*Pan.* 48.13.1).

If we are to believe the words of Tertullian, the first apologist of the NP, according to which the promised Paraclete of the Fourth Gospel had come in the NP, then the revelatory, expository and covenant-fulfiller self-designation and self-understanding of the prophets is perfectly understandable. That the portrayal of the Paraclete and Jesus in the Fourth Gospel followed the function and characteristics of the prophet within the Johannine circle has been suggested by Boring.⁵⁵ The prophet-Paraclete, was thus seen as the interpreter of the historical tradition, someone who not only repeats the things which Jesus had already revealed, but expands them and declares new insights to the disciples, bringing the divine revelation up to date to the contemporaries.⁵⁶ It is suggestive to regard Montanus, Priscilla and Maximilla as such figures who functioned as prophets within a Johannine-influenced Christian community: figures who understood themselves as divinely possessed mouthpieces of the Paraclete who compelled them to reveal new insights to contemporary Christians. It is only as a result of a later

54 William Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy and Polluted Sacraments: Ecclesiastical and Imperial Reactions to Montanism*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 138f.

55 Eugene M. Boring, "The Influence of Christian Prophecy on the Johannine Portrayal of the Paraclete and Jesus," *New Testament Studies* 25, no. 1 (1978): 113-123.

56 *Ibid.*, 118. Similarly, Hill argued that the New Testament prophets functioned as pastoral preachers within the church whose message contained warning, instruction and correction. However, he denies that their message was delivered in ecstatic mode – David Hill, "Christian Prophets as Teachers or Instructors in the Church," in *Prophetic Vocation in the New Testament and Today*, ed. Johannes Panagopoulos (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 114-116.

accusation against Montanus that he would have identified himself with the Paraclete (*HE* 5.14): the earliest Asian sources are silent about such claim.⁵⁷

Although some of the contemporary sources (e.g. Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Origen) still report that prophecy *per se* was still a lively phenomenon within the church, its general decline or marginalisation (especially the ecstatic type) can be observed.⁵⁸ Most notably, the Anti-Phrygian betrays his cessationist understanding of prophecy when he refers only to the prophets of the Old and New Testaments, but fails to mention any post-apostolic or contemporary figures. For him, the ecstatic prophecy belongs to a romantic past, and anyone who finds himself “at variance with Scripture, he himself is estranged from the holy Catholic Church, and so is the sect which boasts in relation to him [viz. Montanus] that it possesses prophets and spiritual gifts” (*Pan.* 48.11.4). As Nasrallah put it: “What is at stake for the Anti-Phrygian is the identity of true Christianity”.⁵⁹ The NP with its destabilising tendency soon found itself outside of the boundaries of what was beginning to be called “true Christianity”.

II.2. Eschatology

Apollonius, who “produced a special polemic against” (*HE* 5.18.1) the adherents of the NP, probably in the first decade of the third century, states that Montanus “renamed Pepuza and Tymion, insignificant towns in Phrygia, as Jerusalem, in the hope of persuading people in every district to gather there” (*HE* 5.18.2).⁶⁰ Similarly, Epiphanius cites the vision of Priscilla or Quintilla (the heresiologist is unsure) in which the prophetess speaks of Christ who came to her in a dream in the form of a woman in white robe, and revealed to her that “this place [Pepuza] is holy, and that Jerusalem will descend from heaven here” (*Pan.* 49.1.3).

These pieces of information led some scholars to understand the chief motivation of the NP in its chiliastic speculations, and regard its urging belief in an imminent *parousia* as the main explanation for the proclaimed rigorist practices.⁶¹ If such interpretation is right, and Maximilla’s oracle

57 Trevett, *Montanism*, 79.

58 Ulrich Luz, “Stages of Early Christian Prophetism,” in *Prophets and Prophecy in Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, ed. Jozef Verheyden and Korinna Zamfir (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 73.

59 Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 194.

60 Tabbernee dates the anti-Montanist treatise of Apollonius ca. 205 CE – *Fake Prophecy*, 48.

61 Friend, *Town and Countryside*, 35–36. Gábor Szlávik, “Egy elmaradott régió szerepvállalása a kor vallási mozgalmaiban: Közép-Phrygia montanizmus,” *Egyháztörténeti Szemle* 7, no.

“After me there will no longer be a prophet but the end” (*Pan.* 48.2.4) is in fact, some sort of eschatological speculation about the coming end, the NP did not announce anything otherwise shockingly new to the contemporary Christians: “in the 160s, it was not so very special to believe in an imminent millennium.”⁶² Plague, wars, earthquakes, and persecution of Christians, were almost everyday phenomena in the middle of the second century, which consequently stirred up the eschatological expectations within the Christian communities, causing bishops on some occasions to lead their entire congregation to the desert in order to await the coming of Christ.⁶³

Since the archaeological discovery of Pepuza and Tymion in the first years of our century, Tabbernee has argued that two major factors might have influenced Montanus to claim these otherwise uninfluential towns to be Jerusalem. Firstly, the topography of the area with a considerably high hill provides such “a great, high mountain” (Rev 21:10) to which the New Jerusalem could easily descend. Secondly, Philadelphia, to whose church the new city was first promised (Rev 3:12), lays only eighty kilometres from the towns. Pepuza and Tymion therefore could easily serve as an “ideal landing place” for the New Jerusalem.⁶⁴ According to Tabbernee, therefore, Montanus opted for “a literalistic interpretation of Rev 21:1-2, 9-10” and awaited the fulfilment of the promise there.⁶⁵

There is only one main major problem with such assertion, as Trevett points out: “There is nothing in the early sources to suggest that the name ‘Jerusalem’ was adopted because its descent was expected at the site(s) of Pepuza and Tymion.”⁶⁶ If the Prophets truly had expected the millennial coming of the New Jerusalem to take place in their towns and persuaded people to gather there for this reason, Apollonius would have found it important to mention such reason. Similarly, Eusebius, who judged Papias’ chiliast belief as simple misinterpretation of the symbolic language of the Scripture and thus condemned him to be “a man of very small intelligence”

1 (2006): 20.

62 Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 405.

63 Trevett, *Montanism*, 42–45, 101.

64 William Tabbernee, “Portals of the Montanist New Jerusalem: The Discovery of Pepouza and Tymion,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 1 (2003): 93.; William Tabbernee and Peter Lampe, *Pepouza and Tymion: The Discovery and Archaeological Exploration of a Lost Ancient City and an Imperial Estate* (Berlin: W. De Gruyter, 2008), 27.

65 Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 116. Similarly W. M. Calder, “Philadelphia and Montanism,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 7, no. 3 (1923): 327.

66 Trevett, *Montanism*, 99.

(*HE* 3.39.13), must have commented on the millennial expectation of the NP, if such expectation was in fact characteristic to it. The very fact that – as it shall be pointed out later – considerable organisational method was being built around the movement from the beginning (*HE* 5.18.2), rather suggests that the Three had planned in the long run.

“We hear of no great rush to Pepuza”⁶⁷ and even the Montanist Tertullian seem to have adopted a more “realized and consistent eschatology”.⁶⁸ It is more probable to state that at the beginning the name Jerusalem was more understood in terms of community-life rather than eschatological expectation. There was more emphasis on the “*quality* of Christian discipleship” than chiliastic speculations.⁶⁹

II.3. Martyrdom

Previously, scholars tended to propose that one of the basic characteristics of the NP was its eagerness for voluntary martyrdom: “urging believers to make public confession of their faith and become martyrs”.⁷⁰ Such conclusion rests on a number of misinterpreted assumptions,⁷¹ which more recently have been countered by the reinterpretation of written and epigraphic evidences.⁷²

The earliest Asian sources do not accuse the Three of propagating voluntary martyrdom. The Anonymous makes mention of the “great

67 Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 405.

68 Jaroslav Pelikan, “The Eschatology of Tertullian,” *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 21, no. 2 (1952): 118–119.

69 Trevett, *Montanism*, 104–105. Wright, “Montanists Condemned,” 20.

70 Klawiter, “New Prophecy,” 100. Also Balfour Goree, “The Cultural Bases of Montanism” (PhD diss., Baylor University, 1980), 143f. W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 292–293.

71 Firstly, these scholars presuppose that the figure of the Phrygian Quintus in *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* (4.1) “whose courage failed him at the sight of the beasts” after he had surrendered himself voluntarily to the authorities was in fact a Montanist – Klawiter, “New Prophecy,” 101–108. Secondly, following similar lines of argumentation, Vettius Epagathus who referred to the *paraclete* and Alexander, a Phrygian doctor both martyred in Lyons in 177 CE are supposed as Montanist zealots. Thirdly, the Χριστιανοὶ Χρηστιανοὶ (“Christians for Christians”) epitaphs discovered by Ramsay in the Phrygian Upper Tembris Valley in the late nineteenth century had been regarded as the clear evidence for pre-Decian open profession of Montanist faith – William Mitchell Ramsay, *The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia: Being an Essay of the Local History of Phrygia, from the Earliest times to the Turkish Conquest* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), 491. Calder, “Philadelphia,” 320–321.

72 Tabbernee has recently refuted such false assertions, stating that the designation “Phrygian” in the case of Quintus and Alexander most possibly means simply the geographical origin of the men and not used as heretical allusion – William Tabbernee, “Early Montanism

number” of martyrs who served as proof on the side of the NP of the power which was manifested within the movement (*HE* 5.16.20). However, he does not accept the claim of the adherents since other heretical sects had their martyrs too (*HE* 5.16.21). Therefore, the martyrs of the true faith in a recent persecution in Apamea and Eumenia refused to associate with “the so-called martyrs of the Phrygian sect” (*HE* 5.16.22). Apollonius, whose – to use the words of Campenhausen – “tittle-tattle”⁷³ is to be taken with a good pinch of salt, speaks of the Montanist Themiso who “bought his release by a heavy bribe” from prison (*HE* 5.18.5) and Alexander, who although “calls himself a martyr”, in fact, had been arrested for robbery (*HE* 5.18.6). It is right to state, that while the NP had its “great number” of martyrs, even if they were not accepted by their fellow Christians, there is no proof that in the early phase of the movement within the Asian setting they would have urged believers to “become martyrs”, as Klawiter with many others believed. Even if the allegedly Montanist oracles cited by Tertullian that encouraged Christians to value martyrdom over other forms of death, and the already arrested confessors to rejoice when others publicly expose them, were considered as norms in Phrygia as well, such a view did not depart sharply from other contemporary “orthodox” opinions such as those of Cyprian or of Clement of Alexandria.⁷⁴

II.4. Fasting and Marriage

There is a considerable lack of information concerning the practice of fasting within the Phrygian setting of the NP in its earliest days. Apollonius did condemn Montanus for laying down new rules on fasting, however in the same breath he accused him of giving way to gluttony (*HE* 5.18.2). Similarly, the Anti-Phrygian applies the warning of the apostle (1Tim 4:1,3) about those sectarians who would come and “enjoin abstinence from foods” to the erroneous discipline of the Three (*Pan* 48.8.8). Similar charges were laid

and Voluntary Martyrdom,” *Colloquium*, 17 (1985): 41. Furthermore the “open-profession” epitaphs of the Tembris Valley might had been engraved by mainstream Christians as well those who felt secure enough to do so – William Tabbernee, *Montanist Inscriptions and Testimonia: Epigraphic Sources Illustrating the History of Montanism* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997), 201.

73 Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: A. and C. Black, 1972), 223.

74 Tabbernee, “Voluntary Martyrdom,” 43. Trevett, *Montanism*, 123. Croix De Ste and Michael Whitby, ed. *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 198. H. J. Lawlor, “The Heresy of the Phrygians,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 9, no. 36 (1908): 496.

down in Rome some decades later against the adherents of the movement, who ate cabbage or radishes and kept dry fasts (xerophagy).⁷⁵ Once again, attention must be paid to Tertullian whose views on fasting *might* shed light on the original views of the Prophets as well. In *On Fasting* he declares that the NP is rejected not because

“... Montanus and Priscilla and Maximilla preach another God, nor that they disjoin Jesus Christ (from God), nor that they overturn any particular rule of faith or hope, but that they plainly teach more frequent fasting than marrying” (1.3)

These fasts, as he elaborates further, included the extension of the abstinence from food until the evening instead of the early afternoon on the usual fast days, xerophagy, and abstinence from wine and in certain periods, from bath.⁷⁶ Fasting *per se* of course was not something novel within Christian circles, since the time of the *Didache* (7.4; 8.1) the pre-baptismal and the ordinary fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays were widespread standards within the Church.⁷⁷ Yet, the underlying issue in Carthage (and probably both in Rome and Asia Minor) was whether additional and stricter fasting above the prescribed and compulsory minimum “is a voluntary act of either an individual or community or whether it is always a solemn duty imposed by God”.⁷⁸ Tertullian opted for the latter. He argued with fierceness that the real reason for labelling the fasting practices of the Prophets as novelty (a designation equal to heresy) is the sensual appetite and lack of temperance on the side of the “psychics”: “For to you your belly is god”, he assessed (*On Fasting* 16.8). Now, the Paraclete who had been manifested in the Prophets, forbids such laxity and demands “the discipline of sobriety and abstinence” (*On Fasting* 13.5). By making “*obligatory* what catholics themselves allowed as a matter of choice”⁷⁹ and justifying such universal obligation by pointing

75 Trevett, *Montanism*, 105–106.

76 Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 111.

77 Thomas O’Loughlin, “The Didache as a Source for Picturing the Earliest Christian Communities: The Case of the Practice of Fasting,” in *Christian Origins: Worship, Belief and Society*, ed. Kieran J. O’Mahony (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 91.

78 Joan Brueggeman Rufe, “Early Christian Fasting: A Study of Creative Adaptation,” (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1994), 285.

79 Trevett, *Montanism*, 107. Similarly John de Soyres, *Montanism and the Primitive Church: A Study in the Ecclesiastical History of the Second Century* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, 1878), 81.; Lawlor, “Heresy,” 495.

towards the supplementary moral revelations of the Paraclete, Tertullian necessarily found himself at odds with the catholic leadership whose less rigorous fasting thus seemed to be questioned and proved to be less devout.⁸⁰

Along with the charge of instituting new fasts, Apollonius makes the accusation against Montanus for teaching “the dissolution of marriages” (*HE* 5.18.2). As Tabbernee points out, this charge could have been the logical deduction of another of his allegations, viz. that Maximilla and Priscilla “from the time they were filled with the spirit, were the very first to leave their husbands” (*HE* 5.18.3).⁸¹ The Anti-Phrygian is more precise (yet less polemic) in his refutation. While arguing that the “holy catholic church reveres virginity, monogamy and purity, commends widowhood, and accepts lawful wedlock” (*Pan.* 48.9.1), it does not wish to lay a burden on anyone and consequently the “frailty of the weak” is to be borne (*Pan.* 48.9.8). It becomes clear, that behind the accusation against the adherents of the NP for “forbidding marriages”, lays the prohibition of second marriages (*Pan.* 48.9.7) which according to the Anti-Phrygian is contrary to the accepted catholic practice (*Pan.* 48.9.6).

Tertullian in Carthage made a great deal to convince the “psychics” that the forbiddance of remarriage was itself not something novel but the original intention of God. However, nowhere does he assert that marriage *per se* is something evil (as Marcion argues), celibacy on the other hand is regarded as “the better state” (*Against Marcion* 1.29). The “psychics” by allowing the practice of digamy, nonetheless are just as erroneous as the Marcionites: while the latter marry not *even* once, the former not *only* once (*On Monogamy* 1.1). Strict monogamy, as it is revealed again in the recent past by the Paraclete, is therefore to be observed, and not seen as something novel, but as the original plan of God for his people (*On Monogamy* 4.1f). Such purity is even more required of the clergy, as both Paul (cf. Rom 8:6) and Priscilla declared (*On Exhortation to Chastity* 10.5).

It seems reasonable to assume that Tertullian’s views on the “better state” of celibacy to that of marriage, and the insistence on strict monogamy, reflect the beliefs of the Three. The NP did not tolerate the “frailty of the weak” as the Anti-Phrygian noted, and demanded obedience to the now clearly revealed ethical imperative of the Paraclete. In this too, they were not that far from other contemporary Christians.

80 Goree, “Cultural Basis,” 137. Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 147–148. Trevett, *Montanism*, 109.

81 Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 113. Also Goree, “Cultural Basis,” 138.

Already 1Clement (38.2) warned those “modest” Christians who claimed higher spiritual gifts not to boast of their purity, and Ignatius rendered celibates under the authority of the bishop (*Pol* 5.2). Apparently, by the end of the first century there were many believers within the congregations who, by agreeing with Paul’s preference to celibate life (1Cor 7:7), formed an ascetic elite, and thus “posed a potential danger to Christian community”.⁸² In face of such growing ascetic tendency, the *Pastoral Epistles* “offered a resolutely non-ascetic reading of the apostle” by condemning those who forbid marriages (1Tim 4:3) allowing remarriage after the death of the spouse (1Tim 5:11) and preferring married men be appointed to clerical tasks (1Tim 3:2,12; Tit 1:6).⁸³

Such non-ascetic interpretations of Paul, however, were not accepted by the Church widely. In the same decade when the NP occurred and opted for stricter purity within the congregations, the episcopal letter of Dionysius of Corinth, in which he asked Pinytus “not to put on the brethren a heavy burden” (namely celibacy), was dismissed by his fellow-bishop as “milky words” of a weak Christian who treats his flock as babes (*HE* 4.23.7-8). Pinytus is not to be regarded as a Marcionite or Encratite, Eusebius was convinced of his orthodoxy, learning and “grasp of theology” (*HE* 4.23.8). Despite the tangible efforts of the hierarchical leaders to impose the “official” interpretation of 1Cor 7 which took into consideration “that most people were weak creatures” (Dionysius, *HE* 4.23.7), in many places (apparently in Phrygia too), it was not seen as unorthodox to propagate a more ascetic ideal of Christian life.⁸⁴ The Prophets at best can be regarded as moderate-Encratites⁸⁵ or preachers of a *via media*⁸⁶ who did not go as far as Gnostics in their understanding of marriage and sexual life, but in the same time did not tolerate human weakness as easily as others would when it came to the question of discipline.

82 David Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 92.

83 David Hunter, “The Reception and Interpretation of Paul in Late Antiquity: 1 Corinthians 7 and the Ascetic Debates,” in *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity: Proceedings of the Montréal Colloquium in Honour of Charles Kannengiesser, 11-13 October 2006*, ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Lucian Turcescu (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 169.

84 Cavan W. Concannon, “Ethnicity, Economics, and Diplomacy in Dionysios of Corinth,” *Harvard Theological Review* 106, no. 2 (2013): 154. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy*, 97–99.

85 Hunter, “Reception,” 173.

86 Trevett, *Montanism*, 113.; Also de Soyres, *Montanism*, 86. Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 114.

III. Montanists versus Bishops

III.1. Prophecy and Progressive Revelation

In the earliest phase of the controversy, as it has been pointed out above, debates between the ecclesiastical leaders and the adherents of Montanus centered on the unnatural ecstasy (παρέκστασις) of the prophets which in the eyes of the opponents proved to be contrary to the traditional practice (*HE* 5.16.7; *Pan.* 48.3f.).

In order to understand the main concerns of the “orthodox” leaders, Ash suggested that we have to go back to Ignatius and his prophetic allusions which laid down a fundamentally different understanding of the nature and characteristic of legitimate Christian prophecy for later generations.⁸⁷ Ignatius claimed that his imperative “Be loyal to your bishop and clergy and deacons” was in fact the preaching of the Spirit (*Phild.* 8.1-2). Furthermore, he asserted, he had the ability – in contrast to the Trallians, who were still in infancy – “to comprehend celestial secrets, angelic hierarchies..., and much else both seen and unseen” (*Trall.* 5.2). Such clearly prophetic qualifications were not only his privilege but possessed by other bishops as well: the power of God rested on bishop Damas (*Magn.* 3.1), Polycarp was urged to “pray for insight into the invisible world” in order to receive “the whole treasury of the Spirit” (*Pol.* 2.2). According to Ash, from the time of Ignatius in certain areas – especially in Asia Minor – there was a strong tendency to regard the prophetic gift as “the special province of the bishop” who used “the charisma for its own ends, and rendered it powerless in the hands of others”.⁸⁸ The roughly contemporary *Pastoral Epistles* moved in the same direction by portraying the collegiate body of elders (without the Ignatian-type of monoepiscopate) as the Spirit-endowed and prophetically-empowered ministers of the congregations (1Tim 4:4, 2Tim 1:6). The great characters of the second century church worthy of mention and veneration by later generations were not ecstatic babblers, but prominent churchmen like Polycarp, “who combined both apostle and prophet in his own person” (*Mart.Pol.* 16.2), or bishop Melito of Sardis, who “lived entirely in the Holy Spirit” (*HE* 24.5), and at the same time wrote extensive works on different segments of the Christian faith and practice, including petitions to the emperor (*HE* 4.26).

87 Ash, “Decline,” 234.

88 Ibid, 250. Also Arnold Ehrhardt, *The Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries of the Church* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), 91f.

It is generally argued by patristic scholars, that the second century was a decisive period in the life of the church, when considerable efforts had been made to defend Christian beliefs and practices against Roman (intellectual and political) accusations, and to make Christianity culturally and ideologically more acceptable to the wider cultural context.⁸⁹ In face of such attempts, the tendency was to rely more on the intellectually reasonable, philosophically sophisticated arguments presented in the works of Justin or Athenagoras, all products of a “cultured mind deeply versed in theology” (HE 4.18.1).⁹⁰ Figures like these apologists together with the sober-minded yet spiritual, prominent bishops could achieve more in the service of the church by explaining the mysteries of the Gospel and building bridges towards the contemporary world than frenzied, barbarian, wild and savage enthusiasts (Pan. 12.1-3) who “chattered crazily, importunately, and wildly” (HE 5.16.9).⁹¹

The Prophets not only spoke in an unintelligible way, but they claimed universal recognition to their utterances: “Hear not me, but hear Christ!” cried Maximilla (Pan. 48.12.4), “Neither angel nor envoy, but I the Lord God the Father have come” stated Montanus (Pan. 48.11.9). Deeply rooted in the Johannine tradition, the Three believed that the promised Paraclete was not only a reality of the Pentecost some one and a half centuries ago, but a present (in fact: the ultimate) authority whose revelations through the prophetic oracles made the instructions of Jesus more accurate to the contemporary troubled Christians.⁹² They regarded themselves as legitimate interpreters of the tradition, and demanded recognition of the instructions of the Paraclete on every matter. It might not be an exaggeration to state that the NP looked to a “pre-monoepiscopal” church where prophets had been held in high esteem and their preaching was welcomed without the suspicion of clerical overseers.⁹³ Needless to say, the church in which the

89 Hans von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Church*, trans. Manfred Hoffman (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 5. Trevett, *Montanism*, 142. Frend, *Rise*, 231.

90 Paul Parvis, “Justin Martyr,” *The Expository Times* 120, no. 2 (2008): 58–61. G. W. H. Lampe, “Christian Theology in the Patristic Period,” in *A History of Christian Doctrine*, ed. Hubert Cunliffe-Jones and Benjamin Drewery (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978), 30f.

91 Klawiter, “New Prophecy,” 157–165.

92 Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy*, 124. Trevett, *Montanism*, 146.

93 Trevett, “Apocalypse,” 321. Ronald Arbuthnot Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion: With Special Reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 40. Helmut Koester, “ΓΝΩΜΑΙ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΟΙ: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity,” *Harvard Theological Review* 58, no. 3 (1965): 317. W. H. C. Frend, *Saints and Sinners in the Early Church: Differing and Conflicting*

movement appeared could no longer tolerate Themiso-like prophets who, by bypassing the monoepiscopate, the legitimate interpreter of the apostolic tradition and the emerging authoritative body of writings, instructed others and thus “blasphemed the Lord, the apostles, and Holy Church” (*HE* 5.18.5).⁹⁴ I think MacCulloch rightly raises the question in relation to Montanus, the question which must have been asked by contemporary ecclesiastical leaders as well: “By what right did this man with no commission, in no apostolic succession, speak new truths of the faith and sweep crowds along with him in his excitement?”⁹⁵

Although prophecy *per se* was still known within the Christian communities by the end of the second century, this kind of hierarchically uncontrolled, ecstatic type proved to be a “troublesome bedfellow” in the eyes of the leaders.⁹⁶ Considerable efforts had been made to tame this troublesome bedfellow. The Anti-Phrygian regarded all kinds of unintelligible behaviour as “an ecstasy of folly” (*Pan.* 48.5.8) and transformed the debate over prophecy into the identification of true Christianity: if anyone wished to prophecy in an untraditional, unscriptural way, viz. revealing new insights in an ecstatic manner, he or she could easily find himself or herself outside boundaries of “the holy Catholic Church” (*Pan.* 48.11.4).⁹⁷ He was heard and agreed to by others. Following the condemnation of the NP, the era of the prophets was coming to an end, after which the now “tamed” prophetic charisma became an additional tool in the hands of the well-educated exegetes or the silent company of the prominent leaders without any disturbing, unexpected novel ideas.⁹⁸

III.2. More Rigorous Ethical Standards

The NP did not introduce any novel doctrine to the church. Even the Anti-Phrygian agrees with this when he states that the “Phrygians... accept

Traditions in the First Six Centuries (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 69.

94 Henry Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society from Galilee to Gregory the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 115.

95 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* (London: Penguin Books, 2010), 138.

96 Trevett, *Montanism*, 147.

97 Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 200–201.

98 Trevett, *Montanism*, 137. Ash, “Decline,” 250–251. Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 192–193. Wright, “Montanists Condemned,” 22. MacCulloch, *History*, 140–141. Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 410. E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety: Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 67–68.

every scripture of the Old and the New Testaments and likewise affirm the resurrection of the dead... They agree with the holy catholic church about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” (*ap. Pan.* 48.1.3-4). The new insights of the Paraclete proclaimed by the Three and their successors were ethical rather than dogmatic in nature. On the basis of the accusations laid down against the Prophets, such new insights dealt with issues such as martyrdom, fasting and marriage.

In many respects the discipline of the Three cannot be seen as radically different from other contemporary “orthodox” practices: martyrdom was highly valued in the second century church and the laws on fasting together with the preference of a celibate life were not rare either. However, the insistence of the Anti-Phrygian “The holy word everywhere declared that we must bear with the frailty of the weak” (*ap. Pan.* 48.9.9) was an already accepted interpretation of the scriptural witness concerning the Christian way of life. Tertullian, the loudest spokesperson of the movement, could not accept such excuses. The ethical demands of the Paraclete were clear enough, and consequently the Prophets proclaimed “that theirs was not time for concessions to human weakness, nor time for polite censorship – the moderately unchaste could no longer to be considered chaste.”⁹⁹ Compared to such radical, uncompromising – as Wright calls: fanatic¹⁰⁰ – declarations, the Dionysian-type light recommendations which acknowledged the fact that “most people were weak creatures” proved to be “milky words” of lax clerical leaders (*HE* 4.23.7f).

In light of the fact that by the turn of the first century certain ascetic promptings were regarded by the ecclesiastical leaders as boastings (cf. *1 Clem* 38.2) and consequently they wished to control those who propagated them in order to avoid the disturbance of the congregational unity by the “spiritual elite” (Ignatius, *Pol.* 5.2), the condemnation of the more rigorist ethical standards of the NP was inevitable. The hierarchs soon realised that they were losing “the moral and spiritual high ground” against the Prophets.¹⁰¹ If they (or rather: the Paraclete) claimed the last word on every disciplinary matter, it was no longer the privilege of the bishop to define the exact nature of Christian orthopraxis.

99 Kaufman, *Church, Book and Bishop*, 44.

100 Wright, “Montanists Condemned,” 21.

101 Trevett, *Montanism*, 120.

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The theological and juridical significance of the diocesan and parish pastoral council in the recent canon law

Introduction

The Church, as the People of God under the direction of the Holy Spirit, has been continually seeking the right answers to the challenges of the world from the very beginning, the pastoral plan serves this purpose as well. In the Acts of the Apostles we read about the importance of supporting and caring for widows and orphans in the primitive Church (6: 6–6), or of the great need to educate the faithful of Antioch (11: 19–26), or of how the prescriptions of the laws of Moses apply to converts from paganism (15: 1-35). The same need – the matter of planning, foresight, and the solution of problems – has run throughout the history of the Church. Church leaders have always sought the solution on how to meet the pastoral needs of the faithful in the best way possible. In order to face and solve these pastoral challenges, a pastoral plan involving the whole diocese as well as the parish is needed.

The so-called consultative bodies, operating at the diocesan level with their advisory function to assist the bishop, differ from commissions or councils that do not have a representative nature.

The conciliar¹ and post-conciliar documents² “highly recommend” the establishment of a pastoral council tasked with preparing a systematic pastoral plan. The pastoral council considers the pastoral activity in the diocese and draws practical instructions, i.e. prepares a pastoral plan. It helps bring the lives and work of the People of God more and more in harmony with the Gospel. The participation of the laity, in accordance with their

1 Austin Flannery O.P., *Vatican council II, the conciliar and post conciliar documents* (New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1984), *Christus Dominus* no. 27; *Ad gentes* no. 30; *Presbyterorum ordinis* no. 7; *Apostolicam actuositatem* no. 26.

2 *Sacra Congregatio Pro Episcopis*, “*Directorium Ecclesia imago*, 26 feb. 1973.,” in *Enchiridion Vaticanum, 1971–1973/4*, (Bologna: EDB, 1991), no. 1461–1463; *Sacra Congregatio Pro Clericis*, “*Litterae Omnes Christifideles*,” in *Enchiridion Vaticanum, 1971–1973/4*, (Bologna: EDB, 1991), no. 1196–1211.

specific mission, takes place in such a way that, they give advice on certain matters, which require the exercise of governmental power.³

An examination of the diocesan and parish pastoral council as a body serving the cooperation of the bishop, the priests and the laity raises the question of whether the legal structure of the pastoral council at these two levels shows merely an analogous or deeper theological connection. Do these councils have a theological basis formulated by the Council? What impact does the specific mission of the faithful arising from the universal priesthood have on emphasizing the representative nature, and is this sufficiently expressed in the legislation pertaining to councils? Should the question on the relationship between the bishop and his commissioned cleric and the members of the council be examined on the basis of the centralization or decentralization of power, or should we rather start from the reality of the theological structure of *communio*?

The theological significance of the diocesan pastoral council in the conciliar and post-conciliar documents

The concept of a pastoral council is a novelty in the current Code, the sources of which can be found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council.⁴

According to the decree *Christus Dominus*, it is “highly desirable” that there be a separate pastoral council in each diocese; and its designated task to “raise and discuss matters of pastoral work and draw practical conclusions”. (27) The *Ad Gentes* decree, on the other hand, emphasizes that a bishop should “as far as possible set up a pastoral council for the sake of greater harmony”, in which priests, members of institutes of consecrated life and lay persons represent the faithful as delegates. (30) The statements of the *Ad Gentes* document – according to renowned canon lawyer Arrieta – need to be analyzed in a larger context, since they primarily speak about the mission of the universal Church. However in the diocese, this missionary task, as well as the coordination of missionary objectives, is entrusted to the bishop, not to his pastoral council, as is commonly referred to.⁵

3 Aymans, Winfried and Klaus Mörsdorf, *Kanonisches Recht I* (Paderborn–München–Wien–Zürich: Verlag Schöningh, 1991), 400.

4 Jean Denis, “L’Église diocésaine et la lumière de Vatican II, Le Conseil du presbyterium et le Conseil diocésain de pastorale,” *Studia Canonica* 1, (1967): 185.

5 cf., Juan Ignacio Arrieta, “El régimen jurídico de los Consejos Presbiteral y Pastoral,” *Ius Canonicum* 21, (1981): 594.

The decree *Apostolicam actuositatem*, albeit indirectly referring to the pastoral council, calls for the “cooperation” of clergy, members of institutions of consecrated life, and laity to organize in each diocese councils that assist the apostolic activity of the church. “These councils also serve to coordinate the various associations and initiatives of the laity, allowing its proper character and autonomy.” (26) The explanation given in paragraph 7 of the *Presbyterorum Ordinis* clearly distinguishes the pastoral council from the presbyteral council, namely the senate, whose task is to „support the bishop with its advice – if deemed necessary – in the administration of the diocese”. (7) The pastoral council “has the task of only keeping an eye on pastoral problems” (7). The formation of this is optional.

Of the post-conciliar documents,⁶ the *motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* urges the most practical application of the ideas of the Council.⁷

The document entitled „The ministerial priesthood” of the Synod of Bishops of 1971 explains the relationship between priests and laity in relation to the pastoral council: „The more the joint responsibility of bishops and priests is intensified nowadays (primarily through presbyteral councils), the more desirable it is to establish pastoral councils in each diocese.”⁸

The letter *Omnes Christifideles* of the Congregation for the Clergy issued on January 25, 1973 also states that if the diocesan bishop, after joint discussion with the episcopal conference and his own presbyterium, decides that the given conditions are met, he then sets up the pastoral council, and create its statutes.⁹ The circular letter also states that “councils in the diocese, whether at the parish or district level, have the same nature”.¹⁰ This circular letter is the only post-conciliar document that deals specifically with the pastoral council, and it is the first to mention the parish pastoral council as well.

The directorium *Ecclesiae Imago* on the pastoral service of bishops, issued by the Congregation for Bishops on 22 February 1973, states that if the bishop deems it useful for pastoral work, a pastoral council should be established in each parish in addition to other already existing centers of

6 cf. Péter Erdő, “Tanácsok, bizottságok és más pasztorális szervek a zsinat utáni egyházjogban,” *Teológia* 16, (1982): 244–246.

7 Paul VI, “*Motu Proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* 6 aug. 1966.,” in *Enchiridion Vaticanum*, 1963–1967, (Bologna: EDB, 1981), 696–769.

8 Synodus Episcoporum, “*Documentum Ultimis temporibus de sacerdotio ministeriali*, 30.11.1971.,” in *Enchiridion Vaticanum*, 4 1971–1973, (Bologna: EDB, 1991), no. 1232.

9 *Sacra Congregatio pro Clericis*, “*Litterae Omnes Christifideles*” no. 7.

10 *Ibid.* 12.

apostolic work, and these are coordinated by the diocesan pastoral council.¹¹ The coordinating role of the council at the diocesan level is already a novelty here. In terms of coordination, it is not an advisory body within the legal structure of the diocese, as in the clear case of the presbyteral senate, but rather the maternal caring role of the Church when it seeks to regulate harmony between the different groups.¹² This document was repealed by the directorium *Apostolorum Successores* which came into force in 2004, and it has practically clarified the uncertainties that have arisen in the past.¹³

The juridical significance of the diocesan pastoral council in the current Code Establishment and competence: According to canon 511, the establishment of the council (*constituatur*) is mandatory if it is justified by pastoral circumstances. Of course, it is up to the bishop to decide whether or not the circumstances justify it.¹⁴

The competence of the council, although formulated in general terms, is nevertheless clear that the council is not responsible for carrying out pastoral activities.¹⁵ Since it can only deal with issues “concerning” pastoral work, it therefore has a triple function: to investigate (*investigare*), to ponder (*perpendere*), and to propose practical conclusions (*proponere*). In order to distinguish the competence of the council from the presbyteral senate, it is generally argued that only priests can be members of the presbyteral senate, while the pastoral council can also have laymen.¹⁶ The pastoral council can give advice on matters related to pastoral activities, while the presbyteral senate can advise on legal acts that also concerns governmental power.¹⁷

11 Sacra Congregatio Pro Episcopis, *Directorium Ecclesia imago*, no. 204.

12 cf. Arrieta, *El régimen jurídico*, 594.

13 Sacra Congregatio Pro Episcopis, *Directorium Apostolorum Successores*, (22.02.2004), no. 184.

14 The *Ommes Christifideles* circular letter of 1973 of the Congregation for the Clergy calls on the bishops to decide before the episcopal conference, as well as to discuss with their own presbyteriums, whether these pastoral circumstances exist (cf. no. 6).

15 Denis, “L’Église diocésaine,” 187.

16 Albano Vilela, “Réflexion Théologique sur les Conseils Presbytéraux,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 94, (1972): 600.

17 Sacred power (*potestas sacra*) signifies the power of teacher, priest, and governor. Governmental power implies legislative, executive, and judicial powers. More on this matter: Gábor Kiss, “A világi krisztushívők közreműködése a krisztusi hármasság küldetésében és a kormányzati hatalom gyakorlásában” (PhD diss., Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem, 2020), 30–41. In relation to governmental power, cf. Jean Beyer, “La nouvelle définition de la „Potestas Regiminis;” *L’Année Canonique* 24, (1980): 53–67; Elizabeth McDonough, “Layty and the Inner Working of the Church,” *The Jurist* 47, (1987): 231–234; George Felix,

Since „Lay members of the Christian faithful can cooperate in the exercise of this same power according to the norm of law.” (can. 129 § 2), therefore, lay members of the pastoral council can also contribute their advice on issues that require the exercise of governmental power.¹⁸

The pastoral council has no competence to declare anything concerning general matters of faith and orthodoxy, moral principles, or the law of the universal Church, since the bishop is the supreme teacher in the diocese. In the exercise of pastoral activities, the presbyteral senate is the advisory body. Of course, the pastoral council can give advice on matters concerning missionary, catechetical, and apostolic work in the diocese, as well as matters relating to the sacramental and religious life of the faithful. In addition, the council may assist the priests in the pastoral care of the various social areas of the diocese, as well as in the public activities of the Church.¹⁹ With regard to competence, it should be noted: The consultative vote of the pastoral council is limited only to the territory of the diocese.

Composition of the diocesan pastoral council:

Canon 512 answers three important questions about the council: 1) who make it up; 2) who it represents; 3) and what qualities the members should have.

a) *Its members:* “Christian faithful in full communion with the Catholic Church” can be its members. This criterion does not mean that the council withdraws from the idea of ecumenism, since the dialogue with other churches and ecclesial communities is a not an insignificant part of the issues concerning pastoral work, especially nowadays. This is also prescribed by universal law when formulating the pastoral duties of the diocesan bishop.²⁰

“Canon 129: The participation of Christ’s lay faithful in „potestas regiminis,” : a Juridical Approach with Special Reference to the Indian Context (Roma: Nagercoil, 1993), 24–26; James Provost, “The Participation of the Laity in the Governance of the Church,” *Studia Canonica* 18, (1983): 4–448, particularly 423–430.

18 For example, one of the members of the collegiate tribunal may be a lay person (c.1421 §2); More on this matter: Gábor Kiss, “Világi krisztushívók az egyházi bíróságon a Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus után,” in *Fiatal Kutatók és Doktoranduszok VII. Nemzetközi Teológuskonferenciájának Tanulmánykötete*, ed. Kiss Gábor (Pécs: 2017), 349–357; cf. Alphonse Borrás, “Petite grammaire canonique des nouveaux ministères,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 117, (1995): 240–261; Francesco Giannini, “Il consiglio pastorale diocesano,” *Orientalmenti Pastoralis* 31, (1983): 80–85; cf. Aymans and Mörsdorf, *Kanonisches Recht I*, 400.

19 cf. *Sacra Congregatio pro Clericis, Litterae Omnes Christifideles*, no. 9.

20 c.383§3: „He is to act with humanity and charity toward the brothers and sisters who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church and is to foster ecumenism as it is understood by the Church.”

Since the canon does not explicitly speak of our brethren of other catholic rites, we must presume that their participation, their membership, is evident.²¹ Of course, the bishop may, in his own discretion, judge the importance of this.

The first category of council members consists of clerics. By clerics, the Code means “persons performing sacred service or sacred ministers” (can. 207 § 1).²² These include the bishop, priest and deacon. The second group includes members of the institutions of consecrated life. The institutions of consecrated life include monastic and secular institutions (can. 573),²³ and according to Fernando Loza, because of the similarity, even the societies of apostolic life are included. The third group is composed “mainly” of the laity.²⁴

The designation of members is based on the free decision of the bishop. Similar to the presbyteral senate – although emphasizing the essential difference between the nature and identity of the two councils – the members are, on one hand, elected, on the other hand, the membership is obtained by office, and finally some are freely appointed by the bishop. It is important to emphasize that in whatever manner members are designated, we cannot speak of a canonical election in the strict sense (cf. can. 164-179). The latin term of the canon says a lot: “*designantur*”, “*deputantur*”, “*seligantur*”, “*ne deputentur*,” the legislator expressly avoids the term election (*electio*), which would imply a kind of representation.²⁵ The canon does not speak about the number of members, but it is evident that members appointed by the bishop, similar to the presbyteral council, must correspond to the criteria of competence or representation.²⁶

21 Paul VI., *Motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* 16§5: “Where there are hierarchies of different rites in the same territory, it is highly recommended, as far as possible, that the pastoral council be of an inter-rite character, that is, composed of clerics, monks, and laity of different rites.”

22 “The sacred ministry denotes not only the irreplaceable priestly functions which, even if necessary, cannot be validly performed by a person who has not obtained the proper degree of holy orders, but also those which belong to the specific mission of ordained persons, but which, if necessary—with an auxiliary character, or as useful cooperation, but with a proper mandate—can be administered by the laity.” cf. c.232–233; CCEO c.323§1, c.331§1; Péter Erdő, “A világiak munkája a plébánián,” *Távlatok* 12–13, (1993): 635.

23 Fernando Loza, “Exegetical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law,” no. 1247.

24 Erdő, “A világiak munkája,” 633.; cf. Adolfo Longhitano, “Laico, persona, fedele cristiano. Quale categoria fondamentale per i battezzati?” in *Il fedele cristiano. Il Codice del Vaticano II*, ed. Adolfo Longhitano (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1989), 48–52.

25 Loza, “Exegetical Commentary,” no. 1248.

26 Cesare Bonicelli, “Note per una riqualificazione del consiglio pastorale diocesano,” *Orientamenti Pastoral* 34, (1986): 26.

b) *Representation*: The christian faithful, therefore, must be selected “to reflect fully and truly the portion of the People of God that constitutes that diocese.” (§ 2.) The pastoral council is nothing more than the council of the faithful of the diocese gathered around the bishop. Although they are equal in dignity and action, they differ according to the service entrusted to them. They participate in the same mission, in their own way. Clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and lay persons participate in carrying out this common mission as effectively as possible. Thus, the pastoral council, as Pagé Roch notes, becomes a collectively responsible organization in the particular Church that includes all elements of the activity of the People of God.²⁷ This does not imply, however, that the pastoral council, in its organizational structure, is entitled to the juridical representation of the People of God. This would require a specific procedure of canonical election (can. 164 - can. 179). It is clear from the preparatory draft of the canon that the function of representing all the christian faithful of the diocese cannot be attributed to the pastoral council, since the members are not elected by the other faithful.²⁸ Therefore, the members of the council have no right of representation, they act in their own name and with their personal criteria. Members appointed to the council should reflect the diocesan portion of the People of God, considering the different regions of the diocese, social conditions and professions, and individual and collective involvement in apostolic work.

c) *Required qualities*: Members of the pastoral council are required to be in full communion with the Catholic Church (Can. 512 § 1).²⁹ Thus, those who belong to a group that is not in full communion with the Catholic Church, or members of associations that are factually against the Church, cannot be its members.³⁰ Positively formulated, this means that “only believers in Christ

27 Roch Pagé, *Les Églises particulières. Leurs structures de gouvernement selon le Code de Droit Canonique de 1983* (Montréal: Édition Paulines, 1985), 191.

28 Loza, “Exegetical Commentary,” no. 1249.

29 vö. Péter Erdő, *Az Egyházjog Teológiája intézménytörténeti megközelítésben* (Budapest: SZIT, 1996), 114–119; Libero Gerosa, *La scomunica e una pena? Saggio per una fondazione teologica del diritto penale canonico* (Fribourg, Suisse: Editions Universitaires, 1984), 264–296; Alphonse Borras, “Appartenance à l’Église, communion ecclésiale et excommunication,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 110, (1988): 808–814; Velasio De Paolis, “Communio et excommunicatio,” *Periodica* 70, (1981): 271–302.

30 c.1374 punishes catholics who are members of such associations, or promote or direct such associations, with an ecclesiastical ban. Those who are members of a masonic association are in grave sin and cannot receive Holy Communion. cf. Petrus Tocanel, “*Adnotationes*,” *Apolaris* 54, (1981): 30–38. At the same time, a person in full communion with the Catholic

who stand out with their firm faith, good morals, and wisdom” (Can. 512, §3) should be designated to the council. It is up to the diocesan bishop to determine whether these conditions (knowledge, prudence, integrity, firm faith, good morals, wisdom) are met, or whether the required qualities still need to be specified.

Duration:

The pastoral council as a juridical institution is not permanent in the classical sense, as it is established for a certain period of time. The terms “*ad tempus*” should not be interpreted to imply that the council receives a mandate to perform a function, and once it has performed it, it ceases, but to imply that the duration of membership should be specified in the statutes.³¹ As for the duration of the members’ function, the preparatory committee of the texts of the present canon also emphasized the provision of the Code, namely the establishment of a pastoral council for a definite period.³² Members are not elected for a lifetime, but only for a certain period of time.

According to the canon, the pastoral council is established by the bishop. Although the text, similar to the chapter, does not mention the “statutes approved by the diocesan bishop” (can. 506), it is clear that the statutes constituted by the council³³ only become final with the approval of the diocesan bishop. The establishment of the council as a juridical reality and the approval of its statutes shall be recorded in writing in accordance with can. 474³⁴ It is important to note here that the office of the members of the council is of a pastoral consultative nature, thus they do not form part of the diocesan curia (can. 469).³⁵

Church may also be barred from Holy Communion when, for example, he is in mortal sin. cf. Erdő, *Egyházjog*. 352; Péter Artner, *A kánoni büntetések alkalmazását megelőző fegyelmi intézkedések* Bibliotheca Instituti Postgradualis Iuris Canonici Universitatis Catholicae de Petro Pázmány nominatae (IV/9). (Budapest: SZIT, 2013), 176.

31 James A. Coriden, and Thomas J. Green, and Donald E. Heintschel, *The Code of Canon Law. A text and commentary* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist press, 1985), 412.

32 *Communicationes* 5, (1973) 231.

33 c.94§1: „Statutes in the proper sense are ordinances which are established according to the norm of law in aggregates of persons (*universitates personarum*) or of things (*universitates rerum*) and which define their purpose, constitution, government, and methods of operation.”

34 c.474: „For validity, acts of the curia which are to have juridic effect must be signed by the ordinary from whom they emanate; they must also be signed by the chancellor of the curia or a notary. The chancellor, moreover, is bound to inform the moderator of the curia concerning such acts.”

35 cf. Péter Erdő, *Hivatalok és közfunkciók az egyházban* (Budapest: SZIT, 2003) 45–81,

Since the pastoral council is the bishop's advisory body, its establishment and abolition are the bishop's responsibility as well, therefore it is quite evident that the council ceases when the see becomes vacant. Members also lose their office and all rights and obligations that are articulated in the statutes. With the cessation of the vacancy, the council will not be revived automatically, but the newly appointed bishop, after taking possession of his office, at his own discretion, may re-establish the pastoral council in the light of can. 511.³⁶

The place of the county bishop in the pastoral council:

Canon 514 enumerates the right to convoke, to preside over, and also to make public the deliberations in the council within the competence of the bishop. It follows from the nature and purpose of the council that the right to convoke belongs to the diocesan bishop, which means that any convocation that takes place without the bishop's consent is invalid. The bishop convokes the council "according to the needs of the apostolate" (can. 514 § 1). However, this does not preclude the possibility of the convocation by the members of the council themselves if this is necessary for the examination of matters concerning pastoral work.

The diocesan bishop also has the right to preside. As the bishop is the head of the council by virtue of his power of governance, he is not obliged to always appear on it, yet the personal presence of the bishop greatly facilitates the hearing and the presentation of practical conclusions, advice and its acceptance.³⁷

The consultative vote of the pastoral council is entirely optional. Nowhere in the law is it prescribed that a bishop be obliged to seek or hear the opinion of the council before commencing any legal act, of course, he may do so, but in no case under the burden of validity or permissibility.³⁸

The canon reserves the public release of the deliberations solely to the authority of the bishop (*unice spectat*), thus imposing a kind of mandatory secrecy on the members of the council. Opinions, discussions, agreements, and final conclusions expressed at the meeting may not be made public

particularly 78–81.

36 Coriden, Green, and Heintschel, *The Code of Canon Law*, no. 412.

37 Loza, "EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY," NO. 1251.

38 Norbert Witsch, *Synodalität auf Ebene der Diözese. Die Bestimmungen des universalkirchlichen Rechts der Lateinischen Kirche* (Padenborg–München–Wien–Zürich: Schöningh, 2004), 386–391.

unless they are made public by the bishop. Even if they were accepted and approved by the bishop.³⁹

Finally, the convoking of the pastoral council, as determined by the Code, is to take place at least once a year. In universal law, we do not find such cases that would require more frequent convening of the pastoral council. However, we can say that according to the legislator, this is the required minimum for the pastoral council to be able to examine and consider – by submitting practical questions – the issues concerning pastoral work.⁴⁰

The theological significance of the parish pastoral council in the conciliar and subsequent documents

The concept of the parish pastoral council is a novelty in the Code, although its foundations are not found in the terminology of the Council, yet several authors⁴¹ deduced the establishment of the parish pastoral council from the spirit of the Council.

The decree *Christus Dominus* strongly recommends that a separate pastoral council be established in each diocese; whose job is to “raise and discuss issues related to pastoral work and reach practical conclusions.” (27). This formulation will be the normative regarding the task of the parish pastoral council as well.

The decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, although referring only indirectly to the pastoral council, calls for the “cooperation” of the clergy, members of institutions of consecrated life and the laity to organize in each diocese councils that assist the apostolic activity of the Church. “These councils also serve to coordinate the various associations and initiatives of the laity, allowing its own particular character and autonomy.” (26) Notable authors⁴² do not consider this conciliar text to be a valid source of reference for the establishment of the parish pastoral council.

39 Loza, “Exegetical Commentary,” no. 1252.

40 Cappellini, *Il Consiglio pastorale diocesano*, 46.

41 cf. Carlo Pini, *Il consiglio pastorale parrocchiale, cosa è, cosa fa, come funziona* (Torino: Elle Di Ci, 1992), 18–22.

42 William Dalton, “Parish Councils or Parish Pastoral Councils?”, *Studia Canonica* 22, (1988): 171–172.; Orville Griesse, „The New Code of Canon Law and Parish Councils”, *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, vol. 85, no. 4 (January 1985): 47; John Richard Keating, “Consultation in the Parish”, *Origins* 14, (1984–1985): 260.; Alesandro John Renken, “Pastoral Councils: Pastoral Planning and Dialogue among the People of God”, *The Jurist* 53, (1993): 148.

The letter *Omnnes Christifideles* from Congregation for the clergy states that if the diocesan bishop, after joint discussion with the episcopal conference and his own presbyterium, may decide to set up a pastoral council to which he provides its own statutes. This is the document that later made it possible to establish the parish pastoral council in analogy with the diocesan pastoral council.⁴³ According to the circular, “councils in the diocese, whether at parish or district level, have the same nature”.⁴⁴

Post-Synod documents do not refer to Resolution AA 26 as the theological source of the parish pastoral council. This circular is the only post-synod document that explicitly mentions the parish pastoral council. Therefore, it can be concluded that the conciliar documents do not directly address the establishment of the parish pastoral council, but in accordance with the particular charism arising from the baptism of the faithful, this institutional form of cooperation can be placed in the conciliar context.⁴⁵ Others argue that reference to the conciliar documents is merely a subsequent interpretation.⁴⁶

What was the original intention of the Second Vatican Council regarding the parish pastoral council? AA 26 merely mentions that “councils should be organized in every diocese to assist the apostolic activity of the Church.” Its parish-level organization is the pastoral council. The apostolic indicator has a very broad sense since it may include evangelization, sanctification, charitable, and social activity as well. These councils also have the ability to “coordinate” secular associations and their initiatives. Obviously, they cannot impose regulations, as these associations retain their specific character and „autonomy”. Nevertheless, the council assigns a serious task to these councils, but without juridical authority. It is certain that the parish council (in the former version of the text, the center) has a dual function, on one hand, to assist the apostolic activity of the Church, and on the other hand, to coordinate the various associations and initiatives of the laity.⁴⁷ Coordination was the essence of the problem of interpreting AA 26, according to which the task of the councils was to “coordinate” the various associations and

43 Alphonse Borras, “Petite apologie du Conseil pastoral de paroisse,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 114, (1992): 376–378.

44 Sacra Congregatio pro Clericis, “Litterae Omnes Christifideles”, n. 12.

45 Borras, “Petite apologie,” 372–376.

46 Mark Fischer, “What Was Vatican II’s Intent Regarding Parish Councils?,” *Studia canonica* 33, (1999): 7.

47 Ibid. 24–25.

initiatives of the laity. This has been interpreted by many to mean that the council is also competent in directing parish services.⁴⁸

Pope John Paul II, in his exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, warns that pastoral problems can only be dealt with if they are examined and solved with the “cooperative help” of all. Moreover, this “cannot be accomplished otherwise than by the sincere, broad-minded, and firm appreciation of the parish pastoral council” (CL 27).

The latest instruction of the Congregation for the clergy seems to solve the problem above by stating that “the main task of the parish pastoral council is therefore to seek and inquire practical suggestions related to pastoral and charitable initiatives in the parish, in accordance with the diocesan plans.”⁴⁹ Of course, other options may be chosen in accordance with the law, such as a joint pastoral council set up for several parishes entrusted to a single parish priest.⁵⁰

The theological significance of the parish pastoral council

The parish pastoral council is, in a theological sense, “engraved in the essential reality of the Church,”⁵¹ which means that the faithful must, by virtue of their baptism, all work to build the body of Christ. Their participation in this, and the “spirituality of communion” which is lived through the diversity of charisms and services flowing from the gift of the Holy Spirit, is what gives the parish pastoral council its essential character.

The instruction is reminiscent of St. Paul VI’s words, “It is the task of the pastoral council to study and examine everything connected with pastoral activity and then to draw practical conclusions for the purpose of bringing the lives and actions of God’s people into harmony with the Gospel.”⁵² The triple function of the diocesan pastoral council can also be applied to the parish pastoral council by *analogia iuris*.⁵³

Thus, the council has primarily a task of evangelization rather than an administrative one. As Pope Francis puts it: “the purpose of the council is not

48 Griese, “The New Code,” 47–48.

49 Congregation for the Clergy, *The pastoral conversion of the parish communities in the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2020), no. 112.

50 Ibid. 52.

51 Ibid. 52.

52 Ibid. 53.

53 Borras, “Petite apologie,” 559–561.

primarily to perform organizational functions within the Church, but that missionary ideal for us to reach everyone”⁵⁴

Finally, before turning to the special legislation of the hungarian particular churches, it is worth giving a brief overview of how the german, italian and polish churches defined the concept of parish pastoral council in their regulations, based on the research of legal scholar Leszek Rojowski.⁵⁵

Germany: “The council of the parish community serves to build a living community and realize the universal mission of salvation of the Church. The parish pastoral council established by the bishop is an organization that coordinates the apostolate of the laity and is responsible for promoting the apostolic activity of the parish community.” (Diocesi di Würzburg, Art. 1, 1998).

Italy: “The parish pastoral council [...] represents on the one hand the image of the fraternity and the whole community of the parish in which all its elements are expressed, and on the other hand creates an instrument for joint pastoral decisions where the president as its proper pastor and the representatives of the faithful should reach a common synthesis.” (Diocesi di Milano, Sinodo XLVII, cost. 147 § 2).

Poland: “The parish pastoral council which represents the people of God in the parish is an expression of the communion of the Church, a sign which indicates the common responsibility for the Church and her saving mission through the cooperation of the laity and the clergy.” (Diocesi di Czestochowa, 1986).

These definitions clearly show that the ecclesial community appears directly and visibly in the parish. For the parish is “not the same as the organization, the area, or the building; but rather as a brotherly community, the family of God, the home of cordial, brotherly and family togetherness, the community of Christians.” (CL 26). It is a Eucharistic community whose mission is to perform apostolic activity and exercise its duties and rights in a common responsibility.⁵⁶

54 Pope Francis, “*Evangelii gaudium*”, n. 31, AAS 105, (2013): 1033; cf. Leszek Rojowski, “La scelta missionaria nell’attività del consiglio pastorale parrocchiale,” *Person and Challenges* 4, (2014): 241–245.

55 Leszek Rojowski, *I consigli pastorali parrocchiali dal concilio Vaticano II alle sue attuazioni* (Roma: Pontificia Università Lateranense, 2002), 185.

56 Borras, “Petite apologie,” 381–390.

The juridical significance of the parish pastoral council in the current Code Parish pastoral council or parish board of representatives? The legal institution of the hungarian communal board of representatives is considered to be a speciality of particular law. It was introduced everywhere, and operated legitimately in Hungary after World War II. This body did not function as an organization independent of the bishop, but was given a legitimate place in the hierarchical organization of the diocese. The institutional activity of the parish board of representatives coincides with the functions and rights of the parish pastoral council subsequently proposed by the Second Vatican Council.

Since the parishes did not initially have juridic personality, but were later recognized as independent legal entities by state laws, and by the promulgation of the Code of 1983 – legitimately erected parishes has juridic personality by the law itself (can. 515 § 3) – it therefore seemed necessary to clarify the relationship between the two juridic persons, which were identical in nature and function.

The introductory provision of the “A Magyarországi Egyházközségi Képviselőtestületek Szabályzata”⁵⁷ issued by the Episcopal Conference on January 2, 1993 states the following: “The new universal law of the Church calls the community of believers itself a parish, therefore it is no longer necessary to speak about the communal as a separate ecclesiastical concept (can. 515-518). We agree that henceforth we use the word communal as the beautiful old hungarian name of the parish community.”⁵⁸

According to the provision of the Episcopal Conference, the parish board of representatives is the council which – as recommended by universal law – fulfils the function of the parish pastoral council.⁵⁹ Therefore, when interpreting the norms applied to the pastoral council, we also refer to the provisions of The Statutes of the Hungarian Parishes’ Board of Representatives.

Establishment and competence

Current canon law entrusts the establishment of the parish pastoral council to the competence of the diocesan bishop, after hearing the priestly senate (can. 536 § 1). This should be considered „highly recommended” in normal circumstances, as Pope Francis affirms: “No parish priest can lead his parish

57 “The Statutes of the Hungarian Parishes’ Board of Representatives”

58 “A Magyarországi Egyházközségi Képviselő Testületek Szabályzata,” (1993), I.2. nr. 1. 1. (abbreviation: Meksz)

59 Ibid. 2.1.

without a pastoral council!”⁶⁰ The fact that the current law entrusts the county bishop with the establishment of pastoral advisory bodies at the diocesan or parish level, rather than making it generally mandatory,⁶¹ by all means recognizes the ordinary, proper and immediate authority of the diocesan bishop (cf. can. 381 § 1). The interpretation that if the establishment of the council were obligatory, then the transmission and representation of the fundamental values of the parish and particular churches (participation arising from the general priesthood, responsibility, proper autonomy) would be more effective, is incorrect.

The council is an ecclesiastical organization which serves the life and growth of the parish community through the cooperation and common responsibility of all Christian faithful. Its basic purpose is to “ensure, within an institutional framework, the cooperation of believers in the specifically priestly and pastoral activities.”⁶² With its advisory role, it helps to promote pastoral activity. The pastor listens carefully to the opinions expressed by his council. The council has no right of decision or resolution, it is merely of an advisory nature. Based on the image of the Church of the Second Vatican Council, the composition of the council consists of the community of believers belonging to the parish who in cooperation with the parish priest wish to support the ministry of evangelization, liturgical life and brotherly love with their advice, suggestions and opinions. The particular task of the council is to develop the pastoral program of the parish community⁶³ in accordance with the pastoral guidelines of the diocese and the universal Church. The council assists the parish priest in the fulfilment of his office, considers issues raised by the community, and submits proposals to the parish priest to resolve them. It facilitates the joint cooperation of parish groups and associations,⁶⁴ and also supports the implementation of decisions concerning them. It promotes missionary awareness and activity in the community.⁶⁵

60 Congregation for the Clergy, “The pastoral conversion,” no.108.

61 cf. Borras, “Petite apologie,” 559.

62 Congregation for the Clergy, *The priest, the pastor and leader of the parish community*. (London: Pauline Books & Media, 2002), no. 26.

63 cf. Rojowski, “La scelta missionaria,” 250.

64 cf. Alphonse Borras, “La paroisse et les associations de fidèles à l’heure du pape François”, *Studia canonica* 51, (2017): 113–134.

65 cf. Congregation for the Clergy, “The priest, the pastor,” no. 26.

Canon 536 is not a ‘product’ of conciliar theology, but a real innovation in legislation. Although the current law does not primarily use the concept of the parish pastoral council, yet the innovation consists in that the parish gives its own pastor – in accordance with the principles of the Council – great freedom in terms of deliberation. The emphasis is not on the advisory body but on the consultative role of the pastor. He convenes, presides, asks the council to assist him in certain pastoral matters, as we have observed in the case of the diocesan pastoral council.

Composition of the parish pastoral council

Canon 536 answers three important questions about the council: a) who make it up; (b) who it represents; (c) and what characteristics members must possess.

a) *Members:* The instruction of the Congregation for the Clergy, in reference to the Code, states that the parish pastoral council is “an advisory body governed by the rules laid down by the diocesan bishop, defining the criteria for its composition, the methods of electing members, objectives, and working methods.”⁶⁶ Furthermore, the document warns against the tendency that “the pastoral council should rather consist of persons who are actually responsible for the pastoral life of the parish or who perform specific duties there.”⁶⁷

The composition of the council consists of *ex officio* and elected members. The council is headed by the parish priest, moreover, its members also include the parochial vicar and the priests and deacons who participate in the pastoral care of the parish. The leaders of the various parish groups and institutions (charitable, liturgical, catechetical, economic, Catholic schools, media) are also *ex officio* members of the council. Elected members are appointed from among the faithful who are actively involved in the life of the parish, taking responsibility, and performing specific tasks.

In Hungary, the members of the board of representatives can only be those Catholics who a) live permanently in the parish territory, b) or have been actively involved in the life of the parish for at least one year, c) are fully capable of action, d) are not prohibited from receiving the Eucharist, e) are confirmed, f) they pay church tax, g) they are between 18 and 70 years old, h) they are disposed for the task.⁶⁸

66 Congregation for the Clergy, “The pastoral conversion,” no. 111.

67 *Ibid.* no. 114.

68 Meksz, no. 4.1.

b) Representation: It is important that “the pastoral council, in accordance with the diocesan instructions, in a truly representative way should stand for the community that it needs to represent with all its components (priests, deacons, consecrated persons, and the laity). It creates a special environment where the faithful can exercise their right and duty to express their own thoughts to the pastors concerning the good of the parish community, and to share them with other believers.”⁶⁹ Attention should also be given to ensure that “all strata of the parishioners are represented as much as possible according to age, sex, profession and the geographical locations of the territory.”⁷⁰

c) Desired Qualities: The faithful who is known to be a religious and active believer, who performs a real function, lives an exemplary individual and family life, has an apostolic spirit, common sense, and disciplined negotiation skills should be a member of the council.⁷¹ This person should be in full communion with the Church, should stand out in the community with his or her firm faith, and take an active part in the life of the parish community and be able to weigh on pastoral issues with his or her ecclesial spirit.

Duration of appointment

The term of office of the members is usually 5 years, but the bishop may specify a shorter term. The term of office of the whole body shall be terminated if the bishop dissolves it for serious reasons, or if the body dissolves itself with the consent of the bishop, if the term of office expires. In addition, the term of office may be terminated for each member if he or she did not meet the conditions for election, if he or she requests his or her dispensation in writing, if he or she reaches the age of 70, if he or she does not attend five consecutive meetings unreasonably, or if the ordinary renounces the concerned assignment.⁷²

69 Congregation for the Clergy, „The pastoral conversion,” no. 112.; cf. Pini, *Il consiglio pastorale*, 14–16.

70 Meksz, no. 4. 2.

71 Ibid. 4.2.

72 Ibid. 4.7.

The place of the parish priest in the pastoral council

The president of the pastoral council is the parish priest, or if the parish is entrusted to a secular chaplain, then this person acts as the presiding officer next to the parish priest.⁷³ In Hungary, the members of the board of representatives elects a lay president from among themselves who acts under the authority and supervision of the ecclesiastical president (parish priest).⁷⁴ The parish priest, just as he presides the Eucharist both as an ecclesiastical person and in the person of Christ, he stands at the head of the council not as a member, but as the proper pastor of the community.⁷⁵

The most recent instruction of the Congregation for Clergy calls for “two extremes to be avoided: on the one hand, that the parish priest only informs the council of ready-made decisions, and does not disclose prior information, or rarely and only formally convenes the council; on the other hand, that the parish priest serves in the council merely as one of its members, practically depriving him of his pastoral and leadership role in the community.”⁷⁶ The parish as a juridic person is not collegial, as its action in decision-making are not determined by the cooperating members (cf. can. 115 § 2).⁷⁷ The decisions made by the council without or in spite of the parish priest are therefore invalid. “The pastoral council belongs to the realm of the mutual relationship between the parish priest and the faithful. [...] It would therefore not make sense to consider it [...] as a body that would practically define the leadership role of the parish priest based on a majority.”⁷⁸

Summary

The composition, structure, and authority of the diocesan pastoral council are defined by the conciliar documents. According to these documents, the task of the council is “to raise and discuss issues concerning pastoral work and to reach practical conclusions” (PO 27). Setting up a council is “highly desired”. The conciliar documents do not mention the parish pastoral council. The pastoral council at the diocesan and parish levels does not possess a theological foundation established by the Council.

73 Ibid. 4.8.

74 Ibid. 4. 9.

75 Borras, “Petite apologie,” 563.

76 Congregation for the Clergy, “The pastoral conversion,” no. 113.

77 Borras, “Petite apologie,” 564.

78 Congregation for the Clergy, “The priest, the pastor and leader of the parish community,” no. 26.

Post-synodal documents (especially significant in this regard is the *Omnes Christifideles*) urge the practical implementation of the given guidelines. In these texts, the establishment of the pastoral council is already mentioned as “highly recommended”. Its function is unchanged. Regarding the nature of the councils, we find equivalence either at the parish or regional level. There are already explicit references to the parish pastoral council in these documents.

From the misleading formulations of the Council, but most of all of the post-conciliar pronouncements, emerges the misconception that the mission arising from the general priesthood would entail a representative character which would mean the exercise of ecclesiastical governmental power. Thus, the directorium *Apostolorum Successores* published in 2004 is an important pronouncement which practically clarified the controversial issues that have arisen in the meantime.⁷⁹ The “Pastoral conversion of parish communities” issued by the Congregation for the Clergy in 2020, in Pope Francis’ missionary view, gave a new impetus to the active role of the parish pastoral council which would ensure the cooperation of believers within an institutional framework.

According to current law, the establishment of the council is not mandatory, and its competence is generally defined. It does not deal with pastoral work, but with issues that “concern” it. The consultative vote of the council is to be interpreted broadly, since the council is not a body that participates in the governmental function of the diocese. Certain bodies prescribed by law already exist for this purpose (cf. the presbyteral senate, can. 495; the college of consultors, can. 502 § 2). The opinions, advice, suggestions, and practical conclusions of the members, which are made by a formal vote at the end of the sessions, only reflect the opinion of the majority,⁸⁰ without imposing any obligation on the bishop or the parish priest. This is not about such right of election that would be binding on anyone. At the diocesan level, it is up to the bishop to judge and evaluate how much weight he gives to the opinions expressed.⁸¹ Of course, these counseling is limited to the territory of the diocese. At the parish level, the parish priest decides to what extent he applies the council’s suggestions in the fulfilment of his pastoral duties.

In connection with the composition of the council, in addition to those specified in the canon, members of the ecumenical council as well as catholic

79 Sacra Congregatio Pro Episcopis, “Directorium Apostolorum Successores,” no. 184.

80 On a contrary standpoint: Borras, “Petite apologie,” 560.

81 cf. Loza, *Exegetical Commentary*, 1252.

faithful of other rites may be present. The appointment of members is the responsibility of the bishop.

In terms of representation, the directorium *Apostolorum Successores* states that although in the strict sense the council does not represent the faithful, yet it must be a “faithful image” (*immagine fedele*) of the people of God.⁸²

Thus, the pastoral council is not entitled to its legal representation, since the members are not elected by other christian faithful by the special procedure of canonical election (can. 164 – can. 179). Therefore, the members of the council have no right of representation, acting in their own name and on the basis of their personal conditions. In the parish pastoral council, the christian faithful formulate and express their own thoughts concerning the good of the parish community and communicate them to other believers. In particular, the council has the task of developing the pastoral program of the parish community, and it should be in accordance with the pastoral guidelines of the diocese and the universal Church.

The notion that the establishment, task and purpose of the pastoral council is aimed at the decentralization of power is erroneous. Although the council does not have a theological foundation formulated by the Council, yet, thanks to the special mission arising from the universal priesthood of believers, the representative character is sufficiently emphasized, which must be interpreted broadly in its legal context.

The reference to the individual or collective interests of advisory bodies is the real expression of the *communio* of the Church, in the case where it serves the public good of the Church. Otherwise, we are only dealing with a misinterpreted notion of “democracy” that interprets communion in the Church merely on a humanistic, anthropological level.⁸³

Finally, with regard to the pastoral council, the principle of synodality is closely related to the *communio* nature of the Church, as issues concerning pastoral care must be thoroughly discussed together, decision-making mechanisms must be well prepared, according to which the diocesan bishop and the parish priest at the diocesan and at the parish level respectively can make the desired decisions.

The pastoral council as an advisory body “does not give advice” to the competent persons, but “keeps advice” to make the diocesan and parish community more and more faithful to the Gospel and more fruitful in love. From this point of view, the goal is not the clash of opinions, the exchange

82 Sacra Congregatio Pro Episcopis, “Directorium Apostolorum Successores,” no. 184.

83 Ibid. 152.

of ideas, to convince the diocesan bishop or the parish priest, but that way of synodality in which joint and responsible thinkers, led by their own pastor, develop their different charisms to accomplish the mission of the Church. The provisions pertaining to the diocesan and parish pastoral councils show “how can the canonical guidelines – which determine the possibilities and limitations, the rights and duties of pastors and laity – be applied so that the parish finds itself as a preacher of the gospel, the fundamental place for the celebration of the Eucharist from which Christian witness is radiated throughout the world.”⁸⁴

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⁸⁴ Congregation for the Clergy, “The pastoral conversion,” no. 123.

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Hungarian monks and nuns in the 21st century

-How do small orders see their and
the Christian churches' situation and future?

Introduction

This article will demonstrate how members of the smaller Christian orders operating in Hungary today perceive religiosity and the church in the country. The research that forms the basis of this article is a part of my master's thesis in religious studies.

I will discuss firstly the relevance of the topic, the methods that I used, then the qualitative and quantitative results, and finally the summary.

The continuing importance (in my opinion) and relevance of the topic is due to the transformation of the religious structure and religious map; and the increasing religious diversity. In recent years a discernible trend has emerged: the number of Catholic monks and believers has dropped drastically, while other communities have begun to prosper. After the change of regime in the late 80's, a kind of collective effervescence began to characterize Europe. The number of Catholic monks today is lower than 15% of their number in 1943.¹ Moreover, the number of priests ordained each year is less than the number the church would need to make up for those who have left their profession and those who have died. After the change of regime, 40-50 more priests were ordained each year, but in 2015 only 20 and in 2016 only 27.² Simultaneously, the membership of new and small churches increased, and the number of those who were religious in their own way (like a sociological classification). It is precisely because of these that defining European culture as a Christian culture is not at all as self-evident as it used to be. It is becoming increasingly common to state, even in public discourse, that Christianity is also an element of religious and cultural

1 Istennek szentelt életek. KSH, Statisztikai Tükör: 2015/96

2 Tomka and Révay put it this way-referring to Martin's work in 1990, that a sign of the viability of the church is how many choose the priesthood. (Tomka and Révay, 1998: 231.)

diversity, an element which, although fundamental to European society, is in conflicts with other actors.³

The situation, however, is even more complex, as Christianity is beyond many historical changes and legal regulations (which is beyond the scope of this). The 2001 census after the change of regime provided an opportunity to examine religiosity for the first time, however, the census is not always reliable data, and there are also religious entities that do not have precise membership criteria. In Hungary, this was true for as many as 17% of new religious movements in 2002. Nor do people's own religion categories make it easier to investigate.⁴

1. table:

ESS Hungarian samples	2002	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
	71,50%	66,60%	73,30%	72,40%	73,30%	73,20%	74,20%
Roman Catholic	N=754	N=609	N=661	N=660	N=681	N=611	N=597
	25,90%	29,10%	23,90%	25%	24,50%	24,70%	24,60%
Calvinistic	N=273	N=198	N=216	N=228	N=228	N=206	N=198
	1,90%	4%	2,20%	1,80%	1,50%	1,70%	0,60%
other Christian	N=17	N=37	N=20	N=16	N=14	N=13	N=4
	0,70%	0,20%	0,50%	0,60%	0,60%	0,40%	0,60%
other non Christian	N=7	N=2	N=3	N=6	N=6	N=4	N=5

Taking into consideration the above table it can be seen that the proportion of Roman Catholic believers shows a relative stability. Based on these, it is certain that Christianity was able to renew in the country despite the adversities before the regime change. Máté-Tóth writes after Braguera that the secret of Christianity lies in its ability to survive throughout history and become the most successful religion because it proved to be more adaptable to social change than others. Vattimora argues that the secularized form of Christianity after the fall of communism was the common point and root to which Europe could go back.⁵

3 Máté-Tóth, 2012: 33.

4 Török, 2007: 227.

5 Máté-Tóth, 2012: 25-32.

Nor can we ignore the possibility that this value above 70% was able to remain constant because religiosity is strongly present in people, and the existence of Catholic self-classification and faith does not mean that the respondent is an active practitioner of religion. The periodic unreliability of the census data can also be seen in the first table, as KSH⁶ researchers found a decline of more than 10% among Roman Catholics between 2001 and 2011. But as we can see from The European Social Survey's (ESS) data, it is not true. The proportion of Catholics is relatively stable at over 70%. Máté-Tóth and Nagy said the reason is: The KSH research analysts did not adequately account for the high non-response rate in 2011.⁷

Thus, I focused my study on describing the situation of monks because we can see a very different perspective of the situation of the church and religiosity from the perspective of “*religious virtuosos*”⁸ as opposed to understanding the situation solely through empirical studies.

Research methods

In the course of my research, I visited Christian orders belonging to small (or at least with few members in Hungary) orders and conducted interviews. I collected data from 21 monks and nuns, in 17 cases I conducted a semi-structured interview, we talked to 3 monks at the same time due to time constraints, and one of them sent online answers, because of her (a nun) health status.

The method of sample compilation was expert sampling. Based on the menu item listing the orders on the website of the Office of the Monastic Precedents, I searched for the smaller orders and their contact information and started contacting with them. Data collection took place in several parts of the country. These settlements were the following: Eger, Máriapócs, Budapest,⁹ Galgahévíz, Kismaros and Kunszentmárton. The sample was not homogeneous in terms of gender and age. I also had the opportunity to conduct interviews with members who have made a perpetual and temporary vow and with a candidate also. I also talked with few monks and nuns who came to Hungary on a mission. In addition, a Greek Catholic order was included in the sample.

6 Központi Statisztikai Hivatal (Hungarian Central Statistical Office)

7 Máté-Tóth and Nagy: 2013.

8 Max Weber called monasticism a religious virtuosity, and its culmination was the experience of virginity. (Révay,1998: 110.)

9 The capital city of Hungary

The questions

I tried to make sure that the questions as broad and varied as possible, because different questions may be relevant in the case of the monastic and apostolic orders. The questions focused on issues concerning, living in the accession, making their decision, and leaving the profession, how they see the issue of their succession and the future of the order, how they judge the religiosity of the country and the position of the church.

During the analysis, we will now be talking about the second and third questions. Later, I will try to support or refute their views with the help of statistics.

Summary of interviews

Appearance in society

There were several views expressed by the monks and nuns regarding the wearing of habits. As with the other topics, they are not mutually exclusive. They simply depend on what charismatic or historical background order they belong to. There are also examples of someone wearing the habit always, someone wearing it only intermittently and there were orders who never wore a habit.

For example: In an order the members, among whom are old monks (who are accustomed to wearing their habits), wear uniforms in everyday life, but it's gray and loose. They only wear habits on holidays. The younger nuns among them who would love to wear it all the time are trying to keep an eye on the older nuns.

Some people do not wear habits at all. For example one of my interviewees was in a T-shirt and jeans in the kindergarten office where we talked. Others wear gray and white suits when they need to appear officially, but otherwise they wear civilian clothes. They do this also because they feel it makes their activities easier so they can get closer to member of the public. People who do not know them see them as "little miracle beetles"-says a nun (65 years old woman)-because they do not know what they are doing. Events such as the '2015 Year of the Monks' were also useful in this regard. They had more opportunities to introduce themselves to people so they could show they exist and what they were doing. They were better able to be open outward, to show that what they were doing was important. They all stressed that this also requires an absolute testimony on their part. The orders must be closed either, the orders must also support each other.

The social engagement of orders also depends on whether they are monastic or apostolic orders, but the main reason for the difference in their duties is the difference in charisma.

Several said they were greeted with amazement after the regime change, but have not felt that way since. Nonetheless, quite a mixed reception has been reported: there are people members of the public, who say when they see them that “*well, the clunkers have arrived*”-says a nun (65 years old woman)-while others say thank you for their work. Their judgment depends on how close people know them. Many people think that they are just praying, they live far away from the world; where they have been present for a long time, people are much more likely to see that they are not so different from other people. Everywhere they consider it important to be present among people and communicate with them. Almost without exception, male monks are priests in the country, it is making easier for them to have daily contact with the faithful, but the charisma of the female orders carry a great deal of activity to help people in their daily lives.

Situation of religiosity

According to one member of the sisterhood, the fact that the practice of religion has become free in the country has both positive and negative effects. It had a positive effect, especially for those who experienced the ban during the years of persecution that they did not have the opportunity to practice their religious life freely. The negativity of this freedom lies in the fact that during the period of persecution people had to live their religion much more clearly-as far as lifestyle and morality are concerned-even in secret; and now, with freedom, they live less clearly. Practice is not so important to them. So here, as you can see from the quotes, they were essentially talking about custom-religiosity.

Only a small part of society is committed religiously, and they also belong to different groups. My interviewees also put the category of ‘I am religious in my own way’ come to the fore.

“Many times we experience in relation to the Church, or in relation to people and the Church, that there is little such... not everyone, but it is often the case that we think of the Church as an automaton. You throw in the money and whoever you want comes. Let’s say to be baptized. Because it fits, or because it’s still a tradition. So that it is not so much a deep conviction, but rather a tradition.” (32 year old, woman)

“I think, such that Christian society, maybe it does not exist anymore; but there are retaining communities, even if not in large numbers, who carry on the faith, carry on the gospel.” (37 year old, male)

The number of practicing believers is declining, but people remain earners; people lack personal intercourse. Another respondent put it, *“People are hungry for the joy of the gospel.” (37 year old, male)*

Yet another is that few people live in Christianity, in Hungary; religiosity was pushed into the background because “the world is talking about something else”. The fact, that you can buy everything for money, parties are the most attractive, and the church is considered more of a boring place. Neither family nor company of friends create an atmosphere according to the monks that would motivate young people to be practicing believers, or to see that this is an important and good thing for them. In addition to this phenomenon, however, there are also people among the laity who live their lives in such a demanding, Christian way that they could be a driving force even for monks. Their views about the church were relatively uniform. There were no contradictions among them, rather they are complementary, approaching the issue from several sides.

Situation of monks and Church

They agreed most: the way the church is going is right. There were those who stressed that they rejoiced in the way the Holy Father is leading the Church because it led to a humane and open church that was open to people’s problems. This encouraged them to go out and see the needs of the people, as the pope said: *“We can’t stay home when the starving crowd is out.”* He emphasizes that Christians have a duty to the people, and that is to show the beauty of life that they have been given as gifts. The Hungarian Church is also pointing in this direction.

Ever since the education system introduced a choice between religious education and ethics, the situation may not improve. It seems that for children they attend theology classes because it is obligatory and not because they are interested. However, but a more positive point is that there is at least there is the option for studying religion for children and their families at schools.

There is no doubt that the lack of a priest is a real problem in everyone’s opinion, but several positive aspects of this situation are also mentioned. It has been said on several occasions that although they are fewer, it is precisely because of their deep religiosity. Another effect, also mentioned several

times in the interviews, is that the lack of the priest mobilizes the laity, active believing Christians, and the church is in constant motion and dynamism because of this.

The downside, however, is that where this activity does not occur – or there are tasks that lay people cannot perform – there the priests are overworked and do not have enough time to fully perform their duties. Like priests, monks are overworked in places where there are few. You can see several orders that are on the verge of extinction. The situation is difficult for orders that could not function during the years of communism, as there are the young and the very old who find it difficult to find a voice with each other. This was a problem not only in the '90s, but it is today, too.

Nevertheless, their views were mostly optimistic. Several have mentioned that although there are few, they experience their spirituality more deeply; and the number of priests and callers may also decrease, but *“it is not quantity that matters, but commitment and spiritual quality”*. (37 year old, male)

Communism's imprint can be observed in the communities studied; they need to be rebuilt. This process, according to my respondents, has started, but it will take some time for its impact to become significant. When they get together at the annual event in Szentkút,¹⁰ it seems that there are many young people, but still not enough.

According to many, the missing 40 years can be felt. Though there has been reorganization in their orders, the middle age group is still missing. But at least the orders began to get closer to each other. They recognized that they also needed to get to know each other better and not to treat each other as a rival; that they should see a gift in their differences, as they can complement each other, and thereby they can be an even stronger signal to the world. In the past, everyone “defended their own castle” and turned inward, locked in, now they are open to each other in trainings, projects, and professional clarification as well.

Many of the orders have charisma when dealing with children and young people, their faith life education and leadership, but they find it difficult to reach them, for a number of reasons. For example, those who did not function during the years of persecution find it more difficult to find a voice with young people because of the generation gap.

¹⁰ Maria shrine and national pilgrim place in Hungary.

Resupply

Taking into consideration the work that the orders do they try to secure the replenishment of their order. The respondent monks and nuns mentioned two things: they need grace, so they pray regularly for vocations and try to live their lives authentically because it can only be attractive in this way to young people. Due to being overworked and low membership, not all orders can do more.

Everyone receives the message differently. Monks and nuns need to be flexible in how they communicate their message so that it reaches their target audience, young people. They need to be addressed through the tools they use. Monks and nuns should avoid giving long speeches because they can be boring. Rather they should attempt to be creative and imaginative in the ways that they speak to children. There is an order where they play with pictures, music, verb cards, or perform a play together with the high school students. Elsewhere, joint film-watching and its discussion and analysis took place, or even joint sports, like football.

Here I would like to mention, who is an example of this, Sister Christina, who sang in the Italian Voice. She said when asked why she was there, that the pope told them to go among his people, so she is here and would like to hand over the gift she has received.

The experience of young people when they visit the orders can also help a lot because they gain insight into the lives of monks. Their feedback at this time is important so that they can shape future programs accordingly. Thus, for example, it is very useful when a forum discussion is held at the end of spirituality days and participants can make both positive and negative comments.

They find that young people from less religious families are harder to reach, and their reach is also hampered by the many and impulsive environmental impacts.

However, according to the monks and nuns they get training opportunities from many places. They think a lot about how to bring new opportunities and methods into education, because it is becoming increasingly difficult to grab the attention of young people. Commitment difficulties also stem from this. One of the nuns also sees the crisis of existing marriages in this. According to her, young people are not mature for self-giving love, which is why 78% of relationships break up.

“They get so many stimuli that it’s hard for them to concentrate, it’s hard to put their own lives, styles and personalities on a journey. The bad thing about the

perpetual vibration is that they become almost incapable of... their personalities not mature to walk in just one concert road.” (35 year old woman)

They guess that it is difficult for young people to commit. One reason for this is that we live in a world where there are more opportunities than there have been for previous generations and they want to leave all opportunities open; because of the false freedom, happiness, and opportunity it causes, the period of commitment is extended to the age of 30 to 40. That is when they start looking for community and getting married.

The low number of marriages comes with few children. Families with few children also have a much lower chance of get out of their own children will become monk, on the one hand because of the “enjoy the moment” mentality of society, and on the other hand because only one or two children are born within a family.

Challenges of the 21st century

„A great challenge for all monks, nuns and believers is to... recognize the signs of the times and respond to them, where we are going and how to live the call of a good God in our daily lives. ” (37 years old, male)

The problem is not only that young people find it difficult to commit which is one of the reasons why so few apply to become a monk/nun. This is a reason for their being few young monks/nuns. For example, someone came to one of the mission orders at the age of 37. He liked their lives, but he had to learn languages in a missionary order. However, he no longer saw himself as fit to learn foreign languages, so he could not stay with them. It could also be that if they get older, they would have a harder time adapting to such a closed community. In addition, there are orders where there is an upper age limit for entry, mostly 35 years of age. The reason for this age limit is that it is believed that over the age of 35, personality can no longer change without a major break.

There were several of my interviewees who already were on a mission, to serve abroad in their youth, and monks came here from abroad after the change of regime. My interviewees saw a solution to the Hungarian situation that if there were not enough vocations in the future, foreigners would come to us again to counterbalance the situation. Because of this, even those whose orders belong to only a few people at home can see the future of their order positively.

According to one monk, although it is difficult to admit it, every order has a charisma, an activity that is a response to a social situation. When that activity is no longer needed, the order has fulfilled its mission. This was the case, for example, with the former prisoner-serving orders. The remaining and new orders need to focus on how they can help with the problems of the people. And this requires continuous learning, as the saying goes, “a good priest also studies to the dead”. Not only theology is needed to stand by the man of the age, but also the acquisition of leadership attitudes, the tools of psychology and mental hygiene expertise.

Also, an important question is how orders within their charisma can be renewed according to today’s life to match the spirit of their rules; don’t cross it, but don’t get stuck on an earlier level that is no longer alive in this social form.

They see that they need to make better use of the opportunities offered by telecommunications. They need to be present, even on Facebook. They see that they are lagging, but they need to be present where people are, they need to find a voice with young people.

“Initially, when it flares up in a person that you want to be a nun, you just look at the website of the orders, for example, because it also matters a lot, because where the website is not alive, you think about how far they proceed from the spirit of the world. If you see that the website has been updated two years ago or I don’t know. One is reluctant to... afraid of an order where there is no opportunity for development.” (33 years old, female, candidate)

It is important to use the tools provided by the world and society, but it is also very important that they do so while preserving the values of the church. And it is difficult to find a balance in this. Using the internet can open roads where they also need to open up. Otherwise, they would become aloof and inaccessible. There are platforms where change cannot be avoided in any way, such as banking for economic monks, which for the most part can only be handled electronically. They need to find out how compatible these tools are with their way of life so that the rush of the world does not affect them. The community helps a lot in finding the balance.

Many of Orders are also contactable via websites, e-mails, posters, attempting to inspire young people to give them a go as they welcome anyone openly. This is also important because today the order that cannot be accessed through these means isolates itself from the outside world and at the same time from the possibility of recruitment:

These tools already had some impact in the orders. For example, one of the monks pointed out that without them it would be very difficult for their order to function in the country, because there are only three of them, they serve in different places and the superior does not live in Hungary.

What do the numbers say?-Statistical analysis

The main consideration in setting up the hypotheses was to seek answers to the questions raised in the interviews with the monks. During the analysis I tried to test the interviewees' suggestions based on statistical considerations. Considering this, I have tried to answer the following questions based on the Hungarian Youth 2016. The 2016 Hungarian Youth Research is the fifth cycle of a large-sample data collection in the country, repeated every four years since the turn of the millennium. The sample of 8,000 people represents the 15-29 age-group.¹¹

- Value preferences of young people (community or individual?)
- Religiosity (the influence of the socialization medium?)
- Commitment (marriage and willingness to have children?)

Individual values are more important

2. table: How important is...? ESS (Hungarian sample, 2016)		
	Mean	Scatter
true friendship	3,64	0,627
family safety	3,61	0,616
freedom	3,63	0,585
love/happiness	3,63	0,607
inner harmony	3,6	0,632
peaceful world	3,59	0,656
safety of nation	3,57	0,658
order	3,56	0,64
interesting life	3,56	0,656
equality	3,52	0,673
freedom from prejudice	3,51	0,683

¹¹ Bauer et. All., 2017: 9.

talent	3,5	0,697
obedience/sense of duty	3,49	0,672
nation	3,46	0,713
respect for traditions	3,41	0,732
(youth) community	3,39	0,749
riches	3,38	0,758
power	2,89	0,971
religious faith	2,61	1,075

Table 2 shows, listed by size, how the respondents of the Hungarian Youth questionnaire scored the importance of different values on a 5-point Likert scale. We can say, apart from the fact that religious belief is the least important (2.61) for young people, that although individual values and community values can be relatively distinguished by ranking the averages. As we can see in the third table individual values – as opposed to traditional ones – are in a cluster. Obviously the situation of these values is more complex than that we could fully describe on the axis of individual and group values. However, the 'safety of the nation' is also clustered with individual values which raises another interesting question, but that is beyond the scope of the present study.

As for religiosity, however, the situation is more obvious, to the question “How important is part of your self-image, that is, how much do you define who you are: the religion you follow?” 29.2% of respondents said: somewhat important; and 48.7% said not at all.

<i>3. table: How important is...?</i>		
ESS (Hungarian sample, 2016), Rotated Component Matrix ^a ¹²	Component	
	1	2
power	0,789	0,17
obedience/sense of duty	0,767	0,294
freedom from prejudice	0,755	0,306
religious faith	0,738	0,277

12 Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

order	0,735	0,409
equality	0,683	0,434
respect for traditions	0,649	0,428
talent	0,604	0,465
riches	0,587	0,387
nation	0,57	0,457
family safety	0,243	0,839
true friendship	0,253	0,836
love/happiness	0,263	0,806
peaceful world	0,466	0,73
freedom	0,493	0,726
safety of nation	0,406	0,696
interesting life	0,406	0,693
inner harmony	0,456	0,595
(youth) community	0,51	0,526

Strong effect of religious upbringing

4. table: Which of the following statements would best describe you? (Hungarian Youth, 2012)		
	Frequency	Valid percent
I'm religious, I'm following the teaching of the Church	571	7,9%
I'm religious, in my own way.	2476	34,1%
I don't know that I'm religious or not.	506	7%
I'm not religious.	3175	43,7%
I'm not religious, my belief is definitely different.	532	7,3%
Total	7260	100%

In the table 4, we can see that only 7.6% of respondents (only 5.6% in the 2016 sample) said that they are religious based on the teaching of the church, only 42% declared themselves religious, along with those who were religious in their own way, as opposed to with non-religious 51%. If we look at these

data in the context of upbringing, we get a completely different picture. 23.8% who are religious according to the teachings of the church among those who have received a religious upbringing (sig.: 0.001).

Low propensity of marriage

5. table: age category & what is your current marital status-cross-tabulation (Hungarian Youth, 2012)

(Hungarian Youth, 2016)	what is your current marital status				
	unmarried, single	married	living in a cohabitating relationship	divorced	Total
15-19 years old	96,9%	0,8%	2,3%	0%	100%
	N=2228	N=18	N=54	N=0	N=2300
20-24 years old	80,4%	4,6%	14,8%	0,3%	100%
	N=2241	N=127	N=412	N=8	N=2788
25-29 years old	48,8%	23,1%	27,2%	0,9%	100%
	N=1417	N=670	N=791	N=26	N=2904
Total	73,6%	10,2%	15,7%	0,4%	100%
	N=5886	N=815	N=1257	N=34	N=7992

Table 5 shows that 73.6% of the respondents are single or unmarried. Although there is a significant correlation between the age categories and the marital status of the respondents (sig: 0.00), even in the highest age tertiary, only 23.1% of the respondents are married; cohabitation is more common in all three categories.

77% of marriages are between the ages of 22 and 26, but among those who have not yet married, 6% certainly do not want to, 16% prefer not to, and 10% do not know or have not answered. This can be explained by the fact that the statement that “*you can find your partner easily nowadays*” on a 5-point Likert scale was rated very low by all three age groups: below 2.

“*At what age do you want your first child to be born?*” The answers to the question gave an average of 28.72 years of age, however, those who already have a child at the time of the child’s birth had an average age of 22.24.

Religious beliefs played a negligible role in contraception and other protection. The answer to this block of questions is approx. 39.3% of 1,100 young people explained that they did not use protection themselves: they

know they should, but sometimes they are irresponsible. And 44% of them said they forget about it. In contrast, only 2.4% have a religious belief. If we examine age-related tertiles, 8.3% of the youngest 15–19 year olds already have children, 57.5% of 20–24 year olds, and 89.1% of 25–29 year olds at least one child has been born.

For the near future (next 3 years), those aged 25–29 also have the highest willingness to have children, but only 13% would like it anyway, compared to 22% in any case.¹³

To the question “*What is the reason you don’t want more children?*”, material reasons were mentioned rather than individual ones. 20.2% of young people mentioned work, career response as a reason, and 21% only mentioned that the extra tasks involved in raising children are a problem; as opposed to 40.8% mentioning material, income reasons and 31.4% housing conditions.

Summary

The conclusions that can be drawn at the end of the interviews largely agree with the findings of two Hungarian religion researchers on the topic, but go somewhat beyond them. Török predicted that generational differences would be a problem, and this seemed to be confirmed at the beginning of his research. This is indeed a problem even today, but with this difficulty the orders have learned to live together, the young and the elderly are trying to adjust their life-rhythm to each other.

The fact that they are open to society and try to be as visible and accessible as possible is in line with Révay’s findings, but we can see a very positive picture of the situation of the youth even from the small orders, because they see their survival in Hungary as possible with the arrival of missionaries.

Révay puts it that women’s motivation is primarily altruistic, a kind of altruistic motivation.¹⁴ Based on the conversations I have, this can be supported in some respects, but can be refuted in others. Based on her table, on page 67, 79.6% of those who completed the questionnaire indicated that their motivation to do for others, and 71.9% responded to their motivations is willingness to sacrifice. Opposite Révay’s data the motivations of my interview subjects have a mixed structure. The most important thing about almost all of them is that they can live in the love of God and pass it on to

13 Diósi, 2016: 50.

14 Révay, 2003: 94.

others (this, in turn, they do not experience as a sacrifice); other social roles and community life by the order follow.

With regard to the future of the orders, perhaps the most forward-looking conclusion is that communities are ready to adapt to the changes of the 21st century, not just social but also telecommunication means. They use online interfaces: for both administration and appearance.

After the statistics, we can say that there is a difference between the assessment of the importance of individual and community values, the former is preferred by young people, which supports the monks' view that individual values are preferred by young people today. There is a connection between religious upbringing and religiosity, so the family socialization environment and the religious education of educational institutions are also important for the succession of the church. However, there is no difference in the opinion of age tertiles regarding party finding. All age groups find it equally difficult.

In summary, monks and nuns face many challenges in Hungary today, but try to adapt to the changes of the 21st century and open up not only to the people but also to each other. And the image of the Church and religiosity, despite all the difficulties, is positive, as is their vision of the future. In addition, the statistics support the late commitment of young people to marriage, but childbearing is still largely influenced by individual rather than material reasons.

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Viola Erbach

The Missiological Self-Interpretation of the Russian Orthodox Church

The main goal of my PhD research is to examine the challenges facing the Ukrainian Christian Churches since 1991, especially in terms of inculturation and ecumenism. However, one of the most important criteria for an objective examination of these challenges is understanding the missiological and ecclesiological teachings of these churches. In this paper, I present a small part of my research, focusing on the historical development of the Orthodox Church's missiological self-interpretation as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, as I try to examine the effect this self-interpretation has on their interdenominational relations and their mission in Ukraine.

Background

In my doctoral thesis I am planning to research changes in the theology of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Baptist Church since Ukraine has gained its independence, or, to be more precise, how the theological narrative of the aforementioned churches adapted to the newly found reality of Ukraine as an independent state. My goal is to identify the stimuli (if any) for contextualizing theology in Ukraine and how this contextualization takes shape in practice, which includes the field of mission studies. In my research I attempt to examine the previous processes of contextualization in Ukraine in order to see what type of contextualization has future in Ukraine, what form should it take in order to be beneficial for the work and the engagement of the aforementioned churches of Ukraine with the Ukrainian believers and non-believers alike. The main research question of my doctoral thesis is thus: How did the theological narrative of UOC MP, UGCC and ECB change and adapt in the last 30 years, and how did these changes influence the above-mentioned churches' understanding of mission as well as their ecumenical relations and their engagement with the Ukrainian society?

However, in order to answer this question, I needed to familiarize myself with the missiological self-understanding of the churches represented in Ukraine, so I started my research by looking at the missiological definition of the Russian Orthodox Church. Since my research focuses on self-interpretation, i.e. the boundaries and frameworks that a church sets for itself, my research on the Russian Orthodox Church relies on sources in Russian. It was important to examine what the Russian Orthodox Church teaches its future clergy; thus my primary sources are textbooks taught in the church's seminaries. Additionally, I examined statements or resolutions the Church had issued on the subject, identifying issues that were considered relevant to society and any writings on the subject that appeared in public literature. I was also curious about the Western perception of the issue, so I included some Western scholars along with Russian sources.

Missiological Foundations in Russian Orthodoxy

According to Ginkel, the concept of mission itself (Latin *missio* - sending, commission) is explained in Russian Orthodox theology from three main perspectives:

1. The spreading of the Christian faith and the kingdom of God among non-Christians for the purpose of planting new churches (which is the primary understanding among churches). According to St. Inokenty, Metropolitan of Moscow and Apostle of Siberia and America, a true missionary “must leave his native land and travel to far, wild places far from comfort, in order to lead those who stumble in the darkness of blindness onto the path of truth...”¹
2. A special ministry aimed at deepening and extending the Christian faith (usually among Christians who have left the church).
3. The sending of missionaries (preachers) themselves to a particular country or area and their church-planting work in that given area/country. In contrast to the first point, which focuses on the global aim of mission, this perspective is much more confined and focuses on mission as an internal activity, among the foreign countries, rather than the whole world, in its broad, global sense.²

1 Alexander Ginkel, *Миссиология*, (Moscow: Missiological Board of the Russian Orthodox Church, 2010), 9.

2 op.cit.

At first sight, then, it appears that the primary aim of the Orthodox mission, is to reach out to the world, or to convert the world itself: make disciples of all nations. However, we must also take into account the two opposing trends that are simultaneously present in the Orthodox mission. From one point of view, the Gospel proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God and calls for the knowledge of the Truth and liberation from sin in the Holy Spirit. This 'positive' task of mission is summed up by the apostle Peter himself in his sermon in Jerusalem on Pentecost: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.(Acts 2:38, NIV). In other respects, however, the mission of the Church is quite the opposite: a protest against the world, or, to be more precise, against the evil present in human relations. This "negative" task of mission was formulated by Apostle John: "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever. (1 John 2:15-17, NIV).

The Christian man can only understand the futility of worldly life from an eschatological point of view. The mission of the Church, in this sense, is both directed towards the world and at the same time implies a turning away from it as well as an invitation to world renewal.³

While this provides the foundational definition for Orthodox mission, it does not answer my questions about the motivation for mission. According to Anastasis Yannulatos, the concept of the glory of the Most Holy God is essential for the interpretation of the Orthodox mission, since the human story told in the Scriptures both begins and ends with the glory of God. The ultimate goal of the Orthodox Church is therefore precisely this: to proclaim the glory of God. Therefore, Christians are called to be witnesses.⁴

The Christian mission is part of God's mission, so its purpose in itself cannot be different from God's purpose for this world. And God's purpose, according to the Scriptures, especially Ephesians and Colossians, is nothing other than the reign of the universe through Christ and the participation of

3 op.cit., 11.

4 Yakov Stamulis, *Православное Богословие Миссии Сегодня*, (Moscow, St. Tikhon Orthodox Theological University, 2002), 157.

human beings in the eternal glory of God.⁵ This participation culminates, above all, in the Eucharist, which, according to Ion Bria, is not only a gathering of Christians in thanksgiving for God's grace and kingdom, but also a witness to the world, an invitation to participate in and taste the kingdom of God. The Eucharist strengthens and renews believers, enabling them to go out into the world as witnesses.⁶

According to the Orthodox interpretation, however, this renewal must be continuous, which is similar to Martin Luther's idea of "continuous conversion" where he argues, "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says, "Repent!," he wants the whole life of believers to be a continuous conversion!"⁷ So, it is not only those who are outside the Church who need conversion, but also those who are already, albeit nominally, members of the Church. It is precisely in this light that Orthodox missiology distinguishes between internal and external mission.

Orthodox internal mission is directed primarily towards members of the Church, including the baptised, but also Christians who are not well versed in the Orthodox religion or who are not familiar with the mysteries of the Church. An essential task of internal mission is to provide post-baptismal catechesis and to enlighten people who, despite their baptism, were brought up outside the Church or who, although not baptised, are members of historically Orthodox people.⁸ In contrast, the external mission is directed to those who are outside the Church. The recipients of this outreach are followers of different worldviews and religious beliefs. The goal is the integration of new church members into existing churches or the planting of new churches.⁹

5 op.cit.,160.

6 Henning Wrogemann, *Intercultural Theology, Volume Two: Theologies of Mission*, (Downers Grove, IVP Academic, 2018), 194.

7 Lull, Timothy F, and William R Russell. *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*. (Lanham: Fortress Press, 2012), 8, <https://www.scribd.com/book/240869792/Martin-Luther-s-Basic-Theological-Writings>

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Contextualization & Russian Orthodoxy

The founding of new congregations and the missionary work carried out by other denominations in the Orthodox area itself are linked by the missiological understanding of the Russian Orthodox Church and the importance of the process of contextualization.¹⁰ In his chapter on the Church's missionary work in the post-Soviet territories after the fall of the Soviet Union, Chernishev explains that missionaries working in the post-Soviet territories have paid too much attention to the differences between the sending and receiving cultures (he sees this as particularly evident in the case of Protestant missionaries in the USA)¹¹. Chernishev, however, sees the contextualized use of Orthodox cultural traditions as a more successful method of Protestant mission. He cites as positive examples the use of the cross integrated into the practice of Ukrainian Baptists, the Russian Orthodox works adapted by Protestant choirs, or the written column on famous Orthodox theologians in the periodical of the Odessa Baptist Theology.¹²

Similarly, Iakov Stamulis explains that the aim of Orthodox mission has never been to create replicas of the mother church or of the sending organization in the regions to be converted; rather, its aim is to create a national church which embraces its own specific character and the way of life of the people concerned. As Stamulis points out, the national church is not a Russianized version of national church, it is a matter of creating local congregations in which people, according to their own natural gifts and qualities, praise the Lord, adding their own unique color to the Universal Church.¹³ However, it is precisely the issue of contextualization in relation to ecumenism, or perhaps inter-denominational cooperation, which, even after all these positive steps, is one of the most significant challenges of current Orthodox missiology and missionary self-understanding.

The Russian Orthodox Church thinks in terms of so-called canonical territories, as a consequence of which it claims "exceptional representation and presence" in traditionally Orthodox areas. The church stresses that "In countries where Christianity has become part of the national culture and thus played a role in the formation of national identity, the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church does not use methods that in our modern context can be

10 For the definition of „Orthodox area” see below.

11 Chernishev, Vladimir, *Миссиология*, (St. Petersburg, Saint Lev Publishing House, 2010), 222-254.

12 ОР.СИТ., 235.

13 Stamulis, *The Theology of Orthodox Mission Today*, 164.

identified with the concept of proselytism. However, the Russian Orthodox Church also makes the same demands of the representatives of other religions present in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate.¹⁴

Russian Orthodox Mission & the Russian Nation

A closer examination of the Russian Orthodox Church's view on canonical territories and their so-called claim on the monopoly of religion in these areas faces the researcher with a simple question: 'Is the Russian Orthodox Church's claim to "canonical territories" a type of imperialism?' This is an important question for the current mission of the Russian Orthodox Church, since in recent decades, a kind of imperialism has undeniably become part of the self-understanding of the Russian Orthodox mission. Between 2009 and 2016, the concept of mission was largely defined by four voices. They are Patriarch Kirill, Vsevolod Chaplin, Illarion Alfeyev and the organisation known as WRPC.¹⁵ The general concept of mission was formulated by Metropolitan Illarion who argued that we cannot speak of a chosen nation, because its place has been taken by the one true Church since Jesus Christ redeemed the world. Nevertheless, specific nations, at specific historical times, are called to missionary tasks, such as keeping the peace or spreading God's truth. According to the Metropolitan, such a nation becomes a God-bearing nation but this privileged position cannot be the result of economic advantage. Chaplin's interpretation is closer to that of the German Romantic philosophers: every (or almost every) nation can have a missionary task to fulfil. However, both Chaplin and Patriarch Kirill see Russia as a country with a deep inner motivation to achieve the Ideal (Truth) and emphasize that to withdraw from the mission would be tantamount to abandoning Russian nature.¹⁶

According to this view the Russian Orthodox Church, has been given a special role in the history of not only its nation, but of the whole world. In Patriarch Kirill's opinion, modern Russia, for example, has much to teach the

14 „О современной внешней миссии Русской Православной Церкви / Официальные документы / Патриархия.ru. Accessed 20 August 2020. <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3102956.html>.

15 The WRPC (World Russian People's Council) was founded in 1993 by Patriarch Alexy, and is governed by the current Patriarch. It is an international organisation that brings together people who are concerned about the fate of Russia.

16 Alicja, Curanović, „Russia's Mission in the World,” *Problems of Post-Communism*, 66, no.2 (December 2016): 257.

world and Russia must first and foremost become an example by taking upon itself the role of a teacher. In the Church's view, history is a clear testimony to Russia's role as a global protector, and thus the role of the Russian nation is to achieve peace throughout the world. This peace is threatened primarily by the West and by the processes of globalization, individualization, liberalism and terrorism. The West can therefore only be saved from total failure by following Russia's example.

Modern-day Orthodoxy thus not only fulfils a certain socially unifying function in the role of society, but also secures a place for the Russian nation in world history. Traditionally, Russian Orthodoxy has viewed Russia itself as a special nation, as one with a divine predestination to protect humanity itself.¹⁷ In this conception, there are similarities with the idea of "manifest destiny" that became popular in the West in the first half of the 19th century, whereby the many white nations of the modern nation saw themselves as chosen for a special destiny and endowed with a special gift.¹⁸ Like the Americans – along with the Germans, the English, the Dutch – the Russians emphasized their own exceptionalism and their mission to other nations. In both cases, we can observe the embedding of religious language in political rhetoric, for example the undeniable eschatological gimmicks of Marxism, or the religious terminology of Soviet ideology: 'sacrifice', 'personal change' and 'new man'. With the fall of communism, this eschatological understanding also made its way into a reinterpreted Russian Orthodox worldview. While the American nation draws its political symbols from the Puritan era with ideas such as the city built on a hill, the new Israel and "manifest destiny", Orthodoxy draws its resources from the 15th century theory of "Moscow as the third Rome".¹⁹ Most scholars trace the roots of this particular chosen role of Russia to the so-called "Moscow-Third Rome" theory, which was coined by the Pskov monk Filofei in a letter written around 1522-1524. In the letter mentioned, Filofei writes, "Know, my God-loving lord, that all the Christian Tsardom has come to an end, and our ruler is united in one Tsardom according to the prophetic books, that is, the Russian Tsardom: since two Romes have

17 John P. Burgess, „Orthodox Resurgence: Civil Religion in Russia,” *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, 29: no.2 (2009), article 1, 11. <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol29/iss2/1>

18 David J. Bosch, *Paradigmaváltások a misszió teológiájában*, (Budapest, Harmat- PMTI, 2005), 274-275.

19 Burgess, *Orthodox Resurgence: Civil Religion in Russia*, 12.

fallen, the third stands, and there will be no fourth.”²⁰ It is important to note, however, that Filofei’s theory is strongly determined by its historical context. In his view, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the responsibility for ensuring the survival of Orthodoxy with its norms and values fell entirely to Russia. His argument is informed by a theological-prophetic perspective. He seeks to interpret Russia’s role in history and interprets present events in the light of the prophecies found in Scripture. For him, Russia being chosen is not the basis for Russia’s territorial expansion or its dominance over the world, rather the task of the “Third Rome” theory is simpler: to draw the attention of Russian rulers to the importance of preserving the Church and Orthodoxy.²¹

The idea that Russia should be the defender of Orthodoxy in general and of the Christian faith developed from the theory of “Moscow - the third Rome” throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. According to Marshall Poe, this theory was most popular in the first decade of the Cold War, when the ‘Soviet expansionist policy’ was at its height, and it was therefore essential to explore its roots.²² More than once, Russia turned to the idea of Filofei as the basis for a ‘post-communist’ Russia. What is more, the West itself sometimes sees in Filofei’s theory the roots of modern Russian thinking, for example, according to Chancellor Helmut Kohl: “Russia’s expansionist policy and its belief that Russia will bring salvation to the world can be traced back to the ‘Third Rome’ theory.”²³ The reinterpretation of the original meaning of the ‘Third Rome’ theory is well illustrated in the writings of Mikhail Nazarov, who, while basing his argument on the original eschatological interpretation of Filofei, uses it to support his own nationalist messianic narrative. In his view, Russia is opposed to the majority of the world, because it alone can save the world from the approach of the coming anti-Christ, often equated with globalization and/or the United States of America. The fate of the world, in this light, lies in the hands of Moscow and Russia as the Third Rome²⁴, and

20 Imrényi, Tibor, ‘A “Moszkva-Harmadik Róma” Elmélet Az Ortodox Ekklezziológia És Kánonjog Tükrében.’ *Aetas* 13, no. 1 (1998). http://epa.oszk.hu/00800/00861/00008/1998_1_t2.html.

21 Klimenko, Anna N., Vladimir I. Yurtaev. ‘The Moscow as the Third Rome Concept: Its Nature and Interpretations in the 19th –Early 21th Centuries.’ *Geopolítica* 9, no. 2 (February 2018): 235.

22 Poe, Marshall, ‘Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformation of a „Pivotal Movement”,’ *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 49, no.3 (2001): 426.

23 Poe, ‘*Moscow, the Third Rome*’, 426-428.

24 For Filofei, however, the theory of the „Third Rome” cannot be associated with or justify Russia’s global domination („dominium mundi”). For him, this theory is only about

if Russia fails to rebuild the Third Rome, nothing can save the world from its fall.”²⁵

By examining the missiological foundations of the Russian Orthodox Church, we can see that there is a mixture of a messianistic and a mission-centered view. The messianistic view is that a nation or community becomes the agent of God’s work. The ‘missionalist’ view is that some nations or communities may have a special place in human history. The confusion between the two concepts is clearly discernible, for although God has entrusted the task to an exceptional nation in both views, the coming of the Messiah himself is missing from this interpretation. To complicate matters, prior to 2011 mission was still primarily seen as the task of the Church, but changes between 2012 and 2013 indicate that the Church is increasingly being replaced by the State as the primary implementer of mission, and mission itself has become much more political.

Thus, the Russian Orthodox Church sees the purpose of its existence and mission as leading all humanity to God. This is true both for its own country or nation and for those of different national or religious affiliation. For the coming of Christ, or redemption, has made mission universal; the task of leading people to God is no longer the privilege of a particular people or nation, but must involve us all. Nevertheless, the Russian Orthodox Church claims a special and, in its own words, privileged role as a God-bearing nation that is an example not only for the Russian World (Rusky Mir) but for the whole world. This outreach to other worldviews and other religious beliefs is an important element of the Church’s mission, although in my view it runs counter to the anti-proselytism views also held by the Russian Orthodox Church.

This concept of a universal mission purpose has a huge influence on the Church’s ecumenical relations as well as their attitude to the whole of the ecumenical movement. Although a member church of the WCC, the Russian Orthodox Church is still very hesitant towards the Council, which is understandable given their perception of themselves as having an exceptional role in the history of salvation. In this respect, the so-called “Final Text” document published after the negotiations at the Thessaloniki meeting is

Russia’s role in the survival of Orthodoxy (Klimenko, Yurtev: „The Moscow as the Third Rome Concept,” 246.)

25 Sidorov, Dmitrii. ‘Post-Imperial Third Romes: Resurrections of a Russian Orthodox Geopolitical Metaphor’. *Geopolitics* 11, no. 2 (March 2006): 327.

particularly interesting.²⁶ In it, the participants of the All-Orthodox Meeting formulated, among other things, the following thought: ‘The participants unanimously consider it necessary for the Orthodox Church to continue to participate in the dialogue between Christians, because they cannot renounce the mission entrusted to them by the Lord Jesus Christ to bear witness to the Truth before the non-Orthodox world.’²⁷ This document also focuses on the special role of the Orthodox Churches towards the non-Orthodox world, and although dogmatically it is impossible for the Orthodox Churches to deny this, it leaves questions about the further development of the Orthodox mission and its strategies.

Conclusion

The main question of the research is how did the theological narrative of UOC MP, UGCC and ECB change and adapt in the last 30 years, and how did these changes influence the abovementioned churches’ understanding of mission as well as their ecumenical relations and their engagement with the Ukrainian society? Looking at this brief examination of the Russian Orthodox Church’s understanding of mission and their own role in the history of salvation one cannot help but wonder: How effective can a mission be in a non-Russian context when it is so strongly based on the special place of the Russian nation in the history of salvation? Obviously, Russia and Ukraine share a lot of their history, yet we are still talking about two different nations, cultures and sometimes even values. The events of our not so distant past, such as the Revolution of Dignity, and more poignantly Russia’s attack on Ukraine, all show an enormous schism between the two nations. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is no different. The recognition of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine’s Autocephaly can only be seen as a defining milestone in the relationship between Russian and Ukrainian Orthodoxy. As can be seen in this paper, it is of utmost importance for the Russian Orthodox Church that their cultural heritage should be taken into consideration. We can see with the fall of the Soviet Union many new churches have appeared in the previously mainly Orthodox territories, and it is vitally important for the Russian Orthodox Church that the cultural

26 ‘Состоялась Межправославная Встреча, Посвященная Вопросам Отношения к Экуменическому Движению : Русская Православная Церковь (Архив)’. Accessed 20 August 2020. <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/1998/05/nr050581/>.

27 Feriz Berki, “Ortodoxia és az egyházak világtanácsa,” *Theológiai szemle*, 41, no.6: 323.

background of the people inhabiting the traditionally Orthodox territories should be taken into account: using the language, songs, and imagery close to them.

One can only ask whether this is not the case for Ukrainian Orthodox Churches. In the last 30 years of Ukrainian independence, we can clearly see a national, cultural renaissance: rediscovering Ukrainian national culture, songs, motives and images, reviving the use of Ukrainian language and producing more Ukrainian media content are just a few of the examples one can name. If these however, became so important to the society, should the church not pay more attention to the changes in the societal priorities? Should the Russian Orthodox Church, and their Ukrainian representative the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, not consider the specific traits of the Ukrainian territory, so that the newly established churches bring something new to the table?

In my assessment, in order for Russian Orthodoxy to survive in Ukraine, they should take their own advice and look at what was previously done, inspecting the symbols and meanings that are important to the people within and outside our parishes while trying to contextualize and incorporate them into their everyday interactions. Globalisation, individualisation and liberalism have become part of the world, and although people have the right to express their own personal opinions, I suggest ignoring them when developing mission strategies is impossible. In a world in which 'supermarket religiosity' is becoming more and more prevalent, the steps of contextualisation are indispensable for all religions, and indeed the principle of the extent to which a denomination can claim the role of supremacy is fundamentally at issue. How productive can a church be in their interdenominational relationship building if all of missional work conducted on their territory is considered to be proselytism? I truly believe that Russian Orthodoxy has a lot to offer – and by this I do not mean only the former USSR countries; however, it is still clinging to somewhat outdated principles – from a missiological point of view. I suggest a reexamination of its mission strategies and plans laid down earlier in the light of modern times - while remaining on dogmatic ground - would be essential for its development.

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2021

Seekers of the Peripheries

The Point of Convergence of Pastoral Theology in East-Central Europe between Pope Francis and Ádám Bodor

Pope Francis's first apostolic exhortation, entitled *Evangelii Gaudium* [Joy of the Gospel], emphatically expands on the proclamation of the gospel, arguing that it should not be proclaimed exclusively to individuals but to the various cultures as a whole. Therefore, theologians need to engage in a dialogue with the other disciplines and understand man's most genuine experiences so that afterwards they can give careful consideration to how the gospel can be infused into cultural diversity.

Since it is not enough that evangelizers be solicitously concerned to reach each person and that, therefore, the gospel be proclaimed to the cultures as a whole, theology – and not just pastoral theology – which is engaged in dialogue with other disciplines and human experiences, acquires new importance as for how best to bring the gospel message to the diversity of cultural contexts and addressees [110]. The church, in her commitment to evangelization, appreciates and encourages the charism of theologians and their scholarly efforts to advance dialogue with the world of cultures and sciences. I call on theologians to carry out this service as part of the church's saving mission. In doing so, however, they must at all times be concerned with the evangelistic purpose of the church and theology and not be content with a desk-bound theology.¹

The aim of the present research is to make a contribution bearing in mind the above exhortation and, say, request by entering into a dialogue with a living medium of culture and social awareness of life, i.e. literature. The question is what narrative literature can produce about the social milieu if we aim to understand our own region, the identity of East-Central Europe. By way of initiating an active dialogue with this field of discipline, its context can bring us closer to appreciating the dynamics in the region, which then pastoral

1 Franciscus PP. 2013. Adhortatio apostolica *Evangelii gaudium* (24 November 2013). ASS 105: 1075–1076. (In Hungarian: *Evangelii gaudium. Ferenc pápa Az evangélium öröme kezdetű apostoli buzditása*. Transl. István Diós. Budapest [hereinafter as: EG]).

theology can interpret in a secondary reflection as cultural features, in its effort to make evangelization up-to-date. In my adoption of this approach, I take a closer look into the prose works of contemporary Hungarian author Ádám Bodor, not going beyond the reasonable bounds of the present paper. Given that the East-Central European sense of life is thematized in the author's literary oeuvre and his works are centred on the human drama of the oppressed, the existentially marginalized, it seems worthwhile to examine these literary pieces in our search for the pivotal points of the above-mentioned region's sense of life.

Pope Francis's Teaching: Relevant Highlights for East-Central Europe

As is widely known, one of the achieved objectives of the Second Vatican Council was to engage in a dialogue with the present world and that the church can move forward with accomplishing its mission while providing definite answers, enlightened by faith, to issues that may arise along the way. Remaining in this spirit of actualization and clinging tightly to faith and the tradition of the church, Pope Francis opens up new perspectives by taking the challenges lying ahead seriously. He addresses the contemporary man, asking topical questions and trying to answer them by explaining God's message in plain language. The situation in the peripheries is formulated as a central issue in his teachings: he is concerned with those living on the fringes of existence, in spiritual poverty, who stand the most in need of comforting and healing by the gospel, i.e. evangelization, the core essence of any pastoral activity. The Holy Father revives in the church the mission of disseminating and experiencing God's mercy.² With every generation and people, the gospel faces a new social reality, thus having to deal with the different dimensions wherein the respective pastoral activities are carried out. The task that lies ahead for both the faithful and theologians is to explain the general guiding principles of proclaiming the gospel and to do so in the most appropriate voice, with the aim of finding receptive ears in the given community of Christ with a view to conforming to its Christian mission and at the same time becoming an integrative part of its specific culture, i.e. achieving inculturation.³ Several messages addressed specifically to the countries of East-Central Europe can be found in the teachings of Pope Francis. Such an example would be his homily delivered during his visit in

2 EG. 8.

3 Cf. EG. 69.

Romania in May 2019, including the following encouraging words: "... do not let ourselves be robbed of our fraternal love by those voices and hurts that fuel separation... let us walk together on the road and ask the Lord for the grace to transform our past and present resentments and mistrust into new opportunities for the benefit of the community".⁴

He urges to do away with the worldview and church concept left behind by the socialist historical background and prompts to put on a new attitude that engenders a Christian community in the service of society and the shaping of culture. He encourages us to recognize and get over our wounded identity. In the approach of theologian and sociologist of religion András Máté-Tóth, these are elements of hurt carrying regional identity, whose omission pushes pastoral optimization and church development wide of the mark. This is the key to understanding the East-Central European region, as this wounded condition can be found in the collective memory and remembrance. Part of the self-definition of the region's societies is the pain left in the wake of the many vicissitudes and injustices and the idea of victimhood resulting therefrom. Compared to other sub-regions, political and geographical changes of great significance have taken place here throughout the past two centuries, which have become the basis for social self-definition.⁵ We must think of this wounded condition making up one of the region's identity factors as a central element – if we are to understand this region, the correct interpretation of the phenomena taking place here cannot be done but through building on this very element.⁶ The wounded, insecure feeling of existence, the marker of instability is being widely felt. Rendering personal as well as economic cooperation difficult, it directly stands in the way of development, slows down the catching-up process,⁷ reduces social dynamics, and diminishes motivational skills.

As stressed by Pope Francis himself, Christianity could become a resource in moving forward, in taking steps towards a culture of mercy,

4 Ferenc pápa csíksomlyói homíliája [Pope Francis's Homily in Șumuleu Ciuc]. In: Bodó Márta – Oláh Zoltán (eds.), *Ferenc pápa Csíksomlyón: Emlékkönyv* [Pope Francis in Șumuleu Ciuc. Festschrift]. Cluj-Napoca, 2019. 10–11.

5 Máté-Tóth András: *Vallásnézet. A kelet-közép-európai átmenet vallástudományi értelmezése* [Religious View. A Religious Studies Interpretation of the East-Central European Transition]. Cluj-Napoca, 2014. 7–29.

6 Máté-Tóth András: *Sebzett identitás Kelet-Közép-Európában* [Wounded Identity in East-Central Europe]. <http://eta.bibl.u-szeged.hu/1215/> (last accessed on: 20.03.2020). 5.

7 Cf. Györfly Dóra: *Értékrend és fejlődés Közép-Kelet-Európában* [Values and Development in East-Central Europe]. In: Pierluca Azzaro–Gájer László (eds.), *A közép-európai országok társadalmi, gazdasági és spirituális helyzete az egyház társadalmi tanításának tükrében*

redemption being the central feature of its teaching; and redemption is neither some sort of spiritual phenomenon nor a rite but something that bears testimony to and disseminates a new mentality. What is meant here is metanoia, that is, conversion, which indicates a full turn, the core message of the transformation of thinking. This may empower man that in his coping with the scars inflicted by history not to take up an attitude of revenge, demanding satisfaction, but be merciful and show willingness to forgive his fellow human beings.

In order for us to bring the Christian message of a culture of mercy closer, we must first learn to speak the language of those we wish to evangelize. András Máté-Tóth also points to literary works as sources that assist this process of understanding, calling them the graphic examples of social remembrance due to their capability of expressing and capturing for us the community or individual traumas that we conceive as unspeakable.⁸ It is worthwhile for us to familiarize ourselves with these secular sources: serving as the carriers of a society's collective consciousness, our theological thinking can draw inspiration from them. They can be great inspiration for East-Central European theology as well, which has the potential to gradually become a tool for the healing process. Literature can lead the way to understanding the wounded, the periphery dweller; art creates the empathic ability to understand others.

Ádám Bodor's Prose Works

Considering the present paper's research focus, Ádám Bodor's literary oeuvre stands out from the contemporary literary topics, as the author sets his mission to evoke the marginalized sense of existence in the socialist milieu. "The centre is in the periphery; it cannot be anywhere else. For me, centre is periphery. Solitude, for instance, is the centre of the world."⁹

Mónika Dánél points out with regard to Ádám Bodor's works that his writings have a powerful and unique atmosphere, the aura of the texts being

[The Social, Economic, and Spiritual Situation of East-Central European Countries in the Light of the Social Teaching of the Church]. Budapest, 2021. 66–81.

8 Juhász Zoltán András: „Az irgalom kultúrájának követői vagyunk...” [“We Are Followers of a Culture of Mercy...”]. *ELTE Online*. 03.04.2019. <https://elteonline.hu/tudomany/2019/04/03/az-irgalom-kulturajanak-kovetoi-vagyunk/>. Last accessed on: 03.06.2021.

9 Bodor Ádám. Kortársak plakáton [Contemporaries on Poster]. *LátóOnline* 20.08.2008.

created by the way language is formed. Experiencing the atmosphere cannot be absolutely objective, as it presupposes personal presence and requires personal interaction between subject and object. Feelings, too, assume a similar physical presence – they exist outside the body but, as a multisensory space, are inseparable from it, touch being the mother of these senses. The latter serves as a basis for atmosphere, is a veritable contact zone, is outside the body but inseparable from it, is stimulated by the imagination, and presumes the presence, the attraction of the body as a whole.¹⁰

Ádám Bodor's textual world also requires sensory routine and expertise from the atmosphere so understood. István Berszán translates this experience as reading and writing practises applied to the said author.¹¹ On the recipient's part, reading practice means answering the question as to what sort of perceptive, memory, and imaginal functions are guiding us while reading. The reader's "room for manoeuvre" depends on the development of his/her attention gestures, and in these texts we must get our bearings among the attention gestures resonating with the events. When reading, we need to go down the road to which the attention gestures of Ádám Bodor's writing practice take us, and we must persistently endeavour to stay within their scope of action. Writing practice can be interpreted from the direction of the author, the creator: Bodor's writing practice shows interest in actions, gestures, and events, not in the characters' spiritual or mental functioning. István Berszán adds that should literary creation endeavour to present the existence of these characters paralysed by power, it would make a pretty dull venture. Instead, each and every one of their gestures becomes intense within the scope wherein we are allowed to roam about exclusively through attunement to the attention practices of the narrative.¹²

Creating this "elbow room" is also down to the fact that Ádám Bodor is indeed a skilled mountaineer, which conveys power and inspiration to his writing practices, this extremely disciplined art that is always capable

<http://www.lato.ro/news.php/Kort%C3%A1rsak-plak%C3%A1ton/1/136/>. Last accessed on: 03.01.2021.

10 Dániel Mónika: *Atmoszféra, légkör, haptikus érzék* [ATMOSPHERE, CLIMATE, HAPTIC Perception]. *Litera* 26.02.2016. <http://www.litera.hu/hirek/atmoszfera-legkor-haptikus-erzek>. Last accessed on: 19.03.2017.

11 Berszán István: *Helység, amely emberi nevet visel: a Bodor Ádám-történetek mozgásterei* [A Place That Bears a Human Name: Scopes within Which Ádám Bodor's Stories Operate]. *Helikon Irodalomtudományi Szemle* 2010/1–2: 20–38.

12 Berszán, 2010. 24.

of sticking to the events while avoiding the glosses. Besides the repeatedly formulated, perfected sentences, this is also a core feature of writing practice. The author can make the atmosphere conveyed by him present for us only if he has previously absorbed it deep to his core. His physical experiences and presence enabled him to capture the atmosphere that is realistically represented in his works, which in its turn is brought about by the linguistic climate of his textual worlds. The realistic, orderly nature of his sentences reveals the uncut story and brings the portrayed world to the fore, all this time leaving the authorial position undisclosed.¹³

I am after those common solutions, indicating the contexts of the relationship between language and power, by which a perceptible atmosphere is created in the recipient and the characteristic features of the East-Central European awareness of life are emerging before us, too. A specific image is created in the reader that presupposes our practised attention gestures on the one hand, and we become participants in a sensory, haptic reception mode on the other – the reception experience has physical aspects, evoking in the most vivid manner the basic sense of life in the region. We are dealing with a defining relationship when we look into the context of the relationship between language and power. Total power delimits personal, social relations and our language use in communities. This limited language use creates in itself a haptically perceptible atmosphere, one that is specific to Bodor's textual world.

A Literary World of Its Own and Reception

As postulated by László Szilasi, reference as illusion is known as a particular feature of Hungarian prose.¹⁴ The goal is not the perfect representation of

13 Gelencsér Gábor: *Forgatott könyvek* [Screened Books]. Budapest, 2015. 453–457.

By virtue of the enumerated characteristics, the author's works leave considerable room for interpretation; thus, six film adaptations were released based on his writings as follows: Péter Bacsó – *Forró vizet a kopaszra* [The Agony of Mr. Boroka]; *Kivégzés* [Execution] directed by Tamás Buvári; *Plusz-mínusz egy nap* [One Day More, One Day Less] by Zoltán Fábri; *A részleg* [The Section] by Péter Gothár; *A barátkozás lehetőségei* [The Possibilities of Making Friends] by Gábor Ferenczi; Zoltán Kamondi's motion picture, *Dolina* [Dolina]. Discussion of the filmic medium is not among the objectives of the present paper, but it might prove to be worthwhile to look into the message conveyed by these works with regard to the region's milieu. The research at hand takes as an example the epic creation that became the basis for the three latter films as carriers of collective consciousness.

14 Szilasi László: A referencia-illúzió a mai magyar prózában („mintha” változatok) [Illusion of Reference in Contemporary Hungarian Prose (Variations for “as if”)]. *Lettre* 62/2006.

reality but the creation, by means of language, of such an image for the reader that overlaps empirical knowledge, impressions. In other words, what is meant here is a narrative style that “is able to construct stories linguistically created from nothing and offer them for the reader’s reconstructive imagination in such a way that the extra-textual world thus created will subsequently correspond to familiar realia, to existing ideas of reality – either known or knowable”.¹⁵

A work of art is reflected differently in every recipient. It is not imitation, mimesis that needs to be achieved, but we must notice that we are dealing with a neutral narrative procedure, wherein the narrator is in position zero. The atmosphere is created in the recipient while leaving maximum freedom for interpretation. In this context, personal experience, acknowledging the layers of my own history encrusted upon me also plays a vital role. Taking no account of this leads to an erroneous interpretation frame though in no case assuming the existence of a flawless interpretation.

We are wondering as to what appears to the reader, what image is reflected in someone who did not experience (post-)socialist East-Central Europeanness, not even by coming across some reminders of history in their day-to-day lives. Is it necessary that s/he can recall the image of binoculars, pocket roulette, matchboxes, and the beer bottles carried in a string-bag – as they are evoked in the short story entitled *A barátkozás lehetőségei* [The Possibilities of Making Friends] – so that s/he can relive this atmosphere as a recipient? Here reading is not merely an abstract intellectual activity but a mode of reception where our other senses, too, have an active part in addition to vision, such as touch or smell.¹⁶

Ádám Bodor’s literary world is extremely unique and uncluttered, its aim not being aestheticization but relying on known realia over and above the recipient’s imagination. The literary creation does not strive after an accurate visual representation – it rather gives much scope for personal reception. It operates with the purified barrenness of its language, which, paradoxically, is precisely what provides the imagery of the works, what brings to life the distinctive atmosphere. In the enigmaticity of its textual world, it destroys the myth of language; it speaks a unique language whose purpose is not recalling concrete pictorial compositions in the reader. Pursuant to his prose works,

15 Ibid.

16 Dánél Mónika: *Áttetsző keretek. Az olvasás intimitása* [Transparent Frames. The Intimacy of Reading]. Cluj-Napoca, 2013. 290.

language is not conducive but, on the contrary, deleterious to the discursive delimitation of the self and to cognition. Narrative comments are completely inexistent in the text, the reader's expectations remain unfulfilled, and in the greatest perplexity s/he is forced to rely on his/her experiences and references.¹⁷

In these absurd-grotesque short stories by Ádám Bodor, H. G. Gadamer's observation – namely: representing the power of imagination is the basis and foundation of all arts – is reinterpreted.¹⁸

The Role of Language and Power in the Peripheral Sense of Life

In their conception of minority literature, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari explain that minority literature on minority has three characteristics: its language has a strong coefficient of deterritorialization; it is suitable for peculiar, minority, regional, archaic, broken, and deviant usage; it is an intense language, including all sorts of politics – because of the enclosed environment, we cannot speak of a purely personal matter since some of its constituents are connected with politics. Therein, everything gains a collective value; it is not a literature organized around individuals but one that has the potential to create active solidarity, that is, it has a collective, political quality. Deleuze and Guattari argue that welcoming the diversity of minority languages may be the way out of the power, rigorous, and majority language. The individual minority literatures construct the entire component termed major literature. Indeed, everything (everyone) is some sort of minority in a sense.

Hence, the term minor in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari “no longer characterizes certain literatures but describes the revolutionary conditions of any literature within what we call the great (or established).”¹⁹

Language is an organic part of identity in the life of minorities – and considering the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin, language plays an even more prominent identity-creating role. There are different types of identity, and it itself also has highly varied and ideologically diverse interpretations, such as citizenship status or religious tradition in the case of

17 Pozsvai György: Bodor Ádám [Ádám Bodor]. Pozsony, 1998. 97–101.

18 Gadamer Hans-Georg: *A szép aktualitása* [*The Relevance of the Beautiful*]. Transl. Gábor Bonyhai. Budapest, 1994. 41.

19 Gilles Deleuze – Félix Guattari: Mi a kisebbségi irodalom? [What Is Minority Literature?]. In: Gilles Deleuze – Félix Guattari (eds.), *Kafka – A kisebbségi irodalomért* [*Kafka – Toward a Minor Literature*]. Budapest, 2009. 33–57.

diasporic identities. In the context of these identities, spoken language with a communicative function is less relevant as compared to sacred language that preserves and carries traditions. “However, the Hungarian identity of the Carpathian Basin cannot be related to citizenship beyond the borders. Tradition is also substantial to this identity, but, as Hungarians are more divided by denomination than by citizenship, this tradition too is related to the mother tongue as the single common element. [...] That, therefore, is the reason why language is intrinsic to the identity of the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin” [author’s translation].²⁰

Thus, in the context of identities and attachments, János Péntek calls our attention to the fact that a particularly privileged role is given to language in Hungarian people’s identity, especially in the Carpathian Basin. In his study, he goes on to explain that our communities attach a certain kind of sacred role to language, which is not only a reliable guardian of culture but the sole token of our aliveness to unity and belonging.

Notwithstanding that language, and especially the mother tongue, should be an organic part of identity, the pieces of literature under study here feature language as the absolute of reduction and confinement, both metalinguistically and in terms of the characters’ language used among themselves. Denudedness and reduction characterize communication, reactions, human relations, conversation topics, thoughts, and actions alike. And what triggers them is hierarchical establishment, which stifles the words, even if it were possible to use them for reduced communication. This sort of minority existence leaves no room for integrity. To convey this social mirror and reflect this depressed atmosphere, the two essential devices that prose has recourse to are the displacement of fixed language constructs and the rigid reflection of the hierarchical establishment. Ergo, the relationship between language and power structure is worth highlighting in literary works. A further major aspect of Bodor’s universe is the unique dimension of time and space, which is a significant contributor to the construction of this social image. A comprehensive literature has already grown up around this topic too as regards the author at hand,²¹ but the scope of the present paper

20 Péntek János: Nyelv és identitás a Kárpát-medencében [Language and Identity in the Carpathian Basin]. *Hitel* 2007/7: 91–93.

21 Cf. Bányai Éva: Terek és határok. Térképzetek Bodor Ádám prózájában [Spaces and Boundaries. Space Concepts in Ádám Bodor’s Prose]. Cluj-Napoca, 2012.

is restricted to the connections between language and power in peripheral existence and their role of creating sensory images, which is capable of making the East-Central European sense of life a reality for us.

The Peripherality of the Individual

Both in general and in relation to *A részleg* [The Section], Ádám Bodor's works are characterized by the visualization of a colourless, devastated world. His locations are apocalyptic, distressingly closed, depressing, and hidden. As previously referred to, the atmosphere of the spaces is an indispensable specificity of the short stories.

In keeping with the above, the reader can experience first-hand a bleak, end-of-the-world nightmare in the short story entitled *A részleg*. Merely shreds of intellectual, high culture can be detected, its memory having been extinguished in the gaze of the characters – no one knows if it has ever truly existed. We must let it sink into oblivion altogether, as it would only serve to further complicate compulsive ordinariness and stand in the way of the complete abandonment of identity.

Even though we are witnessing ordinary events, fantastic twists of plot are not missing either.

“It is not only through fairy tale motifs, however, that he portrays a narrative far removed from reality. Bodor's representation of landscapes has a symbolic character: the nature, the animal world are anthropomorphized, and they have influence upon the lives of those inhabiting them [these landscapes], just as the material world, which at times also assumes human qualities while humans teeter on the brink of brutishness.”²²

Such a world is unrealistic, yet it delivers quite realistic stories. It is characterized by restrained ordinariness and nerve-racking normalcy.

The story is a rather “simple” one – judging by the solutions adopted by the oppressive regime, we may as well call it an ordinary one. But then we would

22 Nagy Bori: Bodor Ádám filmen 1 [Ádám Bodor Cinematized 1]. *Prizma* 01.02.2010.

fail to have regard for the individual as a personality, for his/her identity, in no way dissimilar to how coercive collectivity acted.

Gizella Weisz lives somewhere in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. She lives all by herself, is divorced, well-travelled, educated, that is, a culturally privileged woman, who works as an engineer in a design institute. She is appointed section chief far away from the town, which is effectively tantamount to exile. We follow the protagonist from her old life dwindling to nothing all the way to her settling into a new life. We are about to embark on an endless train ride, yet the section is even farther away. The journey, being on the road emphasizes and foregrounds the state of in-betweenness, which acts as a symbol of this emotionally alien, absurd existential drama.

“This is the world of absurd order, which becomes complete along the way: the doubled scene on site no. 2 on the way to the section. Some of the solutions viscerally known in Eastern Europe are: the telephone is not used for private conversations but for public messaging [...]”²³

And the journey goes on and on, and the section becomes even more remote, is deep in the mountains, at the far end of the snow-covered landscapes, on no man’s land.

All the same, it becomes perfectly clear for the protagonist already upon her arrival at the section that her location of exile is at the same time the sole token of freedom. The complete isolation from the awfully depressing outside world paradoxically carries within itself the prospect of freedom, a new life. The section thus stands for the ambivalence of freedom and minority, subdued existence. It is this ambivalence that Károly Veress’s interpretation of minority existence sets out from. The author of the present paper attempts to present a minority survey focused on East-Central Europe and to provide an interpretation of minority existence in the capacity of a philosopher. Under the approach considered herein, a certain kind of ambivalence, ambiguity is inherent in minority existence on the one hand, and it has a paradoxical attribute to it on the other. In terms of quality, we can speak of a lack of existence, whereas in terms of quantity we can mention an abundance of shortages. In relation to minority and majority, the individual can pass

23 Galambos K. Attila: A részleg megálló [The Section Stop]. *Beszélő* 1995/5.

between the two. It is within as well as beyond the confines of reality, this state being a so-termed “mock existence”.²⁴

Existence featured in this story is, however, a minority existence even further denuded than in Károly Veress’s interpretation of existence, as in this particular case the individual, identity is all but erased, it has become emotionally so dull that the manifestations of personhood and personality are completely inexistent. Power forces the individual into an oppressive, subordinate existence to such an extent that the latter can only live through the events by adopting a static temporal approach – only then can s/he survive. This is where the “opportunity” of minority existence lies: “holding onto something even when there is nothing” is the only way to survive in this absurd existential drama. And Gizella Weisz is a minority since, considering her being an intellectual, she stands out from the average, from the uniformity of the system and also speaks the minority language; but her most salient minority is the one in relation to the oppressive power system. The individual is powerless against this suffocating hierarchy, his/her identity, personal space is null and void in his/her own eyes as well, s/he could not even lay claim to having principles – this is emptiness itself.

This state of existence can be made bearable only through a segmented time experience, through – as already mentioned – floating in the in-between. We can observe states of consciousness of the real and the dream world flowing into each other, yielding the co-temporality of fiction and reality.

“Are you asleep, comrade Wiesz?’ – asks the man in the hat. ‘No’ – replies Gizella Wiesz awake. ‘I’m watching you’ – continues the man in the hat – ‘sit here, as if you were sleeping.’”²⁵ What choices does the individual really have at the section? “Remaining pinned down”, “animalistic existence”, and for Gizella Weisz to be pondering upon why she has been sent there in the first place? “Be quiet!’ – whispers the man called Öcsi, or Petya, in angry tones. ‘You’ve been sent here to give some thought to why you’ve been sent here.’”²⁶

24 Veress Károly: *Kisebbségilét-elemzés* [An Analysis of Minority Existence]. In: Veress Károly: *Kisebbségi létproblémák* [Issues of Minority Existence]. Cluj-Napoca, 2000.

25 Bodor Ádám: *A részleg*. Budapest, 2006. 6.

26 Id. 39.

The Dictatorship of Personal Relationships in the Short Story A barátkozás lehetőségei

Both in the work *A részleg* and the short story *A barátkozás lehetőségei*, the silencing power of authority, the insufficiency of language and the limitations imposed thereon become clearly prominent and vivid in the recipient. Oppression from the ruling regime, a dearth of freedom and opportunities downshift all opportunities to interact or communicate – even in the most personal situations – to a ridiculously primitive level.

The plotline takes place in enclosed environments and in a narrow period of time, just as the characters are skint in their emotional expressions and limited in their language use. As has been repeatedly pointed out, we come across whirling language and inhospitable locations. There is some grotesque aspect to the story, yet we cannot accuse it of being out of touch with reality; we are rather under the impression that a secret lurks behind it.²⁷ The unpredictability of power is a depressing ubiquity, and its representatives, the superiors act incomprehensibly, are determined and unquestionable. The attitude demonstrated towards them, the demonic images are also revealed in communication and language use. They are never contradicted, their answer is always an affirmative one – this can be observed both in manner of speech and parlance.

In the short story entitled *A barátkozás lehetőségei*, we are introduced to Mr Emerik, a self-assured man of authority, and to Amirás, a character subservient in all his ways. The clear-cut distinction between the various social classes becomes evident straight away from how they address each other. Amirás, a simple working-class man, approaches and addresses the effective-looking Mr Emerik with fear and extreme precaution. The friendly gesture on the part of the authority is ironic just as much as grotesque are

27 Gyöngyösi Lilla: A hétköznapok abszurditása – Bodor Ádám, *A barátkozás lehetőségei* (novellák és film) [The Absurdity of Everyday Life – Ádám Bodor, *The Possibilities of Making Friends* (Short Stories and Film)]. *Filmtekercs*. Available at: <https://www.filmtekercs.hu/magazin/bodor-adam-a-baratkoz-as-lehetosegei>. Last accessed on: 03.03.2021.

Amirás's responses. He treats everything as an order and adopts a yes-man strategy all the way.

“When Mr Emerik spoke to him, he was idly leaning on his elbow, a finished woman's handbag lying in front of him.

– Good day! – he said somewhat awkwardly and with restraint. He stood up from behind the sewing machine, pushed the door open, and nodded to the landlord.

– Shut the window, close the door – said Mr Emerik. – Let's go somewhere.

– Go somewhere? – Amirás wondered. – Where? And he cast a glance at the window that he must soon close if he really is to accompany Mr Emerik.

– Pooh! We'll see. We'll go someplace – said Mr Emerik. The main thing is not to stay at home, right? Amirás shut the window, padlocked his door, and fell in behind Mr Emerik, who was already at the gate rattling the car keys. The Volkswagen was parked in front of the gate, Mr Emerik got inside and unlocked the other door too so that Amirás can take a seat. He himself pulled the safety belt across Amirás's chest and buckled it up. Amirás didn't seem happy with this, watching from the corner of his eye as Mr Emerik fastened himself to the body of the car.”

In the above quotation, we can see Mr Emerik himself fasten Amirás, as if he were symbolically curtailing all manner of freedom and pointing out his superior position, his power. Amirás is forced to act against his own will, merely submitting to his fellow being's approach, to his constrained friendly gesture. Even when making a ridiculous attempt at a refusal, he ventures to speak only hypothetically:

“– What's the weather like today? – asked Mr Emerik. – It's quite warm, right?

– Considerably – agreed Amirás.

– Then it's all plain sailing – went on Mr Emerik. – We'll go for a swim.

– I might not – Amirás noted.

– Yes, you will.

– I'll be perhaps watching Mr Emerik. As you take a swim.

– No, you won't be watching me – replied Mr Emerik. – You'll be taking a swim as well.

– I can't swim – admitted Amirás.

– You'll learn today.”

In this game of power, the communication and behaviour of two of them is an excellent reflection of how their roles and positions influence their expressions and language use. Over and above the characters' verbal manifestations, their body language and movements also reflect the hierarchical human relationship. And addressing each other formally further increases the distance between them. Hence, the characters of *A barátkozás lehetőségei* carry within themselves reversed polarities: this is a world of rulers and the ruled, a reality that is in control of their linguistic expressions.

Mechanisms of Power in the Prose Entitled Az érsek látogatása [The Archbishop's Visit]

The third text provides us a broader view of the form of existence controlled by the strings of power. All distinctive aspects highlighted so far are prominently present here. This is yet another story of the men in the street, whose every move must not do without the routine mechanisms of the power system. We can witness the atmosphere of the extremes, where specific rules are at work similarly to *A részleg*, but whereas there is total desolation, this one is inhabited by an entire community. In this reality, nevertheless, people organize themselves and are present voluntarily; we can observe a continuously regenerating society that adapts to changes and at the same time exists invariably in a constant static state. We do not only get a brief glimpse into tighter networks of relationships but can see a compact social establishment delivered in the framework of a novella. And the organizing principle of the text is the movement of the forces, the game of power itself.

The way language is formed, linguistic construction is through which the short story entitled *Az érsek látogatása* operates and brings to life the world of hierarchy on the one hand and the palpability of the city's presence in the reader on the other hand. It does not provide any accurate information on the time and space, yet we consider Dolina to be a real place since owing to reference, illusion seems so real.²⁸ The author employs a narrator who remains neutral and anonymous all along, who tells the story in a detached tone. We encounter still images – only these can remain with the reader, as the events and situations are not presented to us in a chronological order. Timeless repetitions of everyday life is all that we can witness: “All of this

28 Cf. Szilasi, 2006.

happened on a Friday.”²⁹ This neutral narrative procedure reflects well the unemotional totalitarian regime; the language of Dolina involves the narrator himself, who thereby communicates and becomes vulnerable as the rest of the inhabitants in Dolina.³⁰

The language of Dolina must belong to everyone inhabiting it, just as the patterns of behaviour. Because anyone who fails to obey the prevailing symbol of power and dares to think freely will be isolated and segregated also in terms of language, in Dolina’s Izolda, the collection point for tuberculosis patients.

“Here in Bogdanski Dolina, no girl or woman is called Izolda; that is the name of the isolation facility. The whole meadow together with the camp surrounded by barbed wire went by this name, where the sick and other undesirable persons had been kept in wind-swept, sun-faded barracks since time immemorial. This is where the town line used to be – beyond the encampment, there were the landfills of Midia Meadow, swarmed by seagulls.”³¹

This absolute terror and vulnerability is irrespective of those holding a position of power in a given period of time. Either mountain huntsmen, priests, archimandrites, soldiers, or colonels are running the city, the townspeople will invariably live in subjugation. “They were obsessed with the idea that the popes of Dolina were former colonels and corporals, every single one of them being a one-time mountain huntsman, except that they had now grown a full beard, put a mitre on their heads, and dressed in all sorts of clerical garments.”³² The position of power changes with the simple change of symbols, by either adopting or discarding them. Once starting to don a false beard and corresponding clothes, the person’s right to exercise his/her power “enters into force”, or s/he can be stripped of it just as easily. And power in Dolina is represented by the holy orders and Colentina Dunka, the owner of the barber shop, the brothel, and a personage also affiliated with

29 Bodor Ádám: *A barátkozás lehetőségei*. Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum. <https://pim.hu/hu/dia/napi-idezet/baratkoz-as-lehetosegei>. Last accessed on: 03.03.2021.

30 Fodor Györgyi: *Az érsek szava* [The Archbishop’s Word]. In: Selyem Zsuzsa (ed.), *A túlhatalom formái egy kelet-európai fiktív városban* (Elemzések Bodor Ádám regényéről és Kamondi Zoltán filmjéről) [Forms of Supremacy in an Eastern European Fictional Town (Analyses of Ádám Bodor’s Novels and Zoltán Kamondi’s Films)]. *Látó Munkafüzet* 20 (2009/11).

31 Bodor Ádám: *Az érsek látogatása*. Budapest, 2014. 5.

32 Id. 74.

them. She pays her respects to the current oppressors by rendering carnal services, and gaining power thereby, she has influence over everything. She performs services directly connected to ecclesiastical insignia: together with her woman hairdressers, Colentina trims and scents the priests' beards. Here being a priest means nothing more than putting on the symbols and insignia corresponding to the ecclesiastical title, the garments and the beard. However, this holy order has lost all touch with the transcendent – it only borrows its insignia yet attaches great importance to keeping the regalia in a mint condition. Everyone who can either becomes a priest or starts serving them, no other way being left for survival. All recalcitrant individuals are locked up in the isolation facility without any explanation. And all communication channels are cut off from them by the oppressors; everything is under control, as a blanket censorship is put in place.

Against this background, the individual is not allowed to have personal manifestations. They cannot have authority even over their own body, they are literally enslaved. This prose work thus creates the haptic image of being reduced to silence, of destitution and complete emptiness.

Women's opportunities are restricted to acting in the role of hairdressers, prostituting themselves, and serving the body of those who own them. In this simplistic world, the body plays a central role, depriving its owners as well as "users" of having feelings of their own. "The most vulnerable part of humans is their body – both by virtue of exposure to their own instincts and in the hands of another person. This is the most effective instrument of threat within reach for those in power, which can be put to work towards achieving their goals most easily. [...] Given that the body is an integral part of power structures and processes, it stands for the most common means of serving the leaders through tending to the body."³³

Caring for the body, cleanliness is a perpetually pursued yet unattainable goal since a gigantic dump site is surrounding the city, whose foul smell is continuously present in the air above Dolina.

"Ever since waste is stored in Bogdanski Dolina and the heaps of trash have grown to such enormous proportions that they stand in the way of the northern

33 Bucur Tünde: „Új gúnyát öltöttek és szakállt növesztettek” – A hatalom Bogdanski Dolinán [“They Have Put on New Dresses and Have Grown Beard” – Forms of Power in Bogdanski Dolina]. In: Selyem Zsuzsa (ed.), *A túlhatalom formái egy kelet-európai fiktív városban (Elemzések Bodor Ádám regényé-ről és Kamondi Zoltán filmjéről)* [Forms of Supremacy in an Eastern European Fictional Town (Analyses of Ádám Bodor's Novels and Zoltán Kamondi's Films)]. *Látó Munkafüzet* 20 (2009/11).

winds, the air above the city becomes foggy already by midday, there is nothing but the jelly-like bell of the miasma trembling above the roofs, and even the fiercest seagulls are reduced to silence therein. A numbing silence descends between the walls, and all we can hear are flies thumping against the window.³⁴

Some kind of magic is overpowering Dolina, the freezing silence, inhuman physical conditions, and a spiritual wasteland, suffocation. In his novella, Ádám Bodor gives a taste of this enclosed world, jammed between the ribs and living in a suffocating totalitarian struggle.³⁵

The title, *Az érsek látogatása*, further plays up this drowsy paralysis, this anxiety-generating atmosphere, which can be gradually detected in ourselves too. The reader can sense and experience first-hand the strain of waiting that bears no fruit. The sensory effects evoked in the process of reception now become perceptible: we can perceive the foul smell of Dolina as real, the characters' gestures and verbal expressions create the illusion of a stifling silence. The illusions thus created lull us into thinking of Dolina as real, our sensorial experiences become animated.³⁶

We are getting sucked into and stupefied by the monotony of Dolina's everyday life oozing with stench – the narrator and the recipient, just as the strangers arriving there, are covered with and captured by the grimy fog of the town.

“As the train, approaching from Bogdanski Dolina, emerges from Pop Sabin Forest, crosses into the flatlands and smoke rolls in underneath the dome of the miasmatic fog-bank, murky fumes stick onto the windows and the smell of decay fills the train car. Whoever comes here for the first time in his life commonly gets stunned already at the outskirts of the city, oftentimes even passes out, or just doses off and is rendered unconscious for days on end.”³⁷

The behaviour, mindset, and character of the strangers arriving here conform to the environment. Human relationships undergo transformation, everything is dictated by survival techniques, and the system completely and utterly eradicates all human emotions. Those arriving here soon come to realize that if they are to make themselves understood, they must speak the

34 Bodor, 2014. 80.

35 Fodor, 2009.

36 Cf. Szilasi, 2006.

37 Bodor, 2014. 91.

superior language variety, to adopt the mentality of the regime currently in power. As everything else, language is regulated by the authority, thereby determining society and all laws and orders. The residents of Dolina as well as those visiting it are equally exposed to raw power, which, no matter the outfit it dons, has total control over all their perceptions and expressions. Through appealing to our senses, the novella gives a hands-on experience of its instruments of intimidation, the stench, the physical vulnerability, and the restrictions imposed upon language use. Ádám Bodor's novel sheds light on the mechanisms of supremacy, constructs a universal interpretation of dictatorship, thus acquiring the potential to evoke the gripping power of the East-Central European awareness of life.

A Shift towards Mercy

The examined prose literature provides assistance in gaining insight into the milieu of this region at the individual level, in terms of social interactions, and with respect to the society at large, thus closing in on the drama of the periphery dweller. And getting a closer view of the East-Central European sense of life is essential for learning its language and speaking it when sharing the Gospel in order to offer the glad tidings of God's mercy as a remedy.

He who meets Jesus Christ will experience God's mercy, His acceptance of him and His love for him, and he will want to pass on this experience through acts of solidarity. This way, God's unconditional love that can be experienced in Jesus Christ becomes the foundation and example of the Christian's mercy.³⁸

Listening to Pope Francis' catecheses and homilies or reading his volume of interviews,³⁹ we are almost constantly faced with the concept of mercy either directly or indirectly, just as in his magisterial statements. The Jubilee Year of Mercy declared on 13 March 2015 is yet another example for this concept being eternally at the core of the Holy Father's evangelization. It is our duty as Christians to bring God's greatest attribute into the world. Particularly today, this is a major responsibility of the church as a mother to act so in this age, which is the age of mercy, stresses Pope Francis. "The Church does not exist to condemn people but to bring about an encounter with the visceral love of God's mercy. (...) in order for this to happen, it is necessary to go out: to go

38 Entry for "irgalmasság" [mercy], in: Diós István (ed.), *Magyar Katolikus Lexikon* [Hungarian Catholic Lexicon].

39 Cf. Spadaro, Antonio: *Jó napot kívánok! Ferenc pápa vagyok*. Budapest, 2013.

out from the churches and the parishes, to go outside and look for people where they live, where they suffer, and where they hope.”⁴⁰ This quotation from Pope Francis can be read in the blurb written for the volume *The Name of God Is Mercy*, wherein the pope talks to Vatican expert Andrea Tornielli about the importance of the exceptional Jubilee Year of Mercy declared in 2015. The Bishop of Rome sees mercy as the Lord’s most powerful message that has practical implications. The church must work at all times towards getting this fundamental message into the world, it must seek every day new ways to meet people so as to enable them to experience God’s loving mercy to the best of their abilities. In Paul M. Zulehner’s words, “it is Pope Francis’ wish, in fact he demands from the church that it should convey this [message] and enable everyone to experience God’s unconditional mercy”.⁴¹ In order for this to happen, the church must step outside herself, must leave her familiar confines and break away from her conventional practices. In his first exhortation, entitled *Evangelii Gaudium*, the pope propagates as a project this image of the church that steps outside herself and seeks out those on the outskirts of existence, and he goes on to state that whoever experiences God’s mercy is capable of passing on the healing mercy.⁴²

This is a simple message whose significance runs deep, however, evoking the image of a church that “does not reprimand people for their weaknesses and wounds but that has recourse to the healing mercy” in its eagerness to meet them.⁴³ As already mentioned above, the Year of Mercy is yet another “product” yielded by the central role this message plays in Pope Francis’ teachings, as he reads the signs of our times and considers that time is now ripe for the age of mercy. In these times, the church shows her face of a mother and looks at the wounded humanity in her maternal concern. It condemns sin but comes close to the sinner and speaks to him about God’s endless mercy – about the mercy of the Gospel, where Jesus forgives even those who humiliate and crucify him. There we can also learn that it is not merely about forgiving but rejoicing over the prodigal son’s return. Following in the steps of Jesus Christ, the mission of the church is to bring word of God’s mercy to those who can see themselves as sinners, who long for mercy, and who take responsibility for all the wrongdoings they have committed. This encounter

40 Pope Francis: *Isten neve irgalmasság. Beszélgetések Andrea Torniellivel*. Budapest, 2016 (the book’s cover).

41 Zulehner, Paul M.: *Kifutó modell: merre kormányozza Ferenc pápa az egyházat?* Budapest, 2016, 18.

42 EG 9; 197.

43 Pope Francis, 2016, 10.

cannot take place, however, if someone is not willing to participate, does not see himself as a sinner, does not feel the need to receive mercy or loses hope and simply believes that standing up again is not possible – if he cannot overcome his wounds and revolves around them or cannot distance himself from his own misery and remains lost. The wounds of sin can heal up only if we have confidence in God's readiness to forgive them and if we can forgive as well. A small step of acceptance is essential for the healing to take place, a step whereby our desire towards changing our own situation will become apparent.⁴⁴

Conclusions

We have taken a closer look at three pieces of *Ádám Bodor's* prose works, which enable us to experience first-hand the wounded sense of life, the East-Central European existential drama taking place at the (inter-)personal as well as community level. They facilitate our understanding of the open wound from struggling in the suffocating totalitarian regime. The living carrier of the region's sense of life can be recognized in them, which can give us an improved understanding of the language used by those to whom we wish to offer a shift in mindset towards mercy, as Pope Francis himself exhorts us. This is one of the secular sources that help us understand the collective consciousness of the East-Central European individual. This literary oeuvre can lead the way to understanding the wounded, the periphery dweller, with the ambition to evoke this milieu for the reader, as per his own admission. "I was above all inspired by the existential image of the homeland and of the entire Central European region, with its primitive morals, lethargic atmosphere; I couldn't have even borne to write about anything else, nor differently in any way."⁴⁵

Ádám Bodor is inspired by the human-interest story of individuals in a peripheral setting: he speaks about as well as for them, and his works visualize the lives of those marginalized. A fictional world sets the context that brings to mind the experiences arising from which the wounded identity is very much alive to this day. These literary works as carriers of social memories can help us recognize existential wounds. They help us grow into a greater

44 Pope Francis, 2016, 73–74.

45 Bodor *Ádám*: *A börtön szaga. Válaszok Balla Zsófia kérdéseire* [The Smell of Prison. Answering Zsófia Balla's Questions]. Budapest, 2001. 153.

awareness of the experiences of marginalized individuals, of people going through hopeless life situations.

“The problem arises when the meaning of life fades away – for any reason – and so taking another step towards the fullness of life becomes impossible for the person. In the spiritual sense, we can talk about existential wounds. And wounds need to be healed. Man’s wounds need to be healed, and the wounds of mankind need to be healed, or those of a specific society.”⁴⁶

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46 Csiszár Klára: Logo-pasztorális. Egzisztenciaanalízis-alapú pasztorális teológia az egyház integrális missziófogalmának tükrében [Logo-Pastoral. Existential-Analytical Pastoral Theology in the Light of the Church’s Concept of Integral Mission]. In: Kiss Gábor (ed.), *Fiatal Kutatók és Doktoranduszok IX. Nemzetközi Teológuskonferenciájának Tanulmánykötete* [Papers of the 9th Conference of Junior Theologians and Doctoral Students]. Budapest, 2020. 16.

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Religiousness and images of God of young figures in current German-language young adult literature

Introduction

»Aber trotzdem: ja. Ich glaube an *Irgendwas* mit großem *I*. Habe immer daran geglaubt.« »Wirklich?« Ich war überrascht. Ehrlich gesagt hatte ich den Glauben an den Himmel immer für eine Art intellektuellen Aussetzer gehalten. Doch Gus war nicht dumm.¹

How a person's conception of God and religiousness change within his or her life is one of the key questions of religious education. Equally central is its conclusion on how religious education may contribute to an understanding of the complexity of the question of God.² Especially youth is a time of dramatic changes. Teenagers are gaining independence from their parents, are gathering all kinds of new experiences and are reflecting on what kind of a person they want to become. Those changes and reflections may concern questions about religion and religiosity as well.

The quotation above, taken from the book *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter*, the German translation of the New York Times bestseller *The Fault in our Stars* (hung.: *Csillagainkban a hiba*), gives insight into a conversation between the two teenage protagonists about their religious ideas. While Gus, who was brought up by an evangelical American family, formulates a symbolic understanding of after-life as '*Irgendwas* mit großem *I* (orig.: `Something with capital S'), Hazel's thoughts mirror her surprise and her beginning shift of mind.

Since Hazel and Gus each suffer from severe cancer, both are faced with the end of their lives. Honestly discussing questions about life after death and images of after-life is their way of coping with their situation. Thereby they bring up religious, but not necessarily biblical, interpretations.

1 Green, John (2012): *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter*. Translated by Sophie Zeitz, p. 154.

2 See: Büttner, Gerhard; Dietrich, Veit-Jakobus (2016): *Entwicklungspsychologie in der Religionspädagogik*. 2. Aufl. UTB, p. 171.

As many other examples of current young adult literature the *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter* tackles existential questions and the young protagonists' search for adequate answers.

This paper wants to give an insight into findings on the depiction of images of God and religiousness of the young protagonists within current non-religious young adult literature. It asks to what extent the texts can be regarded as seismographs of current social developments and argues the use of youth literature in religious education. Before discussing the results and comparing them to findings of studies on religious socialization I am reflecting on the sample of books, as well as the analytical method used.

1. Sample and Method

In my doctoral thesis I examine religious intertextuality in current – not explicitly religious – young adult literature. My sample represents about 50 youth literary texts from the years 2008 to 2016. The selected texts represent different genres – realistic, phantastic and dystopian. The books are relevant for the German-speaking area, but also include translations from other languages. In order to fit the sample they either were awarded with or nominated for the *German Children's Literature Award*³ or gained relevance for young people by being listed as bestsellers on the Spiegel bestseller list for a long time and/or by being adapted as movies. This paper is paying particular attention to texts of the realistic genre.

Religion and intertextuality are each concepts that cannot be clearly defined. In order to analyze the texts, however, it is urgently necessary to operationalize both terms. Regarding intertextuality I include both, a wide and a narrow concept of intertextuality. A wide concept of intertextuality is based on the interweaving of text (written or unwritten) and context in general. It follows its origin in post-structuralism (MICHAÏL BACHTIN, JULIA KRISTEVA)⁴ AND IS APPLIED IN CULTURAL STUDIES. A NARROW CONCEPT OF intertextuality, which is preferred in literary studies, describes explicit

3 The *German Children's Literature Award – Deutsche Jugendliteraturpreis* is the best-known and most highly endowed prize for young adult literature in Germany. Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur: *Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis*, <https://www.jugendliteratur.org/english-key-facts>. (KK, 30.09.2021)

4 Bachtin, Michail (1979 [1934/35]): *Das Wort im Roman*. In: Die Ästhetik des Wortes. Herausgegeben von Rainer Grübel. Frankfurt am Main: edition suhrkamp.; Kristeva, Julia (1969): *Le mot, le dialogue et le roman*. In: Semeiotike. Recherches pour une sémanalyse. Paris: Éd. du Seuil.

text-text relationships (e.g. quotations) between youth books and other texts as pretexts. In order to make the concept of religion methodically comprehensible, I follow Detlef Pollack in the combination of a substantial and functional definition of religion, in which certain inner-worldly problems are solved by a reference to transcendence and then are referred back to inner-worldly practices.⁵

I have analysed the texts according to references to religious pretexts, references to religious communities and rites as well as to references to discourses and topics related to religion. For this presentation, I focus mainly on references to discourses and topics and ask the following questions: How are religiousness and images of God depicted within young adult literature? When do questions about religion and religiosity appear?

2. Findings on the depiction of images of God and religiousness of the young protagonists

In general, the selected, non-religious young adult literature shows a broad spectrum of answers to existential questions and reflects a frank approach to religion. When it specifically comes to the representations of religiosity and relations that teenagers may have with God, the texts offer a surprisingly wide range, too. In order to answer the question, how religiousness is depicted within young adult literature it has proven useful to defer between religiousness of other figures and the religiousness of the protagonists themselves.

2.1. Not like them – Religiousness of others

Firstly, we look at how religiousness of other figures than the main characters is depicted within the books; secondly, we take a closer look specifically at the protagonists' differentiation from their parents and grandparents when it comes to religious ideas.

2.1.1. Portraying believers

When focussing on the depiction of religious characters we usually see them through the eyes of the young protagonists. Religiously drawn characters rarely serve them as identification figures. Rather, believers are portrayed as

5 Pollack, Detlef (1995): *Was ist Religion? Probleme der Definition*. In: *Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft*, S. 164–190.; Pollack, Detlef (2017): *Probleme der Definition von Religion*. In: *Z Religion Ges Polit 1* (1), S. 7–35.

slightly peculiar or too dogmatic. One example is Patrick, the Support Group Leader in *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter*, who

bei jedem einzelnen blöden Treffen von Jesus' Herzen redete und davon, dass wir als Krebskinder direkt in Jesus' superheiligem Herzen wohnten und so weiter.

Und so lief es ab in Jesus' Herzen: Wir sechs oder sieben oder zehn Teilnehmer kamen bzw. rollten herein, bedienten uns an einem dürftigen Buffet mit Keksen und Limonade, setzten uns in den Kreis des Vertrauens und hörten zu, wie Patrick zum tausendsten Mal seine deprimierende Lebensgeschichte abspulte⁶.

Patrick may be the “only person over eighteen in the room”⁷; but the protagonist Hazel cannot take him seriously. In contrast to Hazel, his thoughts are stuck with his (long ago cured) cancer and he doesn't get any further in his life. For her, who, due to her cancer, doesn't have much chance of reaching her eighteenth birthday herself, Patrick is nothing more than a whining and pitiable figure. The weekly meetings are displayed as redundant; the decrepit cookies mirror Hazels feeling towards the meetings. The Christian support group fails to truly help Hazel cope with her situation.

Another example of the lack of identification potential of religious figures is the character Willi in Rolf Lappert's novel *Pampa Blues* (2012). Willi always is slightly too enthusiastic in his missionary work and drives the main character Ben mad. Willi starts giving talks about after-life without being asked, he is carrying piles of Christian magazines and a Bible in order to inform the teenager about Christianity. Ben, for his part, is rather annoyed and embarrassed by these attempts at proselytizing:

Wenn Willi anfängt, von Gott, Glauben und Kirche zu quatschen, kriege ich regelmäßig die Krise. [...] Als ich in seiner Gegenwart mal erwähnte, ich hätte schon seit Jahren keinen Gottesdienst mehr besucht, war er völlig entsetzt und schleppte am nächsten Tag eine Bibel und einen Stapel christlicher Magazine an.⁸

While the young protagonists may not identify with Patrick or Willi's religiosity, they can still show them sympathy and meet them with a sense of humour. In contrast to them, the sample shows less harmless examples when

6 Green, John (2012): *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter*, p. 10.

7 Green, John (2012): *The Fault in our Stars*. New York: penguin books, p. 4.

8 Lappert, Rolf (2012): *Pampa Blues*. München: Hanser, p. 88f.

it comes to religious characters, too. There is the strict Catholic grandmother in Tamara Bach's narration *Marienbilder* (2014),⁹ whose only reaction to her daughter's extramarital pregnancy is to ask the doctor to get rid of the unborn. There also is "der fromme Kai" within the Danish narration *Nichts. Was im Leben wichtig ist* by Janne Teller (2010),¹⁰ who is always mentioned with the attribute 'pious' and whose only fear it is to be kicked out of the inner mission. While his only answer to morally questionable actions of his class is the threat of God's punishment, he as well carries the stones they throw at an unloved classmate.

The only example that religious characters can function as identifying figures for the young protagonists is the liberal pastor in *Stadtrandritter* by Nils Mohl (2015)¹¹ He is trying hard to include the teenagers of his district into the youth group of the church and is discussing questions of their interest openly. Nonetheless, he is an ambivalent character for possibly starting an affair with an underage girl.

2.1.2. Differentiation from parents and grandparents

Usually the protagonists aren't brought up in religious families. If so, they distance themselves from the beliefs of their parents. The typical demarcation attitude of teenagers towards their parents can therefore also be seen with regard to expressions of religion. As the opening quote showed, Gus from *Das Schicksal ist ein miser Verräter* is open to religious searches and discourses. Nevertheless, his own religiosity differs from his parents' belief. When he ironically apologizes to his girlfriend Hazel for being spiritual, he refers to his religious upbringing:

»Aber ich könnte noch viel schlimmer sein, weißt du?« »Wie das?«, fragte ich ironisch. »Immerhin hängt bei uns zu Hause ein Schild über dem Klo, auf dem in Schönschrift steht: ›Bade täglich im Trost von Gottes Wort‹ Ich könnte viel schlimmer sein, Hazel.«¹²

The differentiation from the parent's religiousness is to be witnessed not only regarding Christian characters (even though when it comes to institutional

9 Bach, Tamara (2014): *Marienbilder*. Hamburg: Carlsen, p. 41.

10 Teller, Janne; Sigrid Engeler (2010): *Nichts. Was im Leben wichtig ist*. München: Hanser, p. 19; 47.

11 Mohl, Nils (2013): *Stadtrandritter*. Roman. Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag.

12 Green, John (2012): *Das Schicksal ist ein miser Verräter*, p. 156.

religion, the books mainly refer to Christianity), but also other religions. In *Simple* by the French author Marie-Aude Murail (2009), the father of a Muslim family seems a little helpless and irritated when it comes to discussions with his daughters and wife.

»Gut, hört zu. Das Leben hier auf Erden ist nur Genuss von Illusionen.«
»O nein nicht schon wieder« protestierte Djemilah, die vierzehn Jahre alt und sehr vorlaut war. »Aber das steht im Koran«, erklärte Papa Larbi irritiert. »Wenn du eines Tages die Gärten, durch welche Bäche fließen, kennenlernen willst ...«
»Allahs Paradies ist cool, aber nur für Männer«, unterbrach ihn Djemilah erneut.¹³

By the father's referring to the deafness of his one daughter Amila in the face of his other daughter Djemilah's replies, it is clear that strict religious attitudes and dogmatic declarations no longer work for the younger generation. Even explicit references to the Qur'an are no longer taken up by them without reflection.

An even stronger example for the decline in religious affiliation or at least the decline in affiliation to institutional religion within the current young adult literature is given in *Marienbilder*. The grandmother is represented as a very strict Catholic. Her daughter suffered from that upbringing and as a result, didn't share any Christian rituals or ideas with her own daughter Mareike, the main character of the story.

2.2 Religiousness of young adults

As we have seen, a personal relationship with God, as embodied primarily by adult characters, is an exception for the main protagonists in non-religious young adult literature. Yet religion and God can still play a role in their lives. Namely, when they experience an existential crises and the contingency of life. Then discourses about different ideas of God ignite and a deep longing for support (in faith) becomes visible. In these situations, the protagonists may even begin to pray. Even if they never do so otherwise.

2.2.1. Seriously searching for answers

When it comes to discussing existential questions the young protagonists are willing to have honest discussions and are seriously interested in finding

13 Murail, Marie-Aude; SCHEFFEL, Tobias (2009): *Simple*. 16. Auflage: Juni 2014. Frankfurt, M.: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, p. 156.

answers. Those discussions are often caused by an emergency. Regarding the question of what God is like, different kinds of images of God appear.

Ben, the main character in *Pampa Blues*, is taking care of his grandfather with dementia. When he feels overwhelmed by the responsibly and hopes for an improvement of his grandfather Karl's condition, Ben starts thinking about God. His thoughts reveal an anthropomorphic image of God. However, Ben is frank with his doubts. He has no idea, whether there really was an old man with a beard sitting in heaven:

Ich habe mit Religion nicht viel am Hut und keine Ahnung, ob es wirklich einen alten Mann mit weißem Bart gibt, der im Himmel sitzt und bestimmt, wer hier unten leben darf und wer sterben muss. Aber falls es Gott gibt und falls er einen Sinn für Gerechtigkeit hat, könnte er ruhig dafür sorgen, dass Karls Gehirn wieder funktioniert und ich endlich mein eigenes Leben bekomme.¹⁴

Ben has no access to church-mediated religion. It is only through Willi, who is not only overambitious in his missionary work, but who himself cannot get beyond the level of mythical-literal faith (Fowler)¹⁵, that Ben is confronted with notions of faith. Thus, Ben is basically alone with his thoughts. While the anthropomorphic image of God does not convince him, it is the only image of God he knows and therefore he keeps holding on to it. He still hopes for God's intervention. However, the usage of the subjunctive/if-clause – if God existed and if that God had a sense justice – shows Ben's detachment with regard to a personal relationship to God.

Apart from few anthropomorphic images of God, we find different examples of symbolic images of God within the current young adult literature.

Gus from *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter* thinks of God as ›Die aufgehende Sonne zu hell in ihrem schwindenden Blick‹.¹⁶ Even though he is familiar with the Bible, he uses this metaphor, which he read in the fictional pretext *Ein herrschaftliches Leiden*, the favourite book of his girlfriend.

In fact, biblical images of God are rarely used by the main characters. If they are, they are adapted. Merle in *Stadtrandritter*, for example, believes in feelings, especially in love – and for her, God is in everything this word encompasses.¹⁷ Even though the image of God as love can be found in the

14 Lappert, Rolf (2012): *Pampa Blues*, p. 161.

15 Fowler, James (1991): *Stages of Faith and religious development*. New York: Crossroad.

16 Green, John (2012): *Das Schicksal ist ein mieser Verräter*, p. 154.

17 Mohl, Nils (2013): *Stadtrandritter*, p. 215.

Bible, Merle is not explicitly referring to it. In the novel *Stadtrandritter*, all kinds of different images of God are represented, since different characters speak in the form of an interview about their relation to God. The young woman Domino is the only one within the novel – within the whole sample, actually –, who doesn't have any idea of an image of God. For her this word is nothing more than a noise.

Gott. (Zuckt die Schultern.) Hm. Also, tut mir leid. Das sind vier Buchstaben. Ein Geräusch. Mehr nicht. Oder?¹⁸

Next to anthropomorphic or symbolic images of God and not having any image at all, the corpus shows examples of the idea of God being part of oneself. In the Australian novel *Wer hat Angst vor Jasper Jones?* by Craig Silvey the protagonist Jasper is an orphan and outcast in the city. The image he has of God mirrors the fact that he cannot rely on anyone:

Das ist Gott in Wirklichkeit, glaube ich. Er ist ein Teil von mir, der stärker und härter ist als alles andere.

God is part of himself and stronger than anything else is. Jasper clearly distances himself from any metaphors and Biblical stories. Those simply were a complicated way to get to that place within oneself. He himself is the only one that matters:

Ich muss mir nichts vormachen, dass jemand anderes zuhört oder sogar Anteil nimmt. Weil es darauf nicht ankommt. Auf *mich* kommt es an. Und ich komme klar, das weiß ich. Weil ich ein gutes Herz hab.¹⁹

2.2.2 *God in emergencies – trying a prayer*

For various reasons, the majority of the young main characters cannot experience the adult and grandparent generation's religiousness. They clearly distinguish themselves from it and seek their own honest understanding of existential questions. In doing so, they sometimes explicitly reflect on the function of religion to cope with contingency. However, in emergency situations they often wish they shared their parent's faith and that can lead

18 Ibid, p. 499.

19 Silvey, Craig; Bettina Münch (2012): *Wer hat Angst vor Jasper Jones?* Reinbek b. Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch-Verlag, p. 205.

to prayers, too. Those prayers follow a certain structure. They are embedded in if-clauses and the subjunctive is used.

When contemplating abortion, Mareike in *Marienbilder*, for example, wishes that she were religious. She assumes that if she had religion, she would know what to do, since unborn life was sacred. Her very narrow view of the behavior of religious people becomes obvious as she thinks that if she was religious, this unwanted pregnancy would not have happened to her, because she would not have had sex as a teenager. Then she starts saying a prayer, but this prayer follows the conditional clause 'I could pray', in that sense it cannot really be seen as a prayer. Instead it shows her longing desire for security and understanding.

Ich könnte beten. [...] Ich könnte sagen:

Lieber Gott. Bitte hilf mit. Ich bin ein gefallenes Mädchen [...] ich brauche deine Güte, ich brauche Zuwendung, ein Zeichen.²⁰

Another example of a protagonist longing for the faith of his parent is Adrian in *Schneeriese* by Susan Kreller. When he is heartbroken, he regrets not having a particularly good connection to the God of his mother, since he could have prayed to be somewhere else.

[A]drian bedauerte auf einmal, dass er zu dem Gott seiner Mutter keinen besonders guten Draht hatte, sonst hätte er sich nämlich genau jetzt werweißwohin gebetet. Irgendwohin.
Weit weg von hier.²¹

3. Current young adult literatur as seismograph of current social developments

The non-religious young adult literature pictures the fading tradition of the church-mediated religion in our society²² and sometimes even makes it part of the discourses between the young protagonists. When comparing these findings to results of the *Religionsmonitor*,²³ the largest study on Religious Socialization in Germany then commonalities become clearly evident.

20 Bach, Tamara (2014): *Marienbilder*, p. 109f.

21 Kreller, Susan (2014): *Schneeriese*. Hamburg: Carlsen, p. 125.

22 Langenhorst, Georg (2012): *Kinder- und Jugendliteratur – Gegenstand religionspädagogischer Theoriebildung und Praxis*. In: Die Münchner Theologische Zeitschrift 63 (1), pp. 60–71, p. 63.

23 Pickel, Gerd (2013): *Religionsmonitor. verstehen was verbindet*. Bertelsmann Stiftung.

There is an obvious similarity to the decline in religious socialization in Germany within the past years. The regions of the former GDR have been – due to political pressure during the socialist times – less religious compared to western parts of the country. However, slowly conditions are equalizing and religious socialization is decreasing throughout the country. Nonetheless, a decline in religious socialization does not mean the decline in religious search for meaning in general. The same is to be seen within the young adult literature. The young main characters may not share older generations' religious upbringing, nevertheless they are open to religious search²⁴ and discourses. The finding of the *Religionsmonitor* show an increase in individualisation as well as a decrease in dogmatism – something that the young adult literature mirrors. The main characters distance themselves from religious routine²⁵ and dogmatism, but are open to individual references. Examples of a vivid religiosity are rarely given. If they are, the protagonists can identify with it to a certain point, but still long for their own answers.

When relating the findings from youth literary texts especially to studies on adolescents' image of God, similarities can be found, too. HANS-GEORG ZIEBERTZ states that the majority of adolescents have a critical attitude towards traditional images of God, but also towards atheistic ideas. Mostly young people believe in a 'God' in whatever form.²⁶ The images of God depicted within sample mirror those findings. Traditional images of God are rarely something the protagonists can identify with, but atheistic ideas are seldom, too. While anthropomorphic images of God hardly work for the protagonists, examples of symbolic images of God are often more meaningful to them as well as the understanding of God being a part within oneself.

Ziebertz further notes that it is difficult for adolescents to verbalize their concept of God. In this respect, dealing with examples given in young adult literature can make a valuable contribution.

24 According to Detlef Pollack, religious search means that there are religious questions, but no religious answers are given. Pollack, Detlef (1995): *Was ist Religion? Probleme der Definition*, p. 189.

25 According to Detlef Pollack, religious routine means that there are religious answers, but no religious questions. Pollack, Detlef (1995): *Was ist Religion? Probleme der Definition*, p. 189.

26 See: Ziebertz, Hans-Georg, *Gesellschaftliche und jugendsoziologische Herausforderungen für die Religionsdidaktik*. In: Hilger, Georg/Leimgruber, Stephan/Ziebertz, Hans-Georg, *Religionsdidaktik. Ein Leitfaden für Studium, Ausbildung und Beruf*, München 7. Aufl. 2012, pp. 76–105.

Conclusion: Young adult literature and religious education

Even if young adult literature as a medium has not yet received sufficient attention in the field of religious education, its didactic advantages are obvious in my opinion. Especially non-religious youth literature should be considered as a learning object and learning medium for students in religious education: It reveals literary conceptions of God held by their peers and can help the students formulate their own ideas. The texts thus help their young readers to understand current discourses on religiosity and the use of religious language, even or especially if they are not explicitly religious texts, but literature they are confronted with in their everyday lives.

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Types of Religiosity in Europe¹

Introduction

This study is based on the modern secularisation theory, which states, among other things, that the role of religiosity (and of churches) is changing on both the social and the personal level, and that these changes are unfolding in several directions at the same time. The main questions underlying my research are the following: What types of religiosity exist in Europe? In what proportions are they present in society, and how do they change over time? My main thesis is that the most common type of religiosity in Europe is cultural religion, meaning that the majority of religious people do not have a strong personal faith and do not practice their religion, but nevertheless consider themselves religious.

Theoretical background

The secularisation thesis emerged in relation to the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th century and is based on the idea that, due primarily to advances in science, faith would sooner or later cease to be needed in order to make life meaningful. This thesis (or some variant of it) was largely accepted for hundreds of years. Its core premise is that the level of religiosity necessarily decreases with the progress of modernisation, and that eventually, religion will disappear from society altogether.²

The secularisation thesis was taken for granted to such an extent that no research was undertaken to prove it for a long time. Therefore, critiques of the thesis only appeared from the 1960s onwards, because by then it had become clear that not all elements of religiosity were disappearing, at least

1 The project titled "EFOP-3.6.3-VEKOP-16-2017-00007 "From talented student to young researcher—fostering scientific careers in higher education" is co-financed by the European Union (European Social Fund) within the framework of Hungary's Széchenyi 2020 programme, which supported the writing of this paper.

2 Rodney Stark, "Secularization, R. I. P.," *Sociology of Religion* 60, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 251.

not at the rate previously assumed. Peter Berger has expanded the meaning of secularisation, defining it as “the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols.”³ In his famous article, *Secularization R. I. P.*, Rodney Stark also noted—quite sarcastically—that once it became obvious that religiosity would not disappear, the term secularisation began to be used in a different, broader sense.

Such an extended definition is used by José Casanova, who argues that there are three meanings of secularisation: religious decline, the privatisation of religion, and differentiation, by which he means that the various sub-sectors of society—such as politics, science, economy and art—are no longer under religious control.⁴

According to Casanova, the three levels of analysis concerning modern religiosity are personal faith, activity in a religious community, and belonging to/identification with a religious community.⁵ Questions based on these factors are also used in several surveys, for example the European Social Survey.⁶

All three dimensions may appear strongly in a person's life, but it is also common for people to show their religiosity along only one or two of these dimensions. In my research, based on Casanova's levels of analysis, I consider religious any person who believes in at least three of the four items of belief (a personal God, life after death, the existence of hell and the existence of heaven) included in the questionnaire on which my analysis is based; who attends religious events at least once a month (excluding rites of passage, such as baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc.); or who identifies with a religious community/church.

3 Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1967) 107.

4 José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 7.

5 José Casanova, “Die religiöse Lage in Europa”, in *Säkularisierung und die Weltreligionen*, ed. Hans Joas – Klaus Wiegandt (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2007), 324.

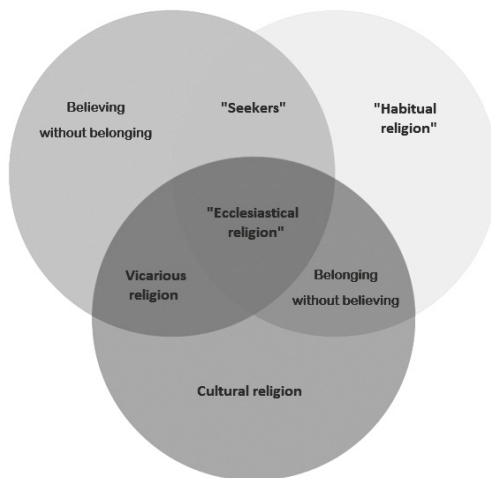
6 David Voas, “The Rise and Fall of Fuzzy Fidelity in Europe”, *European Sociological Review* 25, no. 3 (2009): 156.

Seven types of religiosity

I used these three dimensions—personal faith, participation in a religious community and belonging to a religious community—to construct something akin to a Venn diagram to illustrate the different types of religiosity. Based on the presence or absence of these dimensions in a person’s life, I distinguish seven categories. I call non-religious those who do not meet any of the above criteria. Those who meet at least one criterion make up the big umbrella group of the religious, which can then be further subdivided into groups based on how many and which dimensions apply (see Fig. 1).

At this point, one question arises: Do I, as a researcher with a scientific point of view, have the right to determine who should or should not be considered to be religious, or would it be more appropriate to rely on the results of self-classification? David Voas also discusses this question, noting that “people are not the best judges of their characteristics”.⁷ In this particular case, I consider it justified to make this decision because the aim of this study is precisely to overcome the simplicity of self-classification. It is not satisfactory to rely on the self-described binary categories of religious and non-religious: it appears to be exponentially more fruitful to research religiosity by examining several different dimensions together. For example, my results would have been skewed if I had not classified someone as culturally religious (this category will be explained in detail below) because they did not declare themselves religious based on their different concept of religiosity.

Fig. 1: Seven types of religiosity



7 Voas, "The Rise and Fall," 157.

Those who fall into the central intersection where all three dimensions overlap form the “ecclesiastically religious” group. They belong to a religious community, in which they actively participate, and also have personal faith. Members of this group mostly wish to follow the teachings of their church, and religion plays an important role in their lives.

Those who belong to a religious community and are active in it and attend a religious ceremony at least once a month but do not have personal faith belong to the “belonging without believing” category, a term that was first used by Daniele Hervieu-Léger.⁸ Members of this group claim that they belong to a religious community and participate in its ceremonies, but they do not strongly believe in the main tenets of their religion.

The next category is the group of “seekers”, who do not feel that they are part of a community or may not have decided yet at what level they wish to commit to it. However, they are personally religious and active in the community.

The third group practice “vicarious religion”, a concept constructed by Grace Davie.⁹ Members of this group let church attendees represent all other members of the denomination who require its services only on exceptional occasions, such as rites of passage, religious holidays or personal tragedies. Group members feel that they are part of the community, and they also have personal faith, but they refrain from attending ordinary ceremonies.

I call the group of those who are active in a community but do not feel that they belong there and do not have personal faith “habitually religious”. Habitual religion includes people who do not consider themselves to be members of a religious community and do not have personal faith but who nevertheless participate in religious ceremonies. Presumably, this group has very few members, who, for example, accompany their believing spouse or children, or whose habit of attending church is rooted in other factors. David Voas also says:

“while it is unusual to find unreligious people in church, religious practice can occur even among the secular. People accompany religious parents or spouses, go for the music, or hope to qualify their children for church-affiliated schools.¹⁰”

8 Daniele Hervieu-Léger, “The Role of Religion in Establishing Social Cohesion,” in *Religion in the New Europe*, ed. Krzysztof Michalski (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 45–63.

9 Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain: A persistent paradox* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015).

10 Voas, “The Rise and Fall,” 163.

The second type of religiosity that has only one dimension—personal faith—is “believing without belonging”, a term that was also created by Grace Davie.¹¹ Members of this group have personal faith but do not belong to any religious community and do not attend religious events or liturgies. People falling in this category are often referred to in questionnaires as being “religious in their own way”—an umbrella term of sorts which often includes a variety of beliefs collected from many sources. The international literature also uses the term “patchwork religion”. Group members believe in a personal God or another transcendent power, but these beliefs do not involve religious practice in a community, and they often specifically reject churches and institutionalised religion.

The last category is “cultural religion”. This term already appeared in studies 20 years ago and has become an increasingly researched topic in recent years, though different researchers define it in different ways. I call culturally religious all those people who say that they are religious, who do belong to a church or a religious community, but who do not personally believe in God, the afterlife, heaven and/or hell, and are not active in the community.

Cultural religiosity is a very interesting category, since many theologians would not call its adherents religious at all due to their lack of faith and/or involvement in religious practices. I first encountered the term in one of Demerath’s case studies, where he examines the religiosity of Poland, Northern Ireland and Sweden. He defines cultural religiosity as

“a way of being religiously connected without being religiously active. It is a recognition of a religious community but with a lapsed commitment to the core practices around which the community originally formed.”¹²

As he puts it, “Cultural religion affords a sense of personal identity and continuity with the past even after participation in ritual and belief have lapsed.”¹³

“Cultural religiosity” can be the result of several factors. In his case study, Demerath claims that due to the long history of religiously tinted animosities

11 Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without belonging* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994).

12 Nicholas Jay Demerath, “The Rise of ‘Cultural Religion’ in European Christianity: Learning from Poland, Northern Ireland, and Sweden,” *Social Compass* 47, no. 1 (2000): 127.

13 Demerath, “The Rise,” 136.

(up to and including all-out civil war) in Northern Ireland, belonging to the Catholic or Protestant denomination has become a criterion for belonging to a family or social group.

In one of his interviews, a respondent said to him:

“When you meet a stranger here at a party or some other gathering, the first thing to be established is not your occupation but your religious identity.” And as another noted, “Even if you are an atheist, you are either a Catholic or a Protestant atheist.”¹⁴

In Sweden, ecclesiastical and state functions were connected for a long time, as the church was responsible for registering deaths, and more than 90% of funerals were ecclesiastical. However, such a funeral was only possible by paying the church tax, for which one had to be a member of the church.¹⁵ (Since 2000, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden has been separated from the state, which means that Sweden no longer has an official state church.)

Hervieu-Léger has researched cultural religiosity in Denmark and found that faith and participation are declining. Her experience is well illustrated by the following sentence:

“Danes do not believe in god and never attend church but faithfully continue to pay the tax that goes to the Lutheran Church because they like to see religious buildings properly maintained for the ceremonies associated with rites of passage.”¹⁶

I have not been able to find any specific research on the causes of the high level of cultural religiosity (26% of the religious population) in Hungary. However, I assume that the cultural religion of Hungarians is connected to the strong memory of the formation of the state around the year 1000, which was based on Christian premises. The traditions of the historical churches are thus still strong in the country. For instance, many refer to themselves as Christians because they have been baptised or believe that their lives are embedded in a predominantly Christian culture.

14 Demerath, “The Rise,” 131.

15 Demerath, “The Rise,” 134.

16 Daniele Hervieu-Léger, “The Role of Religion,” 48.

Methodology

Prior to analysing the data, my hypothesis was that in Europe, secularisation manifests in a decline in “ecclesiastical religiosity” and an increase in the proportion of the “believing without belonging” group within the religious population (hypothesis 1).

At the same time—this can be seen as a counter-process, but it can also be shown to confirm the secularisation thesis—personal faith is declining in many countries while institutional religious practices have remained largely unchanged over time, so that the proportion of “cultural religiosity” is increasing (hypothesis 2).

I used data from the European Values Study to examine the different types of religiosity. The EVS started in 1981 with the aim of examining the changes within European values and religiosity, with 16 countries surveyed in the first wave. Hungary joined the survey during the second wave in 1990, along with several other post-socialist countries. Subsequently, three more studies were conducted, in 1999, 2008 and most recently in 2017. As the questions in the first 1981 master questionnaire differed slightly from the ones used in subsequent waves, and the number of surveyed countries was much smaller, I decided to work only with the data from the four surveys conducted since 1990.

The integrated database included a total of 49 countries, but not all of them were in Europe and several states participated in only one or two waves of the study. For the sake of comparability over time, I therefore only included countries that were surveyed in at least three waves. In the end, I narrowed the database down to 30 European countries, nine of which participated in all five, fourteen in four, and seven in three surveys.

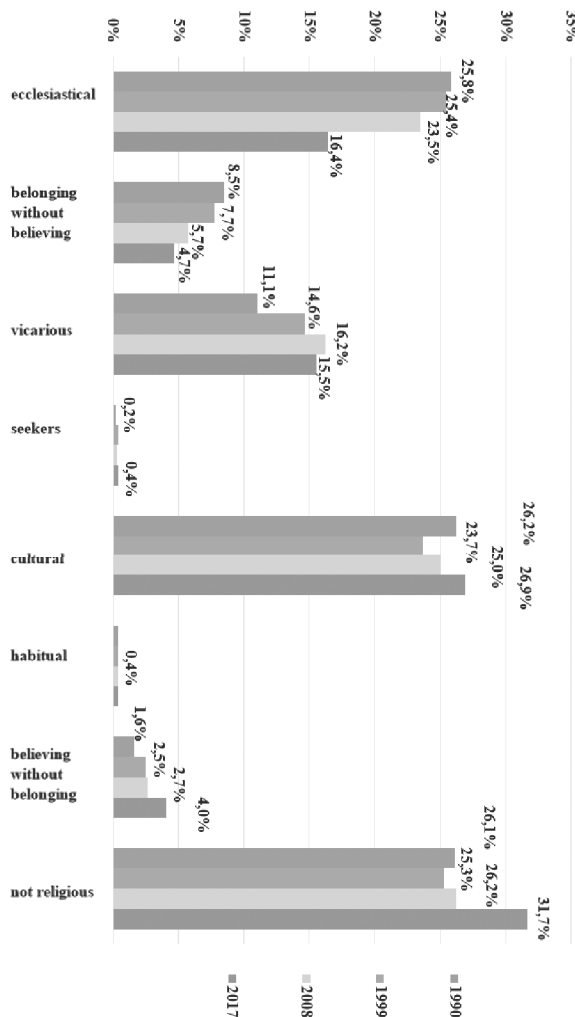
The number of observations in the final database amounted to about 25,000 during the first, 28,000 during the second, 46,000 during the third and 40,000 during the fourth wave.

During my analysis, I assigned the variables selected from the database to the three dimensions of religiosity mentioned above. I separated the seven types of religiosity, as well as the group of non-religious people, by creating variables based on the three dimensions. For example, to get the “cultural religiosity” variable, I filtered the data to include all people who said that they belong to a religious denomination and whose values of participation and faith were lower than the threshold presented earlier (participation: attending religious services less frequently than once a month; faith: believing in one or two out of four items of belief). I repeated this filtering six times, to create a variable for each type of religiosity.

Results

First, I analysed the data in general, for all countries together, by examining the changes in proportion of the various categories across the surveyed time period. The main trends show that the rates of “ecclesiastical religiosity” and “belonging without believing” are decreasing, while “cultural religiosity”, “believing without belonging” and non-religiosity are increasing over time (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Distribution of the seven types of religiosity in 30 European countries



Looking at the categories, it is clear that in both 1990 and 1999, the ecclesiastically religious and non-religious groups were present in almost equal proportions in European society. Ecclesiastical religiosity declined at an accelerating rate between all subsequent stages of the study, dropping from 23.5% in 2008 to only 16.4% in 2017. Meanwhile, the share of the non-religious group stagnated throughout the first three surveys and then rose from 26.2% to 31.7% in 2017. Like ecclesiastical religiosity, “belonging without believing” also declined steadily. The proportion of the group decreased by 1-2% in each wave: from 8.5% in 1990, it sunk to 4.7% by 2017. A person of the “belonging without believing” type probably either stops participating and becomes culturally religious or, less often, starts having faith and moves to the ecclesiastically religious category.

The proportion of seekers and the habitually religious is so small as to be negligible. I call these transit categories, from which individuals quickly move on to another type of religiosity. Both types are also often temporary. My assumption is that it is most likely for “seekers” to move to the “ecclesiastically religious” or the “believing without belonging” category, depending on their level of acceptance for institutionalised religion. Habitually religious people may return to the non-religious group, but it is possible that they will begin to believe or identify with a religious community, thus entering one or both of the other two dimensions. In each case, I assume that the affiliation with a transit category only lasts for a short period of time, while the other types may characterise people throughout their whole lives.

The share of people with vicarious religion stood at 8.5% in 1990 and then nearly doubled to 16.2% by 2008. At the same time, the rate of ecclesiastical religiosity and “belonging without believing” is steadily declining, while “believing without belonging” is slowly growing. In 1990, only 1.6% of the European population avowed belief “without a church”, but in 2017 as many as 4% believed in their own way. Thus, my first hypothesis, that the proportion of ecclesiastical religiosity decreases and the proportion of “believing without belonging” increases, was confirmed.

Among all types of religiosity, cultural religiosity has the highest share overall. In 1990, its level (25.8%) was almost the same as that of ecclesiastical religiosity (26.2%). By 1999, cultural religiosity had declined a little, but in the last two waves it again slightly exceeded the initial value of 1990. Thus, in 2017, more than a quarter of the European religious population (26.9%) was culturally religious. These data support my other assumption that the rate of cultural religiosity was already high in the beginning of the survey, and that it continues to increase over time.

In the second part of analysis, I used crosstables for each wave, with the countries as rows and the category variables as columns, to obtain the percentages for each type of religiosity in every country. Here I only present the most recent results from 2017, but the longitudinal analysis of the changes of proportions within each country also makes for interesting research material (see Table 1).

There were 24 countries with enough data to analyse in 2017, but to get the widest results possible I added six countries to the table for which data were only available from 2008.

Table 1: Share (%) of seven types of religiosity in 30 countries, 2017*

Seven types of religiosity (2017)*, percentages by country

	non-religious	cultural religion	ecclesiastical religion	believing without belonging	habitual religion	belonging without believing	vicarious religion	seekers
Czech Republic	69.2%	8.5 %	7.4%	6.9%	0.1%	1.3%	6.5%	
Estonia	67.8%	6.5%	6.3%	11.6%	0.5%	2.1%	4.6%	0.6%
Netherlands	57.2%	12.6%	13.5%	4.5%	0.6%	3.3%	8.2%	0.0%
Great Britain	50.6%	14.9%	11.3%	7.8%	0.7%	4.8%	9.5%	0.3%
France	49.9%	16.6%	8.3%	8.0%	0.4%	2.0%	14.2%	0.5%
Belgium	40.8%	24.4%	9.9%	2.9%	0.4%	6.7%	14.7%	0.2%
Hungary	40.4%	17.7%	14.8%	10.1%	0.7%	3.5%	12.2%	0.6%
Germany	38.3%	27.4%	11.9%	3.3%	0.3%	5.3%	13.2%	0.2%
Russia	36.8%	13.1%	14.3%	6.4%	0.9%	2.6%	24.7%	1.1%
Slovenia	36.2%	26.8%	15.9%	1.9%	0.3%	7.6%	11.2%	0.1%
Spain	35.0%	24.2%	19.7%	2.7%	0.6%	3.6%	13.7%	0.5%
Belarus	25.4%	21.9%	16.3%	6.8%	0.9%	3.9%	23.3%	1.5%

	non-religious	cultural religion	ecclesiastical religion	believing without belonging	habitual religion	belonging without believing	vicarious religion	seekers
<i>Malta</i>	1.2%	3.5%	83.5%	0.3%		3.2%	7.8%	0.4%
<i>Northern Ireland</i>	6.7%	4.4%	58.7%	8.1%		1.2%	20.3%	0.6%
Poland	6.6%	11.5%	58.3%	1.1%	0.2%	9.8%	12.4%	0.1%
<i>Ireland</i>	7.7%	11.3%	52.5%	3.3%	0.4%	7.7%	16.5%	0.4%
Romania	1.7%	16.3%	38.5%	1.1%	0.1%	10.6%	31.0%	0.8%
Slovakia	22.9%	17.3%	37.4%	1.4%		5.9%	14.9%	0.3%
Italy	19.5%	15.1%	34.2%	1.3%	0.5%	9.6%	19.7%	0.2%
Lithuania	12.4%	21.2%	31.1%	0.6%		4.6%	30.1%	
Croatia	15.5%	25.4%	29.6%	2.1%	0.2%	5.4%	21.0%	1.0%
<i>Portugal</i>	10.9%	23.8%	28.6%	1.5%	0.5%	18.1%	16.1%	0.4%
Denmark	14.8%	65.7%	4.0%	1.9%	0.2%	4.4%	8.9%	0.2%
Iceland	18.3%	43.3%	6.8%	2.4%	0.1%	2.2%	26.9%	0.1%
Sweden	32.5%	42.4%	6.5%	4.3%	0.4%	2.7%	10.5%	0.7%
Finland	24.4%	41.4%	8.5%	2.8%	0.5%	1.8%	20.3%	0.4%
Norway	33.2%	35.7%	9.1%	4.0%	0.2%	2.3%	15.1%	0.4%
Bulgaria	24.8%	34.9%	11.5%	2.8%	0.4%	5.5%	19.1%	0.9%
<i>Latvia</i>	26.8%	29.4%	13.7%	5.3%	0.7%	4.7%	19.0%	0.4%
Austria	24.3%	26.5%	19.2%	2.7%	0.6%	8.7%	17.8%	0.2%
*Data for countries in <i>italics</i> are from 2008								

In the table, the largest category in each country is highlighted in grey. Overall, three of the seven types dominate across Europe. In 12 countries, which can be called the most secular, non-religiosity is the most common type: the Czech Republic, Estonia, the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Belgium, Hungary, Germany, Russia, Slovenia, Spain and Belarus. It is interesting that there is no geographical pattern, as these countries are located in different parts of Europe. Of course, there is a big difference between the two most secular countries, the Czech Republic and Belarus, since 69.2% of the Czech population are not religious and all other categories account for less than 9% of the total, while in Belarus, 16.3% are ecclesiastically religious, 23.3% are vicariously religious and a further 21.9% of the population are culturally religious.

It is worth mentioning that the second largest category in eight out of the 12 most secular countries is cultural religion. I assume that cultural religion will decline, and the share of non-religious people will increase in the future, as people who do not believe or participate in services also tend to lose their religious identity.

Surprisingly, ecclesiastical religion is the second most common type of religiosity in 10 out of 30 countries: Malta, Northern Ireland, Poland, Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Italy, Lithuania, Croatia and Portugal. In Malta, the level of ecclesiastical religiosity is extremely high, at 83.5%, which is probably caused by the island's small population and the significant role of the Catholic Church. Moreover, this group also includes traditionally religious countries, such as Poland, Italy, Ireland and Northern Ireland. Again, the ecclesiastically religious countries do not show any geographical connection. The second most common type of religiosity in these countries (in seven out of 10) was vicarious religion, which means that besides people who have faith, avow a religious identity and go to church, there is a big group that also has faith and a religious identity but does not participate in services.

Illustrating the significance of cultural religiosity, this was the most common type in eight countries, where it accounted for more than a quarter of the population: Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Bulgaria, Latvia and Austria. This is the only group with any geographical proximity, with the exception of Austria and Bulgaria, given that cultural religion is most common in the Nordic countries. This statement is supported by the findings of Hervieu-Léger in Denmark¹⁷ and of Demerath¹⁸ and Kasselstrand¹⁹

17 Demerath, "The Rise," 127–139.

18 Hervieu-Léger, "The Role of Religion," 45–63.

19 Isabella Kasselstrand, "Nonbelievers in the Church: A Study of Cultural Religion in

in Sweden. In this context, it is interesting that the most common type of religiosity is different in each one of the Baltic states: while Estonia is non-religious, cultural religion dominates in Latvia and Lithuania is marked by ecclesiastical religion.

In summary, cultural religion is the only type where any geographical connection is apparent. Hence, the development of types of religiosity in these countries is likely due to other factors, such as historical events, religious history, and culture. While there is a significant amount of qualitative research on the causes and background of religiosity, my aim was to underpin these findings with quantitative data.

Conclusion

In this paper, I identified seven types of religiosity based on three dimensions often used in surveys: personal faith, participation, and belonging to a religious denomination. I analysed their proportions based on data from four waves of the European Values Study. The categorisation by dimension revealed an interesting picture of religiosity in Europe.

The results confirmed that the largest category of religiosity is cultural religion, that the dimension of personal faith is in decline across Europe, and that the proportion of cultural religiosity is increasing due to the persistence of institutional ties. In addition, the analysis showed that within the religious population, the share of “ecclesiastical religiosity” is decreasing while that of “believing without belonging” is growing.

At country level, I have found that after non-religiosity, ecclesiastical and cultural religion are the most common dominant types of religiosity. The three groups of countries display some similarities in the structure of religiosity, with the second largest type often being the same within each group, while geographical proximity does not seem to play a significant role.

Discussion

The motivation behind this paper is to engage in the scientific discourse about cultural religiosity, a topic that has received greater attention in recent years. Although the methodology of secondary data analysis requires the simplification of concepts in order to make them measurable, it also provides

an opportunity for a diverse analysis of an extremely interesting and relevant topic that has so far been mostly researched by means of qualitative methods.

In the future, I intend to continue my research by examining the following types of questions: Do factors like age, gender, education or denominational affiliation influence a person's type of religiosity? Is there a correlation between the historical religious background of a country and the level of cultural religiosity? Are similarly culturally religious countries also similar in other aspects? Answering these questions could shed light on the current state of religiosity within Europe and the modern process of secularisation.

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Herspectives

Female Photographers and Faith Today

Photography, from its early experimental and exclusive status in the nineteenth century, developed into a widely applied medium in the twentieth century, and—in harmony with the *total aestheticisation of the world*, a term borrowed from Márton Szentpéteri, intellectual historian and design critic¹, as well as in line with the accelerating spread of the accessible and easily reproducing digital images—into a common and everyday practice in the twenty-first century. In addition to the inevitable democratising character of this change, this phenomenon has also led to a schematic use of the medium, focusing on the decorative, appealing nature of the images, often referred to as “Instagram compatibility” or even more aptly named by Adam Possamai sociologist as *i-sation*².

The possibility of including added meaning to photographs, in addition to their beautified character is thus generally lost. Think of the empty appealing character of images purchased from image banks to illustrate articles, advertising, or simply used without any reference in personal communication is social media—from sunny fields of crops under the blue sky to crimson seaside sunsets.

These are opportunities missed, and lead to a deluge of schematic, and decorative photographic images, albeit missing the chance of giving the images meaning above their visual appeal—whereas photography, I argue, is a suitable vehicle to investigate, learn, and understand the world we live in. In this paper I attempt to highlight that in terms of photography related to religious or spiritual experience.

1 Márton Szentpéteri, “Changing the Rhythm of Design Capitalism and the Total Aestheticization of the World,” *Hungarian Studies Yearbook* 1:1, (2019): 82–99, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/hsy-2019-0007>.

2 Adam Possamai, *The i-zation of Society, Religion, and Neoliberal Post-Secularism*, (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), DOI: 10.1007/978-981-10-5942-1.

A simple though often forgotten commonality of religion and art is that both “require belief for them to work”³—claims the art historian Daniel A. Siedell, and gives an example of the Eucharist and the painting. To make the Eucharist efficacious, Siedell says, the recipient needs to believe that the wine and the wafer is the blood and body of Christ. Also, similarly, the beholder of a painting must believe that the paint smeared on the canvas means something. Photographic images are alike. As viewers, we need to believe the photographer, her intention, as well as that what we see does mean something.

The ecumenical researcher Eileen D. Crowley addresses the role of photography as a spiritual practice in forming and practising belief already in her 2014 writing, “‘Using New Eyes’: Photography as a Spiritual Practice for Faith Formation and Worship.”⁴ Crowley reminds us that photography in addition to being a “disposable consumer commodity in an instant-gratification society”⁵ (i.e., images photographed by mobile devices, instantly posted in social media, remaining mostly unnoticed, and soon forgotten by their owners, too), the mediated work and the sharing of it as an act and practice is utterly everyday, normal, and forms a natural part of the participative culture⁶ of our days.

In addition to this participative method, which Crowley investigates through case studies of Lutheran Evangelical groups using photography as spiritual practice in processes that lead to group spiritual reflection for faith formation and worship (in forms of a) a photography club; b) a “Photography as Spiritual Practice” mini course in a parish; and c) a six-month parish project of communal art-making of liturgical media art for one church’s Easter Vigil readings), there are early examples of the phenomenon. Good examples are Benedictine photographers—from the early twentieth-century Gergely Palatin OSB to the mid twentieth-century Dr. Tamás Rados

3 Daniel A. Siedell, “Liturgical Aesthetics and Contemporary Artistic Practice: Some Remarks on Developing a Critical Framework,” In *Beyond Belief: Theoaesthetics or Just Old-Time Religion?* Edited by Ronald R. Bernier (Eugene OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 11.

4 Eileen D. Crowley, “‘Using New Eyes’: Photography as a Spiritual Practice for Faith Formation and Worship,” *Dialog: A Journal of Theology*, Volume 53, Number 1, (Spring 2014, March): 30–40.

5 *Ibid.*, 30.

6 The term of participative culture appeared in 2009 in writings by Henry Jenkins. See, Henry Jenkins with Ravi Rurushotma, Margaret Weigel, Katie Clinton and Alice J. Robison, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2009).

OSB,⁷ both active in the Pannonhalma Abbey, Hungary. Accordingly, it is no surprise to understand that there is a Gergely Palatin Photo Award for students of Benedictine schools in Hungary,⁸ or that the portrait of the last archabbot, Asztrik Várszegi appeared in the portrait gallery of the abbey as a photograph instead of a painting for the first time,⁹ as well as the photographic art exhibitions at the archabbey.

Photography appears today as art. As Charlotte Cotton notes in her groundbreaking volume, “We are at an exceptional time for photography as the art world embraces the photograph as never before, and photographers consider the art gallery or the book the natural home for their work.”¹⁰

The question of photography and faith, however, appears beyond the practices described above. As guest editor of *Aperture Magazine #237: Spirituality* published in December 2019, the internationally renowned photographer and artist, Wolfgang Tillmans explains his choice of subject: “I immediately knew that it should be spirituality ... because I strongly sense that the political shifts in Western society in the last ten years stem from a lack of meaning in the capitalist world.”¹¹ The questions raised and discussed in this issue investigate human relations as a form of spiritual engagement, as well as the intertwining of spirituality and solidarity, which is not an unknown pairing since Tony Fry design theorist coined the term sacred design.¹²

A few pages later, Martin Hägglund, Swedish philosopher and literary theorist asks Tillmans whether he sees the (re)creation of the social connection, a possible reading of his oeuvre, part of his task as a photographer.

7 See, Klára Romoda, “Dr. Rados Tamás pannonhalmi irodalomtanár: Egy ‘másik’ fényképező szerzetes,” *Fotóművészet* Vol. XLVI, No. 1–2. (2013). Available online at http://www.fotomuveszet.net/korabbi_szamok/200312/dr_rados_tamas_annonhalmi_rodalomtanar?PHPSESSID=85230b2aef70a262de7279ef8d4d4272, 16.06.2021.

8 Palatin Gergely-fotópályázat (Gergely Palatin Photo Award) open for students, for the thirteenth time in 2018. See, <https://www.phbences.hu/hirek/palatin-gergely-fotopalyazat-2018>, 16.06.2021.

9 See, Attila Horányi, “Egy portréről—Lábady István: Várszegi Asztrik pannonhalmi főapát portréja,” *Artmagazin* 120, XVIII/1 (2020): 34–38, available online at https://www.artmagazin.hu/articles/archivum/egy_portrerol, 16.06.2021.

10 Charlotte Cotton, *The Photography as Contemporary Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 7.

11 “Editors’ Note,” *Aperture Magazine*, 237 (Winter 2019): 23.

12 Fry highlights the commonalities of the sacred and design—“understood futurally and ethically (rather than historically and religiously).” See, Tony Fry, “Returning: Sacred Design III,” *Design Philosophy Papers*, 8:1, 25–34, (2010): 33, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/144871310X13968744282755>.

Tillmans answers that he sees photography as an expression of “how we look at things,” which in his opinion should be nonjudgemental.¹³ This claim is surprisingly in harmony with the *opinionlessness* claimed by Boris Groys and Peter Weibel in *Medium Religion*.¹⁴

The key concept for Tillmans is *fragility*,¹⁵ which the idealised images, capitalism and commercial pop culture almost entirely reject. The result is the terror of perfect images leaving people alone with the feeling of their fragility, as if it were something bad, instead of highlighting the seeing of their strength in connecting to their fragility—claims Tillmans.¹⁶

Possibly this growing awareness of humanity’s sense of fragility is strengthened by the wide understanding of the sharpening climate crisis, the global pandemic, the returning waves of economic crises, the increase of social inequalities, the deterioration of the circumstances of life on Earth, the unsustainable, as well as the lack of a foreseeable promising future. This, however, might prove to be less than enough, both in society and globally. To gain real experience of our fragility, we might often need an even more radical approach, one that might also connect to spirituality. Art is such an approach,—which the philosopher Santiago Zabala declares as the only capacity to alter reality and save us.¹⁷ And, as we could understand, photography is part of the domain of art.

A recent phenomenon in international and Hungarian photo art is the turn towards investigating religiosity and spirituality—clearly marked by the rising number of photographers active in the field, the appearance of publications—like the earlier mentioned issue of *Aperture Magazine*, and exhibitions—as the *Guest + Appearance* exhibition in Pannonhalma in 2020.¹⁸

Interestingly, the presence of women among photographers investigating religion and spirituality is striking—both internationally and in Hungary.

13 “Spirituality is Solidarity: Wolfgang Tillmans and Martin Hägglund in Conversation,” *Aperture Magazine* 237 (Winter 2019): 36.

14 *Medium Religion: Faith. Geopolitics. Art.*, Edited by Boris Groys and Peter Weibel (Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2009).

15 Tillmans used ‘fragile’ as his *nom d’artiste* in the 1980s. It was also the title of his solo exhibition on view in several locations in 2018 and 2019.

16 “Spirituality is Solidarity” 2019, 37.

17 See, Santiago Zabala, *Why Only Art Can Save Us* (New York NY: Columbia University Press, 2017).

18 See, Vendég+Látás (Guest+Appearance) temporary exhibition, the website of the Pannonhalma Archabbey, <https://pannonhalmifoapatsag.hu/vendeglatas-fotokiallitas/>. 16.06.2021.

The commonalities in their oeuvres is evident in 1) their investigating religion, religiosity, spirituality—practices, and identities; 2) women as main (and not side) subjects of the investigation—though not exclusively; 3) the unusual, surprising or shocking perspectives applied; 4) their personal quests of clarifying (their own) relations with organised religion, and seeking the spirituality they miss therein; 5) their artistic sensitivity, access, and attention to detail.

My contention is that this phenomenon is rooted in three core concepts: 1) the importance of the perspective; 2) the relevance of photography in a broad aspect; and last but not least 3) a specific phenomenon referring to the female gaze, I propose under the collective term of *herspectives*.

Perspective, as Jean-Luc Marion claims, in itself exercises a paradox. “The paradox attests to the visible,” he writes, “while at the same time opposing itself, or rather, while inverting itself; literally, it constitutes a counter-visible, a counter-seen, a counter-appearance that offers a spectacle to be seen the opposite of what, at first sight, one would expect to see. More than a surprising opinion, the paradox often points to a miracle—it makes visible that which one should not be able to see and which one is not able to see without astonishment.”¹⁹

This capacity of creating visibility, and thus orchestrating the—religious or spiritual—experience takes us further to the relevance of photography. Paraphrasing Marion’s claim, and hoping that is an acceptable modification in support of our view, we can conclude that “the question of *photography* does not pertain first or only to *photographers*, much less to aestheticians. It concerns visibility itself, and thus pertains to everything—to sensation in general.”²⁰

Under the concept of *herspectives* I wish to denote a specific phenomenon of the female gaze I find of outstanding importance in case of these photographers and their art. I do not wish to use it in opposition of the long-time-ruling male gaze, as evident in most of the history of art, not in a feminist discourse, not by gender-stereotyping, and not in the sense of the ‘female gaze’ influencing the construction of masculinity. Rather I wish to use it to emphasise their sensibility, the ability of recognising and sharing new and enriching learnings in the world, where meaning seems to evaporate,

19 Jean-Luc Marion, *The Crossing of the Visible*, Translated by James K. A. Smith, (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 9.

20 In original: “The question of *painting* does not pertain first or only to *painters*, much less to aestheticians. It concerns visibility itself, and thus pertains to everything—to sensation in general.” *Ibid.*, 7.

and where the—image-making and image-consuming—generation has a burning need to face honest experience.

The list of female photographers investigating religion and spirituality ranges from the twentieth-century pioneering work of the Spanish Cristina Garcia Rodero²¹ photographing Christian religiosity, and the Italian-Senegalese Maimouna Guerresi²² investigating the spirituality and ancestry of African, Asian and European cultures by mirroring her own situatedness of living in balance of two cultures, and imagining a global community that transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, to the radical art approaches of the Iranian Shirin Neshat²³ and the Yemeni Boushra Yahya Almutawakel,²⁴ and the fresh perspective of the Jordanian Tanya Habjouqa, especially in her project, *The Un/Holy Land*, ongoing since 2013.²⁵

The American photographer, Lauren Pond researches American religiosity through beliefs, culture and experience by moving in the communities investigated. Pond sees photography as more than a means of documentation: an opportunity to share experiences and create new understandings. In her earlier projects, she worked with believing bikers,²⁶ Mennonite youth and their education in faith,²⁷ the spiritual life of the lonesome wanderers of roads in connection with the mobile chapels of the trucker mission *Transport For Christ* and their mobile churches erected at truck stops,²⁸ the spreading of paganism, which is estimated to have approximately one million followers in the United States, in prisons,²⁹ and those seeking and practising new ways, frameworks and forms of faith.³⁰ With her latest project, *Test of Faith*,³¹ available also in print,³² Pond returned to the world of charismatic Pentecostal, serpent-handling pastors, whom she has followed earlier.

21 See, Garcia Rodero's page within the website of Magnum Photos, <https://www.magnumphotos.com/photographer/cristina-garcia-rodero/>, 16.06.2021.

22 See, <https://www.maimounaguerresi.com>, 16.06.2021.

23 See, Neshat's page at the website of *The Collector*, <https://www.thecollector.com/shirin-neshat-artist/>, 16.06.2021.

24 See, <https://www.boushraart.com>, 16.06.2021.

25 See, <http://tanyahabjouqa.com/the-unholy-land>, 16.06.2021.

26 Born Again Bikers, <https://www.laurenpondphoto.com/stories/born-bikers/>, 16.06.2021.

27 Faith Builders, <https://www.laurenpondphoto.com/stories/faith-builders/>, 16.06.2021.

28 A Less Lonely Road, <https://www.laurenpondphoto.com/stories/less-lonely-road/>, 16.06.2021.

29 Paganism in Prison, <https://www.laurenpondphoto.com/stories/paganism-prison/>, 16.06.2021.

30 Belief, Unbound, <https://www.laurenpondphoto.com/stories/belief-unbound/>, 16.06.2021.

31 Test of Faith, <https://www.laurenpondphoto.com/stories/test-faith/>, 16.06.2021.

32 Lauren Pond, *Test of Faith: Signs, Serpents, Salvation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

Similarly insightful are the photographs of the young Amsterdam-based photographer, Robin Alysha Clemens, who—just like Pond—researches subcultures, and with her works aims at capturing the presence of communality, the identity of belonging. Clemens' images are characterised by a dramatic nature—in the sense of the theatre or rather the motion pictures. Her strongly contrasting dark and light photographs recall the technique of *chiaroscuro* well-known since the Renaissance, sometimes even George de la Tour's Baroque paintings. She uses light available at the location and captures mostly spontaneous scenes. This technique enables her to focus on the subject and the pictoriality at the same time, seeing light as an emphatic tool of imaging.

In her series “*Yo soy otro tú, tú eres otro yo*” (I am another you, you are another I)³³ photographed in Mexico, where different religious traditions and beliefs intermingle and transform—from native ancient Mayan and Aztec traditions to Catholicism imported by the Spanish conquerors, the African and other Latin American beliefs of the slaves, as well as North American cultural influences, Clemens researched Mexicans and their faith. Looking at the diversity of contemporary Mexican spirituality, practices unfamiliar to us and their sometimes surprising similarities are also revealed. Instead of altars, icons, and other religious symbols belonging to the world of material culture, she focuses on portraits of the people behind the systems of belief: subjects of exorcism with prayer, consecrated oil and the Bible; a portrait of a *brujo* witch master working with both black and white magic; a young woman with tattoos on her arm recommended for *Santa Muerte* and a cross tattooed upside down in honour of Satan; a traditional healer from the Seri tribe; a spiritual healer woman; a young Catholic poet who sees the unity of different cultures as the basis of his art; worshippers holding statues of St. Judas Tadeus, saint of the hopeless and desperate, and a Catholic priest blessing them with holy water; a man kneeling in prayer at the basilica erected to commemorate the first apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a building which replaced the former Aztec Tonantzin Shrine, and is therefore of paramount importance to the Mexican Indian population; a *granicero* healer in his cave; and young Nazarenes praying together.

In Clemens' works one cannot feel the made-up mastery: the situations, the people in the pictures, the dramatic light appear before us as natural, self-identical images. This impression is reinforced by Clemens' statement that she sees her photographic work as an anthropological tool in the study

33 See, <https://robinalysha.com/Yo-soy-otro-tu-tu-eres-otro-yo>, 16.06.2021.

of cultures, identities, traditions, and the symbols associated with them. In reflection to Tillmans' words cited earlier, she claims that she seeks to portray people as individuals, not as caricatures of the ideologies they represent.³⁴

In addition to the two international examples, two examples from Hungary deserve attention. Boglárka Éva Zellei has been researching religiosity and spirituality with photography for years. Her currently ongoing projects continue this consequent quest. In her recent series, *Path Amidst Souls* an ongoing artistic research series started in 2020, wherein Zellei researches the Pilis Mountains, north of Budapest, which is a natural environment strongly imbued with spiritual life of several religions.³⁵ Through pilgrimages, series of walks, and, naturally, through photography, Zellei seeks to discover the connections between God, nature, and the human being. The work is based on Zellei's own experiences. As she notes, "The spiritual process of seeking oneness with nature meets a community with people on a similar path. This is often made possible by sacred places embedded in nature. Through their abandoned traces, we can connect with those before us, and observe the transforming work of nature on human structures. By encountering the unknown, I strive to experience oneness."³⁶ Images of the landscape, phenomena of nature, and self portraits accompany the paths of this artistic pilgrimage.

Zellei's other current series include, *Untitled*, a strongly personal project ongoing since 2015, with images of self-portraits, images of sculptures of penitent thieves found as mostly vernacular liturgical art, as well as modernist church buildings erected during the communist rule of the country before 1990.³⁷ With the honest, and sometimes shocking confession of these images of an investigating nature, Zellei doesn't wish to hide her search of identity, her relations to organised religion and society. As she notes, "I am a young

34 Heming Liu, "Women Crush Wednesday: Robin Alysha Clemens," *Musée—Vanguard of Photography Culture*, April 15, 2020, (<https://museemagazine.com/culture/2020/4/15/women-crush-wednesday-robin-alysha-clemens>), 16.06.2021.

35 The series is—partly—available at Zellei's website. See, <http://www.boglarkazellei.com/path-between-souls>, 16.06.2021.

36 In original: "A természettel való egység keresésének lelki folyamata találkozik a hasonló úton járó emberekkel vállalt közösséggel. Ennek sokszor a természetbe ágyazott szakrális helyek adnak teret. Otthagyott nyomaik által kapcsolódhatunk az előttünk járókkal és szemlélhetjük a természet átformáló munkáját az emberi építményeken. Az ismeretlennel való találkozás által törekszem az egység megtapasztalása felé." Boglárka Éva Zellei, *MMA konzultáció 2021–1* (MMA Consultation 2021–1), 25.03.2021., pdf-document, 2. Courtesy of the artist.

37 See, <http://www.boglarkazellei.com/cim-nelkul-untitled>, 16.06.2021.

Christian creative woman from Central and Eastern Europe. In this series spanning the years, I gather the impressions that I receive as a believer in my own cultural environment since my early twenties, and shape my identity. Spirituality determines my personal life and my connection to society alike. I display the dialogue of the two spheres through images. My self-portraits reflect on the visual memories of Christian culture or speak in a symbolic way about this complex identity. At the same time, I also display the historical and cultural features of my environment in the churches built before and immediately after the change of regime, in sculptures that are perceptible to me.”³⁸

Coincidentally, Eszter Asszonyi’s latest project also connects to the Pilis Mountains, though with a partly different interest and subject of research. As a graduating student of photography at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest,—through her MA degree photographic series entitled *Middle World* (Középső világ), and her MA thesis “*Mother Earth, I Hear Your Voice*”—*Reflexive Spirituality and Neo-Pagan Movements in Hungary Today* (“Földanya, hallom a hangod”—Reflexív spiritualitás és újpogány mozgalmak a mai Magyarországon), she researches the peculiar phenomenon of the coexistence, interrelations, and sometimes merger of Christianity and Neo-Pagan movements among women. Although sometimes Asszonyi photographs the same trees, sanctuaries, and similar pilgrims like Zellei, her work focuses more on the phenomenon itself, raising questions—partly to herself, too—why and how Neo-Pagan rites and spirituality, an intimate proximity with nature replace the spiritual need unfulfilled in organised religion, namely in Christianity. Asszonyi uses the methodology of sociology and cultural anthropology as a solid scholarly fundament to her research, in addition to collecting personal experiences by moving into, coexisting and co-practising the rituals with the subjects of her work, as well as photographing these actions with the consent of the

38 In original: “Fiatal közép-kelet európai keresztény alkotó nő vagyok. Ebben az éveken átívelő sorozatban összegyűjtöm azokat a benyomásokat, amelyek hívőként saját kulturális környezetben érnek a húszas éveim eleje óta, és identitásomat formálják. A spiritualitás meghatározza személyes életemet, és a társadalommal való kapcsolódásomat egyaránt, a két szféra párbeszédét jelenítem meg a képeken keresztül. Önarcképeim a keresztény kultúra vizuális emlékeire reflektálnak vagy szimbolikus módon beszélnek erről az összetett identitásról. Ezzel párhuzamosan környezetem történelmi és kulturális sajátosságait is megjelenítem a rendszerváltás előtti és közvetlenül utána épült templomokban, számomra érzéketlen szobrokban.” Boglárka Éva Zellei, *MMA konzultáció 2021–1* (MMA Consultation 2021–1), 25.03.2021., pdf-document, 19, courtesy of the artist.

participants. It seems also evident that this research cannot be separated from her own questions and quest as a young practising Christian.

Asszonyi shares some of her insights and learnings through her study published in 2020: “For the century ahead, researchers predict the flourishing of small religions. Although the number of those who profess Neo-Pagan beliefs is still negligible compared to followers of historical religions, there are those who believe that paganism has become a “world religion” over the past half century. It is a non-unified, non-dogmatic, not always institutionalised religion whose branches are undoubtedly related to each other and to spiritual movements—in their tones, external forms, rites. One of the aftermaths of the spread of the prenatal feast may be that there will already be members of the next generation who encounter Neo-Paganism as a belief exercised by their parents, rather than choosing it as an adult from the existing spiritual-religious offerings, as is currently the case. And the new generation that is now growing up and for whom it is important to save our planet and live in harmony with nature is likely to identify more easily with a belief system of which these values are an integral part. So, for the future of Neo-Pagan female rites and reflexive spirituality, we can only be sure of one thing: that the “shaman princesses” already live among us.”³⁹

The questions of why we look at these pictures, why we find them interesting, and why they are relevant and effective as form of art would easily arise. The answer, on the one hand, is that no matter how trivial it sounds, simply because these are photographs: images communicated and communicating through a medium and language that humanity has widely learned to “read,” understand, accept, and hold authentic by the twenty-first-

39 In original: “Az előttünk álló évszázadra a kutatók a kis vallások felvirágzását jósolják. Bár az újpogány hiedelmeket vallók száma egyelőre elenyésző a történelmi vallások követőihez képest, mégis vannak, akik úgy vélekednek, hogy a pogányság ‘világvallássá’ vált az elmúlt fél évszázad során. Egy olyan nem egységes, nem dogmatikus, nem minden esetben intézményesült vallássá, amelynek ágazatai egymással és a spirituális mozgalmakkal—tanaikban, külső formáikban, rítusaikban—kétségtelenül rokonságot mutatnak. A születés előtti áldó ünnep elterjedésének egyik utóhatása lehet, hogy a következő generáció tagjai között már lesznek olyanok, akik az újpogánysággal a szülők által gyakorolt hitként találkoznak, nem ők választják azt maguknak felnőtként a meglévő spirituális-vallási kínálatból—ahogy ez jelenleg megfigyelhető. Az az új generáció pedig, amely most van felnővőben, és akinek fontos a bolygónk megmentése és a természettel összhangban élés, vélhetően könnyebben azonosul majd egy olyan hiedelemrendszerrel, amelynek ezen értékek a szerves részei. Az újpogány női rítusok és a reflexív spiritualitás jövőjét illetően tehát egy dologban lehetünk csak biztosak: abban, hogy a ‘sámánhercegnők’ már közöttünk élnek.” Eszter Asszonyi, “Virágmandala, Szűz Mária, gyógyító kristályok: reflexív spiritualitás és női rítusok a mai Magyarországon,” *Helikon* 2020/3: 371.

century. On the other hand, with these images we can witness situations and life stories, we can look behind walls that, captured in this form, can touch us and burn into our memory, precisely because of their aforementioned language.

Besides, as a result of this authenticity and effectiveness, as viewers of these photographs, we can more easily immerse in the situations presented to us, gain an illusion of participation. Together with Clemens, Zellei, or Asszonyi, we can start thinking about how we stand with our inherited or recently acquired belief system, our identity. Are we aware of it? Do we consider it as important as the people photographed?

If we have to argue for photography as a valid form of art related to faith, religious and spiritual experience, we could say that although we understand the dilemma of the artist's position, and the role of the photographer, which is a returning question, photography—in addition to being a means of functionally documenting the individual (person, action, phenomenon, etc)—can also show the general in the individual interestingly and authentically, bring examples and practices of centuries-old stories and millennial mythologies into tangible proximity, extract readings that permeate time and space, and thus transfer the belief in religion to the work of art. Photography has a place in religion, in the places and surfaces of worship, as well as in the artistic representation of spiritual experience, in the spaces of art.

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