



ΦΙΛΟΘΕΟΣ

PHILOTHEOS International Journal for Philosophy and Theology



Γ

18.1
2018

ΦΙΛΟΘΕΟΣ

18.1 (2018)

PHILOTHEOS

International Journal for Philosophy and Theology



Sebastian Press
Los Angeles

GNOMON
Center for the Humanities
Belgrade 2018

Center for Philosophy
and Theology, Trebinje

PHILOTHEOS

International Journal for Philosophy and Theology

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Milan Kostrešević

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Die Christianisierung der Idee der *zwei Wege* (*Did* 1-6) und ihr jüdisch-philosophischer Kontext

Seit der Entdeckung der Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer, der *Zwei Wege* Abschnitt von *Did* 1-6 wird als aus jüdischen Traditionen stammend anerkannt. Die *Didache* reproduziert diese Traditionen jedoch nicht nur, sondern zeigt auch Anzeichen von Wiederholungen, die darauf hindeuten, dass die traditionellen Materialien übernommen und angepasst wurden, um auf die *Didache*-Gemeinschaft angewendet zu werden. Darüber hinaus zeigen einige Anweisungen in diesem Abschnitt Anzeichen von Interpolationen auf den Quellmaterialien. Diese Interpolationen können auch die besonderen Anliegen der *Didachisten* widerspiegeln. Daher können die Auswahl und die Einzelheiten der Anweisungen die Bedenken der *Didache*-Gemeinschaft offenbaren. Wenn man also auf die Charakteristiken der *didachischen zwei Wege* achtet, kann man auch Einsichten in die Spannungen erhalten, die die Gemeinschaft erlebt hat.

Jüdische Wurzeln und Christianisierung

Did 1-6 zeigt deutlich die Einhaltung der jüdischen Traditionen. Zum Beispiel wird im sogenannten *Teknon* Abschnitt (*Did* 3) die Autorität des Dekalogs einfach kommentarlos angenommen.¹ Der konzeptionelle Rahmen und die literarischen Ausdrücke der Sektion von leichten zu schweren Sünden ähneln ebenfalls rabbinischen Diskussionen.² Dies zeigt, dass die *Didache-Gemeinschaft* in gewissem Masse immer noch im Bereich der Tora war.³ Die Befolgung der Tora musste jedoch durch das Einfügen von christianisierten Materialien in die *zwei Wege*-Tradition qualifiziert werden.⁴ Dies wird besonders deutlich in der *sectio evangelica* (1,3-2,1) was betrachtet wird als eine Interpolation der Jesustraditionen in der *Zwei Wege*-Quelle.⁵ In der *Didache* werden diese Aussagen Jesu als in der Kontinuität mit dem mo-

1 John S. Kloppenborg, "The Transformation of Moral Exhortation in *Didache* 1–5," in *The Didache in Context*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 102. Koester bemerkt auch, dass die Beschreibung der „Lebensweise“ in der *Didache* nur eine Interpretation des Dekalogs ist. Vgl. Koester, "Apostolic Fathers," 136.

2 Vgl. van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 165–72.

3 Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 362, van de Sandt, "Essentials of Ethics," 244–45.

4 Contra Kloppenborg, "*Didache* 1–5," 108. Kloppenborg behauptet, dass der *zwei Wege* Abschnitt der *Didache* nicht christianisiert wird, indem identifizierbare christliche Behauptungen eingefügt werden.

5 Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 68.

saischen Gesetz dargestellt,⁶ jedoch autoritativer, da sie zu Beginn des die *zwei Wege* lehren und geben das Folgende als das „zweite Gebot der Lehre“ (δευτέρα δὲ ἐντολὴ τῆς διδασκαλίας).⁷ Ausserdem die Subsumtion der ethischen Instruktionen unter dem doppelten Liebesgebot und eine negative Form der Goldenen Regel (1,2) als herrschende Prinzipien kann auch Einflüsse christlicher Traditionen zeigen.⁸ Daher kann der Abschnitt *Zwei Wege* in der *Didache* als eine christianisierte jüdische Tradition ethischer Lehren beschrieben werden.

Diese Christianisierung der Tradition der *zwei Wege* weist darauf hin, dass die *Didache*-Gemeinschaft eine Entwicklung in der christlichen Identität gegenüber dem traditionellen Judentum durchlebte.⁹ Die *Didache*-Gemeinschaft akzeptiert immer noch eine höhere Autorität als die jüdische Tradition für die Interpretation der Tora. Dies würde definitiv zu Spannungen mit anderen jüdischen Gruppen führen. Sozialwissenschaftliche Studien zeigen, dass der Wettbewerb autoritativer Behauptungen eine entweder/oder Machtstruktur hervorbringt, die zur Abstossung der rivalisierenden Gruppe(n) führt.¹⁰ Obwohl der *zwei Wege* Abschnitt der *Didache* nicht so polemisch ist wie *Did* 8, kann man dennoch die jüdisch-christliche Spannung erkennen, die dadurch enthalten ist.¹¹

Das Verständnis der Vollkommenheit und des Jochs des Herrn (*Did* 6,2)

Die Christianisierung der *zwei Wege* Tradition hat auch Auswirkungen auf die Interpretation der Ermahnung über „Perfektion“ in 6,2. *Did* 6,2-3 ist eine entscheidende Stelle für die Interpretation der Haltung der *Didache*-Gemeinschaft zum Judentum und zur Tora. Die Passage fehlt in der Tradition der *zwei Wege* in Barnabas, der *Doctrina Apostolorum* und den Apostolischen Konstitutionen. Daher werden diese beiden Verse gewöhnlich als eine spätere Hinzufügung zum ursprünglichen Ende der *zweiWege* Quelle (6,1) betrachtet und sind daher ein direkter Hinweis auf die Besorgnis des *Didachisten*

Did 6,2 lautet: εἰ μὲν γὰρ δύνασαι βαστάσαι ὅλον τὸν ζυγὸν τοῦ κυρίου, τέλειος ἔσῃ· εἰ δ' οὐ δύνασαι, ὁ δύνῃ, τοῦτο ποιεῖ (wenn du das ganze Joch des Herrn ertragen kannst, wirst du vollkommen sein, aber wenn du nicht kannst, tue, was du kannst.) Dieser Vers kann aus einigen traditionellen Redensarten entnommen werden, aber was dieser Vers bedeutet, muss die *Didache* durch den gegenwärtigen Kontext bestimmt werden, und diese Bedeutung würde die Situation der *Didache*-Gemeinschaft widerspiegeln.¹² Es ist

⁶ Reed, „Hebrew Epic,” 219.

⁷ Pardee, „Visualizing,” 82–83.

⁸ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 66. Es wird jedoch darauf hingewiesen, dass die Kombination der doppelten Liebesgebote und der Goldenen Regel auch in jüdischen Traditionen wurzeln. Siehe van de Sandt / Flusser, *Didache*, 155–60.

⁹ Pardee, „Visualizing,” 82–83. Williams behauptet auch, dass die Einbeziehung der *sectio evangelica* den Autor und das Publikum von anderen israelitischen Gruppen unterscheidet. Ritva H. Williams, „Social Memory and the *Didache*,” *BTB* 36 (2006): 38.

¹⁰ Wilmot et. al., *Interpersonal Conflict*, 97–99.

¹¹ Vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 121.

¹² Flusser weist darauf hin, dass der *Didachist* das Sprichwort möglicherweise nicht durch seine ursprüngliche Bedeutung in der Quelle versteht. Flusser, „Paul’s Jewish-Christian Opponents,” 199.

klar, dass die Didache hier für die Christen ein Ziel der Vollkommenheit darstellt, das durch das Tragen des Ganzen erreicht werden soll. Es spiegelt jedoch auch die Realität wieder, dass einige Christen diesen Standard der Vollkommenheit nicht erfüllen und daher ein Zugeständnis gegeben wird. Was hauptsächlich diskutiert wird, ist die Bedeutung des „ganzen Jochs des Herrn“. Kein Beweis in der Didache unterstützt diese alten Interpretationen, die das Joch als Bezug auf sexuelle Askese betrachten.¹³ In der neueren Forschung ist eine der Hauptmeinungen, auf die sich der Ausdruck bezieht die ganze Thora, da es die traditionelle Bedeutung von ζυγόν ist, in den jüdischen Texten.¹⁴ Dann würde es nahelegen, dass die Didache-Gemeinschaft immer noch voll Torah-beobachtend ist, und bevorzugt die Heidenchristen, die ganze Thora zu beobachten,¹⁵ obwohl „flexibler Zeitplan“ ist es den Heiden erlaubt, ein voller Jude zu werden.¹⁶ Diese Interpretation legt ausserdem nahe, dass falsche Lehrer in 6,1 auf diejenigen verweisen, die lehren, dass Vollkommenheit erreicht werden kann, ohne die gesamte Torah zu beachten.¹⁷ Gleichwohl mehrere Kommentatoren beachten, dass die Qualifikation του Κυρίου sowie die Hinzufügung der *sectio evangelica* in die Tradition der *zwei Wege* darauf hinweisen, dass das Joch jetzt die Tora ist, wie sie von Jesus Christus interpretiert wird, oder von der christlichen Gemeinschaft unter dem Einfluss der Jesus-Tradition.¹⁸ Eine solche „Christianisierung“ der Tora zeigt bereits ein gewisses Mass an Abweichung von der ursprünglichen Bedeutung des Jochs als Tora in den jüdischen Traditionen.¹⁹ Der Begriff der Vollkommenheit und *das Joch des Herrn* in *Did* 6,2 kann nicht ausschliesslich auf der Basis traditioneller jüdischer Auffassungen interpretiert werden.

¹³ Harnack, *Lehre*, 19–21, Knopf, *Lehre*, 21.

¹⁴ Draper, „Torah and Troublesome Apostles“, 352–57. Vgl. auch: Celia Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11:25–30*, JSNTSup 18 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 113–40.

¹⁵ Slee, *Church in Antioch*, 83–86, Wim J.C. Weren, „The Ideal Community According to Matthew, James and the Didache“, in Matthew, James and Didache, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 196–98. Stuijver schlägt vor, dass Heidenchristen die jüdischen Ritualgesetze so weit wie möglich einhalten sollten. Alfred Stuijver, „Das ganze Joch des Herrn‘ (Didache 6,2–3)“, *StPatr* 4.2, TU 79 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961), 328.

¹⁶ Draper, „Torah and Troublesome Apostles“, 359. In ähnlicher Weise behauptet Mitchell, dass ein getaufter Heiden den Torah-beobachtenden jüdischen Christen unterlegen ist, und dass die heidnischen Bekehrten am Ende zu vollwertigen Juden werden sollen. Nathan Mitchell, „Baptism in the Didache“, in *The Didache in Context*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 237. Siehe auch eine ähnliche Interpretation in Matti Myllykoski, „Without Decree: Pagan Sacrificial Meat and the Early History of the Didache“, in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, eds. J.A. Draper and Clayton N. Jefford, ECIL 14 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 443–46.

¹⁷ van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 270.

¹⁸ Draper, „Torah and Troublesome Apostles“, 354, Huub van de Sandt, „Bearing the Entire Yoke of the Lord’: An Explanation of Didache 6:2 in the Light of Matthew 11:28–30“, in *The Scriptures of Israel in Jewish and Christian Tradition: Essays in Honour of Maarten J.J. Menken*, eds. Bart J. Koet et. al., NovTSup 148 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 344. Rordorf and Tuilier, *Doctrine*, 32–33, William Varner, *The Way of the Didache: The First Christian Handbook* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2007), 70–71.

¹⁹ Im Gegensatz zu Draper beobachtet Finlan, dass die Anweisungen in der Didache nicht torahspezifisch sind, sondern mehr über die allgemeine Moral. Vgl. Finlan, „Identity“, 19–21.

Eine für *Did* 6,2 besonders relevante Bibelstelle ist Matthäus 11,28–30.²⁰ In der letztgenannten Passage wird auch das Joch des Herrn erwähnt, das sich wahrscheinlich auf Jesu Interpretation der Tora bezieht.²¹ Obwohl die Kontexte der beiden Passagen unterschiedlich sind, ist der Matthäus die Passage weist zumindest darauf hin, dass die frühe Kirche die Anforderungen Gottes an sein Volk anders als die jüdischen Lehren verstanden hatte und somit in einen Kampf mit jüdischen Gemeinden um autoritäre Ansprüche verwickelt war.²² Daher ist es möglich, dass auch die Didache eine Meinung haben der christlichen Verpflichtung anders als die jüdische Einhaltung der Tora. Ausserdem müssen die verschiedenen Darstellungen des Jochs des Herrn in den beiden Passagen²³ keine andere Referenz für das Joch implizieren. Der Unterschied könnte vielmehr den verschiedenen Kontexten zugeschrieben werden. Die Matthäus-Passage ist polemisch und konzentriert sich auf den Kontrast zwischen den Interpretationen des Gesetzes durch Jesus und die Pharisäer. Daher betont es die Leichtigkeit des Jochs im Vergleich zu der schweren Last, die die Pharisäer auf Gottes Volk legen. Auf der anderen Seite konzentriert sich die Didache-Passage hauptsächlich auf Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft. Es handelt sich um „eine Spannung zwischen dem hohen Ideal der Vollkommenheit und den bescheideneren praktischen Erfordernissen“.²⁴ Daher betont es die Bemühung, Vollkommenheit zu verfolgen, obwohl Christen ihre eigene Unfähigkeit erfahren können. Daher müssen die verschiedenen Belastungen nicht implizieren, dass die Didache im Vergleich zu Matthäus eine andere Haltung gegenüber der Tora und dem Judentum einnimmt.

Eine weitere Überlegung, *Did* 6,2 zu interpretieren, ist das Konzept der Perfektion in anderen Passagen der Didache. Neben 6,2, dem Adjektiv *τέλειος* auch in 1,4 erscheint auch das Verb *τελειόω* und in 10,5 und 16,2 auf. In 16,2 werden Christen gewarnt, dass sie am Ende vervollkommenet werden müssen, sonst wird die ganze Zeit ihres Glaubens gewinnlos sein. Diese Passage wirft jedoch nicht viel Licht auf die Bedeutung von Perfektion. Insbesondere deutet nichts in diesem Vers darauf hin, dass Vollkommenheit die totale Einhaltung der Torah bedeutet oder ein voller Jude wird. Darüber hinaus ist die passive Stimme von *τελειωθήτε* in *Did* 16,2 andeutend.²⁵ Sie zeigt, dass Vollkommenheit letztlich

²⁰ Für einen detaillierten Vergleich der beiden Passagen: van de Sandt, “Bearing the Entire Yoke,” 331–44.

²¹ Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom*, 40–44.

²² Paul Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, WUNT 2/177 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 94–217.

²³ Einige Kommentatoren bemerken, dass, während Matthäus betont, dass das Joch des Herrn leicht ist, die Didache annehmen, dass nicht jeder Christ in der Lage ist, das gesamte Joch zu tragen. Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 94–95; Weren, “Ideal Community,” 197.

²⁴ Kari Syreeni, “The Sermon on the Mount and the Two Ways Teaching of the Didache.” In *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 96.

²⁵ Im Gegensatz zu den meisten Übersetzungen interpretiert Draper das Verb als Mitte, indem es es als „perfektioniert sich selbst“ übersetzt. Vgl. Draper, “Torah and Troublesome Apostles,” 359. Die Handlungen des Zusammenfügens und Suchens in 16,2a sollten jedoch so verstanden werden, dass sie die geeignete Umgebung für die Christen bieten, um perfektioniert zu werden, anstatt aktive Handlungen der Selbstvervollkommenung. Darüber hinaus deuten diese Handlungen nicht auf ein Ziel hin, ein völliger Jude zu werden, wie es Draper vorschlägt.

eine göttliche Handlung ist, was es unwahrscheinlich macht, dass *Did* 16,2 heidenchristen zu Torah-beobachtenden Juden werden.

Es sind die anderen beiden Gelegenheiten des Wortes „perfekt“, die hilfreicher sind, um das Konzept der Perfektion in den *Didache* zu verstehen. In 1,4, nach dem Befehl, die andere Wange zu drehen, wird der Kommentar „und du wirst perfekt sein“ (καὶ ἔσῃ τέλειος) hinzugefügt. Hier scheint der Begriff der Vollkommenheit mit dem besonderen Gebot verbunden zu sein, die andere Wange zu wenden, obwohl die Assoziation auf andere Ermahnungen in 1,3-4.²⁶ ausgedehnt werden kann. Daher offenbart die Passage, dass Vollkommenheit in dem von der Herr, besonders, dass ich die Feinde liebe. Diese Beobachtung bestätigt nicht nur die Interpretation, dass das Joch in 6,2 nicht die Tora als solche ist, sondern die christliche Auslegung des Gesetzes, sie zeigt auch, dass die moralischen Aspekte des Gesetzes besonders im Blick sind, wenn der *Didache* Christen zur Verfolgung auffordert Perfektion.²⁷ Auf der anderen Seite müssen Christen im eucharistischen Gebet in 10,5 für den Herrn beten, dass er die Kirche vor allem Bösen bewahrt und sie in seiner Liebe vervollkommnet, was bedeutet, dass sie geheiligt und von den vierten versammelt wird windet sich in das Reich des Herrn. Daher ist die Vollkommenheit hier verbunden mit der vollständigen Verwirklichung der Verheissungen Gottes an die Kirche im Unterschied zur persönlichen Vollkommenheit.²⁸ Diese beiden Arten der Vollkommenheit sollten als komplementäre Beschreibungen derselben eschatologischen Hoffnung betrachtet werden. Hartin bemerkt richtig, dass in der *Didache* der Begriff der Vollkommenheit die Identität der Kirche ausdrückt, was bedeutet, dass Christen „in ihrer Beziehung zu Gott, untereinander und sich selbst Ganzheit und Integrität erlangen“.²⁹ Allerdings sollte dies im Blick behalten werden des ethischen Fokus in *Did* 1,5 sollte die Bedeutung von moralischem Verhalten für Perfektion nicht heruntergespielt werden. Für die *Didache* soll die Beziehung der Kirche zu Gott und zu anderen Menschen im moralischen Massstab der Christen verwirklicht werden.

Die obige Diskussion zeigt, dass das „Joch des Herrn“ in *Did* 6,2 nicht die Tora ist, wie sie aus einer normativen jüdischen Perspektive verstanden wird, sondern die Tora, wie sie in einer christlichen Perspektive interpretiert wird. Es bezieht sich auf den *zweiWege* Abschnitt selbst oder auf die Lehren der *Didache* im Allgemeinen. Die *Didache* verlangt von Heidenchristen nicht, dass sie die ganze Torah auf jüdische Weise befolgen.³⁰ Vielmehr werden so-

²⁶ Bentley Layton, „The Sources, Date and Transmission of *Didache* 1:3b–2:1,” *HTR* 61 (1968): 352–58.

²⁷ Repschinski, „Purity,” 393 behauptet, dass die Reinheit in der *Didache* nicht dazu dient, einen angemessenen Gottesdienst zu gewährleisten, sondern moralisches Verhalten unter Gläubigen zu fördern, das mit dem praktischen Leben in der Gemeinschaft zusammenhängt.

²⁸ Taras Khomych, „The Admonition to Assemble Together in *Didache* 16.2 Reappraised,” *VC* 61 (2007): 132. See also Enrico Mazza, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 29.

²⁹ Hartin, „Ethics,” 301.

³⁰ van de Sandt, „Essentials of Ethics,” 260. Er stellt jedoch auch fest, dass die *Didache*, im Gegensatz zu Paulus, den Heidenchristen auch nicht verbietet, die gesamte Torah zu beobachten. Es ist immer noch ratsam, die ganze Torah für die Heidenchristen einzuhalten. Gegen diese Ansicht gibt es in der *Didache* tatsächlich nichts, was darauf hindeutet, dass die Heiden dazu aufgefordert werden, die Tora vollständig zu befolgen.

wohl jüdische als auch Heidenchristen ermahnt, „den höchstmöglichen Standard christlicher Verpflichtungen zu erreichen“, ³¹ der in der moralischen Lehre in *Did* 1 festgehalten wird. Der Befehl über Essen in 6,3 muss jedoch noch berücksichtigt werden. Bedeutet die Erwähnung, etwas über Nahrung zu haben, dass jüdische Gesetze in Sicht sind?

Das erste, was zu bemerken ist, dass 6,3 mit *περὶ δὲ* beginnt, die in *Did* 7-15 viermal verwendet wird, um neue Themen einzuführen (7,1; 9,1,3; 11,3). ³² Daher sollte die Ermahnung über das Essen als eine in dieser Abfolge von Lehren betrachtet werden. Es gibt ein Beispiel für die Wege zur Vollkommenheit, aber nicht notwendigerweise die wesentlichste. Der Verweis auf die Lebensmittelgesetze in 6,3 gibt daher keine ausreichende Grundlage, um darauf hinzuweisen, dass sich das „ganze Joch des Herrn“ auf die volle Einhaltung jüdischer Gebote bezieht, auch wenn einige Fragen bezüglich des Essens zu den Ideen des Didachisten gehören der Perfektion. ³³ Ein genauerer Blick auf 6,3 zeigt ausserdem, dass die Logik dieses Verses den Vorschriften in der Teknon-Abteilung ähnelt, die vor leichteren Sünden warnt, da sie zu schwereren Sünden führen. Das drängendere Problem von 6,3 ist die Ablehnung von Götzen angebotenem Essen, die der Verehrung toter Götter gleichgesetzt wird. Die Instruktion in 6,3 betrachtet das apostolische Dekret nicht als das Mindestmass der Tora-Befolgung, ³⁴ sondern stellt die notwendige Massnahme dar, um Christen daran zu hindern, etwas mit Götzenanbetung zu tun, die zum Tod gehört (3,4; 5,1). ³⁵ Eine solche Interpretation hat den weiteren Vorteil, dass 6,3 ein passenderer Übergang von den moralischen Lehren zu dem folgenden rituellen Abschnitt ist, der sich auf die Verehrung Gottes durch die Gemeinschaft bezieht.

Darüber hinaus bezieht sich „das, was man über das Essen haben kann“, nicht notwendigerweise auf die Gebote in Bezug auf Nahrung im AT und in jüdischen Traditionen. ³⁶ Andere Erklärungen sind möglich. ³⁷ Insbesondere kann die Diskussion von Paulus in 1Kor 8, 10 relevant sein. ³⁸ Zugegeben Man muss vorsichtig sein, wenn man davon ausgeht, dass es sich bei *Did* 6,3 um dasselbe Problem handelt wie in 1Kor. Allerdings enthüllt 1Kor, dass es in der frühen Kirche Probleme mit Lebensmitteln gab, die nicht das jüdische Lebensmittelrecht als solches betreffen. Daher ist es möglich, dass der Befehl *περὶ δὲ τῆς*

³¹ Flusser, „Paul’s Jewish-Christian Opponents,” 199.

³² Pardee schlägt aus dieser Beobachtung vor, dass 6: 3 hinzugefügt worden sein könnte, da die Zwei-Wege-Tradition in den rituellen Abschnitt der *Didache* integriert ist. Pardee, *Genre and Development*, 184.

³³ Skarsaune bemerkt, dass 6,2-3 die einzige Passage im ganzen Katechismus ist, die sich mit rituellen Geboten befasst, und der Rest ist ethisch. Daher sollte der Begriff der Vollkommenheit nicht im Sinne einer vollständigen Bekehrung zum Judentum verstanden werden. Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), 359–63.

³⁴ Contra Draper, „Two Ways and Eschatological Hope,” 232.

³⁵ In der Ermahnung gegen den Götzendienst in 3: 4 gibt der Text im Vergleich zu anderen Ermahnungen im Teknon-Abschnitt intensivere Warnungen. Dies zeigt, dass der Götzendienst ein besonderes Anliegen des Didachisten ist. Vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 95–96.

³⁶ Contra Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 123.

³⁷ Zum Beispiel schlägt Harnack, *Lehre*, 21 vor, dass es in *Did* 6: 3 nicht um jüdische Lebensmittelgesetze geht, sondern speziell um das Essen von Fleisch.

³⁸ van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 253.

βρώσεως, ὃ δύνασαι βάστασον in *Did* 6,3, anstatt das Jüdische Lebensmittelgesetz zu fördern, bezieht sich auf andere Fragen in Bezug auf Essen unter der Didache Gemeinschaft. Darüber hinaus ist die Verwendung des Wortes εἰδωλοθύτος in beiden Passagen suggestiv.³⁹ Dies könnte darauf hindeuten, dass die beiden Passagen ähnliche Bedenken haben. Im 1Kor ist Paulus letzte Sorge nicht Nahrung, sondern Götzenanbetung (10,18-21). Daher unterstützt es den Vorschlag, dass das Hauptanliegen von *Did* 6,3 nicht die Lebensmittelgesetze, sondern die Götzenanbetung sind.

Zusammenfassend gibt es im *Didache* nichts, das nahelegt, dass Vollkommenheit vollständige Tora-Beobachtung bedeutet. Perfektion ist vielmehr die Übereinstimmung mit den Lehren der Gemeinschaft, insbesondere jenen moralischen Lehren, die im Abschnitt *zwei Wege* gesammelt wurden, aber auch die Lehren über Rituale und das Gemeinschaftsleben. Diese Vollkommenheit ist auch mit der eschatologischen Hoffnung der Gemeinde verbunden, da die Kirche auf Gott wartet, um sie in sein Reich zu sammeln und sie vollkommen zu machen. Der Unterricht über Perfektion in der *Didache* spiegelt zwei Aspekte der Spannung in der Gemeinschaft wider. Erstens führt ein anderes Verständnis von Perfektion zu Spannungen mit anderen jüdischen Gemeinschaften, da die Kirche mit diesen Gemeinschaften um den massgeblichen Anspruch auf die Auslegung des Wortes Gottes konkurrieren muss, was sich auch in der Christianisierung der Tradition der jüdischen *zwei Wege* widerspiegelt wie das Drücken versucht, die Gemeinschaft von anderen Juden in *Did* 7-10 zu unterscheiden. Zweitens zeigt *Did* 6,2 eine Spannung innerhalb der Gemeinschaft selbst, da die Christen sich nicht mehr an die Standards halten, die in *Did* 1-5 festgelegt wurden. Dies würde Frustration bei den Christen verursachen und somit eine psychologische Barriere für die Mitglieder schaffen, sich der Gemeinschaft anzuschließen.⁴⁰ Dies ist der Grund, warum der Didachist die Konzession nach dem ursprünglichen Ende der Zwei-Wege-Sektion hinzugefügt hat.

Kritik und Verbot der heidnischen Praktiken

Einige der Anweisungen in *Did* 1-6 scheinen besonders gegen heidnische Praktiken gerichtet zu sein. Die Einbeziehung dieser Ermahnungen in die Didache spiegelt einige besondere Sorgen für die Didache-Gemeinschaft wider, insbesondere für die unter ihnen lebenden Nichtjuden. Das soll nicht heissen, dass diese Anweisungen nicht aus jüdischen Traditionen stammen. Tatsächlich können die meisten dieser Ermahnungen auf das AT zurückgeführt werden. Es sollte jedoch angemerkt werden, dass diese entsprechenden Verbote im AT auch gegen heidnische Praktiken gerichtet sind und Israeliten gewarnt werden, sie nicht zu imitieren.

³⁹ Das Wort ist im Neuen Testament nicht üblich. Neben 1Kor erscheint es nur vier Mal, in Apg 15, 21 und Offb 2.

⁴⁰ Wenn die Bestrebungen die Realität übertreffen, entstehen Unzufriedenheit und Unruhe, was zu Spannungen und Konflikten führen wird. Vgl. Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 21–22. See also James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *ASR* 27 (1962): 5–19.

Das erste zu beachtende Beispiel ist die Liste der Ermahnungen in 2,2, wo zu vier Geboten aus dem Dekalog sechs Verbote hinzugefügt werden. Die zweite Mahnung, du sollst keinen Ehebruch begehen, wird durch ein Paar verbundener Verbote erweitert, du sollst keine Kinder korrumpieren (οὐ παιδοφθορήσεις) und du sollst nicht unehelich werden (οὐ πορνεύσεις).⁴¹ Diese beziehen sich auf verschiedene Arten von illegalem Sex, wie sie in der Antike nicht selten vorkamen.⁴² Es ist wahrscheinlich, dass zumindest einige der nichtjüdischen Konvertiten gegenüber solchen Praktiken nicht resistent waren, bevor sie sich der christlichen Gemeinschaft anschlossen. Daher muss die *Didache* das Verbot dieser Sexualdelikte betonen. Als nächstes, zwischen den Geboten des Dekalogs „du sollst nicht stehlen“ und „du wirst nicht begehren, was deinem Nächsten gehört“, werden zwei Verbote eingefügt. Das erste Paar betrifft das Üben von Magie (μαγεύω) und das Herstellen von Drogen (φαρμακεύω).⁴³ Obwohl magisches Wissen und Verzauberungen auch unter Juden gefunden wurden,⁴⁴ waren sie bei Heiden häufiger und besonders verabscheuungswürdig, wenn sie von Heiden praktiziert wurden.⁴⁵ Die andere paar Verbote betrifft die Abtreibung und Tötung von Neugeborenen (οὐ φονεύσεις τέκνον ἐν φθορᾷ, οὐδὲ γεννηθὲν ἀποκτενεῖς). Diese Praktiken wurden innerhalb der hellenistischen Kultur als eine normale Form der Familienbegrenzung akzeptiert.⁴⁶ Zusammenfassend stellen alle drei Paare der Ergänzung zum Dekalog in *Did* 2,2 Praktiken dar, an die Heiden gewöhnt sein würden, bevor sie zum Christentum bekehrt wurden und würden die jüdischen Empfindlichkeiten besonders abscheulich.⁴⁷ Daher wäre es notwendig, diese Verbote gegenüber den Konvertiten der Nichtjuden hervorzuheben, um akzeptable moralische Standards in ihnen zu schaffen und Spannungen zwischen jüdischen und nichtjüdischen Christen zu vermeiden.

Der zweite Schwerpunkt gegen heidnische Praktiken findet sich im Verbot gegen Götzendienst in 3,4. Es ist der dritte unter den fünf Sprüchen im Teknon-Abschnitt. Die fünf Sprüche haben eine einheitliche Struktur, die aus zwei Paaren von Warnung und Verurteilung besteht.⁴⁸ Das dritte Sprichwort enthält jedoch eine erweiterte zweite Warnung, die

⁴¹ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 89.

⁴² Milavec, *Didache*, 131–37.

⁴³ Das Verb bezieht sich auf die Herstellung von Gift oder Zaubersäften.

⁴⁴ Ein Beispiel sind die Lieder des Weisen, die in den Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer gefunden wurden (4Q510–511). Das Dokument besteht aus Hymnen zum Schutz der Söhne des Lichts vor bösen Geistern. Maurice Baillet, Qumran Cave 4: III (4Q482–520), DJD 7 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 215 und Johann Maier, “Songs of the Sage,” *EDSS*, 2:890. Für andere Beweise von magischen Praktiken unter Juden vgl. Philip S. Alexander, “Incantations and Books of Magic,” in Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 3:342–79, Margaret H. Williams, *Jews in a Graeco-Roman Environment*, WUNT 312 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2013), 88–89, and Pieter van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides with Introduction and Commentary*, SVTP 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 213.

⁴⁵ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 89.

⁴⁶ Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Viking, 1986), 343.

⁴⁷ Milavec, *Didache*, 139–40. Judith M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Greco-Roman World* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 174–75 stellt fest, dass diese Ermahnungen eine Zweideutigkeit der Kontinuität mit dem jüdischen Erbe zeigen, was auf ein Bewusstsein für die heidnische Umwelt hindeuten könnte.

⁴⁸ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 96.

vier Verbote enthält,⁴⁹ während die anderen vier Sprüche nur zwei enthalten. Zusammen mit der ersten Warnung in 3,4 warnt der Spruch davor, Omen-Beobachter (οἰωνοσκόκος), Zauberer (ἐπαοιδός), Astrologe (μαθηματικός) zu sein, und die Durchführung von Reinigungsritualen (περικαθαίρω). Christen sollten solche Dinge nicht einmal sehen wollen (μηδὲ θέλε αὐτὰ βλέπειν). Die ausgedehnten Warnungen deuten darauf hin, dass das Problem der Abgötterei für die Didache-Gemeinschaft von entscheidender Bedeutung war.⁵⁰ Obwohl diese Aktionen auch von einigen Juden praktiziert wurden,⁵¹ deutet die Verbindung zum Götzendienst (εἰδωλολατρία) darauf hin, dass sie als typisch heidnisch wahrgenommen werden.⁵² Die weit verbreitete Sitte des Götzendienstes unter den Heiden war eine besondere Bedrohung für die frühen Christen.

Ein weiteres Beispiel der Ermahnung, die besonders gegen Nichtjuden gerichtet ist, findet sich in 5,2. *Did* 5 enthält eine Vize-Liste, die als Todesart zu vermeiden ist. Viele der Verbote in *Did* 1-4, wie Mord, Ehebruch, Götzendienst, Magie und Kindermord werden in diesem Kapitel wiederholt. Von besonderem Interesse ist hier die Zurechtweisung für „nicht zu wissen, wer sie gemacht hat“ (οὐ γινώσκοντες τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτούς). Dies ist eine besondere Beschreibung der Heiden.⁵³ Dies zeigt erneut, dass der Mangel an ethischem Standard unter den Heiden zu den Hauptanliegen der Didache gehört.

Die Betonung bestimmter heidnischer Verhaltensweisen im Abschnitt Zwei Wege der Didache zeigt eine Besorgnis über Gruppennormen. Gruppennormen dienen dazu, die Erwartungen der Mitglieder zu verzahnen und somit die Wahrscheinlichkeit von Konflikten zu verringern.⁵⁴ Konflikte treten eher auf, wenn eine Gemeinschaft keinen normativen Konsens hat. In der Didache-Gemeinschaft, in der jüdische und nichtjüdische Christen mit ihren unterschiedlichen sozialen und kulturellen Hintergründen zusammenkommen, wäre eine Zweideutigkeit in Bezug auf Normen wahrscheinlich, wenn massgebliche Normen nicht klar festgelegt wurden. Eine solche Spannung in der Gemeinschaft wäre eine Motivation für den Didachisten, unannehmbare heidnische Verhaltensweisen zu betonen, wenn er die *zwei Wege* Tradition annahm.

Die Grundprinzipien der Gemeinschaftsinteraktionen

Ein weiteres Merkmal des *zwei Wege* Abschnitts in der *Didache* ist die Existenz einiger ausgeführter Regeln über Gemeinschaftsinteraktionen. Einige dieser Grundsätze werden in späteren Teilen der *Didache* weiter diskutiert, und einige finden Gegenstücke im Jakobusbrief. Aus diesen Anweisungen kann man einige der Spannungen in der Didache-Gemeinschaft erkennen.

⁴⁹ Einige Versionen haben fünf mit einem zusätzlichen Mhde. avkou, ein Vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 98.

⁵⁰ Slee, *Church in Antioch*, 80.

⁵¹ Milavec, *Didache*, 150–54.

⁵² Draper schlägt vor, dass alle fünf Sprüche im Teknon-Abschnitt die Noachischen Gesetze widerspiegeln, die sich an Nichtjuden richten. Vgl. Draper, „Commentary,” 65–76.

⁵³ Obwohl die Israeliten getadelt werden, weil sie Gott in Hos 5,4 nicht kennen, weist der Prophet sie tatsächlich zurecht, sich wie Heiden zu benehmen.

⁵⁴ Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 26–27.

Eine Passage, die Aufmerksamkeit auf sich zieht, ist *Did* 1,4, die einige Ermahnungen enthält, die Matthäus 5,38-42 und Lukas 6,29-30 ähneln. Interessant ist der letzte Satz, οὐδὲ γὰρ δύνανσαι (da du nicht in der Lage bist), was weder in Matthäus noch in Lukas zu finden ist. Es gibt verschiedene Versuche, diese rätselhafte Klausel zu verstehen. Einige behaupten, der Text sei beschädigt und versuche ihn zu verbessern.⁵⁵ Andere versuchen, diese Hinzufügung geistig zu motivieren.⁵⁶ Diese Versuche sind jedoch, wie Niederwimmer andeutet, unnötig. Stattdessen spiegelt diese zusätzliche Klausel das soziale Milieu der Didache-Gemeinschaft wider: „Sie sind ausgebeutete und hilflose Menschen, die sich nicht wehren können und wollen.“⁵⁷ Angesichts der starken Klasseneinteilung in der Antike ist es wahrscheinlich, dass die benachteiligten Armen machtlos sind sich gegen die Unterdrückung der sozial Privilegierten zu wehren. Daher ist die Instruktion in *Did* 1,4 nicht nur als ein idealer moralischer Standard für die Gemeinschaft gegeben, sondern auch eine praktische Antwort auf ihre eigene Situation. Darüber hinaus dürfen die betrachteten Ausbeuter nicht nur Aussenseiter sein. Es war nicht völlig unmöglich, dass einige Ausbeuter zu den christlichen Gemeinschaften gehörten.⁵⁸ Tatsächlich deutete 11-12 zumindest darauf hin, dass die Didache-Gemeinde in Gefahr war, von einigen ausgebeutet zu werden, die behaupteten, Christen oder sogar Führer zu sein. Ausser Massnahmen zu ergreifen, um zu vermeiden, ausgebeutet zu werden, weist der Didache auch Gemeindemitglieder an, sich zu verhalten, wenn Ausbeutung auftritt.

Weitere Anweisungen zum Geben folgen in 1,5-6. Die in 1,5a empfohlene Haltung der Grosszügigkeit, die in 4,5-8 noch einmal betont wird, stimmt mit ähnlichen Anliegen in *Did* 11-13 und synoptischen Traditionen überein. Es werden jedoch weitere Ermahnungen gegeben, um den Befehl „Gib jedem, was er von dir verlangt“ zu qualifizieren. Erstens wird denjenigen eine Warnung gegeben, die nehmen, ohne in Not zu sein. Eine solche Person wird für die Einnahme und Verwendung der Ressourcen zur Rechenschaft gezogen und kann auch inhaftiert werden, bis sie das zurückgezahlt hat, was sie schuldet. Das letzte Wort ähnelt den Worten Jesu in Mt 5,25-26, aber das Thema der Versöhnung in der Matthäus-Passage fehlt in *Did* 1,5. Stattdessen betrifft der *Didache* hier hauptsächlich den Missbrauch der Grosszügigkeit anderer. Der Spruch dient nicht nur als Warnung für die

⁵⁵ Layton, „Sources,” 348–49.

⁵⁶ Knopf, *Lehre*, 9 behauptet, dass der moralische Geist des Christen es ihm unmöglich macht, das zurückzunehmen, was durch Gegenkraft oder mit rechtlichen Mitteln weggenommen wird. Auf der anderen Seite heisst es in der georgischen Version: „and you cannot do this even for the sake of the faith.“ Vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 79–80.

⁵⁷ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 79–80.

⁵⁸ Milavec, *Didache*, 98–99 schlägt vor, dass die Feinde in *Did* 1: 3–4 in der Tat die Verwandten und Freunde der Christen sind, die sich aufgrund ihrer religiösen Überzeugungen gegen sie gewandt haben. Siehe auch: Aaron Milavec, „The Social Setting of ‘Turning the Other Cheek’ and ‘Loving One’s Enemies’ in Light of the Didache,” *BTB* 25 (1995): 131–43. Sein Vorschlag ist vielleicht zu weit gegangen, aber er wirft die Möglichkeit auf, dass die Feinde nicht nur vollständige Aussenseiter sein können. Auf der anderen Seite schlägt Draper, „Moral Economy,” 6 vor, dass 1: 3–4 eine Regel für das Verhalten gegenüber Ausenstehenden vorsieht, während 1: 5–6 Verhaltensregeln für Insider vorsieht. Eine solche scharfe Trennung ist jedoch angesichts der Kontinuität des Denkens in der ganzen Passage nicht notwendig.

Täter, sondern dient auch als Trost für diejenigen, die von verheissungsvoller Gerechtigkeit missbraucht werden, sowohl im Sinne der Gemeinschaftsordnung als auch des eschatologischen Gottesurteils.⁵⁹ Zweitens wird in Gen 1,6 eine Ermahnung gegeben sorgfältig überlegen, was zu tun ist, bevor man Wohltätigkeitsgeschenke verschenkt.⁶⁰ Die Einbeziehung dieser Ermahnungen in die *sectio evangelica* weist erneut auf die Sorge um die Grosszügigkeit der Gemeinschaft hin, die missbraucht wird.

Eine andere Passage von Interesse ist eine Reihe von Ermahnungen in Bezug auf die Rede in 2,3-5, die ähnlichen Sorgen über die Sprache im Jakobusbrief ähnelt. Dazu gehören Verbote gegen falsches Schimpfen (ἐπιορκέω),⁶¹ mit falschem Zeugnis (ψευδομαρτυρέω), Böses sprechen (κακολογέω), sich an vergangene Verletzungen erinnern (μνησικακέω), zweistimmig oder zweisprachig (διγνώμων, διγλωσσος) und nicht erfüllen, was man gesagt hat (ἔσται ὁ λόγος σου ψευδής, οὐ κενός). Die Erweiterung dieser Liste zeigt, dass wahrheitsgetreues Sprechen ein besonderes Anliegen des Didachist ist. Da Ehrlichkeit und gegenseitiges Vertrauen eine wesentliche Eigenschaft für die Harmonie und Kohärenz der Gemeinschaft sind,⁶² kann man in diesen Ermahnungen über die Sprache in der *Didache* eine Sorge über Misstrauen zwischen den Gemeindemitgliedern erkennen, besonders angesichts der Gefahr der Ausbeutung, wie oben erörtert.

Didache 2,7 zeigt auch mögliche Erweiterung von der Quelle.⁶³ Nach dem allgemeinen Grundsatz οὐ μισήσεις πάντα ἄνθρωπον (Sie sollen keinen Mann hassen), der Text erwähnt drei Arten von Behandlung für drei Arten von Menschen. Der erste Typ muss zurückgewiesen werden (ἐλέγχω). Dies sind vermutlich Mitglieder, die Fehler begangen haben, und andere Mitglieder haben die Verantwortung, auf ihre Fehler hinzuweisen, damit sie Busse tun können. Für die zweite Art soll gebetet werden. Dies sind wahrscheinlich Christen, die in Schwäche sind und sich möglicherweise auf diejenigen beziehen, die Widerstand gegen die Umkehr zeigen.⁶⁴ Für die dritte Gruppe sollen die Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft sie mehr als sich selbst lieben. Diese Gruppe kann sich auf alle Mitglieder beziehen, die nicht schuld sind, aber angesichts des in den ersten beiden Ermahnungen offenkundigen Themas der Rüge und Reue ist es wahrscheinlich, dass diese dritte Gruppe sich auf diejenigen bezieht, die von ihren Fehlern Busse getan haben. Diese Ratschläge sind in den Anweisungen zu Versöhnung und Tadel in *Did* 14-15 enthalten. Ausserdem be-

⁵⁹ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 83 schlägt vor, dass die zugrunde liegende Tradition in *Did* 1: 5d kaum als eschatologisch verstanden werden kann. Siehe auch Rordorf und Tuilier, "Le problème de la transmission", 508. Im Zusammenhang mit der *Didache* ist es jedoch wahrscheinlich, dass, wenn der Täter zur Gemeinde gehört, auch die Ordnung der Gemeinschaft in Betracht gezogen wird. Siehe Draper, "Moral Economy", 6.

⁶⁰ Der Ausdruck δε. ει. ρηται zeigt, dass der Didachist hier ein traditionelles Sprichwort zitiert, aber die Quelle des Sprichwortes ist unklar. Für eine Diskussion siehe Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 83-86.

⁶¹ Anders als Mt 5: 33-37 und Jas 5:12 ist das Fluchen als solches in der *Didache* nicht verboten, aber nur falsches Fluchen ist verboten.

⁶² Studien zu Konflikten haben gezeigt, dass Misstrauen eine besondere Ursache für Konflikte ist. Vgl. Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 25.

⁶³ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 92-93 bemerkt, dass der Vers überladen wirkt und den Eindruck vermittelt, sekundär zu sein.

⁶⁴ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 93.

obachtet Audet die Ähnlichkeit von *Did* 2,7 mit Judas 22-23.⁶⁵ Die Passage in Judas betrifft Christen bei Fehlern in verschiedenen Graden. Es ist offensichtlich, dass *Did* 2,7 ähnliche Bedenken für die Gemeinschaft zeigt.

Die Sorge um die interkommunale Interaktion spiegelt sich auch in 4,3 wider. Vier Befehle werden nacheinander gegeben. Der erste ist das Verbot, Spaltung zu verursachen (οὐ ποθήσεις σψίσμα). Dies ist wahrscheinlich ein traditionelles Sprichwort für rechtes Verhalten im jüdischen Studienhaus.⁶⁶ Das zweite, im Gegensatz zu und das Bilden eines Paares mit dem ersten, verlangt die Aussöhnung der Streitenden (εἰρηνεύσεις δὲ μαχομένους). Der dritte und der vierte Befehl bilden ein weiteres Paar, das die Christen dazu aufruft, gerecht zu urteilen (κρινεῖς δικαίως) und keine Vorliebe für die Verurteilung von Übertretungen zu zeigen (οὐ λήψῃ πρόσωπον ἐλέγξαι ἐπὶ παραπτώμασιν). Milavec behauptet, dass *Did* 4,3 die dunklere Seite des Gemeinschaftslebens anspricht: „Dissonanz“ und „Kämpfen“.⁶⁷ Es scheint wahrscheinlich, dass eine solche „dunklere Seite“ des Gemeinschaftslebens ein echtes Anliegen der Didache-Gemeinschaft war, besonders seit dem Thema Intrakommunale Spannung wird auch in anderen Teilen der Didache gesehen. Ausserdem könnte man mehrere verbale Verbindungen zwischen *Did* 4,3 und Jakobus bemerken. Es wurde oben diskutiert, dass Parteilichkeit eine reale Bedrohung für die Gemeinschaft im Jakobusbrief darstellt. Obwohl in der *Didache* keine nähere Erläuterung zum Thema der Parteilichkeit gegeben wird, ist es dennoch möglich, dass Parteilichkeit eine echte Bedrohung für die Didache-Gemeinschaft darstellt.

Eine weitere interessante verbale Verbindung mit James findet sich in *Did* 4,4. Dieser Vers enthält ein verwirrendes Sprichwort: οὐ διψυχήσεις, πότερον ἔσται ἢ οὐ (Sie werden nicht unschlüssig sein, ob es sein soll oder nicht.) Es wurden viele Versuche unternommen, um diese Ermahnung zu verstehen.⁶⁸ Hier ist zu bemerken, dass das Verb, διψέω weder im Neuen Testament noch im Septuaginta (ausser dem Wort δίψυχος Jak 1,8; 4,8) zu finden ist. Wenn, wie Porter andeutet, der Begriff von Jakobus stammt,⁶⁹ könnte 4,4 ein anderer Ort sein, der die Christianisierung der *zwei Wege* Tradition zeigt. Im Licht des Themas der Doppelbesonnenheit in James kann *Did* 4,4 als Warnung vor Unentschlossenheit interpretiert werden, sowohl im persönlichen als auch im gemeinschaftlichen Leben. Dies könnte die Sorge um einige Mitglieder widerspiegeln, die nicht von ganzem Herzen der Gemeinschaft verpflichtet sind, und so die Grenzen der Gemeinschaften mit der Gesellschaft verwischen.

Der letzte Punkt, den es zu beachten gilt, ist der in 4,9-11 enthaltene Haushaltscode, der dem im NT ähnelt.⁷⁰ Er zeigt, dass soziale Beziehungen in der frühen Kirche ein Prob-

⁶⁵ Audet, *La Didachè*, 296.

⁶⁶ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 106.

⁶⁷ Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom," 73.

⁶⁸ Vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 106-107. Insbesondere schlägt Niederwimmer vor, dass im Kontext von 4,3 die einzige wahrscheinliche Bedeutung die Unentschlossenheit eines Richters ist, der es nicht wagt, über die getroffene Entscheidung zu entscheiden oder sie zu bereuen. Da 4,3 jedoch keine enge Verbindung zu 4,1-2 und 4,5-8 zeigt, muss auch keine enge Verbindung zwischen 4,3 und 4,4 angenommen werden.

⁶⁹ Stanley E. Porter, "Is δίψυχος (James 1,8; 4,8) a 'Christian' Word?", *Bib* 71 (1990): 469-98.

⁷⁰ Zum Beispiel Eph 5:22-6:5; 1 Pet 2:13-3:9.

lem waren. Insbesondere können die ausgearbeiteten Instruktionen über die Master-Sklave-Beziehung in 4,9-10 darauf hinweisen, dass die Misshandlung von Sklaven, die eine gängige Praxis war, die Harmonie in der Kirche stören könnte.⁷¹ Daher muss die richtige Behandlung von Sklaven in der Reihenfolge betont werden den Zusammenhalt der christlichen Gemeinschaften bewahren.

Zusammenfassung

Did 1-6 hat viel traditionelles Material angenommen, sowohl jüdisch als auch christlich. Einige Merkmale dieses Abschnitts zeigen jedoch die Hand des Didachisten und zeigen somit einige der besonderen Anliegen des Dokuments auf. Die Christianisierung des Abschnitts „Jüdische Zwei Wege“, insbesondere die Einfügung der *sectio evangelica* vor anderen traditionellen *zwei Wege* Sprüchen, weist auf eine Spannung zwischen den massgeblichen Ansprüchen der Kirche und anderen jüdischen Gemeinden hin. In den *Didache* wird die Tora selbst nicht mehr als Mittel zur Vollkommenheit betrachtet. Vielmehr muss das Gesetz von der Autorität Jesu richtig interpretiert werden, mit besonderer Betonung der persönlichen und gemeinschaftlichen Ethik. Auf der anderen Seite richten sich einige Ermahnungen in den *Didache zwei Wege* besonders gegen heidnische Praktiken. Dies zeigt, dass die Diskrepanz in den moralischen Standards der heidnischen Konvertiten auch ein dringendes Anliegen der *Didache*-Gemeinschaft war. Indem die *Didache* sowohl jüdischen als auch heidnischen Christen den gleichen moralischen Standard unterwirft, kann sie dazu dienen, die gesamte Gemeinschaft in ihrem Streben nach Perfektion zu vereinen.

Darüber hinaus zeigen einige Aspekte von *Did* 1-6 bedenken für die Ordnung und Harmonie der Gemeinschaft. Zum Beispiel wird das Gebot, Feinde zu lieben, als „eine pragmatische Strategie zur Reduzierung von Konflikten“ gedeutet.⁷² Während zwar Großzügigkeit gefördert wird, werden auch Anweisungen gegeben, um gegen Missbrauch vorzugehen. Darüber hinaus werden umfangreiche Listen und Ausführungen zu Rede, Zurechtweisung, Versöhnung, Sanftmut und sozialen Beziehungen gegeben. Zusammen mit den Sorgen der Gemeinschaft in anderen Teilen der *Didache* weisen diese Ermahnungen darauf hin, dass die Kohäsion der Gemeinschaft tatsächlich ein wichtiges Anliegen des Dokuments ist.

⁷¹ Draper, „Moral Economy,” 9; Draper, „Children and Slaves,” 91–103.

⁷² John S. Kloppenborg, „The Use of the Synoptics or Q in *Did* 1:3–2:1,” in Matthew and the *Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 127.

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Cyprian's Communal Model of Episcopal Ministry and Governance

St Cyprian of Carthage (c 210–258 AD) delivers a testimony that the Church of his time was unequivocally organized on a basis of monoepiscopal ministry and governance, and that each local gathering of the faithful was presided over by a bishop (episcopos) who safeguarded and coordinated various ecclesiastical activities. There is no ground for doubt that according to Cyprian's understanding and experience bishops were successors of the apostolic ministry in the Church. Therefore, he didn't hesitate to describe the apostles as bishops¹ and the bishops as direct successors of the apostles.² The older notion about the ancient apostolic centers, i.e. about the local churches originally founded by the apostles, which was so important in the theologies of St Irenaeus and Tertullian and functioned as a paradigm and the source of the authentic apostolic tradition and teaching, was not so prominent in Cyprian's thought. This was the case most probably because this idea didn't need perpetual emphasis and argumentation anymore as the influence of Gnostic theologies decreased significantly. Additionally, partially at least, it was the case because the schisms and disorders in Cyprian's time didn't spring out of problems connected primarily with doctrinal issues. Likewise, he intensely insisted on his insight about utter mutual equality of all apostolic successors, i.e. of all the bishops throughout the Christian oikoumene as well as on the necessity of maintaining the unity of all of the faithful with their bishops (overseers) on a local level.

As stated by Cyprian, every bishop (episcopos) participates in fullness in one episcopacy of the Church, and he is doing that in such a way that his own ministry could never be thought of or exercised as it were his own private property or personal achievement. Participation in the sacramental fullness of the communion of the local churches is open for

¹ „Meminisse autem diaconi debent quoniam Apostolos, id est episcopos et praepositos, Dominus elegit, diaconos autem, post ascensum Domini in coelos, Apostoli sibi constituerunt episcopatus sui et Ecclesiae ministros“, Ep. 65.3, CSEL 3.2.471; „Quod postea secundum diuina magisteria obseruatur in Actis Apostolorum, quando de ordinando in locum Iudae episcopo Petrus ad plebem loquitur... Nec hoc in episcoporum tantum et sacerdotum, sed et in diaconorum ordinationibus obseruasse apostolos animaduertimus...“, Ep. 67.4, CSEL 3.2.738.

² „... cum te iudicem Dei constituas et Christi, qui dicit ad apostolos ac per hoc ad omnes praepositos qui apostolis uicaria ordinatione succedunt...“, Ep. 66.4, *Ad Florentum Pupianum*, CSEL 3.2.729.

all only on condition of unbroken unity with the validly ordained local bishops who share in one ministry of the one and undivided episcopacy of the Church.³ According to Cyprian's testimony, the episcopal ministry was at the beginning bestowed upon Peter (Mt 16:18-19) and right after upon all the apostles (Jn 20:20-23), as the one homogeneous ministry which is equally shared by all.⁴ In the perspective of the historical inheritance of the apostolic ministry of overseeing in the Church, the key factor is the inclusion of concrete recipients (bishops) in this ministry, but, equally important, a continuation of this ministry and the preservation of its unity.⁵ Every concrete bishop participates in the episcopacy only on a condition of being in peace, concord and sacramental unity with all other ministers upon which the same episcopacy was bestowed, with whom he is fully equal in the matters of dignity and empowerment in his work inside the community he is responsible for. This certainly does not entail that in practice one couldn't discern a distinction in the authority which marked out certain bishops. What especially influenced the *dignitas*, *gravitas* and *auctoritas* of an individual bishop, besides his own personal abilities and competencies, was also his maturity, age and time spent in the ministry, and also size, gravity, and importance of the community he presided upon.⁶

However, one should certainly pay attention to Cyprian's communal perspective and insistence on his belief that the Church is founded on episcopal ministry, but also on clergy and on "those who remain firm [in faith]", i.e. on the people of God.⁷ In this context, it becomes clear that Cyprian, similarly to St Ignatius of Antioch, does not separate the episcopal ministry from the living ecclesial organism to whom this ministry was oriented in the first place. This refers to the entirety of the community of the local church, along

3 All bishops share one and the same charisma of episcopacy in such a way that each bishop possesses a part of its entirety, but at the same time he possesses the very entirety of episcopacy *in solido*. In his share or 'portion' of episcopacy the totality of episcopal ministry is present. Cf.: „Episcopatus unus est, cuius a singulis in solidum pars tenetur“, *Liber de Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate* 5, CSEL 3.1.214.

4 Ibid. 4, 212-213.

5 In line with Cyprian's opinion, any bishop separated from the episcopal *sacerdotum collegio* could not possess nor exercise the episcopal power which naturally belongs to this ministry (in spite of his valid ordination): „episcopi nec potestatem potest habere nec honorem qui episcopatus nec unitatem uoluit tenere nec pacem“ (Ep. 55.24, CSEL 3.2.643). See: M. Bevenot, „Sacerdos' as Understood by Cyprian“, *Journal of Theological Studies*, 30/2 (1979), 413-429.

6 For example, see G. D. Dunn, „Cyprian and his *collegae*: Patronage and the Episcopal Synod of 252“, *The Journal of Religious History* 27/1 (2003), 1-13.

7 „Cum hoc ita diuina lege fundatum sit, miror quosdam audaci temeritate sic mihi scribere uoluisse ut ecclesiae nomine litteras facerent, quando ecclesia in episcopo et clero et in omnibus stantibus sit constituta“, Ep. 33.1, CSEL 3.2.566. The cooperation and interconnectedness of the bishops with the other hierarchical structures in the local Christian communities are likewise visible in Cyprian's description of the reception of previously excommunicated members into the Eucharistic community. Namely, a readmittance was performed by communal laying on of hands by the bishop and clergy, as a clear symbol of achieved peace and concord: „Nam, cum in minoribus delictis quae non in Deum committuntur poenitentia, agatur justo tempore, et exomologesis fiat inspecta vita ejus qui agit poenitentiam, nec ad communicationem venire quis possit nisi prius illi ab episcopo et clero manus fuerit imposita, quanto magis in his gravissimis et extremis delictis caute omnia et moderate, secundum disciplinam Domini, observari oportet?“, Ep. 11.2. *Ad plebem*, PL 4.257.

with all other different types of ministry which function inside it.⁸ Moreover, similarly to the argumentation from the *First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians*,⁹ Cyprian emphasized the necessity of the participation of the entire community (*sub omnium oculis*)¹⁰ in the procedure of election of new bishops (including clergy and laity of the local community and the bishops from neighboring communities).¹¹ In peaceful and untroubled times the election of a new bishop on an empty episcopal see were accomplished in the following way, according to the testimony of Cyprian. First of all, the community suffering a loss of its bishop gathered together (clergy and laity) with neighboring bishops present as well. The election of a new bishop implies an active participation of all faithful gathered together in the electoral procedure and, having this procedure in mind, Cyprian talks about no-

8 A significant feature of the ecclesiology of Ignatius of Antioch is his emphasis on a collegial character of a ministry and on a consonance and coordination of activity of different ministries. It was in this context that he brought about his metaphor about the lyre ("For your presbytery, which is both worthy of the name and worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop as strings to the lyre [ὡς χορδαὶ κιθάρα]. Therefore Jesus Christ is sung in your harmony and symphonic love", Eph 4:1). Such a harmonic activity is a key to attaining and strengthening of the unity of the Church. A collegial understanding of ministry is also manifest in Ignatius appeal that Christians should "be unified with the bishop and with those who preside" (ἐνώθητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τοῖς προκαθημένοις - Mgn. 6:2). A conclusion that one could indirectly reach is that a transformation into a monoepiscopal model of the ecclesiastical organization did not entail an adoption of an authoritarian organization analogous to the political despotism, for example. A primacy of the episcopal ministry didn't require a deprivation of dignity and sacramental authority of presbyters and deacons in the community (cf. Trl. 2:2-3). Likewise, the role of the laity had an enormous significance being an inseparable constitutive element in Ignatius' ecclesiology. Cf. *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, (Loeb Classical Library 24, B. D. Ehrman, ed. & transl.), Harvard University Press, London 2003.

9 A very important detail for a more complete understanding of Clement's view of ministerial appointments is his emphasis on a practice that "the entire church giving its approval" (συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης - 44:3). The role of the entire community is obvious also in 54:2 where the author accredited to the "congregation" (πλήθος) the power of commandment and making of very important decisions like the deposition of unworthy presbyters. It is clear that for Clement a notion of ecclesiastical ministry or office does not refer to an individual property of some kind but springs out from the consensus of the entire community of Christians. Cf. *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ibid.

10 „Quod et ipsum uidemus de diuina auctoritate descendere, ut sacerdos plebe praesente sub omnium oculis deligatur et dignus adque idoneus publico iudicio ac testimonio conprobetur...“, *Ep.* 67.4, CSEL 3.2.738. In that sense, the very election and consecration of an episcopal candidate, besides the presence of all the neighboring bishops of a given region, presuppose the presence of the laity as well for whom the future overseer is consecrated. The presence of the laity, i.e. the People of God is necessary and reasonable because the laity of a given diocese is best acquainted with the abilities and charisma of a candidate for episcopal ministry. The needs and requirements as a primary recipient of the episcopal ministry are fundamentally important for St Cyprian: „... ut ad ordinationes rite celebrandas ad eam plebem cui praepositus ordinatur episcopi eiusdem provinciae proximi quique convenient, et episcopus deligatur plebe praesente, quae singulorum uitam plenissime nouit et uniuscuiusque actum de eius conuersatione perspexit“, *Ep.* 68.5, *Ad clerum et plebes in Hispania consistentes*, CSEL 3.2.739.

11 „Quod et apud uos factum uidemus in Sabini collegae nostri ordinatione, ut de uniuersae fraternitatis suffragio et de episcoporum qui in praesentia conuenerant quique de eo ad uos litteras fecerant iudicio episcopatus ei deferretur et manus ei in locum Basilidis inponeretur“, *Ep.* 67.5, CSEL 3.2.739; Cf. „publicum iudicium ac testimonium“, *Ep.* 67, 4, CSEL 3.2.738); omnium suffragium et iudicium, Ibid.

tions such as - *universae fraternitatis suffragium*,¹² *publicum iudicium ac testimonium*,¹³ and *omnium suffragium et iudicium*.¹⁴ The final and the most significant element of the electoral system is *Dei iudicium*¹⁵ or *divinum iudicium*¹⁶ which actually represented a manifestation of the divine confirmation and a blessing of choice that has been previously made by the entire community of the local church.¹⁷

The purpose of such an electoral procedure in Cyprian's Latin Africa was twofold. On the one hand, it represents a manifestation of the charismatic competencies of the entire community to discern about things of fundamental importance for their own life in Christ. On the other hand, it simultaneously provides the context in which, for the sake of the community, the best possible candidate will be chosen, whose virtues and abilities for governing and teaching will be confirmed by all.¹⁸ Therefore, one could speak about aggregation of discernment of some kind accumulated as a result of active participation of each segment of the structure of a given local community. It is also important that, besides the fundamental condition of new bishop's unity in faith with the entire episcopal collegium (*collegis omnibus fideliter junctus*), Cyprian emphasized the importance not only of the participation of all the people of a given Christian community (*quando populi universi suffragio*) in electoral process, but of their confirmation of bishop's ministry in a future period as well (*plebi suae in episcopatu ... probatus*).¹⁹ A similarity with the viewpoint of the ecclesiology of the *First Clement* is more than obvious.²⁰

In the context of the central significance of the episcopal ministry for the maintenance and strengthening of the unity and identity of the Church, the expressions like *ordinatio iusta et legitima* (ordination just and legitimate)²¹ indicate that for Cyprian the mentioned normative and rule of communal participation and discernment in connection with

¹² Ep. 67.5, CSEL 3.2.739.

¹³ Ep. 67.4 CSEL 3.2.738.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ep. 55.8, CSEL 3.2.629; Ep. 68.2, CSEL 3.2.745.

¹⁶ Ep. 59.5, CSEL 3.2.672.

¹⁷ For a technical discussion, see P. Granfield, „Episcopal Elections in Cyprian: Clerical and Lay Participation“, *Theological Studies* 37 (1976), 41-52; J. Patout Burns, „On Rebaptism: Social Organization in the Third Century Church“, *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 1/ 4 (1993), 367-403.

¹⁸ Cf. V. A. Alkin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering. Origin, Development and Content of the Christian Gathering in the First to Third Centuries*, Brill, Leiden/Boston 2010, 265; S. Wessel, *Leo the Great and the Spiritual Rebuilding of a Universal Rome*, Brill, Leiden 2008, 163.

¹⁹ „... quando episcopus in locum defuncti substituitur, quando populi universi suffragio in pace deligitur, quando Dei auxilio in persecutione protegitur, collegis omnibus fideliter junctus, plebi suae in episcopatu quadriennio jam probatus, in quiete serviens discipline, in tempestate proscriptus applicito et adjunto episcopatus sui nomine...“, Ep. 12.6, *Ad Cornelium Papam*, PL 3, 804.

²⁰ Author of the *First Clement* states that the entire community, in a long time, had the competence to observe and evaluate its overseers' ministry (μεμαρτυρημένους τε πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων - 44:3). The whole community of the Church takes part in the election and reception of the ministers, but also have an obligation and competence to judge the dedication and quality of those who were elected to position of overseeing by community's own will and participation.

²¹ Ep. 67.4, CSEL 3.2.738.

the election and evaluation of episcopal ministry had an utmost importance. It is exactly in this context of rightful approach in the ordination procedure Cyprian insists on the necessity of adherence to the Tradition and the apostolic rule as a guarantee of a valid consecration.²² Rightful ordination entails, according to Cyprian's theology, a synergy of three different factors which are operative in its implementation. The neighboring bishops who participate in the rite of consecration lay their hands on a newly elected candidate but also brings their judgment about him (*iudicium*), clergy gives its testimony (*testimonium*), and the people give their vote (*suffragium*).²³ When the procedure for the election of the new bishop is conducted rightfully and in accordance with the Tradition it only then becomes an event in which the will of God is manifested. Consequently, in the event of communal election and ordination of a new bishop two different dimensions intertwine inseparably - the institutional and the charismatic (human, as well as divine), and this event becomes the manifestation of God's providential presence in the community of the Church.

The central Cyprian's idea is that in the event of ordination, when and if it is performed according to the rules and the Tradition of the Catholic Church, it is the God Himself who actually choose and appoint the bishop.²⁴ It is God who inspires and bless the activity of the congregation in an event which implies a free participation and discernment of each member of the community. Cyprian is so assured that in the ordination of a bishop the activity of God is manifested that for him the notions of *iudicium episcopi* and *iudicium omnium* function virtually as analogous to the notion of *iudicium Dei*.²⁵ To discern rightfully about a candidate for an episcopal position and to reach a decision unanimously, with the participation of the entire local church and of the neighboring bishops actually mean to be in consonance with the will of God about the Church, and to manifest His presence in its midst. In this context, the laying on of hands (*impositio*) on a chosen candidate for the episcopal ministry, preceded by acclamation of all the community members present at a liturgical gathering (*suffragium omnium*), represented a visible sign that the electoral procedure was completed, that a candidate was chosen willfully and with the discernment of all, and therefore that the will of God was directly manifested and the new bishop was given to the local church.²⁶

Undoubtedly, a very important detail in the electoral procedure is that, although suggestions for a candidate and final choice belongs to the local ecclesiastical communi-

²² „Quod diligenter de traditione diuina et apostolica obseruatione seruandum est ... ut ad ordinationes rite celebrandas ...“, *Ep.* 67.5, CSEL 3.2.739.

²³ More extensively in A. Thier, „Procedure and Hierarchy - Models of Episcopal Election in Late Antique Conciliar and Papal Rule Making“, y: (J. Leemans et. al., прир.), *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston 2011, 541-553.

²⁴ „Dominus elegit“, *Ep.* 3.3 CSEL 3.2.471

²⁵ For a more detailed discussion, see P. J. Fitzgerald, „A Model for Dialogue: Cyprian of Carthage on Ecclesial Discernment“, *Theological Studies* 59 (1998), 236-253.

²⁶ Compare, for example, Norton's conclusion: „Thus, in Cyprian's view, God sanctions an election which has been properly conducted“, y: P. Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250-600 - Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York 2007, 12; also: V. A. Alikin, *The Earliest History*, 263.

ty, the very performance of laying on of hands is performed by the bishops from other (often neighboring) communities. Foundation for such a practice could be found, according to Cyprian, in the fact that the episcopal collegium was founded by the Christ Himself who established the council of the twelve apostles and conferred to them the governance of His Church. This first council of the apostles expanded continually due to the success of the apostle's missionary efforts. In other words, the mission implies the inclusion of the overseers of newly founded churches, appointed by the apostles, into the apostolic council. This process continued to develop after the disappearing of the original apostles from the historical scene as they were replaced by the successors of their ministry, namely the bishops. The succession of the apostolic ministry by the bishops implied both the capacity for governing of the local Christian communities but simultaneously also a responsibility for the entire Universal Church, together with all the other bishops sharing the same apostolic ministry. The manifestation of this universal responsibility of the apostolic successors was visible in the very act of consecrating of new bishops, and in the participation at the regional episcopal councils and regular mutual consultations and correspondence as well.²⁷ In this context, Cyprian underlies the importance of the gathering of bishops in instances of serious crises threatening the life and the unity of the Church (as it was the case, for example, with the problem of the *lapsi*).²⁸

Cyprian states that episcopal councils could achieve a well-balanced analysis of the situation, but also says that insight and perception of presbyters and deacons could significantly contribute an effort to reach an adequate solution of problems.²⁹ Such a viewpoint is especially significant if one has in mind his teaching about the dignity and the prestige of the episcopacy. Cyprian's understanding of the episcopacy is, besides its strong connection with the apostolic ministry, far from any form of institutionalism and far from ascribing any autonomous or inherent qualities to the episcopal ministry independently of its source

²⁷ Cf. J. Patout Burns, „Cyprian of Carthage“, *The Expository Times* 120/10 (2009), 469–477; A. Brent, *A Political History of Early Christianity*, T&T Clark, London 2009, 271.

²⁸ „... cumque semel placuerit tam nobis quam confessoribus et clericis urbicis, item universis episcopis vel in nostra provincia vel trans mare constitutis ut nihil innovetur circa lapsorum causam...“, *Ep.* 40.3, *Ad Plebem*, PL 4.334–335. Уп: *Ep.* 38.2, *Ad Caldonium, Herculanum et Caeteros*, PL 4, 329–330.

²⁹ „Plane caeterorum causas, quamvis libello a martyribus accepto, differri mandavi et in nostram praesentiam reservari, ut, cum, pace a Domino nobis data, plures praepositi convenire in unum coeperimus, communicato etiam vobiscum consilio, disponere singula et reformare possimus“, *Ep.* 24.3, *Ad presbyteros et diaconos Rome consistentes*, PL 4.264. This is confirmed by the words of presbyters Moses and Maximus, and deacons Nicostratus and Rufinus and other confessors who, in the letter to Cyprian, confirm his opinion about the necessity of inclusion of all ministries in process of resolving of the disputed issues (such as admittance of the unworthies into a sacramental communion without the bishop's approval): „... cum grande delictum, et per totum pene orbem incredibili vastatione grassatum, non oporteat nisi, ut ipse scribis, caute moderateque tractari, consultis omnibus episcopis, presbyteris, diaconibus, confessoribus, et ipsis stantibus laicis, ut in tuis litteris et ipse testaris“, *Ep.* 26.6. PL 4.295, just like in the letter of the Roman clergy sent to Cyprian in which it is stated that regaining the issue of the *lapsi* the decision should be pursued at a council of bishops, presbyters, deacons, confessors and laics who stand firm in the faith: „... quamquam nobis in tam ingenti negotio placeat quod et tu ipse tractasti, prius Ecclesiae pacem sustinendam, deinde, sic collatione consiliorum cum episcopis, presbyteris, diaconis, confessoribus pariter ac stantibus laicis facta, lapsorum tractare rationem“.

and foundation - the community of the Church. Cyprian's understanding of the episcopal ministry as completely rooted in the ecclesial community and oriented towards its life and growth was memorably made manifest in his assertion that for a bishop it is proper not only to teach others but to learn from others as well. Namely, in his interpretation of a line from the *Second Epistle to Timothy* Cyprian says that one who continually learn from others progress and become more capable to teach people (to become a διδασκτικός, 2 Tm 2:24) and consequently makes a stronger contribution to the building of the Church.³⁰

* * *

Each form of ministry (διακονία) in the early Church, apostolic ministry included, was perceived as a continuation of Christ's own ministry. It's fundamental aspects such as kerygma of the authentic Word of God and safeguarding of peace and unity in the Church was understood as activities for which the entire community is hold responsible for, and not just some of the specially appointed individual ministers. Such an understanding of the ministry was not lost even in the process of development of ecclesiastical self-understanding and institutional solidification and uniformity of hierarchical structures, due to complex historical challenges and circumstances.

The ecclesial context of an authentic apostolic succession was very strongly emphasized in the theology of Cyprian of Carthage. This was made manifest in his connecting of the episcopal succession of the apostolic ministry with the liturgical life of the Christian community in its entirety. According to Cyprian, the episcopal ministry emerges primarily on a local level as a ministry oriented towards the needs of a concrete community. He also rejected the idea of an automatism or mechanical *modus operandi* with regard to the notion of the succession of the episcopal ministry. A bishop ceases to be worthy of his ministry, i.e. he ceases to be a bishop if his conduct departs from the norm of the Christian ethos, and especially if he separates himself from the community of the Church and leads the community he is responsible for in schism.³¹ According to Cyprian, just as a firm faith of a bishop represents a paradigm one should look upon and follow, similarly a bishop's fall (into heresy or schism) threatens to lead astray those who are in sacramental communion with him.³²

However, the precondition for an authentic episcopal ministry was not based upon the valid consecration or ordination of a bishop only. An additional prerequisite is also an

³⁰ „Cui rei prospiciens beatus apostolus Paulus ad Timotheum scribit et monet episcopum non litigiosum nec contentiosum, sed mitem et docibilem esse debere. Docibilis autem ille est qui est ad discendi patientiam lenis et mitis. Oportet enim episcopos non tantum docere, sed et discere, quia et ille melius docet qui cotidie crescit et proficit discendo meliora“, *Ep.* 74.10, *Ad Pompeium*, CSEL 3.2.807.

³¹ Cyprian expresses his opinion about the removal from office of unworthy bishops when reflects upon the deposition of Basilides: „Nec rescindere ordinationem iure perfectam potest quod Basilides post crimina sua detecta et conscientiae etiam propriae confessione nudata Romam pergens Stephanum collegam nostrum longe positum et gestae rei ac ueritatis ignarum fefellit, ut exambiret reponi se iniuste in episcopatum de quo fuerat iure depositus“, *Ep.* 68.5, *Ad clerum et plebes in Hispania consistentes*, CSEL 3.2.738.

³² „Nam quantum perniciores res est ad sequentium lapsum ruina praepositi, in tantum contra utile est et salutare cum se episcopus per firmamentum fidei fratribus praebet imitandum“, *Epistola* 3.1, PL 4.229.

understanding of a episcopal ministry as a constitutive part of the episcopacy conceived as a collegial body, analogously to the body of the original apostolic collegium. Nonetheless, such an understanding must have a practical implementation, i.e. maintenance of a continual and unbreakable Eucharistic community of each local bishop with all other overseers throughout the world. Another, equally important and necessary condition for an authentic episcopal ministry was also its rootedness in the liturgical community of the entire congregation. This rootedness is made manifest primarily in the electoral procedure of a candidate for episcopal ministry which necessarily included a discernment of the entire local church, but also in the continual evaluation of bishop's ministry by its own community of faithful.

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Ontological and Epistemological Approaches of Proclus in the Process of Psychogony

Abstract: This study presents the way in which Proclus structures some aspects of his Epistemology on the basis of his metaphysical Ontology. All those that we discuss – relying on his comments on *Parmenides* (*Εἰς τὸν Πλάτωνα Παρμενίδην*) (816.11–819.29) –, take into account the following: a) his theory on the universal Intellect and the individual intellects, b) his theory on the universal Soul and the individual souls, c) some approaches of his in Plato's theory of Ideas. Combining the above, our purpose is also to show in what way some specific manifestations of the metaphysical world are connected with the natural world. The Neoplatonist philosopher explains the relevant theories by following a clearly defined method and that is why his analyses compose a cohesive system or a coherent Epistemology. He follows the principles that he has established on the basis of a clear ontological realism, which is based on his views about how the similarities and the differences between the two worlds appear. By elaborating these principles, we come to the conclusion that the methodological tools used by him are the principle of analogy, analytical thinking and hypothetical syllogisms.

Key-words: Proclus, Plato, Soul, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Forms (Ideas), Intellect

Introduction

In his philosophical system Proclus the Neoplatonist (412–485) deals quite often with the question of the Soul, which he investigates it in a holistic way, though from different perspectives: the ontological, gnoseological, ethical and aesthetical, with the last three composing the anthropological one, which is actually subject to the fundamental principles of the first one. These approaches are closely related with each other, since they are based on common general principles and constitute literally a system quite coherent as to its foundations as well as complete in its structure. From the ontological point of view, Soul is considered to belong to both the metaphysical world (because of its undivided universal appearance) and the physical world (because of the many specific appearances, the most important of which are considered to be human beings). The combination of the transcendent with the immanent is due to its inherent nature: it takes action while at the same time it remains stable. In other words, Soul is considered to be a middle ontological reality, which connects the two worlds. Its contribution consists in providing through its kinetic energy the productive and paradigmatic projections and the protective interventions of

the first world upon the second. From the gnoseological point of view, it is clear that the soul of each human being is the center of its scientific-logical activities and that it possesses a priori ontological elements given by gods. That is, it includes all the common concepts or the theories that correspond to the physical and metaphysical reality. In many cases, Proclus mentions the Platonic theory of ἀνάμνησις (“recollection”), considering knowledge to be a recovery of what actually exists in the very inside of the self; so recollection is not a process of gaining new previously unknown knowledge. Certainly, this process is due to stimuli caused by external factors, which work mainly as empirical-sensory data. Here we speak about the representations formed by man’s communication with the natural universe, which “challenge” him to discover their ontology. Therefore, in order the human soul to act clearly cognitively, that is, not to remain in the superficiality of a one-dimensional empiricism, it is supposed that certain ontological conditions corresponding to the multiform ontological field are required within it; according to Proclus, these conditions are going under various procedures of conceptual formations, out of which each one acts as an intermediate-middle factor for the following. Soul, by making composite judgments, gradually matures. One of these procedures shows how both universal Soul and the individual souls are related to the archetypical Εἶδη (Forms)¹. For the universal Soul, the relation appears to be possible through a co-operation with them, while for the individual souls it is accomplished through descents and ascents. Forms provide specific properties, to which, among other beings, souls also participate, in order to activate with specific functions what they have received and which is also the source of their existence. That is to say, they have to utilize their essence with creative projections.

So, in his extensive treatise under the title *In Platonis Parmenidem*, Proclus attempts, among other ontological and gnoseological issues, to specify, as far as this is possible, and to explain Plato’s theory on Forms, i.e. the metaphysical archetypes of the sensible world, following the way in which the topic is elaborated in the dialogue *Parmenides*. This is an attempt that shows the final phase, before Damascius, the last Neoplatonist Scholarch, of a long philosophical tradition related to topics that Plato, the founder of the Academy, had put forward for investigation and explanation with his famous theory both on the ontological and the gnoseological level, including the ethical-practical and the aesthetic aspects too. There is no doubt that Proclus makes a great effort to describe in a systematic way the

1 Proclus elaborates his views on Soul and souls quite systematically and in the form of geometrical theorems in his treatise *Institutio Theologica* [Proclus: *The Elements of Theology*, ed. Eric Robertson Dodds (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1963)], props. 184–211, 160.31–184.20. Cf. Adolphe Berger, *Proclus. Exposition de sa doctrine* (Paris: Hachette Bnf, 1840), 47–9; 77–109. This study has achieved in an extremely precise way to present Proclus’ philosophical system as it is developmentally structured and, in our view, although it is an old one, it is still valuable for modern research on Neoplatonism. Cf. also Stanislas Breton, “Âme spinoziste, âme néoplatonicienne”, *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 71 (1973): 210–224; John Finamore and Emilie Kutash, “Proclus on the *Psyché*: World Soul and the Individual Soul”, in *All from One: A guide to Proclus*, eds. Pieter D’Hoine – Marije Martijn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 122–38). On the relation between Intelligence and Soul in the light of the theory about the henads, cf. Lodewijk Hermen Grondijs, *L’âme, le nous et les bénades dans la théologie de Proclus* (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitg.Mij., 1960).

theory on Forms, while it is also obvious in his works – giving special emphasis to his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus* too – that he is quite familiar with the former – Platonic and anti-Platonic (and mostly the Aristotelian) – tradition. Also, regardless of the quality or the reliability of his comments – which methodically and systematically are quite impressive –, the historical-philosophical contribution of his was that he both connected to each other and distinguished one another the former worldviews, by including them into precise categories. In this way, he organized in a clearly critical way the available theoretical material; he utilized both the original texts of Plato and the texts of the following though closely related tradition till Syrianus².

We could therefore describe Proclus as a consistent encyclopedist, in the sense of a historian of philosophy who knows really well how to approach a theory in an intertemporal way and how to express it. We are describing a scholar who had a good knowledge not only on how a theory had been formed, but also on the epistemological rules that determined it; so, he may easily be considered to be consistent – from the literary point of view that arises when studying his texts – regarding the objectivity required in research. Certainly, there is permanently a general concern about whether such approaches, which also develop into critical, rely on authentic textual criteria or are influenced by some adopted worldviews. So, the main epistemological question here is about what the influences are. That is to say, is this intervention a result caused by the extension of the texts discussed or is it due to the commentator himself, who attempts to find proof of his theory in the past? Of course a combination of these two views is possible. We will attempt to answer this question at the end of our study. We have to mention, however, in advance that Proclus, since he is the founder of a well-established philosophical system, approaches any issue taking into account the principles that he himself has defined as valid and appropriate to be followed.

In this brief study, we will analyze an aspect of Proclus' comments on this Platonic theory. More specifically, the question on which we will focus is which natural things do have Forms and which do not³. This is a topic of great importance, since its systematical

² Concerning Proclus' theory on Forms, cf. Laurence Jay Rosan, *The Philosophy of Proclus* (New York: Cosmos, 1949), 158–63. Giovanni Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica* IV (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 1981), 175–85; Jean Trouillard, *La mystagogie de Proclus* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982), 143–86; Carlos Steel, "Proclus et les arguments pour et contre l'hypothèse des Idées", *Revue de philosophie ancienne*, no. 2 (1984): 3–27. Carlos Steel, "Breathing Thought: Proclus on the Innate Knowledge of the Soul", in *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism*, ed. John Cleary (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), 293–309. Alexandre Kojève, *Essai d'une histoire raisonnée de la philosophie païenne* III (Paris: Gallimard, 1973). We believe that the last-mentioned study is up today the most innovative about how Proclus associates in the theory of Ideas Platonism with Aristotelianism, highlighting also the question on whether the Neoplatonic Scholarch is an eclecticist or not (either by just quoting or by composing). See also, Pieter D'Hoine, "Four Problems Concerning the Theory of Ideas: Proclus, Syrianus and the Ancient Commentaries on the Parmenides", in *Platonic ideas and concept formation in ancient and medieval thought*, eds. Gerd Van Riel and Caroline Macé (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), 9–29. We have to mention that Syrianus, since he is Proclus' teacher, is one of his main inspirers. The above study highlights some details of this relationship.

³ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.* 815.15–838.3. At this point, we will focus on the text 816.11–819.29, which is a part of Proclus' comments on the extract 130c.5–d.2 of the Platonic *Parmenides*: «Ἡ καὶ περὶ τῶνδε, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἃ καὶ γελοῖα δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι, οἷον θρίξ καὶ πηλὸς καὶ ῥύπος ἢ ἄλλο τι ἀτιμωτάτων τε καὶ φαυλότατον, ἀπορεῖς εἶτε χρῆ

elaboration will define what the relation between the metaphysical and the natural world is. According to Proclus, this is a multipart and multifunctional relation, which is also directly connected with matters related to the integrity or the changeability of the hypostases, their energies and the resulting from them effects; it should be mentioned that the integrity or the changeability of the effects depend on which their ontological source is. Two are the main goals of our approach. First of all, we will attempt to show how at this point Proclus reveals the ontological and axiological priority of the metaphysical world over the physical one, which for him are unquestionable. Generally speaking and following the suggestions of the relevant research, this priority – without resulting in a relegation of the cosmic beings – is typical not only for Proclus' theological orientation but also for the School that he represents, as well as for the historical-cultural period of time during which he takes action⁴. Secondly, we will try to prove that Proclus, standing for his ontological views, attempts in an indirect way to organize a consistent Epistemology. That is to say, he intends to establish the collective processes and the logical principles that, since they are going to reflect precisely what exists and what is produced, they will be able to function in an objective manner as theoretical principles and to become a methodological tool –or the basis for a valid truth to arise– that will confirm or will prove wrong the various propositions related to the issue discussed. In this attempt, the relations developed between both the Universal Soul and the particular souls and the supreme metaphysical realities that hierarchically take precedence over the Soul is according to him a question of great importance for the entire debate. This is an issue that at least in his philosophical system, if not in the philosophical systems of all the other representatives of the late Neoplatonism, is approached in a holistic manner. It is actually included in the general view related to the divinely determined *panpsychism* that is found in the natural universe.

I. Intellect as an expression of the metaphysical integrity

At the beginning of his analysis, Proclus describes the ontological reality of the intellectual substance or Intellect (or Intelligence), which is the third in hierarchy plane in the process of the (intra-)development of the metaphysical world and appears after 'Being' and 'Life'⁵.

φάναι καὶ τούτων ἑκάστου εἶδος εἶναι χωρὶς, ὃν ἄλλο αὐτῶν τι ἡμεῖς μεταχειριζόμεθα, εἴτε καὶ μή;» [“And things that might seem ridiculous, Socrates, such as hair, mud, dirt, or some other unseemly or trivial thing, are you in doubt whether or not we ought to say there is an Idea of each of these, separate and other than things that we handle?”] [*Proclus commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, trans. Glenn Morrow and John Dillon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 179]. Note that Proclus from 783.1 to 838.3 comments on the passage 130b.1–e.4 of the Platonic *Prm.*, which refers to which things have archetypal Forms, combining natural science, philosophy and theology. For an intertextual approach of the subject on Soul and souls, cf. Procl., *in Ti.*, v, 278.1–285.21, where special details for the general views presented in the *in Prm* that are to be analyzed here are discussed.

⁴ Cf. Trouillard, *La mystagogie de Proclus*, 15–51. See also Henri-Dominique Saffrey, *Recherches sur le Néoplatonisme après Plotin* (Paris: Vrin, 1990), 159–72, who carefully presents the parallels, as otherness and analogy, between theology and anthropology in Proclus.

⁵ Concerning the metaphysical triad 'Being-Life-Intellect', cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props. 101–103, 90.17–92.29. On this matter, Werner Beierwaltes, *Proklos. Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik* (Frankfurt am Main, 1979), 93–118, says: “In Sein, Leben und Geist entfaltet sich die Trias: Gedachtes, Gedachtes zugleich und Denkendes, De-

In his view, if we accepted that many intellects exist, which could be considered as the special demotion-bifurcation of their primal source, i.e. the Intellect, the possibility some ontologically different – and obviously superior to them – paradigmatic causes to be the direct archetypes of their hypostasis would be out of the question. This is due to the general principle – also accepted by the entire Platonic tradition – that if a being has a direct paradigm, the paradigm necessarily is for the being an authentic image; it has to connect with it by means of likeness, in an inferior though way. At this point, a complicated question arises, which is associated with the ontological class and the range of the concept of image.

So, it is mentioned that if the universal Intellect or the individual intellects were actually images, i.e. relegated reflections, an absurd, both ontologically and logically, view would arise, contrary to the principles of the metaphysical world. The reason why is the following: the image is always a reflection of the reality for which is an image, which means that it is a dependent reality with no autonomy and self-value. Furthermore, it is pointed out that these properties are found only in the natural beings, which are not stable and fall within the terms of becoming. We have though to mention, even parenthetically, that in Proclus's system there is no reality without some ontological value. They all do have some value, but they are hierarchized. This is actually a hierarchy that is also fed by the cause and effect relation, which is presented by Proclus in many ways⁶. Recalling the Elean Stranger's view presented in the Platonic dialogue *Sophista*, the Neoplatonist philosopher says that there it is also investigated whether the image may be described

kendes (νοητόν – νοητόν ἅμα καὶ νοερόν – νοερόν), so, daß sich beide Triaden gegenseitig auslegen. Dabei wird einmal deutlich, daß das, was gedacht wird, seines ist, Sein aber nur als sinnbestimmtes Etwas zu denken ist; zum anderen, daß Leben die dynamische Einheit von Gedachtem und Denkendem ist und als solche nur rim Horizont des νοῦς gedacht werden kann; schließlic, daß Denkendes als die ὑπόστασις νοῦς zu fassen ist, der sich durch den Akt des Denkens vielfältig bestimmt und gliedert.. Wenn im Folgenden von „dem Denken“ die Rede ist, so meint dies nicht ein irgendwie bestimmtes oder „leeres“ Denken eines selbst diffusen Allgemeinen, sondern den wesenhaften Akt des in sich seienden, sich selbst in seinen vielfältigen Konkretionen reflektierenden Geistes. Dieser Akt des vollkommenen Rückganges in sich selbst wird auch als Erkenntnis (γνώσις) dessen, was das Denken denkt, gefaßt: als Selbsterkenntnis des sich selbst denkenden Geistes“ (93–94). See also Pierre Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* I (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1968), 213–46 and 260–72). According to Proclus, Being corresponds to the intelligible gods, Life to the intelligible-intellectual gods and Intellect to the intellectual ones. Cf. Procl., *Theol. Plat.* IV, 10.21–13.18 [*Proclus. Théologie Platonicienne* I–VI, eds. Henri Dominique Saffrey and Leendert Gerrit Westerink (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1968–1997)]. Among the three terms there is a hierarchical classification: Being comes first, Life is the middle one and Intellect is third. This priority is set by their productive-archetypal range. It is also important to mention that this ontological triad is not the superior one in Proclus' system. Both it and all of the other metaphysical entities or categories depend on the henads, which are the direct unified emanations of the supreme principle, the One-Good. And this dependence is due to the extreme theological position that Proclus gives to metaphysics. In this way, he acknowledges that unity comes before the “true being” (ὄντως ὄν). It should be mentioned too that in his opinion universal Soul contains in its own special ontological way Being, Life and Intellect, as causes of it. So, when being specified in the individual souls and intervenes by means of them in the natural world, it is actually provides in a mental way the sensible beings with the three leading ontological realms.

⁶ On the causality in Procl., cf. books III–VI of his treatise *Theol. Plat.*. Cf. Francesco Romano, “L' idée de causalité dans la Théologie Platonicienne de Proclus”, in *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. Allain Philippe Segonds and Carlos Steel (Louvain–Paris: Leuven University Press, 2000), 325–337.

as “non-being” (οὐκ ὄν)⁷. This point does not indicate that he adopts such a view; he just uses it for serving his own purpose. So, according to his reasoning: if the entire intellectual substance belongs to the field of the “true beings” (ὄντως ὄντα), i.e. the metaphysical world or the ontologically unchanged world, it is not appropriate to name it an image or a reflection. Otherwise, both ontology and hierarchy would overturn⁸. Metaphysical beings would fall within becoming and they would lose their integrity.

In order to support the fact that the image is not a part of this metaphysical world, Proclus says that the entire intellectual substance is unseparated and that its “procession” (πρόδος) – that is, the emanative multiplicative activation of it – has taken place without causing any changes to the nature of the ontological properties of the world from which it came⁹. In this case, there is no ontological relegation and that is why the appearing in this phase of the metaphysical progress particular intellectual beings do not cut off the roots from their sources. The only thing that can be said, in the sense of a transition, is that there is a relation of determination-dependence between the individually particular – which is multiplied – and the whole – which keeps its natural unity. For Proclus, a whole is a general ontological principle, which manifests its internal richness by means of individual expressions, i.e. special formed projections, each of which shows a special ability of it¹⁰. More specifically, what can be said about the specialized particulars can also be said for their source, which is a universal whole. «Ὅθεν δὴ καὶ ἀνεκφοίτητα τὰ δεύτερα τῶν πρώτων ἐστί, καὶ ταῦτα μερικῶς ἂ τὸ ὅλον ὀλικῶς»¹¹. This is actually a sharing of the primal compressed condition, which brings out its properties-attributes, the richness of its ‘qualities’. According to the context, this distinction does not indicate inflexible identities among the effects.

7 Cf. Pl., *Sph.* 240b [*Platon Oeuvres complètes: Sophiste*, ed. Auguste Diès (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2011)]: Οὐκ ὄν ἄρα οὐκ ὄντος ἐστὶν ὄντος ἦν λέγομεν εἰκόνα; “Then what we call a likeness, though not really existing, really does exist?” [Plato II: *Theaetetus, Sophist*, trans. Harold North Fowler, (London–New York: William Heinemann–G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1921), 351]. Cf. Victor Goldschmidt, *Les dialogues de Platon* (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1971), 170–1.

8 Cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 816.11–22. We have to mention that in this passage metaphysical hierarchy is actually preserved. It is all about the possibility everything that is found into the physical world to be introduced by analogy into the metaphysical world.

9 Cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 816.22–24. The term ‘procession’ shows: a) the process by which a reality – which is actually metaphysical – comes out from another, in which inhered in a seminal way. Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props. 25–39, 28.21–42.7. This is a cause-effect relation, which is determined by the indissoluble connectivity and is constituted by the initiatives of both the participating terms, with the priority of course given to the cause. The previous mentioned initiatives are determined by the structural and formative planning. b) How an emanating reality functions and which processes develops in order a new reality to emerge in a following plane. And this is a process that lasts until the end of the metaphysical development, the main characteristic of which is the ontological mediating continuity.

10 Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props. 66–74, 62.24–70.27.

11 Cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 816.24–26. “Hence its derivations are inseparable from their origin; they are in part what the whole is entirely” [Morrow–Dillon, 179]. Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props. 19, 20.21–28. See also Annick Charles-Saget, *L’architecture du divin* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982), 238–9, where, through a schematic-structural use of Proclus’ texts, the relations between the two levels is presented both in the horizontal (in width) and in vertical (in depth) point of views.

It should be also mentioned that this process may not be described in precision by the human consciousness, which approaches the metaphysical world analogically or hypothetically, relying on sensible data or logically founded axioms.

Discussing next the true ontological differences, Proclus explains that the image, regardless of the plane at which is found, should keep likeness – which arises from its relation with its paradigm – together with unlikeness – the true feature of it, when being compared to the other images. Moreover, unlikeness shows that there is a different ontological plane from the plane of the paradigm. That is to say, unlikeness proves that the image is different from the paradigm; also, that there is a starting point, from which the ontological individualities will emerge, which here are associated with relegations. So, the natural world has emerged from the metaphysical world due to the expansion of unlikeness, which indicates that the plane has changed. On the other hand, likeness is a somehow functional-relational property of the image, by means of which it obtains or possesses the requirements to reverse to its paradigm, as soon as the appropriate conditions will allow this to happen. This ‘reversion’ is related to the possibility of exceeding itself and accomplishing consciously on its own its ontological plenitude. This kind of procedures, however, are not found in the case of intellectual substances – since they are metaphysical –, so the relations between the image and the paradigm – as well as the resulting from them states of separation and communication – are for them out of the question. The only existing and properly working ontological state is the primal or universal cause-source of the projections and the special forms that come from the activation of its energy¹². This is actually a ‘reversion’ to the source, by which some kind of regularity is applied and the relation between the emanating and the reverting is suddenly accomplished. In the metaphysical world ‘reversion’ shows the power of unity, from which the multitude came.

Subsequently, Proclus, by making a brief historical overview without giving any specific names, mentions that the former theologians, after having taken into account the views that he has just elaborated and after having placed many causes into that special Intellect which is considered to be the creator, suggested that this is the only cause and the source of the multi-form world, i.e. the sensible world which is subject to becoming. Focusing on causality, he suggests a special kind of metaphysical multitude, in order to explain the way in which the natural world exists. More specifically, he does not just elaborate the matter of the source of the Forms, but he also investigates the Forms themselves, which basically have the ‘mission’ to bring together the metaphysics of transcendence with the metaphysics of immanence, which preserve both the ontological monism and the distinct-

¹² Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 816.26–32. See also Trouillard, *La mystagogie de Proclus*, 71–91. This is a cause that does not change; it just multiplies its metaphysical integrity. This is a function that appears analogously to all the ontological planes. In Trouillard’s following remark we find in short Proclus’ view: “Qu’est-ce que la démiurgie selon Proclus? C’est la puissance expansive de l’unité. Il n’y a dans l’univers aucune autre efficacité réalisatrice que celle de l’unité et de la bonté” (83). Note that unity and goodness are, depending on the case, the two expressions of every metaphysical being. This is an issue that Proclus discusses in the second book of his treatise *Theol. Plat.*. For a general approach, cf. Beierwaltes, *Proklos. Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik*, 153–8, who discusses analogy as the structure and the principle of motion of the world.

ness between the two worlds, so as pantheism to be avoided. So, Proclus attempts to investigate mainly the extensions of the previous theologians' view, since he believes that this view only in general is adopted by the Platonic tradition, while it has not been thoroughly discussed. It is a necessary elaboration to be made, since both the projections of the metaphysical world and the ways in which the natural world receives them have to be fully explained. Furthermore, according to his opinion, it is, first of all, obvious, that everything that comes from the creative Intellect are not activated by just following the cause that provides the intellectual eidetic characteristics to the natural beings¹³. Is it then possible that they act generally in an intervening way, besides providing the intellectual form?

Analyzing his view, Proclus says that the relation that determines what takes place within the metaphysical world relies on the fact that those beings that are subject in real terms to 'procession' and the ones that have gained their substance from a separation so as to be distinguished from the rest, must have clearly received both their substance and all of their properties because of the activation of the cause that is actually capable of providing all the above. And that is definitely the One-Good. So, Proclus explains that in a particular area of the metaphysical world, the emanating being is initially formed as a complete entity, despite its special nature in which it may appear in the natural world. For instance, Intellect contributes to the emanation of the particular intellects. Special attention, however, is here required, since the leading law is that of the hierarchical community. So, Intellect and individual intellects hold other properties too, defined of course by the intellectual one. Firstly, we would say that the grounds of this view obviously lie on the fact that this cause – the Intellect – causes multiplications in the sense of ontological relegations – and not in the sense of changes –, that is to say, it causes the crucial archetypal multiplicative factor which is necessary for the creation of the natural world to take place. However, natural beings are not just intelligent. So, there must be also some other metaphysical sources – which are also archetypes of the multitude –, from which either in a direct or in an indirect way the individual intellectual Forms have come; and that is why they possess a composite divine nature¹⁴. So, Proclus' point for the productive projection is the same: these shall be sources that preserve their – composite – nature and pass it through in a way that is in accordance with their main property, so as to function productively as soon as they have to, following a systematic planning. That is to say, there are some other metaphysical realms too within the Intellect and the intellects or intellectual Forms.

13 About the Demiurge in Proclus' system, his comments on *Timaeus* are the best source for drawing historical and systematical information, as all of his other treatises of course are. See for instance John Dillon, "The Role of the Demiurge in the *Platonic Theology*", in *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. Allain Philippe Segonds and Carlos Steel (Louvain–Paris: Leuven University Press, 2000), 339–49; Jan Opsomer, "Proclus on Demiurgy and Procession: A Neoplatonic Reading of the *Timaeus*", in *Reason and Necessity. Essays on Plato's Timaeus*, ed. M. R. Wright (London: Duckworth and The Classical Press of Wales, 2000), 113–43. Either way, the Demiurge appears to be an inferior god, who undertakes the responsibility to complete the planning of the superior ones.

14 Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 816.32–817.1. For a general approach, cf. Jean Trouillard, "Les Degrès du ποιείν chez Proclus", *Dionysius* 1 (1977): 69–84. It should be mentioned that Proclus, when speaking of "Intellect" and "intellects" considers "Life" and "lives" as their direct requirement and "Being" and "beings" as their indirect one.

Relying on the above, Proclus comes once again to the conclusion that there is no paradigm of the intellectual substance – or the Intellect – to look for it in itself, since otherwise there would be an ontological likeness of the cause with its effect. An inflexible relation with no ontological meaning would arise. Thus, this substance should be considered as absolutely depending on the undivided and supreme divine cause. Here too, this is a determination set by the leading source of everything, the ‘One-Good’, which, while preserving its essential pureness, allows a part of its hypostasis to emanate or produce or progress. Relying on the general context of Proclus’ theory, one could say that the priorities and dependencies found within the sensible world have no place in the metaphysical plane. This is actually a general difference to keep in mind, regardless of the fact that the sources of all things – both the metaphysical and the natural ones – are closely connected with the procedures or the planning that the highest ontological plane – the main characteristic of which is the primal and undivided self-founded unity – follows¹⁵. However, in this case, the most important ontological point is that it is not possible for a divine entity to have itself as a paradigmatic cause, since otherwise the multiplicative development of it would be impossible. If that was the case, it would have nothing other than itself to turn to and it would actually reproduce itself. Such an identity, i.e. that would eliminate the possibility of an emanation, would actually put an end to the development and growth of the metaphysical richness and, therefore, there would be no physical world.

According to what is here said and having in mind Proclus’ general theory, the suggestion is as follows: every superior divine plane self-develops by separating itself and, accordingly, causes the inferior to it class to appear. In this way, causality, while developing, regulates everything and appears in a new-inferior divine plane. The last plane of this development sets the requirements for the creation of the natural world. It should be noted though that Proclus is not discussing at this point the emanation of every metaphysical reality by its former one. However, it is necessary to be mentioned, since it is one of the leading principles of his system to have in mind from now on in this study. For instance, this position is extensively elaborated in the fourth book of *Theologia Platonica*. More specifically, the first metaphysical realm is Being, which is separated into the individual beings. The second one is Life, which is separated into the individual lives. These two realms contribute to the emanation of the Intellect and reside in it as properties of it. Accordingly, these properties pass on the individual intellects. It should be also mentioned that the Forms first appear when the Intellect is specified and they are considered to be individual intellects.

II. The archetypal Forms and the souls

Proclus, while investigating what takes place into the metaphysical world, raises the following question: are there any primal – i.e. first – causes of the souls within the plane of

¹⁵ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.1–3. Also, Jean Trouillard, *L’Un et l’âme selon Proclus* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1972), 91–109. We believe that this study describes quite precisely Proclus’ original theory about the Soul and souls and shows the relation of this theory with the rest of Proclus’ theories. In his comments, however, on *Timaeus* the above issues are elaborated in many ways, with constant references to the way in which Cosmology is structured and with the panchychism being the permanent point, which has to be investigated in detail so as to be precisely defined.

the Forms – which are considered to be within the Intellect – and what exactly is their nature? Do they exist in unity or are they a multitude?¹⁶ Attempting to define things in precision, he says that if there would be an individual monad for the souls within the Demiurge, at whose ontological plane their number would be actually included in a unitary way, an unquestionable ontological causative combination would arise. He is speaking about a metaphysically established multitude, which preserves its primal unity while revealing the internal richness of the monad. The basis of this view is both the principle-relation of causality that develops among beings (ontological criterion) and the philosophical tradition that starts from Plato (historical-epistemological criterion)¹⁷. By utilizing this knowledge, Proclus says that, if the Soul was thought to be the ontological reality that primarily owned the properties of the created and separated reality – i.e. of the sensible world – in the sense a general planning, the uncreated and undivided Form comes to be prior to it. Following the general principles of his ontological system, those beings that are considered to be eternal and keep unchanged their hypostatic integrity, are hierarchically prior to those that are subject even to the slightest developmental process. «Ἀνάγκη τὸ ἀμέριστον εἶδος προηγεῖσθαι τῶν μεριστῶν καὶ τὸ αἰώνιον τῶν ὁπωσοῦν γεννητῶν»¹⁸. Combining everything together, the ontological ascents are for Proclus as follows. The unseparated Form is found within the Demiurge and defines the way in which he will form the Soul and will make it to be separated into the individual souls, which actually constitute the very first separation from which the natural-empirical separation will come. The question here is why does he mention just one Form and why does he not speak about all the Forms? And what is this

16 On the relation between the Intellect and the Forms, cf. for instance Beierwaltes, *Proklos. Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik*, 39–48, where, among other things, he says the following: «Der Geist ist Grund des Seins jeder Sache als der versammelnde und bewahrende Sinngrund oder „Ort der Ideen“: τόπος γὰρ αὐτῶν (scil. τῶν ἰδεῶν) ἔστιν ὁ νοῦς und damit auch die Dimension in der die Möglichkeit und Wahrheit von Sprache gründet. „Ort“ ist allerdings nicht so zu verstehen, als ob die Ideen seiner als eines raumhaften „Sitzes“ (ἔδρα) bedürften. Die Ortlosigkeit des νοῦς ist gerade der Grund dafür, daß er eine alle Unterschiedenheit integrierende Einheit zu sein vermag, wie seine Zeitlosigkeit alles Vor und Nach in das immerseiende Zugleich immer schon aufgehoben hat und nur durch diese Wesenhaftigkeit Urbild von Zeit als deren Prinzip sein kann. Die Ideen sind auch nicht „aufgehäufte Teile“ des νοῦς, μέρη σεσωρευμένα κατὰ σύνθεσιν, die er umfaßt und zusammenhält. Einigender „Ort“ der Ideen ist der Geist vielmehr, inder er, frei von Zeit und Ort, durch den Akt des Denkens als seiner Ursprung in jeder Idee ganz gegenwärtig ist und in ihm. Die Idee ist nur durch und in dem Geist, der Geist aber denkt nur die Ideen, wenn er sein Selbst denkt» (39–40).

17 Cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 817.4–11. Do note here that the ontological pair ‘one-multitude’ is the most important in Proclus’ ontological system, with the latter factor revealing in the sense of the forms the infinite quantitatively cores of the former one. Concerning the role of Plato’s thinking in Proclus’ philosophical and theological teaching, according actually to the Neoplatonic interpretation, cf. *Theol. Plat.*, III, 5.6–125.8. Here Proclus takes information from all the Platonic dialogues of the late period, attempting to find similarities. However, he remains consistent with his original purpose, to find a way to connect theology with ontology in a factual and epistemological whole.

18 Cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 817.13–15. “Necessarily the indivisible Idea must precede the divisions and the eternal everything whatever that was generated” (Morrow–Dillon, 180). The term ἄνάγκη does not refer to a necessity but to a firmly established ontological effect. Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props. 40–51, 42.8–50.6. See, also, Charles-Saget, *L’architecture du divin*, 268–9, who insists on the distinction between the self-moving (i.e. the metaphysical) and the moving by another mover (i.e. the natural).

Form? Furthermore: what is the nature of the monad of the souls found in Demiurge? Is it just the monad of the souls or is it the universal Soul too? We will attempt to provide some answers next.

Furthermore, Proclus says that, if the relation between the Soul and the Intellect was thought to be analogous to the relation between time and eternity, then, on the basis of the fact that the time is an image of eternity, the Soul would be thought to be the image of the Intellect¹⁹. It is obvious that the very first reasoning is about to change. And this change is due to the fact that the ontological condition has changed. The Soul is the intermediate part for accomplishing the transition from the metaphysical to the natural world, so the concept of the image may be approached in a broader sense and may be applied in many ways²⁰. The ontological – and why not, the axiological – relegation from the status of the Intellect to that of the Soul is quite obvious. However, this does not mean that one could actually name the Soul image in the sense in which this property appears in the natural world. For, otherwise, its metaphysical pre-existence would be disestablished. It is the intermediate factor that contributes to the appearance of the images, in the literal sense, that is to say, the material-sensible meaning. So, the term ‘image’ is here used metaphorically and implies hierarchical relations.

Subsequently, Proclus intends to explain the matter discussed according to the general principles of his system. That is to say, he attempts to analyze it in the light of the ontological mediations or, in other words, relying on the theory about the intermediate entities-powers which are prior to the Soul. So, he says that if there is not only Life, as Socrates claims in the dialogue *Philebus*²¹, but also Soul within the Being, which is the first simple manifestation-realm of the metaphysical world, it follows that there are some archetypal qualities within the Soul – since ontologically it exists before any other cosmological condition. And these would actually be the seeds of being which come out in individual forms. According to this, it arises that the Soul, by possessing primal properties, is a paradigmatic cause of the individual souls, which appear to come indirectly from the Intellect too. So, taking into account what has been elaborated in the previous chapter of our study, the re-

¹⁹ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.15–18.

²⁰ Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props. 184–211, 160.21–184.20. Cf. Charles-Saget, *L'architecture du divin*, 247–8, who concerning the props.198–200 says the following: “L’être d’un être se comprend hors de toute dimension temporelle, et s’il “devient” autre, ce “devenir” désigne simplement l’effet un la présence en lui d’une force autre qui lui-même. Ainsi la différence être/devenir s’affirme comme transposition d’une distinction ontologique: par soi/par un autre. Et le refus du temps trouve son appui dans une logique du don”. Definitely, the image is subject to time and is always defined by another superior to it reality.

²¹ Cf. Pl., *Phlb.* 30a [*Platon Oeuvres complètes: Philèbe*, ed. Auguste Diès (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2011): Τὸ παρ’ ἡμῖν σῶμα ἄρ’ οὐ ψυχὴν φήσομεν ἔχειν; (“Should we say that the body we have has life (*psyche*)?”] [*Plato: Philebus*, trans. Justin Gosling, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 23]. The answer to this question is yes. Soul is shown to provide power to the body. Furthermore, soul helps the body to utilize the above-given properties. Here anthropology shows in a specialized way the general ontological-cosmological conditions. About the way in which Proclus approaches *Philebus*, see Gerd Van Riel, “Ontologie et Théologie. Le Philèbe dans le troisième livre de la Théologie platonicienne de Proclus”, in *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. Allain Philippe Segonds and Carlos Steel (Louvain–Paris: Leuven University Press, 2000), 399–413).

lations are as follows: the Intellect – which comes after the Being and the Life – is the supreme source, the creative one. The Soul specifies it so as the metaphysical cause to work by its contribution also as a paradigmatic factor. That is to say, Proclus adds some special properties to the individual souls, which are also intelligent and because of that act productively. It should be mentioned too that according to Proclus' general metaphysical principles the Intellect is also placed within the Being and the Life. So, souls, except from being noetic, hold also the properties of being and life. After all, how would a reality be actually capable of functioning intellectually, if it did not exist and if there was no kinetic impulse given by life?

Attempting to be more specific, Proclus says that from the very first moment the Soul has included in a programmatic way undividedly and inseparably both the order and the number in which individual souls will appear in the developing physical world²². So, the fact that the supreme Soul exists in a primal way in the sense of a seed within the Being, and is not an a posteriori formed reality, provides the requirements in order the Intellect to act generally in a productive way. Metaphorically speaking, the tasks to be assigned to each metaphysical reality are now clearly defined and classified within the Being. So, the previously-mentioned relegation is not absolute, since there seem to be seeds of the factors that cause the productions of the sensible world, which preexist in the highest metaphysical planes as possibilities to be manifested. All that is analyzed is how these factors are hierarchized – without the general ontological, i.e. the metaphysical, plane to change at all. The suggested hierarchy is also revealed in the way in which both the general physical cores and the particular physical beings will be formed. It should be mentioned that in other parts of his work Proclus explains that these are eternal and universal and that they follow the plan in order to receive a form. Moreover, potentiality has nothing to do with the metaphysical world, which is permanently found in an active state. It is only related to what is going to be produced next.

Proclus then says that, since all souls are immortal, it is necessary an – obviously metaphysical – paradigm for each one of them to exist. In this way, he underpins his belief on the combination of the transcendence with the immanence: that is to say, an unchange-

²² Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.20–23: «Δεῖ δὴ ποῦ τὴν ψυχὴν αἰτίαν ὑποτίθεσθαι παραδειγματικὴν τοῦ προελθόντος ἀπὸ νοῦ πλήθους τῶν ψυχῶν, καὶ τὴν τάξιν αὐτῶν καὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἐνιαίως προειληφύϊαν». “We must suppose that Soul is the paradigmatic cause of the plurality of souls that proceed from Intellect and that it contains in unity their order and number” (Morrow–Dillon, 180). Clearly the reference to numbers leads us to the first period of the Academy (Plato, Speusippus, Xenocrates) and to Iamblichus. For all of these philosophers, numbers have a metaphysical-eidetic-paradigmatic content and determine the formation of the natural beings. They certainly perceive arithmetic to be a science too, but they assign to it the task to investigate the ways in which the metaphysical defines the physical, i.e. the metaphysics of immanence, which actually has a geometrical content and requires clear cognitive procedures in order its completeness to be described. For instance, see Iamblichus' study *Theol. Ar.*. Cf. Harold Tarrant, *Plato's First Interpreter* (London: Cornell University Press, 2000). Dominic O'Meara, “Geometry and the Divine in Proclus”, in *Mathematics and the divine: A Historical Study*, eds. Teun Koetsier and Luc Bergmans (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science B.V., 2005), 136–45. Russell M. Dancy, *Two Studies in the Early Academy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991). For a systematic reading of the history of mathematics from Plato to Proclus, cf. Charles-Saget, *L'architecture du divin*.

able metaphysical basis, which is actually confirmed due to the fact that it is reflected upon or provides the incorruptible conditions to be transformed into cosmological with form. Proclus explains though that the produced or 'processing' multitude is not in number the same with the ontological united and intact requirements. So, in order to describe the true nature of these conditions and not to make any simplistic comparisons, the Neoplatonist philosopher utilizes once again the theory on the many principles and many causes as well as that of the intermediates. First of all, he separates and hierarchizes the individual souls into divine and worldly. Then, he points out that after the Form of all the divine souls – and after the Form of the universal Soul – the rest of the metaphysical causes should be placed, according to which the separations that will take place in the sensible world are generally organized. So, taking into account the precise metaphysical 'procession' from superior to inferior, but much more in number, ontological planes, it turns that the individual worldly souls result from many causes²³.

Providing some explanations, Proclus says that in order this progression to take place as it has been already planned, some inferior causes have to appear too. In his opinion, these are the daemonic causes, by the intervention of which the 'procession' will result in the production of the individual worldly souls. The whole process corresponds to an ontological necessity, in which procedures-functions follow a specific order. «Τῶν μὲν θείων ψυχῶν πασῶν μετὰ τὴν μίαν ἰδέαν καὶ ἄλλας διωρισμένας αἰτίας θετέον, ταύτας δὲ κατὰ τινα πρόοδον εὐτακτον καὶ ὕφεσιν ἀπ' ἐκείνων γίγνεσθαι διὰ τῶν δαιμονίων ἐπὶ τὰς μερικὰς ψυχὰς τῆς φύσεως ληγούσης»²⁴. This is a process-transition that holds all the qualities of teleology. It is all about the unfolding of a specific united principle, which moves from the general to the increasingly particular in an excellent structurally way, so that the divine world to be totally essentially different from the sensible world. Obviously, pantheism is out of the question and that is why images are quite appropriate for this case.

In order to avoid any misinterpretations, Proclus provides further explanations. Ac-

23 Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.23–28. Every inferior divine entity possesses all the former ones in its own way, according to its position in hierarchy. In other words, the substances of the superior entities are placed as properties or modes of existing-functioning into the substances of the inferior ones. The substance of an inferior results from the combination of its superiors; this process takes place in order this substance (sc. of the inferior) to appear as an individual. The above are analyzed in the fourth book of Proclus' treatise *Theol. Plat.*.

24 Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.29–34. "We must posit for all the divine souls other distinct causes after the single Idea and say that from these causes souls proceed in the well-ordered downward procession from the divine through the daemonic souls, the process ending with the particular souls" (Morrow–Dillon, 180–181). Also, Stephen Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena: An investigation of the prehistory and evolution of the Pseudo-Dionysian tradition* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), 82–94, who says the following about the triad 'being-life-intellect': "The third term is equivalent to the final element in the usual Neoplatonic analysis of causation [...] this causal scheme achieves its consummation in the moment of reversion and so, if the triad of being, life, and intellect is to be equated with it, the last of these three terms must also signify a perfection or fulfilment. This seems to be precisely what Proclus means when he argues that 'intellect is in itself, and is the plenitude of life and being' (83). It should be mentioned that here Gersh, utilizing the entire relevant tradition, presents the Intellect as the plenitude of the Forms, which define the ontological procedures to be followed till the production of the natural world. Everything is done in precision so that metaphysics of immanence not to be combined with metaphysics of transcendence. And of course pantheism is not an option.

cording to his view, every general to be individualized appears after some multidimensional and multifunctional processes have taken place; however, it is primarily a monad. He also points out that this monad is not considered in the sense of the infinitely small; it is a monad that includes the entire multitude, which originally is not obvious. So, he makes clear that there is a paradigmatic monad of all the souls and that this is found within the divine Intellect. One could say that it is an ontogenetic reality that contains many seeds and works like a compressed but energetically ready to take action mass. It is like an original substrate, from which a multitude gradually emanates. However, this is not an indefinite chaotic emanation; it reveals the infinite richness of the primary source that is able to provide many forms. Therefore, this monad includes in a united way the measure, which determines both the number and the quality of the divine souls²⁵. According to this metaphysical planning, teleology remains untouched. That is to say, there is a preconceived plan which determines the way in which the developing metaphysical system will grow, the extensions of which are also found in the physical world.

In order to avoid both simplistic monism and the risk of the sameness – which would be ontologically contradictory –, Proclus introduces a sort of a primary pluralism. So, he says that there is a second number inherent in this monad, which also has come from separations and individualizations of the former supreme metaphysical realms and, due to its many forms, may be considered to be the direct – and complete – paradigmatic cause of the divine souls²⁶. So, in every composite divine soul, which is productively manifested in many forms, there is a particular Form that functions as a paradigm too. This Form is the source of a specific quality for this particular soul and, accordingly, it is a source for the rest as well. Moreover, this Form – as well as any other – works like a radial spreading, so that both the general divine soul and the corresponding to it multitude to arise. And that would be the crucial multitude for the emergence of the natural world. One could say

²⁵ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.35–38. Obviously, the quantitative extent of the number is as large as it is required, in order the natural world to appear. Taking into account the whole analysis of the topic, the combinations among numbers are also examined, just like in the case of Ideas. This would be the function of numbers as general ontological categories, the combinations of which are found within the individual souls, which appear in the next ontological plane and direct them to their functions.

²⁶ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 817.39–40. Also, Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 98–105. Here too, Gersh classifies the relevant extracts – with those of Syrianus holding the main role – quite successfully. First of all, he attempts to reveal the terms in which the internal relations among the Ideas are formed in the metaphysical world and, secondly, how they are activated when being combined with the numbers. Referring to Proclus' treatise entitled *Theol. Plat.*, IV, 87.20–25, where he says that “all things are produced by means of numbers and Forms. Numbers take their procession from the intelligible Forms. The Forms occur primarily in the third triad of the intelligible whereas the numbers are primarily in the first triad of the intellects. As is the case with their effects, every number is a Form but not every Form is a number”, Gersh clarifies that “since Forms originate as a multiplicity within the Paradigm or the intellect of the hypostasis of Being whereas numbers are produced within the three subdivisions (being-life-intellect) of the hypostasis of Life, and since lower principles participate in all those terms which precede them in the emanative order of reality although the reverse is not the case, then all numbers possess the characteristic of Forms by this participation while Forms are numerical and others not” (103). The above extract of Proclus is included in the chapter about the properties of the divine number, the immediate sources of which is believed to be the supreme metaphysical realities. Cf. *Pl.*, *Ti.* 53b.5.

that every Form of this kind may be described on the basis of the traditional platonic pair “one-indefinite dyad”.

The subsequent development follows some strict rules. So, a special ontogenetic condition is going to arise from every Form-paradigm and every divine soul that corresponds to it. For instance, from the paradigm – or originally the Form – of the soul of Helios came in the following order the divine soul of the sun, all solar angelic souls, the daemonic souls that are found around the sun and, finally, all the individual souls that relate to it in a special way. The latter are probably those which reflect its direct manifestations in the natural universe. This kind of providing archetypal properties and the productive multiplicative process appear to all of the categories of souls. That is why these archetypes are able to combine parts with wholes as well as the first ontological conditions with the second ones in the form of a cone and not like chain. The reason why is possibly that the chain shows equal to each other states, despite the progression, while the cone indicates an expanding developing hierarchy. The fact that the souls own these intermediating skills shows that both their intellectual cause and its effects hold an analogous but much greater skill too. So, this cause, due to the special way in which each (intellectual) individual of it works, is able to provide the souls with union (in the sense of holism) and continuation (in the sense of a cosmological projection). And obviously, this ensures both the ontological quality and the co-operation of the souls, which have to stay together and should not work separately and autonomously one another. According to Proclus, quite similar is the case of the soul of Selene: there is an intellectual monad which results in lunar souls. The same process is also suggested for the chthonic soul, which is the last plane of the divine activations and shows how and in which ontological qualities-mediations the final transition from metaphysical to natural world is accomplished²⁷.

This hierarchical system of multiplications is quite impressive and reflects the complex cosmogonic play that takes place, so that the sensible world and its infinite quantitatively multitude to be formed. Teleology is dominant and develops through various planes, each of which has a special goal to achieve. However, we should keep in mind that all the individual divine souls are included into the universal Soul, despite the fact this is not analyzed here. The very Soul is defined by the rest of the individual intellectual Forms, which are considered to be the sources of its individual categories or its collective individualizations. Either way, this is an inherency found in all of the planes of Proclus’ metaphysical system, in the sense of typical applications of the ontological pair ‘one-multitude’.

Following his analysis, it becomes clear that Proclus insists on describing what is really happening, in order to justify in a rational way and with proofs the resulting from the metaphysical procedures effects. He always looks for a Form, in order to ensure, through its paradigmatic function, the main source of the process of production of beings. In order to avoid the risk of stagnation, he introduces the concept of ‘procession’. So, he manages to make the transition from the absolute to the increasingly individual regarding the ontolog-

27 Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.1–22.

ical integrity, which however multiplies the projections due to an ontological descent²⁸. In this process, the relations among the terms that co-constitute the developing ontological system are preserved and, regardless of the extent of the development, the primary properties are kept and pass on from the superiors to the inferiors, which hold them in a more specific way. Moreover, since the hypostatic properties are increased by the presence and the activation of the number two, the growth rate keeps following the original plan. The metaphysical world is ontologically perfect and that is why any external intervention on the way in which it works is really unnecessary. It is also out of the question, since unity – in the sense of integrity – determines the hierarchically structured regularity that is projected by the two. According to Proclus, the dominant in each case ontological relation reflects the unity and is defined by the participation of the inferior to the superior, which follows the terms set by the superior and activated by the inferior.

Hierarchized functions are *mutatis mutandis* found in the natural world too. For instance, an individual soul, despite the fact that it has been placed in the most inferior plane of development, participates, through its superior intermediates, to the properties of the Form that is found at the beginning of the procedures that it determines. Approaching in a slightly different way on the basis of the principle of analogy, Proclus explains that, just like the one monad of the transcendental-divine psychic paradigms produces the Soul of the world, similarly the monads, which constitute a multitude, in the sense of the possibilities that they own in order to manifest themselves, produce many souls; each one of them produces the number that is able to produce. It should be noted that there is hierarchy both in depth and in width, as well as that the each monad appears in a special way. So, the general monad contains all the individual series of souls in a simple way, while the general-individual ones include the seeds of their series, for instance, one of them includes the seed of the sequence of Helios, another one of Kronos and so on²⁹.

In the case discussed here, one sees the way in which every primary monad, following the production planning, is individualized. This development, of course, presupposes the principle on intermediate-middle realities, which functionally connect the superiors with the inferiors, since they possess the properties of both. So, in the last phase of these procedures, each worldly soul, since it appears after the the transcendental formations have taken place, expands the necessary archetype of it to the last levels of the corresponding to it sequence in the hierarchical ontological system. At this point, every worldly soul not only is determined by its supreme realities, but also multiplies their properties. «Ἐκ τῶν ἐκεῖ μέτρων ἐγκόσμοι ψυχὰι πρῶται φανεῖσθαι διατείνουσι τὸ ἐν τούτῳ εἶδος ἄχρι τῶν τελευταίων

²⁸ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.22–23: Πᾶσαι γὰρ καθ’ ἐν εἶδος ὑπέστησαν τῆς ὑφέσεως σφζομένης. “And all of them are produced by one Idea when the succession by descent is maintained” (Morrow–Dillon, 181). Also, Trouillard, *La mystagogie de Proclus*, 53–70, who briefly explains the following: “Entre deux extremes aussi éloignés l’un de l’autre que la simplicité pure et l’extrapolation corporelle il faut ménager de multiples médiations, Car la procession ne peut souffrir de vide. Pour qu’elle soit cohérente, il faut qu’elle soit continue, ces deux caractères s’exprimant par le même mot *συνεχής*” (66).

²⁹ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.23–24. For the general principles of this relegation, cf. *Inst.*, prop. 21, 24.1–33, where some principles of causality are also presented. Cf. Charles-Saget, *L’architecture du divin*, 239–40).

τῆς αὐτῶν σειρᾶς ψυχῶν»³⁰. So, the transition from the metaphysical to physical world follows specific procedures, while the system preserves the properties of both the homogeneous and heterogeneous monism, which may also be described with the pair ‘one–multitude’, which appears in many hierarchically structured ways. Likeness here ensures the unchangeability of the archetypes, though some changes do take place, while unlikeness contributes to the development to new planes. These two categories are not opposed to each other, but they complement each other, so that the physical world to be formed, with actually teleological characteristics according to Proclus’ principles.

III. Intellect as the absolute regulator of the way in which the souls exist

Proclus, then, attempts to provide some more details on the procedures of the metaphysical plane for which the Intellect is responsible. According to his description, the Intellect, since it is the supreme metaphysical reality, includes primarily the Forms of the souls, which has originally produced with no other intermediate co-causes, in the sense that it was self-activated. The only intermediates to be used are its Forms; but these are only immediate expressions of its ontological nature. Each Form is both one and multitude, since as a cause it contains in its own special way the multitude of the souls that will emerge and which as individuals depend on it. Relying on what we have already examined, each soul has acquired its existence according to its Form–paradigm in the following sequence: the superior plane contains the Forms–paradigms of the divine souls, in which the Forms–paradigms of the individual souls are included in an inferior way³¹. At this point, Proclus gives the example of the platonic *Timaeus*. So, he mentions that, after an explanation on how the divine souls acquire existence and how individual souls are produced, the genera of the latter, which also take part in their production, were named “remainders” of the genera that define the divine souls³². He obviously relates the divine genera of the Platonic dialogue to the abovementioned Forms–paradigms. He also underlines that in the same dialogue, after the discussion about the hypostases of the souls, it was said that they were distributed in an equal way to the stars³³.

³⁰ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.34–36. “These worldly souls, which are first manifestations of the measures established on high, extend this one form down to the lowest souls in their respective series” (Morrow–Dillon, 181).

³¹ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.36–819.5. Concerning the inclusion of the created into its creative source, cf. Procl., *Inst*, prop. 65, 62.13–23.

³² Cf. Pl., *Ti.* 39e.6–7 [*Platon Oeuvres complètes: Timee et Critias*, ed. Albert Rivaud (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1925)]: Τοῦτο δὴ τὸ κατὰλοιπον ἀπειργάζετο αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ παραδείγματος ἀποτυπούμενος φύσιν. “In carrying out this final task of his, the god, of course, took the model as the exemplar he was to copy” [*Plato: Timaeus and Critias*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 28]. In general, Plato here discusses his astronomical thoughts. Geometry takes over the most important role and explains the phenomena as both to their distribution and structure within the world.

³³ Cf. Pl., *Ti.*, 41d–e: Ἐυστήσας δὲ τὸ πᾶν διείλε ψυχὰς ἰσαριθμούς τοῖς ἄστροις, ἔνειμε θ’ ἐκάστην πρὸς ἕκαστον. “Once he had a complete mixture, he divided it up into as many souls as there are stars and he assigned each soul to a star” (Waterfield, 31).

Combining the views on panpsychism with those expressed earlier, Proclus points out that the Intellect, according to both the content of the Forms (paradigms) and the numbers that exist within it, has distributed these particular ontological realities as requirements to all the natural beings that are going to be produced. So, with regard to the general regulative productive principles, it is activated in an appropriate to its ontological nature way. That is to say, it somehow works by following the determinations caused by an inner necessity and causality, which do not affect its freedom³⁴. One could say that it observes itself and acts in an analogous way, so as its projections to be reflected in its products, the content and structure of which show how the Intellect has acted; so, both the content of the natural world and the reason why it exists will be explained too.

Taking into account these functions-interventions, Proclus reasonably raises the following question: why the distributions of the Intellect differ from one another and why do they sometimes relate to the sun while others to the moon or to another star? According to his view, the answer to this question should take into consideration what the particular creative starting points of the metaphysical universe are, since they reveal a plan for distinct multiplications. In addition, this plan is obvious in the things that, since they are parts of the physical reality, are necessarily perceivable. So, it arises that the Intellect creates some souls according to the solar Form, some others according to the lunar and so on³⁵. Proclus reasonably mentions that every soul is formed according to a unique and specific way; that is why they are different one another and that is why they participate in different degree to the common Form on which they depend. «Καὶ πᾶσαι (sc. αἱ ψυχαὶ) μὲν πρὸς ἓν καὶ καθ' ἓν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡσαύτως τοῦ εἶδους μετελήχασιν»³⁶. Following his conclusion, it arises, firstly, that the Forms project-reveal themselves in one of the higher metaphysical planes following a specific order and, secondly, that every soul includes within its hypostasis in a special way the Form from which it has come. Furthermore, every soul is unique and unrepeatable and has come into existence after a special ontological process that took place for a special reason. And this uniqueness is not due to the fact that the metaphysical requirements are ontologically different, but because the eidetic properties provided by them to the planes of the world are different. There is a metaphysical planning that results in variety, which appears in the natural world.

So, it is necessary, every Form that produces a soul to produce as well a state of infinity, in order both the – unquestionable – unity of the metaphysical world – despite its manifestation – and its relation to the natural world to be preserved³⁷. Proclus believes that, as soon as the former theologians understood these things, supported the idea that there are two types of causes of the souls: The first causes manifest themselves in a holistic way and each one of them produces the corresponding to it general rank of the divine souls. The

³⁴ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 819.5–12.

³⁵ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 819.12–15.

³⁶ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 819.15–17. “And although all of them [sc. the souls] are generated in accordance with and in respect to a single Idea, they do not all participate in the Idea in the same way” (Morrow–Dillon, 182).

³⁷ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.17–24. Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, prop. 190, 166.1–25.

second causes are the individual ones, which, according to the individual Form, provide separation and division to individual souls, in a predetermined way since the first causes. It should be mentioned though, once again, that isolationism is out of question, since every soul, regardless of the Form on which it depends, carries also the rest. Under one condition: all these Forms exist only once in themselves. In all other times, they have been transformed into properties and functions, depending on what the function of the main Form is³⁸. So, the all-inclusive model is here the dominant one.

Conclusions

One the basis of what has been investigated, it appears that Proclus flexibly and convincingly attempts to connect in a special way the metaphysical world with the natural one, without falling into contradictions. Without violating the priority and the unchangeable character of the first world, he manages to prove that it is a necessary preliminary stage for the development of the second world. In other words, within the boundaries of the first world, which do not change, the conditions for the development of the second world are established. Actually, the first world does not ontologically change at all, since its main quality is over-plenitude³⁹. In this way, Proclus proves the theory on intermediates, which, according to his opinion, are the objective ontological terms and the unquestionable necessity for any further procedure, so that no confusion-assimilation between the ontological planes will emerge. Apart from these, however, the text that was discussed may easily be described as an attempt of a rational or scientific structure of Metaphysics. Therefore, it arises that this short but one of a kind text shows the way in which the Neoplatonist Scholar structures his epistemology. The methodological tools that he uses for expressing the thoughts that were analyzed are the following:

a) *The principle of analogy*: this is a flexible logical process used by Proclus, in order to describe and to explain the metaphysical world, as far as this is possible. It is applied both to similar and non-similar conditions and it is not necessarily based on definitions; perhaps only in a general context. More specifically, Proclus describes the properties of a gen-

³⁸ Cf. Procl., in *Prm.*, 818.24–29. Also, Trouillard, *L'Un et l'âme selon Proclus*, 27–50, who suggests the following about the difference between Proclus and Aristotle, regarding the issue discussed here: “La logique néoplatonicienne est ici l'inverse de celle d'Aristote. Ce dernier ne connaît que l'universel constitué, simple projection, selon les néoplatoniciens, de l'universel constituant. En celui-ci la compréhension est raison directe de l'extension, le plus étendu étant le plus fondamental et le plus efficace. Il ne reçoit pas ses différences du dehors, mais se les donne du dedans. Comme des lois opératoires, les genres enveloppent leurs espèces, et celles-ci les singuliers. S'il n'y a pas une idée de chaque âme dans sa cause, il y a au moins une raison génératrice de la chaîne des différences formelles” (45–46). Trouillard included the above comments into Proclus' broader discussion about the relationship between universal and individual according to the way in which he explains it – actually in multiple successive levels both in width and in depth – in his commentary on the Platonic dialogue *Prm.*

³⁹ Cf. for instance Procl., *Inst.*, prop.27, 30.25–32.9. We have to mention that props. 26, 27, 28 and 29 of the *Inst* constitute one of the most systematic axes of Proclus' epistemological foundation of causality, which is actually structured in a geometrical way. For a commentary on the props. 26, 27, 28 and 29, cf. Dodds, *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, 213–7. On the concept of causality in Neoplatonism, cf. Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 45–81.

eral ontological principle. In a following phase, this description will turn into a definition. Then, according to this definition, which works as a clear basis, he defines the relations of likeness or unlikeness among the beings, which as individuals are included in a different to each other degree in the general principle that he himself has defined. Comparing these beings, he specifies which one of them has the properties of the general principle and in what degree. In this way, he composes the ontological function of the analogy with its gnoseological one. It becomes clear that Proclus' interpretation about the natural world – and the relations of the phenomena formed within it –, is analogically transferred to the metaphysical world.

In fact, in the text that has been discussed, analogy confirms archetypical relations (or relations between the originals and their images); it measures quantitative distributions and identifies qualitative similarities. The purpose is to show what the structure or the nature of a metaphysical object is, by following its properties, energies and general relations which humans as thinking subjects consider to have been manifested on the basis of the experience of the natural beings. Analogy is not used by Proclus in order to define categorically the difference of the metaphysical from the natural world. First of all, he attempts to define the boundaries and the relativity or the abilities of the human mind and, secondly, what the metaphysical world in the sense of a cause possesses⁴⁰. This is a positive ascent for Proclus, who in this way evaluates in a positive way the attempts-achievements of the human mind.

b) *Analysis*: in order the ontological realities to be described, their identity with themselves is required. However, since metaphysical world is considered to be dynamic, it is considered to be active too. This kind of motion is an ontological property which for human turns into a way of studying and understanding what takes place. So, nothing is believed to be motionless; it is approached as an *ad extra* projection that develops relations, which both human conceives them in a basically intuitive way. Every metaphysical being is a hypostasis which, following an inner dialectic – i.e. projecting its potentials, being pushed by a somehow inner power –, reveals all of its properties in the form of new hypostases (effects) or, from the gnoseological and rational points of view, in the form of attributes. This process does not ontologically alter it. Instead, it describes its dynamic tendency or the changes-adjustments of its projections caused by a specific plan. Therefore, the number of its projections does not affect the condition – principle of identity, but shows the active and entelechial nature of it over its products. Human thought attempts to analyze any changes it believes that they take place over the metaphysical projections. Moreover, it attempts to explain for what purpose they take place⁴¹. In this level of research, there are many models of interpretation to be used. From the ontological point of view,

⁴⁰ A typical example of the principle of analogy is the following text: Εἰ ὡς πρὸς αἰῶνα χρόνος, οὕτω ψυχὴ πρὸς νοῦν, [...] εἰκὼν δὲ αἰῶνος χρόνος, ἀνάγκη καὶ ψυχὴν εἰκόνα εἶναι νοῦ. "And if soul is to intellect as time is to eternity, [...] and time is an image of eternity, then soul must be a likeness of intellect" (*in Prm.*, 817.15–18, Morrow–Dillon, 180). Another typical example is the text in which the developments of the souls are described (cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 818.3–24).

⁴¹ Cf. Procl., *in Prm.*, 818.36–819.5, where what results from the manifestations of the creative Intellect is presented in detail. Cf. Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 86–8.

analysis may be defined as the gradual projection of the inner powers which a metaphysical entity owns. From the gnoseological point of view, it is the way in which human mind explains the projections and eventually reaches the source from which they came. That is to say, gnoseology follows the opposite course to that of ontology and could be characterized as composing or recomposing.

c) *Hypothetical syllogisms*: in order to confirm some theoretical judgments, Proclus uses hypotheses, which are either disproved or confirmed. Despite the fact that in the text that we have discussed hypotheses are not easy to be elaborated and are mostly used in the sense of questions, they are, at least indirectly, epistemologically important. They indicate the reflection of the human thought and its intention to define, as far as this is possible, the ontological planes, by following rational processes. Each hypothesis starts from a specific point in order a conclusion to be rationally drawn, from which ambiguities and general unclear meanings would be excluded⁴².

The gnoseological product that finally results from the combination of these three methodological “tools” used by Proclus is the gradual formulation of an analytical and composing definition, which indicates the constancy and the multidimensional nature of the ontological conditions, on the basis of the worldview in which he approaches them and which is impressively holistic. That is to say, he does not just comment on the Platonic texts. As in all of his other theoretical endeavors, here too, the choices made by him, which are original, are quite clear and they are placed within a broad approach of the Platonic ontology under a theological perspective⁴³. This is a point of view that insists especially on the infinite multiplication of the intermediate entities and powers, which show in detail how the two worlds come in communication. It should be mentioned that in Plato too the intermediates are a very important ontological topic (one may see, for instance, *Philebus*⁴⁴); however, in Proclus, this topic is elaborated in detail. So, in the case of the souls too, the topic of intermediates holds a key role.

More specifically, considering that the Soul is part of both the metaphysical world, as a single universal presence (essentially in itself), and the natural one, as multitude of exem-

⁴² A typical case of hypothetical thinking is the following: Εἰ οὖν ἡ νοερά οὐσία πᾶσα τῶν ὄντως ὄντων ἐστίν, οὐτ’ ἂν εἰκόνα αὐτὴν οὐτ’ ἂν εἰδωλὸν ὀνομάζειν πρέποι [...]. Οὐκ ἄρα εἰκὼν καὶ παράδειγμα ἐν ταῖς νοεραῖς οὐσίαις. “If then all intelligent being belongs to what is really real, it would not do to call it either a copy or a likeness [...]. Consequently, there is no relation of likeness to paradigm among the intelligent beings” (cf. in *Prm.*, 816.20–32, Morrow–Dillon, 179–180). For a Neo-Kantian approach of Proclus’ hypothesis, cf. Beierwaltes, *Proklos. Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik*, 270–2), who suggests the following: “Das Problem der Hypothese bei Proklos ist in der Forschung bisher nur aus dem Horizont neukantianischer Philosophie ausführlicher angegangen worden” (270).

⁴³ The roots of the above-mentioned relation are mainly found in the first book of his *Theol. Plat.*. Cf. Stephen Gersh, “Proclus’ Theological Methods. The Programme of Theol. Plat. I, 4”, in *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. Allain Philippe Segonds and Carlos Steel (Louvain–Paris: Leuven University Press, 2000), 15–27.

⁴⁴ Cf. Goldschmidt, *Les dialogues de Platon*, 235–56. Nikolaos Ioannis Mpousoulas, *Φίληβος ἢ Περί ἡδονῆς* (Thessaloniki: Egnatia, 1978). For an overall view of these issues on the basis of the similarities and the differences between the Platonic Academy and the Aristotelian Lyceum, cf. Léon Robin, *La théorie platonicienne des Idées et des Nombres d’après Aristote* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1908).

plified presences (in its energy projection) and that, while it remains unchanged, it moves as well, it comes that it is a middle ontological reality that connects the two worlds. Since in both the ways in which it exists-manifests, it relates to the archetypal Forms, which are considered to be part of the Intellect and hierarchically come before the Soul, it arises that through the process of psychogony each and every soul gains existence-being, which is enriched by the activation of the archetypal properties being provided, that is, they all hold the idioms of being, life and intellect. So, the Soul exists as a sperm within the Being and contributes to the appearance of the Intellect in the sensible world. Taking into account that the Soul is the ontological reality that presented for the very first time the properties of generation and separation, it comes that the unseparated Form comes before it and defines the way in which the Soul will be structured, which is both the causal and paradigmatic source of the individual souls, that is, of the multitude of the natural-empirical world, which appears after the process of the descending “procession” and indirectly comes from the Intellect too, which, in that case, is creative source of it. The multiplications described are quite impressive in variety and contribute to the actually composite psychogonic-cosmogonic play that takes place so as the sensible world to come into existence⁴⁵.

45 For a more thorough approach of the position of the Soul and souls in Proclus’ system, one may study his treatise under the title *In Platonis Alcibiadem I*, where the cognitive procedures of the human soul are elaborated in a synthetic way. Exactly on this basis, it is explained how human being communicates with himself, the social and natural environment and eventually God. Self-knowledge is considered to be one of the leading endeavors of the human soul and a fundamental requirement for the theoretical and practical Reason. In this treatise, the ontological requirements are also examined in detail, while the grounds of the cognitive procedures, which are based on “being”, are approached in an epistemological way. We should mention that this treatise is of great importance for the history of the ancient Greek gnoseology, while, it also shows how Aristotelianism and partially Stoicism are utilized by the Platonic tradition. It constitutes a philosophical attempt in which the philosophy of the subject is systematically structured. However, taking into account that Proclus intends to form a holistic philosophical system, it is necessary to approach every treatise of his having in mind the rest too. [For the discussion on soul in *in Alc.*, cf. Gregory MacIsaac, “The Nous of the Partial Soul in Proclus’ *Commentary on the First Alcibiades* of Plato”, *Dionysius* XXIX (2011): 29–60]. So, the ontological grounds of Proclus’ *Commentary on the Platonic dialogue Alcibiades I* are derived from his *Commentaries on the Platonic dialogues Parmenides and Timaeus*. The former basically describes the metaphysical existence-function of the souls, while the latter approaches the physical one. Combining these two, it becomes clear how the transcendent world of souls turns into immanent. Furthermore, the comments on *Alcibiades I* compose the conceptual and methodological material, in order the ontological topics presented in the last mentioned treatises to be elaborated. Combining the content of these texts, it could be suggested that Proclus is the most important founder of psychogony. And he imparted this knowledge to his students, by devoting the last – and quite extensive – chapter of his *Institutio theologica* to the ways in which the souls appear. Cf. Procl., *Inst.*, props.184–211, 160.13–184.20 with Dodds’ excellent comments (*Proclus: The Elements of Theology*). Cf. Lucas Siorvanes, *Proclus: Neo Platonic philosophy and science* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 165–73). Proclus also elaborates the question of psychogony in a special cosmological and natural-empirical way in his commentary on *Timaeus*, for instance see the third book, 289.5–22. And, of course, questions about the soul are also found in Proclus’ one of the most important treatises, *Theologia Platonica*. Cf. André Motte, “Discours théologique et prière d’invocation. Proclus héritier et interprète de Platon”, in *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. Allain Philippe Segonds and Carlos Steel (Louvain–Paris: Leuven University Press, 2000), 91–108. Note that Motte, discussing this topic, compares and finds the similarities of this treatise with Plato’s dialogues (mainly *Phaedrus* and *Timaeus*).

Relying on the above, we believe that in the extract which has been investigated, Proclus directly connects Epistemology with Ontology and Metaphysics. The question is whether he adds to Metaphysics a primary epistemological meaning. His purpose is clearly to describe the leading logical axioms on which he establishes his gnoseological system. However, if this was his only intention, he would automatically disestablish metaphysical realism – which he really respects – and he would just describe logical – mathematical relations. His actual intention is to show the ontological requirements that make his gnoseological views foolproof and reliable. His realism is not only explicit, but also tends to become a methodological procedure. Therefore, Epistemology is the highest point of the consistent way in which he organizes, up to a certain point, his Metaphysics and which turns him into the most systematic philosopher of the Neoplatonic School. It should be noted that this is also a quality of the last principal of the Neoplatonic School, Damascius, who proves himself equal to his predecessor⁴⁶. Although Greek philosophy very soon ends, it still preserves, actually with impressive performances, its scientific and dialectical-critical orientation. Parenthetically, we have to mention that everything we have studied about the production and the activation of the souls are almost completely absent from Christianity – at least since the fourth century and then –, which insists on an anthropological point of view and rejects the possibility the souls to pre-exist in the metaphysical world. Of course, there are similarities between Neoplatonism and Christianity mostly regarding the ethical rules that a human soul has to follow in accordance to its conscious free will. However, the roots of the moral principles in the two worldviews are clearly different⁴⁷.

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⁴⁶ On Damascius' epistemological views, see his *Pr.* (*Ἀπορίαι καὶ λύσεις περὶ τῶν πρώτων ἀρχῶν*). Cf. Carole Me-try-Tresson, *L'aporie ou l'expérience des limites de la pensée dans le Péri Archôn de Damaskios* (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2012).

⁴⁷ The main difference lies on the fact that the source of Christian morality is Jesus Christ as he is mainly presented in the New Testament. Neo-Platonists clearly reject such a determination and place the regulatory sources of their morality in the adopted by them polytheism. However, the moral categories that both these worldviews use are almost the same. For instance, cf. the fourth chapter of Dionysius the Areopagite *d.n.*, PG3, 748A–813D and Proclus' treatise *De mal. sub.*, pr.2–58 [*Proclus: De malorum subsistentia. De l'existence du mal*, ed. Daniel Isaak (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982)]. In both texts, the good found in the created beings is considered to be an ontological gift provided by God's infinite goodness, while evil is believed to be a false and unnatural hypostasis, a parypostasis. Furthermore, the ancient Greek virtues, prudence, temperance, justice, fortitude and friendship, which are found in all of Proclus' works, are found in Christian texts too, since the time of Clement of Alexandria and Origen (third century AD). On evil, cf. Eugenio Corsini, *De divinis nominibus dello Pseudo-Dionigi e i commenti neoplatonici al Parmenide* (Torino: Università di Torino, 1962), 7–35, who defines both the similarities and the differences of the two thinkers, using the appropriate extracts.

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Kant über das Verhältnis des teleologischen zum moralischen Gottesbeweis

Es wäre, so schreibt Immanuel Kant in der ersten *Kritik*, „nicht allein trostlos, sondern auch ganz umsonst“, dem Ansehen des teleologischen Gottesbeweises „etwas entziehen zu wollen“. Die Vernunft „kann durch keine Zweifel subtiler [...] Spekulation so niedergedrückt werden, dass sie nicht aus jeder grüblerischen Unentschlossenheit [...] durch einen Blick, den sie auf die Wunder der Natur und die Majestät des Weltbaus wirft, gerissen werden sollte, um sich von Größe zu Größe bis zur allerhöchsten, vom Bedingten zur Bedingung, bis zum obersten und unbedingten Urheber zu erheben“¹. „Dieses aus der physischen Teleologie genommene Argument“, so die dritte *Kritik*, „ist verehrungswert. Es tut gleiche Wirkung zur Überzeugung auf den gemeinen Verstand, als auf den subtilsten Denker“². Dieses Lob wird jedoch sofort eingeschränkt. Der physikotheologische Beweis kann „das Dasein eines höchsten Wesens niemals allein dartun“³, und so ist zu fragen, wodurch „dieser Beweis so gewaltigen Einfluss auf das Gemüt“ gewinnt. Es geht nicht um „Rührung und Erhebung [...] durch die Wunder der Natur“, sondern um die Überzeugungskraft, die „Beurteilung durch kalte Vernunft“⁴.

Nach der Analyse in der ersten *Kritik* ist der Beweis nicht überzeugend. Der Schluss geht von der in der Welt durchgängig zu beobachtenden Ordnung und Zweckmäßigkeit auf das Dasein einer ihnen proportionierten Ursache. „Der Begriff dieser Ursache aber muss uns etwas ganz *Bestimmtes* von ihr zu erkennen geben“, und er kann kein anderer sein als der von einem Wesen, das alle Vollkommenheit besitzt. Die Prädikate „von *sehr großer*“ Macht sagen nicht, „was das Ding an sich selbst sei, sondern sind nur Verhältnisbestimmungen von der Größe des Gegenstandes [...] Wo es auf Größe (der Vollkommenheit) eines Dinges überhaupt ankommt, da gibt es keinen bestimmten Begriff als *den*, so die ganze mögliche Vollkommenheit begreift, und nur das All (omnitude) der Realität ist im Begriffe durchgängig bestimmt.“ Dieser Schritt zur absoluten Totalität ist auf empirischem Weg unmöglich; niemand kann beanspruchen, „das Verhältnis der von ihm beobachteten Weltgröße [...] zur Allmacht, der Weltordnung zur höchsten Weisheit, der Weltseinheit zur absoluten Einheit des Urhebers etc. einzusehen. Also kann die Physikotheologie

1 Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 1781, A 624.

2 Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790, B 470f.

3 Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 624.

4 Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 471.

keinen bestimmten Begriff von der obersten Weltursache geben [...] Der Schritt zur absoluten Totalität ist durch den empirischen Weg ganz und gar unmöglich. Nun tut man ihn aber doch in physikotheologischen Beweise. Welches Mittels bedient man sich also wohl, über eine so weite Kluft zu kommen?“ Dem physikotheologischen Beweis liegt der kosmologische, „diesem aber der ontologische Beweis [...] zum Grunde“⁵. Das aber ist ein apriorischer Beweis, und Kant fragt, wie man es anfangen wolle, seine Kenntnis ganz und gar apriori zu erweitern, also „einem von uns selbst ausgedachten Begriff seine objektive Realität zu versichern. Wie der Verstand auch zu diesem Begriffe gelangt sein mag, so kann doch das Dasein des Gegenstandes desselben nicht analytisch in demselben gefunden werden, weil eben darin die *Existenz* des Objekts besteht, dass dieses *außer dem Gedanken* an sich selbst gesetzt ist“⁶. Alle synthetischen Grundsätze des Verstandes sind jedoch „von immanentem Gebrauch; zur Erkenntnis eines höchsten Wesens aber wird ein transzendenter Gebrauch derselben erfordert“; folglich kann es, „wenn man nicht moralische Gesetze zum Grunde legt, oder zum Leitfaden braucht, überall keine Theologie der Vernunft geben“.⁷

Der erste Schritt der *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* zu einer solchen Theologie der Vernunft ist die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von spekulativer und praktischer Vernunft. Setzt die spekulative der praktischen Vernunft Grenzen, so dass die praktische Vernunft nichts weiter als gegeben denken darf, als was die spekulative Vernunft ihr vorgibt? Dagegen stellt Kant die These vom Primat der reinen praktischen Vernunft. Sie besagt, dass das Interesse der spekulativen Vernunft dem Interesse der reinen praktischen Vernunft untergeordnet ist. Das Interesse des spekulativen Gebrauchs der Vernunft „besteht in der *Erkenntnis* des Objekts bis zu den höchsten Prinzipien a priori, das des praktischen Gebrauchs in der Bestimmung des *Willens*, in Ansehung des letzten und vollständigen Zwecks“. Welches Interesse ist das oberste? Angenommen, die reine praktische Vernunft „hätte für sich ursprüngliche Prinzipien a priori, mit denen gewisse theoretische Positionen unzertrennlich verbunden wären, die sich gleichwohl aller möglichen Einsicht der spekulativen Vernunft entzögen“, so ist die Frage, ob die spekulative Vernunft „diese Sätze aufnehmen, und sie, ob sie gleich für sie überschwänglich sind, mit ihren Begriffen, als einen fremden, auf sie übertragenen Besitz, zu vereinigen suchen müsse, oder ob sie berechtigt sei, ihren eigenen abgesonderten Interessen hartnäckig zu folgen“ und „alles als leere Vernünfteleien auszuschlagen, was seine objektive Realität nicht durch augenscheinliche in der Erfahrung aufzustellende Beispiele beglaubigen kann“.⁸ Alles Interesse, so die Antwort, „ist zuletzt praktisch [...] und selbst das der spekulativen Vernunft nur bedingt und im praktischen Gebrauche allein vollständig“⁹.

Die Physikotheologie führt nicht zu einem genau bestimmten Begriff des Urwesens. „Da wir diese Welt nur zu einem kleinen Teile kennen [...], so können wir von ihrer Ordnung, Zweckmäßigkeit und Größe wohl auf einen *weisen, gütigen, mächtigen* etc. Urheber

5 Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 627-630.

6 Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 639.

7 Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 636.

8 Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, 1788, A 216f.

9 Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, A 219.

derselben schließen, aber nicht auf seine *Allwissenheit, Allgütigkeit, Allmacht*, u.s.w.“; dagegen führt die Moralthologie zu einem Welturheber „von *höchster Vollkommenheit*“.¹⁰ Die reine praktische Vernunft sucht zu dem praktisch-Bedingten das Unbedingte, „die unbedingte Totalität des *Gegenstandes* der reinen praktischen Vernunft, unter dem Namen des *höchsten Guts*“¹¹. Das höchste als das vollendete (*consummatum*) Gut umfasst Tugend und, „in Proportion der Sittlichkeit [...] ausgeteilt“, Glückseligkeit.¹² Wir sollen das höchste Gut zu befördern suchen; also muss das höchste Gut möglich sein. Glückseligkeit beruht auf der Übereinstimmung der Natur mit unseren Zwecken. Das „handelnde vernünftige Wesen in der Welt ist aber doch nicht zugleich Ursache der Welt und der Natur selbst“. Also wird das Dasein einer Ursache der gesamten Natur, „welche den Grund dieses Zusammenhangs, nämlich der genauen Übereinstimmung der Glückseligkeit mit der Sittlichkeit, enthalte, *postuliert*“¹³. Das Objekt der reinen praktischen Vernunft ist also nur möglich „unter Voraussetzung eines Welturhebers *von höchster Vollkommenheit* [...] Er muss *allwissend* sein, um mein Verhalten bis zum Innersten meiner Gesinnung in allen möglichen Fällen und in aller Zukunft zu erkennen; *allmächtig*, um die ihm angemessenen Folgen zu erteilen; ebenso *allgegenwärtig, ewig* u.s.w.“¹⁴

Das „aus der physischen Teleologie genommene Argument [...] tut gleiche Wirkung zur Überzeugung auf den gemeinen Verstand als auf den subtilsten Denker [...] Allein, wodurch gewinnt dieser Beweis so gewaltigen Einfluss auf das Gemüt, vornehmlich in der Beurteilung durch kalte Vernunft?“¹⁵ Nach einem Prinzip der Urteilskraft, so argumentiert die dritte *Kritik*, kann bei Naturprodukten mit einer bloß mechanischen Erklärungsart nichts ausgerichtet werden; vielmehr muss „die Beurteilung solcher Produkte jederzeit von uns zugleich einem teleologischen Prinzip untergeordnet werden“¹⁶. Man kann von einem organisierten Wesen nochmals fragen: Wozu ist es da? Denn wir stellen uns in ihnen „schon eine Kausalität nach Zwecken zu ihrer inneren Möglichkeit, einen schaffenden Verstand vor, und beziehen dieses tätige Vermögen auf den Bestimmungsgrund desselben, die Absicht“¹⁷. Man kann entweder antworten: der Zweck der Existenz ist in ihm selbst, d.h. es ist nicht bloß Zweck, sondern auch Endzweck; oder: der Zweck ist außer ihm in anderen Naturwesen, d.h. „es existiert zweckmäßig, nicht als Endzweck, sondern notwendig zugleich als Mittel. Wenn wir aber die ganze Natur durchgehen, so finden wir in ihr, als Natur, kein Wesen, welches auf den Vorzug, Endzweck der Schöpfung zu sein, Anspruch machen könnte“. Was für die Natur ein letzter Zweck sein könnte, kann „doch als Naturding niemals ein *Endzweck* sein“.¹⁸

¹⁰ Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, A 251f.

¹¹ Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, A 194.

¹² Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, A 199.

¹³ Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, A 225.

¹⁴ Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, A 252.

¹⁵ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 471.

¹⁶ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 367.

¹⁷ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 380.

¹⁸ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 382.

Wenn die Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur ausschließlich mechanisch erklärt wird, kann man nicht fragen, wozu die Dinge in der Welt da sind. Nehmen wir aber für die Zweckverbindung in der Welt die Kausalität einer absichtlich wirkenden Ursache an, dann können wir nicht bei der Frage stehen bleiben, wozu die Naturprodukte diese oder jene Form haben und von der Natur in dieses oder jenes Verhältnis zueinander gesetzt sind, sondern „da einmal ein Verstand gedacht wird, der als Ursache solcher Formen angesehen werden muss [...], so muss auch in demselben nach dem objektiven Grunde gefragt werden, der diesen produktiven Verstand zu einer Wirkung dieser Art bestimmt haben könne, welcher dann der Endzweck ist, wozu dergleichen Dinge da sind“¹⁹. „Endzweck ist derjenige Zweck, der keines anderen als Bedingung seiner Möglichkeit bedarf“²⁰ und den die Natur deshalb nicht hervorbringen kann. „Nun haben wir nur eine einzige Art von Wesen in der Welt, deren Kausalität [...] auf Zwecke gerichtet und doch zugleich so beschaffen ist, dass das Gesetz, nach welchem sie sich Zwecke zu bestimmen haben, von ihnen selbst als unbedingt und von Naturbedingungen unabhängig, an sich aber als notwendig, vorgestellt wird. Das Wesen dieser Art ist der Mensch, aber als Noumenon betrachtet [...]. Wenn nun die Dinge der Welt [...] einer nach Zwecken handelnden obersten Ursache bedürfen, so ist der Mensch der Schöpfung Endzweck; denn ohne diesen wäre die Kette der einander untergeordneten Zwecke nicht vollständig gegründet; und nur im Menschen, aber auch in diesem nur als Subjekte der Moralität, ist die unbedingte Gesetzgebung in Ansehung der Zwecke anzutreffen, welche ihn also allein fähig macht, ein Endzweck zu sein, dem die ganze Natur teleologisch untergeordnet ist“.²¹

Der Endzweck der Natur ist der Mensch als moralisches Wesen. Diese These impliziert eine wechselseitige Beziehung von Moral und Natur. Die Kausalität des Menschen ist bezogen „auf einen Endzweck, der von uns in der Welt beabsichtigt werden muss“, und die Natur muss „die äußere Möglichkeit seiner Ausführung“ gewährleisten. Damit stellt sich die Frage, ob diese moralische Teleologie uns „nötige, über die Welt hinaus zu gehen und zu jener Beziehung der Natur auf das Sittliche in uns ein verständiges oberstes Prinzip zu suchen, um die Natur auch in Beziehung auf die moralische innere Gesetzgebung und deren mögliche Ausführung uns als zweckmäßig vorzustellen“.²² Die Antwort ergibt sich aus folgenden Schritten: (1) Der Endzweck, den die Vernunft a priori angeben muss, kann kein anderer sein als der Mensch unter moralischen Gesetzen. (2) Das moralische Gesetz schreibt uns einen Endzweck vor: „das höchste durch Freiheit mögliche Gut in der Welt“²³. (3) Das höchste in der Welt mögliche und von uns zu befördernde physische Gut ist Glückseligkeit in Übereinstimmung mit dem Sittengesetz. (4) Diese beiden Erfordernisse des gebotenen Endzwecks können wir uns nicht als durch bloße Naturursachen verknüpft vorstellen. (5) „Folglich müssen wir eine moralische Weltursache (einen Welturhe-

¹⁹ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 397.

²⁰ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 396.

²¹ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 398f.

²² Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 419f.

²³ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 423.

ber) annehmen, um uns, gemäß dem moralischen Gesetz, einen Endzweck vorzusetzen²⁴.

In dem uns vorgeschriebenen Endzweck „ist die Möglichkeit des einen Teils, nämlich der Glückseligkeit, empirisch bedingt, d.i. von der Beschaffenheit der Natur (ob sie zu diesem Zweck übereinstimme oder nicht) abhängig, und in theoretischer Rücksicht problematisch“. Zur „objektiven theoretischen Realität“ des Begriffs vom Endzweck vernünftiger Weltwesen ist aber erfordert, dass nicht nur wir einen uns a priori gegebenen Endzweck haben, sondern dass auch die Schöpfung ihrer Existenz nach einen Endzweck habe, den wir uns nicht anders denken können „als so, dass er mit dem moralischen (der allein den Begriff von einem Zweck möglich macht) übereinstimmen müsse“. Diesen Endzweck der Natur suchen wir in ihr selbst jedoch vergeblich; er kann nur in vernünftigen Wesen gesucht werden. Endzweck ist ausschließlich ein Begriff der praktischen Vernunft; er kann nicht für die theoretische Beurteilung der Natur verwendet werden. Aber durch das moralische Gesetz, das uns den Endzweck vorschreibt, haben wir einen Grund, „die Möglichkeit, Ausführbarkeit desselben, mithin auch [...] eine Natur der Dinge, die dazu übereinstimmt, anzunehmen. Also haben wir eine moralischen Grund, uns an einer Welt auch einen Endzweck der Schöpfung zu denken.“²⁵ Zu dieser Schöpfung, „d.i. der Existenz der Dinge gemäß einem *Endzwecke*“ muss jedoch „nicht bloß (wie zur Möglichkeit der Dinge der Natur, die wir als *Zwecke* zu beurteilen genötigt waren), ein verständiges, sondern ein zugleich *moralisches* Wesen als Welturheber, mithin ein *Gott* angenommen werden“. Dessen Wirklichkeit ist jedoch „bloß für den praktischen Gebrauch unserer Vernunft hinreichend dargetan“, denn diese bedarf zur Möglichkeit des ihr vorgeschriebenen Endzwecks einer Idee, durch die das Hindernis weggeräumt wird, das sich „aus dem bloßen Naturbegriff von der Welt ergibt“.²⁶ Der vom Vernunftgesetz vorgeschriebene Zweck, das höchste Gut in der Welt, muss möglich sein, und das ist nur dann der Fall, wenn die Natur vom Schöpfer entsprechend geordnet ist. Die Menschen konnten sich „niemals ein anderes Prinzip der Möglichkeit der Vereinigung der Natur mit ihrem inneren Sittengesetz erdenken, als eine nach moralischen Gesetzen die Welt beherrschende oberste Ursache: weil ein als Pflicht aufgebener Endzweck in ihnen, und eine Natur ohne allen Endzweck außer ihnen, in welcher gleichwohl jener Zweck wirklich werden soll, im Widerspruche stehen“.²⁷

Dass der physisch-teleologische Beweis überzeugt, beruht nicht auf der Benutzung von Zwecken der Natur als empirischen Beweisgründen für die Existenz eines höchsten Verstandes; vielmehr „mischt sich unvermerkt der jedem Menschen beiwohnende und ihn so innigst bewegende moralische Beweisgrund in den Schluss mit ein, nach welchem man dem Wesen, welches sich so unbegreiflich künstlich in den Zwecken der Natur offenbart, auch einen Endzweck [...] beilegt, und also jenes Argument, in Ansehung des Mangelhaften, welches ihm noch anhängt, willkürlich ergänzt“. Nur der moralische Beweisgrund bringt die Überzeugung hervor; „der physisch-teleologische aber hat nur das Verdienst,

²⁴ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 424.

²⁵ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 429-432.

²⁶ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 433f.

²⁷ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B 439.

das Gemüt in der Weltbetrachtung auf den Weg der Zwecke, dadurch aber auf einen *verständigen* Welturheber zu leiten“.²⁸ Der moralische Beweis würde auch dann in Kraft bleiben, wenn wir in der Welt keinen „Stoff zur physischen Teleologie anträfen [...] und dennoch würde die Vernunft, die hier durch Naturbegriffe keine Anleitung bekommt, im Freiheitsbegriffe und in den sich darauf gründenden sittlichen Ideen einen praktisch-hinreichenden Grund finden, den Begriff des Urwesens diesen angemessen, d.i. als einer Gottheit, und die Natur (selbst unser eigenes Dasein) als einen jener und ihren Gesetzen gemäßen Endzweck zu postulieren, und zwar in Rücksicht auf das unnachlassliche Gebot der praktischen Vernunft.“²⁹

²⁸ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilstkraft*, B 472.

²⁹ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilstkraft*, B 473f.



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God and Mammon: Fundamental Structures in Georg Simmel's Philosophy of Money

One of the lessons to be learned from Hegel's philosophy is that there is a coherent structure uniting the entire cultural field.* According to the great metaphysician, philosophy does not stand above the other areas of culture, reflecting upon them from a position of transcendence, but rather develops in tandem with politics, religion, and art. Together, these four dimensions enact the unfolding of Spirit in history, that is, the movement in which substance becomes subject, or—to put it theologically—the movement in which God becomes fully himself.

It is not my intention here to defend the Hegelian metaphysics of Spirit. The idea that there is a certain coherence to the dimensions of culture makes sense independently of Hegel's highly speculative metaphysics. Anyone studying the development of human civilization notices that the philosophy, politics, religion, and art of a particular epoch reflect each other. As an example, one could cite Erwin Panofsky's book, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*, in which the eminent art historian suggests that the architecture of the Gothic cathedrals mirrors the construction of the *summae* in which the theological thought of high scholasticism found its expression.¹ Such parallelism between thought and art—and here, in particular, architecture—is by no means a phenomenon limited to the high Middle Ages. Postmodern architecture perfectly reflects the quest of postmodern philosophy to articulate a coherent whole without thereby affirming the totalizing systems of modernity.² And there are many other examples. Thus, it is not a coincidence that Kant's transcendental idealism arose at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. Industrialization is nothing but the reflection, in the practical and economic realm, of Kant's theory according to which we cannot encounter reality as it exists in itself, but only insofar as

* Revised version of a paper presented at the *Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México* on November 24, 2017. For the invitation, I would like to express my warmest thanks to Professor Carlos McCadden, head of the *Departamento Académico de Estudios Generales*.

1 Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*, Wimmer Lecture, 1948 (Latrobe, Pa.: Archabbey Press, 1951). Panofsky was not the first scholar to suggest this parallel; for historical perspective on the parallelism thesis, one may read Joseph C. Murphy, "Nervous Tracery: Modern Analogies between Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism," *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies* 33:1 (March 2007): 75–85.

2 I have commented on this parallelism in my essay, "Penser l'Autre: De l'architectonique d'un système qui ne serait pas homogénéisant," *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 94 (1996): 311–29.

it is an object of experience structured by the parameters of human thought. Anyone who drives around a highly developed city or sits in front of a computer surfing the Internet encounters a reality that is thoroughly shaped by human structures. In a Heideggerian vein, one might say that we no longer encounter trees, but only material for lumber or furniture; we no longer see rivers and lakes, but wastewater canals and reservoirs; indeed, much of the time we no longer interact with human beings, but with service providers and consumers. In this kind of environment—one could suggest—to uphold some type of “realism” is simply to hold fast to a relic from a bygone age.

Now to dispel a possible misunderstanding, I do not mean to defend a reduction of mind to matter. My point is not to maintain that Kant devised transcendental idealism because his philosophy was determined by the urban structures of life in late eighteenth-century Königsberg. Such a theory of material substructure and intellectual superstructure fails to account for the causality that intellectual life exerts upon the material conditions in which it is rooted. (Put more simply, ideas have effects.) The point is, rather, to suggest a co-constitutionality of the various dimensions of culture, which influence and interpenetrate each other. Thus, philosophy reflects (and reflects upon) life, which reflects philosophy.

In the quaternity of cultural forms that Hegel posits, the element of economics is missing. Marx was to make up for this omission, viewing as he did human history as the unfolding not of Spirit, but of economic forces. If Marx's reductionism does not make sense, assigning economics a crucial place among the pillars of civilization does. It is against this philosophical background that this essay considers the philosophy of money.

I. A Philosophy of Money?

To connect philosophy with money must, at first, appear counterintuitive. In fact, philosophy has a long tradition of defining itself in opposition to money. In the *Republic*, the ruthless and anti-philosophical Thrasymachus wants Socrates to pay a fine should the latter lose their argument over the nature of justice. To which the prototype of the philosopher replies: “I will as soon as I have some money” (Book I, 337d). Truth-seeking and money are here presented as being incompatible.

The reality is, however, more complex, even in ancient Greece. Scholars of antiquity have noted the appearance of currency in the Greek cities at the time of the establishment of democracy and the rise of the first sages, such as Solon and the Presocratics. They have suggested that monetization represented an important element in the transition from a highly centralized, theocratic society to the classical *polis*, in which citizens exchanged arguments in the *agora* over the best course of political action. Just as politics became a matter of offering an account (*logos*) of one's views in the public arena, so currency spread wealth through the *polis* while providing an objective measurement of economic values.³ If it is correct that money and the quest for *logos* are not opposed but different sides of the same coin, so to speak—

³ For this argument, see Édouard Will, “De l'aspect éthique de l'origine grecque de la monnaie,” *Revue historique* 212 (1954): 209–31, which Jean-Pierre Vernant summarizes in *The Origins of Greek Thought* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982), 94–95.

the coin being a society in which law, truth, and value are subject to public examination—then it becomes possible to imagine philosophy as being intrinsically concerned with money.

It is precisely this idea, that philosophy and money belong together, which lies at the heart of Georg Simmel's *Philosophy of Money*. First published in 1900, *Die Philosophie des Geldes* appeared in a slightly enlarged edition in 1907, just eleven years before its author's untimely death in 1918, at the age of sixty. In this work, philosophy flows together with economic theory, cultural history, psychology, and sociology to form a densely argued and rather austere book. The original German text consists of almost 600 pages with few quotations and no footnotes, and only the most rudimentary chapter divisions. Simmel's learned German makes few concessions to the reader.

The *Philosophy of Money* represents a synthesis of Simmel's thought,⁴ having been prepared in a long series of essays that appeared in the years preceding the chef-d'oeuvre—essays such as “The Psychology of Money” (1889) and especially various pieces that were published between 1897 and 1899 as “Fragments from a ‘Philosophy of Money.’” Simmel was a master of the philosophical essay, and some of his books are in fact essay collections. The thought of the *Philosophy of Money* is so complex, the project so ambitious, that its author may have struggled to hold the whole together.

Sadly, anti-Semitic sentiments in German academe long prevented Simmel from receiving the professional recognition he deserved. Marginalized, he turned to a less academic form of philosophy, one that found expression precisely in essays for a wider audience. This, in turn, further harmed his chances of professional advancement. Thus, it was only in 1914, toward the end of his career, that he was appointed to a paid, full-time professorship at the University of Strasbourg (in the “provinces,” not in his native Berlin, which had been the center of his intellectual life).

Due to Simmel's relative academic rootlessness, there was never a “school” of his students. His thought was influential, but its reception remained piecemeal: scholars drew on individual aspects of his vast oeuvre, which ranged from work on Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche to books on Goethe and Rembrandt—not to mention his publications on sociology, which were instrumental to the foundation of that discipline. But there were few attempts to appreciate Simmel's philosophy as a whole, including the *Philosophy of Money*. This observation applies all the more to scholars outside of Germany, since the *Philosophy of Money* took a long time to become available in other languages. After Leo Belmont rendered it into Polish in 1904,⁵ more than seventy years elapsed before translations into other languages emerged. The book was first translated into Spanish in 1977 (by the well-known political scientist Ramón García Cotarelo).⁶ The first English translation appeared

4 In a letter to Heinrich Rickert, Simmel wrote in 1904: “I have lost interest ... in all that I have written prior to *The Philosophy of Money*. This one is really *my* book, the others appear to me colorless and seem as if they could have been written by anyone else” (quoted in David Frisby's preface to the second edition of *The Philosophy of Money*, p. xlvii in the volume cited in note 7).

5 Georg Simmel, *Filozofia pieniądza*, trans. Leo Belmont (Warsaw: K. Kowalewskiego, 1904).

6 Georg Simmel, *Filosofía del dinero*, trans. Ramón García Cotarelo (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1977).

in 1978,⁷ followed by versions in Italian⁸ and French.⁹ This wave of translations is both the expression of, and has fueled, new interest in Simmel's analyses of the role of money in structuring human life.

II. Money and the Structure of Being

To say that, according to Simmel, there is a strong connection between philosophy and money is an understatement. The most radical thesis of the *Philosophy of Money* goes far beyond such a claim:

This is the philosophical significance of money: that, within the practical world, it is the most definite visibility, the clearest embodiment of the formula of all being, according to which things receive their meaning *through each other* and the reciprocity of the relations in which they find themselves constitutes their being and their being-such.¹⁰

The German is even stronger than this translation in emphasizing the paradigmatic role of money for the comprehension of the structure of reality; for Simmel claims that money gives the formula of all being its *deutlichste Wirklichkeit*, its clearest "effective reality" (*wirken* means "to have an effect").

In order to understand this passage, we will have to answer two questions:

1. What is Simmel's conception of money?
2. What, according to Simmel, is the "formula of all being"?

Simmel's Theory of Money

For Simmel, value (*Wert*) arises in the opposition between subject and object. A thing that a human being enjoys without obstacle is not experienced as valuable; rather, "we call those objects valuable that resist our desire to possess them."¹¹ This entails that there is both a lower and an upper threshold for value. An entity that offers us no resistance possesses as little value as something that it is impossible to attain. An example Simmel offers illustrates this idea.¹² The air we breathe does not acquire a value as long as it is freely available. Air

⁷ The English translation is now in its third edition: Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money*, 3rd ed., ed. David Frisby, trans. Tom Bottomore and David Frisby from a first draft by Kaethe Mengelberg (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).

⁸ Georg Simmel, *Filosofia del denaro*, trans. Alessandro Cavalli, Renate Liebhart, and Lucio Perucchi (Turin: UTET, 1984).

⁹ Georg Simmel, *Philosophie de l'argent*, trans. Sabine Cornille and Philippe Ivernel (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1987).

¹⁰ Simmel, *Philosophy of Money* (as in note 7), 128–29. I have amended the Frisby/Bottomore translation in light of the German text: "Dies ist die philosophische Bedeutung des Geldes: daß es innerhalb der praktischen Welt die entschiedenste Sichtbarkeit, die deutlichste Wirklichkeit der Formel des allgemeinen Seins ist, nach der die Dinge ihren Sinn *aneinander* finden und die Gegenseitigkeit der Verhältnisse, in denen sie schweben, ihr Sein und Sosein ausmacht" (*Philosophie des Geldes*, ed. David P. Frisby and Klaus Christian Köhnke, Gesamtausgabe 6 [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989], 136).

¹¹ *Philosophy of Money*, 67 = *Philosophie des Geldes*, 35: "wir nennen diejenigen [Dinge] wertvoll, die unserer Begehrung, sie zu erlangen, Hemmnisse entgegensetzen."

¹² See *ibid.*, 72/43.

becomes valuable only to someone who has difficulty breathing, or who is confined to life in a smog-filled city whose air presents itself as incompatible with human flourishing. At such a point, people become willing to pay for air, be it in the form of an oxygen tank or through a vacation in the countryside.

Simmel considers subject, object, and value as co-constitutional. Thus, just as value is a function of the distance between subject and object, so a sense of self arises only in a world experienced as ob-jective (as *Gegen-stand*, Heidegger might say, something “standing over against” us). Conversely, the world is “object” only to the extent that a self respects and values it. Otherwise, it becomes mere resource.¹³

Another way to approach the same issue is through the notion of sacrifice (*Opfer*): “Sacrifice is not only the condition for specific values, but—within the economic realm that concerns us here—the condition for value as such.”¹⁴ Attaining a value always requires foregoing another. No value, therefore, exists on its own. It exists only in relation with other values in a system of exchange (*Tausch*). Simmel provides a basic example: “the exchange with nature which we call production.”¹⁵ As the subject recognizes the fruits of tilling the soil as valuable, he sacrifices a portion of his limited energies to agricultural labor. The concept of sacrifice complements the previous description of value in terms of subject and object, rather than changing or correcting it. Sacrifice must enter into our consideration of the network of co-constitutional factors that constitute the human world, a world in which subject, object, value, and sacrifice enjoy equal primordially.

Value, then, exists only in a system of economic exchange. In such a system, however, valuable objects acquire a certain independence from the subjects to the relationship with whom they owe their value. Someone who enters a car dealership to purchase a vehicle will find that this vehicle has an “objective” value, determined in relation to the values of other objects that circulate in the economic system. The exchange of a BMW between seller and buyer involves far more than their respective willingness to make sacrifices—the seller sacrificing possession of the car and the buyer a certain amount of money. It involves the relative value of the BMW in relation to other cars of the same brand, in relation to other brands, housing, clothes, food, and so on. The particular object of exchange thus derives its value from the place it occupies in the economic system as a whole. In a completely developed economy, Simmel writes, “objects circulate according to norms and measures which are fixed at any one moment, and through which [these objects] confront the individual as an objective realm.”¹⁶

Money constitutes a further step towards objectivity. Although money is nothing but the expression of the relativity of value as constituted in the system of subject, object, exchange, and sacrifice that we just described, it represents such value as autonomous:

¹³ See *ibid.*, 71/42. Simmel's reflections anticipate some central points in Heidegger's philosophy of technology.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 85/65. Translation amended.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 84/63.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 79/55. Translation amended. It is interesting that values still remain negotiable, even in the most highly developed economies. In such negotiations, intersubjective skills play an important role.

"If the economic value of objects is constituted by their mutual relationship of exchangeability, then money is the autonomous expression of this relationship."¹⁷ Put differently, "money is value frozen into substance, the value of things without the things themselves."¹⁸ Money is the exchange function represented as substance.

The idea that money is function-turned-substance raises two connected difficulties. The first concerns the "dual role"¹⁹ of money, which functions as the representation of value in a system of exchange, yet also circulates as an object within that system. In other words, money not only "*is* relation," but it "*has* relation" as well: it not only *represents* value, it also *possesses* value.²⁰ The dollars that change hands when a BMW is sold are themselves the object of exchange in the currency market; this latter role does not leave the former unaffected (and vice versa). Simmel maintains that the dual role of money is necessary for the economic system. For, on the one hand, economic agents must regard money as the stable representation of value: this function places it outside the process of economic exchange. On the other hand, in particular transactions money must also be able to transfer value, inside the economic system, from one moment to the next: at *t*₁, I had a BMW; at *t*₂, I have a check for a certain dollar amount. In synchronic perspective, then, money only represents value, while in diachronic perspective it carries value.²¹

The dual role of money has historical roots. Before money consisted in nothing but numbers written on a check, or even digits appearing on a screen, its representative function was attached to a valuable substance. Simmel—characteristically without citing any sources—offers the example of marten furs in old Russia. Initially, these furs were themselves highly desirable objects of exchange, but as society developed the furs became standards of measurement for all other economic values: that is to say, they turned into money. With this development, the substance that served to represent economic value shrunk, becoming increasingly symbolic. Thus, economic agents no longer carried entire pelts with them, but only their tips, and eventually small pieces of leather stamped by the govern-

¹⁷ Ibid., 120/122: "Wenn nun der wirtschaftliche Wert der Objekte in dem gegenseitigen Verhältnis besteht, das sie, als tauschbare, eingehen, so ist das Geld also der zur Selbständigkeit gelangte Ausdruck dieses Verhältnisses"

¹⁸ Ibid., 121/124: "es ist das zur Substanz erstarrte Gelten, das Gelten der Dinge ohne die Dinge selbst." Translation amended. The German *erstarrt* literally means "stiffened"; I have translated it as "frozen." More importantly, the verb *gelten*, used as a nominalized infinitive here, is etymologically related to the noun *Geld*, "money." Simmel plays on this etymology. The translation of *Gelten* as "value" fails to capture the fact that *Gelten* expresses an action: money is the process of representing value, frozen in a substance.

¹⁹ Ibid., 122/125: "Doppelheit seiner Rollen."

²⁰ Ibid., 125/131. My translation. The German reads: "... so daß es, kurz gesagt, nicht mehr Relation *ist*, sondern Relation *hat*."

²¹ On the significance of the dual role of money and the challenges it poses for economic theory, one may read the essay by Paschen von Flotow and Johannes Schmidt, "Die 'Doppelrolle des Geldes' bei Simmel und ihre (fehlende) Entsprechung in der modernen Wirtschaftstheorie," in *Georg Simmels Philosophie des Geldes. Einhundert Jahre danach*, ed. Jürgen G. Backhaus and Hans-Joachim Stadermann (Marburg: Metropolis, 2000), 61–94.

ment.²² Simmel notes that the development of money from substance to function will never be complete because money “performs its services best when it is not simply money, that is, when it does not merely represent the value aspect of things in pure abstraction.”²³ He offers several arguments, of which the most important one concerns the need to limit the supply of money. It is “technically impractical [or imprudent: *untunlich*] to accomplish what is conceptually required, [namely,] the transfer of the money function to pure token money, its complete detachment from any substantial value that could limit the quantity of money.”²⁴ Since the abolition of the gold standard, what Simmel still regarded as “imprudent” has of course occurred, that is to say, the detachment of the money function from any substratum that could limit arbitrary multiplication. This decoupling of function from substance has led to an explosion of wealth worldwide, but also to an unprecedented accumulation of debt and mounting social tensions. Whether the experiment will work or Simmel will in the end be proven right is something only the future can tell.

Money as the Paradigm of All Being

We are now ready to return to our quotation, according to which money is “the clearest embodiment of the formula of all being.” Simmel conceives of money as *substanzielle Relativität*, to use a particularly pithy phrase from the *Philosophy of Money*: “relativity turned substance.”²⁵ If it is in money that the structure of reality is thrown into the clearest relief, then is being nothing but “relativity turned substance”?

Exactly. Simmel subscribes to what he very bluntly calls a “relativistic world view.”²⁶ This phrase does not indicate skepticism, but rather the primacy of relation over substance in the constitution of the human world. Simmel declares:

But practical consciousness has discovered the form [that makes it possible] to unite the processes of relationship or interaction, in which reality takes place, with the substantial existence in which praxis must clothe the abstract relation as such. Such a projection of mere relations into particular objects is one of the great accomplishments of the mind, in that in [this projection] the mind is indeed embodied, yet only in order to make the corporeal into a receptacle of the mind and thus to bestow upon the latter a fuller and livelier reality. In money, the ability to construct such formations has attained its greatest triumph.²⁷

²² For this example, see *Philosophy of Money*, 150/169.

²³ Ibid., 165/193. Translation amended.

²⁴ Ibid. The translation is mine. The German reads: “Aber eben die Realisierung dieses begrifflich Geforderten, der Übergang der Geldfunktion an ein reines Zeichengeld, ihre völlige Lösung von jedem, die Geldquantität einschränkenden Substanzwert ist technisch untunlich”

²⁵ Ibid., 127/134. Frisby/Bottomore translate “embodied relativity,” but that is too imprecise and weak.

²⁶ Ibid., 101/15: “relativistisches Weltbild.” Note that the section titles that appear in the English translation have been derived from Simmel’s detailed table of contents.

²⁷ Ibid., 129/137. The translation is mine. The German reads: “Das praktische Bewußtsein aber hat die Form gefunden, um die Vorgänge der Beziehung oder der Wechselwirkung, in der die Wirklichkeit verläuft, mit der substanziellen Existenz zu vereinigen, in die die Praxis eben die abstrakte Beziehung als solche kleiden muß. Jene Projizierung bloßer Verhältnisse auf Sondergebilde ist eine der großen Leistungen des Geistes, indem in ihr der Geist zwar verkörpert wird, aber nur um das Körperhafte zum Gefäß des Geistigen zu machen und die-

Some commentators have taken this “somewhat obscure” passage as an indication of Simmel’s indebtedness to Hegel’s notion of objective spirit.²⁸ While this interpretation is not absurd, it is too precise. Simmel views his thought as a confluence of many sources. In one passage he likens money to Plato’s (and Schopenhauer’s) ideas, to the Stoic *logoi*, to Kant’s a priori, and finally to “stages in the development of reason as with Hegel”²⁹—all in one sentence. Clearly, Simmel does not care too much about the finer distinctions in the history of philosophic doctrines.

In the excerpt just quoted, what stands out is the emphasis on the practical dimension of the process in which the mind freezes function into substance. Also, if we look back at Simmel’s programmatic statement regarding the paradigmatic role of money for the comprehension of “all being,” we notice that he speaks of the “practical world.” This emphasis suggests an interpretation along Heideggerian lines. In the human world, practice precedes theory; we encounter things as ready-to-hand (*zuhanden*) before they become present-at-hand (*vorhanden*). But the practical world is a network of relationships: the hammer derives its meaning from the relations in which it stands to the nail, the wall, the picture to be mounted, and the hand that holds it. Before the hammer becomes an “object,” it is a piece of equipment (*Zeug*) that is defined by the place it occupies—which means, the significance it possesses—within the human world. The substance of the hammer exists as the focal point of the relations in which the tool stands with its environment. This does not mean that the human mind creates the hammer in its physical substrate. The point is that this physical substrate exists *as hammer* only because of the significance bestowed upon it by the network of relationships in which it is involved.³⁰

We are dealing here with a practical transformation of the Kantian a priori. The world appears to us within a framework of human meanings that give it coherence: “[The entities that] we characterize as associated in the external world, that is, as somehow unified and existing in each other, actually always remain adjacent to each other, and in referring to this association we *mean* something that we can ‘feel’ only from within ourselves into the things, something that is incomparable to anything external”³¹

Simmel goes beyond Kant, not only in giving the a priori a practical bent, but also in positing a dialectical relationship between subject and object. The world of meaning is not

sem damit eine vollere und lebendigere Wirklichkeit zu gewähren. Mit dem Gelde hat die Fähigkeit zu solchen Bildungen ihren höchsten Triumph gefeiert.”

²⁸ Gianfranco Poggi, *Money and the Modern Mind: Georg Simmel's Philosophy of Money* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1993), 108.

²⁹ *Philosophy of Money*, 121/124.

³⁰ Simmel makes this point clear by means of a religious example: “every sacramental object,” he writes, is “the relation-turned-substance between man and his God” (*ibid.*, 129/136; my translation). The German phrase for “relation-turned-substance” is *das substanzierte Verhältnis*. Thus, for example, water certainly exists as H₂O without human intervention; yet this H₂O is endowed with an entirely new meaning in the baptismal font.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 472/656–7. Translation amended. The German reads: “Was wir als in der Außenwelt verbunden, d. h. doch, irgendwie vereinheitlicht und ineinander seiend, bezeichnen, bleibt doch in der Außenwelt ewig nebeneinander, und mit seinem Verbundensein *meinen* wir etwas, was nur aus unserem Inneren, allem Äußeren unvergleichbar, in die Dinge hineingeführt werden kann”

constituted by a transcendental subjectivity that floats above experience; rather, the subject is constituted by what it constitutes: "Thus there exists a relativism, as it were an unending process between internal and external life: the one as the symbol of the other, making it conceivable and representable, being neither the first nor the second, but realizing the unity of their—that is, our—essence by their mutual dependency."³² We will return to this point later.³³

One final remark about the primacy of the practical in Simmel. Simmel holds a view of truth that is pragmatist: "In fact, we do not have any other *definitive* criterion for the truth of the representation of a being, except that the actions based upon [that representation] lead to the desired consequences."³⁴ Thus, when he speaks of the paradigmatic role of money for practical consciousness, the emphasis on the practical entails no limitation. Theory builds on praxis rather than preceding it.³⁵

To sum up, then, for Simmel the human world is a network of ultimately practical significance that is held together by a subject who "feels" these structures of meaning into reality. In the world around us we encounter nodes of meaning that arise in our dynamic interaction with our environment; the mind freezes these dynamic relationships into permanence by projecting them into substances. Likewise, money is initially nothing but the representation of value that comes into being as objects enter into relationship with each other in a network of economic exchange; in order to represent this value, the mind freezes it into substance. Lastly, the mind itself is not a substance existing independently of the structures that it constitutes; rather, it forms part of the system of relativity in which it acts.

III. Money as the Purest Form of the Tool

The mind does not act upon the world without mediation: it is incarnate. But more than that, what distinguishes human beings from animals is the fact that man is capable of extending and refining the functions of his body by means of tools. I have eyes to see, but a magnifying glass helps me discern small details invisible to the naked eye. I have feet to walk, but a horse, carriage, or car will allow me to travel faster and with less effort. I have hands to manipulate objects around me, but a hammer will amplify the blows of my fist and allow me to focus it on something as small as a nail.

Simmel analyzes the tool in connection with what he calls the "sequence of purposes." In the practical world, the subject relates to his or her object as an end; put differently, human action has a purposive structure. I focus on an apple initially because I am hungry

³² Ibid., 472/657. I have slightly altered the translation of this difficult German sentence: "So besteht ein Relativismus, gleichsam ein unendlicher Prozeß zwischen dem Inneren und dem Äußeren: eines, als das Symbol des anderen, dieses zur Vorstellbarkeit und Darstellbarkeit bringend, keines das erste, keines das zweite, sondern in ihrem Aufeinander-Angewiesensein die Einheit ihres, d. h. unseres Wesens verwirklichend."

³³ In section IV below.

³⁴ *Philosophy of Money*, 108/103. Translation amended.

³⁵ For the pragmatist dimension of the *Philosophy of Money*, see Alois Halbmayer, *Gott und Geld in Wechselwirkung. Zur Relativität der Gottesrede* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2009), 206–13. Halbmayer's study also offers an in-depth interpretation of Simmel's relativism.

and believe it will satisfy my hunger; admiring it for its beauty and making a painting of it come later. In a primitive society, nothing may mediate between my hunger and the apple: I go to the apple tree, pick the fruit, and eat it. With increased cultural sophistication, however, a society will interpose more and more steps between the desiring subject and its end: as a consequence, the teleological series will grow longer. “The average number of links” in this series, Simmel writes, “indicates the degree of knowledge and control of nature, as well as the breadth and refinement of the way of life.”³⁶ Consider the length of the chain of production and transportation that is involved in bringing the enjoyment of French apple cider to a customer shopping at a supermarket in Texas.

A tool is an object whose entire meaning is derived from its role in such a teleological series. Practically speaking, it has no existence in and for itself, but is embodied function. To be sure, the hammer has a wooden or plastic handle and a metal head, but its meaning derives, on the one hand, from the human hand for which the handle was made, and, on the other, from the nail that the face is shaped to strike. Still, a hammer cannot function without a certain weight: its function calls for substance. It is not a “pure” tool. Indeed, in the human world of embodied minds and their objects, pure function cannot exist. But if there is a tool that approaches purity of function as closely as possible, it is money: “Money is the purest form of the tool,” Simmel declares.³⁷ And he elaborates:

Money is perhaps the most decisive demonstration and expression of the fact that man is the “tool-making” animal, which is, however, itself connected with the fact that man is the “purpose-positing” animal. The concept of means characterizes the position of man in the world: he is not tied, as the animal is, to the mechanism of instinctual life and the immediacy of volition and enjoyment, nor does he have unmediated power—of the kind we attribute to a God—so that his will is as such identical with its realization.³⁸

So, just as money led us to the very structure of being, it offers the key to understanding the human condition.

The purity of money as a tool is due to several factors. First, money requires only a minimum of substance to function (like the digits on a screen that we mentioned earlier). Second, money is the “absolute means” (*das absolute Mittel*), the “means as such” (*das Mittel schlechthin*)³⁹ because, unlike other tools, it is only minimally configured for a particular subject while bearing no inherent relation at all to a specific object. To return to our example of the hammer: the handle of the hammer is made for the grip of the human hand, while its head reflects a particular purpose, such as driving in nails (with a poll), removing

³⁶ *Philosophy of Money*, 207/259.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 210/263.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 211/264–65. Translation amended. The German reads: “Es ist vielleicht der entschiedenste Beweis und Ausdruck dafür, daß der Mensch das ‘werkzeugmachende’ Tier ist, was freilich damit zusammenhängt, daß er das ‘zwecksetzende’ Tier ist. Die Idee des Mittels bezeichnet überhaupt die Weltstellung des Menschen: er ist nicht wie das Tier an den Mechanismus des Trieblebens und die Unmittelbarkeit von Wollen und Genießen gebunden, er hat aber auch nicht die unmittelbare Macht—wie wir sie an einem Gotte denken—, daß sein Wille schon an und für sich Verwirklichung des Gewollten sei.”

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 211/264 (*das absolute Mittel*) and 265 (*das Mittel schlechthin*).

them (with a claw), or hammering metal into shape (with a peen). A dollar bill, by contrast, is a dollar bill is a dollar bill ... in other words, it can be used by anyone to purchase anything. There is only one limitation: to the extent that different countries have different currencies, the dollar is more appropriate for use in the United States than in Mexico or China.

The fact that money is the purest form of the tool produces two consequences that bring it in relation with the religious realm.

In God We Trust

We have already discussed the historical trajectory in which money came to be increasingly detached from substance. Such detachment is possible only on the basis of trust. Thus, an economic agent will accept a stamped piece of leather, rather than an entire pelt, as a valid form of payment only if he can be confident that the piece of leather represents a stable value which corresponds to the value of the goods sold. If he had to fear that the piece of leather did not represent a stable value, he would not accept it as payment, so that the exchange would be unable to occur or the trading partners would have to resort to barter. Such loss of trust is what typically occurs in conditions of hyperinflation: the currency collapses.

Simmel maintains that the functioning of the money economy always requires trust, even when the currency is tied to precious metals. To be sure, a gold coin requires less trust from its user than a banknote, but even gold cannot guarantee the stability of the currency absolutely. Gold itself can gain and lose value. Secondly, "in everyday transactions an examination of the metallic substance of the coin is feasible only in exceptional cases."⁴⁰ Rulers and governments of all ages have exploited this fact to debase their coinage.

The trust that is at the heart of the money economy is well summarized in a phrase that the Order of St. John of Jerusalem placed on many of its coins when it ruled over Malta: *non aes sed fides*, "not bronze but faith."⁴¹ The inscription goes back to Grand Master Jean de La Valette (1557–1568), who decided to strike fiduciary coins to raise funds after the siege of the Turks and to pay for the construction of the new city of Valletta. Thus, the Maltese mint started using copper for denominations that would normally be struck on silver, such as the "tari." Those who accepted these coins as payment needed to have faith in



FIGURE 1: A 100 billion banknote issued by the city of Bielefeld (Westphalia) in 1923. The apocalyptic scenes on the obverse are meant to capture the spirit of the times.

(From the author's collection.)

⁴⁰ Ibid., 178/215. Translation amended.

⁴¹ See *ibid.*

that stems from profound confidence.⁴⁵ In the economic order, we invest a “quasi-religious faith”⁴⁶ in the community, trusting that its members will remain willing to exchange the “symbolic signs” which we use as money for real-world goods—that pure function will eventually translate back into substance.

Since 1957, all American currency carries the motto, “In God We Trust.” The use of this motto can be traced back to 1864, when it first appeared on a two-cent coin. The intention was always to acknowledge the existence of God on the country's very currency, so that no economic transaction could occur without at least implicit recognition of the De-



FIGURE 3: The phrase “In God We Trust” on the reverse of an American one-dollar banknote.

ity. The use of God's name on money was, however, not uncontroversial. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt reacted with revulsion to the suggestion that “In God We Trust” should be placed on a new ten-dollar gold coin: “My own feeling in this matter,” he wrote, “is due to my very firm conviction that to put such a motto on coins, or to use it in any kindred manner, not only does no good but does positive harm, and is in effect irreverence, which comes dangerously close to sacrilege.”⁴⁷ Despite such reservations, in the 1950s the use of the motto was broadened to include all coins and banknotes. This measure occurred in the atmosphere of the Cold War, with the intention to set the United States apart from the atheism of the communist world. Representative Charles E. Bennett of Florida, who introduced the relevant legislation (H.R. 619) in the House in 1954, argued that, “[i]n these days when imperialistic and materialistic communism seeks to attack and destroy freedom, we should continuously look for ways to strengthen the foundations of our freedom. At the base of our freedom is our faith in God To serve as a constant reminder of this truth, it is

⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas, too, holds that faith is both more and less certain than knowledge (*scientia*), although his reasoning differs from Simmel's; see *Summa theologiae* II-II, qu. 5, art 8: *Utrum fides sit certior scientia et aliis virtutibus intellectualibus*.

⁴⁶ *Philosophy of Money*, 179/216. More literally, the German speaks of a “faith” that is related to religious faith” (... *dem religiösen verwandten “Glaubens”*).

⁴⁷ Quoted in T. Jeremy Gunn, *Spiritual Weapons: The Cold War and the Forging of an American National Religion* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2009), 67.

highly desirable that our currency and coins should bear these inspiring words, ‘In God We Trust.’”⁴⁸ H.R. 619 created the modern-day equivalent of sacred money: currency that objectifies group cohesion by invoking the group’s shared faith. Simmel clearly saw the possibility that the faith which money requires must ultimately be anchored in the sacred,⁴⁹ but he has been criticized for not pursuing this line of inquiry more vigorously.⁵⁰

God and Money in the Sequence of Purposes

We have already touched upon what Simmel calls the “sequence of purposes” (*Zweckreihe*). Our example was an apple. An apple has value for human beings because it is able to satisfy a basic human need. As “tool-making animals,” however, we typically do not simply grab an apple from a tree and eat it. A whole series of means is able to insert itself between us and the apple: thus, the apple itself stands at the end of a long chain of production, while a consumer’s ability to reach the apple depends upon access to a supermarket, which requires transportation, which requires money, which requires a job, which requires ... and so on and so forth.

Furthermore, the apple is not an end in itself. We do not find that the consumption of an apple is an absolute value; rather, it is a means to sustain us in our quest for greater ends. Human experience shows us, however, that these greater ends tend to recede toward an infinite horizon: I eat the apple so that I have the strength to work; I work so that I have income; I need income to pay the bills; I pay the bills in the hope that, one day, I will be able to retire. In retirement, I can finally go on a cruise; on the cruise, I can relax and feast on the “all-you-can-eat” buffet; I subsequently need to lose weight so that I join the health club; and this series goes on and on. “To summarize,” writes Simmel, “it appears as if what we call the ultimate purpose floats above the teleological sequences, standing in the same relation to them as the horizon does to the earthly paths that always lead towards it, yet which, after the longest wanderings, never seem to be any closer to it than at the outset.”⁵¹

Given the elusiveness of the ultimate purpose, as well as the fact that any purpose is best served if one focuses one’s strength upon the means that lead towards it, means have a tendency to overshadow and absorb their ends—especially if these ends are remote. Simmel terms this phenomenon the “psychological growth of means into ends.”⁵² This growth of means into ends—or, rather, this deformation⁵³—paradoxically affects money more

⁴⁸ Quoted *ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁹ Simmel mentions sacred money in *Philosophy of Money*, 187/229.

⁵⁰ For this criticism, see Claus Thomasberger and Klaus Voy, “Geldtheorie und Geldgeschichte. Überlegungen zum Zusammenhang beider, angeregt durch Simmels Versuch, der Ausgrenzung der Geschichte aus der theoretischen Geldforschung entgegenzutreten,” in *Georg Simmels Philosophie des Geldes* (cited in note 21 above), 217–70.

⁵¹ *Philosophy of Money*, 235/303. Translation amended.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 228/17: “das psychologische Auswachsen der Mittel zu Zwecken.”

⁵³ The German *Auswachsen* suggests deformation rather than natural growth. One of the examples offered in the Grimms’ famous *Deutsches Wörterbuch* is, *sie hat einen etwas ausgewachsenen rücken*, “she has a somewhat hunched back.” The Grimm is available online at <http://dwb.uni-trier.de/de/>.

than any other means, despite the fact that it is the most empty of them all. Since every other economic value can be represented by money, the latter takes on an absolute value, even with connotations of omnipotence. These reflections lead us to one of the most stunning passages in the *Philosophy of Money*:

It may appear as an irony of history that, at the moment when the satisfying and ultimate purposes of life become atrophied, precisely that value which is exclusively a means and nothing else takes their place and clothes itself in their form. But in reality, money as the absolute means and thus as the unifying point of innumerable sequences of purposes, in its psychological form possesses significant relationships to the notion of God—relationships that only psychology, which has the privilege of being unable to commit blasphemy, may disclose. The notion of God has its deeper essence in this, that all diversities and contradictions in the world achieve a unity in him, that he is—according to a beautiful formulation of Nicholas of Cusa—the *coincidentia oppositorum*. Out of this idea, that in him all estrangements and all irreconcilables of being find their unity and equalization, there arise the peace, the security, [and] the all-embracing wealth of feeling which reverberate with the notion of God and [with the notion] that we *have* him.⁵⁴

The structural affinity between the notions of money and of God may well explain, muses Simmel, why religion tends to view money with particular animosity. In the Christian tradition, the Bible is clear that “no man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Mt 6:24). The choice is binary here, with no middle ground. All means either dissolve in money, which thus takes on the appearance of a final purpose, or they are absorbed into God, who fills them with ultimate content. Is the choice one between substance and function?⁵⁵

IV. Having and Being

Earlier on in this essay, we hinted at the fact that Simmel's “relativist”—it might be better to say, “relational”—understanding of reality is all-encompassing. The author of the *Philosophy of Money* does not merely believe that the practical mind organizes the world in relational

⁵⁴ *Philosophy of Money*, 236/305. Translation amended. The German reads: “Es kann als eine Ironie der historischen Entwicklung erscheinen, daß in dem Augenblick, wo die inhaltlich befriedigenden und abschließenden Lebenszwecke atrophisch werden, gerade derjenige Wert, der ausschließlich ein Mittel und weiter nichts ist, in ihre Stelle hineinwächst und sich mit ihrer Form bekleidet. Allein in Wirklichkeit hat das Geld, als das absolute Mittel und dadurch als der Einheitspunkt unzähliger Zweckreihen, in seiner psychologischen Form bedeutsame Beziehungen gerade zu der Gottesvorstellung, die freilich die Psychologie nur aufdecken kann, weil es ihr Privilegium ist, keine Blasphemien begehen zu können. Der Gottesgedanke hat sein tieferes Wesen darin, daß alle Mannigfaltigkeiten und Gegensätze der Welt in ihm zur Einheit gelangen, daß er nach dem schönen Worte des Nikolaus von Kusa die *Coincidentia oppositorum* ist. Aus dieser Idee, daß alle Fremdheden und Unversöhnlichkeiten des Seins in ihm ihre Einheit und Ausgleichung finden, stammt der Friede, die Sicherheit, der allumfassende Reichtum des Gefühls, das mit der Vorstellung Gottes und daß wir ihn haben, mitschwebt.” I have added the emphasis on *have* for clarity.

⁵⁵ Alois Halbmayer has devoted a detailed study to the affinity between the notions of God and money; see *Gott und Geld in Wechselwirkung*, cited in note 35 above. For further reflection on the religious dimension of Simmel's thought, one may read John McCole, “Georg Simmel and the Philosophy of Religion,” *New German Critique* 94 (Winter, 2005): 8–35.

structures; that is to say, that we encounter reality through the teleological series discussed in the previous section. Rather, our own subjectivity, our “internal life,” is constituted in relation to the external world into which we “feel” (*hineinfühlen*) our purposes. We have already quoted the following sentence: “Thus there exists a relativism, as it were an unending process between internal and external life: the one as the symbol of the other, making it conceivable and representable, being neither the first nor the second, but realizing the unity of their—that is, our—essence by their mutual dependency.”⁵⁶ Now it is a matter of understanding it.

Just as Simmel conceives of substance as a knot of relations, so he regards the self as a center of activity. Furthermore, it follows from this view that the relationship between the self and the substances which make up its world is more than merely a static “having.” For Simmel, such static possession approximates to non-being, to a “zero point” between the movement toward possession of an object and its active use: “Ownership as the point of indifference between the movement that leads towards it and the movement that leads beyond it shrinks to zero.”⁵⁷ Static ownership is a “metaphysical” concept (perhaps something like the Kantian thing-in-itself), a placeholder for the totality of actions and enjoyments in which a particular object can be involved.⁵⁸

The possession of an object is dynamic not only because the owner most fully “has” the object when he incorporates it into his sequence of purposes.⁵⁹ It is dynamic also because that which is actively owned in turn shapes its owner. Simmel illustrates this point by giving a few examples:

Whoever owns an estate or a factory (insofar as he does not leave the management to somebody else and becomes a rentier), [or] whoever owns a picture gallery or a racing stable as his central piece of possession, no longer has a completely free existence. This means not only that his time is taken up to a particular extent and in a particular form; above all, it means that a specific capacity is presupposed. ... Just as the possession of specific objects is all the more genuine and active the more decisively and unambiguously the subject is suited for them, so the reverse is just as true: the more fundamentally and intensively the possession is really owned—that is, is made useful and enjoyed—the more decisive and determining will be the effects upon the internal and external nature of the subject.⁶⁰

The quotation makes us think of the “types” of people who used to be associated with particular professions: the English banker in pinstripe suit and bowler hat, and never without umbrella; the country landlord in his tweed jacket and Garforth cap; or the Southern cattle herder in cowboy hat and boots. Their professions—and this means, their active relations with particular types of objects—gave these people particular personalities, shaping them down to the level of their external appearance.

⁵⁶ *Philosophy of Money*, 472/657. First quoted at the end of section II above.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 304/406.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 306/408.

⁵⁹ Again, Simmel’s reflections here foreshadow Heidegger’s view according to which the practical world of “items of equipment” (*Zeuge*) grounds and precedes the theoretical world of objects.

⁶⁰ *Philosophy of Money*, 306–07/409–10. Translation amended. The Bottomore/Frisby translation is quite defective here.

Money, Simmel claims, has the tendency to sever this connection between having and being. As pure function, money so to speak lacks the substance to limit the freedom of those who possess it, but with that, it also lacks the ability to shape its owners. Money is itself without character, since it represents value in general, but no value in particular. If my possessions consist of money, rather than of land or a workshop where objects are manufactured by means of specific tools, I will no longer experience the constraints that arise from objects, which stand “over against” (*ob-*) me. Money does not need to be fed and milked, like cows, nor do I have to send it reminders when it does not pay the rent that I am owed. By comparison with other tools, the use of which has to be learned, money offers minimal pushback in relation to the human will.⁶¹ The subject experiences him- or herself as omnipotent while at the same time losing personal character. Thus, the business owner turns into an “entrepreneur,” who invests into a whole range of businesses about which he knows nothing in particular, except that they are profitable. Conversely, the skilled laborer who knew how to extract coal from a mine or assemble pieces of wood into furniture is replaced by members of an amorphous “work force” whose main characteristic is to possess “transferable skills.” In this way, the freedom that was gained at a lower level—namely, the freedom from the need to master a particular craft, as well as the need to work with particular people—is replaced by enslavement to an impersonal economic system. The result is what Simmel repeatedly calls a “soulless” society.⁶² Its members experience freedom as freedom *from* constraints rather than as the freedom *to* pursue certain ends.⁶³ Simmel does not regard these developments as entirely negative, especially if one compares the functionalism of the money economy with the highly personal obligations under which people used to labor. Yet he sees the downsides very clearly.

V. Conclusion

This essay has focused on the most fundamental claims that Simmel advances in his *Philosophy of Money*: money most clearly reveals the structure of all being, it is key to understanding the nature of the human being as a tool-making animal, and it exhibits significant structural similarities with the notion of God. With these three claims—metaphysical/epistemological,⁶⁴ anthropological, and theological—Simmel places money at the center

⁶¹ As the example of the banker shows, ownership of money can shape a personality. According to Simmel, this is due to the fact that money derives a certain quality from its very quantity. In turn, a personality, or even the spirit of a nation, can confer upon wealth a particular character. See *Philosophy of Money*, 259–80/338–71.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 346/468, 467/648.

⁶³ See *ibid.*, 402/552: “It is true he [i.e., the peasant] gained freedom, but only freedom *from* something, not freedom *to do* something. Apparently, he gained freedom to do anything—because it was purely negative—but in fact he was without any directive, without any definite and determining content. Such freedom favors that emptiness and instability that allows one to give full rein to every accidental, whimsical, and tempting impulse. Such freedom may be compared with the fate of the unmoored [*ungefestet*] person who has forsworn his gods and whose newly acquired ‘freedom’ only provides the opportunity for making an idol out of every fleeting value.” Translation amended.

⁶⁴ Simmel squarely belongs in the Kantian tradition. Thus, strictly speaking, he does not advance any metaphysical theory, but rather a theory about the structures within which human beings encounter reality.

of philosophic reflection. Furthermore, Simmel believes that the de-substantialization of money is a critical element in the development of social relations. As we have seen in the beginning of the essay, Simmel's focus on money is less eccentric than it may appear: money may well have played a crucial role in the cultural reconfiguration within which the birth of philosophy became possible in the first place.

I would like to conclude this essay on a pedagogical note. Given the centrality of money in these days of post-industrial capitalism, Georg Simmel's *Philosophy of Money* is an ideal work to demonstrate the relevance of philosophic reflection to students in institutions of higher education. Unfortunately, Simmel's dense style as well as the sheer length of the *Philosophy of Money* stand in the way of a more widespread use of his work. An abridged edition and translation would therefore make an extremely welcome addition to the philosophical literature.

VI. Postscript: A Note on the Emergency Money from Bielefeld

In figure 1 of this article, we saw a banknote for 100 billion marks, issued in 1923 by the city of Bielefeld in Westphalia (Germany). The "emergency money," or *Notgeld*, from Bielefeld has acquired a certain fame among collectors for its vivid artistic representation of the social conditions that accompany hyperinflation.

As Simmel maintains, money requires trust. Such trust is all the more necessary in the case of our modern de-substantialized currencies, where it is not coins of gold or silver that exchange hands, but pieces of paper—and, increasingly, bits of information read from the chips of credit or debit cards. Under these conditions, "[t]he value of money is based on a guarantee represented by the central political power, which eventually replaces the significance of the metal."⁶⁵ At this stage of our reflections on the *Philosophy of Money*, we will not be surprised that Simmel considers the relationship between money and the authority that issues or guarantees it to be reciprocal. Thus, not only does an economy relying on de-substantialized money require a strong state, but in turn "[t]he modern centralized state ... came into being partly as a result of the prodigious growth of the money economy"⁶⁶

A further consequence follows from these reflections. We discovered earlier that, for Simmel, "money is value frozen into substance, the value of things without the things themselves."⁶⁷ But money is also trust frozen into substance, that is to say, it represents the trust among the members of the society in which it circulates, without these members themselves. We could therefore call money an "objectification of the social whole"⁶⁸—

⁶⁵ *Philosophy of Money*, 184/224–25. The translation here is more of a paraphrase of Simmel's complex German: "Es ist die *Sicherheit* des Geldes, auf der sein Wert ruht und als deren Träger die politische Zentralgewalt allmählich durch die unmittelbare Bedeutung des Metalls, sie verdrängend, hindurchwächst."

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 185/226.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 121/124; quoted in section II above.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 187/228; trans. amended. The German has "Objektivierung der Gruppengesamtheit." We are going beyond Simmel here, who says only that such objectification is "a prerequisite of money."

trust turned substance, so to speak, but with the interesting corollary that the more trust there exists, the less substance is necessary to represent it.



FIGURE 4: A banknote for 10 trillion dollars from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, issued in 2008.
(From the author's collection.)

Hyperinflation arises in conditions where the trust that money requires has broken down, but where the society affected by this collapse has no way to re-substantialize its currency: to move from banknotes to gold and silver coins, for example. In such circumstances, giving up a valuable object in exchange for mere money creates a greater and greater—perhaps ultimately infinite—sense of sacrifice. Even trillions of dollars will no longer be able to satisfy it.

The emergency money from Bielefeld beautifully and starkly illustrates the social disintegration in which hyperinflation occurs: it is distrust objectified. When, in the wake of the First World War, inflation in Germany spiraled out of control at an increasingly frenzied pace, the *Reichsbank* was eventually no longer able to keep up the money supply. Even measures like simply stamping “one billion” (*1 Milliarde*) over banknotes with a denomination of one thousand marks provided no lasting relief. At this point, local institutions stepped in by issuing their own banknotes. The city of Bielefeld did this through its own bank, the *Stadt-Sparkasse Bielefeld*. From the beginning, however, the emergency money from Bielefeld was devised to be special: designed by local artists to document the despair and social upheaval that afflicted post-war Germany, the currency which the *Sparkasse* issued was advertised as an object for collectors. To increase its collectability, it was printed not only on paper but also on burlap, linen, silk, and velvet.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ The history of the *Notgeld* from Bielefeld is chronicled in Günter Gerke, *Das Geld der mageren Jahre—als alle Milliarden waren. Bielefelder Notgeld 1917–1924. Geschichten und Dokumente* (Bielefeld and Potsdam: Verlag Hans Gieselmann, 1998). The longtime director of the *Stadt-Sparkasse Bielefeld* describes the emergency money in a fictitious dialogue between a father and a son who are looking back at the history of Bielefeld in the year 2000: Paul Hanke, “Bielefelder Notgeld nach 80 Jahren,” *Niedersachsen*, vol. 26, no. 21 (July 10, 1921): 505–07.

The one hundred billion banknote depicted in figure 1 above demonstrates the crazy pace at which the inflation occurred; for its obverse reprises the motif from a one hundred mark banknote issued just two years earlier.⁷⁰ The scene on the left and on the right mirror each other, each showing a group of women who appear to be congregating around a bearded figure—some kind of sage no doubt. In the foreground we are able to discern a creature (a monkey perhaps or a devil) riding on someone's back, whereas in the background a dark monster looms whose greedy hands overshadow the entire scene. Behind the sage on the left, we read the passionate appeal, *Seid einig, einig!* ("Be united, united!"), whereas the sage on the right seems to be discussing *Geldnot* ("shortness of money"). The greedy claws are inscribed, from left to right, *Zwietracht* ("discord"), *Neid* ("jealousy"), *Missgunst* ("ill will"), and *Wucher* ("usury"). Beneath the scene, a verse comments on the gloomy picture:

Die Tage tanzen in rasender Flucht	"The days are dancing in frenzied flight
Wir sind vom Teufel besessen	We are possessed by the devil
Und Ordnung und Sitte und Treue und Zucht	And order and custom and loyalty and discipline
Vergessen sind sie, vergessen.	Forgotten are they, forgotten."

These lines are a quotation from a well-known poem that Paul Warncke (1866–1933) contributed under the title *Vergessen* ("Forgotten") to the nationalist magazine *Kladderadatsch*. The poem's final line—not quoted here, but surely on everyone's mind—left no doubt about who was to blame for all the misery: *Und was der Feind uns angetan, das sei ihm nicht vergessen!* ("And what the enemy has inflicted upon us, that shall not be forgotten!").

Finally, in the frame surrounding the obverse of our banknote, we find some figures that serve to illustrate the pace of the inflation. For example, the line at the bottom explains that the cost of living increased by a startling 3,045,000,000% between 1914 and October 23, 1923.

The obverse of the Bielefeld banknote situates the hyperinflation of the Weimar Republic in the context of a social discord that has reached diabolic proportions. The artist bemoans the lack of unity (*Seid einig, einig!*) within Germany, but he ultimately suggests that the war is to be blamed for the tragedy that has befallen the German people. The reverse of the 100 billion banknote (adapted from a 5000 mark banknote issued in February, 1923) repeats this theme at its very top edge.⁷¹ Thus, the user is reminded of *Deutschlands Zusammenbruch 11. Nov. 1918*, "Germany's collapse, November 11, 1918," the date on which Germany signed the armistice with the Allied forces. In densely printed text right under this headline, the artist—a certain Schreiber—has compiled a list of war expenditures by the Allies in the year 1922, followed by price comparisons that illustrate the extent of the inflation (for example, "1918: 1 hat, 8 marks; 1923: 1 hat, 30,000 marks").

The scene beneath this text is utter chaos. The crown and scepter of the Reich have fallen, as have the German eagle and the country's maritime prestige (*Seegeltung*). A judge on the right vainly shouts, *Seid einig, einig, einig* while a valiant worker attempts to hold

⁷⁰ My interpretation of the imagery draws on Gerke, *Das Geld der mageren Jahre*, 162–65.

⁷¹ See *ibid.*, 134–37.

the pillars of the country together, but unity (*Einheit*), order (*Ordnung*), the unity of the Reich (*Reichseinheit*), and law (*Recht*) cannot be salvaged as they tumble about violently. At the very bottom, cowed or even dead, we find, on the right, a soldier and, on the left (with book and owl), an intellectual (*Geistesarbeiter*). On the former, a line from Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* comments, *Ein Grab der Freiheit ist's*, "it's a grave for freedom." Above the intellectual this verse is inscribed: *Wir wissen den Weg in jene Welt, wo die stärkste Maschine in Schutt zerfällt* ("we know the path into the kind of world where the strongest machine falls into ruin").⁷²

In light of Simmel's claim regarding both the "quasi-religious faith" that the functioning of the money economy requires, and the similar roles that God and money play in the sequence of purposes, the religious references on the reverse of our banknote are particularly revealing. An inattentive observer could miss the crosses on the crown and the scepter, crosses which subtly suggest that, with the monarchical rule of the Kaiser, the Christian faith itself has been brought down. Upon closer inspection, the falling pillars—marked "revolution" and "civil society" (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*), respectively—bear religious inscriptions. Starting on the left, we read, "golden calf" (*goldenes Kalb*), with a reference to Psalm 73:12: "Behold these are sinners; and yet abounding in the world they have obtained riches."⁷³ The pillar devoted to civil society bears a reference to Psalm 109:24: "My knees are weakened through fasting; and my flesh is changed for oil." Finally, the pillar on the extreme right cites Psalm 79:4: "We are become a reproach to our neighbors: a scorn and derision to them that are round about us." Furthermore, the pillar on the left not only says, "golden calf," but is topped by a small image of a calf or bull, the ultimate signifier of idolatry from the narrative of Exodus 32. This is a society that has abandoned its faith in the true God and, as a consequence, has plunged into chaos. People trample on each other without respect for social order and justice. At the top, we now encounter shady figures such as the *Schieber* (the black marketer or racketeer).

The one-dollar banknote from figure 3, with its motto, "In God We Trust" and the serene imagery from the Great Seal of the United States—especially the pyramid with the eye of providence at its top—contrasts starkly with the 100 billion marks from Bielefeld. The contrast throws into relief the truth of Simmel's claim that money requires a quasi-religious trust in the social order. Without such trust, the social order and the money that represents it collapse.



FIGURE 5: Reverse of the 100 billion banknote depicted in figure 1. (From the author's collection.)

⁷² I have been unable to identify the source of this verse.

⁷³ The Psalms are quoted from the Douay-Rheims version.

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Faith, Science and the Question of Death: Retrieving the Philosophical Vision of Nikolai F. Fyodorov

Abstract: In this study* I critically discuss the religious philosophy of Nikolai F. Fyodorov. Beforehand I will offer a synoptic overview of its key components. The thought of Fyodorov may serve as a model for case study work in regard to two crucial questions: (1) What is the relation between the past and the future? and (2) What is the relation between faith and science? These questions receive their spiritual, theological and philosophical answers through Fyodorov's reflection on the (3) overcoming of death. In offering his answers Fyodorov taps into the innermost depths of Christian spirituality which is interpreted in ways which are not always 'Orthodox' in the conventional sense. On one hand he offers a vision which prophetically yet idiosyncratically anticipates the "resurrection of all by all" (viz. Philosophy of the Common Task): this in itself calls for a radical revision of humanity's guiding ethical, political and cultural principles (viz. Supramoralism). On the other hand, he expounds visionary proposals for the role science has to play precisely within the project of resurrecting the deceased and restoring free conscious life to all being (viz. Regulation). Fyodorov is acclaimed as one of the pioneering anticipators of climatology, rocket and space astronautics, cryonics, genetic engineering, cloning and body re-design; also, he is endorsed as the forerunner of Russian cosmism and influencer of transhumanism. His thought is radical, maximalist and limital. As well, it is informed by the purity of a moral saintliness. Inasmuch his philosophical vision may help us re-examine our own understanding of the relation of the past to the future, as well as the relation of faith to science, and, to re-address the predicament of dying. For the same reason it allows us to metacritically examine the neuralgic points of Fyodorov's proposals. Lastly, I strive to reflect the mentioned problematic within a historical perspective, hermeneutically, hoping to provide orientation points for further discussion.

Keywords: God, mankind, image and likeness, personhood, primordial sin, death, faith, science, re-evolution, resurrection, the Common Task, supramoralism, regulation, pre-Soviet and Soviet culture, Russian cosmism, transhumanism

* This study is the finalized result of preparatory work for the PP presentation given under the same title at the Institute for Patristic Studies in the Holy Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of the Vlatades, Acropolis, Thessaloniki 23 January 2018. The event was organized by the Inter-faculty Committee for exploring the relations between tradition and modernity (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki = AUTH). The co-chairmen of the said Committee are Dr Miltiadis Konstantinu (Dean of the Faculty of Theology: Professor of Biblical studies) and Dr Argyris Nikolaidis (Faculty of Sciences: former Professor of theoretical physics). This would not have been possible without the blessing of His Grace Bishop Nikiforos, residing as Hegumen at the Vlatades monastery; nor without the warm support of Dr Symeon Pashalidis, Professor of Patristics & Hagiography (AUTH) and Director of the Patriarchal Foundation for Patristic Studies at the Vlatades monastery. To the aforementioned distinguished gentlemen and scholars I hereby extend my deep collegial gratitude.

“At the basis of his philosophy was his grieving for the human predicament, and there was no man on earth who felt such sorrow at the death of people and such thirst to return them to life”
(Nikolai Berdyaev, 1915)

Introduction. Nikolai Fyodorovich Fyodorov (1829–1903) was born into Russian higher nobility (Klyuch, Tambov region): an illegitimate son of Prince Pavel Ivanovich Gagarin (1798–1872) and Elisaveta Ivanovna. After Fyodorov’s grandfather died in 1832 his uncle, Konstantin Ivanovich Gagarin, took care of the family estate. And, since Fyodorov’s father (a man fond of the arts) was often absent and immersed in setting-up theatres and plays (Odessa, Kishinev etc), his uncle did his best to have the young Fyodorov receive a fine education (Tambov Gymnasium [1848], Odessa Richelieu Lyceum [left in 1854])¹. He spent a significant part of his life, from 1854 to 1868, as a teacher of history and geography in Russian provincial schools. Finally, after a spell in the Tchertkov Library (from 1869), he settled in Moscow’s Rumyantsev museum (from 1874)². This allowed him a permanent exposure to books, journals and latest news from the worlds of philosophy, science and the arts. Because of his self-denying lifestyle, humble character, gigantic erudition—and, primarily, because he was regarded as a new (Christian) teacher of humanity—Fyodorov was dubbed the “Moscow Socrates”³ (S. Bulgakov [1911]; V. N. Ilyin [1929]). A common trait for Russian religious philosophers is to treat the revealed truths of faith as plausible philosophical premises. These are subsequently used to address burning issues in the fields of religion, philosophy, history and generally in the social and natural sciences. This is realized through a critical praxis of illuminated reason, using disciplined discursive methods for sustained reflection and argumentation. At the same time, notably, the tradition of Orthodox ecclesial spirituality is utilized as a creative source of primary ideas, values and orientation points.

Fyodorov is paradigmatic in the said sense. Dostoyevsky and Solovyov endorsed his teaching profoundly. Tolstoy stated that he is proud of the moral heights reached by Fyodorov’s thought. He adds that he could defend them “as if their where his own”, regardless of the fact that he hastened to disclaim that he would endorse them. Others acclaim his genius and lasting influence as well: be it positive or negative. The influence needn’t be substantially direct, explicit, nor positive, in order to be acknowledged as present. Conditionally speaking, one can establish a commonality of certain important Fyodorovian themes and concerns (say, the primacy of the “spiritual-ethical” understanding of reality) in the case of religious philosophers such as Svyatogor, Yaroslavsky, Gorsky, Setnitsky, Berdyaev, Florensky, Bulgakov, V. N. Ilyin, N. O. Lossky (to mention just a few). His influence impacted not only philosophers. In one way or the other it was felt in other fields as well: in theology (Florensky, Bulgakov, Zenkovsky, or Fedotov and Florovsky et alii), science (Muravyov, Tsiolkovsky, Chizhevsky, Vernadsky, Kuprevich et alii) and art: literature, poetry, music and

1 George M. Young, *The Russian Cosmists: The Esoteric Futurism of Nikolai Fedorov and His Followers*, Oxford University Press, New York 2012, 54–55 = abbr. RC.

2 He spent his final years working at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

3 Sergei Bulgakov, “The Enigmatic Thinker” (Russ.), in idem, *Two Cities: Explorations of the Nature of Social Ideals*, vol. 2, Put’, Moscow 1911, 260–272.

painting (Beli [Bugayev], Zamyatin, Remizov, Fet, Platonov; Skryabin, Rachmaninov; Chekrygin, Filonov, Kandinsky, Malevich, the “Amaravella” group and Roerich, or Labas et alii).

After the posthumous publication of his magnum opus, *The Philosophy of the Common Task* (*Filosofia Obshchago Dela*: I Verny 1906, II Moscow 1913)⁴, written between 1878 and 1892, collected and edited by his pupils V. A. Kozhevnykov and N. P. Peterson, it became clear that his thought represents a cultural event of the first order: a “unique, inexplicable and incomparable event” (Akim L. Volyinsky). As the histories of Russian philosophy suggest⁵, he laid-out the key regulative ideas which fertilized and formatted the ascent of modern Russian religious philosophy⁶. Especially the ideas of: 1. Godmanhood, 2. integral knowledge, 3. all-unity, 4. sophianism, 5. in-churchification and 6. (anti-western) Kulturkritik. Subsequently, these have served as the main discussion topics and foundational orientation points for theory and practice.

More specifically, a school of Fyodorovians emerged. Both philosophers and natural scientists were affected, idealists and materialists alike. This school constitutes what is now acclaimed as Russian cosmism⁷, including its side-currents: those of transhumanism, immortalism and scientific futurism. In its ranks one finds a diverse yet unifiable assembly of amazing minds: Muravyov, Umov, Tsiolkovsky, Korolev, Bugayev, Vernadsky, Chizhevsky and others. The proposals of the manifold representatives of Russian cosmism issue forth from Fyodorov’s daring as much as astounding speculation. Both the master and his followers attracted harsh criticism and, equally, powerful affirmation: from theologians, philosophers, scientists and the wider thinking public. The variegated depth of Fyodorov’s multilayered influence, however, is not questioned. Again, in a qualified sense, he may be

4 I use the Russian critical edition rendered by A. G. Gacheva, S. G. Semyonova (eds.), N. F. Fyodorov, *Collected Works in Four Volumes* (*Sobranie Sochineniy*), vols I-IV, Progress, Moscow 1995 = abbr. CW (All further quotes [unless otherwise stated] refer to this edition via the said abbreviation). The fifth volume is an addition to the fourth. It includes commentary.

5 Vasily V. Zenkovsky, *History of Russian Philosophy* (Russ.), vol. II, YMCA Press, Paris 1950, 131-147 = abbr. HRE.

6 Of course, it would be incorrect, as much as unnecessary, to single out Fyodorov as the sole forefather of the Russian religious “renaissance” (N. Zernov) of the 19th and 20th century. The roots are far too intertwined and complex to allow for such a cultural and hermeneutical reduction. Still, he is one of the fountain heads behind the movement as such.

7 George M. Young (cf. op. cit) offers an overview of the “forerunners” of Russian cosmism (12-20), as well as an overview of what he rubricates as “religious” cosmists (92-144) and “scientific” cosmists (145-176), with sections on 20th century Fyodorovian “followers” (193-218), including its “offshoots today” (219-234). This is thus far the only Anglo-American attempt to present this movement within one relatively broad sweep: presupposing, as it does, that cosmism is or may become a unified doctrine (despite, or because of, the immensity of its spiritual-theoretical expanses and the diversity of its conceptual networks). Of course, much systematic, methodological and critical-polemical work remains to be done in order to further clarify and stabilize this subject matter. A recent study by Marina Simakova offers a rich bibliographical, culturological and philosophical framework for understanding the genesis, structure and history of Russian cosmism. It also includes convincing explanations of the motives powering the more recent “cosmist turn” in aesthetical, art-performative and philosophical-scientific theorizing: cf. Marina Simakova, “No Man’s Space: On Russian Cosmism”, *e-Flux Journal*, 74 (June 2016): www.e-flux.com/journal/74/59823/

regarded is the spiritual “father” of Russian philosophically grounded cosmism. At the same time, as was said, he is the conceiver of a recognizable style of religious philosophizing informed by the main themes, ideas and ideals of Orthodox Christianity. This type of religious philosophy produced hitherto unheard of manifestations of the inspired thinking spirit. Some may be taken as authentic contributions to the field of philosophy. As well, not a few may be regarded as promising philosophical developments of the legacy of the Orthodox Church’s tradition. A number of ideas and proposals of religious philosophy *modo Russo*, admittedly, have been evaluated as either awkward or non-Orthodox, and some as bordering on the lines of the heretical. All in all, as Svetlana G. Semenova, affirms boldly, and rightly, within the history of Russian (“fatherland”) thought, including that of world philosophy itself, Fyodorov occupies a position of a “religious Master” who has given us a “most powerful, unexpected and fertile philosophical optic”⁸.

“... the most general evil affecting all—in fact, an evil-doing—is death, and therefore the supreme good, the supreme task, is resuscitation”

(Nikolai F. Fyodorov, *Philosophy of the Common Task*, Verna 1906)⁹

Thematic. Fyodorov dedicated his life to devising an effective solution to the challenge of death¹⁰. What is more, he wants to salvage the past. He concludes that the future is meaningful only in the case of a substantial retrieval of the past. For this reason he turns to both faith and science: that is, to theology and technology. In fact, his conclusions state that positive science can lead humanity to this colossal accomplishment. He adds that Christianity itself demands such a deed. Fyodorov’s philosophy is anchored in the intersection of two main relations: that of the (a) past and the future, and that of (b) religion and science. The very heart of this intersection comes out of the “grave”. According to Fyodorov, it springs from the question about (c) death: “In the torments of the consciousness of mortality the human soul was born”¹¹. In what follows I venture to explain the extraordinary proposals given by the Russian philosopher. As a result, I critically evaluate Fyodorov’s understanding of the aforesaid relations, including his teaching on the meaning of death. Lastly, I offer an overview of his standing legacy.

1. Philosophy of the Common Task. Does Fyodorov wish to disregard the future in the name of an abstract and dead past? The answer is: Absolutely not. This is so because he regards the past primarily through the faces (*lik, lica*) of our deceased ancestors. Consequently, to retrieve the past means to collect the concrete persons of those who have perished (i.e. their hypostases). The act of collecting (gathering: *sobornost*) is deeply connected to the act

⁸ Svetlana G. Semenova, “N. F. Fyodorov’s Philosophy of Resuscitation” (Russ.) = abbr. FPhR. Cf. A. G. Gacheva, S. G. Semyonova (eds.), N. F. Fyodorov, CW, I, 5.

⁹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, “The problem of brotherhood or kinship, of the causes of the unbrotherly, unkindred, that is, the unworldly state of the world, and of the means for the restoration of kinship” (Russ.) = abbr. PBK. Cf. *idem*, PBK: CW, I, 140.

¹⁰ “The last enemy to be destroyed is death” (1Cor. 15:26).

¹¹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, “On the Horizontal and Vertical Position: Death and Life” (Russ.) = abbr. HVP. Cf. *idem*, HVP: CW, II, 257.

of recollecting (memorizing: *pamyat*). Both of these endeavours are expressions of an action of love. However, this act of love needs to be substantial in the absolute sense. Otherwise it remains or becomes a sentimental mimetic gesture which is ontologically futile. Fyodorov claims that the history of mankind, thus far, is a history of failure to generate such an act. "History as fact is mutual extermination [...] of people like ourselves, the pillage and plunder of nature (i.e. the Earth) through its exploitation and utilisation, leading to degeneration and dying (i.e. culture)"¹². The reasons for this malfunction are many, claims Fyodorov. Three of these stand out. Firstly, the sons (daughters) have abandoned their fathers (mothers). Secondly, this is caused by and also induced by deep forgetfulness of the sons' absolute debt to the forefathers (from whom they have received the absolute value: life). And thirdly, the previous two are permeated by a resignation before death. "The renegade of filial duty has forgotten that the son's love for father takes precedence over the love for power"¹³. Not without Old Testament and New Testament undertones (Mal. 4:6¹⁴; Lk. 1:17¹⁵), Fyodorov's philosophy proposes to overturn this history of abandonment and forgetting. The "overturn" is to be achieved by what he calls the Common Task (*obsche delo*).

1.1. Resurrectionism. What is this Common Task? Firstly, it is "... a response to catastrophes affecting all humans—that is, death and all that leads to it"¹⁶. Secondly, the grand Deed is nothing less than the new pan-human effort, executed by the sons and daughters, to resuscitate and resurrect the deceased generations of their ancestors. Thirdly, this pan-human effort demands the reconstitution of brotherly relations against divisive relations, of which there are three kinds: (a) unbrotherliness among human beings (b) unbrotherliness between the living and the dead and (c) unbrotherliness between destructive nature and destructive mankind. Brotherliness, kinship, sonship are terminological variations of the main operative distinction of the Fyodorovian system. Other distinctions are derived from it: especially, the learned (knowledge and city conglomerate) against the unlearned (labour, and country community) and the wealthy against the poor. Moreover, Fyodorov's pan-human undertaking is to be achieved by the means of positive science (also inspired and guided, as we shall see, by the Spirit of Christ [viz. Jn. 14:26; 16:14-15]). Part of these radical proposals is Fyodorov's innovative statement that the resurrection, note, needs to be "immanent"¹⁷. It has to be accomplished this side of the "transcendent" resurrection implied by the Dread Last Judgment. This entails an interiorization of the eschaton. In other words, Fyodorov claims that the doctrines of Christianity demand an imma-

¹² Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 138.

¹³ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, "The art of imitation (false artistic re-creation) and the art of reality (real resurrection)" = abbr. A. Cf. idem, A: CW, II, 230.

¹⁴ "He [Elijah BL] will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse".

¹⁵ "And he will go on before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" [reveals the Angel to Zechariah BL].

¹⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 185.

¹⁷ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 151.

ment resurrection praxis conducted by the sons who ought to (must!) devise a technology which will enable this event to come to pass within history, in cooperation with divine agency. This would usher an apocatastatic apocalypse “now”!

Fyodorov’s philosophy entails a series of astounding transformative reversals of established ideas and ideals, including the accordant fields of thought and practice. The radical shift in levels of the transformative approach to human problems is indicated by the following statement: “... the revolution¹⁸ may be determined as a supplanting of the Common (obsche) fathers-oriented [...] Task by the mere social (obschestveno) task, that is, as the permutation or negation of the debt of sons towards the fathers, of the (debt to) resurrect the dead, in the name of the welfare of the living”¹⁹. In this sense, a fortiori, Fyodorov may be seen as more radical than any socio-economically oriented revolutionary²⁰, the Leninist fundamentalist notwithstanding²¹. In yet another sense, he may be recognized as a spirit pre-emptively reworking—transmuting or even hijacking²²—the ideals and goals of both Russian revolutions (1905, 1917), as spelled-out by the revolutionary intelligentsia. Let me illustrate and clarify further by taking several paradigmatic examples of what I call Fyodorov’s transformative reversal proposals. Expounding these examples takes us into the core of Fyodorov’s philosophy of the Common Task. Namely, this exposition will introduce us into his teaching on Supramoralism. In turn it will allow us to understand its applicative side as well: notably, his teaching on Regulation.

The first fundamental reversal relates to ontology. In traditional ontology the main question, i.e. “What is being?”, casts a shadow over the question of “Why do living be-

18 In this concrete case, Fyodorov regards the French revolution as shallow and frivolous. Since, he finds that it deals with ideological, social and economical matters “only”. The same can be said, *mutatis mutandis*, for other revolutionary projects if and where they lack his approach to radicalism.

19 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 185. For this reason Fyodorov is relentlessly critical towards both communist socialism (“evil of Marxist matterocracy”) and capitalism (“evil of anarchic individualism”): cf. Nikolai F. Fyodorov, “As long as there is death, there will be hunger and disease, and conversely: As long as there is hunger and disease, there will be death” (Russ.) = abbr. DHD. Cf. *idem*, DHD: CW, II, 257 et passim.

20 A subversive relation between Fyodorov’s engagement with the social-political and that of the Russian revolutionary ferment in ideas and ideologies needs to be noted. It needs to be explored further. To leave it out of one’s explorative scopes would impoverish the understanding of the Fyodorov event.

21 One of the left-oriented Fyodorovians, who eventually accepted the Soviet revolutionary-ideological system, Valerian N. Muravyov (1885–1932), pleads for the real and literal victory over “objective” time: to wit, a triumph realized within history by a revolutionary collective united through science in action. It is no coincidence that Muravyov (who also corresponded with Leon Trotsky), confesses that: “We are far greater Bolsheviks than the Bolsheviks themselves”: cf. Vladimir G. Makarov, “Archive Secrets: Philosophers and the Authorities. Alexandr Gorsky: A Destiny Crippled by the ‘Right of [Ruling] Authority’” (Russ.), *Voprosy filosofii*, 8 (2002) 99; also cf. Valerian Muravyov, “Overcoming Time as the Basic Task of the Organization of Labour”, in *idem*, *Overcoming Time*, tr. from Russ. into Serbian: Z. Buljugić, Brimo : Logos, Belgrade 2005, 88–219 = abbr. OTI.

22 According to Communist jargon he would be labelled as the “counter-revolutionary” par excellence in a negative sense. Yet, paradoxically, one must again add the provision that he was a revolutionary spirit of the first order, albeit one coming from “outside-above” (Christian) and from “inside-within” (hyper-modernist): both at the same time. Technically speaking, then, Fyodorov’s proposals may be regarded as a counter-revolutionary strategy with revolutionary effects in the domain of possibilities.

ings die?” The question of “What is being?” takes primacy over the truly crucial question of “How?” is being. “If the subject of science is the solution of the question about causes²³”, argues the Russian, “then this means that science (nauka) explores the question ‘why does the existent exist?’ [...]. The question ‘why does the existent exist?’ is entirely unnatural and artificial. Since, as it is unnatural to ask ‘why does the existent exist?’ so it is natural to ask—‘why does that which is living die?’”²⁴ Therefore ontology needs to be reversed (transformed) by a special kind of thanatology. Sequentially Fyodorov’s thanatology²⁵ states that only personal beings are aware of death. Only they anticipate death as the catastrophically tragic event. And, in principle, personal beings acknowledge the death of other beings as equally unacceptable. Hence classical ontology needs to be reconstituted as personology²⁶. That is to say, it needs to be readdressed by an ontology of relationally conceived personhood²⁷ (viz. being as kinship, communion and solidarity). This would, then, offer knowledge about what needs *to be* the case, rather than merely describe what *is* the case²⁸. And, the case so far is that persons²⁹ (hypostases) perish. “Death transforms real presence of the person³⁰ into mere representation of the person. Therefore reinstated loving kinship demands the return of the deceased, each one being—irreplaceable”³¹. This explains why Fyodorov’s thanatology and personology presuppose the transformative reversal of mere intellectualism into projectivism. The goal is to bridge the wounding gap between theory and practice, thought and being, ideals and reality, nature and history, etc. For, pragmatically, the only way to transport an idea(l) into reality is through a project: “The common property of all the categories of action—is immortality. Here is why reason receives significance not subjective and not objective, but rather—projective...”³².

The second fundamental reversal relates to social economical politics. The main aims of social politics, historically speaking, deal with effects, not with main causes: the causes

23 This indicates Fyodorov’s impressive erudition. It is plausible to infer that he is acquainted with Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytic* where this definition of “science” is given (i.e. science as episteme grounded in the knowledge of causes). Cf. Aristotle, *Analytica posteriora*, 71 b 9–11.

24 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, vol. I, 45. In contradistinction to Aristotle, Fyodorov asks not “what is being” (to ti ên einai [*Metaphysica*, VII, 1029b]) nor “what is being qua being” (to on he on [*Metaphysica*, IV, 1003a]). Rather, he poses the question of its way of being (tropos hyparxeos) in regard to death, decay and decomposition (phtora).

25 Technically, he does not use this term. But it is de facto introduced by his extensive, elaborate and disciplined reflections on death.

26 Hence his personology is a function of his thanatology and vice versa.

27 It would take a whole study to explore this personalist-communional potential in Fyodorov’s thought. In any case, I venture to here highlight this pioneering streak: that is, the germinal vestiges of a Christian relational personalist ontology in Fyodorov.

28 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, vol. I, 44–45. As well, we can here glean the insertion of ethical concerns into ontological matters.

29 That is, entities of priceless worth in principle.

30 Literally in Russian: “licezrenie” = “the looking into the other: face to face”.

31 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 59.

32 Cit. acc. to Nikolai Berdyaev, “The Religion of Resuscitative Resurrection (‘The Philosophy of the Common Task’ of N. F. Fyodorov)” (Russ.), *Russkaya Mysl*, (July 1915) 76–120 = abbr. RRR.

of death. Yet it is death which is the root of all intermediate forms of human poverty, depravity and inequality. “The first paschal [sic] question is how to replace the problem of poverty and wealth by that of death and life, which is the same for rich and for poor”³³. The real basis of all “super-structures” (let me use the Marxist idiom) is not found in the alienating relations of production, socio-economically speaking, but in the disrupted relations of nature-being, that is, in the re-production of dying (which can be read as a horrifying “not-being-able-to-hold-together”: equally affecting human and non-human orders of nature-being). Whilst preparing a solution Fyodorov adds: “... the social question can be decided not by socialism, but only by nature-knowledge (*estestvoznanie*)”³⁴. Not any “nature-knowledge” (or “social knowledge” for that matter), however, will satisfy Fyodorov’s maximalist aspirations. Both the social and natural sciences are content (ever so eagerly) to discover the means to make life better, to unveil more knowledge and devise superior tools for the preservation, mediation and advance of human life. Nonetheless, “... if we consider social tasks as ultimate goals, we distort the idea of God, we deprive Him of perfection, we perceive Him as Ruler and Judge³⁵, we admit that we are incapable of being brothers and have no Father”³⁶. In other words, without evidencing God in concrete social-scientific and social-political practice, collectively, we subvert not only the divine, but also travestize the social as such: to wit, eliminate the very possibility of eminent sociality: i.e. the God-human collective traversing the horizon of history: against, through and beyond death. Lamentably, the modern natural and humanistic sciences³⁷ (including a plethora of socio-economical and socio-political regimes based on them) take death as a given “natural” and-or “social” reality: as a fated cosmic necessity, and, simultaneously, jettison the divine meta-context of material and socio-historical reality. That is why ultimately, argues Fyodorov, socio-economic politics need to be reversed (transformed) by a special kind of physics³⁸. This is to be a physics of resuscitation³⁹ of all human and non-human beings. For, as long as there is death, there will be hunger and disease: and conversely⁴⁰. We could

33 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, “Supramoralism, or the All-universal Synthesis (i.e. all-universal union)” (Russ.) = abbr. S. Cf. idem, S: CW, I, 390-391.

34 For Fyodorov’s criticism of socialism (which has replaced religion which in turn has escaped into the “transcendent” domain leaving the field open for socialism without God), cf. N. F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 59-60.

35 Fyodorov’s rejections of deism, as well as vulgar (binary) secularism, are notable.

36 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 185.

37 It is useful here to note that Fyodorov pleads for, and works towards, the elimination of the objectified water-tight distinction between the so called real-hard sciences (*realia*) and the so called imaginative-humanistic sciences (*humaniora*). As we shall soon see, he voices the idea remarkably in his programmatic teaching on supramoralism viz. the “all-universal synthesis”. By the same token he anticipates the (now ubiquitously endorsed) inter-disciplinary mode of scientific holistic consciousness.

38 According to the idiom of the Fyodorovian Valerian Muravyov: “... pure science must direct genetics, politics and production”: cf. idem, OTI, 108.

39 Fyodorov distinguishes between “resuscitation” = restoration (*voskreshenie*) and resurrection (*voskresenie*). Both terms are inextricably linked in his thought. However, they are not exactly the same: neither semantically nor functionally, nor ontologically.

40 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, DHD: CW, II, 257-259. Of course, eliminating hunger and disease, even death, cannot

say that Fyodorov demands the reinstatement of the most fundamental human “natural” right: the right to be ever exempt from death⁴¹, or, inversely, the right to unrestrained life.

A completely new (“hyper-revolutionary”) notion of the political is thus inaugurated. It is noteworthy that Fyodorov’s Common Task philosopheme “utilizes”⁴² a pre-eminent Marxist directive in order to realize a pre-eminently Christian goal. He in fact “baptizes” Marx’s 11th Thesis on Feuerbach: “Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it”⁴³. However, according to the main thrust of Fyodorov’s thought, the only *real* change of the “unworldly state of the world” would be the resurrection of the fathers and mothers by the sons and daughters, etc. In that case, the collective resurrection praxis is *the* final realization of philosophy: that is, revolution. Furthermore, the physics of resuscitation is the other—applicative—side of Fyodorov’s ontology of personhood. Both imply, and demand, the accomplishment of the task of resurrecting the forefather’s face (prosopon) as a concrete living being (hypostasis). Devising adequate means for that, in the fields of all the sciences, will serve the highest purpose and will bring emancipation⁴⁴ from all bondage, finally from corruptibility and death. This includes the non-human created order as well⁴⁵. As we may anticipate, Fyodorov is far from being a vulgar positivistic philosopher-scientist. Rather, he may be regarded as a meta-positivist (V. N. Ilyin). For lack of a better word, his pragmatic vein is spiritualized.

Philosophy of the Task and science of the Deed must serve a meta-empirical goal:

automatically solve the spiritual-moral side of the pathological aspects of power strife and power passions. For this, as we shall see, a massive spiritual-moral revolution is needed as well, unconditionally.

41 That all human agents desire infinite and unlimited life, existentially, is presupposed by Fyodorov. Therefore, the implied moral universalism of human “natural” rights is not questioned.

42 The real question here is to what extent is this counter-subversive “utilization” consciously implemented, or not, by Nikolai Fyodorovich?

43 Karl Marx originally wrote the text in Brussels in 1845 under the title “1) *ad* Feuerbach”. Friedrich Engels rendered a redaction of it in 1888, entitled “Theses on Feuerbach” (appended to his own work *Ludwig Feuerbach*). The first Russian translation of the “Theses” appeared in Moscow in 1924.

44 Fyodorov lends unique verbatim realism to the task of ushering the New Testament promises in regard to the predicament of death. A specially edited biblical fabric (serving as an omnipresent referential meta-context) is weaved into most, if not all, of his socio-cultural and/or political-economical reflections. The philosophy of the Common Task wishes to take avant-garde steps, scientifically and in terms of re-organizing labour (in fact, in terms of resetting [rebooting] the whole social-symbolic order itself), in the name of realizing the final freedom of the “children of God”, in accordance with the words of St Paul: “For the creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but because of the One who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom (ten eleutherian tes doxes) of the children of God. [...] Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons...” (Rom. 8:20-21, 23). Fyodorov overcompensates the “awaiting” moment by a revolutionary programme attuned Christologically. This is a programme of praxis equally hostile to individual mysticism and to collective quietism: a theoretical manifesto befriending Pauline theology in terms of revolutionary visions as well as visions of a supremely atypical revolution.

45 The biblical underpinnings of Fyodorov’s sensitivities are always at hand, reverberating throughout: “We know that the whole creation (*pasa he ktisis*) has been groaning together (*synodinei*) in the pains of childbirth until the present time” (Rom. 8:22).

“Resuscitation, as an action, is positivism in the sphere of final causes...”⁴⁶. This explains why Fyodorov’s concept of meta-physical physics (or, of political physics in the said sense), also, presupposes the transformative reversal of atomized urban citizenry (including the equally fragmented proletariat of the suburbia) into an organic solidarity of resurrection-oriented kinship: say, into a pan-human “Comintern” of resurrectors aware of their historical vocation. His political physics, thusly, inaugurates a messianic absolutism⁴⁷ of the universalized brotherhood of resurrection. It is to be established from “ground zero” in the name of resuscitation, integration and regulation. That is, in the name of a simultaneous restitution⁴⁸ and hyper-modernization of reality. “The desolation within the cemeteries is a natural consequence of the decay of kinship and its transformation into citizenship”: moreover, “... museums, especially natural science museums⁴⁹, and schools should be built in the vicinity of cemeteries [...]. To save cemeteries, a radical change is necessary: society’s centre of gravity should be moved to the countryside”⁵⁰. And, the cemetery church should always and everywhere be the main central Church—sabornaya, katholikon—because the purpose of the Liturgy is resurrection in Christ⁵¹.

The third fundamental reversal relates to ethics. Broadly speaking, the philosophical tradition of ethical reflection can be projected into three main approaches: the ethics of duty (deontological), the ethics of consequences (utilitarian) and the ethics of virtue (aretological). It is neither altogether simple nor necessary to confine Fyodorov’s understanding of the ethical within one or all of these categories⁵². Still, one could venture to claim that he, primarily, undertakes a substantial revision of deontological ethics (alongside, he keeps a special virtue ethics in mind⁵³, and is aware of the far-reaching consequences of the behaviour of individuals and collectives). Firstly, mere utilitarian ethics

⁴⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 56. Again, let us note Fyodorov’s knowledge of the Aristotelian theory of the four causes (Gk. *aitia*: the material, formal, efficient and final causes). Cf. Aristotle, *Physica*, II 3; *Metaphysica*, V 5.

⁴⁷ Presumably, a resurrection-friendly “politburo” of scientists, artists and priests would dictate the terms of this “paschal” revolution: note, this side of an otherwise historically deferred apocalypse. By doing accordingly, they would in fact subvert the “expected” (die-and-be-judged) into something “unexpected” (co-resurrect-yourself-with-God—now!). In short, they would accelerate history and subvert it by realizing total freedom, including freedom from death.

⁴⁸ This *restitutio in integrum* should be understood in the sense of re-creating pre-original life: re-forming the dead into the living; re-instituting creation into a life free from the strictures of sin, mortality and death, and free for endless creative possibility.

⁴⁹ Cit. acc. to Nikolai Berdyaev, RRR, 76-120.

⁵⁰ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 73-75.

⁵¹ As we shall grasp, this notion is part of Fyodorov’s vision of the cosmic Liturgy: that is, of a Liturgy which will transcend the confines of the church walls of any particular temple, engulfing the whole of creation within a never ending action of resuscitation, culminating (or commencing) in the atoning resurrection of the deceased generations of humankind.

⁵² There is no clinically pure deontological, utilitarian or virtue ethics. All three kinds, in fact, possess serious considerations of rules, consequences and virtues. The point is to see wherein lays the fundamental notion-value which supports a given ethical framework as such. In Fyodorov’s case, I’d say, it is duty coupled with responsibility.

⁵³ Where the human being (humanity) is truly virtuous if and only if virtue entails the maximal striving by all capacities, individual and collective, to resurrect being.

is dismissed by Fyodorov. Since, it defines the Good as that which is “useful” (heteronomy) and of interest for the “greatest” number of subjects. Alongside, it disregards the main problem: that of retrieving the dead, which is the Good par excellence (a Good not to be negotiated by consequentialist calculations, nor by a fleeting “democracy” of opinionated votes on what is useful “hence” good). Secondly, deontological ethics is re-considered, if not reconstructed and overcome. Deontological ethics is founded on motifs of respect for the moral law as such (autonomy) regardless of external interests of the moral agent. Nonetheless, it prescribes a formal universal law, i.e. the categorical imperative, which, as in the case of utilitarian ethics, leaves the main predicament of humanity unsolved. In a word, it is blind to past generations of persons who have perished, including countless sediments of expired natural organisms, etc. Alongside, it envisages the duty to future generations only in abstract imaginary terms. Finally, the Kingdom of God (where all souls are headed to congregate, hopefully, and on the basis of moral worth) happens to be a formal postulate: an “ideal” of a “Kingdom of ends”. The following lines ensue as the result of Fyodorov’s assessment of Kant’s thought as a whole (which he deems the summit of western philosophy, tying in the ark strung from Descartes to Nietzsche):

“All that is good in the *Critique of Pure Reason*—that is God—is an *ideal**; and in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, is a reality *beyond this world**. So reality consists of (a) a soulless world, an irrational, unfeeling force which it would be more appropriate to call chaos than cosmos [...] and (b) a helpless soul, a knowledge of which can be called psychology (in the sense of psychocracy⁵⁴) only projectively, since a soul, separated from God and from the world, is only a capacity to feel, know and act, while deprived of energy and will. In this we find the separation of the soul from energy and the world, from reason and feeling. Their union can only be accomplished through a *project**, but this is not to be found in Kant”⁵⁵.

1.2. Supramoralism. Therefore, posits Fyodorov boldly, “... the *duty** to return life to our fathers-ancestors, resuscitation, is the highest and unconditionally universal morality [...]; on the fulfilment of this duty of resuscitation depends the destiny of the human race”⁵⁶. These considerations introduce us into Fyodorov’s teaching on supramoralism, to which we duly turn in what follows next. In developing the aforesaid he proposes to regard the Good in terms which are far more comprehensive than what is usually suggested in philosophical reflection on morality. What the philosopher is saying is that ethics need to be re-constituted on a substantial level. Ethics (moral law) need to be re-worked to include duties to past generations (not only towards the presently living generation): and, ethics need to be re-worked to include duties towards non-human otherness, viz. the natural cosmic environment. This necessitates the advocacy of what he calls the real Good, which would

⁵⁴ If achieved, that would be what Fyodorov would endorse: the realization of integration, all-universal synthesis and real restoration, etc.

⁵⁵ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 48. (The asterisk sign denotes that italics are added by BL).

⁵⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, “Supramoralism, or the All-universal Synthesis (i.e. all-universal union)” (Russ.) = abbr. S. See idem, S: CW, I, 388.

“... revert men into sons of men⁵⁷, and bring the prodigal sons⁵⁸ to the God of the fathers in order to implement the duty of testament executors (*dolg[a] dusheprikazchestva*): that is to say, general resurrection. This is the very meaning of the Liturgy. The Liturgy is *the** Good justifying itself and constituting the Common Task⁵⁹.”

Therefore, ethics need to be reversed (transformed) into theurgy⁶⁰ through Liturgy and both, we shall see, lead to cosmourgy. In short, mere moralism needs to be overcome by a meta-moralistic morality: such that it is grounded in an act of not merely “bettering” behaviour, but in an effective act of reconstituting *being* in cooperation with divine agency, to wit, with the triune God as the synthetic⁶¹ agency par excellence: “The Trinity is the Church of the Immortals and its human image and likeness can only be a Church of the resurrected”⁶². As we may observe, the philosophy of the Common Task cannot be reduced to, nor explained by standard ontology, gnoseology, sociology nor ethicology. But what is meant by “theurgy”? This is another crucial regulative idea of Fyodorov’s thought. Answering this question takes us into the epicenter of his philosophy. It is revealed by his doctrine of Supramoralism (which presupposes and develops further the above listed transformative “reversals”):

“In Supramoralism all dogmatics is transformed into ethics (that is, dogmas become commandments)—an ethics inseparable from knowledge and art, from science and aesthetics, all of which merge into ethics: the divine services themselves need to become acts of atonement, i.e. of resuscitation [sic]. Supramoralism [...] is based on the supreme commandment given before the Pascha⁶³ and the last commandment given after the Resurrection⁶⁴ by the First of the risen, as the necessary condition for continuing the task of resurrection. [...]: it calls for re-creation and resuscitation by which we are likened to the Creator; for this

57 Like many others, this locus, too, indicates the underlying biblical threads that constantly weave-in the philosophical and religious dimensions of Fyodorov’s reflections on the destiny of humankind and of the cosmos. Within this particular line (locus) the phrase refers to human sons of human fathers (cf. Mic 5:7; Heb. 2:6-9; cf. Ps. 8:4-8; Ps. 144:3). However, this phrase has other OT and NT anchoring points (e.g. OT: Psalms; Ezekiel; Daniel – e.g. NT: the four Gospels; Acts; Book of Revelation) which indicate towards the connection between sons of men and *the* Son of Man. It invites a likening of men to Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29), and, equally, it invokes their filial adoption to the Father by the Spirit in Jesus Christ (Gal. 4:6-7). Since Jesus is both: the Son of God and the Son of Man. Of course, the title Son of Man is primarily a Messianic self-identification of Christ himself. He readily chooses to use it, and he does so profusely. Because, such usage allows Jesus to reveal his divine character and mission (e.g. Matt. 24:30; 26:64 [viz. Dan. 7:13-14]): at the same time, it allows him to retain his immanent involvement with the human condition and destiny of humankind.

58 OT: “For this is a rebellious people, false sons, Sons who refuse to listen to the instruction of the Lord” (Is. 30:9); NT: “After a few days, the younger son got everything together and journeyed to a distant country, where he squandered his wealth in wild living” (Lk. 15:13). BL

59 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, “The Agathodicy (the justification of Good) of Solovyov and the Theodicy (the justification of God) of Leibniz” (Russ.) = abbr. AT: cf. idem, AT: CW, II, 180.

60 This is mirrored, analogically, in Fyodorov’s thesis about “gnoseology” becoming “gnoseourgy”.

61 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 64.

62 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 90.

63 “Be perfect, therefore, as your Heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). BL

64 “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15; Matt. 28:19). BL

is what Christ prayed for in his last prayer [...]”⁶⁵. Immediately after His resurrection, Christ indicated the way to such unity, which would endow us with the likeness of God [...]”⁶⁶.

Christologically regarded, theurgy translates into human cooperation with Christ the God-man, and conversely. It also implies continuing the resurrection process, liturgically and technologically. Equally, and for that reason, it entails productive labour: action which turns ideas into realities and collapses the division between subject and object, knowing and being, symbol and reality, possible and impossible, etc.⁶⁷ Fyodorov views the participation in God-manhood, dynamically, as a historical extension of Christ’s resurrection of Lazarus (Jn. 11:43). Retroactively, Lazarus’ resurrection demands full human cooperation (with Christ and among themselves) in the process of re-integrating deceased ancestors as restored into life, and as transformed: physically and morally⁶⁸. This makes the Russian visionary confident that Supramoralism and Christianity “coincide”. It is here necessary to add three explanatory points.

Firstly, Fyodorov interprets Supramoralism to be the final (Paschal) consummation of the Church’s Chalcedon doctrine: “... the teaching about the two wills, acting in harmony, has remained only a dogma, a theory, lacking expression in actual life”⁶⁹: “Christianity has not fully saved the world, because it has not been fully assimilated”⁷⁰. That is to say, Christianity “is not simply a doctrine of redemption, but the very task of redemption”⁷¹. We now recognize as well that his philosophy of re-collecting (a gathering memory; *vospominanie*, *zapominanie*) has another side: namely, the philosophy of re-memembering (literally, a vivifying memory; *pamyat*) which, ultimately, resuscitates members of humanity into a spiritualized ecclesial organism (*viz.* membership of all in resurrection Life).

Secondly, Fyodorov interprets the content of theurgy as that of an all-integrative Liturgy (theurgia as *leiturgia*). The projected liturgical “immortalization” moreover represents a creative extension of *art*⁷². This is an art *par excellence*. It differs from other hitherto known arts not merely in terms of formal markers allocated to art by traditional aesthetic theory. According to Fyodorov’s conception, this art should be eminently syn-aesthetic and supremely capable to integrate all manner of human knowledge, including a

⁶⁵ “That all of them may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I am in You. May they also be in us” (Jn. 17:21). BL

⁶⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, S: CW, I, 388.

⁶⁷ It is apt to mention that on these grounds Fyodorov reverses Auguste Comte’s periodization of history. According to Comte, the main periods of history are the following: mythological, metaphysical and positive (where the positive period, marked by empirical rational science, is superior to the previous two). According to Fyodorov, the metaphysical and positive eras are characterized by the divorce of knowing (theory) and doing (practice). Hence they should both be (a) renamed as “metaphorical” and (b) they should be re-evaluated within the possibilities opened-up by the mythological period (Fyodorov calls it “mytho-urgical”). Because, therein is preserved the unity of thought (name) and reality (presence). That is why Fyodorov holds that “mytho-urgy” is synonymous to “theurgy”. Cf. Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 295.

⁶⁸ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 86.

⁶⁹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 160.

⁷⁰ Cit. acc. to Nikolai Berdyaev, RRR, 76-120.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Analogically speaking, the same holds as true for technology.

host of transformative technologies, crafts and skills. Its high goal is to enable and vouchsafe the humanization of the cosmos and cosmization of humanity. Moreover, this “art of arts” should be grounded within the reality of Godmanhood, to wit, in Christ the pre-eternal creative Logos. Speaking in Christian cosmist terms, becoming fully divine-human in Christ means to become maximally human and maximally cosmist: both at the same time. The same holds as true for art. The maximalization of art’s potential is possible only in and through a theurgic event: actually, within the liturgical reality of the Body of Christ, that is, the Church. Consequently, the ultimate work of art is the fully resurrected human being⁷³.

As Irina Gutkin explains, “In Fedorov’s philosophy [...] aesthetics was allotted a role of a true positive science because a true work of art, in Fedorov’s definition, was that which contained the blueprint for new—future, ideal—life. [...]. Rather than simply represent reality [...] art must subdue the blind forces of nature and transform the ‘external world’ into a ‘better world’ of the future”⁷⁴. Or, in the words of the Fyodorovian Valerian Muravyov: “Then, every human being, in the sense of his constitution and form, will truly be created as something special and incomparable, in the same way works of art are now created. Then, Goethe and Shakespeare will not be creating plays but human beings and human communities”⁷⁵. This is how Dostoevsky’s dictum “beauty will save the world” receives its Russian cosmist augmentation, or concretization.

In summation, according to Fyodorov, the ultimate meaning of the Liturgy is: firstly, to give witness to the pending resurrection through the uninterrupted co-existence of all generations (this is depicted symbolically by the hosts of saints on the temple walls); secondly, in the Eucharist to allow the blood of Christ to establish panhuman brotherhood, kinship and communion by the Spirit; thirdly, to “overcome” the extra-liturgic reality. The Liturgy (taken as the internal “constitution of the temple”) contains both the programme and the power of transformative reversal of the invalid state of things within the extra-temple reality, i.e. in cosmic nature. For, in its present state nature represents “a travesty of the image of God [...] a travesty of co-existence (immortality) which entails succession, i.e. the mutual displacement of one generation by the other [...]; in other words, death...”⁷⁶. Thus, the theurgic Liturgy is envisaged as a profoundly transformative event of a pan-cosmic order⁷⁷.

Thirdly, this leads us into the applicative side of Supramoralism. It is opened to view

⁷³ I would here indicate towards a striking parallel: namely, St Irenaeus of Lyon’s statement: “The glory of God is a human being fully alive”; cf. idem, *Against Heresies*, IV, 20:7 in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 7, 1037B. (Fyodorov’s network of implicit and explicit patristic references is another topic, one yet to be explored fully).

⁷⁴ Irina Gutkin, *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic: 1890–1934*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois 1999, 42.

⁷⁵ Valerian Muravyov, “The Scientific Transformation of the Organism”, in idem, *The Culture of the Future* (unpublished writings), 1925–1927 = abbr. COF. [Published in V. Muravyov, OTI (Belgrade 2005), 230–268: 267 (supra-heading: *The Seal Over the Abyss*)].

⁷⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 300.

⁷⁷ There is a connection here to be observed (and to be further explored) between Fyodorov and the teaching of St Maximus the Confessor on the cosmic liturgy and the integrative Logos, revealed as the pre-eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ.

by the following question: How is resurrection and-or immortalization to be realized in concrete terms? For, if there are none, then Fyodorov's philosophy may reveal a serious limital weakness.

1.3. Regulation. This is where science comes to play nothing less but a crucial role. It is laid-out within Fyodorov's doctrine of Regulation. Let me say in advance that Fyodorov's conceptualizations of the role and capacities of science are truly visionary as much as revolutionary in the futuristic sense. And, allow me to remind that it is here that his conception of cosmic Liturgy connects with the movement which he fathered, namely: Russian cosmism. One name only may suffice here: Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (1857–1935). He is the undisputed founder of rocket science and pioneer of astronautics. It is almost unknown that Fyodorov was his influencer and teacher: of Supramoralism, and of mathematics, for three formative years in the Chertkov library⁷⁸. "Till now consciousness, reason and morality were localized on planet Earth [...]. Palestine and the Hellenic world are examples of this sort of localization—art and science in Greece, religion in Palestine, whence they then spread all over the Earth. But only when religion and science are united will it be possible to disseminate the influence of rational beings even beyond our Earth"⁷⁹. This entails the colonization of the whole cosmos coupled with resurrection activity dedicated to all beings which are dead or have perished: on an inter-galactic scale.

Before explicating the main proposals of the Regulation doctrine, it is necessary to reflect on its philosophical presuppositions. This allows us to appreciate the unity behind Fyodorov's understanding of social and of natural history. It takes us deeper into his thought: strewn between Concept and Vision. Both natural history and social history are imbued with an irrational, destructive, blind and evil force. Thus they condition each other. Humankind is responsible for the negative outcomes because of primordial sin. Nikolai Fyodorovich understands primordial sin to be the allowance of unbrotherly relations. These follow from the sin par excellence: the choice of prodigality over and against loving sonship (kinship) to God the Father (Is. 30:9; Lk. 15:13). Consequently, this entails the other side of primordial sin: the refusal to introduce rational governance over the Creation, thus denying God's Commandment (Gen. 1:28) and releasing the irrational force into human and non-human nature. For the same reason, humanity is responsible for the positive overcoming of the said processes (and guilty of passivity in regard to the said activity). Being an image of God (obraz, lik), the human being is enabled—called—to become a re-creator of the created order through god-given powers of free rational will. On one hand: "History is a ravaging of nature and an annihilation of men by one another". On the other hand: "Earth itself has become conscious of its fate through man, and this consciousness is evidently active—a means of salvation"⁸⁰. This means that the human being is

⁷⁸ Konstantin E. Tsiolkovsky, *Notes From My Life* (Russ.), Tula 1983, 61 (cf. FPhR, 5). (Tsiolkovsky's autobiography was originally published in 1935 in the Russian Journal *Molodaya Gvardia*, № 11–12).

⁷⁹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, A: CW, II, 231. It is noteworthy that in 1895 Tsiolkovsky published a tract with an indicative title: *Dreamings about the Earth and the Sky* (Russ.).

⁸⁰ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 255. This anticipates the theistic evolutionary theory of Pierre Teilhard

the “eye” of otherwise “blind” nature. Therefore humankind is the horizon in which evolution becomes self-conscious. Fyodorov extrapolates the full social-structural and civilizational consequences of such “cosmist” insights: “Universal military service is a preparation for the common sacred struggle not against but for each other, against the force of nature acting outside and within us”⁸¹.

The words cited above (A: CW, II, 231; PBK: CW, I, 255) enable us to glean the fuller meanings of the spirit powering Fyodorov’s teaching on Regulation, as well as Russian cosmism. In general, cosmism could be determined as an awareness that in humankind evolution has become (1) self-consciously active: aware of the supreme goal of introducing purpose and meaning, as well as death-defying ordering of life i.e. (2) immortality into the universe (kosmos). Humanity thus acts as the steward of creation in accordance with God’s plan (if the given cosmist is Christian theist⁸²): or, humanity acts in such a way that it introduces the mega-plan into the cosmos itself (if the given cosmist is atheist Marxist, agnostic or esoterically gnostic). In doing accordingly, the cosmos evolves⁸³ to a level

de Chardin (1881–1955). Vide: idem, *Le Phénomène Humain* (1955) written in the late 1930ies, at least 50 years after suchlike ideas were conceived by the Russian.

81 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 148.

82 Some cosmists have confessional allegiances, strong or loose, with the tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church. This however doesn’t fully exhaust the defining process in regard to the prefix “Russian” in Russian cosmism. Since, some of them, being atheists or agnostics, do not subscribe to Russian Orthodoxy. This leaves the question of the “Russianness” of Russian cosmism still open. If we take into account the Soviet (SSSR) Communist belief in the omnipotence of science and the belief in the unlimited capability of the “universal socialist man” to conquer and transform nature in absolute terms, then we might come closer to identifying the trait of “Russianness” in cosmism (Especially if the aspect of Russian messianism is added: Orthodox Christian or Leninist-Marxist, keeping in mind the totalizing approach as well: either through the tsarist state or the Communist state). But again, even this leaves things complicated. For, we find Russian cosmists who are neither Orthodox Christian nor Soviet Communist but, for instance, are more inspired by Eastern esoteric doctrines, etc. As well, it seems that cosmism as a theoretical term should be connected to the generically human “cosmic” awareness, behavior and endeavor. This, then, demands the integration of similar cosmist tendencies in non-Russian humanity as well (e.g. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomène Humain*, 1955; Oliver Reiser, *Cosmic Humanism*, 1966 etc). An underlying all-unifying theoretical principle needs to be deduced so as to inclusively ground the super-complex idea and reality of cosmism as such, etc. (Of course, this is not the place to delve deeper into this theoretical and methodological problem: yet, it should be noted). For reflections on the connection of Soviet doctrines and some fundamental precepts of Fyodorov’s philosophy cf. Dmitry Shlapentokh, “Fedorovism in Early Post-Soviet Russia: The Collapse of the Meta-imperial Project”, *Slavonica*, 1-2:22 (2017) 1-19.

83 In Vernadsky’s idiom, the cosmos evolves from the geosphere level to the biosphere level, that is, it evolves on its way to and through the “noosphere” level. The term “noosphere” (Gk. nous = intellect or mind) was coined in Paris in 1926 by Vladimir Vernadsky (1863–1945) together with Édouard Le Roy (a Henri Bergson student) and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. In cosmist usage it denotes the developing consciousness or mental sheath surrounding and permeating the Earth. It is seen as connected to the biosphere (organic existence) and geosphere (inorganic existence). These layers of existence, however, are not fully nor properly integrated. The next stage of terrestrial (possibly extraterrestrial) evolution is to be opened by the process in which the noosphere (i.e. inter-relating and inter-connecting consciousness which humanizes and socializes matter) integrates and transforms the biospheric and geospheric systems of existence on Earth, thus “spiritualizing” them. (The technosphere, I venture to add, with the appearance of the Internet and World Wide Web herald the appearance of some of the necessary preconditions for the said process).

where the (3) all-unity in oneness of meaning, kinship, love and re-creative expansion into the Good becomes visible: equally possible and realizable.

Therefore, Fyodorov views evolution anthropically and activistically⁸⁴. However, he does so in spiritual terms, not in terms of a vulgarized (socio)Darwinist projection. The human person as of the image of God (*imago Trinitatis*, *imago Dei*) is to remain immutable in terms of its ontological integrity. However, the development of human nature (both psycho-somatic and spiritual-intellectual capacities), realized rationally through god-aiming activity, is open to radical transformation and seems not to be immutable. This potential in Fyodorov's thought signals an overlap with certain aspects of transhumanism⁸⁵. Inasmuch it represents, likely, an instance of subversive creativity, especially in comparison to the more rigid sides of traditional Christian notions on what humankind is or is destined to become, and how. The following meditations are indicative in the said sense: "Through the work of resurrection the human being—as a self-sovereign (*samobitnoe*), self-built (*samosozdanie* [sic]) and free being—freely ties itself to God by love"⁸⁶. More boldly still, the final purpose of evolution is an immanent resurrection of all served by all: "We must conceive of the resurrection as a work still unfinished. [...] Christ is the beginning of it, through us it continued, and it continues until now. The resurrection is not a mere thought; it is also not a fact⁸⁷: it is a project..."⁸⁸⁻⁸⁹.

⁸⁴ Together with some notable others (e.g. Gacheva and, more recently, Knyazeva, Young, Simakova et alii), Svetlana Semenova insists on the awareness regarding the "active" aspect of evolution as one of the essential marks of the definition of Russian cosmism (FPhR, 13). Also cf. Svetlana G. Semenova, "Russian Cosmism", in S. G. Semenova and A. G. Gacheva (eds), *Russian Cosmism: An Anthology of Philosophical Thought* (Russ.), Pedagogika Press, Moscow 1993, 3-33; esp. pp. 4, 8, 14 et passim = abbr. RCO. For the relation between the modern theory of synergetically self-organizing systems and the main ideas of Russian cosmism: cf. Hellena Knyazeva, "The Russian Cosmism and the Modern Theory of Complexity: The Comparative Analysis", in A. T. Tymieniecka, A. Grandpierre (eds), *Astronomy and Civilization in the New Enlightenment. Analecta Husserliana: The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research*, 107 (2011) 229-235.

⁸⁵ One way to glean the transhumanistic "fecundity" of Fyodorovian precepts, as well as the mechanism of their transmission, is to look at those who came under his influence, albeit through a self-styled re-appropriation of his thought. For instance, such is the case of the previously mentioned thinker Valerian Muravyov. In his futuristic science tract *The Overcoming of Time* (1924) we read: "Closely tied with the organizing of symbolic sides of culture must be the organizing of its real manifestations. [...] it is obvious that living beings are the most complete products of culture. The cultural activity whose task is creativity of this kind we have named genetics. The organizing of the creation of living beings is therefore the organizing of genetics. Genetics has set its main goal to be the creation of the most perfect amongst beings that are known to us: namely, human beings. [...] There will be a time when, possibly, the birth process will be upgraded and moved to the laboratory. Eugenics and the science of production of people [sic] will master the formula of every being and will create them and educate them accordingly" (OTI 200); or: "The (artificial BL) creation of a human being is the real overcoming of time inasmuch as it confirms the integrity of individuality against the corrosive forces of time" (OTI 201), etc.

⁸⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 255.

⁸⁷ Obviously, this is aimed not at Christ' resurrection, but at the ensuing lack of its realization by humans in the domain of the socio-historical and natural life-worlds.

⁸⁸ Fyodorov refers to John 5:25: "...the hour is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live". The verb "coming" (*erchetai*) in present indicative middle or passive is highlighted by the Russian thinker. The resurrection, to wit, is something which is coming to pass, presently.

⁸⁹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 142.

The historical task of human beings is to re-appropriate the event of God-mankind, as radically as possible: "... in their togetherness to become an instrument of universal resurrection, when the Word of God becomes in ourselves the Deed of God"⁹⁰. This explains Fyodorov's criticism of the vulgar linear conception of progress. "Biologically—progress consists in the swallowing up of the old by the young, in the displacing of the fathers by the sons; psychologically—it is a replacement of love for the fathers by a cold-hearted extolling over them [...]. Sociologically—progress is the achievement of the greatest possible individual freedom [...] but not the broadest participation of all in a common task. [...] the truly Divine, the truly human deed consists in the saving of the sacrificial victims of progress..."⁹¹. Therefore true progress entails yet another transformative reversal: "Insofar as progress is regarded as a movement from the worse to the better, it obviously requires that the shortcomings of blind nature be corrected by a nature which perceives these shortcomings—that is, by the combined power of the human race. It demands that improvement should arise not through struggle and mutual annihilation but by the return of the victims of this struggle"⁹².

This opens-up to view the main proposals of Fyodorov's doctrine of Regulation, as it comes out of Supramoralism, and both out of the philosophy of the Common Task: "Resurrection is the transformation of the Universe from that chaos towards which it is moving into cosmos: into the greatness of incorruptibility and indestructibility"⁹³. This is what man was created for, claims the Russian. Namely, in the name of Christ's Command⁹⁴ to introduce the Trinitarian immortal life of loving communion and brotherly kinship into the inner and outer realms of mortalized creation. Strikingly, this is to be accelerated and mediated by science: one to be devised futuristically⁹⁵. Then, progress will mean the improvement of means (technology) as well as ends (philosophy and theology)⁹⁶. Expressly: "Resurrection is not mere progress: it requires actual improvement, true perfection..."⁹⁷.

"The action consists of: firstly, the transformation of the procreating force into a re-creating one and of the lethal into a vivifying one; secondly, the gathering of the scattered dust and its reconstitution into bodies, using radiation or outlines left by the waves caused by the vibration of mol-

⁹⁰ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 87.

⁹¹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 51.

⁹² Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 53.

⁹³ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, A: CW, II, 231.

⁹⁴ Fyodorov claims that the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament, when understood in their Christian sense, are reducible to one: "Work in the name of the resurrection of all with all"! The other side of this is given by his emphasis on the Lord's Command: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15; Matt. 28:19). Fyodorov takes the first Command to be the substantial content of the second (viz. Mk. 16:15 etc). Cf. Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 107, 111.

⁹⁵ In the year of Fyodorov's death Tsiolkovsky published the "Exploration of Cosmic Space by Means of Reactive Devices (Rockets)". That was the first time in recorded history that rocket space travel was considered as a realizable possibility, scientifically, with adequate mathematical formulas following suit.

⁹⁶ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 53.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

ecules; thirdly, the regulation of the Earth: that is, the management of the Earth as a cemetery⁹⁸, a management comprising the consecutive resuscitation or re-creation of numerous generations, and the extension through them of the regulation of all the uninhabited worlds. Such a project is the full expression of Supramoralism, or the answer to the question, 'What has Man been created for?' It indicates that the human race, all the sons of man, through the regulation of the celestial worlds, will themselves become heavenly forces governing the worlds of the universe⁹⁹.

2. Evaluation. The philosophemes laid-out by Fyodorov generate swarms of questions. I will select only the essential elements of criticism, and expound tersely. The criticism of the problematic sides may be presented within three interrelated domains: theological, philosophical and scientific.

(2.1) Theologically speaking, the main problem is the appearance of a trait, possibly, of semi-Pelagianism¹⁰⁰ (viz. Pelagius fl. 429–529) in Fyodorov's religious philosophical interpretation of the Church's dogmatic and biblical foundations. That is to say, the act of salvation by God in Christ tends to be pre-empted by human initiative: by scientific labour either securing grace or, rather, vouchsafing immortalist outcomes¹⁰¹. This is connected to a perilous possibility, perhaps a trait, of humanistic self-dependence in regard to the divine principle. The idea of God-manhood tends to slide into an anthropocentric frame rather than a Christocentric one. This indicates a somewhat imbalanced Christology. One gains the impression that Fyodorov tends to take the following verse literally, in the anthropocentric sense: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12–13). Nevertheless, the following words of the Lord remain absolutely binding: "For apart from Me you can do *nothing*" (Jn. 15:5). Conjointly, the resurrection of Lazarus is understood as the final deed of Christ who, retreating "backstage", lingers as a "role model" of sorts: "... the end (zavrshenie) of Christ's service was the resurrection of Lazarus..."¹⁰² [sic]. Fyodorov fails to notice that the resurrection of Lazarus is performed with an explicit invoking

⁹⁸ Cf. Nikolai F. Fyodorov, A: CW, II, 231.

⁹⁹ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, S: CW, I, 409. In this sense the Fyodorovian Valerian Muravyov anticipates the transition of "history into astronomy", that is into cosmic history: cf. idem, OTI, 228.

¹⁰⁰ In a nutshell: "... while not denying the necessity of grace for salvation, it maintains that the *first** steps towards the Christian life were taken by the human will and that grace supervened only later". (One might ask: When does this "later" come to pass: after, during or before the completion of the Common Task?). Cf. "Semi-Pelagianism", in F. L. Cross (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, OUP, Oxford (1957)² 1974, 1258.

¹⁰¹ In a certain sense, the price of Fyodorov's optimism is the standpoint that the internal corruption of humanity is a matter to be dealt with by man's native (in-born) will. It seems that the commitment of the Christian towards God (what John Cassian calls "initium fidei"; or, what Faustus of Riez calls "credulitatis affectus") rests secured in his unassisted will (although repentance, conversion and confirmation are conditioned by the blessing of divine help). This moment of naturalistic self-reliance, as well, invokes the question of the status of unmerited grace in Fyodorov's thought (viz. the "internal empowering graciously infused by God into man"). For, the Church teaches that "it is the divine will that takes the initiative by renewing and enabling the human will to accept or use the aid of grace offered" viz. the proffered salvation in Christ. Cf. M. D.; S. H. M., "Pelagius", in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 17, 1965, 448. Therefore, St Paul's crucial remark needs to be heeded more seriously: "I do not set aside the grace of God. For if righteousness comes through the Law, Christ died for nothing..." (Gal. 2:21).

¹⁰² Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 142.

of the Father's "help" by his Son, Christ, thusly: "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me..." (Jn. 11:41-42). After all, even Lazarus died, *again*... The life-giving blood of Golgotha is not accounted for in fullness¹⁰³. The mystery and divine power of the Jesus' Cross is rationalized and underestimated¹⁰⁴. Alongside, one needs to note that resurrection is not coequal to redemption (apolytrosis). The redemptive act is absolutely within the hand of God's divine prerogative and final decision. No matter what we do, there are no guarantees. Even if we attain full resurrectional capacities and correspondent biotechnological skills, the final "amen" belongs to divine agency¹⁰⁵. Nor is resuscitative transformation of the created human being, be it psycho-physical or moral, coequal to spiritual transfiguration (metamorphosis) in the uncreated Light of Christ by the Spirit¹⁰⁶, received sacramentally or otherwise. Moreover, the mystery of human freedom as of the image of God (eikon) is rationalized to an extent. The radically evil will and sin-bearing proclivity¹⁰⁷ are viewed, generally, as effects of individual "ignorance" or lack of social-schooling "engagement". This begs the question, as well, of addressing the unseen warfare (aoratos polemōs¹⁰⁸) against the demonic "realms"¹⁰⁹. Analogously, the ascetic denial of the world's fallenness (deeply related to spiritual death in Christ through the Cross¹¹⁰) tends to be supplanted by self-denying labour of the "people" (led by resurrection-friendly supramoralist scientists) working for the Good of mankind within a mandated neo-imperialism of

103 Actually, Fyodorov does underline the "life-giving Blood of the Saviour". But this is somehow left on the verbal level. The sacramental and spiritual side of the Church's activities, generally, are not elaborated fully. They are posited as referential indeed: yet, the transfigurative effects of the Orthodox spiritual life (viz. asceticism, prayer, denial of the fallen world: or, the spiritual communion of the inner man with God in Eucharistic communion, etc) are understated in Fyodorov's system.

104 "For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things [...] by making peace through the *blood of His cross** [...]. But now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy, unblemished, and blameless in His presence—if indeed you continue in your faith" (Col. 1:19-22).

105 "... for all have sinned and *fall short** of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:23-24).

106 "There He was transfigured (metemorphothe) before them. His face shone like the sun (hos ho helios), and His clothes became as white as the light (hos to fos)" (Matt. 17:2). As the Orthodox fathers teach, deification (theosis) of humanity is conditioned by (a) the incarnation of Christ as well as by (b) the participation of human beings in the transfigured and glorified human nature of the God-man, Christ (2Pet. 1:3-4). This entails partaking in the uncreated energies of the God-man: on the condition that these are freely given, as grace, and freely received, as grace. The point is this: no scientific excellence (science being of the created order) can supplant this event of communion of the uncreated and created, in and of Christ (cf. 2Cor. 3:18), nor can scientific technological breakthroughs make Christ's salvific blessing redundant.

107 "Then Satan entered Judas [...]. And Judas went to [...] betray Jesus" (Lk. 22:3-4; 23:36-39).

108 Epitomized in the work *Unseen Warfare* (Gk. 1796) by St Nicodemos the Athonite (c. 1749–1809). (Actually, this is a redaktorial translation enterprise based on Lorenzo Cupoli's *The Spiritual Combat* [Lat. 1599], but, with St Nikodemos' personal and Orthodox spiritual-ascetic experience coming to bear significantly enough).

109 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world's darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6:12).

110 "I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20).

the enlightened tsardom (samoderzhavie). Spiritually speaking, asceticism and industriousness are not identical. The presence of the spirit of French Enlightenment optimism, to a significant extent, permeates Fyodorov's science-bound speculations. The power of uncreated spiritual light¹¹¹ (spirit) somehow recedes in the name of created natural light (reason): "enlightenment or death, knowledge or eternal perishing—there is no other outcome"¹¹². There appears to be a tendency of the external to overwhelm the internal in Fyodorov's thought¹¹³. Analogously, there is a symptom of tension between the augmentation of the outer person (viz. bionics and natural resuscitation¹¹⁴) and the transfiguration in and by the inner person (body and soul included): a symptom, perhaps, of regulation "taking over" the workings and powers of deification (theosis)¹¹⁵. In a word, the spiritual birth from "above" (Jn. 3:5-6), the birth in Christ by the Spirit¹¹⁶, is somewhat overcast by discourses dedicated to technologically executed bio-psychological restoration and re-design with significant transhumanistic leanings. As far as Fyodorov is concerned, these leanings are set (stabilized) within a generally Orthodox theistic mould. This in turn prevents the main tenets of Christian faith from being jeopardized: for instance, the principle of immutability of the human person (eikon) as such. Despite envisaging the most radically imaginable changes of human psycho-physiology¹¹⁷, humankind will remain the image and likeness of Christ the Godman, who in turn is the image of his heavenly Father (Col. 1:15). Admittedly, all of this allows Fyodorov's thought to be exceptionally communicative with both Orthodox theology and transhumanistic philosophy, be it atheistic or theis-

111 The Church fathers speak of it profusely in an uninterrupted succession of the Philokalia and newer Philokalia tradition. (A classic example of this is given in: *Divine Eros: Hymns of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, tr. Daniel K. Griggs, SVS Press, Yonkers NY 2010, 419 pp).

112 His definition of enlightenment [prosveshchenie] is indicatively ambivalent: "Enlightenment, i.e. the turn of all rational beings into knowing ones, as the expression of the aspiration of nature itself to attain full comprehension and governance over itself in the fulfilment of the will of the God of the fathers..." cf. Nikolai F. Fyodorov, S: CW, I, 435. As in many places in Fyodorov, such statements can be read both ways: enlightenment as of grace, spiritually, or, enlightenment as of reason itself, naturalistically, or, perhaps as best: both at once. Still, the unresolved relation of "natural" and "supernatural" lingers.

113 "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, yet our inner self is being renewed day by day" (2Cor. 4:16).

114 Fyodorov envisages the elimination of the alimentary tract, addition of wings: generally, the self-growing of organs and the achievement of plant-like feeding on extraterrestrial energies, etc.

115 In principle deification is not conditioned by regulation, Fyodorovian or other. Of course, on the other hand, regulation can be aligned synergetically with deification goals and processes.

116 The Apostle's teaching is adamant about the importance of the inner spiritual realm and of the importance of its interaction with the outer domains of creation: "... you have taken off the old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator" (Col. 3:9-10) or: "Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ..." (Rom. 13:14) or: "Though our outer self is wasting away, yet our inner self is being renewed day by day" (2Cor. 4:16).

117 For example, the envisioned overcoming of the cumbersome aspects of the human body, say, in favour of a semi-angelic state of telepathic ethereal existence of the soul (viz. psychocracy), etc. Arguably, though, even this presupposes an embodiedness of sorts. Otherwise, Fyodorov would have to face the Apolinarian temptation as much as the corrective given by Gregory of Nazianzus (as early as 380 or 381 AD): "What was not assumed was not healed" (cf. idem, *Letter* 101, in J. P Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 37, 181C).

tic¹¹⁸. Still, in Fyodorov's work the spiritual is somehow caught in the networks of the natural upon which it overly depends. Perhaps this is due to Fyodorov's fascination with the alluring promises of positive science and of technology as a sort of wonder-making extension of the hand of God.¹¹⁹ (This is not to say, as I shall soon indicate, that Fyodorov totally lacks a "critical" concept of technology).

(2.2) Philosophically speaking, the main problem of Fyodorov's doctrine of the Common Task is the formidable strain caused by two main contradictions: (a) on one hand, the attaining of mystical ends by positivist-rational means¹²⁰ and, on the other hand, (b) the duality of the religious-conservative and the revolutionary-progressive. As regards the first contradiction, we can ask the following: Can we, or should we, build a ladder to God scientifically *if* the price might be the acceptance of a religious naturalism and-or an apotheosis of technocentric science (with an add-on in terms of the supramoralistic meta-narrative)?¹²¹ Surely, that would conflate the human and divine in favour of human agency. Or, metaphorically speaking, should we conflate the DNA Double Helix with The Ladder of Jacob (Gen. 28:12-13). As regards the second contradiction, I offer only two from many problematic aspects: On one side we have the primacy of the religion of kinship and the cult of forefathers; on the other side we have the accentuation of the trans-racial uni-

118 This point is made well by Eugene Clay in: idem, "Transhumanism and the Orthodox Christian Tradition", in H. Tirosh-Samuelson and K. L. Mossman (eds.), *Building Better Humans? Refocusing the Debate on Transhumanism*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 2011, 166-167, 173-174. After a significant appraisal, Clay reviews the problematic aspects of Fyodorov's thought. His critique, however, is compressed in two prolonged sentences: "As for Fedorov, many of the criticisms levied against transhumanists can certainly be levied against him as well. Fedorov is often impractical, he is unable to provide specific information or guidance about how to go about resurrecting the dead; he ignores the laws of physics and wrongly imagines that it is possible to change them". As well, Clay strongly underlines Fyodorov's connection to St Maximus' spiritual, theological and ecclesial legacy. He concludes that "Both thinkers [Fyodorov and Maximus] offer an optimistic Christian moral framework for discussing the transformation of humanity" (op. cit, 174). Establishing the possibility of this connection is an invaluable contribution. Clay extrapolates the relation between St Maximus and Fyodorov in quite a mediate way: from both authors' allegiance to the results of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680-681), of which St Maximus (c. 580-662) was the harbinger and standing star. Especially in regard to the integrity of the two natures of Christ the Godman: divine and human, united in one hypostasis: and, particularly in regard to the protection of human nature (physis), will (thelema) and operation (energeia) of Christ as the Godman (against the monothelite party). However, Fyodorov does not delve into Maximian theology per se. At least not in terms of substantially deposited textual evidence of suchlike explorations.

119 Cf. Excursus 1: An aside on Florovsky's criticism.

120 This was well noted especially by Nikolai Berdyaev. Cf. idem, RRR, 76-102. (However, one should here repeat that Fyodorov does speak of the improvement of both the ends and the means. This implies the spiritualization of not only the goals of the collective efforts of humanity [elevated, ideally, from historic-materialistic ones to spiritual Christian ones], but it also implies the spiritualization of the means as well [transformed, ideally, according to a subtilization and a boost in efficiency of tools and technology]. This would allow us to view the latter, hypothetically, as "ethereal" or "angelic". Nevertheless, it is extremely sensitive to attempt any kind of objectivization of grace in or through [let alone as] technology. And, it seems that there is a tendency in Fyodorov to attempt that or at least to leave it as a non-excluded possibility. I would still have to say that the only "technology of grace" [a mystical one indeed] is the Eucharist itself.

121 This is certainly the case with some more materialistically inclined Fyodorovians.

versality of spiritual relationships imaging the Trinitarian model. This signals the danger of an unintentional possibility of re-paganizing Christian faith through a seeming cult of ancestors tied to land and blood (although, in positive terms, this may be taken as an attempt to “reset” the moral problem as such: by re-rooting the concept of debt within its origin, namely, that of our deceased yet life-giving forefathers¹²²). Or, on one side we have the reversal of the birth-giving natal (bio-erotic) energy in favour of the (spiritual) energy for resurrectional activities of the sons; on the other side, however, the resurrectors of the ancestors re-affirm what they purport to overcome: namely, “seeds of corruption”¹²³—i.e. the new humanity remains sin-bearing in its roots¹²⁴, hence it is due to die again (Rom. 6:23). In a word, the main philosophical problem is this: Fyodorov’s vision allows an oscillation between God and technology within a religious naturalism. That is why some Fyodorovians subscribe to a technological “God” or to even to technological self-divinization. All of this, for Fyodorov at least, was set within a pastoral idealization of the 19th Century Russian countrified, not without Slavophile nostalgia. (The melody of this nostalgia, the pastoral elegiac tones, nor the manifold paradoxes, shouldn’t veil the incredible radicalism and dazzling spiritual-ethical excellence of Fyodorov’s philosophical visions: exploding out of his impossibly possible desire: that of resurrection for all from all—now! a revolutionary re-evolution).

(2.3) Scientifically speaking, Fyodorov’s attempt to retrieve the past state of being through scientific reconstruction (like an ontological “restaurateur”) meets the problem of the impossibility of re-capturing the past fully. Logically speaking, this is related to the following questions: (a) Can the past relate to the future in a literal physical sense: and, can finite systems (reasoning brains) describe and understand infinite systems which they are part of (even if they were given the basic laws, which they are not)? (b) Can we restore the spiritual foundations of personal identity through technical manipulation of the natural psycho-physical reality? As concerns the first question, I add: the scale of human and natural history is so immense—more than gigantic¹²⁵—that replication and replaying (of

122 That is why the institution of genealogy (Lk. 3:23-38; Matt. 1:1-18), according to Fyodorov, represents not only the instrument of knowing (soznanie) one’s past but, phenomenologically, it is regarded as the condition for the appearance of conscience (sovest). For, what is truly moral, ultimately, is reflected in and as the face(s) of our (deceased) others: viz. forefathers and foremothers.

123 Cf. Rom. 7:18-20; 1Pet. 1:23 (ek sporas phthartes); Gal. 6:7-8.

124 We here needn’t prescribe to the notion of inherited guilt or sin. It suffices to acknowledge that we inherit human nature: ipso facto, we inherit a disposition or proclivity to sin. No moral advancement in itself can deal with that, unless *Christ* gives us the final remission of our sinfulness. On top of that, Fyodorov is confident that the procreative activities are sin-bearing, in one way or the other. But, eliminating these does not eliminate the sin-bearing disposition of fallen human nature as such (e.g. 2Pet. 1:4 “en epithymia phthoras”).

125 David Kornreich is an astronomer assistant professor at Ithaca College in New York State, and associate at Cornell University. According to his specialist opinion a rough estimate, one which is probably an underestimation, is that there are circa 10 trillion galaxies in the universe (10 million millions = 10×10^{12}). If the Milky Way galaxy contains an estimated 100 billion (100×10^9) stars, then the overall result is 1^{24} stars = 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 in the perceivable universe.

otherwise unique events!) are not realistically conceivable¹²⁶. (The same holds true for futurative inferences). Without such replay and replication there are no grounds for precise experimental testing and analysis, for anticipative modelling and for ascertaining regularity patterns—such that they reveal to us the fundamental laws governing relations between *all* past events and *all* future outcomes. As regards the second question I add: atomic particles are interchangeable and information may be lost¹²⁷. The attempt to re-synthesise (resuscitate or resurrect) a concrete individual, even if it were realistically possible, say through retrieval technologies manipulating genetic-hereditary blood maps and blood deposits (“remains”), would encounter the problem of the so called identical twin or clone. This can be formulated as follows: Can the reconstructed pattern of information that characterized the person be regarded as the full presence of that *person*? Let us here voice the parallel theological question: What if divine will is in principle against such a procedure? Furthermore, in regard to Fyodorovian scientific futurism connected to cryonics (time) and trans-solar astronautics (space), or genetic cloning re-manipulation of the organism (life) one can ask this as well: Is perpetual psycho-physical existence in a fallen world in accordance with God’s plan for mankind? Is infinitely extended time, or control over time and body processes, commensurate to spiritual transfiguration and re-creation in Christ (viz. *kaine ktisis*¹²⁸)?

Nevertheless, we need to recognize that Fyodorov’s philosophy carries positive visionary perspectives and aspects. Many of these are inspiring and need to be acknowledged accordingly. Some have a lasting value. Only a selected few contributions are in order due to limitations of space and time.

(2.4) Theologically speaking, next to the positive sides introduced thus far (especially in regard to viewing the whole cosmos in liturgical terms), Fyodorov’s idea about immanent resurrection has at least two lastingly invaluable aspects. Both affirm the freedom and the responsibility of the human being before God, humankind and nature. Firstly, Fyodorov’s teaching on “immanent” resurrection annihilates every quietist leaning in the understanding of the potentials of human nature, which it affirms exceptionally. As is obvious in the following statement: “General resurrection could not immediately follow that of Christ because it has to be the conscious work¹²⁹ (*trud*) of the human race unit-

¹²⁶ Cf. Joel E. Cohen, “How does the past relate to the future?”, *Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Annual Report*, (31 Aug 1982) 71. (Of course, putting up models of re-construction of evolutionary processes and computing possibilities is necessary as much as welcome).

¹²⁷ This critical remark was made by R. Michael Perry, in Ed Tandy, revised by R. Michael Perry (2003), “N. F. Fedorov, Russian Come-Upist”, *Venturist Voice* (originally published: Summer 1986).

¹²⁸ “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation (*kaine ktisis*). The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come! *All this is from God**, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ” (2 Cor. 5:17-18).

¹²⁹ The category of labour [*trud*], together with those derived from it (deed [*delo*] etc), is amongst the most important in Fyodorov’s philosophy. It brings him into a notable vicinity of the theory of Karl Marx on the constitutive role of labour in the historical phylogenesis of mankind. “The purpose of humanity is to change all that is natural, i.e. given by nature, into what is created by labour...” (Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 255). Yet, the distance between the two thinkers is equally great. Fyodorov sees labour as a divinely instituted capacity with a divine finality attached to it, accordingly. In virtue of being the image of God, man is the co-regula-

ing the length and breadth of the globe: indeed, the field of action is not limited to planet Earth¹³⁰. Admittedly, Fyodorov would concede that saving grace cannot be “earned” by means of any calculating merit. But, he also knows that it cannot be taken for granted. (This somewhat alleviates the objection in regard to his crypto-Pelagian streak). Secondly, Fyodorov’s anthropocentric resurrection activism (set within the frame of God-manhood) has one more astonishing outcome. Namely, it leads to the teaching about the conditional (sic) nature of apocalyptic prophecies: “... the Resurrection of Christ is the beginning of general resurrection, and the consequent history is the continuation of it”¹³¹. According to Fyodorov’s suggestion, the Dread Last Judgment needn’t be a predetermined dead-line (chronologically, historically). As well, it needn’t be a pre-determined eternal damnation into Hell (spiritually, existentially). The outcome and timing of the Last Judgment depend on the activity and decisions of mankind as well¹³². This entails a free interiorization of the eschaton. And yes, Fyodorov does know that transformation within the Common Task demands a massive moral and spiritual effort by humanity, each person included.

(2.5) Philosophically speaking, Fyodorov posits the foundations for a non-formalist (or “meta-adequationist”) theory of truth. It endeavours to address the question of being as the question of un-covering (Gk. a-letheia) what truly is—or, rather, of un-forgetting what truly should be the case with *being*. In other words, Fyodorov accepts something as true (of being) only if, ultimately, it works towards or enables the unconcealing and-or remembering of a possibly non-mortalizable mode of being. A notion of truth, then, may be taken as “adequate” to its object if and only if it facilitates the recovery and re-discovery of being’s non-mortal possibilities (viz. me-ontology¹³³: i.e. an ontology of being-yet-to-be: an ontology of being-not-yet-there [Gk. me-on]). Then and only then such a notion “corresponds” to something that may prove to be substantially true, as of the proper way of being. Truth is ontologized, and projected dynamically into a pragmatistically realizable real-

tor of creation. This means that reason needs to be re-introduced into chaotic or blindly spontaneous nature. Consequently, labour is the function of finality since labour enables the re-introduction of purposiveness into creation, synergetically with God. Rational labour spells-out the grammar of nature’s purposes. Interestingly, the same understanding of labour applies in resurrection work and in nature work, viz. the positive sciences.

130 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 146.

131 Ibid.

132 In the opposite case, transcendent resurrection (saving the elect only) might come about as divine punishment for abandoning labour dedicated to the immanent resurrection, i.e. the Common Task. Here we glean a creatively reinterpreted apocatastatic trait in Fyodorov (viz. Origen and Gregory of Nyssa).

133 There is a “meontological” critique of classical onto(theo)logy to be observed in Fyodorov’s opus. See more in the invaluable study by Myroslav Feodosijevič Hryschko, “Fyodorov’s Meontology”, *Sofia Philosophical Review*, 2 (2009) 157-179. “Using the contemporary speculative anti-humanism of Badiou, Brassier, Grant, Meillassoux, etc., and the anthropic-transcendental lineage of Kant and Heidegger as points of both accession and tension, the possibility of resurrection and immortality coupled with the death of being suggests the excision of any constancy or necessity to ontology, to both Being or beings, thus entailing the rudiments of such a meontology” (idem, op. cit., 157). In more concrete terms, Fyodorov’s reflection on being is posited in terms of a being-not-yet-in existence (me on): a resurrected being, to wit, which is here (Lazarus, Christ) but not yet (humankind).

ity¹³⁴. In Fyodorov's thinking on truth several aspects of the concept of truth emerge: (a) the ontological (what is?), (b) the gnoseological (how is it known?), the (c) the pragmatic (how does it work?) and (d) the ethical (what is the state of the 'isness' of what 'is': good or bad, alive or dead etc? and, what should it be or become?). These aspects are closely inter-related and cannot be separated. In a nutshell, for Fyodorov, truth is understood to be an act of un-forgetting (a-letheia) being: moreover, an act of retrieving concrete beings from the grasp of death, darkness, hiddenness (Gk. *lanthano*) i.e. an act of resuscitation of being. Full truth as notion and action is opened within a horizon of substantial being-resurrecting memory (Russ. *vechnaya pamyat*: Gk. *aionia he mneme*: memory eternal). Therefore, on Fyodorov's terms, resurrection praxis would be the ultimate realization of a notion of what is adequate to truth. The pragmatic aspect is thus connected to the ontological and gnoseological aspects, all of which are united within the ethical dimension, viz. resurrection. Fyodorov's philosophy of truth as memory (*pamyat*) thus elucidates the absolute debt that we, as sons and daughters, owe to our ancestors. It echoes in philosophical terms the meaning of their calling (*vyzov*): a calling of us into re-membrance of a humanity restored, resurrected and reunited: a calling to meet, again, face to face¹³⁵: being to being—beyond and against death, darkness, oblivion.

As well, he grounds a philosophy of personhood. His personology understands the face to face encounter, both ontologically and existentially, as *the* primary horizon of meaning (inasmuch, this anticipates E. Levinas)¹³⁶. What is more, the question of the meaning of being (*ti*) is articulated by looking at the way of being (*pos*): which is currently a being-towards-death (inasmuch, this anticipates M. Heidegger). Importantly, the question of being is simultaneously reversed into the question of being-towards-resurrection. Indeed, there is a pertinent critique of classical ontology to be observed in his opus (v. n. 133).

Fyodorov's radicalization of Kant's practical philosophy in regard to the categorical imperative is another important contribution. It posits a deep reformulation of the categories of absolute debt (of sons to forefathers): of duty and responsibility, such that they have significant ethical and social as much as ecological and cosmic repercussions: reaching out to the past and to the future in terms of a resuscitative restoration of beings. Let me explain by returning to Fyodorov's discussion of Kant.

As was said, Kant's understanding of morality is articulated through the doctrine of the categorical imperative which is the basis for the evaluation of motifs for moral conduct. It is posited in *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). This work offers four formulations of the categorical imperative¹³⁷. These formulations presuppose each other.

¹³⁴ We now understand that Fyodorov wishes to supervene this type of theory of truth over other more local and objectivised, instrumental, types of truth theories and-or truth practices.

¹³⁵ Cf. Excursus 2: Reflection on the influence of Fyodorov's notion of truth on Paul Florensky.

¹³⁶ Cf. Excursus 3: Reflection on a possible influence path from Fyodorov via Dostoevsky to Levinas.

¹³⁷ I. Formula of the Law of Nature (universality): "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature" II. Formula of the End Itself (humanity): "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end" III. Formula of Autonomy (self-legislation): "So act that your will can regard itself

Let us cite the Second formulation: "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end"¹³⁸. Now, Fyodorov may be dubbed the fiercest "anti-Kantian Kantian"¹³⁹ (the latter adjective can be allowed because of the absolute primacy of ethical duty in Fyodorov's philosophy). Interestingly though, Fyodorov would endorse Kant's formulation of the obligatory moral law. But, he would do so under one condition (a condition which in fact changes everything). Namely, it must be broadened and deepened, radically. Treating humankind always as an end must include absolute moral respect not only in regard to those who are presently alive. In a deepest inversion and simultaneous expansion of the categorical imperative, Fyodorov claims that the categorical imperative, viz. moral Law, must include absolute moral respect towards the deceased: however, not in terms of mere piety nor mere pity towards persons who have perished (who have "departed" and have been "dis-membered" from the community of the living). If they, too, are to be included as ends (if we are serious about treating persons as ends in themselves), then we ought to (must) treat them as resurrected, by working for the Common Task, supramorally. The same follows suit for nature (Rom. 8:20-23). Thereby the deep past of being itself (not mere representations of it) must be integrated into moral action. Ethics is no longer focused exclusively on the present and-or the future in the abstract, but on substantial action. In other terms, ethics need to integrate a power of being-changing effectiveness. That would make ethics effective on an ontological level: "... without universal resurrection it is impossible to affirm the triumph of spirit over bodiness (plot); without universal resurrection this triumph remains perfectly ineffective, and, in that case, what is left of that meaningless (nelepoe) autonomy of morality in regard to such a powerless being as is man..."¹⁴⁰ This of course takes us back to Fyodorov's critique of formal descriptive ontology which, as he protests, remains divorced from ethics, and vice versa. Anticipating the primacy of the ethical or even ethics as first philosophy (viz. Levinas, again) Fyodorov demands the following: "If ontology as the science of being would be not only

at the same time as making universal law through its maxims" IV. Formula of the Kingdom of Ends: "So act as if you were through your maxims a law-making member of a kingdom of ends".

138 Cf. Kant's second formulation of the Categorical imperative in idem, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, Riga 1785.

139 Let this suffice to illustrate how irreconcilably Fyodorov departs from Kant: "The world is my representation of it"—the latest word of the collegiate of the learned [viz. Kantian criticism BL]. The reduction of the world to its representation is the outcome of inactivity and individualism [...]; it is the child of idleness—mother of all vices—and of solipsism (egotism)—father of all crimes": cf. Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 46. I leave aside the fact that in Kant both the conscious experience (empirical consciousness of the self as the object of particular representations) as well as the conscious self-experience (consciousness of the self attained by apperceptive acts) are conceptualized as predetermined by the transcendental ego which, note, executes an a priori spontaneous activity of synthesizing the unity and identity of consciousness, as well as re-representing the necessary condition for it: All this, in fact and thusly, implies a notion of both freedom and activity—even a specific kind of labour (admittedly, in an idealistic mode).

140 Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 122.

reflected about (mislimaya) but also felt¹⁴¹ (chuvstvuyema), then it would be impossible to separate it from deontology, i.e., it would be impossible to separate what is from what that which needs to be¹⁴².

(2.6) Scientifically speaking, many of Fyodorov's futuristic intuitions regarding the integration of mankind and science are becoming a reality, as we speak. As well, it is not entirely fair to take Fyodorov's claims verbally or, even worse, to caricaturize them. This makes it easier to dismiss them in an unwarranted way, i.e. at face value. It could be said that Fyodorov is clear that resuscitation is not necessarily to be envisioned as a mere physical 1:1 replication of a past physical form: for instance, of people who have lived in the past and have populated distant eras and spaces¹⁴³. As such, they were moral and rational types of existences. Yet, some or many were egotistic, exploitative, extremely self-centered, and generally not enlightened. Therefore, one has to take into account Fyodorov's idea of the collective enlightenment of mankind over time: intended projectively and retrojectively. Inasmuch it is legitimate to keep the following as a regulative *ideal*, regarded in terms of a spiritual (re)evolution: namely, mankind is a self-creating and freely self-governing body of integrated persons and, as such, needs to master the technologies capable of infinite renewal: with physical augmentation oriented by moral augmentation. Let this be stated by the Fyodorovian cosmist, Valerian Muravyov:

"Together with the transformation of organisms and creation of new ones, the resurrection of what was valuable in the old ones will also become part of practice. [...] Needless to say, the physical transformation still isn't everything. It is only a condition for the transformation of man in which he will be reborn and transformed in an integral way. Nevertheless, the obstacles for his spiritual perfecting, those placed by the material conditions of our existence, will no longer exist"¹⁴⁴.

As regards his philosophical influence on science, it seems to have gone from science fiction to science fact. The following ideas have populated the field of Russian scientific futurism and cosmism¹⁴⁵. They may be attributed to the fertilizing influence of Fyodorov's genius, in one way or the other. (1) immortalism: indefinite extension of the length of human life (anticipation of cryonics or longevity projects [Kuprevich]); (2) resurrectionism: resuscitative healing of decaying and dead organisms (anticipation of genetic engineering, molecular biology, cloning, organ implant-transplant surgery, bionic extensions of human

¹⁴¹ This not intoned in the romantic emotionalist sense. Rather, it signifies the sense of feeling (and then legislating) the absolute duty to care for being: to cater to and resuscitate being, actively, not to merely "think" about it nor to merely "improve" our knowledge about it.

¹⁴² Nikolai F. Fyodorov, PBK: CW, I, 106.

¹⁴³ On the other hand, the physical retrieval of bodies-souls of the dead is part of Fyodorov's proposal and, as such, brings along formidable technical, scientific and metaphysical problems (as noted previously). Again, many of Fyodorov's ideas are ambivalent-edged and can be interpreted in more than one way, even in opposite and mutually excluding ways.

¹⁴⁴ Valerian Muravyov, COF in OTI, 268.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Semenova's listing of the branches of Russian cosmist thought, including Fyodorov. She lists both natural and spiritual-humanistic scientists and thinkers: Svetlana G. Semenova, ROC, 3-4.

capacity, self-development and body and soul re-design etc); (3) regulationism: harnessing natural forces on a cosmic level through the intervention of purposive consciousness and technology (anticipations of climatology, ecology, astrobiology and astrorobotics, as well as astroenergetics and astrotellurgy etc [Chizhevsky et alii]); (4) astronautics: space travel control [Tsiolkovsky, Korolev et alii]; (5) chrononautics: control over time and the production of time [Muravyov]; (6) esotericism: willed changes of body, soul and spirit morphology (autotrophy) and capacity (anticipation of experiments in telekinetics, remote viewing and telepathy: anticipations of invisibility projects, as well as those creating a noosphere to interact with the biosphere and geosphere: humanity will have the ability to transmute the physical elements due to its conscious mastery of nuclear processes [Ver-nadsky et alii]); and (7) fringe science: some of Fyodorov's ideas anticipate explorations of the effects of quantum physics realities on the understanding of the functioning of consciousness, the reasoning brain and the psycho-physical reality of the human being; or, the influence of meditation and prayer on consciousness and psycho-somatic capacities. Let the following synthetic narrative illustrate the transhumanist fecundity of Fyodorovian cosmist philosophy:

"Maybe in the future new elements will be discovered, totally devoid of the negative sides of current organic matter. New bodies will be created which possess incomparably greater plasticity, strength, solidity, mobility. They will move with exceptional speed without external devices, they will feed directly of light and will not be susceptible to the action of the law of gravity [...]. At the same time, they will think, feel, perceive, and act at a distance. [...] the contemporary body will be removed and only an electronic body will be left over..."¹⁴⁶.

It should be added that Fyodorov's thought opens a space for a critique of the technocratic understanding of technology, encased as it is within instrumental scientific rationality. This should be underlined as well. Precisely because Fyodorov does nurture the highest hope¹⁴⁷ that science and technology may bring about a turnover of the lamentable state of the human condition. By calling for the transformation of both "means" and "ends" (and this includes technology and social behaviour ethically regarded in respect to final goals) Fyodorov posits a departure point in relation to a naïve (as well as vulgar) conception of technology. He allows us to understand that technologies are not mere tools, morally neutral in themselves. His project of the Common Task, especially viz. regulation, in fact presupposes a recognition that technologies are, and need to be, self-consciously crafted social products which can and do change human behaviour, radically. Technologies are always already social-ethical "statements", imbued with the social-cultural value-system. In themselves they are incarnations of behaviour codes and suchlike directives implanted by the overall social grid: knotted by power, interests, desires, and the dominant ideological

¹⁴⁶ Valerian Muravyov, COF in OTI, 267.

¹⁴⁷ Of course, as I've indicated earlier, at the same time, precisely by nursing seemingly unlimited grand expectations regarding science-technology, Fyodorov comes to the brink of a specific kind of re-objectification of technology ("idolizing" would be an overly harsh and misplaced word, though). Perhaps we should acknowledge that there might be things that technology and technical tools cannot achieve, including the victory over death.

imaginary. Technologies serve either progressive or degenerative purposes and, therefore, they significantly impact the historic and natural realities of human existence. Fyodorov actually works for what may be called the “angelic” transmutation, i.e. “spiritualization”, of science and technology. He is aware that the technical side of social laws and the social side of laws governing technology can be, and should be, evaluated and judged: that they need to change, if and when they are not adequate to the highest of goals (those stated in his supramoralist vision). Contemporary attempts to produce nature-friendly and society-friendly technologies, as well as the criticism of the massive impact of modern technology on the life-world of globalized humanity (especially in the sphere of biotechnology, IT and the world wide web [Internet] etc) may be connected to some of Fyodorov’s ideas voiced in this regard.

3. Results and legacy: It is now expedient to recapitulate the main positive contributions of the religious philosophy of Nikolai Fyodorov, especially with regard to our thematic. According to the lasting and obligatory insights of Fyodorov: (1) technology should be the extension of the service to divine-human spiritual and ethical goals and practices: only that justifies it, ultimately; (2) because the essential Past must have a future, the Future will not become a mere “past”: and, the past’s future lies in the Deed (leiturgia) of resurrecting our deceased fathers and mothers: in fact, that is the essential condition of and for the future; (3) philosophy is the project of the Common Task: the spiritual corrective of godless scientism-industrialism-consumerism: a cure against manifold fragmentation, and of disintegration of mankind into the living “and” the dead; lastly, (4) with regard to the question of death positioned at the cross-road of the relations of past–future and theology–technology, I propose the following:

Reflecting on Fyodorov’s thought Vladimir N. Ilyin (1891–1974) says rightly: “In the centre of liturgics and technics, as a unifying instance, stands the Resurrection—the Festivity of the Pascha, the main solution of which is determined by the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ”. Importantly, he adds: “Therein lays the Achilles heel of Fyodorov’s teaching. The thing is that it was an organic part of the person of the author of the Philosophy of the Common Task, and, outside his person it was unavoidably threatened by ruin, parody, sectarianism, even by heresy”¹⁴⁸. Equally just and respectful, perhaps less sentimental, is Vasily Zenkovsky (1881–1962). Whilst reflecting on the utopian proclivity of Russian thought in general¹⁴⁹, the one-time professor of philosophy at Belgrade’s Faculty of Orthodox Theology (1921–1923), Fr Vasily Zenkovsky, concludes on Fyodorov by indicating the main—limital—problem of the Project as a whole: “Fyodorov’s utopianism is an evidence not of weakness of his philosophical talent, but, for the time being, of the insurmountable difficulty to re-unite into one the ideal with history, the ‘all-universal’ salvation with the living reality of our being”¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁸ Vladimir N. Ilyin, “On the Religious and Philosophical Worldview of N. F. Fodorov” (Russ.), *The Euroasian Collection*, vol. VI, Prague 1929, 17–23.

¹⁴⁹ Vasily V. Zenkovsky, *Der Geist der Utopie im russischen Denken, Orient und Occident*, XVI (1934) 23–31.

¹⁵⁰ Vasily V. Zenkovsky, HRF, 147.

I am fully aware of the reasons backing Zenkovsky's understandable "realism". However, I am compelled to add that the said "difficulty", even if "insurmountable", doesn't justify resignation. It shouldn't serve as an alibi for abandoning history in the sense of struggle, hope and explorative imagination in regard to overcoming social-cultural alienation, including the alienation par excellence: death. Nor should it be a pretext to abandon the striving to reach unity in what is True, Good and Beautiful. Marina Simakova captures the moment of Fyodorovian and Russian cosmist resilience, if not defiance in the face of pessimistic realism or cynical reticence to strive for the realization of ideals:

"Declaring the 'cosmic growth of humankind' its goal, cosmism was, of course, a modernist project, but it was the project of an alternative modernity. It experienced the tremendous impact of scientific theory, becoming its esoteric extension. The dream of human immortality was not a romantic fantasy, but an integral system of viewpoints that grew out of a principled refusal to view the world through the eyes of the lonely and selfish individual, that is, through the eyes of the nihilist. Immortality implied an unwillingness to separate the human of the present from the human of the past, as well as the destruction of all obstacles standing between people [...]. Progress, in this instance, was neither an end in itself nor a harbinger of the revolutionary rupture (although the idea of a mandatory period of active evolution did resemble the inevitable dictatorship of the proletariat on the road to communism), but a natural necessity and measure of morality"¹⁵¹.

As regards Fyodorov's solution to the problem of death, theologically, one can state the following (albeit, in full acknowledgement of the liturgical core of his teaching): Technology and science cannot in themselves supplant the Eucharistic resuscitation (nor the resurrection-transfiguration promise implied therein) given by the Son of God Christ by the Spirit. They cannot do so even if the mastery over matter, space and time were to become absolute. The goal of Christian life is not the infinite life-span in itself, nor augmentation of psycho-somatic or other human capacities in themselves. The goal of the Christian life is not only the remission of sins. The goal is to attain transfigured living in communion with the living God, in the community of transfiguration, the Church. The Christian notion of immortality doesn't automatically translate to the realizability of infinite possibility and-or omnipotence. Rather, true immortality is revealed as the non-severable unity and incomparable dynamic peace¹⁵² forged with God in Christ by the Spirit. The fore fruits of this gift are Eucharistic, and the consummation of it will ever remain Eucharistic, as of the mystery of Christ. The fathers of the Church know this well. For instance, Symeon the New Theologian ([949–1022] speaking of St Paul's ineffable experience of the goods prepared by God for those who love Him [1Cor 2:9]), states that "together with the good things stored up in heaven, these are the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which we see every day and eat and drink [...] outside of these, you will not be able to find one of those things spoken of, even if you [...] traverse the whole creation"¹⁵³. In similar spirit,

¹⁵¹ Marina Simakova, op. cit.

¹⁵² "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding (he hyperechousa panta noun), will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

¹⁵³ St Symeon the New Theologian, *On the Mystical Life: The Ethical Discourses* (Vol. 1: Third Ethical Dis-

Ignatius of Antioch (c.35–c.107) describes the Eucharist as *pharmakon athanasias*: “... the medicine of immortality, and the antidote which wards off death and yields continuous life in union with Jesus Christ”¹⁵⁴. Could we, metaphorically, speak of the Eucharistic resurrection as the most sublime kind of “technology”: a mystical technology (*techne*) administered in and by the act of Eucharistic communion by God in Christ’s Spirit? However, philosophically and scientifically speaking, it is not absurd to envisage that mankind, on the condition of collective repentance before God, might experience a hitherto unknown blessing, a part of which could be an unprecedented advancement of the capabilities of technology to alleviate death-inducing psycho-physical processes, including the harmonization of cosmic nature. These two lines, the spiritual-theological and the philosophical-scientific, in that case, can and should converge. In doing so, they could (possibly) make a future for the “past” as well (say, in terms of a “release” or re-embodiment of souls awaiting the fullness of life eternal in the “bosom of Abraham” as of Christ himself? [Lk. 16:22–23]). And, who is to say that this will not, somehow, coincide with or prepare the Second arrival of our Lord: *ho on kai ho en kai ho erchomenos* (Rev. 1:4).

3.1. A pioneering proposal. *Therefore:* Fyodorov lays-out a foundation for the following proposal: (1) a sustainable framework for the integration of the languages of religion and science should be devised¹⁵⁵; (2) we need a common super-value for the orientation of humankind: preferably, a supramoralistic ethics¹⁵⁶ which unconditionally demands the resurrection of beings through the Common Task of all for all (*leiturgia*) [*n.* whereby Fyodorov in fact postulates a holistic-integrational, dynamic-relational, and personalistic-communional ontology¹⁵⁷ as a possible mediating code (or “interpreter”) in the dialogue of religion and science]; and (3) cosmology¹⁵⁸ may be the meeting focal point for both religion and science. The said triune proposal is formulated memorably in the following statement:

“For man as the consciousness of nature, the natural problem, the problem of nature as a force which procreates and kills, constitutes his natural task because it solves the problem of hunger, epidemics and sickness in general: that is, of old age and death. Both believers and unbelievers¹⁵⁹ can unite in this natural task, and by uniting and carrying out the task they will attain

course), tr. A. Golitzin, St. Vladimirs’s Seminary Press, Crestwood – NY 1995, 130–131.

154 Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to Ephesians*, 20:2.

155 This needn’t be understood literally: for instance, as a quest for the total mutual interchangeability or fusion of the two languages. Rather, it should be understood as an encouragement for finding a dynamic equivalence between the two languages, respectively, in accord with an agreed common framework of symbols, ideas, dialogue protocols, values and goals.

156 Let us not forget the integrative, relational and communional aspects of supramoralism: the “all-universal synthesis” as Fyodorov himself dubs it.

157 Let us remember that in Fyodorov ontology is “ethicized” in personalist terms and, conversely, that ethics are “ontologized”.

158 The importance of cosmology for the meeting of religion and science was insightfully noted by Vladimir Medenica (inspired by analogous reflections of John D. Zizioulas): cf. idem, “Nikolai Fyodorov” (Serb.), in R. Đorđević (ed.), *The Contemporariness of Russian Religious Philosophy*, Gutenberg’s Galaxy, Belgrade 2002, 83.

159 The stance of faith doesn’t exclude the attainment of scientific excellence: on the contrary. Max Planck rightly recognized the common purpose of science and faith: “Religion and science are fighting a joint battle

oneness of mind. In taking part in this task the believers will not oppose God's will, but carry it into effect, while for unbelievers it will be their liberation from enslavement to the blind force, and submission to the will of God, instead of that persistent denial of divine will on which philosophy squanders its powers"¹⁶⁰.

The tenets of Nikolai Fyodorov represent a lasting contribution to the ideal of synergy of religion and science, past and future, and to the struggle to understand and overcome death. The sage from Moscow seems to advise us to keep moving forward by looking "backward" (re-membering dead persons [= the essence of the deep past]): and conversely, to keep moving "backward" by looking forward (anticipating resurrected persons [= the essence of the fullness of future]). This is not a vicious circle. Rather, it is an arrow aimed at immortality¹⁶¹. Alongside, he seems to advise that there is a role for science in religion, and a role for religion in science as long as they remain interconnected. But, I'd wish to add, care needs to be taken not to confuse their specific domains and functions (viz. their autonomy). In the meanwhile declarative postulations of the integration of theological-liturgical and scientific-technological means and powers are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the true immersion of technology into grace: and, more explanatory work needs to be done on how exactly, where and when such a supramoralistic all-unifying synthesis may come to pass.

Afterword: visions of relatedness and related visions. Dostoevsky introduced Fyodorov's notion of "all are responsible for all" in his *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–1880). Tellingly, in 1877 Dostoevsky reveals the following to Fyodorov's follower Nikolai Peterson¹⁶²: "Let me tell you that essentially I am in complete agreement with these ideas. I read them as if they were my own. Today I read them (anonymously) to Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov, our young philosopher. [...] ... Solovyov and I at least, believe in a real, literal, personal resurrection and one that will come to pass on earth"¹⁶³. Still, it is Vladimir Solovyev who vo-

[...] against skepticism and against dogmatism, against disbelief and against superstition, and the rallying cry [...] has always been, and always will be: 'On to God!' [...] Natural science wants us to learn, religion wants us to act!": cf. Max Planck, *Scientific Autobiography and Other Papers*, tr. F. Gaynor, Williams and Norgate Ltd., London 1950, 184. BL

¹⁶⁰ Nikolai F. Fyodorov, S: CW, I, 394.

¹⁶¹ The trajectory of this arrow of desire resembles the Russian khorovod folk dance, of which Fyodorov speaks enthusiastically. In the Serbian folk tradition the analogue is the so called kolo. In this primordial folk event all dance together in a circle. They hold hands in a criss-cross manner and, by looking at each other's faces, celebrate the gift of unity in life and in common community goals (parohija, selo, opshtina, okrug). As well, let me underline strongly, the Little and Great entrance of the Orthodox Church's Liturgy (i.e. the circular movements of clergy around the altar and through the nave of the church [mali vhod, veliki vhod]) are actually types of khorovod or kolo. And vice versa, the kolo dance is an extension of the celebration of the Liturgy itself. Even presently in many Orthodox traditions this happens on major feast days: thusly, all remain intertwined and united, both in heaven and in earth, in time and space. Cf. *The Mountain Wreath of P. P. Nyegosh Prince-Bishop of Montenegro*, tr. J. Wiles, George Allen & Unwin, London 1930 (Serbian original published as: Petar Petrović Njegoš, *Gorski vijenac*, Beč 1847).

¹⁶² Previously Dostoevsky published excerpts from Fyodorov's teaching which Peterson sent to him. Cf. "Isolated Phenomena", *A Writer's Diary*, II:4 March 1876.

¹⁶³ Fyodor M. Dostoevsky, *Letters* (Russ.), vol. IV, Moscow 1959, 9 (cf. cit. FPhR, 5).

calized the most emphatic words of acknowledgment as regards the impact of Fyodorov's resurrection-oriented thought. For sure, it is not difficult to discern Fyodorov's ideas in the underpinnings of Solovyov's *Lectures on Godmanhood* (1877–1881). Writing to the son of Prince Pavel Gagarin (that is, to Fyodorov), Solovyov confides: "Your 'project' I accept unconditionally and without any objections... Since the time of the appearance of Christianity, Your 'project' is the first movement forward of the human spirit on the path to Christ. From my end, I must acknowledge You as my teacher and spiritual father"¹⁶⁴.

One of the first two occupants of the MIR space station (sent aloft on 13 Mar 1986 aboard a Soyuz T spacecraft) was Vladimir Alekseyevich Solovyov (*1946). Twenty-five years earlier, on 12 Apr 1961, a man named Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin (1934–1968) became the first human being to enter cosmic space. Neither is Vladimir Alekseyevich related to Solovyov the philosopher; nor is Yuri Alekseyevich directly related to Fyodorov (Pavel Gagarin's son). Yet, they are related within the spirit of Russian philosophical cosmism as well as within Russian cosmic science. Speaking in Fyodorovian terms, the two astronauts have established brotherly and kindred relations with the two philosophers in a Common Task, within the astronautic side of a spiritual-philosophical journey. And conversely, the two philosophers have reaffirmed their "relatedness" to the two astronauts, not necessarily in blood, but from within the very philosophical roots of Russia's cosmic voyage. Is it likely that this Common Task will eventually overlap exactly with the Common Task that Fyodorov had in mind, and in heart? The answer to this question necessarily remains a mystery locked in the unfathomable depths of the dialogue of Divine Wisdom with mankind.

Excursus

[1. An aside on Florovsky's criticism of Fyodorov. "... until the present the most merciless criticisms of Fyodorov, advancing in the name of Orthodox official thinking (pravoslavnoy ortodoksii), as by rule, have been only variations of [Florovsky's BL] evaluation" (Semenova, FPhR, 6). Svetlana Semenova is right to voice reserve towards Florovsky's critique of Fyodorov (Florovsky, WRT, 322–330). One cannot accept some of his misplaced disqualifications of Fyodorov. Especially not those which view his thought as symptomatic of "necromancy" (sic?!), or, as indicative of a "magical" (sic!?) approach to technology, or, as an underestimation of the problem of personhood (sic!?), or, as conducted without "any" reference to transcendence i.e. grace (sic!?) [this was subsequently corrected by V. Zenkovsky]: or, as generally overshadowed by "phantasizing", etc. Such disqualifications are not hermeneutically and theoretically valid. Simply, they are not true and are thus unacceptable. However, some other critical reserves proffered by Florovsky (and not only Florovsky) in regard to Fyodorov's proposals are still relevant, and do deserve consideration. Especially those criticising Fyodorov's tendency to close the workings of spirit naturalistically; or the deficits of Christological and-or sacramental realism in Fyodorovian theology connected, as they are, to anthropocentric or humanistic over-reliance on the ideas of

¹⁶⁴ Vasily V. Zenkovsky, HRF, 133 (Also cf. E. L. Radlov [ed.], *Letters of Vladimir Sergeevich Solovyov* [Russ.], Obshchestvenaya Polza, Sankt Petersburg 1909, 345 [cit. acc. FPhR, 5]).

modern Aufklärung; or certain errings in Fyodorov's biblical exegesis: that is, interpretative wilfulness and-or literalism, etc. Nevertheless, again, Florovsky's mannerism of criticism of (non-Florovskyian) Russian religious philosophical and-or theological thought, by rule in stiff sweeps en bloc, certainly has serious shortcomings (Cf. an early and rather forgotten, pertinent and well informed, counter-reaction in relation to Florovsky's WRT that came from within the fold of Russian Christian émigré intelligentsia: Evgeny Spektorsky, "A New Book About Russian Theology" (Serb.), *Hrišćanska misao*, III:6–7 [1937] 84–87). All things said, it should also be noted that Orthodox philosophical-theological reflection on Fyodorov (and in general on Russian religious philosophical thinking) is not co-equal to a "remorseless" critique à la Florovsky; nor are all theological attempts to consider Fyodorov critically "by rule" mere "variations" of Florovsky's "decisive dismissal of Fyodorov from the fold of Christianity" (FPhR, 6). Vasily Zenkovsky's critical reflection on Fyodorov is a fine example of quite the opposite of that. And, Zenkovsky was as officially "Orthodox" as was Florovsky. (Although, Fr Vasily Zenkovsky was far more "inclusive" than was Fr George Florovsky, staunchly inset [as he was] within his conception of the "neo-patristic" synthesis, coupled with his purist rigorism [Semenova places Zenkovsky within the broader wing of Russian philosophers, together with Florensky, Berdyaev and Frank, all of whom have offered a far more positive, laudatory, appraisal of Fyodorov: yet, not without a diagnosis of some non-trivial neuralgia]). Actually, at least to my mind, it was a "non-official" religious philosophical mind, Nikolai Berdyaev, who gave the most satisfyingly comprehensive (both measured and insightful) philosophical-theological critique of Fyodorov (Berdyaev, RRR, 76–102). What is more, and surprisingly, in this study Berdyaev is more "conventionally" Orthodox than he himself ever will be. In his study, Berdyaev is much more analytically and theologically balanced, creative, in regard to Fyodorov than is Florovsky in his *The Ways of Russian Theology*... Interestingly, Berdyaev wrote his study 22 years before Florovsky's criticism in *The Ways of Russian Theology* (Russ.), YMCA-Press, Paris 1937 = abbr. WRT]

[2. Reflection on the influence of Fyodorov's notion of truth on Paul Florensky. In respect to viewing truth not merely as a recursive formalism of static concepts-definitions vis-à-vis static-reified objects (which conceal [Gk. *lanthano*] deeper ontological, gnoseological and ethical possibilities), it can be said that Fyodorov anticipates Paul Florensky (1882–1937) by some 36 years, and, in a qualified and conditional sense, Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) by some 50 years. — As regards Florensky let me remind that his analysis of truth was expounded in his *Pillar and Bulwark of Truth* (*Stolp i utverzhdeniye Istiny*, Moscow 1914, esp. 15–50 = abbr. SUI). Florensky's brilliant discussion on truth is opened-up by a markedly non-trivial as much as complex etymological analysis of the term. However, he draws philosophical insights regarding the notion of truth, not merely philological or linguistic ones. He underlines the multidimensional character of the term, concept, notion and usage of "truth". The young Florensky views truth as deeply rooted in the experience of cognizing reality, and, as ultimately affirmed in a special type of certitude. He lays-out the meanings of the term within four historical-cultural traditions of forging truth: the Russian (Slavic), the ancient Greek, the Latin and the Hebrew (Semitic) traditions. Part of his result is giv-

en in his proposal to always keep in mind that the notion of truth is polyvalent. Accordingly, we need to acknowledge that four dimensions of it prevail, according to the following criteria: that is, the relation of truth and reality may be (§1) immediate (cognized by the individual) or (§2) mediate (cognized by the collective), (§3) expressive of the formal side or (§4) expressive of the contentual side. Consequently, the Russian notion is closer to §1+§4; the Greek to §1+§3; the Latin to §2+§3; and the Hebrew to §2+§4. Now let us backtrack to Fyodorov in relation to Florensky's analysis of truth. Aside from a plethora of astounding reflections and insights regarding the notion and theory of truth, both Fyodorov and Florensky highlight the ontological sense of the notion of truth. That is, they delve into the deepest recesses of truth as the event of encountering *being*. The point is this: what Florensky has to say in particular about the Russian Slavonic and Greek Hellenic understandings of truth, actually, is anticipated, posited and already opened to view by Fyodorov's philosophy. I shall extract two relevant and highly illustrative segments from Florensky's dazzling analysis. As we read, we shall immediately see the parallels, namely: the Fyodorovian traces ("vine-creepers") in Florensky. As regards the Slavonic notion of truth (*istina*): "... in its *Russian* understanding, we could say: truth—is a 'state of being';—it is 'alive', 'a living being'¹⁶⁵, 'one that breathes', i.e. possesses the essential condition of life and existence. Truth as a being which is above all else alive,—such is the understanding that the Russian people have in respect to it". Florensky concludes by adding that: "... it is precisely such an understanding of truth which represents a self-specific and self-constitutive characteristic of *Russian philosophy*" (SUI 17 [tr. from Russ. BL]). As regards the Greek notion of truth (*aletheia*), Florensky draws out two chief senses: firstly, the adequational sense viz. correspondence of what is claimed (word, concept, statement etc) in relation to reality (the objective 'thatness' of what is there), and, secondly, the memorial sense. It is the latter sense which exposes again the possibly Fyodorovian inspiration of Florensky at this junction: "Quite another side [to that of the Slavonic Russian notion BL] is underlined by the ancient *Hellene*. Truth—says he—is *aletheia*. But what is it [...] ? The word *alethe(s)ia* [...]—*true*, *aletheuo*—*I'm truthful, I correspond to truth*¹⁶⁶ and others is formed from the negative particle '*a*' ('*a*' *privativum*) and *lethos*, the Doric *lathos*. The latter word [...] is of the same root as the verb *latho*, Ionic *letho* and *lanthano*—*I pass, I slip away, remain unnoticed and unknown*; in neuter this verb receives the meaning *memoriâ lâbor, I drop from memory* [...] *I lose, I forget*. In connection to the latter nuance of the root *lath* [...] stands *lethargy*. The ancient representation of death as a transition into an illusory state of being, almost into a self-forgetting and unconsciousness [...] is symbolically reflected in the image in which shadows drink of the subterranean waters of the river of Forgetting¹⁶⁷, 'Lethe'. The vivid representation of the *river of forgetfulness* [...] gives clear evidence that in the Hellenic conception *forgetfulness wasn't* a state of mere *absence* of memory, but a special *act* [sic BL] of destruction of a part of consciousness, the fading-out in consciousness of a part

¹⁶⁵ Here the substantial-contentual aspect of truth surfaces, as said above (§4).

¹⁶⁶ Here the formal-logical aspect of truth surfaces, as said above (§3).

¹⁶⁷ Or, the river of Oblivion. BL

of the reality of that which is being forgotten—in other words, not an absence of memory, but the *power* of oblivion. [...]. Truth in the conception of the *Hellenes* is a–letheia, i.e. something which is capable to stand against the flows of oblivion, in Lethe's currents of the sensual world, something which transcends time [...], something eternally remembered. Truth is the *eternal memory* (vechnaya pamyat) kept by a certain Consciousness; truth is a value, worthy of memory eternal and capable of it" (SUI 17-19). — As regards Heidegger, I'd here wish (albeit quickly) to add that he, too, for reasons which differ from Florensky's, conducts a breath-taking philosophical-philological analysis of the term "truth" (aletheia), as discovered in the legacy of classical Greece. However, analogously to Florensky he, too, discovers the "ontological" dimension of the primordial experience of truth—the fact itself of the "revealedness" of being (a–letheia): a dimension which, phenomenologically regarded, precedes fundamentally the "logical" dimension as of rational judgment, propositional logic and-or discursive language: "... because the logos is a letting-something-be-seen, it can *therefore* be true or false. But here everything depends on our steering clear of any conception of truth which is construed in the sense of 'agreement' ['Übereinstimmung': conformance, correspondence, adequation BL]. This idea is by no means [sic BL] the primary one in the concept of aletheia. The 'Being-true' of the logos as aletheuein means that in legein [speaking, announcing, pronouncing BL] as apophainesthai [revealing, disclosing BL] the entities *of which* one is talking must be taken out of hiddenness [Verborgenheit]; one must let them be seen as something unhidden (alethes); that is, they must be *discovered* [entdecken]"; cf. Martin Heidegger, "The phenomenological method of investigation [B. The concept of the logos], in idem, *Being and Time*, tr. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Basil Blackwell, Oxford (1962) ⁸1987, 56-57 (= idem, *Sein und Zeit*, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen [1927] ¹¹1967, 33). Lastly, when the priest-to-be, Paul Florensky, in stark Fyodorovian terms, continues to add that it is something "*unforgettably existent* [nezabvennoe sushche] that consciousness desires..." (SUI 19), both, in fact, presuppose (and draw inspiration from, philosophically) the ultimate time-stopping, disintegration-stopping, and oblivion-stopping institutions of the Church's *memorial* services, especially the Liturgic rite of the proskomidia and the funeral service rites (e.g. nekrosimos akolouthia [posledovanie mertvennoe; otepevanie]), including the subsequent mnemosynon (panakhida). A part of the Orthodox funeral rite reads as follows:

"Choir: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy; Lord have mercy; Lord have mercy. Father, give the blessing.

Priest: May Christ our true God, Who rose from the dead, have mercy on us; He Who as Immortal King has authority over both the dead and the living. Through the intercessions of His spotless, pure, and holy Mother; of His holy and just friend Lazarus, who lay in the grave four days; of the holy and glorious forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; may He give rest to our brother (Nikolai), who has departed from us, and number him among the just and holy, through His goodness and compassion, as our merciful God. Everlasting be your memory, O our brother (Nikolai), who are worthy of blessedness and eternal memory (aionia he mneme; vechnaya payat)".

// I wish to voice my gratitude for Robert Slesinski's study *Pavel Florensky: A Metaphysics*

of Love (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood NY 1984, esp. 79-85). Acquainting this book (in 1991) made me aware of Florensky's in-depth reading of the term and notion of aletheia, as well as of the fact that he reached certain incisive insights (viz. the concept of truth) which were to be discovered by Heidegger, too, interpreted in his unique way, but 13 years later, yet independently. Accordingly, one is called to read Florensky in the light of Heidegger and conversely]

[3. Reflection on a possible influence path from Fyodorov via Dostoevsky to Levinas. Here I venture to point out that Fyodorov's philosophemes (especially the ones on the Common Task and Supramoralism) anticipate certain structures of Emmanuel Levinas' (1905–1995) philosophy of the Other, as revealed in the absolute imperative of responsibility handed out in and through the other's face which “orders” and “ordains” us in virtue of its living personal presence (viz. the rapport de face à face). Levinas' philosophy is to be taken neither as a classical ethics (deontology, utilitarianism, virtue ethics) nor as a classical Aristotelian metaphysics (logical description of being, first cause, highest being etc, viz. onto[theo]logy). Rather, as Bettina Bergo says well (drawing on John Drabinski's explorations of Levinas): “It is an interpretive, phenomenological description of the rise and repetition of the face-to-face encounter, or the intersubjective relation at its precognitive core; viz., being called by another and responding to that other. If precognitive experience, that is, human sensibility, can be characterized conceptually, then it must be described in what is most characteristic to it: a continuum of sensibility and affectivity, in other words, sentience and emotion in their interconnection”. By answering Phillippe Nemo's question Levinas clarifies a foundational thought of his philosophy (as expounded in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* [¹1974]). Asked about his understanding of the concept of responsibility, Levinas reveals the following: “I speak of responsibility as the essential, primary and fundamental structure of subjectivity. For I describe subjectivity in ethical terms. Ethics, here, does not supplement a preceding existential base; the very node of the subjective is knotted in ethics understood as responsibility. I understand responsibility as responsibility for the Other, thus as responsibility for what is not my deed...” (EI 95). These thoughts bear a striking affinity with the main trusts of Fyodorov's philosophy. What is more, Levinas then goes on to comment on his work *Totality and Infinity* (¹1961). And, note, he explicitly concedes his debt to—Dostoevsky, thusly: “... the intersubjective relation is a non-symmetrical relation. [...] I am responsible for the Other without waiting for reciprocity, were I to die for it. [...] I am subject essentially in this sense. It is I who supports all. You know that sentence in Dostoevsky: ‘We are all guilty of all and for all men before all, and I more than others’” (EI 98). However, to the best of my knowledge, neither Levinas, nor those who walk in his paths (interpreters) acknowledge (or know) that Dostoevsky received the quoted regulative idea of unconditional all-responsibility from—Fyodorov! It was famously applied throughout his *The Brothers Karamazov* (in *Russkii Vestnik*, 1879–1880). See more on this in Dostoevsky's *Diary of a Writer*, 1877. Also cf. Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*, tr. R. A. Cohen, Pittsburgh, PA (¹1985) 2006, 95, 98, 119 = abbr. EI; Bettina Bergo, “Emmanuel Levinas”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2011 (substantial revision of 2006 entry: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>). See also

Levinas' reflections on "Infinity and Time", in idem, *Totality and Infinity* (I quote according the Serbian edition: *Totalitet i beskonačno*, tr. S. Ćuzulan, Jasen, Beograd 2006, 256): e.g. "Death and resurrection constitute time. But, such a formal structure presupposes the relating of the I towards the Other..." Lastly, in this context I'd wish to shed light on Muravyov's variation of Fyodorov's ("Dostoevsky's") dictum "all are responsible for all": "The highest formula is this: 'we resurrect each one of us'. All the other formulas of dynamism do not include the fullness of world truth. [...]. But resurrection is not enough, since mutual help and love are needed—that is how the idea of resurrecting comes into being. 'Each one of us' underlines the preservation of the catholicity (sobornost) of all individuals": cf. idem, "Aphorisms and Thoughts", OTI, 291]

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“Russian Paris” and the Rising Star of Nikolay Gumilyov

Abstract: The article is dedicated to the early, Paris period of life and literary work of Nikolay Gumilyov (1906–1908), which is still insufficiently studied and understood by scholars. The paper aims to study the influence of this period on shaping Gumilyov’s personality and his spiritual values and aspirations, polishing of his literary taste, gradual gaining of an independent ideological and aesthetic platform and development of his inimitable poetic style. – The research for the paper was based on the comprehensive historical and cultural approach, with application of literary and historical analysis techniques. This approach was used to consider the memoirs of his contemporaries, Gumilyov’s letters to Valery Bryusov, as well as his poetry, prose and art criticism during that period. Particular attention is paid to the history of publishing *Sirius* magazine and to such poorly studied aspects as the symbolic meaning of the magazine name and the first manifestations of acmeism in its aesthetic platform. The authors emphasize the fruitful and creative character of Gumilyov’s friendship with *Sirius* co-editor, artist and art critic M.V. Farmakovskiy, whose name is unfairly forgotten. – They come to the conclusion that the “first Paris period” was not only the novice time for Gumilyov but also the start of his personal and creative self-identity. It was in Paris that the strong and persistent character of the poet was formed, his skills honed and his inimitable style created, with the colour-sound synthesis of the striking romantic picturesqueness and a clear strong word. Paris was the place of polishing the artistic taste, developing a comprehensive system of views, finding main poetic motifs and setting life goals of Gumilyov, a rising star of the Silver Age.

Keywords: Gumilyov, Paris, Diaghilev’s *Saisons Russe*, Bryusov, *Sirius* magazine, spiritual and aesthetic position.

1. Introduction. The striking figure of N.S. Gumilyov, vastly talented and possessing an outstanding vigorous personality, attracts today more and more attention and interest among scholars. Nevertheless, the Paris period of his life and literary work (the so-called “first Paris period”) is still insufficiently studied, and most importantly, it is poorly understood. This paper attempts to consider that period of N. S. Gumilyov’s creative development by analysing the processes of realization of his true nature, shaping of literary tastes and preferences and gradual formation of his independent spiritual and aesthetic position in its entirety.

This aspect has been largely neglected and remains the least studied in the existing biographies of Nikolay Gumilyov and research into his work. The poet’s biography is described in the valuable materials of the domestic archives of the Luknitsky family [1], memoirs of his contemporaries [2] and biographical essays by V.V. Karpov [3], N.A. Otsup [4] and A.I. Pavlovsky [5].

A very important source of information about Gumilyov's creative and personal development is his correspondence with Valery Bryusov [6]. Their correspondence started after Bryusov reviewed the first collection of Gumilyov's poems "The Way of Conquistadors" (*Put' konkvistadorov*) and lasted until 1912, and during Gumilyov's Paris period it was particularly intense (48 of 67 letters addressed to the maître of Russian Symbolism were written during that period). We believe that the history of publishing *Sirius* magazine, which was launched by N.S. Gumilyov and M. Farmakovskiy in 1907, is of particular research interest. Only a limited number of the magazine copies have been preserved until today. A few earlier analytical efforts (one of the first was undertaken by N.I. Nikolaev [7]) have not provided a full-scale study of the *Sirius* content in the context of the Russian culture of the Silver Age. The authors consider it necessary to pay attention to such poorly studied aspects as the symbolic meaning of the magazine name and the first manifestations of acmeism in its aesthetic platform.

2. Materials and Methods. Our research was based on the comprehensive historical and cultural approach to studying materials of the Paris period of Gumilyov's life, with application of literary and historical analysis techniques to interpretation of poetry, prose and art criticism of the young author during that period. The core of our methodology is the contextual research: Gumilyov's creative development is considered, first, in the context of the Paris artistic atmosphere at that time; second, in the context of the Russian culture of the Silver Age period; and, third, in the context of the subsequent literary career of the poet.

3. Results. The main result of our research is a more consistent and clear dialectical conception of the influence of the Paris period in the shaping of the personality of Nikolay Gumilyov, who at that period was in the process of spiritual quest (sometimes indulging in risky self-experimentation), polishing his literary taste, gaining an independent ideological and aesthetic platform and developing his inimitable poetic style.

4. Discussion. Let us outline the scope of the study and discuss the obtained results. In July 1906, after graduating from the Lyceum in Tsarskoye Selo, 20-year old Nikolay Gumilyov went to Paris. At first he lived at 68 Boulevard Saint-Germain, but then he moved to 25 rue de la Gaîté. The novice poet entered the Sorbonne, where Maximilian Voloshin and Marina Tsvetaeva were also studying at that time. The same year was marked by the beginning of famous Diaghilev's *Russian Seasons*, which introduced the European audiences to the works of great Russian composers and painters and let them discover the Russian ballet. S. Lifar, a researcher of Diaghilev's multifaceted activity, wrote, "It must be said that both the time – 1906-1914 – and the place – Paris, at that time an unchallenged world capital – were chosen surprisingly well: that late spring of the Russian-French friendship was marked by the increased interest of the French to everything Russian – nothing could bring Russia and France closer together than the most powerful sphere of art, speaking directly to everybody in the most understandable language" [8, p. 55].

Thus, the Russians were conquering Paris in a peaceful way. On the other side, the unique atmosphere of Paris – the welcoming atmosphere of festive lightness, free-

dom, inspiration and intensive intellectual and creative communication with fellow artists and writers from all over the world – had a magnetic appeal for the talented people coming from Russia.

Gumilyov eagerly absorbed impressions, visiting exhibitions, becoming a regular at Parisian cafés and getting acquainted with interesting people. At the same time, he worked hard to perfect his poetic technique, overcoming challenges, polishing rhymes, developing rhythm and enriching imagery of his poetry. He was seeking advice on all those matters and gratefully received it from Valery Bryusov, whom at that time he justifiably considered his Mentor. In one of his letters Gumilyov told about the difficulties he encountered in writing (not poetry, but prose in that particular case) but at the same time admitted, "In general, it seems to me that I am already on the brink of enlightenment, that the wall is about to collapse, and I will understand – not learn – how to write" [1, p. 45].

In his letter of 11.11.1906, he answered Bryusov's question about the influence of Paris life on his inner world, "I've started thinking about it only after your letter and have come to some serious conclusions: it [Paris] has made me aware of the depth and seriousness of the smallest things, the most fleeting moods..." [1, p. 40].

In this statement we can already see the independent thinking of the young poet: in this letter, the disciple of the leader of Russian Symbolism revealed, in embryo, qualities of the future acmeist, with the attention to the earthly life details, reflecting the depth and shine of eternity and deserving the most serious attitude.

So, Paris, according to Gumilyov, had a significant influence on the shaping of his creative personality. It was during the Paris period that he published his second collection of poems entitled "Romantic Flowers" (*Romanticheskie cvety*). The book received positive response from I. Annensky and V. Bryusov, but some reviewers, such as V. Gofman and A. Levinson, were critical of it. The poems of the collection are remarkable in that they clearly show the formation of the style and express the main motifs of the poet's subsequent work.

However, the influence of the Russian Paris is the most visible in *Sirius* magazine, three issues of which were published in 1907. Venturing into publishing the magazine, Gumilyov was also its editor, art critic and writer. The idea of launching the magazine arose in 1906 as a result of Gumilyov's acquaintance with artists M. Farmakovsky and A. Bozheryanov, who agreed to be co-editors of the new periodical.

N.I. Nikolaev, in his article "*Sirius* Magazine (1907)" [7], provides a bibliographic description of the magazine materials and refers to it as a Parisian analogue of *Zolotoe Runo* (*La Toison d'Or*) and *Vesy* magazines. The latter statement is hardly entirely fair, because the publishing project undertaken by M.V. Farmakovsky, N.S. Gumilyov and A.I. Bozheryanov was largely independent, and its program was even broader and more challenging than that of the previous symbolist periodicals. Nevertheless, the magazine's adherence to the traditions of journalism of the early 20th century was, certainly, felt, and that was a meaningful intent of its publishers, primarily Gumilyov.

Living in Paris, Gumilyov subscribed to *Vesy* magazine. It was a publishing Olympus for the poet – a model of artistic and literary taste, and Gumilyov had always dreamt of being published there. In 1906 a collection of his poems was finally published in *Vesy* (no. 6),

and in 1907 he made his debut as an art critic of the magazine (no. 11) with the article “An Exhibition of the New Russian Art in Paris (A Letter from Paris)”.

The *Sirius* founders obviously relied on the publishing traditions of *Vesy*. The visual imagery symbolisation, format, covers in one ink, facsimile reproductions of original works on plates protected by tissue paper – all these features indicate that Gumilyov and his companions had studied the publishing experience of symbolist magazines before they launched *Sirius*.

In the first half of January, 1907, the new Russian magazine came off the press. It is worth mentioning that its astral name obviously echoes the zodiac symbolism of the names of *Vesy* magazine and the publishing house “Scorpion”.

Sirius is not a zodiac sign, but the name of the magazine is easy to decode. In the Egyptian calendar, the helical rising of the brightest star *Sirius* coincided with the new year beginning and the annual flooding of the Nile, which can be correlated both to launching the new periodical and the challenging publishers’ program. The astronomers in Ancient Egypt referred to *Sirius* as the Dog Star. Therefore, the name of the magazine launched by Gumilyov and Farmakovsky had another nuance of meaning. For the ancient Egyptians, the dog and its fidelity to man symbolized special relationships that existed between a disciple and his teacher in the priesthood hierarchy [9, p. 329]. In view of the above, the name of the magazine could indicate a certain hierarchy of relations between *Sirius* and *Vesy*, as well as between Gumilyov and his teacher Bryusov [15, pp. 269-273].

We can say that *Sirius* ascended the Paris sky to start a new bright stage in the life of the local Russian colony. It was to become the centre of consolidation in artistic circles and of the aesthetic platform development for the new art. The young writer published his poems and prose in the magazine under different pseudonyms: he signed the story “Doomed to Death” (*Gibeli obrechennye*) and the poem “France” (*Francija*) as “K-o”, and the essays “The Cards” (*Karty*) and “Up the Nile” (*Vverh po Nilu*) – as Anatoly Grant.

From the first issue of the magazine, the editors demonstrated the independence and originality of each of its sections: literature, criticism and arts. The editor’s note on the magazine program was written by Gumilyov. He wrote, “Launching the first Russian art magazine in Paris, this second Alexandria of refinement and enlightenment, we consider it our duty to acquaint our readers with our plans and views about art. In our magazine, we will present new values for the refined worldview and a new aspect of old values. We will get to like everything that will produce aesthetic awe in our souls, whether it would be depraved but luxurious Pompey or new Egypt..., or golden Middle Ages, or our time, so strict and thoughtful. We will not worship idols, and the art will not be a slave for domestic services. For the art is so varied that it is an abomination before the Lord to reduce it to some purpose, even for the salvation of mankind” [10, p. 3].

In the notes to the Complete Works of N.S. Gumilyov, it is stated that in their editorial the *Sirius* publishers expressed higher aspirations than those of *Zolotoe Runo* and *Vesy* magazines. Moreover, “the declaration of an exclusively aesthetic approach to artistic phenomena is characteristic of all further Gumilyov’s activities” [11, p. 262].

The editorial platform, however, was not indicative of the complete ideological and

artistic affinity between the magazine staff members. Apparently that was the reason why A. Bozheryanov soon left the editorial board, and sculptor Yakov Nikoladze and artist Semyon Danishevsky played a merely passive role in the magazine.

However, the declared total aestheticism and independence of art from ideological and social problems were not accidental for young Gumilyov, as they were part of his well thought-out position. During the Paris period of his life, which lasted intermittently for about two years (1906-1908), he was trying to find his own way, which, unlike Russian Symbolism, would not strive to be not only a literary school but also an ideological and religious worldview. These were first approaches to the future postulates of acmeism.

It is important to remember that the Paris period was transitional, and the "umbilical cord" that connected Gumilyov with the Symbolists, especially with Bryusov, was still strong. That was especially evident in the common occult interests and occupations of the mentor and his disciple. The existence of such interests is confirmed by Gumilyov's letters to Bryusov. For example, he wrote in his letter of 08.01.1907, "The esoteric mystery enchanted me, and I accept it completely. My demon still whispers various small doubts to me, but I will save them until our meeting..." [1, p. 42].

The very vocabulary and tone of this letter manifested the interest in esotericism and demonology, which was typical for the Silver Age representatives. A. Akhmatova recalled during her conversations with Luknitsky that in those years Gumilyov studied the practical guides to the black magic by Papus, and S.V. von Stein, a poet and translator from Tsarskoye Selo, stated that Gumilyov got acquainted with Papus in Paris.

However, we can assume that the poet's curiosity about the transcendent and infernal areas reflected not only fashion trends of the epoch but also a youthful penchant for experimentation. Moreover, Gumilyov's personal traits – his attraction to everything exotic, unknown and especially risk-taking – largely contributed to his flirting with the occult. Later this aspect of his personality will, fortunately, develop in another, positive direction and will manifest itself in the African travels of the poet and in his heroism during the war.

But in Paris those dangerous games led to the situation when the young poet began complaining of nervousness, grave and disturbing thoughts and loss of goals in life. In autumn of 1907 he confessed to Bryusov, "I'm still unwell and in a gloomy mood..." [1, p. 49]. During that period, he made three suicide attempts, and in two of them the poet was on the verge of death but miraculously survived. "Do you ask me," he said to A.N. Tolstoy, "why I wanted to die? I lived alone, in a hotel – thoughts of death just pestered me. Fear of death was disagreeable to me..." [1, p. 37]. A false and arrogant idea obviously came to his mind: to overcome that fear, he should dare to die.

It is worth mentioning that a similar frame of mind was described by one of our contemporaries: during his student days, he and his friends from the All-Russian State Institute of Cinematography took part in a spiritualist séance, where they were urged by some kind of "spirit" to commit suicide and experienced an incredible craving for death [12, pp. 12-17]. Thus, we can assume that not only a hand-to-mouth existence and lack of money or his passionate unrequited love for Anna Gorenko (as is considered by the majority of scholars) resulted in a gloomy mood and sad events in Gumilyov's life at that period.

As for A.A. Akhmatova (known at that time as Anna Gorenko), she was invited by Gumilyov to write for *Sirius*, and she published her first poem, signed A.G., in the second issue of the magazine. That was the poem "On his hand are lots of shining rings" (*Na ruke ego mnogo blestjashbih kolec...*), the content of which to a certain extent expresses the state of confrontation, which always existed in the relations of Akhmatova and Gumilyov. Though the young poetess repeatedly rejected Gumilyov's marriage proposal, he finally got his own way: in 1910 they got married [20, pp. 106-113].

He knew how to fight and win like nobody else.

The victory over the temptation of occultism, which had long haunted the poet and was reflected in many of his works, especially during the Paris period of his life, required considerable willpower and creative efforts. Recently deceased Yu.V. Zobnin, one of the keenest contemporary researchers of Gumilyov's work, noted, "As early as 1907, in his unfinished philosophical novelette "Doomed to Death" (*Gibeli obrechennye*), Gumilyov created the image of the Saviour under the name of wandering sage Egaim (i.e., "God of Gods"), who rules a severe trial of the lawless prophets of the "new beauty" [13, p. 77]. Denouncing the seductiveness of the "beauty", which is alien to the sorrows and hopes of people, he condemns the false prophets to death.

In his essay "Up the Nile" (*Vverh po Nilu*), published as pages from a diary, there is a character imbuing traveller Grant with the idea of the existence of some secret knowledge. However, Mr. Grant's attempt of initiation into this knowledge almost cost him his life. In the hope of gaining an ability to get to the essence of things, he pronounces an ancient spell without understanding its meaning, and it turns out to be causing death. Grant's companion, Englishman Thierry, saves him, but warns against reading other inscriptions containing spells. In this episode, the author obviously reflected and denounced his own experience of occult magical actions. Later Gumilyov, as is well known, sharply criticized Symbolism because its adepts "fraternised with mysticism, with theosophy, and with occultism" [14, p.57].

The negative experience is useful if honestly comprehended. However, we should also mention positive developments in Gumilyov's life and work during "the first Paris period".

They were mostly related to his friendship and cooperation with Mstislav V. Farmakovsky (1873-1946), a talented artist and independent art critic, whose name is now almost forgotten and whose legacy still awaits detailed research. The foundation for such research has been already laid in the study by A.A. Shelaeva [16, pp. 188-200]. The production of *Sirius*, according to some sources, was financed by Farmakovsky [16, p. 104].

The first issue of the magazine contained his manifesto of the Russian art, and issues no. 2 and 3 were illustrated with several plates of art works created by Farmakovsky (1905-1907) in different techniques: "A motif for the cover", "Female portrait", "Lex", "Luxembourg Garden", "Don Quixote" and "Vignettes for a fairy tale".

Mstislav Farmakovsky and Nikolay Gumilyov considered themselves "casual and temporary Parisians", but it was in Paris that they managed to attract the attention of the Russian artistic elite. This happened, first of all, because of Farmakovsky's articles dedicated to the art exhibition "Two Centuries of Russian Painting and Sculpture", organised by

Sergei Diaghilev, Lev Bakst and Al. Benois at the *Salon d'Automne*, and to the *Salon des Indépendants*, where 75 artists from Russia took part. In his manifesto, Farmakovskiy asked whether the Russian national art existed at all. And he stated that, based on the Russian exhibits at the above-named Paris exhibitions of 1906, the answer would have been negative. He was particularly dissatisfied with the first exhibition, organized by the World of Art (*Mir iskusstva*) leaders "with a claim to the national tone". At the same time, as pointed out by Farmakovskiy, the exposition lacked works of the masters who could actually represent national art (Fedotov, A. Ivanov, Savrasov, Ge, Surikov, Repin, Vasnetsov, Nesterov) but was stocked with imitations of foreign patterns. Farmakovskiy regretted that "the newest Peterhof-style Russian painting" – the artwork reminiscent of articles from Parisian antique shops – reigned at the exhibition. However, his conclusion was optimistic: nevertheless, the new Russian art existed.

In the second issue of *Sirius*, Farmakovskiy offered his own concept of the history of Russian art. He traced its origin to the beginning of the 11th century, to the frescoes of the Mirozhsky Monastery and the Saviour Church on Nereditsa, and the first great national artist, in his opinion, was A. Ivanov. Farmakovskiy was outraged that Diaghilev put Repin's works in the fifth row of the exposition, and the works by his disciples (Bakst, Kustodiev and Malyavin) – in the first.

Farmakovskiy's criticism was largely fair. Al. Benois, Diaghilev's closest assistant in the arrangement of the exhibition, wrote in his memoirs, "As for the exhibition plan, it did not fully correspond to my ideas, namely, the Russian art was shown with a certain gap in half a century, that is, with the omission of everything contributed by Peredvizhniky" [18, pp. 448-449].

In the article about the same Diaghilev's exhibition, published in *Vesy*, Gumilyov further developed the artistic and critical ideas expressed on the pages of *Sirius*.

Reflecting on the basis of Russian art, Gumilyov wrote, "Even today the religion largely governs the soul of the Russian person and our people as a whole... The first Russian national artist was Alexander Ivanov. He was a genius: he did not sell his soul for money from the wealthy and did not paint in fashionable styles for the strong and powerful... No, he gave a pure image to his artistic soul" [1, p. 40]. A. Ivanov, according to Gumilyov, demonstrated deep understanding of the portrayed characters rather than "petty photographic realism". Gumilyov pointed out that the landscapes by Borisov-Musatov, Nesterov and other Russian painters were imbued with sadness, and this sadness was "like an endless Russian autumn dressed in crimson and gold, like a white winter under the dark sky, like a pale-green spring with bubbling streams between the hills, like a pitifully smiling short summer. You can't hide this nature, because it is imprinted forever in the soul of every Russian artist" [1, p. 40].

Gumilyov's reflections reveal not only an excellent understanding of the pictorial language and the "passion of the future 'maître' of acmeism for plasticity and specificity of images in visual arts" [6, c.253], but also strong nostalgic feelings. According to A. Akhmatova, Nikolay Gumilyov missed his homeland so much that he travelled to the other end of Paris "just to read at the corner of the street: Bd. Sébastopol" [17, p. 33].

His Paris friends tried to entertain him with games of cards and knucklebones, with new acquaintances – artists E. Kruglikova, V. Belkin and poet M. Voloshin, as well as with strong artistic impressions. Gumilyov together with Farmakovsky visited performances of Japanese actress Sadayakko, whom he dedicated a poem included in the collection “Romantic Flowers” (*Romanticheskie cvety*).

But he was especially inspired by the fascination of the Paris public with primitivism, and first of all, with the objects of primitive art from Oceania and Africa. Modigliani, with whom Gumilyov was well acquainted, had a collection of African sculptures. A similar collection was owned by Guillaume Apollinaire. Joseph Brummer, a regular patron at the *Le Dôme* café frequently visited by Gumilyov, also had an outstanding collection of primitive art. The poet was fascinated by the pristine beauty and mystery of the works from those collections. He got new acquaintances among the Negroes, Malays and Siamese. In the small cafés of the Latin Quarter, he began to build routes for his future African travels. He was used to carrying out his plans, and Paris became the source for his far-reaching plans.

However, the great city of artists, thinkers and poets, which Gumilyov named “the second Alexandria of refinement and enlightenment”, did not find any significant reflection on the pages of *Sirius* magazine. Only M.V. Farmakovsky, in one of his articles, mentioned a small exhibition hall in rue Caumartin where Diaghilev organised his Russian exhibitions and where the idea of *Sirius* was born. The Paris theme was also reflected in the black-and-white reproduction of “A Corner in Paris” drawing by S.I. Danishevsky and in Gumilyov’s poem “France” (*Sirius*, 1907, no. 1), which ended with a prophetic oath:

*Only over our dead bodies
Would the enemy pass to be in Paris.*

(As is well known, later the poet would actively participate in military actions during the First World War, in the course of which the Russian troops, suffering great losses, saved Paris from the German occupation).

Farmakovsky was the first artist who created Gumilyov’s portrait. The portrait, dated 1908, is painted in pastel. Gumilyov is depicted sitting in an armchair. In his hand, he holds a fan, which reminds of his poem “Masquerade”. The artist managed to see and show the beauty and elegance of Gumilyov’s hands and an unusual asymmetry of the features of his noble face. The portrait was preserved by Farmakovsky during the difficult years of repressions and the Leningrad blockade. In 1946, after Farmakovsky’s death, his family donated the portrait to the Museum of the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House).

5. Conclusion. In conclusion, we can state that the Paris period was not just the novice time for Gumilyov – it was important for shaping his independent creative personality. It was in Paris that the strong and persistent character of the poet was formed, his skills honed and his inimitable style created, in which colours and words are combined and reinforce each other in the colour-sound synthesis. Paris was the place of polishing his artistic taste, developing a system of views, finding main motifs of his future works and setting life goals. There he overcame spiritual crises and avoided temptations. In Paris Gumilyov’s human and artistic talent manifested itself as global and truly national at the same time. The

large and bright star of the poet ascended the Paris sky like Sirius. Bidding farewell to Paris, he promises with gratitude:

*France, I'll turn again to look
At your enlightened face...*

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„ein Gespräch, an dem wir würgen“: Heidegger und Celan

I. Der Kontakt – Beginn der Entwicklung

Scho¹ am 4.3.1943 in Czernowitz spielt Celan in seinem Gedicht *Ein Krieger* auf Heideggers *Sein und Zeit* oder doch eine Formulierung daraus an,² doch erst zwischen 1953 und 1959 – eventuell aufgrund von Hinweisen Ingeborg Bachmanns – hat Celan zum ersten Mal gründlich und viele Schriften Heideggers gelesen,³ seit 1957 standen beide auch in brieflichem Kontakt. Celan schickte ihm seine Bücher und Gedichte (wollte ihm etwa 1957 das Gedicht *Schliere* schicken, das den Zusammenhang zwischen der Allegorie und der Verwundung bzw. Vernichtung thematisiert)⁴. Schon dieser frühe Kontakt ist erstaunlich, kannte Celan doch Heideggers Engagement von 1933 aus der Dokumentation, die seinerzeit von Guido Schneeberger vorgelegt worden war. Celan beschäftigte sich parallel auch mit dem Heidegger-Kritiker Karl Löwith und dessen Buch *Heidegger – Denker in dürftiger Zeit*. Sehr genau kannte Celan auch Heideggers Vorlesungen, die dieser während des zweiten Weltkrieges gehalten hatte (mit ihrer Kritik der nationalsozialistischen Nietzsche-Deutung). Celan kannte seit Herbst 1954 auch die *Einführung in die Metaphysik* – in seinem Handexemplar sind die berühmten Sätze über die „innere Wahrheit und Größe der Bewegung“ mit einem Ausrufungszeichen kommentiert. Celan war überhaupt ein sehr aufmerksamer Heidegger-Leser, besonders die späten Werke hat er gründlichst studiert und sie mit Marginalien versehen.⁵ Aus der *Einführung in die Metaphysik* übernimmt Celan den Begriff der Wahrheit als „Unverborgenheit“⁶, aus den *Holzwegen* die Rede von der Dichtung als „Wagnis“ und „Geschehnis“⁷ und den Terminus „Ereignis“⁸. Im Marbacher Literaturarchiv befindet sich ein Arbeitsheft, das Celans Lektürenotizen zu Heideg-

1 Erweiterter und aktualisierter Wiederabdruck aus: Markus May, Peter Gossens/Jürgen Lehmann (Hg.), *Celan-Handbuch. Leben – Werk – Wirkung*, Stuttgart/Weimar 2008, S. 254–258.

2 Vgl. Otto Pöggeler, *Der Stein hinterm Aug. Studien zu Celans Gedichten*, München 2000, S. 32 f.

3 Vgl. Günter Neske, „Nachwort“, in: Günter Neske (Hg.), *Erinnerung an Martin Heidegger*, Pfullingen 1977, S. 299.

4 Vgl. Otto Pöggeler, *Spur des Wortes. Zur Lyrik Paul Celans*, Freiburg u. a. 1986, S. 153.

5 Vgl. Paul Celan, *La Bibliothèque philosophique*, Paris 2004, S. 338–418.

6 Paul Celan, „Mikrolithen sinds, Steinchen“. *Die Prosa aus dem Nachlass*, Frankfurt a. M. 2005, S. 97.

7 Ebd., S. 97, 100.

8 Ebd., S. 96.

gers *Was heißt Denken?* im Herbst 1954 festhält;⁹ hier findet sich auch ein erster Briefentwurf an seinen „Denk-Herrn“¹⁰. Durchaus zustimmend las er die beiden Nietzsche-Bände von 1961 (für die er im gleichen Jahr mit einem Exemplar von *Sprachgitter* dankt mit folgender persönlicher Widmung: „Stimmen vom Nesselweg her:/Komm auf den Händen zu uns./Wer mit der Lampe allein ist,/hat nur die Hand, draus zu lesen./Für/Martin Heidegger/mit herzlichem Dank, für das/Nietzsche-Buch (...)“) sowie die *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*; gewiss kannte er auch Heideggers seit 1950 mehrfach gehaltenen Vortrag *Die Sprache*. Überdies bezieht sich die Schlußstrophe des am 01.07.1960 geschriebenen Gedichts *Zu beiden Händen* auf Heideggers Parmenides-Reflexionen. Celan verteidigte auch als einer der wenigen damals die Sprache des späten Heidegger (auch sein Etymologisieren) gegen andere zeitgenössische Urteile (so betonte er in Briefen an Clemens Graf Podewils seine Zustimmung zur „limpidité“ von Heideggers späten Texten: „Ich möchte in den Worten wieder die Namen der Dinge vernehmen“¹¹). Allerdings war diese Nähe Celans zu Heidegger eine sehr fragile; schon gar nicht wollte er sie öffentlich dokumentiert sehen (so lehnte Celan 1962/63 Otto Pöggeler's Wunsch ab, ihm sein Heidegger-Buch zu widmen; er werde nicht – wie Buber das getan habe – Heidegger einfach einen „Persilschein“ ausstellen, noch könne er eine Zusammenstellung der Namen nicht annehmen). Auch als Heidegger, der Celan über René Char (weshalb Heidegger auch ein brennendes Interesse für das diesem Dichter gewidmete Gedicht aus *Von Schwelle zu Schwelle* hatte) kannte und sich um eine Stelle für den Dichter an der Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm bemühte, sich 1959 zu seinem 70. Geburtstag für seine Festschrift Gedichte von Celan (und Ingeborg Bachmann) wünschte, verweigerten dies beide, was Heidegger nicht davon abhielt, Celan ab 1959 über seinen Verleger Neske seine Bücher, mit Widmungen versehen, zukommen zu lassen. Im Zusammenhang der Heidegger-Festschrift bei Neske schreibt Celan am 10.08.1959 an Ingeborg Bachmann: „Ich bin (...) der letzte, der über die Freiburger Rektoratsrede und einiges andere hinwegsehen kann; aber ich sage mir auch (...), dass derjenige, der an seinen Verfehlungen würgt, der nicht so tut, als habe er nie gefehlt, der den Makel, der an ihm haftet, nicht kaschiert, besser ist als derjenige, der sich in seiner seinerzeitigen Unbescholtenheit (...) auf das bequemste und einträglichste eingerichtet hat (...). Mit anderen Worten: ich kann mir sagen, dass Heidegger vielleicht einiges eingesehen hat.“¹² Obwohl Heidegger sich ab dem Band *Die Niemandsrose* (1964) von Celan etwas entfremdet und zu Huchel schwenkt, bleibt er doch bis zum Schluss rührend um Celan bemüht.

Kulminationspunkt der Beschäftigung Celans mit Heidegger war die Arbeit am Manuskript der Bühner-Preis-Rede *Der Meridian* im Sommer 1960. Für Vorarbeiten machte er sich – neben Husserl, Scheler und Oskar Becker – umfangreiche Exzerpte aus *Sein und Zeit*, benutzte daneben auch *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, notierte sich etwa die Heideggersche Über-

9 Vgl. Robert André, *Gespräche von Text zu Text. Celan – Heidegger – Hölderlin*, Hamburg 2001, S. 151; vgl. a. Celan, „Mikrolithen sinds, Steinchen“, Frankfurt a. M. 2005, S. 97.

10 Ebd., S. 224.

11 Zit. Nach: Pöggeler, *Spur des Wortes*, Freiburg u. a., S. 250.

12 Ingeborg Bachmann / Paul Celan, *Herzzeit. Der Briefwechsel*, Frankfurt a. M. 2008, S. 118.

setzung eines *Theaitet*-Zitats zum Verhältnis von Denken und Sprache.¹³ Celan beobachtete 1959/60 auch die Vortragsreihe an der Bayerischen Akademie der schönen Künste über „Die Sprache“. Heidegger nahm hier Sprache als Monolog, für Buber gründete die Sprache in einem Dialog, was Celan im *Meridian* aufnahm. Im Manuskript sind auch Anspielungen auf Heideggers *Der Feldweg* (1949) und *Zur Erörterung der Gelassenheit. Aus einem Feldweggespräch über das Denken* erkennbar, wenn es etwa heißt: „Umkehr – dazu scheint es ja nun doch zu viel Einbahnstraßen zu geben. – Gegenverkehr und Umkehr, das ist zweierlei, aber auch auf den Feldwegen scheint es, ach, wenig Gelegenheit dazu zu geben.“¹⁴ Celan nimmt auch den Begriff „Entsprechung“ für das Wesen der Sprache wörtlich auf, der Heideggers Traktat-Aufsatz entstammt (den er wohl schon 1953 im *Merkur* gelesen hatte). Heidegger studierte seinerzeit 1961 den *Meridian*-Sonderdruck gründlich (unter Einfügung von Randbemerkungen, die eine schroffe, doch sehr sachliche Kritik beinhalten)¹⁵.

II. Die Begegnungen

Heidegger hatte dem Dichter durch gemeinsame Freunde wiederholt zu verstehen gegeben, er wolle ihn kennenlernen, doch erst sehr spät haben sich beide dann auch persönlich getroffen. Zwischen Juli 1967 und März 1970 kommt es zu drei Begegnungen Celans mit Martin Heidegger. Das erste Treffen ist historisch zu nennen: hier begegnen sich der einst von der Vernichtung bedrohte Jude und ein deutscher Gelehrter, der in einem Augenblick seiner Geschichte auf Seiten der Verfolger und Vernichter gestanden hat. Vor der ersten Begegnung schreibt Heidegger am 23.6.1967 an Gerhart Baumann: „Schon lange wünsche ich, Paul Celan kennen zu lernen. Er steht am weitesten vorne und hält sich am meisten zurück. Ich kenne alles von ihm, weiß auch von der schweren Krise, aus der er sich selbst herausgeholt hat (...). Es wäre heilsam, P. C. auch den Schwarzwald zu zeigen.“¹⁶ Am 24. Juli 1967 las Celan im Auditorium Maximum der Universität Freiburg vor über tausend Zuhörern Gedichte aus dem Band *Atemwende*. Diesen Besuch Celans in Freiburg hatte Heidegger liebevoll vorbereitet, etwa die Buchhändler der Stadt veranlasst, dessen Bücher auszustellen. Vor der Lesung traf Heidegger Celan im Hotel (wobei dieser ein gemeinsames Foto verweigerte), nach der Lesung galten die Gespräche Heideggers mit Celan – im Kreise mit Birgit von Schowingen, einer Tochter Ludwig von Fickers – dann diesem Innsbrucker Förderer und dem russischen Lyriker Andrej Wosnessenski.¹⁷ Am Morgen des 25.07.1967 fuhr Celan trotz Bedenken auf Heideggers Einladung hinauf in den Schwarzwald, mit Gerhart Neumann und Silvio Vietta. Hier kam es zum denkwürdigen Besuch von Heideggers „Hütte“ in Todtnauberg. Baumann stieß erst später zu ihnen und machte dann die – wegen Regens abgebrochene – Wanderung ins Horbacher Moor mit. An seine Frau berichtet er Anfang August, es sei „im Auto zu einem ersten Gespräch [gekommen], bei dem ich kla-

¹³ Vgl. Paul Celan, *Der Meridian. Endfassung – Entwürfe – Materialien*, Frankfurt a. M. 1999, S. 210, 235.

¹⁴ Celan, *Der Meridian*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 131.

¹⁵ Vgl. Otto Pöggeler, *Schritte zu einer hermeneutischen Philosophie*, Freiburg u. a. 1994, S. 436 f.

¹⁶ Gerhart Baumann, *Erinnerungen an Paul Celan*, Frankfurt a. M. 1986, S. 59 f.

¹⁷ Ebd., S. 67 f.

re Worte gebraucht habe. Herr Neumann, der Zeuge war, hat mir hinterher gesagt, dass dieses Gespräch eine epochale Bedeutung hatte. Ich hoffe, dass Heidegger zur Feder greifen und einige Seiten schreiben wird, die sich auf das Gespräch beziehen und angesichts des wieder aufkommenden Nazismus auch eine Warnung sein werden“.¹⁸ Auch an Franz Wurm schreibt er wenige Tage später, dass er mit Heidegger „ein recht langes und recht deutliches Gespräch geführt (...) habe“.¹⁹

Celan muss – wie etwa Marie Luise Kaschnitz berichtet hat – „verwandelt“ aus Freiburg zurück gekommen sein;²⁰ noch auf der Rückfahrt, am 1. August in Frankfurt, schreibt er das Gedicht *Todtnauberg*.

Im Sommer 1968 kam es zu einer zweiten Begegnung in Freiburg. Celan las am 26. Juni im Hause Baumann aus seiner Mandelsdam-Übersetzung und blieb mehrere Tage dort. Man machte (mit Gerhart Baumann) einen Tagesausflug ins Hochmoor nach Tiefenhäusern im Schwarzwald. Es gab harmonische Gespräche über Geologie, Botanik und Archäologie.²¹ Celan selbst nannte als Hauptinhalt der Gespräche Heideggers Zustimmung wenigstens zu den Tendenzen im französischen Mai 1968, verkrustete Institutionen aufzubrechen.²²

Im Frühjahr 1970 kam es in Freiburg zu einem letzten Treffen. Am Gründonnerstag (26.03.) gab es eine private Lesung Celans aus *Lichtzwang* bei Professor Baumann. Diese Begegnung ist nicht nur durch das Zerwürfnis mit Gerhart Neumann geprägt, sondern auch dadurch, dass Celan sich von seinen Zuhörern, insbesondere Heidegger, letztlich unverstanden fühlte. Zwar „sprach Heidegger einige Verse wörtlich nach“²³ und Celan schrieb unmittelbar unter diesem Eindruck noch am 27.03.1970 an Franz Wurm, alle hätten „wirklich zugehört, (...) auch Heidegger“²⁴, doch schon wenig später beklagte er sich (am 06.04.1970) gegenüber Ilana Shmueli: „Meine Gedichte – (...) in Freiburg, wo ich sie zweimal, in engem und engstem Kreise bei Professor Baumann las, bewirkten sie, nicht bei allen Anwesenden, auch nicht beim ebenfalls zuhörenden Martin Heidegger, ein Äußerstes an Hören und Verstehen – (...)“.²⁵ Heidegger vertraute bei dieser letzten Begegnung Baumann am Gartentor seines Hauses an: „Celan ist krank – heillos.“²⁶ Doch unbeirrbar begleitete Heidegger Celan auf dessen Wegen, allerdings mit wachsender Sorge. „Die Briefe des Dichters wurden ebenso sorgsam aufbewahrt wie das *Todtnauberg*-Gedicht.“²⁷ Für den Nachsommer hatte Heidegger noch einen gemeinsamen Ausflug zu den Hölderlin-Landschaften am oberen Donautal, um den Bodensee und von Hauptwil geplant; Celans Freitod verhinderte eine Verwirklichung dieses Planes.

¹⁸ Paul Celan/Gisèle Celan-Lestrangé, Briefwechsel, 1. Band, Frankfurt a. M. 2001, S. 479.

¹⁹ Paul Celan, *Briefwechsel mit Franz Wurm*, Frankfurt a. M. 1995, S. 88.

²⁰ Vgl. Baumann, *Erinnerungen an Paul Celan*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 72.

²¹ Vgl. ebd., S. 51 f.

²² Vgl. Pöggeler, *Der Stein hinterm Aug*, München, S. 173 f.

²³ Baumann, *Erinnerungen an Paul Celan*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 79.

²⁴ Celan, *Briefwechsel mit Franz Wurm*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 239 f.

²⁵ Paul Celan/Ilana Shmueli, *Briefwechsel*, Frankfurt a. M. 2004, S. 135.

²⁶ Baumann, *Erinnerungen an Paul Celan*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 80.

²⁷ Ebd., S. 65.

III. Todtnauberg

Celans widersprüchliche Beziehung zu Heidegger findet ihren wichtigsten Niederschlag in dem Gedicht *Todtnauberg*, das am 12.01.1968 in einer bibliophilen Ausgabe in Vaduz (Auflage von 50 Blatt) erscheint und von dem Celan das erste Exemplar mit persönlicher Widmung an Heidegger schickt. Aus vielen Zeugnissen (so etwa von Jean Bollack) wissen wir, wie sehr Celan unter Heideggers notorischem Schweigen über seine Verstrickung in den Nationalsozialismus gelitten hat und wie sehr er auf eine Stellungnahme des Philosophen gewartet hat. In einem (undatierten) Briefentwurf an Heidegger aus dem Umkreis der *Todtnauberg*-Begegnung (wohl Ende 1969/Anfang 1970) heißt es: „Heidegger//... dass Sie {durch Ihre Haltung} das Dichterische und, so wage ich zu vermuten, das Denkerische, in beider ernstem Verantwortungswillen, entscheidend schwächen.“²⁸ In der frühesten Niederschrift des Gedichtes in seinem Notizbuch steht ein Gedanke, der später eliminiert wurde: „(seit ein Gespräch wir sind, an dem wir würgen, an dem ich würge)“.²⁹ Die zweite Fassung lautet: „Seit ein Gespräch wir sind, an dem wir würgen, an dem ich würge, das mich aus mir hinausstieß, dreimal, viermal.“³⁰ Celan zitiert hier ein Wort aus Hölderlins Hymne *Die Friedensfeier*, zu der Heidegger sich in seinem Vortrag *Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung* geäußert hatte. Das „Würgen“ bezieht sich auf das für Celan unbefriedigend gebliebene Gespräch mit Heidegger, das ihn aber noch mit einer Hoffnung zurückließ, der „Hoffnung, heute,/auf eines Denkenden/kommendes/Wort/im Herzen“³¹. In der Fassung des Sonderdruckes, den Heidegger erhielt, heißt es abweichend von der letzten Fassung: „(ungesäumt kommendes) Wort“³². Ins Hüttenbuch hatte er sich eingetragen mit dem später berühmt gewordenen Eintrag: „Ins Hüttenbuch, mit dem Blick auf den Brunnenstern, mit einer Hoffnung auf ein kommendes Wort im Herzen. Am 25. Juli 1967/Paul Celan.“ Dieses „Wort im Herzen“ hat – wie alle Worte des Gedichtes – doppelte Konnotationenmöglichkeiten, sowohl im Kontext Heideggers wie in dem Celans. So heißt es bei Heidegger in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*: „Sobald wir die Sache vor den Augen und im Herzen das Gehör auf das Wort haben, glückt das Denken.“ In Heideggers Athener Rede *Die Herkunft der Kunst und die Bestimmung des Denkens* heißt es am Schluss mit Pindar: „Das Wort aber weiter hinaus in die Zeit als die Taten bestimmt es das Leben,/wenn nur mit der Charitinnen Gunst/die Sprache es herausholt aus der Tiefe des sinnenden Herzens.“ Auch andere Doppeldeutigkeiten sind zu beobachten; so steht „Orchis“, das Knabenkraut der Hochmoore,³³ sowohl für die Jugend wie (im Chinesischen) für den einsamen Denker und Dichter; der „Augentrost“, Arnika, ist eine Heilpflanze, erinnerte C. aber auch an das Arbeitslager.³⁴ Der „Sternwürfel“, eine Anspielung auf den Stern auf dem

²⁸ Zuerst mitgeteilt von: André, *Gespräche von Text zu Text*, Hamburg, S. 226; jetzt: Celan, „*Mikrolithen sind, Steinchen*“, Frankfurt a. M., S. 129.

²⁹ Fassung H 5; Paul Celan, *Werke. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, Bd. 9.2, Frankfurt a. M. 1990, S. 106.

³⁰ Fassung H 3; ebd., S. 107.

³¹ Ebd., S. 33.

³² Ebd., S. 127.

³³ Vgl. Atemwende.

³⁴ Vgl. Celan/Celan-Lestrangle, *Briefwechsel*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 126.

Brunnen vor Heideggers Hütte, verwandelt sich ins Gedicht (in „Analogie mit Mallarmés Sternenmotiv im *Coup de dés*, der ja auch eine Theorie der Verwandlung/Aufhebung der Sache ins Gedicht entwickelt hat“³⁵), lässt aber auch eine Erinnerung an den Judenstern zu, aber auch bei „Waldwasen“ kann feuchter Boden wie (französisch) der Schindanger konnotiert werden (evtl. auch ein Gegensatz zur Heideggerschen „Lichtung“). „Krudes“ meint Rohes, aber wohl auch die Sprachweise des späten Heidegger. Das Moor ist für Celan eine Stätte des sich zersetzenden Lebens (die dann wegen Nässe abgebrochene Wanderung ins Horbacher Moor war Celans Wunsch) und auch Erinnerungszeichen an die Konzentrationslager, die meist in Gegenden von „Waldwasen“ und „Hochmooren“ angelegt waren; so denkt Celan bei „Hochmoor“ immer auch an Massengräber. Die „Knüppelpfade“ sind das, was ein Gehen erlaubt auch im Reich des Todes, der Verwesung, – und auch eine Verkehrung der „Holzwege“. Celan markiert so bei aller Nähe doch auch eine unübersehbare Distanz zu Heideggers Sphäre – in vielem fühlte Celan sich in Heideggers Landschaft an seine Kindheitslandschaft, die Bukowina, erinnert, gleichzeitig negiert er den von Heidegger idealisierten Rückzugsort Schwarzwald. Vor allem aber stellt das Gedicht einen Weg als Weg dar – einen Weg, auf dem Celan sich sehr weit nach vorne gewagt hatte. Celan tritt in diesem Gedicht ja als ungeduldig Fordernder auf,³⁶ und umso größer war die Enttäuschung, als er feststellen musste, mit dieser Forderung letztlich ins Leere zu stoßen. Celan hat seine Enttäuschung über Heidegger bzw. seinen Besuch bei ihm Wurm und auch Bollack später mündlich erzählt. Am 24.01.1968 fragte er bei Wurm an, ob er *Todtnauberg* dem Feuilletonchef der *Neuen Zürcher Zeitung* zur Veröffentlichung geben sollte: „oder ein Wort abwarten von ‚dem vom Berge‘“.³⁷ Die einzige Antwort ist ein Brief Heideggers an Celan vom 30.01.1968, der erst 30 Jahre später bekannt wurde.³⁸ In ihm heißt es: „Das Wort des Dichters, das ‚Todtnauberg‘ sagt, Ort und Landschaft nennt, wo ein Denken den Schritt zurück ins Geringe versuchte – das Wort des Dichters, das Ermunterung und Mahnung zugleich ist und das Andenken an einen vielfältig gestimmten Tag im Schwarzwald aufbewahrt. Aber es geschah schon (...) beim ersten Grüßen im Hotel. Seitdem haben wir Vieles einander zugeschwiegen. Ich denke, dass einiges noch eines noch eines Tages im Gespräch aus dem Ungesprochenen gelöst wird. (...) Und meine Wünsche? Dass Sie zur gegebenen Stunde die Sprache hören, in der sich Ihnen das zu Dichtende zusagt.“ Diese Antwort Heideggers betont das stille, wortlose Einverständnis, gleichzeitig will Heidegger das Wort auch als „Mahnung“ nehmen, allerdings nicht in der von Celan erhofften Weise. Gleichzeitig ließ Heidegger Celan seinen Aufsatzband *Wegmarken* mit Widmung zukommen, woraus Celan sich etwas notierte.³⁹ Doch der Dichter war, wie wir von Robert Altman – der Celan einige Tage, nachdem er dessen Brief erhalten hatte, im Februar 1968 in

³⁵ S. Vietta, brieflich an den Verf. 24.08.2007.

³⁶ So Axel Gellhaus, „Seit ein Gespräch wir sind.“ *Paul Celan bei Martin Heidegger in Todtnauberg*, Marbach a. N. 2002.

³⁷ Celan, *Briefwechsel mit Franz Wurm*, Frankfurt a. M., S. 131.

³⁸ Vgl. Stephan Krass, „wir haben Vieles einander zugeschwiegen“. Ein unveröffentlichter Brief von Martin Heidegger an Paul Celan“, in: *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 03./04.01.1998, S. 49.

³⁹ Vgl. Celan, „*Mikrolithen sinds, Steinchen*“, Frankfurt a. M., S. 127.

Paris getroffen hat – wissen, enttäuscht über den Inhalt von Heideggers Schreiben. „Mit einem so unverbindlichen Brief sei für Celan ein Schlussstrich unter dieses Kapitel gezogen. Celan habe verbittert gewirkt und den Brief als ein schlimmes Ereignis empfunden.“⁴⁰

Anfang August 1997 wurde noch ein „Vorwort“ Heideggers zu Celans Gedicht *Todtnauberg* veröffentlicht.⁴¹ Dieses „Vorwort“ ist allerdings nicht an Celan gerichtet, sondern von Heidegger seiner Frau zugedacht gewesen.⁴²

„Doch	Wenn sie sagen,
Hütte und Höhe,	– nicht bedeuten
zum Brunnen der Blick	– nicht bezeichnen.
aus gesammeltem Denken;	Wenn sie zeigend tragen
das Buch auf dem Tisch,	an die Orte
bezeugend die Freude der Gäste –	reiner Eignis
(...)	in den Brauch
	darin der Hauch
Hütte: durch dich gestiftete Stille und Welt.	der Stille weht,
Wann werden Wörter	und alles der Bestimmung
Worte?	in Fügsamkeit entgegengeht.“

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⁴⁰ Ebd., S. 49.

⁴¹ Vgl. Stephan Krass, „Mit einer Hoffnung auf ein kommendes Wort‘. Die Begegnungen von Paul Celan und Martin Heidegger“, in: *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 02./03.08.1997, S. 57.

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Nikos Nissiotis – an Orthodox Approach of the Mission

Abstract: Important personality of the Orthodox and Ecumenical Theology, Nikos Nissiotis has offered many contributions in topics like the Orthodox Ecclesiology, Eschatology, Christology, Theology of Second Vatican Council, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, and s. o. He was also active part of the Ecumenical Movement and, as professor at Bossey Ecumenical Institute and member of different commissions of WCC, has also issued a lot of documents very useful until today in the ecumenical dialogue. As Orthodox observer at Second Vatican Council, he published also some important articles, often quoted, on this topic. Also of his important contributions is in the understanding of mission through an ecumenical context, but from an Orthodox point of view. Despite of its importance, this contribution of the aforementioned author was not enough highlighted until now. Therefore, analysing his most important publications dedicated to this topic, we will try there to emphasize his contribution on it.

Keywords: Pneumatology, Ecclesiological approach, internal and external mission, historical dimension of the mission.

1. Introduction

Important personality both for the Orthodox and for the ecumenical space, Nikos Nissiotis was a theologian and a scholar that left behind him not only an important work, but also a school, disciples, and a special way of thinking. Listened, acclaimed and loved, he benefited, especially after he left this world, by beautiful evocations¹. His ideas were often quoted, analysed or debated and his memory was honoured.

If in the minds of his readers he left as a great writer and theologian, for his students, his most important quality was the one of being professor. In the history of Bossey Ecumenical Institute, Hans-Ruedi Weber underlines this important quality of him:

“The main contribution of Nissiotis was his stimulating way of teaching. He liked honest debates, could listen opinions different from his own, and then, with great competence, enter into dialogue without putting down less knowledgeable partners.”²

1 Some of them were anthologized in the book: Mihail P. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue. In memoriam*, (Athens: Thessaloniki Theological Academy Publishing House, 1994). See also: Thomas Stransky, “Nikos Nissiotis: Three Sketches,” *The Ecumenical Review* 48, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 466-475.

2 Hans-Ruedi Weber, *The Story of Bossey, a Laboratory for Ecumenical life*, updated by Robert K. Welsh, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2016), 73.

Throw his entire activity, Nikos Nissiotis remains in the history of theology, especially thanks to his important approaches in almost all the topics of the domain. If anyone reads, even superficially, the list of those 185 books³, studies and articles that he published during his life, he will see there interesting approaches on Trinitarian Christian base of the faith⁴, ecclesiology⁵, pneumatology⁶, ecumenical theology⁷, Vatican II⁸ and s. o. Between his important contributions, there can be also mentioned the ones dedicated to the mission. Using his ecumenical background, but also his knowledge as Orthodox theologian, he realised some interesting approaches where he not only defines the role of the mission and emphasizing its history in the Eastern space, but also presents its specificity, its Trinitarian, ecclesiological and pneumatological valences, and its common points with the views of missions of other Christian confessions.

By analysing his most important the articles dedicated to this topic, we will try there to emphasize his conception about mission, and especially about its forms and particularities in the Orthodox space. We will try there to present the main aspects of his discourse about mission and, if possible, to show how he influenced authors like Yannoulatos⁹, Ioan

³ For a complete list of his publications, see: Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 13-31.

⁴ Nikos A. Nissiotis, "The importance of the doctrine of the Trinity for the Church life and Theology", in *The Orthodox Ethos*, (Oxford: Oxford Holywell Press, 1963), 32-69.

⁵ Cf. N. A. Nissiotis, "Ecclesiological foundation os mission from the Orthodox Point of view", *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 7, no. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1961-1962): 22-52; N. A. Nissiotis, "The ecclesiological significance of interchurch Diakonia", *The Ecumenical Review*, 13, no. 2 (Summer 1961): 1-12; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Le fondement ecclésiastique du plérome de l'Église", *Verbum Caro*, 18, no. 71 (Spring 1964): 15-32.

⁶ Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Pneumatologie Orthodoxe", in *Le Saint-Esprit*, Labor et Fides, Genève, 1936, p. 85-106.

⁷ There, he used his experience as professor of Bossey Institute, but also the one of the member of Ecumenical Movement. Here he contributed at important documents like *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry from Lima* (1982), with important observations and proposals. Therefore, presenting his contribution to this aspects, Arie R. Brower is underlining the fact that: "All the churches are most grateful for the work of Dr. Nissiotis and his colleagues in formulating the questions included in the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* document of the World Council so clearly and directly, requiring all of our churches to clarify their theological response to decades of ecumenical commitment. These questions have challenged us, in our churches, in a way not before experienced in the modern ecumenical movement". Arie R. Brouwer, "A memorial essay in honour of Prof. Dr. Nikos Nissiotis", in Mihail P. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue. In memoriam*, (Athens: Thesaloniki Theological Academy Publishing House, 1994), 116.

⁸ See: Nikos Nissiotis, "Towards a new Ecumenical Era," *The Ecumenical Review*, 37, no. 3 (Autumn 1985): 326-335; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Is the Vatican Council really Ecumenical?," *The Ecumenical Review* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1964): 357-377; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Die Ekklesiologie des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils in Orthodoxer Sicht," *Kerygma und Dogma*, III (1964): 153-168; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Ecclesiology and Ecumenism of the second session of the Vatican Council II," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1964): 15-36; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "The main ecclesiological problem of the second Vatican Council and the position of the non-roman churches facing it," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1965): 31-62; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Mouvement œcuménique et Vatican II, un point de vue Orthodoxe," in *Rencontre œcuménique à Genève*, (Geneva: Labor et fides, 1965): 1-22; Nikos A. Nissiotis, "Report on the Second Vatican Council (with special reference to the decrees on "Divine Revelation, "Church in Modern World", and to the Ecumenicity of the Council as a Whole," *The Ecumenical Review*, 18, no. 2 (Summer 1966): 190-206.

⁹ He has also evocated him and pointed some of his influences in the volume dedicated to Nissiotis. See:

Bria¹⁰, or Stăniloae¹¹ and their ways of thinking throw his works.

2. Nikos Nissiotis, life and work – main aspects

We consider important, especially for the ones who are not familiarized with Nissiotis biography and bibliography, to present some important aspects of this topic, and to emphasize his main concerns of research. Son of the distinguished priest Angelos Nissiotis from Athena, he has born in the 21th of May of 1924, and he died on 18th August of 1986¹². He graduated with *summa cum laude* in 1947, the Theological Faculty of the University of Athens, and then, achieved post-graduate studies in philology, psychology and theology in Zurich (1948-49), Basel (1951-52), and Louvain (1952-3). In the last of the locations, he has also received the postgraduate diploma in philosophy in 1953¹³. He received his PhD title three years later, by presenting the thesis entitled *Existentialism and Christian Faith*, supported by Professor Nikolaos Louvaris, at the Athens University. Received with reservations at that time, it was, although, appreciated with *summa cum laudae*¹⁴.

Between 1958 and 1974, he was teacher at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute and, from 1966, director of the school¹⁵. Also, between 1959 and 1974, he was extraordinary professor of “Philosophy of Religion with Elements of Psychology of Religion” at Athens University (appointed as ordinary professor from 1969).¹⁶ Of course, there should be mentioned that, during his activity on Geneva, he was also associated secretary of the World Coun-

Anastasios Yanoullatos, “‘Your will be done’ – mission in Christ’s way”, in Mihail P. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue. In memoriam*, (Athens: Thesaloniki Theological Academy Publishing House, 1994), 93-98.

10 With his idea about „Liturgy after Liturgy”, also developed by Yannoulatos. For more information about his conception, see: Ion Bria, *The Liturgy after the Liturgy: Mission and Witness from an Orthodox Perspective*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996).

11 Interesting common aspects of the thinking of the two theologians can also be found in the volume: Dumitru Stăniloae, *Sfânta Treime sau la început a fost iubirea [Holy Trinity or, in the beginning it was the love]*, (Bucharest: Press of Biblical and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2005).

12 Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 5. Cf. Nikos A. Nissiotis, “L’Eglise, Monde Transfigure,” in *L’Eglise dans le monde*, (Paris: Maison Mame, 1966), 9.

13 Characterizing his activity as a student, his biographer said: “N. Nissiotis is the only Greek theologian who, as a student, got acquainted simultaneously with all the pioneering trends in postwar Europe while studying under the last surviving pioneers. He studied the “dialectic theology” of Protestantism with its two pioneers Karl Barth in Basel and Emil Brunner in Zurich; he got acquainted with the Neothomism of Roman Catholicism and its internationally reknown centre of Louvain, but studied also psychoanalysis under Carl G. Jung in Zurich, and assimilated the philosophy of existentialism under Karl Jaspers in Basel”. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 5. Cf. Weber, *The Story of Bossey, a Laboratory for Ecumenical life*, 73.

14 Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 5.

15 Weber, *The Story of Bossey, a Laboratory for Ecumenical life*, 72-73. Thomas Stransky presents details about this moment: “In the summer of 1965 Nikos was appointed director of Bossey, to begin his responsibilities with the 1966-67 session of the graduate school.” Stransky, “Nikos Nissiotis: Three Sketches”, 467.

16 Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 5. Between 1976 and 1977, he was the dean of the faculty and then, from 1982 until 1986, he was the first president of Pastoral Theology Department at the same University.

cil of Churches, observer at 2nd Vatican council¹⁷. During his prodigious activity as a Theology Professor, he was also visiting professor in many Universities from USA, Great Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, and he has lectures in American and Asian continents.

Two years before his death, in 1984, he was elected President of the "International Academy of Religious Sciences" from Brussels¹⁸. He was also very implied in sustaining the Olympic movement from his birth country¹⁹, and his activity was rewarded with important distinctions in Greece and abroad.²⁰ His theological work, mostly formed from studies and articles is spreaded in reviews like: *The Ecumenical Review*, *Theology Today*, *Contacts*, *Irenikon*, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, *Verbum Caro Oikumenische Rundschau*, *Criterion* and s. o., and in different books published in whole world, and it was written mostly in Greek, English, French and German.

As we have already mentioned, he has investigated in his researchers a big amount of topics, starting from Trinitarian Orthodox Theology, Christology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, and until at Ecumenical Theology, Second Vatican Council or Mission. In the following pages, we will try to highlight his opinion about the last topic and to emphasize his contribution to the orthodox understanding of it.

3. Mission in Nikos Nissiotis's vision

Talking about mission in Nissiotis vision is surely a difficult task. Even if the topic is not one of the principals of his theology, there can be founded many and interesting things about it into his works. Therefore, one can found aspects of his perception about mission both in his articles dedicated to Ecumenical Topics, BEM document²¹ and its Orthodox reception²², Second Vatican Council and s. o. We will not neglect his ideas from these articles. We will emphasize them and, when needed, we will compare with other of his ideas. Also, conscious that, as some scholars are underlining, his conception about ecclesiology cannot be understood apart from his missionary and evangelistic content²³, we will point

¹⁷ Weber, *The Story of Bossey, a Laboratory for Ecumenical life*, 73. In this quality, he wrote some articles about this event and the discussed topics (see above, footnote no. 8).

¹⁸ Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 5-7.

¹⁹ See: Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 5-7, for more information.

²⁰ "The important and diverse activity of Nissiotis was internationally recognized and honoured: he was made Doctor Honoris Causa at the Theological Faculty of Foreign Universities (Paris 1965, Aberdeen 1967, Bucharest 1977, Geneva 1984, and the Theological Faculty of St. Sergious, Paris)." Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 9. He has also received the *Golden Croix* and the Order of George III from the Greece King, in 1966. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue*, 11.

²¹ Where, he has an important contribution. Cf. J. K. S. Reid, "Oneness and diversity", in Mihail P. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue. In memoriam*, (Athens: Thesaloniki Theological Academy Publishing House, 1994), 148.

²² Nikos Nissiotis, "Introduction: The Credible Reception of the Lima Document as the Ecumenical Conversion of the Churches", in Max Thurian (eds.), *Churches respond to BEM – Official responses to the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" text*, volume III, col. "Faith and Order Papert", no. 135, (World Council of Churches: Geneva, 1987), XI-XVII.

²³ "Nikos Nissiotis emphasizes that Orthodox ecclesiology cannot be understood apart from its missionary

the link between the two topics and the contribution of the aforementioned author on its understanding.

But, despite of that, this research will focus specially of some of his texts dedicated to this topic, published by the Greek theologian in *The Ecumenical Review*, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, or in different volumes books.

Aware of that “the life of the Church flows in Mission and Evangelism”²⁴, Nissiotis will try to understand both the historical and ecclesiological²⁵ backgrounds of the first notion, and to present its ecumenical utilities. For doing this, and for being able to present the Orthodox perspective on the aforementioned topic, he is presenting in a clear and unchallenged way his Church’s conception about pneumatology, grace and charisma, linked together, which is different from other theologies (for example the one of the Pentecostals), and to emphasize the role of the consecrated people in the act of mission.²⁶

Noticing that: “it is, however, very difficult to study the missionary activity of the Orthodox churches because there are no organized missionary societies”²⁷, he tries to speak rather about the doctrinarian meaning of the mission, then about the historical background of it. Therefore, maybe one of his most important contributions on the meaning of mission according to the Eastern Orthodox theology is the one that can be founded in the 1st number of *The Ecumenical Review* from 1961.

Starting from the historical background of the topic and facing the main objection which is often brought to him by the other denominations of Orthodoxy, that he was not a missionary Church²⁸, he shows that:

“First of all, one should ask oneself how all these Orthodox peoples of the East have preserved the Christian faith under long and continuous persecution, and still do preserve it, and furthermore how they not only merely faced persecutions, but come out from them stronger than be-

and evangelistic content. It is, however, quite difficult to study the missionary activity of the Orthodox because there are no organized missionary societies. The evangelistic power of Orthodox ecclesiology is proved in those areas where inner missionary activity is possible. It is independent of church structures and institutions but within the spiritual pastoral ministry of those who received the authority to preach the Gospel and to celebrate the Eucharist.” Emilio Castro, “Vital contributions of Nikos Nissiotis to the Ecumenical Movement”, in Mihail P. Grigoris (ed.), *Nikos A. Nissiotis, Religion, Philosophy and Sport in Dialogue. In memoriam*, (Athens: Thessaloniki Publishing House, 1994), 121.

24 N. A. Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,” *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 7, no. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1961-1962): 29-31.

25 This one is not only linked with its doctrinal meaning, but also with the idea of worship, that accompanies the mission. Or, according to him: “Worship is living dogmatics,” and “The Orthodox are bound to relate all dogmatics to the eucharistic communion and to the consciousness of the Church expressed in the gathered worshipping community.” Nikos A. Nissiotis, “Worship, Eucharist and ‘Intercommunion’”. An Orthodox Reflection,” in *Worship and the Acts of God*, (Nieuwdam: Studia Liturgica Press, 1963), 197. Cf. Bria, *The Liturgy after the Liturgy*.

26 N. A. Nissiotis, “Le Sacerdoce Charismatique, le Laicat et l’Autorité Pastorale,” *Verbum Caro* 14, no. 55 (Spring 1960): 222.

27 N. A. Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,” *The Ecumenical Review* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1961): 22.

28 “The objection is usually made that the Orthodox Churches are not missionary-minded and active. Such an objection has to be accepted with deep humility by the Orthodox today.” N. A. Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,” *The Ecumenical Review* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1961): 21.

fore, shaped the new nations and brought into a lively existence peoples who otherwise have had no chance to survival under anti-Christian pressures.”²⁹

Then, he is showing that “the evangelistic power of Orthodox ecclesiology is proved today in those areas where an organized evangelistic and inner missionary activity is possible”³⁰, and is highlighting in a slightly ironic form, that:

“The mission to foreign “non-Christian” countries has been carried on by the Orthodox Church members throughout the Church’s history on an evangelistic basis. It was and is the temporary concern of some local churches, and was interrupted when these churches fell under the dominion of the Arabs, the Turks and various other atheistic governments.”³¹

Pointing to his aversion to the idea of peeing, he understands in the sense of some organized entrepreneurship (which he will also express on other occasions)³², he mentions also the fact that, “it is, however, very difficult to study the missionary activity of the Orthodox churches because there are no organized missionary societies.”³³ Also, in the same text, he is speaking about the purpose of the mission. While other theorists of mission from other confessional spaces and times are hesitant in proclaiming it³⁴, Nissiotis, shows that:

“Mission is to be characterized only as Church mission by its evangelistic content and its final goal. Mission brings nothing more than the *evangelion* of salvation, which is achieved only if the non-Christian repents, is baptized and becomes a member of the pre-established historical Church. The goal of the mission – its heart, its power, its only reality – to incorporate new members into the Body of Christ, the One *Ecclesia Christou*.”³⁵

Another interesting text about mission can be founded in the next number of the same review. There, he is linking the notion by a phrase that will then be used with recurrence in the discourse and documents of the Ecumenical Movement, that of diakonia. After explaining the notion through a comparison with the inter-trinitarian relationships,³⁶ he points that the missionary discourse should be moved from koinonia to the aforementioned term, because “the Churches are not primarily philanthropic institutions,”³⁷ he shows that:

²⁹ Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,”: 21-22.

³⁰ Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,”: 22.

³¹ Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,”: 22.

³² N. A. Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,” *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 7, no. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1961-1962): 33.

³³ Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,”: 22.

³⁴ Cf. Norman E. Thomas (ed.), *Classic texts in mission and world Christianity*, (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1995), 5.

³⁵ Nissiotis, “Interpreting Orthodoxy,”: 23.

³⁶ “Diakonia is the self-sacrifice of the Son of God to His Father. This act creates a new relationship between men not as individuals, but as persons within the communion of his diakonia, through the sharing of His body and blood.” N. A. Nissiotis, “The ecclesiological significance of interchurch Diakonia,” *The Ecumenical Review*, 13, no. 2: (Summer 1961): 4.

³⁷ Nissiotis, “The ecclesiological significance of interchurch Diakonia,” Nissiotis, “The ecclesiological significance of interchurch Diakonia,”: 1. In other article he develops this idea, showing that: “The church is not a simply a gathering of people with higher moral standards of life; or with a specific social program; or with a limited scope of animating culture and civilization: all of these humanitarian activities are physical outcome of her own life, but on her own essence. The church has an unshaken being, independent of human activity, but

“When we speak of *diakonia* we usually mean the action of the Churches in the service of the world as one of the most important factors in their missionary activities. The Churches are sent to the world not only to preach and to save men but also to establish communities through which they serve the world in its material and spiritual needs. In this sense, the act of *diakonia* is equivalent to the fulfilment of the duty of the Churches to offer help to the suffering people outside their membership or to provide answers to the problems of man in economic, political, personal or family life. Through this kind of *diakonia*, the Churches enter into the world and render their witness to their Lord evident, vivid and realistically present in practice. Without this action a Church would seem to be deprived of the fundamental expression of her inner life.”³⁸

Nissiotis also offers interesting contributions on the topic of mission in one text published in *Contacts* review from Paris³⁹. Underlining the sacramental importance of the mission, partially accomplished through the Baptism, he is also criticising there the Occidental conception that is linking European culture and the imposition of its values, with the missionary act. To portray the Orthodox perspective on this aspect, he states that:

“Greek, Roman or European civilisations are not superiors to the ones from other continents. The Gospel is not distinguishing between the exterior signs of the collective life. It makes everything to plunge in the Baptism water, as it nourishes people, in their present situation, from the blood and body of Christ.”⁴⁰

Neither sensitive issues, such as the ecumenical aspects of the mission, are missing from Nissiotis work. In an interesting essay, which contains a harsh approach for the times when it was written (where it links the idea of mission from ecumenical space to life in Christ),⁴¹ in which the Greek theologian pleads for the reorientation of the ecumenical dialogue from the intellectuals to the masses of believers⁴², and underlines the infinite di-

dependent on the faith in Christ's redemption and the insistence on receiving it through the act of the Holy Spirit and communicating it to the world. This is the regenerating power of all aspects of worldly existence. It is this power that leads civilization to its development. Without this, and particular without the “sacramental” grace, all activities in the social, political and economic life of the world are doomed to deprive the church of her inner divine power which leads and transforms the world spiritually from within.” Nikos A. Nissiotis, “Spirit, Church and Ministry,” *Theology today*, 19, no. 4 (Winter 1963): 498.

³⁸ Nissiotis, “The ecclesiological significance of interchurch *Diakonia*,”: 1.

³⁹ N. A. Nissiotis, “Les Eglises d'Europe et le Monde - Fondement de la mission universelle,” *Contacts*, 13, no. 33 (Spring 1961): 121-131.

⁴⁰ Nissiotis, “Les Eglises d'Europe et le Monde - Fondement de la mission universelle,” 127. The same idea is, in other article presented in these words: “Therefore, one does not civilise first in order to preach the Gospel afterwards. But one plunges everybody in the baptismal water and in the eucharistic blood in order to raise them all together with Christ into the new life of the Spirit. This is the Alpha and Omega of the Christian mission. All the other conceptions which accompany as fruits of this (*diakonia*, service, education) must follow from within the primary act of the mission.” Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,”: 52.

⁴¹ “The life in Christ is salvation, communion with God, oneness, mission and evangelism. These stages are on the same movement depending on the charismatic energy of the Spirit.” Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,”: 30.

⁴² The meeting of the churches in the name of the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit should no longer remain a dialogue between intellectuals, degenerating into a polite exchange of theological views, merely leading to a polite church policy marked by friendly visitation of church leaders among themselves.” Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,”: 22-23.

mension of mission (that “it should never become an end in itself”),⁴³ who never admits self-sufficiency, he shows that:

“The mission tends to communicate in the hearts of the unbeliever, of the nominal Christian and of the pagan, the one and the same uniting power: the Lordship of Christ which is only mystically apprehended by the converted people once they have consciously joined the Church communion. Mission is not creating societies of welfare bodies ready to help the poor, the uneducated, the uncivilised people. It is profoundly preoccupied by the one thing: the incorporation of people outside the Church into its body by means of the grace, which flows in it through the charisma of the Holy Spirit and the sacraments.”⁴⁴

The tools through which this goal can be achieved are, in his opinion the preaching, the sacraments and the liturgy.⁴⁵ As an open-minded theologian, he sees as context where these instruments can be used the Church, but he can see it more than a simple institution. Therefore, his conception about it can be summarized in these words:

“The church is not merely an institution. She is primarily, before conception and definition as such, the reality of God’s presence, in the form of one family in heaven and on earth, which thus is not a form in itself.”⁴⁶

In a world where, the Christian Ecumenical space was speaking about keywords like “partnership,” respecting local cultures and repentance in the missiological dialogue, Nissiotis’s vision about mission could look superficial and unimportant. But, to a deeper look, the reader can see the multiple valences of his historical approach and his correct emphasis about the inter-church mission. The relevance of his conception about mission can be also seen in the latter outcomes of missionary conferences from Bangkok to Athens, where the pneumatological topics, related with the ones of forgiveness and respect for culture will be on the first place in the debates.

Conclusion

These are, in short, the main ideas that summarize Nikos Nissiotis’s vision of the mission. If a Protestant theologian would have focused more on pragmatic issues, planning missionary strategies and talking about concrete ways of implementing the evangelical message, and a Catholic one would have talked mainly about the theoretical aspects of the missionary area, he, as an Orthodox one, is dealing with all of these aspects in different forms. Speaks about the historical background of the mission, underlines the main theological aspects, but is

⁴³ Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,”: 31.

⁴⁴ Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,”: 32.

⁴⁵ “Preaching, sacraments and liturgy are equally necessary and important to realise this transmission of the grace as a new life of the Holy Spirit to those inside and outside the Church. The liturgy in the mission field is the continuous presence of the glorified Christ. It is celebrated on behalf of the whole world by the whole Church for the conversion of the whole world.” Nissiotis, “Ecclesiological foundation of mission from the Orthodox Point of view,”: 32. Cf. N. A. Nissiotis, “Knowledge as charisma in the university today”, *Student World*, 55, no. 1 (Spring 1962): 77-87, and Nikos A. Nissiotis, “Pneumatologie Orthodoxe”, in *Le Saint-Esprit*, (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1936), 101, for an interesting approach about the way how this instruments can be used in the ecclesiastical space.

⁴⁶ Nissiotis, “Spirit, Church and Ministry,”: p. 497.

also interested to point practical aspects of this topic. By introducing the phrase “diakonia” as a key term of Orthodox meaning, he brings a precious contribution to the theology of mission. Through presentation of some important aspects of the historical background of it in the Orthodox space, it is not only justifying a certain confessional position, but also emphasizing a new aspect of the history of mission, but also showing how his confession have contributed to the development of it, and by presenting the mission in the wider context of ecclesiology and pneumatology and highlighting its sacramental-soteriological valences, offers an ample, even holistic picture of Orthodox perception, which involves collaboration between different segments and areas on this subject.

His opinion, influenced by his philosophical studies, his ecumenical involvement, his activity as observer at the Second Vatican Council, but most of all, by his Orthodox faith and conceptions, must surely be re-discovered, emphasized, analysed and, in certain aspects updated, not only in the Orthodox space, where he brings a new dialectics and another form of dialogue, but also in the ecumenical one, where he creates bridges between spiritualities and enriches the ecumenical perception about this fundamental topic.

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Heilsverlangen – Anbetung des Heiligen

Versuch einer Antwort auf drei Statements aus dem Jahre 2016. – Die Redaktion einer christlichen Wochenzeitschrift aus Freiburg i. Br. weist regelmäßig per mail auf ihre Nummern hin. Am 18. August war zu lesen:

Zwei Texte der aktuellen Ausgabe beschäftigen sich mit der Frage, welche Bedeutung Gott für den Menschen haben kann. In den Zeitgängen sind wir Martin Luther auf der Spur, der deutlich macht, dass Gott an sich nicht wirklich interessant ist.

Im traditionell katholischen Grünewald-Verlag erschien das Buch eines katholischen Professors der Theologie (= Gotteslehre).¹ Darin steht (22), „dass Gottesglaube weder notwendige noch hinreichende Bedingung für das ist, worum es christlicher Theologie im Kern geht“ (Vorblick auf [174–182] Kap. 5: „Irrelevanz des Gottesglaubens“).

Für Gott und den *ordo ad Deum*, doch in „Distanz“ zum Gottes-Gehorsam legt Mathias Wirth (preisgekrönt von der Gesellschaft für Evangelische Theologie) die „Rekonstruktion einer evangelischen Beziehungsform“ vor: gegen ein „asymmetrisches Gottesverhältnis“.²

A. Leben: Leiden? – Schöpfungsdank

1. Nichts Schöneres unter der Sonne als unter der Sonne zu sein...³ Noch Leiden und Ängste bestätigen das von der Kehrseite her. Die Menschen leben gern und wollen nicht sterben. Darum sind Mord und Totschlag Verbrechen, erfüllt Betroffene ein Suizid mit Schrecken und weckt anderseits das Lebensopfer bleibende Verehrung.

So das normale Empfinden. Indes drängt sich schon ihm zugleich die Überlegung auf, dass für das Leben doch ein hoher Preis gezahlt werden müsse. Von den Nöten der Kindheit über die schwierige Pubertät, die Lasten und Sorgen des Erwachsenen bis zu den Beschwerden des Alters. Und wie erst in Zeiten von Not und Krieg und Zukunftsängsten! Sterben möchten die Menschen zwar nicht, doch im Ernst alles nochmals durchleben? – Dennoch bleibt der „Normalmensch“ bei der biblischen Devise (Koh 9, 4): „Besser ein lebender Hund als ein toter Löwe.“

¹ Andreas Benk, *Schöpfung – eine Vision von Gerechtigkeit*, Ostfildern 2016.

² Mathias Wirth, *Distanz des Gehorsams*, Tübingen 2016. Siehe meine Rezension in: *Theologie u. Philosophie (ThPh)* 92 (2017), 600–603.

³ Ingeborg Bachmann, *An die Sonne*, Werke, München-Zürich 1978, I, 136.

Nicht aber so Philosophen und Theologen. In West wie Ost ist offenbar die Weltweisheit übereinstimmend zu der Überzeugung gekommen, Leben sei Leiden. Nicht bloß Einzelkummernisse, die Lebensstufen von der Geburt bis zum Tod sind leidhaft; das Dasein als solches mit den fünf „Stücken des Anhangens“, die den Menschen prägen (Körper, Empfindung, Wahrnehmung, Geistesregungen, Bewusstsein). So die „edle Wahrheit“ BUDDHAS.⁴ Gleichen Sinnes die Griechen: „Das Beste ist, nicht geboren zu sein; und bist du geboren, das Zweitbeste, rasch wieder dorthin zu gehen, woher du kamst.“⁵

I. Not der Endlichkeit

1. In der Tat sind die Dinge weder besser, als sie halt sind, noch etwa dauernder und verlässlicher. Sie sind – mit einem Wort – begrenzt. Thematisiert man nun diese Begrenztheit, dann verlieren sich Wirklichkeit und Gutheit des Bestehenden in der grenzenlosen Weite dessen, was es alles nicht ist und nicht zu geben vermag. Dies übermächtige Nichtsein verdeckt die Tatsächlichkeit von Dasein und Gutheit auch dort, wo man sie nicht so negativ sieht, sondern etwa als *sat-cit-ânanda* = Wirklichkeit-Wissen-Seligkeit. Sei hier das Sein als solches gut; so doch nicht *endliches* Sein im Kreislauf der Geburten.

Um uns mit den Mängeln der Welt zu versöhnen, hat Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz zeigen wollen, die Schöpfung sei so gut wie nur möglich. Sonst hätte Gott sie besser geschaffen. Denn wenn schon wir – mitunter zumindest – unser Bestes zu geben versuchen, sollten wir das erst recht vom Schöpfer erwarten. Das klingt einleuchtend, unwiderleglich. Doch erlaube ich mir, dem großen Denker zu widersprechen.

Dazu bedarf es keiner subtilen Erwägungen über Begriff und Realität von Gottes Freiheit und Allmacht; genügt doch der Hinweis: Eine „an sich“ *bestmögliche Welt* kann es so wenig geben wie die absolut größte Zahl.⁶ Auf jede Zahl n folgt $n + 1$. Zu jeder noch so herrlichen Welt lässt sich eine Welt mit noch tieferen Denkern, frömmeren Heiligen, glühenderen Engeln denken (und nicht bloß denken). Hätte sich der Schöpfer auf das Beste oder auch nur das jeweils Bessere zu verpflichten, gäbe es nicht bloß unsere Welt nicht; es gäbe überhaupt keine Welt. Denn eine jede ließe sich steigern.

Man sieht, in welcher Strenge die alte Redensart gilt, es sei „das Bessere der *Feind* des Guten“. Andererseits gibt eben dies unserer Endlichkeit einen zusätzlichen Stachel: dass nämlich die faktischen Grenzen keineswegs so verlaufen müssen, wie sie es tun. Also waltet hier Willkür? – Aristoteles hat in seiner *Politik* die Frage, „ob es besser sei, vom besten Mann oder von den besten Gesetzen beherrscht zu werden“, trotz bedenkenwerten Ge-

⁴ Der Pfeiler der Einsicht (22. Rede), in: Die Reden Gotamo Buddhos (Karl Eugen Neumann), II (Aus der längeren Sammlung), Zürich-Wien 1957, 383-397, bes. 390 ff.; vgl. Hans Wolfgang Schumann, Buddhismus, Olten 1976, 59-69.

⁵ Sophokles, Ödipus auf Kolonos 1225 ff.; vgl. Plutarch, Trostsreiben an Apollonius 115 (mit Berufung auf Aristoteles).

⁶ Siehe Jörg Splett, Gotteserfahrung im Denken (1973), München 2005, 192-196 (innerhalb von Kap. 9, dessen Thema jene Problematik bildet, die hier ausgespart werden muss: die Frage Ijobs). Für eine Antwort ohne diese These: Robert Merrihew Adams, Must God Create the Best? in: *The Philosophical Review* 81 (1972), 317-332.

gengründen zugunsten des Gesetzes entschieden, da „der Gerechtigkeitssinn es ist, der einen nach einer unparteiischen Instanz suchen lässt“.⁷

Jedenfalls steht einem stets begrenzten Sein und Haben ein buchstäblich unbegrenztes Nicht-sein und Nicht-Haben gegenüber. Und die Bilanz aus diesem Plus und Minus ziehen Buddha wie die Tragiker der Griechen.

2. Deren Antwort ist der Verzicht. Eine andere prägt die Dynamik des aus Jerusalem, Athen und Rom gewordenen Europa. Hier gebietet die Wunde Endlichkeit den Trieb zur Grenzüberschreitung. Radikalisiert aber das nicht unser Unglück?

Und zwar auf doppelte Weise. Einmal auf jene, die Friedrich Nietzsche diagnostiziert: „Das Christentum gab dem Eros Gift zu trinken – er starb zwar nicht daran, aber entartete.“⁸ Das Gift besteht gerade in der „Verunendlichung“ (mit folgender „Verjenseitigung“) des Eros. Ihr widerspricht entschiedener Rück-Ruf, von der Antike an – „Denkt Sterbliches, Sterbliche!“ – bis zu Nietzsches „Bleibt der Erde treu!“⁹ Ludwig Feuerbach argumentiert, übernatürliche Erwartungen seien abnorm und führten in eine abnorme Gemeinschaft.¹⁰

Versagt man sich aber der Flucht ins Jenseits, dann sucht man – die zweite Weise – die Grenzenlosigkeit hier. Johann Wolfgang v. Goethe: „Willst du ins Unendliche schreiten, / Geh nur im Endlichen nach allen Seiten.“¹¹ – Derart zur Fülle aufbrechend, gerät der Abenteurer freilich in Verlegenheit. „Nach allen Seiten“ kann man nicht gleichzeitig gehen, und auch im Nacheinander dürfte es nicht gelingen. Goethes Zeitgenosse Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel nennt dergleichen „schlechte Unendlichkeit“.¹²

Nun will mit Sicherheit hier Goethe selbst nicht simpel nach dem Wort verstanden werden: „In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister.“ Und direkt auf den ersten Spruch lässt er den Ratschlag folgen: „Willst du dich am Ganzen erquicken, / So musst du das Ganze im Kleinsten erblicken.“¹³

Das wäre also jene Erfüllung, das sein Faust nach wildem Umgetriebensein gefunden hätte (wenn auch nur vermeintlich): Einheimatung, Selbst-Inkulturation, Kultivie-

⁷ III, 15 (1286 a 8 f.), 16 (1287 b 4 f.).

⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, § 168 (Kritische Studienausgabe [KSA] V, 102).

⁹ „Liebe Seele, wünsch dir kein ewiges Sein, / Doch die Arbeit, die erfüllbar, schöpfe aus!“ Pindar, *Pythische Ode* 3, 61 f.; „Sterbliches denken muss die sterbliche Natur“, Sophokles, *Fragment* 590 P; Menander: „Du bist ein Mensch, so denk allein, was menschlich ist!“ (Monostichon/Sententia 1). Nietzsche: *Zarathustras Vorrede* 3 (KSA 4, 15).

¹⁰ „Nur der unnatürliche, der unglückliche Todesfall, der Tod des Kindes, des Jünglings [...] empört uns. Aber so schrecklich, so schmerzlich solche Unglücksfälle für die Überlebenden sind, so berechtigen sie uns doch zur Annahme eines Jenseits schon aus dem Grunde nicht, weil diese abnormen Fälle – abnorm sind sie, sollten sie gleich häufiger sein als der naturgemäße Tod – nur auch ein abnormes Jenseits zur Folge haben, nur ein Jenseits für die gewaltsam oder zu früh Gestorbenen.“ *Vorlesungen über das Wesen der Religion* 30: *Sämtl. Werke* (Wilhelm Bolin / Friedrich Jodl) VIII, 350.

¹¹ Gott, Gemüt und Welt, in den *Gedichten* der Ausgabe letzter Hand (Artemis-Ausg. I, 410).

¹² Z. B. *Logik I, Quantität* (*Sämtl. Werke* [Hermann Glockner] 4, 302 f.). Mit demselben Ausdruck bezeichnet er freilich auch das Jenseits, das der hiesigen Endlichkeit gegenübergestellt wird, z. B. ebd., *Qualität* (179).

¹³ a) *Was wir bringen* (Artemis-Ausg. III 623); b) *Anm.* 11.

rung des Landes. Doch nicht von ungefähr besteht das Ziel nur in der Illusion des Blinden; es sollte obendrein, in entlarvendem Selbstwiderspruch, durch Enteignung, mit Gewalt-samkeit erreicht werden. Und das weder aus Übermut noch aus Versehen; wie anders als gewaltsam sollte der von sich her grenzenlose Ausgriff eingeschränkt werden können, um sich im gewünschten Maße zu runden?

Was Goethe als Reise durch (oder auch um?) die Welt vorführt, erscheint tiefenpsychologisch als innere Reifungsreise der Seele: durch Tag und Nacht und Licht und Schatten, einzig sich getreu (wenngleich nicht ohne Abschiedsschmerz und Bedauern) zur Selbst-Integration. Es gilt darum gleichermaßen für die Bildungsromane unserer Klassik, von Hegel gar ins Maß des Absoluten erhoben: zum Weg des Weltgeistes durch die Geschichte – „*tantae molis erat...*“¹⁴ Stets geht es um Selbst-Entwicklung, auf dem Weg zu Heil, Vollkommenheit und Ganzheit: „Siddartha“.

II. Not der Verfehlung

1. Von Faust war schon die Rede. Wählen wir paradigmatisch das Ich-Du-Verhältnis.

Das ist das Ungeheure in der Liebe, meine Teure, dass der Wille unendlich ist und die Ausführung beschränkt; dass die Sehnsucht grenzenlos ist und die Tat ein Sklave der Grenze.¹⁵

Zwischen der Ruhepause der Lust und dem Ausblick bleibender Ruhe der Glückseligkeit ist der Mensch in seiner geist-leiblichen Lebensmitte „exzentrisch“ (Helmuth Plessner), „ist das Herz von Haus aus das, was in mir unruhig ist. Wann werde ich genug haben? Wann wird meine Autorität genügend begründet sein? Wann werde ich genug geschätzt, anerkannt sein? Wo ist in alldem die >Genüge<?“¹⁶

Tatsächlich wird eben diese Bewegtheit, der Überstieg selber gewollt. Die Menschlichkeit des Begehrens besteht gerade darin, Begehren nach Begehren zu sein. In einem doppelten Sinn: einmal verlangt zwischenmenschliches Verlangen nicht einfach nach dem andern, sondern nach dessen Verlangen, begehrt wird also das Begehrtwerden; sodann aber das eigene Begehren. Der Liebende liebt nicht nur den Geliebten und dessen Liebe, sondern will und liebt auch sein eigenes Lieben – und dessen unendlichen Ausgriff. Demnach heißt die Frage der Unruhe nicht nur: wann werde ich genügend geliebt? sondern auch: wann liebe ich zur Genüge? Und zwar gänzlich vormoralisch, eher ästhetisch oder schlicht vital gemeint, darum auch ständig in der Gefahr, sich zu einer Frage bezüglich des anderen zu verwandeln: Entzündet er mich genug?

2. Die Sehnsucht wird zur Sucht (= Siechtum), Und dies auch im moralischen Sinn. Die Fehlwege kann man wohl auf drei Grundformen reduzieren: a) Verabsolutierung des kon-

¹⁴ „... se ipsam cognoscere mentem“, adaptiert Hegel im Rückblick auf seine Philosophiegeschichte (Anm. 12: 19, 685) Vergils Programmzeile über die mühselige Gründung Roms (Aeneis I, 33): Solche Mühe hatte der Geist, sich selbst zu erkennen. Siehe J. Sp, Selbstverwirklichung in sozialer Verantwortung?, in: Stimmen der Zeit 200 (1982) 409-420, sowie Heinrich Spaemanns Stellungnahme zu Eugen Drewermann, in: Tiefenpsychologische Deutung des Glaubens (Hg. Albert Görres / Walter Kasper), Freiburg i. Br. 1988, 159 ff.

¹⁵ William Shakespeare, Troilus und Cressida III, 2.

¹⁶ Paul Ricœur, Die Fehlbarkeit des Menschen, Freiburg/München 1971, 165.

kreten Endlichen (Max Scheler: „Wer keinen Gott hat, hat wenigstens einen Götzen“¹⁷); b) Verabsolutierung des Wechsels (Hegels „schlechte Unendlichkeit“), quantitative Methode des „Sammelns“; c) Totalisierung des Absoluten, Abwertung des Endlichen zum bloßen Spiegel oder gar Köder der Gottheit.¹⁸

a) Die erste Suchtform lässt sich als „Idolisierung“ benennen. Fragt man nach konkreten Abgrenzungen, dann machen sie hier nicht minder Schwierigkeiten als bzgl. Krankheit und Gesundheit überhaupt. Wo etwa verläuft die objektive Grenze zwischen Verliebtheit (Stendhal: „Kristallisation“) und Verfallensein? Wie steht es mit dem Erfüllt- und „Besessenheit“ von einer Idee?

b) Die zweite Form könnte man teilweise als eine Sondergestalt der ersten behandeln (Don Juan wäre jemand, der die Liebe idolisiert; Hermann Hesses Goldmund idolisiert „die“ Frau, „Mutter Eva“, die er in den vielen sucht und findet). Doch steht im Vordergrund die „fallhafte“ Beliebigkeit von Don Giovannis „mille e tre“. Zumal hier alsbald weniger Lust und Freude gesucht wird als die zeitweilige Stillung von Unlust und Schmerz. Statt selbstvergessene Erkenntnis sucht man das erkannte Ich im Fleisch zu vergessen.

c) So gesehen, geht die zweite Form schon in die dritte über. Als Formel von Sucht und Süchtigkeit bietet sich ja die Devise „Um jeden Preis!“ an. Das Böse = das Nein gegenüber Wahrheit und Liebe darf nämlich um keinen Preis sein. Wird irgendwas oder -wer im Endlichen „um jeden Preis“ gewollt, „geht“ man zuletzt in jedem Fall „über Leichen“, deutlichst in der ersten Form, wo es die Hindernisse trifft; aber nicht minder in der zweiten, wo umgekehrt die über alle Widernisse hin Gesuchten selbst die Opfer bilden. Götzendienst ist tödlich; jede Sucht zerstört.

Eigens genannt aber wird die dritte Suchtform, weil hier nicht mehr ein Endliches verabsolutiert wird – weder ein Einzelnes (a) noch ein in vielen Einzelnen gesuchtes Eines (b), sondern das Absolute selbst gemeint ist. Dies aber nicht *als* Absoluten (religiös gesprochen: Gott), sondern als „Götze“. D. h., es wird einerseits verendlicht, andererseits als solches absolut gesetzt. Und das meint der Begriff ‚Totalisierung‘.

3. Das Absolute nämlich ist in Wahrheit gerade „Licht und Leben“ alles anderen, statt mit ihm zu konkurrieren. (*Concursus divinus* bedeutet das Gegenteil von Konkurrenz. So ist nur Allmacht der mögliche [Ab-]Grund endlicher Freiheit.¹⁹) Verendlicht man es indes – jedes unserer Bilder von ihm ist endlich – und beansprucht nun für das Verendlichte Absolutheit, dann läuft das auf totalitäre Verdrängung alles anderen hinaus: Fanatismus.

Heute bevorzugt man die Bezeichnung ‚Fundamentalismus‘. Und deren inflationärer Gebrauch macht weitere Klärungen nötig. Keineswegs jeder nämlich, der etwas

¹⁷ Vgl. Schriften aus dem Nachlaß Bd. 1: Zur Ethik und Erkenntnislehre, Bern 1957, 179-253; Absolutsphäre und Realsetzung der Gottesidee, bes. 225 f.; Vom Ewigen im Menschen (Ges. Werke 5), Bern-München 1954, 261-264.

¹⁸ Ausführlicher: J. Sp., Wahrheit, Ideologie und Freiheit, in: Lebendiges Zeugnis 1969, H. 3, 24-39; J. Sp., Entscheidung, in: Sacramentum Mundi (SM) I 1057-1061 (auch in Herders Theologischem Taschenlexikon).

¹⁹ Siehe Søren Kierkegaard im Tagebuch VII A, 181: Literarische Anzeiger, Düsseldorf 1954, 124 f.

auf Tod und Leben ernst nimmt, ist schon fundamentalistisch. Eben das aber wird behauptet: Den Fanatismus-Vorwurf zieht sich zu, wer überhaupt für (nicht nur privat „seine“) Wahrheit eintritt.²⁰ Der Totalisierung will man also mit der Leugnung des Absoluten begegnen. Dem „Um-jeden-Preis“ glaubt man nur dadurch wehren zu können, dass man für jedes einen Preis postuliert. Und eben das nun abermals um jeden Preis – in fundamentalistischem Antifundamentalismus.

Ist der Mensch jedoch, wie erwogen, ein Wesen des Unendlichen, dann kann eine so umfassende Verendlichung nicht gelingen. Verabsolutierungen schleichen sich wieder ein. Und sei es *modo negativo*: in der Missachtung von allem und jedem, herzloser Indolenz gegenüber Guten wie Bösen, mit Interesse höchstens an Interessantem. Man könnte sich fragen, was schlimmer sei: a) die Flachheit des „letzten Menschen“, „unaustilgbar wie der Erdflöh“;²¹

Man ist klug und weiß alles, was geschehn ist: so hat man kein Ende zu spotten. Man zankt sich noch, aber man versöhnt sich bald – sonst verdirbt es den Magen. Man hat sein Lustchen für den Tag und sein Lustchen für die Nacht: aber man ehrt die Gesundheit. Wir haben das Glück erfunden – sagen die letzten Menschen und blinzeln.“

– oder b) jene Schrecklichkeiten, in die eine solche Selbstdomestikation immer wieder ausbricht.²²

Eine seinerzeit von Hans Urs v. Balthasar vorgelegte Diagnose gilt m. E. nach wie vor. Unsere Zeit sei eine tragische Epoche; denn sie müsse²³

gleichzeitig beides einsehen: dass auf der Welt zuletzt nichts anderes sich verlohnt (weil nichts anderes da ist, wofür man sich einsetzen kann) als der Mensch – und dass der Mensch sich letztlich doch nicht lohnt.

Dies erkläre „den offen oder verdeckt bitteren, zynischen oder süßlich faden oder sanitären... Beigeschmack“ der verschiedenen Humanismen.

Erklärt es nicht auch die inzwischen gehäuften menschenfeindlichen Statements von Naturfreunden und Biophilen? Jeder sei feil; der Mensch das Ungeziefer der Erde, ein Untier... Woher dieser bohrende Groll, die geradezu wollüstige Selbstabwertung und Herabsetzung des Menschen?²⁴ – Man weiß inzwischen, dass nicht nur Süchte zerstören, son-

²⁰ Etwa Heinz Robert Schlette: „Wer immer philosophisch-metaphysische Sicherheit als möglich voraussetzt oder gar behauptet – sei er Marxist, Positivist, Aristoteliker oder ‚christlicher Philosoph‘ –, ist eo ipso (ob er das subjektiv will oder nicht) der Scharfrichter der Freiheit und der Protagonist des Terrors.“ Philosophie – Theologie – Ideologie, Köln 1968, 40; behutsamer in: Der moderne Agnostizismus (Hrsg. ders.), Düsseldorf 1979, 233, wonach Agnostikern die Vermeidung von Intoleranz nur „zweifelloso leichter“ fällt als Atheisten und Religiösen. J. Sp., „Fünf gerade sein lassen“ oder „Der Wahrheit die Ehre“? in: Denken vor Gott, Frankfurt/M. 1996, 45-56.

²¹ Zarathustras Vorrede, 5 (KSA 4, 19 f.).

²² Nach Thomas von Aquin verlieren die Menschen sich in Ausschweifungen aus Mangel an Freude (De malo 11, 4).

²³ Die Gottesfrage des heutigen Menschen, Wien 1956, 206 f.

²⁴ Fjodor Michailowitsch Dostojewski sieht es als Konsequenz einer gottfernen Humanität. Zunächst empöre den Philanthropen seine Ohnmacht gegenüber dem Schicksal von Volk und Menschheit. Er fühle sich „stellvertretend für die ganze Menschheit gekränkt, und dem Gesetz der Reflexion der Ideen zufolge, tötet das in ihm seine Liebe zur Menschheit“, ja kann sie „in Hass verwandeln“ (Tagebuch eines Schriftstellers, Darmstadt 1966, 268). Dilemma der Humanisten: Den Menschen, die Menschheit, könne auf Dauer nur lieben, wer an

dern ebenso umgekehrt der Selbstzerstörungswille sich als Sucht verkleidet. Es gibt nicht bloß den sozusagen naiven Weltdurst Don Juans, sondern auch – nach Verlust solcher Naivität – ein Sich-„Ärgern“ an der eigenen Endlichkeit, das dazu führt, sich selbst nichts zu gönnen.²⁵ Und diese Einstellung zerstört radikaler als unbeherrschter Genuss.

Eine Lösung des dramatischen Problems scheint mir nur in Richtung einer Vermittlung von Endlichkeit und Unendlichkeit möglich.

III. Schöpfungsdank und Hoffnung

1. Dazu hier die These, dass Endlichkeit nur dann akzeptiert werden kann, wenn sie in ihrer Begrenztheit als Ausdruck einer grenzenlosen Bejahung aufgefasst werden darf. Und eben das ist der Kern der Schöpfungsaussage: Das Endliche in seiner Endlichkeit ist gut, weil göttlich gewollt.

Diese Aussage verlangt indes noch nach Verdeutlichung. In welchem Sinn nämlich ist es gewollt? Wenn im Dienst eines göttlichen Zweckes, dann wäre (erstens und grundlegend) Gott nicht göttlich, weil bedürftig – was aber nicht zu unserem Thema gehört, und (zweitens) das Endliche nicht in sich gut und zu bejahen, sondern nur bezüglich seines Wozu: der Mensch ein geborener Sklave. – Göttlich gewollt wird etwas nur, wenn es um seiner selbst willen gewollt wird, sich also freier Freigebigkeit verdankt. Und eben dies ist die Botschaft der Schöpfungsoffenbarung.²⁶

So aber ist der Mensch nicht die Antwort auf eine Situation, die er sich selbst zur fraglichen macht, sondern auf eine Frage, die an ihn gestellt wird. Er hat auch in dem Sinn nicht das erste Wort, dass anfänglich er fragt – worauf dann Religion zu antworten versuchte (nach diversen Korrelationstheorien), sondern er erfährt sich angerufen: berufen zur Antwort. Darum ist die *condition humaine* fundamental eine sittliche Situation.

Deutlich wird das am „Inbegriff“ von Endlichkeitserfahrung: an der Zeit. Hegel hat sie die für sich gesetzte Negativität genannt:²⁷ der „alles gebärende und seine Geburten zerstörende Chronos“ (§ 258). Darum gilt, dass das Zeitliche „ist, indem es nicht ist, und nicht ist, indem es ist“.²⁸

Aber Zeit ist nicht einzig oder auch nur vordringlich *Verfließendes*, das alsbald nicht mehr da ist. Erstlich fließt sie auf uns *zu*. Und in ihr gibt sich ein je uns (ge)währendes Sein-lassen unser. Zeit ist so, durch alle Abschiede hindurch, in allem Sorgen und Vergehen, „Zeit der Gnade“ (2 Kor 6,2). Von Stunde zu Stunde gegeben, kann sie doch keiner sich schaffen (nur eben sich für andere „nehmen“, um das Geben fortzusetzen).

die Unsterblichkeit der Menschenseele glaubt. Andererseits ist die Liebe zum Nebenmenschen kaum leichter. Der Starez Sosima gibt zu bedenken (Die Brüder Karamasoff, Darmstadt 1979, 384), „dass das Gesicht eines Menschen nicht selten diejenigen, welche im Lieben noch unerfahren sind, zu lieben hindere.“ – Das äußerste wäre dann, der Enträuschung über den Schöpfer entsprungen, der Hass auf Gott selbst.

²⁵ Kierkegaard, Die Krankheit zum Tode (Beilage über das Ärgernis – SV XI, 194-199).

²⁶ Ausführlich: J. Sp., Leben als Mit-Sein, Frankfurt/M. 1990, Kap. 6: Grundgesetz Freigebigkeit.

²⁷ Enzyklopädie... (1830), § 257.

²⁸ Zusatz zu § 448, Sämtl. Werke (Anm. 12), X, 322 f.

Und Zeit ist mehr als nur Gestalt meines wie unseres Werde-Wesens. Ihr Ursprung liegt vielmehr gerade im *Begegnungsgeschehen* des Werdens. Gestalt besteht nur in Konturen, also in Grenzen, wobei Grenze stets die Grenze von zweien ist (anstatt an nichts zu grenzen).

Solch konturierende Grenze besteht für Personen nicht als statisches Faktum, sondern allein als Vollzug; und Grenz-Vollzug ist Begegnung. Begegnung aber heißt Anruf – der Antwort freigibt, sie *erwarten* muss. Begegnung heißt, sich angerufen hören, antworten sollen.

Darin wird ursprünglich Zeit in ihren „drei Dimensionen“: da im einander Entgegen von Ich und Du (ihrem Gegen-wärts für einander) der An-Ruf, der sie wechselweise erweckt hat (ihre Herkunft), antwortheischend auf sie zu-kommt. Die Namen „Kairos“, Augenblick (Kierkegaard) sprechen in das Gemeinte. Bei Proust heißt es „wiedergefundene Zeit“; in einem nachgelassenen Gedicht Rainer Maria Rilkes „vollzählige Zeit“.²⁹

All das meint nicht Flucht aus der Zeit, geschweige denn selbst-trügerischen Protest; es meint erlöste Zeit. *Zeitlosigkeit* wäre nach diesem Verständnis nämlich totales Alleinsein, gänzliche Verhältnislosigkeit. Und umgekehrt: Bezug zum anderen sagt Zeitlichkeit. Besonders Franz Rosenzweig hat das herausgearbeitet und dem zeitlos monologischen Ideal eines „kranken Menschenverstandes“ ein „neues Denken“ der Dialogik und Zeithaftigkeit gegenübergestellt.³⁰

2. Ist nun Zeit in dem bedachten Sinn gewährte Gabe, dann besteht das angemessene Verhalten ihr gegenüber in Annahme und Dank. Den Grundakt sich geschenkter Freiheit bildet die *Annahme seiner selbst*.³¹ Das ist mehr als ethisches Verhalten, sagt Romano Guardini und hat recht; denn Ethos, wörtlich = der gewohnte Aufenthalt, geht erst aus solcher Selbstannahme hervor. Sie ihrerseits ist Glaube. „Glauben heißt hier, dass ich meine Endlichkeit aus der höchsten Instanz, aus dem Willen Gottes heraus verstehe“ (16).

Das zu vermögen ist Gnade: aus dem Geist, der „in alle, in die ganze Wahrheit führt“ (Joh 16,13), so auch in die meine. Dieser Geist der Selbst-Gegenwart Gottes kann auch wirken, dass ich meiner inne werde. Er kann machen, dass ich die haarschmale und doch so tief trennende Ferne durchmesse, die zwischen mir und mir-selbst liegt. Er kann wirken, dass ich in den Frieden mit mir gelange“ (26 f.).

Annahme seiner selbst im Heimischwerden bei sich, darin man sich als annehmbar erfährt, geschieht in „dreistelligem“ Bezug; das heißt, es geht nicht bloß (zweistellig) um ein Ich in Beziehung auf sich in Selbstfindung, gar Herstellung seiner selbst; vielmehr verhält sich der Mensch hier im Selbst-Verhältnis dazu, *dass* es ihn gibt; zu dem Grund, von woher es ihn gibt, ja, zu dem Gründenden, *der* (statt nur „es“) ihn gibt – ihm selbst und anderen.

Annahme zeigt sich als Grundvollzug von Dank (wie Selbstablehnung Undankbarkeit wäre): fundamentaler Lebensvollzug eines Wesens, das sich einem Ursprung verdankt. *Glaube* erscheint als jenes Verständnis der eigenen *Herkunft*, das sie als „Gerufen-sein“ begreift, so dass das Erwachen zum Wort als Antwort gelebt wird.

²⁹ Perlen entrollen... Sämtl. Werke. Wiesbaden 1955, II, 42.

³⁰ Vom gesunden und kranken Menschenverstand, Düsseldorf 1964, Das neue Denken, in: ders., Kleinere Schriften, Berlin 1937, 373-398.

³¹ Romano Guardini, Die Annahme seiner selbst, Würzburg 1940.

Denn zwar kann das Geschöpf nicht gefragt werden, ob es sein wolle. Aber nichts und niemand ist ungewollt da. Was immer Menschen sagen mögen, grundsätzlich gilt, dass keine und keiner „passiert“ ist, sondern jede und jeder Datum im Wortsinn = Gabe.

Die Frage ist, ob Menschen das zu glauben vermögen – und was Menschen dazu beizutragen haben, dass Menschen dies können. Dann aber gilt, dass bei einer Gabe vor ihrem Was ihr Dass bestimmend ist. Und hier gewinnt nochmals die LEIBNIZ-Kritik Bedeutung. Vor *jeder* Welt und jedem Maß eigenen Seins und Habens lässt sich ja fragen: Warum nur das und nicht mehr? (Schöpfung ist notwendig endlich). Dürfte es also keine geben? – Oder in den unvermeidlich begrenzten Zuwendungen verleiblicht (inkarniert) sich ein unbedingtes Ja.

In der Tat gäbe es, wollte der Schöpfer immer nur das Bessere, noch vor der Letzt-konsequenz = *nichts*, jedenfalls uns nicht; denn bessere als unsereins gäbe es allemal. Schöpfung ist in ganz wörtlichem, überhaupt nicht „erbaulichem“ Sinn Ereignis von Liebe; denn sie besagt a) Ruf in Sein und Leben, b) dies um willen des Geschöpfes selbst. Darum ruft sie zu gemäßer Antwort.

Wer liebt, muss wollen, dass der Geliebte liebt, weil er mehr, als dass es ihm gut *gehe*, wünscht, dass er gut *sei*. Darum schreibt Rosenzweig zum Paradox des Liebesgebots, kein Dritter könne derlei gebieten oder erzwingen.³²

Nur der Liebende, aber er auch wirklich, kann sprechen und spricht: Liebe mich. In seinem Munde ist das Gebot der Liebe kein fremdes Gebot, sondern nichts als die Stimme der Liebe selber. Die Liebe des Liebenden hat gar kein anderes Wort sich zu äußern als das Gebot.

Antwortende Liebe aber hat dann den gleichen Charakter: auch sie schaut nicht nach Besserem aus, sondern ihr Dank blickt auf das Gute, das ihr zuteil wird. Ihr Selbstüberstieg ist statt extensiv intensiv. Das „Genug nicht genug“ von Genuss und Verlangen bekommt hier einen neuen Sinn, Besonders eindrücklich im „*Dajénu*“ (= Genug uns)-Lied der Pessach-Haggada.³³

3. Der Dank nun wäre keiner, wenn er – sich auf das Gestern beschränkend – mit dem Heute endete. Er meint vielmehr die Zukunft mit. Die Zukunftsgestalt von Dank heißt Hoffnung, und die drückt sich aus in der Bitte.

³² Der Stern der Erlösung, Heidelberg ³1954, II, 114. Schlichter gesagt verlangt *Gerechtigkeit*, dass Liebe als Liebe erkannt und anerkannt werde. Dazu aber bedarf es des Blicks der Liebe; anders gesehen erscheint Liebe unvermeidlich als Auf- und Zudringlichkeit, Bemächtigungswille...

³³

Hätte Er unsere Feinde versenkt	
und nicht vierzig Jahre in der Wüste uns umsorgt:	genug uns.
Hätte Er vierzig Jahre in der Wüste uns umsorgt	
und nicht uns mit Manna gespeist:	genug uns.
Hätte Er uns mit Manna gespeist	
und nicht uns den Sabbat gegeben:	genug uns.
Hätte Er uns den Sabbat gegeben	
und nicht uns an den Sinai geführt:	genug uns.
Hätte Er uns an den Sinai geführt	
und nicht uns die Thora gegeben:	dajenu....

Der Anspruch, der sich mir und derart mich mir gibt, verlangt die Annahme seiner; angerufene Freiheit, die sich als Gabe erhält, hat sich zugleich als ihre Aufgabe empfangen, und zwar so, dass eben dies Annehmen ihrer, in Erfüllung der gestellten Aufgabe, noch einmal ihr gegeben werden muss.³⁴

In derart verdankter Herkunft und gewährter Zukunftshoffnung sieht der Mensch sich zu erfüllter *Gegenwärtigkeit* befreit. Er muss die Vergangenheit nicht fliehen, auch nicht die der Schuld, weil sie im göttlichen Erbarmen aufbewahrt ist. Er muss die Zukunft nicht fürchten, weil sie gehalten wird von der Sorge des „Vaters der Zukunft“ (Jes 9,6 [LXX, Vulgata]). So kann er ungeteilt und selbsteinig *präsent* sein. Zu sich selber freigegeben, ist er vorgängig *von* sich, von der Sorge um sich selbst befreit.

Und mag das etwas pathetisch und feierlich klingen, so weist es doch nur auf das hin, was im Alltag gelebt werden will. Der reife Mensch tut – im „Alltagsgeschäft“ – seine Pflicht. Und „Geschäft“ meint hier nicht bloß „Beruf“. Denn angesprochen, zum Einsatz berufen wird man ständig. Darum hat Karl Rahner den Christen von heute und morgen auf den Alltag verwiesen, und zwar gerade bei seinem (allzu?) vielgenannten Wort vom *Mystiker* als dem Christen der Zukunft.³⁵ Alltag ist³⁶

der Raum des Glaubens, die Schule der Nüchternheit, die Einübung der Geduld, die heilsame Entlarvung der großen Worte und der unechten Ideale, die stille Gelegenheit, wahrhaft zu lieben und getreu zu sein, die Bewährung der Sachlichkeit, die der Same der letzten Weisheit ist.

Eine [so gelebte] Ethik aber ist, hat Emmanuel Levinas vertreten, nicht bloße „Folge der Gottesschau, sie ist diese Schau selbst... eine Optik... Gott kennen heißt wissen, was zu tun ist.“³⁷ Rahner nennt die kleinen Dinge Wassertropfen, „in denen sich der ganze Himmel spiegelt“ (9).

Wenn wir losgelassen haben und uns nicht mehr selbst gehören..., fangen wir an, in der Welt Gottes selbst, des Gottes der Gnade und des ewigen Lebens zu leben (31).

Sich wirklich, unverkürzt, dem widmen, was es gibt, besagt, sich Dem zu widmen, *der* es uns gibt. Zeigt religiöse Praxis sich als sittlich, so Sittlichkeit sich als religiös: Der Dank wird tätig und das Handeln (Ant-)Wort. Derart im „Atem“-Wechsel *leben* Dank und Hoffnung: als Gehorsam sowohl wie als auf-hörende Zukehr (Lk 10,39-42). Denn im einen wie im anderen bedeutet Dank, nach Franz v. Baader, „die Präsenz des Gebers in der Gabe anerkennen.“³⁸ Und diese Anerkennung wird zum Lob *ob des Danks*.³⁹

³⁴ So bittet der Dankbare nicht, weil er meint, Gott müsste zu weiteren Gaben erst genötigt werden, sondern um die Freiheit seiner Gabe zu bekennen, die allein in solchem Bekenntnis angenommen wird als das, was sie ist. (Darum erwartet Gott, dass wir etwas von ihm erwarten (Jes 7,10-13). Indem der Dank gerufener Freiheit sich in der Bitte vollendet, bezeugt er die Göttlichkeit des erfahrenen Anrufs, den man nie „hinter sich“ bringt, der vielmehr stets neu auf uns zu-kommt

³⁵ Schriften zur Theologie VII, Einsiedeln 1966, 22 (Frömmigkeit früher und heute). Siehe J. Sp., Karl Rahner – ein Mystiker? Zur Situation des Christen von morgen (Rahner-Lecture 2016), München – Freiburg 2016.

³⁶ Karl Rahner, Alltägliche Dinge, Einsiedeln 1964, 8.

³⁷ Schwierige Freiheit. Versuch über das Judentum, Frankfurt/M. 1992, 29 (Religion für Erwachsene).

³⁸ Sämtl. Werke, Leipzig 1851-1860 (Aalen 1963), IX, 387.

³⁹ Yeschaiahu Leibowitz (Vorträge über die Sprüche der Väter, Obertshausen 1984, 115): „[I]m ‚Achtzehn‘

Jenseits von Sucht und Suche weiß Freiheit sich darin gefunden. Ohne Preis: kostbar („klein“ als Kleinod). Statt ein quälendes Rätsel ist sie im Geheimnis (dem Wortsinn gemäß: Ge-heim-nis) daheim.

B. Dank ob Seiner Herrlichkeit

I. Lobpreis

1. Nicht nur wir, auch und gerade Gott ist um uns besorgt. Schon und grundlegend mit unserer Erschaffung. Braucht, wie bedacht, Gott uns nicht (was Ihn wie uns betrifft),⁴⁰ dann auch nicht um der Liebe willen. Gott ist kein einsames Eins, sondern göttliches Wir: ein Mit-Eins in der Seligkeit dreier Personen. Er schafft uns, sagt Johannes Duns Scotus in leuchtender Prägnanz: „Quia vult condiligentes – weil er Mit-Liebende will.“⁴¹ Damit aber ruft er uns nicht bloß zum Leben, sondern zur Liebe. Wir blieben also unter unserem Niveau, würden wir seine Sorge nur mit Selbst-Sorge erwidern. Ist er für uns da, sollten wir zumindest *auch* für ihn da sein. Und bloß auch?

Kein Wunder, dass dies Gespür von Anfang an die Texte beseelt, mit denen Menschen auf die Offenbarung Gottes antworten wollten, so in den ;Lob- und Preisliedern von Israels Psalter. Darum enthalten wichtige Handschriften der Evangelien im Anschluss an die sieben Bitten des Herrengebets einen ab- (oder auf-?) schließenden Lobpreis, den nunmehr auch unsere Liturgie übernommen hat: „Denn Dein ist das Reich und die Kraft und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit.“ Man denke an den Auftakt eines der großen Bücher unserer Kultur, der *Confessiones* von Augustinus:⁴²

Groß bist du, Herr, und löblich sehr groß ist deine Stärke und deine Weisheit ist nicht zu zählen. Und loben will dich der Mensch, der irgendein Teil ist deiner Kreatur; der Mensch, der seine Sterblichkeit an sich herumträgt und herumträgt das Zeugnis seiner Sünde und das Zeugnis, daß du „den Stolzen widerstehst“. Und dennoch will dich loben der Mensch, irgendein Teil deiner Kreatur. Du regst ihn auf, daß, dich zu loben, ihn freue; denn du hast uns gemacht für dich und unruhig ist unser Herz, bis es ruhet in dir.

Einen Höhepunkt stellt gewiss die Zeile aus dem *Gloria* dar, der „großen Doxologie“ der römischen Messe: „Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam – Wir danken dir ob deiner großen Herrlichkeit.“⁴³

heißt es – fast als Nebenbemerkung – in logisch paradoxer Formulierung, aber in gläubig-religiösem Sinne: „Wir danken dir dafür, daß wir dir danken (dürfen).“

40 Zu Joachim Wach (Vergleichende Religionsforschung, Stuttgart 1962, 117): „Ein moderner Philosoph schreibt: Die Einsicht, daß Gott der Freiheit der Kreaturen zu seinem eigenen Leben bedarf, ist der beste Weg, sich gegen die falsche Vorstellung einer Allmacht, die jene Freiheit unterdrückt, zu sichern.“ – Nötig auch waren den Griechen die Sklaven – und hießen doch (andrápodon) Mannsfüßiges.

41 Opus Ox. III, 32, 6 – Luis Vivès XV, 433.

42 Die Übersetzung stammt von Rainer Maria Rilke, Sämtl. Werke VII. Die Übertragungen, Frankfurt/M. 1997, 927. Bei aller „beinah rabiaten Antichristlichkeit“ [an Marie v. Thurn u. Taxis, 17. 12. 1912] hatte er ein enges Verhältnis zu dem Kirchenlehrer. (August Stahl, „Salus tua ego sum“. Rilke liest die ‚Confessiones‘ des heiligen Augustinus, in: Norbert Fischer (Hg.), Augustinus. Spuren und Spiegelungen seines Denkens. Bd. 2 Von Descartes bis in die Gegenwart, Hamburg 2009, 229-252.)

43 In einer Frühform war noch von „Barmherzigkeit“ die Rede, in anthropozentrischer Perspektive.

2. Die Abschnitt-Überschrift lautet „Lobpreis“, um der Verwechslung mit „Belobigung“ zu wehren. Nochmals ist also eine Abgrenzung bedeutsam. Man trifft nämlich auf „Fortgeschrittene“, die sich für Dank und vor allem für Bitten zu gut sind (von Klage und Anklage zu schweigen). Für sie kommt einzig Lobpreis in Betracht. Dank und Bitte indes sind ein Lob der Endlichkeit, Bekenntnis zu unserem Angewiesensein auf Gott. Eingeständnis und Einverständnis damit, dass das Geschöpf seinem Schöpfer eben nicht (siehe den Eingang) „auf Augenhöhe“ zu begegnen hätte.⁴⁴

Man stelle sich vor, soeben aus einem Strudel gerettet zu sein: Wer würde jetzt dem Retter auf die Schulter klopfen mit dem Urteil: „Bravo! Note 1!“ So gab es Doktoranden, die meinten, ihren „Doktorvater“ für Klärungen loben zu sollen – als verlaufe Belobigung nicht immer von oben nach unten. Im Blick auf Gott zudem findet sich im Talmud ein Wort Rabbi Chaninas, der einen Mann Gott als den Großen, Mächtigen, Furchtbaren und so weiter preisen hörte.⁴⁵ „Wozu dies alles? Ein Gleichnis. Als wenn man einen König von Fleisch und Blut, der tausende Myriaden Golddenare besitzt, wegen silberner preisen würde.“

Im Lobpreis denkt man nicht mehr an die erfahrene Rettung aus Not und Tod, nicht mehr an erhaltene Wohltaten seitens Gottes, sondern der Beter ist einfach hingerissen von seinem Gegenüber („ganz hin und weg“). Und wann ist ein Mensch mehr „da“ und er selbst, als wenn er „ganz weg“ ist?

3. Derart entzückt nun können wir von vielerlei sein. Und in der Sprache des Entzückens mag sich dann auch das Wort „Anbetung“ einstellen („Je t'adore“). Im Deutschen hat sich aus dem Gegenüber der Konfessionen ein strengerer Wortgebrauch ergeben. Engel und Heilige werden nicht in der selben Weise verehrt wie Gott selbst, auch nicht Maria, die Gottesmutter. Dafür haben wir die Fachausdrücke *doulia* (Dienst) und *hyperdoulia* (Überdienst); Gott gebührt *latría* ([Gottes-]Dienst).

II. Anbetung

1. In einem Aufsatz hierzu geht R. Guardini von einer der Visionen in der Geheimen Offenbarung aus (4,1-11).⁴⁶ Vor dem Thronenden stehen vier Lebewesen, mit Augen übersät, sechsflügelig: Kerubim (die höchsten der Engel). „Sie haben keine Ruhe und rufen bei Tag und Nacht: Heilig, heilig ist der Herr, Gott der Allherrscher“ Um diese Mitte bilden 24 Throne einen Kreis, auf ihnen „Älteste“ in weißen Kleidern und mit goldenen Kränzen gekrönt. Auf den Ruf der Kerubim hin fallen sie vor dem Thronenden nieder und legen ihm ihre Kränze zu Füßen, mit den Worten: „Würdig bist Du, unser Herr und Gott, zu empfangen den Ruhm und die Ehre und die Macht“

⁴⁴ Dorothee Sölle: „Ein Gott, zu dem wir in einem asymmetrischen Verhältnis stehen, ist human unerträglich geworden.“ Sympathie, Stuttgart 1978, 106. Zu Falk Wagner, der das wieder aufgreift, siehe Wirth (Anm. 2), 306-316. Demgegenüber bei Ernst Reinhold Hauschka gelesen (Worte, die reden können, München 1988, 14): „Jede Bitte an Gott ist ein Grund, ihm zu danken, jeder Dank ein Anlass, ihn anzubeten.“

⁴⁵ b Berakoth 33 b (auch Megilla 25 a).

⁴⁶ R. Guardini, Glaubenserkenntnis. Versuche zur Unterscheidung und Vertiefung, Würzburg 1949, 5-16.

Guardini nennt dieses Bild „das gewaltigste vielleicht unter allen Gesichtern der Apokalypse“ (6). Ein Geschehen,

das alle Vorstellbarkeit überschreitet, und wir müssen uns daran erinnern, daß es Vision ist. Die geschauten Bilder stehen in der Ergriffenheit des Geistes und sind nur von da aus wirklich zu vollziehen. Was uns bleibt, ist nur der Eindruck von etwas, das über alle Maße geht“ (8).

Die Macht des Thronenden aber hat die Form vollkommener Ruhe (9).

Um seinen Thron gewittert es; seine eigene Gestalt aber ragt in der Stille reinen Lichtes. Ein Bild von Macht über allem Getöse, aller Erschütterung und Zerstörung. Vollkommene Macht, in reiner Gelassenheit. Herrschaft über jede Anstrengung und jede Anzweiflung hinaus mühe-los-stilles Walten, das alles vermag.

2. Allerdings meldet sich die Frage, und der theologische Lehrer stellt sich ihr: wie es denn wirklich um Gottes Macht in unserer Welt stehe. Die untermenschliche Natur gehorcht unweigerlich ihren Gesetzen, und auch der Mensch, wenn er z.B. stolpert oder fällt. Aber in ihrem freien Denken, Reden und Tun können Menschen Gottes Vorschriften zuwiderhandeln. „So kann der Anschein entstehen, als sei Gott ohnmächtig und müsse den Menschen, der sich wider Ihn empört, Ihn leugnet, Ihn für nicht da seiend erklärt, gewähren lassen“ (10). Tatsächlich vertreten heute auch christliche Theologen, im Blick auf Leid und Bosheit in der Welt, dass Gott in unserer geschichtlichen Welt ohnmächtig sei. Freilich müssen die sich fragen lassen, inwiefern sie dann noch auf ihn hoffen können.⁴⁷ Oder schärfer: was für sie ein Beten zu ihm besage. Einem ohnmächtig Machtlosen kann man für nichts danken, man kann ihn um nichts bitten, sich nicht bei ihm beklagen.⁴⁸ Was aber wäre und sollte eine Theologie, die nicht dem Gebet dient und nicht aus dem Gebet kommt? – Andererseits:

Vor einem Gott, der nur Macht wäre, könnten wir uns nicht in Ehren neigen, nur unterliegen. Er ist aber nicht nur Macht, sondern auch Sinn. So groß Gottes Macht, so groß ist auch seine Wahrheit [...] Wenn der Ausdruck erlaubt ist: Gott ist nicht einfach Gott, sondern er verdient es zu sein“ (13).

So führt auch Guardini die schon bedachte Zeile aus dem *Gloria* an (ebd.):⁴⁹

Wie kann man so sprechen? Danken kann man doch nur für das, was einer tut – wie soll man danken für das, was einer ist? Die Worte treffen aber genau, was wir hier meinen. Daß Gott ist, und was er ist, bedeutet keine bloße Notwendigkeit oder Tatsache, sondern eine Huld. Es ist wirklich so: wir dürfen ihm dafür danken, daß es ihn gibt.“

⁴⁷ 1 Petr 3,15: „Seid stets bereit, jedem Rede und Antwort zu stehen, der nach der Hoffnung fragt, die euch erfüllt.“

⁴⁸ Klaus Berger: „Die Konstruktion eines ohnmächtigen Gottes ist Widerspiegelung einer Epoche, die das Gebet nicht verstehen kann.“ (Wie kann Gott Leid und Katastrophen zulassen?, Stuttgart 1996, 200).

⁴⁹ Hans Urs v. Balthasar: „Ehrfurcht und Dankbarkeit flacht sich nicht ab, wenn man sich an das Wesen von Erscheinendem gewöhnt hat, sondern gehört bleibend zum Phänomen der stets neu sich schenkenden Epiphanie. ‚Schon weil du bist, sei dir mit Dank genah‘, das Wort Georges dürfte nicht nur dem Geliebten gelten, sondern allem sich uns Erschließenden“ – und wie erst dem, den all dies eigentlich erschließt, nein, der darin sich offenbart. (Epilog [zur großen Trilogie], Einsiedeln Trier 1987, 47 f.). (Stefan George, Das Jahr der Seele, 76 [Werke. Ausgabe in zwei Bänden, München-Düsseldorf 1958, I, 147].)

3. „Großes, seliges Geheimnis, die Anbetung! In ihr vollzieht der Mensch seine letzte Pflicht, aber auch die Gewähr seines eigensten Heils, denn in ihr geschieht Wahrheit“ (ebd.). Der Geist nämlich erkrankt – nicht im geläufigen Wort-Sinn, der sich auf Nerven und Gemüt bezieht, sondern – dort, wo er von der Wahrheit abfällt. „Nicht schon, wenn er lügt, selbst öfters lügt... Wohl aber, wenn er innerlich von der Wahrheit abfällt“ (14).

Darum spricht der Lehrer eigens an, die Anbetung sei zu üben. Wir dürfen nicht warten, bis uns danach ist, es uns dazu drängt. „Gott verlangt die Anbetung, und unsere Seele braucht sie; so müssen wir sie als Pflicht und Dienst vollbringen“ (15). Dienst bis in die Haltung hinein: „Das Knien ist die Anbetung des Leibes“ (ebd.). Diesem Vollzug spricht Guardini mit Recht eine besondere Schönheit zu, weil der Mensch hier Gott die Ehre gibt, der sich „in den Schein der Schwachheit bescheidet“ (ebd.)

Deutlich gesagt aber sei, dass die Anbetung nicht ansteht, weil unsere Seele sie braucht. Dieser Beitrag – in seiner Umwegigkeit – ist, siehe eingangs, als Antwort gedacht. Leider sehen auch viele Christen (nicht bloß die „Schäfchen“, sondern auch Hirten) die Kirche als „Heilsanstalt“ anstatt als Gemeinschaft dankbaren Lobs. Aus dieser Sicht ist Religion mitnichten „Kontingenzbewältigung“.⁵⁰

Anfang Januar 1945 hat Alfred Delp im Gefängnis Meditationen zum Vater-Unser geschrieben. Zur Bitte um die Heiligung des Namens nennt er Gott „die große Ehrfurcht des Menschen“.

Wir haben viel Frömmigkeit ohne echt vollzogene Ehrfurcht vor Gott. Die religiöse Keuschheit und die herbe Schweigsamkeit [...] Die Anbetung ist der Weg zur Freiheit und die Erziehung zur Anbetung der heilsamste Dienst am Menschen und die Ermöglichung einer Ordnung, in der Tempel und Altar wieder stehen, wo sie hingehören.

Die Betrachtung zur Brotbitte schließt mit den Worten: „Brot ist wichtig, die Freiheit ist wichtiger, am wichtigsten aber die ungebrochene Treue und die unverratene Anbetung.“⁵¹ – Der Verrat liegt nahe angesichts Gottes im „Schein der Schwachheit“. Wir aber sind gerufen, ihm gleichwohl die Ehre zu geben. Guardini schließt seinen Aufsatz mit den Worten (16):

Es ist vielleicht das Größte, was der Mensch empfinden kann, zu wissen, dass er, der Vergängliche und in der irdischen Wirrnis Verfangene, dem sich bescheidenden Gott gibt, was ihm gebührt. Dass er diesem Gott in seinem Herzen den Thron aufrichtet und so für seinen Teil die Dinge richtig stellt.

III. Eucharistie

1. Was in der Anbetung richtig gestellt wird, ist der weithin vergessene Schöpfungs- und Offenbarungscharakter der Welt: ihre liturgische Verfassung. Michael Schneider:⁵²

⁵⁰ Siehe dazu jüngst M. Seewald, Religion als Kontingenzbewältigung? In: Jhb f. Religionsphilosophie 15 (2016, Freiburg-München 2017), 152-179.

⁵¹ Gesammelte Schriften (Roman Bleistein), Frankfurt/M. 1982-88, IV (Aus dem Gefängnis), 225-241, Zitate: 230 u. 236.

⁵² Michael Schneider, Das Sakrament der Eucharistie (Edition Cardo 94), Köln 2004, 75 f. (dazu meine Rezension, in ThPh 79 [2004], 617-619).

Das griechische Wort ‚orthodox‘ setzt sich zusammen aus dem Adjektiv ‚orthos‘ (= richtig) und dem Verb ‚dokeo‘ (=meinen, glauben, sich bekennen). Demnach ist jener als orthodox zu bezeichnen, der den wahren Glauben besitzt. Aber es gibt auch eine Verbindung des Begriffs orthodox zum Verb ‚doxazo‘ (= preisen). ‚Orthodoxie‘ meint nicht eine abstrakte rechte Lehre, sondern die rechte Lobpreisung Gottes, welche sich in Glauben, Kult und Leben der Kirche verwirklicht. Dies bedeutet, daß der Glaube den ihm ureigenen Ausdruck im Lobpreis auf Gott findet. Den dreieinigen Gott auf die ihm gebührende Weise zu loben macht die Grundaufgabe menschlichen Daseins aus; es ist die wahre priesterliche Aufgabe des Menschen.

Schöpfungsalltag und Liturgie sind daher nicht als getrennt oder gar entgegengesetzt zu sehen, sondern als eng verbunden, dichtest in ihrer Mitte: Jesus Christus. Wie Schaffen mehr ist als „Machen“ und Erhalten, ist Liturgie „mehr als eine gottesdienstliche Feier; (79); denn sie nimmt in Brot und Wein die Schöpfung „in eine letzte Verwandlung hinein“.

Deshalb gibt Kardinal Kasper mit Recht zu bedenken: „Vor allen Dingen müßte man sich von der Fixierung auf die sieben Sakramente lösen und die sakramentale Zeichenhaftigkeit des ganzen christlichen Lebens wieder mehr betonen“ (87). „Eucharistisation“, von der Teilhard de Chardin spricht: meint die universale kosmische Transsubstantiation des ganzen Kosmos in den Leib Christi“ (91).

2. Hier ist es nicht an uns, etwas zu tun; es gilt, an sich geschehen zu lassen (wie bei der Fußwaschung im Abendmahlssaal). Schneider erinnert an Guardini, der in den zwanziger Jahren die katholische Devise „Logos vor Ethos“ herausgestellt hat:⁵³

Nicht was getan wird, ist das Letzte, sondern was ist. Und nicht die moralische, sondern die metaphysische Weltanschauung, nicht das Werturteil, sondern das Seinsurteil, nicht die Anstrengung, sondern die Anbetung ist das Endgültige.⁵⁴

Es geht ihm um den „Primat der Wahrheit, aber ‚in Liebe‘“ (140). Die Liebe aber will in der Tat nicht allererst etwas tun, sondern sein, da sein im Gegenüber vor. Und das nicht nur vor dem Dreieinigen Gott in seiner trans-immanenten Allzeit-Gegenwärtigkeit: rings um uns und in uns, sondern gerade auch in seinem konkret leibhaften Hiersein in unseren Kirchen, im Tabernakel und in der Monstranz auf dem Altar.

3. In der Monstranz wird der Herr „ausgesetzt“, nicht ein Etwas, sondern Er. Das wäre zu meditieren. Aussetzen seinem An-Blick aber soll sich vor allem der Beter, im „In-einander-Blick“. Und dies Sollen ist vor allem ein Dürfen. Zu seinem Heil, hat es geheißen – doch nicht als Weg und Mittel, sondern selbst als Heilsgeschehen. „Das ist ein sel’ge Stunde, darin man sein gedenkt...“ (Ludwig Helmbold).⁵⁵ Aber, nochmals, eben nicht als „Heilsveranstaltung“, sondern in selbstvergessenem Sein (ob stehend, kniend, sitzend) vor dem Heiligen (dem „Allerheiligsten“).

⁵³ R. Guardini, *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, Freiburg Basel Wien (1953), 1961, 139 f.

⁵⁴ Vielleicht sind die Kontrapositionen ein wenig forciert, gegen die „Vorherrschaft des Willens und des Willenswertes“, bis zu Fausts berühmter Übersetzung von ‚Logos‘ durch ‚Tat‘ (134-136). Braucht unser Logos kein Ethos? Gut, in seinem Aufsatz über Anselm v. Canterbury zu lesen (Auf dem Wege. Versuche, Mainz 1923, 33-65, 55), es gebe „eine Ethik der Theologie, weil es eine Ethik des Glaubens gibt; eine Lehre von den sittlichen Voraussetzungen rechten theologischen Erkennens, Man muß gut wollen, um wahr denken zu können.“

⁵⁵ Ludwig Helmbold (1563), *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen*, 5. Strophe: Evangelisches Gesangbuch, Nr. 365.

* * *

Eines der schönsten Gebete dafür wird wohl doch zu Recht dem Aquinaten zu geschrieben. Ich halte es nicht für vollkommen. Formal stört mich die fünfte Strophe, wo der Beter aus dem Gegenüber zu Jesus heraustritt zu einer Meditation über „des Herren Tod“ und inhaltlich die sechste, in der es um Blut und Blutstropfen geht, als ob es nicht die leidende *Liebe* wäre, die uns erlöst. (Ich überspringe beide.)

Das Original dürfte immer weniger Betern noch zugänglich sein. Die dankenswerte Übertragung Petronia Steiners: „Gottheit, tief verborgen...“, findet sich im *Gotteslob* (früher Nr. 546, jetzt 497). Hier wähle ich die Fassung des Jesuiten-Dichters Gerard Manley Hopkins:

Godhead here in hiding, whom I do adore,
Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more,
See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart
Lost, all lost in wonder at the God thou art.

Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived:
How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed;
What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do;
Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.

On the cross thy godhead made no sign to men,
Here thy very manhood steals from human ken:
Both are my confession, both are my belief,
And I pray the prayer of the dying thief.

I am not like Thomas, wounds I cannot see,
But can plainly call thee Lord and God as he;
Let me to a deeper faith daily nearer move,
Daily make me harder hope and dearer love.

Jesu, whom I look at shrouded here below,
I beseech thee send me what I thirst for so,
Some day to gaze on thee face to face in light
And be blest for ever with thy glory's sight. Amen.



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Economic Scarcity, Divine Fecundity: Moral Considerations

Abstract: Current philosophical and theological trends tend to privilege a normative vision of abundance over that of scarcity. Consequently, the role the concept of scarcity once played in political reflection is undermined. Contra these trends, I shall make an appraisal for the necessity of re-thinking scarcity and such rethinking, if harnessed properly, will help us to direct theological and political reflection towards a concern for limitation. To this end, drawing on Jean-Paul Sartre and Sergei Bulgakov, this paper seeks to inquire as to what it might mean to speak of a milieu of scarcity while considering the scope available to express this within moral-philosophical discourse.*

Keywords: Divine fecundity; Jean-Paul Sartre; metaphysics; reflective limitation; scarcity; Sergei Bulgakov

Introduction: Scarcity Setting the Moral-Philosophical Agenda

As used in this paper, the term ‘scarcity’, refers to an actual or perceived insufficiency of ‘a particular natural substance or manufactured product in a particular social field, *given* the number of members of the groups or [the] inhabitants of the region. *There is not enough for everybody*.’¹ The discrepancy between the requirements of individuals and the supply of goods, presupposed by scarcity, is, mostly, a social construct. Nicholas Xenos makes a distinction between ‘dynamic social scarcity’, which will be the focus of this paper, and ‘static natural scarcity’.²

To date, a wide range of disciplines have studied the nature and operational logic of scarcity. An important example is the discipline of economics, defined by Lionel Robbins as the ‘science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses’.³ The ideological effect of scarcity in economics

* For their thoughtful comments and feedback on earlier drafts, I wish to thank Markus Bockmuehl, Hillie van de Streek, and Jan-Olav Henriksen.

¹ Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, 127–8.

² Xenos, *Scarcity and Modernity*, 20.

³ To what extent we should consider this definition as foundational for the discipline of economics could be questioned. Some argue that the reception of Robbins’ definition in mainstream economics (particularly, rational choice model of behaviour) and what accounts for the self-understanding of the discipline – subject matter or methodology – are debatable issues; see for example, Backhouse and Medema, “Defining Economics,” 16; Panayotakis argues that scarcity is a concept foundational for neoclassical economics and that its reception has created a hegemony or ideological impact; see Panayotakis, “Theorizing Scarcity,” 183–200.

and other intellectual discourse should not be undermined for the privileging of scarcity – the normativity of scarcity – has influenced disciplines such as philosophy and theology. Amongst prominent Christian reformational thinkers, some like Herman Dooyeweerd, tend to privilege scarcity in their moral-philosophical considerations.⁴

Yet, scarcity has notably been susceptible to contrary interpretations within philosophical and theological thought. Current intellectual trends such as Habermasian and post-Nietzschean trends privilege ‘mutual understanding and intersubjectivity’ envisioning normative or ‘ontological abundance.’⁵ Other critics of the notion of scarcity such as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have also argued that the concept of scarcity ‘corresponds less and less with our social reality’ and that it is reflective of an eighteenth century Hobbesian sensibility.⁶ Abundance is considered to be the antithesis of scarcity because the latter presupposes that there are material resources more than, or equal to, the requirements of individuals or societies.⁷

In the theological domain, as in social philosophy, scholars such as Walter Brueggemann⁸ and Stephen Long⁹ have focused on ontological abundance to negate scarcity. Brueggemann articulates a liturgy of abundance as an antidote to the imagination of scarcity. Long emphasises the need to accentuate God’s primordial goodness and Christian charitable virtues. Underlying his contention against economists who are proponents of scarcity is this emphasis on ontological abundance and human commonality. For example, the debate with the economist Nancy Ruth Fox could be illustrative in this respect.¹⁰ For Fox, economics uses the term scarcity in its technical sense implying the finitude of resources and thereby economics is understood as a study dealing with human economic behaviour in making choices under the condition of scarcity. Fox argues that the disagreement between economists and theologians resonates around the incommensurable usage of the term scarcity. Nonetheless, Long, with whom I concur, claims that ‘scarcity is scarcity’ in all its senses, and prefers to focus on the problem that underlies the idea of economic choice, which is inseparable from the foundational idea which economists call opportunity cost. He further argues that economics presupposes a human subject with an infinite desire to consume finite resources (which is recognised as sin/greed in Christian theology) and that the remedy for this should only be sought in Christian charitable virtues.

In a similar vein, Daniel M. Bell Jr. and William Cavanaugh have drawn attention to the reality of desire in connection to scarcity and has argued that the Church as a community of desire can remedy the problem of scarcity (which is viewed as a problem of de-

⁴ The Dutch reformed philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd defines economy as a management of scarce resources in a frugal manner. Although charitable virtues receive attention, his work assumes the normativity of scarcity. Cf. Basden, Andrew. “A presentation of Herman Dooyeweerd’s aspects of temporal reality,” 1-40.

⁵ Douglas’s book *In the Spirit of Critique*; and his article “In a Milieu of Scarcity,” 354-71.

⁶ Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*, 310-1.

⁷ Daoud, “Robbins and Malthus on Scarcity, Abundance, and Sufficiency,” 1210.

⁸ Cf. Brueggemann, “The Liturgy of Abundance, the Myth of Scarcity.”

⁹ Cf. Long’s book *Divine Economy: Theology and the Market*.

¹⁰ Long and Fox, *Calculated Futures*, 29-75.

sire).¹¹ In a slightly different *modus*, Albino Barrera¹² juxtaposes the Malthusian ‘Evil of Scarcity’ with God’s fecundity in which the metaphysics of goodness – demonstrated in distributive justice and Christian virtues – deployed as a backdrop to examine scarcity. But unlike Long, Barrera sees the necessity of scarcity (albeit, as an occasion to reveal God’s goodness). My own approach will differ from Barrera’s.

While critics of the notion of scarcity are right to emphasise ontological abundance and human commonality; I contend that they fail to recognise the role of the concept of scarcity in political reflection.¹³ Here, I agree with Andrew Douglas who argues that such role of scarcity is gradually diminishing:

Whether or not a scarcity of material resources is a genuine, objective fact within any given society today – and these times of recession may signal a real need to rethink the significance of the phenomenon worldwide – we must not allow normative visions of abundance, or imaginative projections of a more peaceful or productive commonality, to background a more tragic awareness that our world does not always, or even often, conform to our desires or expectations. It is precisely this sort of critical awareness that the Sartrean notion of scarcity can help sustain.¹⁴

In this essay, I aim to articulate this contention by inquiring as to what it might mean to speak of a milieu of scarcity while considering the scope available to express this within moral-philosophical discourse. To this end, this article embarks on an engaging synthesis of the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre and the philosophical-theology of Sergei Bulgakov brought into focus by its relevance to the discussion on the notion of scarcity and dialectical language. Both Sartre and Bulgakov reject deterministic Marxist materialism while they remain committed to dialectical thinking. This can be exemplified by their accentuation of the need to focus on the dialectical unity of ‘freedom’ (self-transcendence, going beyond limits) and ‘necessity’ (the ‘field of possibilities’ subject to material conditions).¹⁵ In contrast to Marxists, both thinkers share in common the recognition of the need to articulate a non-reductive materialism by drawing conceptual categories from existentialist philosophy (Sartre) and Christian philosophical theology (Bulgakov). More on this later.

In what follows, I will first argue with and against Sartre that rethinking the concept of scarcity will help us to direct theological and political reflection towards a concern for

¹¹ Cf. Bell Jr., *The Economy of Desire*, ch.4 and Cavanaugh, *Being Consumed*, ch.4.

¹² Barrera’s book *God and the Evil of Scarcity*.

¹³ The role the concept of scarcity once played in theological reflection seems now to be gradually diminishing as emerging philosophical and theological trends orient their considerations away from attentiveness to the notion of limitation. For example, the theological economics of the 1970s by Ronald Preston and James Gustafson that concerned itself with the exchange of finite or limited resources and the concomitant axiom of distributional justice and the common good for which they argued seems to gradually fade. In fact, both spell out welfare – articulated in terms of the axiom of distributional justice and the common good – albeit, within the frame of capitalism or market economy. Cf. Gustafson, “Interdependence, Finitude, and Sin: Reflections on Scarcity,” 156–68. For evaluative remarks on Preston’s theological contribution to economics, refer to Long’s work, *Divine Economy*.

¹⁴ Douglas, “In a Milieu of Scarcity,” 1 (my emphasis).

¹⁵ Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 35; Williams, *Sergii Bulgakov*, 121–23, 237–258.

limitation. By limits, I refer to social limits in particular – not natural limits *per se*. While Sartre offers an analysis of scarcity that promotes reflective soberness, he conceives humans as constituted by an original, or primordial, lack – thereby, creating a condition of negativity that can never be overcome. Second, I will then seek to offer an alternative to Sartre's account of negativity by drawing, mainly, on Bulgakov's philosophical-theology grounded in divine *fecundity*¹⁶. Third, I will argue that human creative activity synthesises freedom and necessity which in turn permits freedom to prevail within a milieu of scarcity. Finally, I shall conclude by accentuating the resulting topology of politics and by reflecting on the critical capacity of Christianity in society.

'In a Milieu of Scarcity': Sartre's Engaged Reflection

In his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Jean-Paul Sartre offers a phenomenological analysis of scarcity. Although he clearly demonstrates a tendency to naturalise scarcity, Sartre regards scarcity as a contingent social reality but not as a natural fact. According to his argument, our human condition can be characterised by a 'milieu of scarcity' that conditions our ethos – our moral formation, social behaviour, and political sensibility. Sartre contrasts between an idyllic human condition (where human benevolent reciprocity governs) and a milieu of scarcity (in which life is characterised by competitiveness that culminates in the survival of the fittest): 'In pure reciprocity, that which is Other than me is also the same. But in reciprocity as modified by scarcity, the same appears to us as anti-human in so far as this same man appears as radically Other - that is to say, as threatening us with death.'¹⁷

A milieu of scarcity modifies our reciprocity or inter-subjectivity, causing humans to see each other as threats. Hence, scarcity implies competition (in which the fittest survives), and violence – not of a spectacular kind, but a silent (dehumanising) one.¹⁸ Such kind of violence may be labelled as 'the violence of things' (*à la* Marx and Engels), which is related to economic relations.¹⁹ Poverty and destitution are the objective and material manifestations of the violence of things and under economic theories that make scarcity normative, this violence remains an 'oversight' – understood not as failure of sight but a rationalised and intentional refusal of sight (echoing Louis Althusser and Étienne Balibar).²⁰

¹⁶ Bulgakov does not directly use this term/concept but his philosophical-theological reflections are replete with the idea of fecundity. In this paper, divine fecundity refers to God's plenitude, wholeness, goodness and providence – which is different from a simple unqualified abundance.

¹⁷ Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, xviii-xix, 131-2.

¹⁸ Such an understanding of violence presupposes a consequentialist ethics. According to consequentialism, as coined by Anscombe, an action is right or wrong depending on the outcome; see Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy," 12.

¹⁹ Cf. 'Thus, in imagination, individuals seem freer under the dominance of the bourgeoisie than before, because their conditions of life seem accidental; in reality, of course, they are less free, because they are more subjected to the violence of things,' Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 84.

²⁰ Here, Althusser's remarks on the relationship between sight and oversight in classical political economy seems to be relevant: 'what classical political economy does not see, is not what it does not see, it is what it sees; it is not what it lacks, on the contrary, it is what it does not lack; it is not what it misses. The oversight, then, is not to see what one sees, the oversight no longer concerns the object, but the sight itself. The oversight

The violence of things confronts human subjects and characterise historical material relations within and among societies.

Underlying Sartre's analysis of scarcity is an effort to understand historical material relations. Sartre argues that history – the history of material relations, in particular – develops within the space of tension produced by scarcity.²¹ This implies that the explanatory power of scarcity extends to the domain of human-human and human-environment relations. Thus, scarcity demonstrates a tension and a field-force embedded in 'fundamental structures' ('techniques and institutions' that mediate human relations), because they operate within the milieu of scarcity.²²

The violence of things and the conflict caused by modified reciprocity open up dialectical possibilities. Sartre claims, human praxis interiorises scarcity at all times and conditions – even when humans attempt to transcend scarcity. The 'most fundamental of these structures is scarcity as the negative unity of the multiplicity of humans' – such multiplicity is a 'concrete multiplicity'.²³ Put differently, scarcity can unite people in resistance to the conditions of scarcity. The world environment, as Sartre explains, is a 'practical field' relating everyone to the 'collective structures'.²⁴ From this perspective, being human is inseparable from living in a struggle. Consequently, Sartre maintains that we humans are 'more' than our situations ('facticity') and can surpass or transcend them because we are 'condemned' to be free.²⁵

Sartre's analysis casts a mixture of positive and negative aspects. First, Sartre rightly demonstrates attentiveness to the darker side of life by drawing attention to dynamic social scarcity. Subsequently, one can appropriately describe scarcity as an imagination, or even as a regime, that constitutes and shapes our modern subjectivity.²⁶ While, Sartre appears to emphasise the dark side of life this is not because he is totally dismissive of human benevolent commonality but because such ideals could become mystifying ideological devices captivating humans.²⁷ Andrew Douglas²⁸ who offers a qualified reading of Sartre's dialectic explains, 'the dialectical idiom by coming to see dialectical language as a rhetorical resource, a tool with which to orient and sustain a critical awareness of specific issues and concerns' underlies Sartre's work. Thus, Sartre's description of scarcity could be read as reflective sobriety reviving dialectical language in political reflection.

is an oversight that concerns vision: non-vision is therefore inside vision, it is a form of vision and hence has a necessary relationship with vision,' see Althusser, and Balibar, *Reading Capital*, 21.

21 Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 127.

22 Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 127.

23 Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 127.

24 Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 127.

25 Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 740.

26 Charles Taylor claims that the understanding of economy as a self-regulating system is not natural, or God-given. Rather, he argues that it is a social construction, as "social imaginary" (whose origin goes back to the 18th century), which has greatly influenced today's global culture to the extent that our human existence appears to rest upon it for better or for worse. See Mbembe, "African Modes of Self-Writing," 270-1; Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, 69-82.

27 Douglas, "In a Milieu of Scarcity," 366.

28 Douglas, "In a Milieu of Scarcity," 355.

As Fredric Jameson describes it, Sartre's concept of scarcity is 'unintelligible in itself, simply a fact to which we cannot assign any metaphysical significance whatsoever', but it 'nonetheless is the framework in which we must act, and conditions and alienates our acts and projects in their very conception'.²⁹ Sartre's framework is closely related to his conception, which highlights that 'our modern society as a locus of irreducible conflict – a "milieu of scarcity"'.³⁰ Consequently, the language of scarcity in Sartre provides a way of capturing our social milieu, that is, a way of describing a 'unitary relation of a plurality of individuals' in complex, modern times.³¹

In view of this, Douglas rightly comments that the 'dialectical language emerges', in Sartre's text, 'at least partly, as a rhetorical resource, a means of throwing this situation into the boldest possible relief'.³² Douglas's discussion on Sartre's dialectical reflection on our human condition clearly captures the relations between scarcity, survival, and the dialectical dimension of politics:

Sartre's particular invocation of the dialectical idiom can be substantively useful in our time insofar as it encourages a sense of reflective limitation. Building on a political ontology of the dialectical subject, or the constitutively empty creature struggling to fulfill needs and desires against others trying to do the same, Sartre suggests that we tend to 'internalize' conflicts over material resources such that we come to exhibit an almost Hobbesian political sensibility or ethos.³³

Second, while Sartre offers an analysis of scarcity that promotes reflective sobriety, he, however, conceives humans as constituted by an original, or primordial, lack – thereby, creating a condition of negativity that can never be overcome. Although scarcity negatively modifies human reciprocities posing limits on people and their capabilities, human reciprocity cannot be reduced to actions emanating from scarcity. Humans hold what William Desmond calls 'porosity'³⁴ to primordial goodness (as the basis for self-transcendence – *passio essendi*) or what Paul Ricoeur calls 'benevolent spontaneity'.³⁵ John Milbank also speaks of a 'peaceful harmonious order' and theological virtues governing human relations.³⁶ Sartre's primordial lack relates to his existentialism, which has no room for metaphysics. For this reason, in the next stage, I will explicate Bulgakov's theological *metaphysics*³⁷ insofar as

²⁹ Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, 233.

³⁰ Douglas, "In a Milieu of Scarcity," 356.

³¹ Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol.1, 127.

³² Douglas, "In a Milieu of Scarcity," 356.

³³ Douglas, "In a Milieu of Scarcity," 356.

³⁴ Desmond, *Being and the Between*, 5.

³⁵ Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 187.

³⁶ Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*, 5–6.

³⁷ But, given the contemporary repudiation of metaphysics, should not one simply embrace 'the death of metaphysics' to become a non- or post-metaphysician? In preface to my answer, I must echo the contemporary philosopher William Desmond that 'In claiming to be beyond metaphysics, we become unknowing metaphysicians – an inarticulate sense of the meaning of being informs our post-metaphysical, or non-metaphysical thinking. There seems no escape from metaphysics.' See Desmond, *God and the Between*, 9. Here, Keith Ward's concrete examples could further clarify the whole scenario: 'Materialism says that the only things

I can relate it to economic agency which responds to the condition of scarcity placing scarcity between metaphysics and politics. As I shall argue, Bulgakov's work furnishes us with theological resources to understand Christian economic agency that responds to scarcity and facilitates the contemplation on scarcity as a reflective limitation.

Participated Divine Fecundity: Bulgakov's Sophiological Engagement

What might it mean to speak of divine fecundity? Drawing upon the doctrine of *creatio ex-nihilo* (creation out of nothing), Bulgakov explains that 'nothing' is simply an 'empty metaphysical hole, a bottomless abyss', which is totally devoid of any content.³⁸ It follows, then, that it is the relative nothing – not the absolute nothing – that exists. For Bulgakov, as for Dionysius, it is the relative nothing that was generated and included in the very being of creation. What does this inclusion of nothing into the being of creation entail? It entails that nothing becomes the 'potency' of the relative being, which also implies that the relative being enters the process of *becoming*.³⁹ Indeed, this is the hallmark and donation of freedom and creativity to the relative creaturely being – although creaturely freedom is always limited and perfected only by God who is absolute perfection, divine fecundity.⁴⁰ The process of actualisation requires an extra- or non-worldly and supra-temporal foundation, or *entelechy*.⁴¹ Here, Bulgakov's use of this Aristotelian term is different from that of Aristotle himself. Such *entelechy* predisposes creation towards God insofar as the created world participates in God's perfection and is connected to divine fecundity. The divine extra-temporal foundation of creation provides the *telos* (ultimate end, or goal) for the temporal universe or created world.

This two-fold understanding of the cosmos can be further enriched through a discussion of Bulgakov's account of Wisdom (Sophia), which exists in two modes – heavenly (Divine) Sophia and creaturely Sophia. Divine Sophia exists in eternal (supra-temporal) mode while creaturely Sophia exists in the temporal mode. For Bulgakov, Sophia is a mediating principle that is on both sides – God and the world, but 'with their simultaneous differentiation'.⁴² Divine Sophia, which is the self-revelation and consubstantiality of the Triune God, can be understood as 'divinity as the foundation of the world'.⁴³ As 'All-unity', Sophia reveals the fullness of life and that the creation of the world is an expression of divine fecundity. Sophia, according to Bulgakov, 'must also be understood in the sense of *cre-*

that exist are material things in space. There is no purpose or meaning in the universe. Scientific principles are the only proper forms of explanation.' Closer look at the statements reveals that their assumptions are neither 'empirical' nor 'scientific,' but 'philosophical-metaphysical,' cf. Ward, *God, Chance and Necessity*, 99 cited in Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Revelation*, 213.

³⁸ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 54.

³⁹ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 54.

⁴⁰ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 148.

⁴¹ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 54.

⁴² Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 46.

⁴³ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 14.

ative self-determination.’⁴⁴ Consequently, we can speak of the participation of creation in divine life – creativity and freedom.

Such understanding has several implications: first, the world or humans are not independent, self-enclosed beings as Sartre claims. The world must be understood not within itself but in relation to its creator. Second, insofar as humans are disposed towards the fecund God, they can receive his grace and charitable virtues and are endowed with the freedom and creativity, to undertake economic agency that transcends scarcity. This is not to suggest endless production and commodification, but rather that human freedom is purposeful (not random) in as much as it respects the divine order of creation revealing harmony between human-human and human-environment. Thus, any subjection of life to randomness, chance, competition, and mechanical causality is not part of the design of God.

Therefore, to speak of divine fecundity is to speak of the sophianic nature of the world (insofar as it participates in divine fecundity) – the divine order of creation, the sufficiency of God’s providence and the participation of creation in God’s freedom and creativity fostering peace and harmony. Unlike Sartre, Bulgakov grounds creative self-formation in divine fecundity – rather than primordial lack. By enquiring what it might mean to speak of divine fecundity, we have looked at the twofold order of the world – extra-temporal foundation and the temporal world – and that creation participates in divine fecundity. For Bulgakov, humanity is the proper *metaxu* mediating between God and the world, and divine-humanity as a process.⁴⁵

According to Bulgakov, nature ‘always perceives her reflection in man, just as man [...] perceives his own reflection in Sophia,’ and as a sophianic being and the proper *metaxu* (the between) that mediates between God and the cosmos, human-being ‘reflects the wise rays of the divine Logos.’⁴⁶ Bulgakov conceives a ‘primordial identity’ or inner commensurability (yet, without denying differences) between the two natures: the divine and the human. The hypostatic union of the second person of the Trinity, Christ has implications for human creative activity. The relation and distinction between the two natures in the one person of Christ offers the analogy to understand the cosmic role of humanity (its sophianic role). Such role requires the dependence of humanity on the divine for human creativity is ‘incapable of metaphysical originality’ and must depend on the ‘ideal model’ or an already existing image insofar as it re-sophianises the world.⁴⁷

Bulgakov accentuates the transformative potential of Christian *theurgy* (sometimes, he uses *sophiurgy*) in economy. This is about the question of synergy between divine and human creative activity, which conjoins human creativity (*anthrouργy*) and the notion of *theurgy* (divine action).⁴⁸ *Theurgy*, according to Bulgakov, ‘is inseparably connected with

⁴⁴ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 41.

⁴⁵ Josephien H. J. van Kessel considers Bulgakov’s sophiologal engagement not a political-theological project but as an economic-theological engagement in the tradition of *oikonomia*; cf. ‘Bulgakov’s Sophiology,’ 251–267.

⁴⁶ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 145.

⁴⁷ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 145; Williams, *Sergii Bulgakov*, 241.

⁴⁸ Rosenthal, ‘The Nature and Function of Sophia,’ 149.

the incarnation' and 'it is the incarnation itself extended in time and uninterruptedly in process of accomplishment, the unending action of Christ in humanity'.⁴⁹ In consequence, humanity – taking its incarnational sophianic role – can reflect and communicate God's goodness in creative economic activities that transcend scarcity. 'Christ laid down the absolute and irreversible foundation for theurgy, and passed on to his Church a theurgic power' that is 'realised in the liturgy ... above all the Eucharist'.⁵⁰ Therefore, the idea of divine fecundity in a milieu of scarcity expresses the need to consider the understanding of economic activity in terms of a resurrectional model, the central place of humanity in the process, and the significance of incarnational and ecclesial action.

The motif of Fall-resurrection is coterminous to the idea that humanity which participates in divine fecundity is capable of restoring the lost relation between *natura naturans* (the principle or the ideal image or the foundation of the world) and *natura naturata* (the created world or universe).⁵¹ Sartre's milieu of scarcity can be understood as a reflection of the loss of this image. Restoring such relationship requires reflective sobriety (due attentiveness to the milieu of scarcity) and sustained dialectical act open to divine fecundity. If this is what is meant by divine fecundity, how do we, then, express it within the discourse of economic agency taking seriously the reality of scarcity? In what follows, we shall look upon the dialectical lens provided by Bulgakov's philosophy of economy, which reveals some convergences as well as disjunction with Sartre's idiom of dialectics.⁵²

Economic Agency as a Synthesis of Freedom and Necessity

I will now discuss Bulgakov's conceptualisation of economic agency as a synthesis of two corresponding principles – freedom and necessity – to enquire what scope there is to express this within the discourse of economic agency with a particular focus on scarcity. But what is meant by freedom and necessity in the first place? Freedom, for Bulgakov, is 'extrascientific' or 'suprascientific' that cannot be equated with godless anthropological liberty.⁵³ Rather, it is a concept grounded in Christology (the Incarnation) and ecclesiology (or, more precisely, ecclesial Eucharistic communion). Rightly interpreted, freedom is both a negative and a positive concept: it 'is not noncausality but self-causality, the capacity to act of oneself (*a se* from which the term *aseism* comes), to commence causality in one's own fashion and thus to disrupt the principle of general mechanism'. Bulgakov, like Sartre, puts emphasis on freedom as self-determination. But, unlike Sartre, Bulgakov argues that the source of such self-determination/freedom as *aseism* is

⁴⁹ Williams, Sergii Bulgakov, 156-7; Louth, "Sergii Bulgakov and the Task of Theology," 243-259.

⁵⁰ Williams, Sergii Bulgakov, 157; for an extended discussion on the economic significance of theurgy, see Milbank, "Sophiology and theurgy," 45-85.

⁵¹ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 142.

⁵² In the work of Albino Barrera, we find a juxtaposition of the 'Evil of Scarcity' with God's fecundity in which the metaphysics of goodness is deployed as a backdrop to examine scarcity, but the dialectical idiom is absent; cf. Barrera, *God and the Evil of Scarcity*.

⁵³ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 197-202.

God who is 'Freedom itself' and honoured 'humanity with his image, that is, freedom'.⁵⁴ More on this later.

By necessity, Bulgakov implies causality. Necessity or causality is felt when the object (nature) sets a limit against the human subject, making the subject experience 'unfreedom'. Freedom is realised insofar as the subject is capable of pushing back the limit.⁵⁵ The two principles – freedom and necessity – correspond with the principles of life and death respectively. [Here, death can be considered as freedom, albeit a negative one, but what Bulgakov wants to highlight is the positive concept of freedom as self-determination, as mentioned above.] At this juncture, we can see correspondences between Sartre and Bulgakov in their dialectical motifs expressed in the movement between facticity (our limits, necessity or causality) and freedom (as transcendence). Both philosophers are attentive to the human condition informed by the struggle – not only against nature, but also culture (human sociality that includes economic relations).

Such life-death struggle reveals the possibility of either 'polarization' or 'reconciliation' between the subject and nature (which normally extends to culture).⁵⁶ In polarisation, mechanical necessity controls and defines the status, or fate, of the subject in which the empirical 'I' becomes the 'I' given 'by necessity and received from the surrounding environment' (characterised by and subjected to a milieu of scarcity).⁵⁷ Here, Sartre is absolutely right, even from a Bulgakovian point of view, because the milieu of scarcity is about our empirical self.⁵⁸ For both, the self is determined by situations – social structures and economic practices – but always remains a 'self-willed self-definition'.⁵⁹

Furthermore, as stated by Bulgakov, total determinism 'could be true only if our I were dead'.⁶⁰ In addition, with the notion of the economic subject (the subject of labour) there is an 'excessive logic that points beyond itself [labour]'.⁶¹ In consequence, the struggle, or the 'state of flux', between freedom and necessity continue with instances of reconciliation or equilibrium. Human creative activity, according to Bulgakov, synthesises freedom and necessity insofar as the former prevails over the latter.⁶² Such synthesis assumes equilibrium that overcomes scarcity but never a compromise.

I can now articulate my core argument which is that: understanding economic agency as a synthesis of freedom and necessity (a) seriously queries the promotion of the idea of abundance as an antithesis to scarcity, and (b) illuminates the modern discontent gen-

⁵⁴ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 197–202.

⁵⁵ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 196.

⁵⁶ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 208, 220.

⁵⁷ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 210.

⁵⁸ Here, the theoretical challenge is not only the 'cartesian' dichotomy between externality (empirical self) and interiority (transcendental self) but also that of determinism. In view of the former challenge, Bulgakov keeps himself away from cartesian or Kantian and purely materialistic or deterministic accounts of the human subject.

⁵⁹ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 212.

⁶⁰ Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 212.

⁶¹ Hughes, *The End of Work*, 224.

⁶² Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 212, 218.

erated by the conception of the world as an economic arena. Both of these reveal scenarios of polarisation. To elaborate these points of argument briefly: first, the understanding of economic activity goes contrary to the theory of progress (the linear, progressive or developmentalist account of society) which Bulgakov strongly rejects arguing that economy does not have an eschatology. Moreover, the ideological pretensions of creating an abundant society can result in endless deferrals of economic justice to an indeterminate future. Thus, societies – using promises of abundance – must not sacrifice the present generation for the sake of future ones.

Second, the definition of the world as an economic arena assumes the normativity of scarcity leading to constraints and dissatisfactions. As Ricoeur contends, and I agree, (a) individuals living in societies that define themselves in purely economic terms tend to assimilate to a life of continual struggle and competition for finite resources, and (b) individuals lose a sense of meaning in the struggle against nature and in the rationalisation of calculating economic reasons (with all the control and manipulation of states).⁶³ Understanding economic agency as a synthesis of freedom and necessity illuminates such complex relationships and gives hints to political and ethical choices. Therefore, as long as the fundamental structures are immersed and governed by a milieu of scarcity, we need a dialectical idiom and understanding of divine fecundity that fosters such engagement.

Coda

A theological engagement with the notion of scarcity places one at the crossroads of competing trajectories. Divine fecundity, as articulated in this paper, privileges neither normative scarcity nor unqualified abundance. Rather, leaning on the work of Sartre and Bulgakov, I have shown that the rhetorical potential of scarcity encourages a reflective limitation essential for a theology that seeks to engage the world with Christian practices.

In this light, allow me to forward the following coda – theological and political – in order to show where one could go or needs to go next in developing Sartre's and Bulgakov's moral philosophical discourses. First, *a theological coda*: Although scarcity conditions humans, and modifies their reciprocities, human creatures can transcend their conditions by re-aligning themselves to the creator's (God's) primordial goodness manifested in and communicated through theological and natural virtues. In a Bulgakovian vein, human participation in God's goodness re-sophianises the world and changes the conditions of scarcity.

The Church has a significant role in transforming the conditions of scarcity through its Christic politics. In this regard, the Church needs to develop her 'Christian sociology'⁶⁴ and Christic politics to engage with today's world (shaped by a milieu of scarcity), which

⁶³ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 320.

⁶⁴ Williams, *Sergii Bulgakov*, 275. This is Bulgakov's term to express a theological standpoint that fosters a critical engagement with the world. Nonetheless, and admittedly, this term may be susceptible to divergent interpretations. Here, I am aware of the debate on the relationship between theology and social theory. And there is no intention, here, to claim that Christian theology can serve as or replace social theory (in the vein of Milbank 2006) for theology has to borrow analytical tools developed in the social and human sciences for its understanding of cultures that contextualise it (cf. Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*, 2).

Bulgakov describes as a 'machine': 'A new world has arisen', writes Bulgakov, 'a new organisation of life, in which every man feels himself to be only an insignificant part of the whole, a little screw in a big machine'.⁶⁵ Then, the Church should not be writing a Nicene for ethics (implying an accommodating stance, or legitimising the status quo), but must assert itself as a 'democracy of souls' for the people already belong to it. It needs a Christian sociology that fosters a critical engagement with the world. And Christianity contributes not only by providing value but also by exemplifying a collective way of life.

Second, *a topology of politics*: A topology of politics expressive of the foregoing theological discussion is one that draws attention to a sense of reflective limitation. A theological outlook rooted in divine fecundity should focus not only on the bright side of commonality and collective frames of social existence, but also on the dark side of our world of scarcity. Inattentiveness to reflective limitation might obscure the ideological pretensions of economic growth and development rhetoric in our societies.⁶⁶ Here, I concur with Douglas's argument 'that late-moderns can still make use of the dialectical idiom by coming to see dialectical language as a rhetorical resource, a tool with which to orient and sustain a critical awareness of specific issues and concerns'.⁶⁷ Bulgakov's theological concerns dovetails the concern for a dialectical engagement with the world. Sartre's and Bulgakov's dialectical frame of vision inspires a sense of reflective limitation that will direct us to political enactment of freedom and equality that paves the way for an apotheosis of the bond of togetherness in our societies.

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⁶⁵ Williams, Sergii Bulgakov, 276.

⁶⁶ For example, post-development theorists such as Arturo Escobar makes a critique of the modernist development paradigm: 'Development was – and continues to be for the most part – a top-down ethnocentric [Euro-centric] and technocratic approach, which treated people and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of progress,' cf. *Encountering Development*, 44.

⁶⁷ Douglas, "In a Milieu of Scarcity," 355.

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Book Reviews

Józef Niewiadomski (Hg.), *Das Drama der Freiheit im Disput – Die Kerngedanken der Theologie Raymond Schwagers*, Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Verlag Herder 2017. ISBN/EAN: 9783451375545

Wo sind die Grenzen der menschlichen Freiheit? Wird sie nur von äußeren sozial-politischen Faktoren (wie politischer Instabilität, blutigen Waffenkonflikten, Flüchtlingskrise) und den Naturgesetzen, die das Leben des Menschen in der Welt bestimmen, beeinflusst oder wird die menschliche Freiheit in einer existenziell-daseinsbezogener Weise von Gott in den Ereignissen der Heilsgeschichte usurpiert? Wie kaum ein anderer Systematiker der Gegenwart hat der Innsbrucker Dogmatiker Raymond Schwager sein Leben lang mit dem Problem der Beziehung zwischen Gewalt und Freiheit gerungen, in dem er die zentrale Schwierigkeit der christlichen Erlösungslehre gesehen hat. Aus diesem Grund pochte er auf die unverzichtbare Bedeutung der Wahlfreiheit bei der Diskussion der Freiheit des Menschen Jesus.

Im Sammelband *Das Drama der Freiheit*

im Disput – Die Kerngedanken der Theologie Raymond Schwagers, herausgegeben von Józef Niewiadomski (2017), zeigen die verschiedenen Autoren die signifikanten Elemente der Freiheitstheologie von Raymond Schwager auf. Seine als Befreiung zur Freiheit verstandene Erlösungslehre wird in direktem Vergleich mit der Theologie von Karl Rahner und Karl Jaspers dargestellt und mit einem besonderen Akzent auf seiner Rezeption der Idee von Wahlfreiheit bei Maximus Confessor und der mimetischen Theorie von René Girard kommentiert.

Dieser Sammelband zeigt uns, dass Raymond Schwagers Freiheitsthematik die grundlegenden Fragen der christlichen Theologie umfasst und bietet einen ausführlichen Überblick über die Zusammenhänge, in denen die moderne Theologie über Freiheit diskutiert.

Dragiša Jerkić

Publications of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča (University of East Sarajevo)

Saša Šoljević, *Položaj Srpske pravoslavne crkve u Socijalističkoj Republici Bosni i Hercegovini (1945-1975) — Serbian Orthodox Church in Socialist Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina (1945-1975)* (2015)

In this book, the author Saša Šoljević, professor of Canon and Church Law at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča, examines the

peculiar legal and social position of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Socialist Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period from the end of the Second World War until 1975. In first three chapters Šoljević offers a detailed description of the ideological background of the new government's policies toward religious communities. He thus explains the

foundation and role of the Committee for religious matters, the Association of Orthodox priests, and other similar associations in the Roman Catholic Church and Islamic community. Rigorous implementation of the Law of agrarian reform and nationalization deprived the Serbian Orthodox Church of a large part of its properties. This is a significant problem in Bosnian society even today. The fourth and final chapter describe new social issues for the Serbian Orthodox Church in that period, such as taxation of the Church, social insurance of priests, and the problems that the Serbian Church faced in its attempts to renovate many churches and monasteries that were demolished during Second World War.

Ljubivoje Stojanović, *Sveštenoslužjenje u multidisciplinarnom kontekstu — Priestly Service in Multidisciplinary Context* (2015)

The author Ljubivoje Stojanović, professor of Pastoral Theology at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča, has dedicated this 480 pages long book to various contemporary problems faced by Orthodox priests in their parishes. Aware of the cultural shift in Serbian society, Stojanović reminds his readers of the Church's long-lasting witness to eternity inside historical time. He thus sheds new light on the issues of religious pluralism, inter-religious dialogue, and ecumenism. The multidisciplinary approach to these and many other modern themes, such as the apparent war between religion and science or "necessary" conflict between theology and atheism, seems to offer new solutions for problems in both academic theology and practical, i.e. "parish" theology. Of particular importance is the Sacrament of Confession, since the proper performance of this particular sacrament requires not only the knowledge of theology, but also the knowledge of psychology, psychoanalysis, psychopathology, etc. For this reason, the author dedicates the entire final chapter to de-

tailed discussion of the ways in which these non-theological disciplines might intertwine with theology and help Orthodox priests in their parishes.

Milan Radulović, *Kulturni obrasci u srpskoj književnosti — Cultural Patterns in Serbian Literature* (2015)

In one of his last published books, the late professor Milan Radulović explores the unique spirit and language of Serbian literature. Of particular importance in such an exploration is the awareness in respect to the Christian and patriarchal cultural context from which this literature has emerged. That is why Radulović dedicates the second chapter to the ecclesial forms of literature, such as lives of saints, and its artistic characteristics. One such specific Christian motif in Serbian literature is the "Kosovo Covenant". Radulović also examines several examples of religious themes in the works of Dositej Obradović, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, and Petar II Petrović Njegoš. In the fourth chapter, the author transits to the age of modern civilization, explains the ontology of the modern novel, and the spirituality of modern literature. One especially significant and interesting part of this book is the discussion of the place of Serbian literature in the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča.

Jovan Tarnanidis, *Grčka svedočanstva svetosavlja — Greek Testimonies of Svetosavlje* (2015)

Greek Testimonies of Svetosavlje is a collection of works by Ioannis Tarnanidis, a Greek Orthodox theologian and historian from Thessaloniki, edited by Mirko Sajlović and Zoran Ranković. The works in this collection deal with the concept of "Svetosavlje" – a particular Serbian form of Orthodox Christianity named after Saint Sava – and the ways this concept was understood by the Greeks. Ranging across a variety of subjects, i.e. from the

role of Saint Sava in the process of gaining autocephaly by the Serbian Church to the cult of Saint Sava and Saint Simeon in the Greek Church, the papers collected in this edition present to the reader brilliant insights of Tarnanidis regarding the historical and ecclesial relations between Serbian and Greek peoples.

Darko Djogo, Gnostički mit i mit o gnosticizmu — The Gnostic Myth and the Myth of Gnosticism (2015)

As noted by Vladislav Topalović, the author of the *Afterword* to this book written by Darko Djogo, *The Gnostic Myth and the Myth of Gnosticism* is a study of ancient Gnosticism as an interpretational category of several representatives of modern thought. In other words, professor Djogo diligently unravels the ancient Gnostic myth in order to demonstrate the falseness of the modern myth of Gnosticism as carrying the spirit of liberation from institutionalized religiosity. Perfect examples of such a modern view of Gnosticism are writers Dobrica Ćosić, Borislav Pekić, Ivo Andrić, and Umberto Eco. From their works Djogo extracts the most indicative parts that undoubtedly confirm his theory. Although many modern writers looked up to ancient Gnosticism as a religious way that happily strayed from the oppressive institutional and elitist Roman Catholic Christianity, many of them failed to see that same elitism in Gnostic teachings and societies, thus creating a myth that hardly corresponds to the historical situation of Gnosticism itself.

Vladislav Topalović, Nikola Kovač, Istorijske knjige Starog Zavjeta — Historical Books of the Old Testament (2015)

Vladislav Topalović and Nikola Kovač, the authors of *Historical Books of the Old Testament*, wrote an elaborate academic textbook for the students of Serbian Orthodox Seminaries and Faculties of Theology. Although several

such textbooks were already written in Serbian language, this book is distinguished by its detailed treatment of biblical texts, newness of the information it presents, and the clarity of writing which is a desirable trait for all academic textbooks.

Bogoljub Šijaković, Otpor zaboravu — Resistance to Oblivion (2016)

Reminding us of Philo's words that the beginning of wisdom is not to forget oneself, Bogoljub Šijaković, professor of Philosophy at Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade and the author of *Resistance to Oblivion*, warns us that we live in the age of forgetting. Therefore, in order to be wise in our age, one must actively resist the culture of forgetting and be aware of the fact that remembering is the condition for the very existence of history. The historical responsibility, both synchronic and diachronic, is a prerequisite for establishing one's identity. Papers and essays collected in this book, although seemingly diverse in subjects they deal with, do have one same trait, and that is the resistance to oblivion. Arranged in four chapters, these papers might be thematically differentiated as follows: the first chapter is dedicated to the places that philosophy and theology occupy in modern culture; the second chapter examines the ethics of Vidovdan; the third chapter contains three papers on Ljubomir Tadić, Borislav Pekić, and Svetozar Stojanović; the fourth and final chapter deals with several important issues in relations between Church and State, while at the very end there is an extensive list of the books published by the Institute for theological research of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade.

Mirko Tomasović, Dela apostolska: tom drugi — Acts of the Apostles, Vol. 2 (2016)

In the second volume of his extensive interpretation of the biblical book *Acts of the Apostles*

cles, author Mirko Tomasović, professor of New Testament at Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča, comments on chapters 8:4-12:25. Dealing particularly with the missionary work of the Apostles and their followers, Tomasović interprets the events starting from Philip's mission among Samaritans to the return of apostles Paul and Barnabas in Antioch after Herod's death.

Mirko Sajlović, Sveti Epifanije Kiparski kao jeresiolog — Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus as a Heresiologist (2017)

Mirko Sajlović, professor of Church History at Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča, offers his readers a detailed study of Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus and his struggle against heresies. After placing Saint Epiphanius in precise historical, cultural, and ecclesial context, Sajlović proceeds to examine his doctrinal, polemical, and hermeneutical works, as well as works wrongly ascribed to Epiphanius. The third chapter examines the phenomenon of heresy itself, its meaning, origins, and history before Saint Epiphanius. Sajlović is especially interested in the heresy of Gnosticism, since the struggle of the Fathers of the Church against this particular heresy produced the very criterion of orthodoxy. In the final chapter, the author expounds the heresiology of Saint Epiphanius, and particularly his answers to the heresies that had wrong understanding of God, wrong perspective of the relations between God and humankind, wrong perspective of the world, etc.

Mirko Tomasović, Simvol vere — The Creed (2017)

In this book, author Mirko Tomasović interprets the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. First, Tomasović expounds ancient creeds that existed before the formulation of the ecumenical Creed by the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), such as those

from Rome, Caesarea, Antioch, Jerusalem, etc. Then, the author offers an extensive interpretation of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, based on the works of the Fathers of the Orthodox Church and contemporary distinguished theologians.

Dalibor Petrović, Patrijarh Nikon na čelu Ruske Crkve — Patriarch Nikon as the Head of the Russian Church (2017)

In more than 400 pages within 5 chapters of his book, Dalibor Petrović, professor of History of the Serbian Church at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča, presents to his readers the life of Patriarch Nikon and the history of his governance of the Russian Orthodox Church. In the first chapter, Petrović explains the role of the patriarch in the Russian Church and State before Nikon, and then, in the second chapter, he describes Nikon's involvement in the revision of ecclesial books of worship and church ceremonies, with special attention given to the influence of the Kievan theological school in regard to these reforms. The third chapter describes Nikon's governance of the Russian Church from 1655 to 1658, while the fourth chapter offers many details regarding his contacts with Serbian Orthodox Church. The final chapter explains the reasons for Nikon's disagreement with the Tsar and his subsequent resignation from the patriarchal throne.

Nenad Tupeša, Blagodat bogoslužnja — The Grace of Worship (2018)

Nenad Tupeša, professor of Liturgical Theology at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Foča, presents to his readers the first volume of *The Grace of Worship*, in which he examines the symbolical interpretations of the Holy Liturgy in the works of several Fathers and theologians of the Eastern Church from 4th to 7th centuries. The book is divided in two chapters. The first chapter, entitled

“Liturgical symbolism and catechetic lessons”, explains the meaning of symbol in Orthodox liturgical worship, with emphasis on the symbolical interpretations of Liturgy in the works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem and Theodore of Mopsuestia. The second chapter, entitled “Symbolism in the early Byzantine era”, contains extensive study of the sacramen-

tal symbolism in Dionysius the Areopagite’s work *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, as well as the study of liturgical symbolism in the *Mystagogy* of Saint Maxim the Confessor. The appendix, which by itself might constitute a third chapter, is a study of the prayer of *anamnesis* in certain Western liturgies.

Vedran Golijanin

PHILOTHEOS International Journal for Philosophy and Theology

Published by

Gnomon Center for the Humanities, Belgrade
in cooperation with
Sebastian Press, Los Angeles
Center for Philosophy and Theology, Trebinje

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Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

1:2

PHILOTHEOS : International Journal for Philosophy and Theology /
Founding Editor and Editor-in-Chief Bogoljub Šijaković. - Vol. 1 (2001)- .
- Belgrade : Gnomon Center for the Humanities, 2001- . - 24 cm

Polugodišnje. - Upporedni naslov na grčkom jeziku. - Tekst na svetskim jezicima.
ISSN 1451-3455 = Philotheos
COBISS.SR-ID 185353479

Philotheos is supported by the Ministry of Education, Science
and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia

PHILOTHEOS

ISSN 1451-3455

UDC 12

e-ISSN 2620-0163

Philotheos (Φιλόθεος) is an international scholarly journal that provides a forum for a dialogue in philosophy and in theology respectively, with a special focus on the dialogue between the two. Founded in 2001, it brings together articles and book reviews of philosophical and theological interest in the broader Christian tradition. Contributions are published in several European languages and they cover diverse field of inquiry from antiquity to the present. The overarching goal is to overcome the disciplinarian entrenchments in philosophy and theology and reintegrate professional questions with the need to answer to problems placed before us by life itself.

