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# PHILOTHEOS

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# Analytic Theology and its Method

*Abstract:* I shall present an analysis of analytic theology as primarily characterised by Michael Rea (2011). I shall establish that if analytic theology is essentially characterised with the ambitions outlined by Rea, then it corresponds to a theological realist view. Such a theological realist view would subsequently result in an onto-theology. To demonstrate this, I shall examine how an onto-theological approach to a God of the Abrahamic Faiths (namely, a transcendent God) would prove to be (theologically) incompatible and even hostile. In essence, my argument shall demonstrate that providing analytic theology is essentially characterised with the ambitions Rea alludes to, it is discordant with a transcendent God of the Abrahamic Faiths.

*Key Words:* Analytic Theology; Analytic Philosophy; Theological Realism; Theological Anti-Realism; Onto-Theology; Transcendent God

## Introduction

Logical positivism had begun to wane its prominence from the 1950's onwards, and eventually stagnated in the 1970's. Ever since its decline there has been much effort in reviving metaphysical religious discourse. Such efforts were a concerted attempt in putting right what the logical positivists had so erroneously wronged. Eventually, the struggle against logical positivism began paying off. There were, at least, two things that lay testimony to this success. Firstly, the resentment towards religious discourse, the kind that was specifically generated by the logical positivist movement, had slowly begun to subside. Secondly, the Western academic enterprise began receiving metaphysical religious discourse. Aside from this, there were developments in the field itself. However, since this revival was to lay the foundations of what soon became known as the 'philosophy of religion', and more recently, 'analytic theology', its methodological approach was grounded in analytic philosophy. Perhaps the publication of *New Essays in the Philosophical Theology* edited by Antony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre in 1955 demonstrates this point. This encouraged analytic philosophers to be able to freely engage in religious discourse without being condemned as members from the continental camp. It was keenly received, in particular, by Christian philosophers. For them, it served as a genuine prospect in being able to rightfully return (logical) completeness and consistency to Christianity. Something they felt it always deserved, but never really managed to obtain. Consequently, ever since the philosophy of religion took off, there has been an exceptional upsurge of interest, ideas, and a plethora of work, that is continually being contributed to the field.

Amidst the wide-ranging matters concerning the philosophy of religion, a recent offshoot, namely, analytic theology, has started receiving academic attention<sup>1</sup>. Analytic theology<sup>2</sup> can loosely be conceived of as a further development that was inaugurated out of previous *interests* in theology, philosophical theology, and philosophy of religion. It may also be seen as a successor to earlier *methods* practised by (the vast majority of Christian) theologians. In fact, this is something which Crisp (2011) has proposed. With regards to analytic theology itself, Crisp suggests that ‘it should be’ a contemporary ‘faith seeking understanding’ project. In sum of this, analytic theology ought to be considered as an academic activity which applies (contemporary) philosophical methods in the domain of theology. Much like earlier theologians had done, with the exception of analytic philosophy of course. Analytic theology would specifically seek to employ the tools of analytic philosophy in the service of theology. This would involve, as Crisp puts it, ‘adopting and adapting a rhetorical style, ambitions and vocabulary of analytic philosophy to properly theological ends’.

Despite the advantages that analytic theology may offer in the service of theology, it encounters some serious objections<sup>3</sup>. These objections needn’t be confined to analytic theology itself. They may be certain issues that it has inherited from preceding disciplines within philosophy and theology and their interaction. Amidst such issues, analytic theology would be confronted with foundational metaphysical, epistemological, and methodological concerns. These, quite rightly, would demand a coherent take on the exact definition of analytic theology as well as how it *should* be done<sup>4</sup>. This would involve drawing on the constituting features of analytic theology, namely on the vast philosophical and theological terrain. The philosophical aspects may include debates in and around realism and anti-realism, the metaphysical positions regarding truth, logical monism, pluralism, and even nihilism etc. The theological aspects, depending on the religious tradition in question, may include debates that begin with the divined nature and transcendence of God and the many matters that stem from it.

Analytic theologians, such as Macdonald (2014), have asserted that analytic theology ought to be “firmly grounded in a realist metaphysics and epistemology, or a funda-

1 For the difference between analytic theology and analytic philosophy of religion see: Baker-Hytech, M. (2016). Analytic Theology and Analytic Philosophy of Religion: What’s the difference?. *Journal of Analytic Theology*, 4, pp.347-361.

Wood, W. (2021). *Analytic theology and the academic study of religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.3-13.

2 For more on the historical development on analytic theology see:

Gasser, G. (2015). Toward Analytic Theology: An Itinerary. *Scientia et Fides*, 3(2), p.23.

Torrance, A. (2013). 2nd Annual Analytic Theology Lecture: Analytic Theology and the Reconciled Mind; The Significance of History. *Journal of Analytic Theology*, 1, pp.30-44.

Crisp, O. and Rea, M. (2011). *Analytic theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.87-168.

3 For an interesting perspective on how different groups of interlocutors engage and raise their concerns regarding analytic theology see Wood, W. (2021). *Analytic theology and the academic study of religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

4 Crisp (2011) suggests that analytic theology would have to confront two foundational issues which concern theological method. The first is ‘How should we go about *doing* theology?’ and the second is ‘What is the doctrine of such and such about?’

mental commitment to the objectivity and cognitive accessibility of divine reality and truth” (Macdonald, 2014, p.54-55). Others, such as Crisp (2011), have taken a more sympathetic approach. In particular, Crisp expresses that the project of analytic theology should *not* be dominated by philosophy’s approach to theology; philosophy should not subjugate theology or even shape its concerns. Instead, it should be quite the contrary.

I say the ‘analytic’ part of analytic theology should not be rationalistic. It should not prescribe the material content of theology. Instead, it should be a help to the theologian in making sense of the deliverances of theology, given in the testimony of Holy Scripture and the tradition. (Crisp, 2011, p.180-181)

Crisp’s position appears to be more accommodating than Macdonald’s (2014). I suspect this is primarily to do with the use of reason. Crisp refers to the ‘instrumental use of reason’ in theology as its ‘handmaiden.’ That is with the assumption that philosophy’s task is to assist theology without hindering it. Much like a helper or a servant. According to Crisp, this is how the analytic theological venture ought to be conceived of. However, this harmonious relationship between philosophy and theology would prove to be contentious when confronted with the question of how to sustain both disciplines in a *theologically* amenable manner<sup>5</sup>. If on the one hand theology is given priority, whether in an isolated case or even universally, it would render the whole project of analytic theology vacuous. The philosophical analysis, in this case, would either be non-existent, or it would fail to assert any influence whatsoever. Alternatively, if the philosophical analysis is given priority, whether in an isolated case or even universally, it would give rise to a hard-lined rationalistic theology. This would imply that the theology in question has given-into the subjugation of philosophical analysis.

The cost of attempting to sustain a harmonious relationship, which is somehow theologically amenable, would compromise Crisp’s understanding of how analytic theology should be done. The cost of engaging in no, or very little, philosophical analysis would render analytic theology, philosophically redundant. While the cost of engaging in too much philosophical analysis would compromise the deliverances of theology. Analogising this with the handmaiden example would, in the former case, imply that the mistress feels she has no use for her handmaiden and thus expels her. In the latter case, the handmaiden becomes the superintendent to her mistress and is thus no longer a helper.

According to Crisp, analytic theology should not be subjugated by philosophical analysis. At least that is what we are told. Although, even if analytic theology managed to do justice in this respect, it would not be immune to theologically based issues. Crisp refers to one specific issue by raising the following question,

But it may be objected that an analytic approach to theological problems suggests a kind of ‘atomism’. What if it turns out that certain doctrines are the theological equivalent of uncrackable molecules, the complexity of which makes them unsuited to analysis? (Crisp, 2011, p.38)

Crisp provides two brief responses to this question. Firstly, he suggests that arriving at any such conclusion without prior investigation would prove somewhat prema-

<sup>5</sup> See Stump, E. (2013). Athens and Jerusalem: The Relationship of Philosophy and Theology. *Journal of Analytic Theology*, 1(1), pp.45-59.

ture. Being able to determine as to whether a given theological statement is philosophically analysable would require prior examination. Secondly, he suggests, that although some theological statements may not be amenable to a particular kind of philosophical analysis, *others* will be. Of course, we would have to diligently distinguish between those theological statements that are philosophically analysable from those that are not. Considering this, Crisp seems to concede that there are *some* theological matters that are not amenable to the kind of philosophical analysis specific to analytic theology. In such cases these matters would be unresolvable. That is because they are, what Crisp terms, 'mysterious'<sup>6</sup>.

The way in which Crisp arrives at this understanding involves acknowledging two modes or uses of reasoning. That is substantive and procedural reasoning. Furthermore, it also involves how the possible application of these modes of reasoning fares in a theological context. A substantive use of reason is a radical and insistent activity. It purports that reason alone, or reason along with the senses, is the only way we can obtain foundational and non-trivial knowledge of the world we live in. It is exclusively with the aid of this mode of reasoning that we can apprehend and make intelligible sense of the world around us. On the contrary, a procedural use of reason is more pliable and sympathetic to human social and psychological sensibilities. It purports a normative use of daily reasoning abilities that is common to every layman. That is whether it is making logical connections between different propositions or attempting to make intelligible sense of something. It would, in essence, allow for people to distinguish between sensible and non-sensible propositions and decipher their meanings.

According to Crisp, analytic theology is entirely consistent with either a substantive or a procedural use of reasoning. A substantive use of reasoning would provide logical arguments in defence of a rational approach to theology. We could understand this as a rationalistic approach *to* theology. A procedural use of reason would offer a slightly modest approach. In such a case it would provide an 'argumentative framework' in which various theological discussions can take place. We could understand this as a rationalistic approach *within* theology. Considering this, Crisp suggests that while making sense of theological beliefs, any one of the two uses of reasoning can be adequately applied to obtain a greater insight into theological truths. In other words, theological matters would be analysable in virtue of either a substantive or procedural use of reasoning. Such theological matters would thus not only be conceptually accessible for us, but we would be able to make intelligible sense of them.

In addition to this method, he provides an alternative. It is one which does not seek to evaluate or obtain a more insightful view of actual doctrines. Instead, it seeks to gain some understanding of the 'grammar' of the doctrine in question. The difference between both methods is that the former view focuses on reaching an understanding of the theological or doctrinal matter in question. It would be willing to agree or disagree with a particular theological or doctrinal statement. This alternative view is not concerned about the

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6 "There will be issues that analysis is unable to resolve because they are mysterious (in the sense of being beyond human reasoning, not contradictory or false)." (Crisp, 2011, p.38)

theological or doctrinal matter or what it has to say. Rather, it focuses on its justification. In such a case, any given theological or doctrinal statement would be considered as a mere 'speech act'. Macdonald (2014) expresses Crisp's alternative view in the following manner,

In other words, while the goal of an analytic theologian may be to gain further, objective understanding of Christian doctrine, which he takes to correspond to objective, divine reality, it may also be (again, alternatively) to gain a further justification or warrant for believing what he and others in his theological community hold to be true, while remaining agnostic about whether his theological beliefs correspond to objective realities or not. (Macdonald, 2014, p.55)

Crisp does not seem satisfied with this alternative view. Instead, he advocates a theological realist view. It is the kind of realist view that adopts a type of correspondence theory of truth. This is because it considers a type of correspondence between theological statements and reality to be epistemologically appropriate than a deflationary account. Thus, subscribing to a type of correspondence account of truth would, in essence be, a dismissal of deflationary accounts of truth. Moreover, the theological anti-realist, apparently, would have to confront certain difficulties. With respect to God these difficulties would include, having to affirm that there is no being such as God. One way in which an anti-realist about God may arrive at this conclusion is to consider the claim 'God exists' as expressing a truth. Although, the truth being expressed does not imply that there is an  $x$  such that  $x = \text{God}$ . The same line of thought can be extended to being an anti-realist about certain theological beliefs. The anti-realist may affirm that there are no such things as beliefs. One way in which the anti-realist may arrive at this conclusion is by resorting to paraphrases of belief-talk. This means, certain claims such as 'there are beliefs' express a truth. However, the term 'belief' fails to pick out a genuine mental state. Considering this, the anti-realist theologian can be suspected to engage in analytic theology from an atheistic perspective.

Since the methodological approach to analytic theology slightly varies among theologians and analytic philosophers, I shall discuss both these methodological approaches. Although, my attention shall primarily be centred on the more prominently held opinion, namely a theological realist view. Theological realism also seems to be the dominant approach adopted by analytic theologians. I shall establish that the underlying philosophical assumptions, and thus the method, of theological realism is incompatible with a particular view of God. This would be a God of the Abrahamic Faiths who is believed to be absolutely transcendent. The way in which I shall make the case for my claim is as follows: I shall demonstrate that if analytic theology is essentially characterised with the ambitions outlined by Michael Rea (2011) then, analytic theology would in essence conform to a theological realist view. This would result in an onto-theology. Subsequently, I shall prove that an onto-theological approach to the God of the Abrahamic Faiths would be incompatible and even antagonistic. In essence my argument shall demonstrate that, providing analytic theology is essentially characterised with the ambitions Rea alludes to, it is discordant with the God of the Abrahamic Faiths, or more specifically with those who believe in a transcendent God. Prior to fleshing out my argument, I shall discuss the two fundamental constituting disciplines of analytic theology. This includes analytic philosophy and theology.

The overlap between a philosophically driven epistemology and theology has managed to gain considerable attention. Particularly since the 1980's. To date, it has noticeably flourished within academia. Crisp (2011)<sup>7</sup> provides a transitory account of the intersection between both these disciplines. In doing so he notes that the research conducted in the philosophy of religion has excelled beyond its boundaries. That is not in the sense that it has transformed in any radical sense. Rather, it has captivated the interest of theology. Consequently, giving rise to a philosophical theology of a particular kind. The philosophical theology referred to over here is not merely a philosophical reflection of the Christian doctrine (or of any other religious tradition for that matter). More specifically it is a *theology* that appropriates the unique style of analytic philosophy. This novel combination allows for intelligibly aiding the understanding and articulation of various theological doctrines. The constituting features of analytic philosophy that allow for this include, analytic rigour, precision, clarity, and logical coherence amongst others. The application of these features provides a distinctive sort of scholarly light in expounding various theological doctrines. Being able to strike a harmonious balance between analytic philosophy and theology would thus prove highly beneficial to theology. It would allow for theology to appeal to analytic philosophy in granting it thorough perspicacity about what is *already* believed. The novelty then, seems to reside in doing theology in an analytic style.

### Analytic Philosophy

Analytic theology is a specific convergence of analytic philosophy and theology. According to the handmaiden view, this convergence ought to be one where analytic philosophy serves as an aid and assistant to theological tasks. Analytic philosophy is thus to act sympathetically if it is to serve theology in its deliverances. However, can analytic philosophy engage in philosophising sympathetically? Would any kind of philosophical sympathy not compromise the defining features of analytic philosophy? Wolterstorff (2009) thinks that any such collaboration would come at the expense of certain epistemological attitudes. He highlights two views that analytic philosophy has, or at least appears to have, surrendered to in virtue of collaborating with theology. He refers to the first as an assumption which is 'distinctive to logical positivism'. He refers to the second as the 'basis of classical foundationalism'.

A commitment to the once dominant school of logical positivism would leave no intelligible room for a meaningful discussion about God or theological matters. On this view, expressions about God or theological matters would be devoid of propositional content. The sort of content that would either be analytically true or false. Or the kind that is empirically verifiable. A.J. Ayer (1952) made this clear. For him statements in the domain of metaphysics, ethics, and theology were simply no more than nonsensical pseudo-propositions. They considerably lacked cognitive import which diminished any possible value they had to offer. The abandonment of classical foundationalism is also a necessary requirement in the service of theology. Classical foundationalism grounds the rationality of be-

<sup>7</sup> Crisp, O. (2011). Analytic Theology, *The Expository Times*, Vol. 122, no. 10, pp. 469 – 477.

liefs on foundational evidence and erects its epistemological structure on such certitudes. A belief would only then be justified, according to classical foundationalists, if it manages to satisfy one of the following epistemic modes. Either, it is self-evident, incorrigible, or evident to the senses. Or it is deducible from any one of the aforementioned modes. Both, logical positivism and classical foundationalism<sup>8</sup> would therefore pose serious issues for theological matters.

Nevertheless, exclusively attributing any one or both positions to analytic philosophy would be inaccurate. This is on the grounds that analytic philosophy does not qualify under any strict conditions. The record needs to be set straight from the outset. Analytic philosophy, ironically, is not an easy term to define. Nor does it possess a unanimously agreed definition that is in anyway definitive. In fact, seeking necessary and sufficient conditions for philosophy to qualify as ‘analytic’ may even be misguided<sup>9</sup>. For instance, Martinich and Sosa (2012), caution their readers in the introductory section of *Analytic Philosophy*<sup>10</sup>. They state that analytic philosophy is *not* defined, and should not be conceived of, by any particular set of doctrines or methods. Instead, philosophers in the analytic tradition espouse diametrically opposed positions. They embrace various methods of inquiry to the extent that enumerating or describing them would be a demanding task. Moreover, the very fact that Hans-Johann Glock (2008) has dedicated an entire book to the question ‘what is analytic philosophy?’ is testimony to the intricacies involved in attempting to characterise it. Others, such Greg Frost-Arnold (2017), avoids this question. That is because initial responses to ‘what is analytic philosophy?’ eventually turn out to be unsatisfactory. Such responses tend to founder on various false positives or false negatives.

I am sure some contemporary analytic philosophers would concede to the point that analytic philosophy has traversed a remarkable and intellectually diverse path. This has allowed it to intellectually evolve and outgrow many of the attributed positions it sometimes associated with. That is not to give the impression that it has succeeded in arriving at a definitive position. Quite the contrary in fact. Schwartz (2012) states that analytic philosophy is a ‘dialectical enterprise’ which is perpetually grappling with itself. Despite its constant engagement with problems, methods, and various concepts it has never managed to settle on anything acceptably befitting. That is what makes defining analytic philosophy so difficult.

Let us suppose that a given set of sufficient and necessary conditions can qualify what counts as analytic philosophy. These conditions may involve certain foundational principles that meet a specific criterion allowing analytic philosophy to be properly ‘analytic’. Satisfying the conditions of ‘analytic’ would thus require analytic philosophy to scru-

<sup>8</sup> With the exception of Plantinga’s Reformed epistemology. For more on religious epistemologies in analytic theology see: Dalton McNabb, T. and Baldwin, E. (2021). Religious Epistemology in Analytic Theology. In: J. M. Arcadi and J. T. Turner, Jr., ed., *T&T Clark Handbook of Analytic Theology*. London: T&T Clark Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, pp.33-44.

<sup>9</sup> See Beaney, M. (2013). What is Analytic Philosophy?. In: M. Beaney, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of The History of Analytic Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.3-29.

<sup>10</sup> Martinich, A. and Sosa, D. (2012). *Analytic philosophy*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

tinise the foundational principles it rests on. To demonstrate this further. Take logical positivism and classical foundationalism. Aside from the common arguments levelled against them, they would fail to qualify by their own standards. It would subjugate them to a self-referential paradox. It is for such reasons that Wolterstorff (2009) suggests that analytic philosophy is no longer governed by logical positivism and/or classical foundationalism. By extension, analytic philosophy would not be able to sustain an allegiance to any given theoretical position. Regardless of whether that position is considered as a foundational principle that qualifies it as analytic or otherwise.

Considering this, it may seem plausible to think of analytic philosophy as a 'pluralistic discipline' or a 'dialogical pluralistic enterprise'. This would be overtly conceding to the fluid nature of analytic philosophy. This means that analytic philosophy would bear no commitment to any particular view in virtue of which it may be defined. Perhaps under such a guise, it can exercise the liberty of adopting any number of views without falling prey to its own scrutiny. A similar line of thought is expressed by Preston (2010). He infers that the intellectual enterprise of analytic philosophy is not what it is conceived to be. That is on the grounds that it ostensibly refuses to adopt any particular doctrine by which those who are engaged with it are united. This is something which Benedikt Paul Göcke (2021) also expresses. "Although, until the middle of the last century, analytic philosophy was empirical, materialistic, or influenced by the linguistic turn, according to which philosophical problems are merely linguistic illusions, today it is no longer *de facto* true that the concept of analytic philosophy is used to characterize certain positions, but a method, and a style for approaching genuine philosophical questions" (Göcke, 2021, p.59).

In the face of these apparent foundational problems, defining analytic philosophy seems somewhat hopeless. However, this needn't be the case. We should be able to resort to a less stringent view on the matter. The kind which focuses on its style and method. Perhaps turning to historical or thematic perspectives may also assist us in characterising analytic philosophy. In both respects there are obvious candidates. From a historical perspective, attention may be given to its founding figures and their contributions that starkly distinguished it from continental modes of philosophising. From a thematic perspective, attention may be given to notable features concerning its method and style. When it comes to style, analytic philosophy is emphatic about argumentation, clarity, and rigour. When it comes to method, things are not as straightforward as its style. Appealing to common sense, intuitions, a logic that has its footing in mathematics, etc, are certainly notable features. However, these would require elucidation.

Göcke (2021), on the other hand describes analytic philosophy as "a legitimate division between the genesis and the plausibility of a philosophical position, with a concomitant emphasis on the greater relevance of the plausibility of philosophical theses" (Göcke, 2021, p.57). He introduces two features of analytic philosophy in this respect. The first is concerned with truth or rational acceptability of philosophical theses. Truth and rational acceptability are to be informed by historical developments. It is with the aid of such developments that allows for a systematically clear formulation of a thesis. The second is con-

cerned with executing the analysis of the truth or rational acceptability of a thesis in three stages. These are as follows: (i) conceptual precision and analysis, (ii) clarification of the philosophical thesis under examination in virtue of claims to truth and normative theses about reality, (iii) argument.

Michael Beany (2013) suggests that resorting to the method of analytic philosophy would offer a more substantial characterisation of analytic philosophy. This is simply because the 'analytic' in 'analytic philosophy' comes about in virtue of specific analysis. Moreover, this would suggest that the analysis in question would readily be prepared to share various features of the analytic philosophy without dwelling into the existing discord. Crisp (2011) also suggests that this would prove to be a more promising route. He agrees that elucidating on prominent features such as clarity and rigour are best ways forward in characterising analytic philosophy. Though, he accepts that even these features are not without their problems. The variation of clarity and diversity of presenting in a coherent manner would, as it turns out, lead to a subtle quarrel in defining what counts as clarity and logical rigor while being cogent. Now if analytic philosophers are, despite the elusiveness about clarity, profoundly obsessed with implementing it in a rather esoteric manner, it is only because they are somewhat confident that it would yield results which can be tested for validity and truth. Of course, not all analytic philosophers would be happy to grant that there is such a quality or property as truth. Regardless of their actual views on the matter, they would agree that adopting the methods of clarity and logical rigour would be an adequate tool in clearly demonstrating our views.

This view would considerably differ to the continental approach for reasons which I shall not go into. Nonetheless, the value and force of this approach seems to gain impetus while neglecting foundational issues concerning the definition of analytic philosophy. Alluding to matters of style and method are certainly valuable in their own respect. However, they must not masquerade the issues which lie at the centre of defining analytic philosophy. The pretence of engaging with historical or thematic perspectives of analytic philosophy cannot stand in to address the foundational issues concerning its definition. Neglecting this point, especially when erecting an entire academic enterprise on its back, may even be a kind of intellectual dishonesty. Particularly, when disputing against rival philosophical traditions such as the continental tradition<sup>11</sup>.

The disputations between the analytic and continental camps are nothing short of overwhelming. They have been vigorous debates which have been on-going since the birth of the analytic tradition. However, the aspect which concerns us, is their general approach towards religion. To avoid a lengthy and overwhelming discussion on the matter, I shall suffice with highlighting the methodological approaches of both philosophical traditions to God. The contrasting perspectives would prove helpful in obtaining some idea of the differences that exist between them. I shall refer to Trakakis (2008) in this respect. Trakakis quite neatly, although not decisively, divides the views of both camps pertaining to God as 'the God of the Philosophers and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'.

<sup>11</sup> See Trakakis, N. (2008). *The end of philosophy of religion*. London: Continuum.

**Analytic Philosophers**

1. God is definable
2. God either exists or does not exist
3. 'God exists' is a factual claim
4. God is an explanatory posit
5. God is an inference
6. God's existence is probable or improbable
7. God is an object
8. God is compressible

**Continental Philosophers<sup>12</sup>**

1. God is wholly other
2. God is not an existent or a being
3. God-talk is not fact-stating
4. Belief in God is not scientific belief
5. God is a concrete, not abstract reality

**Theology**

Theology on the other hand has a very different outlook. Not just in terms of it being a collaborator with analytic philosophy, but in and of itself. A theological outlook about a given religious tradition would presuppose at least two things. The first includes defining the characteristics of theology that share proximity with philosophy. The second includes the way in which theology is necessarily bound to faith. Let us take each of these in turn.

Adequately demarcating between theology and philosophy may seem straightforward in some respects. However, the ground between them is far from clear. One way in which theology may share proximity with philosophy is its 'inherent' self-reflective nature. This allows it to dynamically engage with specific religious doctrines without the fear of over-rationalising them. This self-critical examination is an essential feature that may serve as a demarcation between the rational analysis of theology and philosophy. For every task of theology which has been attributed to theologians alike carries, not just a mere sense of affirmation of core religious tenets, but a vigorous endeavour to understand them. It is in virtue of this understanding, as Ogden (1972) puts it, that makes it 'important for a properly theological definition of theology itself'. Theology is comprised in virtue of numerous tasks. These might include translating, describing, interpreting, understanding, and reflecting on scripture or faith itself. Despite all of these, an underlying feature, which theology seems inseparable to, is inquiry and examination. This is something which Migliore (2014) has emphasised. The degree of his emphasis on this matter suggests that an unexamined faith, which is divested of unrestricted questioning, transforms into something quite the contrary. Such as an irrational ideology or a superstition. A lack of inquiry and examination would thus leave open motivational cues, potentially leading to forms of fanaticism.

To further witness an affiliation between theology and philosophy, take the common handmaiden view. Where theology seeks to work with revelation and philosophy as an obedient associate. The handmaid is assigned to intellectually provide a substantiating equilibrium to the deliverances of theology. It does this by invoking certain philosophical methods. Philosophy's handmaiden approach to theology has been described by Crisp,

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<sup>12</sup> Although the above points require elaboration, the reader shall witness, an expansion drawing back to most of the points during this paper. This shall include the methodological approaches which give rise to such differing conceptions of God.

D'Costa, Davies and Hampson (2013) in two capacities. These include formally and materially. The former of these roles employs the distinguishing ambitions of analytic philosophy such as logical rigour, parsimony, and coherence. It equips theology with enough strategic intelligibility, not just to promote its rankings among other disciplines, but preparing it to logically confront its adversaries. This places theology confidently on the front line of intellectual exchange. Particularly in virtue of contesting those who intend to oppose and even denigrate its object. The latter of these roles assists theology in erecting sophisticated conceptual models (frameworks) that are thorough and effective enough in being able to address many religious issues. This provides theology with intricate theoretical resources to which it can fall back on while defending and arguing for its object.

Both roles appear to offer a little more than mere support. They seem to analytically modify the approach of theology. By which I mean it methodologically enhances theology. Consequently, this influences its definition and shapes the way it is conceived of. To appreciate this, consider theology in the absence of such methodological enhancements. If theology can sustain its defining characteristics, in the absence of what philosophy has to offer, would it appear debilitated? Lyman (1913) thinks that the credibility of theology need not be impacted under such circumstances. Theology defined in isolation, by Lyman (1913), is an intellectual interpretation. That is not just of the religion it is affiliated to, but also its development along with its relation to the rest of life. The intellectual nature by which it endeavours to convey scripture would supposedly include various facets of analysis which philosophy similarly has to offer in addition, but perhaps in a more stringent and codified manner. Therefore, in the absence of philosophy's support, theology it seems is already a dynamic enterprise which endeavours to provide systematic expositions of certain doctrines of religion. That is not to suggest its affiliation with philosophy is entirely uncalled for.

The collaboration between theology and philosophy poses a further problem. This problem arises from the methodological enhancement which philosophy offers theology. That is, the more interconnected the collaboration between both disciplines proves to be, the more theology becomes dissociated with faith. The term which I refer to as 'faith' here is not synonymous with 'belief'. Faith would presuppose belief in the sense that beliefs seek to express the components of faith. It is usually the case that many folks manifest their beliefs of a given faith in a manner which fails to accurately correspond to the faith itself. It so happens at times that the beliefs, which are upheld with a significant level of conviction, not only fail in accurately corresponding to the faith in question but subsequently begin to influence the faith itself. Whereby altering the essential components of faith. In such a case, faith becomes distorted from an inverse perspective, which is perpetually creating a personalised faith of a peculiar and eccentric nature.

Faith, nonetheless, possesses an intricate existential nature that is fundamental to people's lives in many ways. Pailin (1968) identifies 'faith as a complex phenomenon' which is constituted and manifested from a various range of outlooks, temperaments, ideals, and practices. Religious faith would be grounded in scriptural claims about reality and the Will of God for instance. Depending on how one construes such sacred ordinances, it would

perhaps determine personal attitudes in relation to how s/he chooses to live their life. It becomes an almost conclusive element that is subjectively (privately) justifiable. Consequently, such internal attitudes may dictate dispositions, characteristics, values, and practices, which are conceived to be parallel with the Will of God. The subtle nature of this subjective (or private) justification would be conditional on exactly how much meaningful import one would be prepared to grant scriptural claims and the Will of God on two fronts. That is, on face-value of the sacred text itself and/or an attempt to acquire a more profound understanding of its meanings. Accepting the literal text as divine and sacred, in the sense that it is nothing other than the actual word of God, would be an initial, yet significant contributor. Perhaps one that is responsible for amplifying its intrinsic worth and prominence. Subsequently, this would inspire a further interest in striving to understand what is being said, its actual meaning, and how it ought to be understood. An insightful understanding in this regard may motivate a kind of meaningful import that would stimulate an individual in his/her devotional application.

Both these elements, however, would fail in delivering a faith that is free from considerable misrepresentations associated to the faith in question. Every attempt in corresponding to the faith in question would be open to the possibility of an inaccurate correspondence. This is because drawing a correspondence in order to arrive at truths about God is very different to drawing a correspondence in arriving at truths about perceivable reality. Of course, this would presuppose a particular view about how we conceive of God. For those who accept the Kantian proscription on knowledge would not hesitate to abandon the appeal to evidence in attempting to grasp divine reality. Simply because it is inaccessible to us. God, in this context would be conceded, as Tillich (1972) has argued, as the absolute subject who exceeds all human categories. It is only in virtue of a sublime and mystical dimension through which God can be truly experienced. This includes an expression of rich metaphors and contemplative silence. I suppose this demonstrates one of the central complexities which encapsulates the spectacle of faith; where you invest a degree of conviction in something which transcends human conceivability. Moreover, it amounts to a gap filled with inaccuracy between two intimate things like faith and belief.

The association between theology and faith then seems to diminish when the collaboration between theology and philosophy strengthens. However, irrespective of the collaboration with philosophy, theology would still encounter some form of dissociation with faith itself. This brings us to our latter presupposition, namely, the way in which theology is necessarily bound to faith. Theology seeks to make rational sense of the contents of faith. Pailin (1996), while referring to John Macquarrie in this regard, defines theology as a specific method of study. The kind which involves reflection and a rational inquiry that adequately expresses the contents of faith via a coherent language. One way in coming closer to achieving this would involve understanding the imports of faith. Subsequently, these imports can be expressed with the aid of language. However, could there be a possible instance in which theology is able to function in the absence of faith? Would a lack of faith leave theology vacuous? Or would the non-existence of faith leave theology without an objective. When we think about the term 'theology' itself, as opposed to various ways in

which it might be characterised, we are to some extent accustomed in conceiving it as an *analytic* term. Where the predicate 'possessing faith and/or believing in the contents of faith' is contained in the subject. This means to say that the term 'theology' cannot be conceived of in the absence of faith. The semantic nature of how theology is understood in the vernacular thus bears a necessary connection to faith. Faith's connection to theology, however, is not the same. Given that the nature of faith is somewhat illusive, a possible definition can be conceived without connecting it to theology.

Despite theology's intimate reliance on faith, in principle they are relatively distinct from one another. Given the complexities which are involved in any one individual's faith, we intuitively begin to associate religious faith with God. This means a considerable investment and sincere endeavour is dedicated in seeking the truth about divine reality (in any possible capacity). There appear to be two major components to this line of thinking. The first is that a divine reality exists. The second is our apprehension and understanding of it. Although the former necessitates the latter, they are somewhat existentially separate from one another. Theology can be seen as external to faith in the sense that, although it has everything to do with faith for its own existence and application, it provides a human perspective to what faith has to offer. It is nothing more than a human endeavour, as Torrance (1969) states, in seeking the truth. This subsequently involves, apprehending God as far as it is possible, understanding *how* and exactly *what* we apprehend about Him, and then expressing it in a coherent and lucid manner.

Both evidentialist and reformed epistemologists would disagree with the dissociation I have drawn on between faith and theology. The evidentialist would only be prepared to invest in a type of faith that possesses sufficient justification. The reformed epistemologist would attempt to offer sufficient justification by way of accepting indubitable basic (non-inferential) beliefs that are considered properly basic. In both cases, the evidentialist and the reformed epistemologist are providing, what they consider adequate justifications, for the content of their faith. In doing so they are both referring to an epistemic analysis which seeks to ascertain the contents of their faith. It is this analysis that inextricably ties it to theology.

I concede that each position tends to enter a labyrinth of philosophical views that are beyond the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, some elements that are in line with the objectives of this paper, shall be discussed. The extent of such debates can be generally categorised between the forceful exchange of faith and reason. The inherent nature of the two has provoked much engagement between philosophers and theologians. It has invigorated a wide-ranging and extremely productive discourse throughout history. A perpetual exchange of ideas on this topic has surfaced in many religious traditions. The conceptual terrain where both faith and reason converge has been trodden on by philosophers and theologians alike. Perhaps those philosophers and philosophical theologians who subscribe to Christian theism are the primary culprits in mobilising the tools of analytic philosophy in the service of Christian theology. This specific convergence is, in many ways, responsible for the rise of analytic theology. In fact, Crisp (2011) acknowledges this, where he refers to analytic theology as a successor to these intersecting endeavours.

## Challenges of Analytic Theology

For analytic theology to demonstrate a type of novelty in its approach to various religious doctrines, it must stand up to demanding questions of methodology. Most, if not all, of these questions would seek to determine how we ought to go about doing this type of theology. Crisp (2011) has highlighted two primary concerns in this regard. Firstly, there are ‘procedural concerns’. These are captured by the following question: ‘how should we go about *doing* theology?’ Secondly, there are ‘material concerns’. These are captured by the following question: ‘what is doctrine such and such about?’. The former of these concerns is foundational, in the sense that it motivates the latter.

I suppose we could loosely divide the uncertainties in and around analytic theology in at least two ways. On the one hand you have uncertainties that arise from various elements of analytic theology. These uncertainties could emerge from foundational concerns in epistemology, metaphysics, and logic. Subsequently they could have a direct bearing on methodological perspectives that practically impact one’s life in some way. On the other hand, you could be sceptical about the entire enterprise of analytic theology. This need not be a consequence of uncertainties that have been accumulated by foundational concerns. Instead, it may be a profound suspicion about the underlying agenda of analytic theology. Further still, it could be an overwhelming doubt about why analytic theology is even required. That is, why is there a need to repackage and reiterate theological doctrines via the tools of analytic philosophy. Is it because there is a dissatisfaction with our *belief* in the contents of scripture and how certain doctrines that have already been expressed? Or are we merely discontent with the quality of our belief of certain doctrines. Or further still, are we intellectually frustrated by the way in which these doctrines have previously been explained?

The former kind of uncertainty has the scope for hosting proponents who occupy a middle ground between a wholehearted acceptance and an outright rejection of analytic theology. In the case of those proponents, who require a little persuasion, many issues would need to be addressed satisfactorily. It would require, as Wood (2013) suggests, more on the part of analytic theologians to broaden their scope of debate and reconsider some of the persistent issues in and around analytic theology. He draws attention to a few of the issues which he would like to see addressed in his own ideal second volume of *Analytic Theology*<sup>13</sup>. The initial concern, according to Wood, that requires attention is ‘the realism question: is metaphysical realism theologically tenable?’ This is followed by ‘the style question: what, if anything, goes missing when one adopts the analytic style?’ He further refers to ‘the history question: when does history matter to the truth of theological claims?’ and lastly he asks, ‘the reason question: what is human reason and what are its limits?’ Each one of these questions, no doubt, is extremely pertinent. They carry a strong incentive for analytic theology. If they are addressed satisfactorily, they may be able to offer the forceful

<sup>13</sup> Wood has recently published this volume: Wood, W. (2021). *Analytic theology and the academic study of religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

persuasion required to convince those who harbour uncertainties. I wholeheartedly agree with Wood on these matters. Analytic theology requires a much-needed reconsideration on many fronts. Equally, it should consider broadening the scope of debate for it to be received as an accommodating discipline.

The latter kind of uncertainty is a type of scepticism. It is a scepticism about the entire enterprise of analytic theology. A type of cynicism about its very nature and existence. The very fact there are such concerns, at least in some respect, would call into question the motivational factors of analytic theology. This need not be a non-scholarly perspective. It could most certainly be entertained by philosophers and theologians alike who take the questions I raised on this matter seriously. I believe such scholars possess enough evidence to repudiate analytic theology. Most notably, Crisp (2011), highlights Brian Leither's view on this matter. Leither cannot bring himself to accept analytic theology. This is because, he is rather adamant, that no one seems to know exactly what analytic theology is. This view seems to gain its motivation from issues that surround the lack of definitive definitions of philosophy and theology, as we previously discussed. An extension of such issues would reduce the definition of analytic theology to nothing more than, analytic philosophy occupying the fertile ground of theological discourse. A kind of analytic philosophical theology if you like. Considering this, why then should anyone feel the need to converge the two disciplines in a manner where one is said to be sympathetic to the other. It seems redundant to innovatively fabricate a new perspective on religious doctrines that, ironically, is not free from various ambiguities? Establishing analytic theology must then come at a heavy cost. It must carry forth the existing fundamental issues of each one of the disciplines that constitute it.

These are hard-hitting questions. They begin with internally probing the methodology of analytic theology and end with doubts about the very nature and existence of it. I agree that these questions require extensive attention. They need to be adequately fleshed out and clearly addressed. However, some may think that these questions misconstrue the very nature of analytic theology. Probably implying that I have misread or misinterpreted analytic theology. My interlocutors may have a point. Although, I do not think that the matters I have dwelled on would count as misconceptions of analytic theology *per se*. Resultantly, the outcome of much of what I have discussed need not be considered as analytic theology *per se* also. Matters such as the ones I have drawn attention to, perhaps better fall under the guise of meta-analytic theology. These are questions concerning the inherent nature of analytic theology, its boundaries, and application. If analytic theology is hoping to convince those who harbour specific uncertainties, then it cannot discard these questions. Even if such questions may preclude analytic theology from getting off the ground.

In line with my objective, I shall investigate the former of these uncertainties. That is the uncertainties that emerge from foundational concerns in epistemology, metaphysics, and logic. Though, I shall not engage with logical concerns on this occasion. In sum, it would be an investigation into one of the predominant approaches adopted by analytic theology in reaching its objective.

## Characterising Analytic Theology

Michael Rea (2020) states that analytic theology essentially involves ‘bringing the style, method, and literature of analytic philosophy to bear on theological topics’. This is not exactly a novel initiative. It has been practised by reputable philosophers who have been active in reviving the philosophy of religion and developing philosophical theology for some time now. Analytic philosophy has outgrown from these disciplines. Though “the concept of analytic theology, the concept of a self-consciously interdisciplinary philosophical-theological activity of the sort just described that deserves both the label ‘analytic’ and the label ‘theology’, is of more recent origin” (Rea, 2020, p.1)<sup>14</sup>. Göcke (2021), offers a slightly detailed characterisation of analytic theology. He states:

Based on experience, reason, and divine revelation, analytic theology attempts to establish an all-encompassing theological theory of God, the world, and human life to contribute to the salvation of souls. In order to develop this theory, analytic theology deploys the tools of analytic philosophy: It strives for clear and precise conceptual analysis, which it uses to formulate clear descriptive and normative theses about the existence and essence of God, the fundamental nature of the world, and the purpose and goal of human life. It then strives for the formulation of sound deductive, and strong inductive, and abductive arguments to justify the truth and rational acceptability of its account of reality. It uses reason, experience, and a hermeneutic of divine revelation to show that together these sources of human knowledge provide the most adequate perspective on the nature of God, the world, and human life that is able to synthesize the insights of the humanities and the natural sciences into a coherent whole. Analytic theology, by its very nature, therefore is interdisciplinary and must engage the humanities and the sciences. (Göcke, 2021, p.59)

Characterisations of this kind seemingly give a false impression about how easy it is to define analytic theology. No doubt, as Wood (2021) suggests, there is an easy way to define it. Yet, the ease of offering such a definition comes with a ‘reasonable level of precision’. Demanding anything more than that, namely, attempting to specify necessary and sufficient conditions, would end our pursuit in vain. To demonstrate this point further, a major international symposium which was published in 2009 by Oxford University Press entitled *Analytic Theology*, testifies to the differing characteristics and modes under which it operates. In retrospect, Rea (2020) states that,

The idea of analytic theology grew out of conversations during the 2004–5 academic year between Oliver Crisp and myself about the puzzling fact that, despite the recent turn in mainstream philosophy of religion towards traditional topics in systematic theology (trinity, incarnation, and atonement most notably), there had been very little by way of genuine and productive interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophers of religion and their counterparts in theology. Philosophical theology as practised by analytic philosophers seemed not even to be recognized as theology; and, with few exceptions, academic theologians and analytic philosophers of religion seemed generally uninterested in exploring their intersecting research topics in dialogue with one another. Both states of affairs seemed problematic and, as we discussed the matter, we thought that perhaps a volume might be called for – a volume tendentiously entitled Analytic

<sup>14</sup> Rea, M. (2020). *Essays in analytic theology. Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Theology – that would call attention to and begin some much needed conversation about the historical, methodological, and epistemological issues lurking in the background of this disciplinary divide. (Rea, 2020, p.1)

On reflection of the initial volume on analytic theology, Rea recognizes that it served as the groundwork for much needed conversations. These involved some conversations that engaged with aspects of meta-analytic theology. This is the territory where boundaries of definitions, methodologies, and applications are discussed. Over a decade later, I do not think we have come much closer to resolving the meta-analytic theology issues. Considering this, I suppose Wood (2021) is right when he says that “I am convinced that there are no absolute, fixed boundaries between philosophy and theology, or, for that matter, between analytic and non-analytic philosophy, from which it follows that there are no absolute, fixed boundaries between analytic theology and other closely related forms of inquiry” (Wood, 2021, p.48).

Though, when it comes to the activity that analytic theology is engaged in Rea (2011) states:

As I see it, analytic theology is just an activity of approaching theological topics with the ambitions of an analytic philosopher and in a style that conforms to the prescriptions that are distinctive of analytic philosophical discourse. (Rea in Crisp and Rea, 2011, p.7)

This characterisation seems to prioritise theology over philosophy. If that is the case, then it comes at a cost. To appreciate this, consider the approach to theological topics in virtue of the following two conditions: ‘the ambitions of an analytic philosopher’ and ‘a style that conforms to the prescriptions that are distinctive of analytic philosophical discourse’. Concerning the first condition, Rea, provides an overview of some of the common ambitions that analytic philosophy is faithful to. The first of these ambitions is comprised of the following two modes:

- I. ... to identify the scope and limits of our powers to obtain knowledge of the world’, and
- II. ... to provide such true explanatory theories as we can in areas of inquiry (metaphysics, morals, and the like) that fall outside of the scope of the natural sciences. (Rea in Crisp and Rea, 2011, p.4)

The former of these modes, he suggests, ‘might be loosely (and, many of us would say, inaccurately) described as a quest for the ‘foundations’ of knowledge – a quest that, thus described, obviously takes for granted the *existence* of foundations.’ From the perspective of a continental philosopher, it would be an investigation into the parameters of conceivability. This would involve attempting to outline the limits of human apprehension in obtaining knowledge. Whereas for the analytic philosopher, it is a critical project which determines to examine epistemological foundations aiming to show the inherent nature of their conceptual feasibility. Therefore, this mode is foundational in the sense that only once it is established can it begin erecting any given theoretical edifice. Moreover, it sets the groundwork for the subsequent mode.

In elaboration of the latter of these modes, he suggests that it ‘includes a quest for ‘local’ explanations of particular phenomenon – morality, causation, and composition, for example.’ This mode, as opposed to its former counterpart, is a little more than just setting

the epistemological foundations. It seeks to apply foundational theories to various phenomena. The motivation behind doing so is to offer explanatory theories to any given phenomena. This does not mean that each occurring phenomena would possess a unique explanation that is specific to it. Rather, there will be interconnected explanatory theories that offer explanations for certain phenomena that are connected in some way. In such cases it would produce 'global' explanations that are made up of an underlying set of comprehensive structures.

As for the second of these ambitions, he expresses an underlying component that is associated to analytic philosophy. This includes its unique style as 'prescriptions that are distinctive of analytic philosophical discourse'. In characterising this component, he makes mention of the following prescriptions:

1. Write as if philosophical positions and conclusions can be adequately formulated in sentences that can be formalized and logically manipulated.
2. Prioritize precision, clarity, and logical coherence.
3. Avoid substantive (non-decorative) use of metaphor and other tropes whose semantic content outstrips their propositional content.
4. Work as much as possible with well-understood primitive concepts, and concepts that can be analysed in terms of those.
5. Treat conceptual analysis (insofar as it is possible) as a source of evidence. (Rea in Crisp and Rea, 2011, p.5-6)

Rea suggests that this is not an exhaustive list. Many more candidates could easily qualify under the current ones. His limiting to these specific prescriptions seems to relay a certain kind of characterising style of the analytic tradition. Whereby, if he enlisted more appropriate candidates, it would begin looking like a standoff with the continental tradition. Since, pedantically adding to a list which seeks to characterise analytic philosophy would, inadvertently, be drawing on the opposing characteristics of continental philosophy. Rea is aware of the contentious presuppositions associated to the enlisted prescriptions, at least for the non-analytic philosophers.

The reality which surrounds both ambitions would have an unsettling, deep-seated reservation for some theologians. Though not all theologians would be moved by such ambitions. Perhaps for those theologians who bear some sympathy with analytic philosophy, yet are not entirely committed to the analytic tradition, would not be concerned with the issues surrounding these ambitions. Instead, they may envisage analytic theology in much the same way they envisage philosophical theology. That is, they would not conceive of analytic theology as a collaborative project in its technical sense. For them, the 'analytic philosophy' in 'analytic theology' is an entirely separate entity, which is provisionally invoked to a theological end.

What about those who would find these ambitions conceptually unfeasible in their amalgamation with theology. And those who do not find their application to specific religious doctrines amenable. We could perhaps understand the current issue, at least for the non-analytic philosopher, by taking a second look at Rea's characterisation of analytic theology. He emphasises the application of the two specific ambitions as almost neces-

sary components of analytic theology. Moreover, the *utility* of both ambitions is seemingly quite important for qualifying and sustaining analytic theology. In all fairness, the existence of the issue which I am referring to here has very little to do with Rea's characterisation. Instead, as we touched on earlier, it is a foundational issue that emerges out of the very nature of the collaboration between analytic philosophy and theology. Nonetheless, Rea acknowledges the issues surrounding the application of these ambitions. In fact, he concedes that these ambitions are in some way responsible for, and significantly contribute to the 'current hostility towards analytic approaches to theological topics'.

### Taking a Closer Look at the Ambitions

Let us take a closer look as to why both these ambitions would be a source of deep-seated reservation for theologians (and/or even non-analytic philosophers). Furthermore, how are these ambitions responsible for contributing to the 'current hostility towards analytic approaches to theological topics'.

#### 1. 'Ambitions of an analytic philosopher':

The first of these ambitions is constituted of the two modes mentioned above. These appear to be reciprocal modes that complement one another. That is because the outcome of the former mode influences the latter in virtue of a given phenomenon. Consequently, this impacts our understanding of how the former mode ought to be conceived. Thus, there exists a complementary correspondence of ideas between the two modes. Where each one conceptually shapes our understanding of the other. In principle then each one of them would be equally responsible for contributing to the issue at hand.

However, despite the possible existence of this complementary shaping of ideas between both modes, we shall give preference to the apparent sequence. Where the former mode precedes the latter. My focus shall be on the former mode, which is responsible for the principal task of providing epistemological foundations (for the anticipated task of analytic theology), due to which, the latter modes exist. My attention to the former mode is not to avoid any particular outcome associated to the latter that may prove relevant to my objective. Instead, it is an inclusive approach. An explanation of the former shall inevitably incorporate implicational consequences of the latter. And since philosophy's task is to engage with the latter mode, it would become a meticulous task in sifting through the relevant philosophical theories that conceptually influence the former mode.

The essential task of the former mode is to formulate an epistemological foundation upon which analytic theology can be erected. This would be done with a theological end in mind. The former mode would thus be mindful and sympathetic to how it goes about approaching various doctrines of a given religion. Though, there shall be limitations to being mindful and sympathetic. Otherwise, it may compromise the philosophical ambitions it hopes to incorporate. This would mean that there shall be instances where the theology or a particular religious doctrine would have to concede to the philosophical ambitions in

some way. This might involve revising the concept of God<sup>15</sup> or how He is ought to be conceived. Such a revision would be in-line with the analytic ambitions that analytic theology has accepted as its integral part. But where should this investigation begin? It only seems plausible for the former mode to appeal to reason in establishing a starting point. After all, it is laying the groundwork for philosophical ambitions that are specific to the analytic tradition. To what extent this appeal to reason would impact the sympathy towards certain religious doctrines is an important question. Nevertheless, appealing to reason would imply the possibility to have epistemic access to religious truths. It would, in fact, see religious facts as being analytically objective. Much like as 'God sees it'. This presents at least two issues for those who subscribe to this view.

The first is regarding those who out rightly reject the existence of any such truths. One of the reasons for rejecting these truths would have to do with presupposing a specific view of reality. Furthermore, it would involve subscribing to a particular theory of truth that is adequately able to represent that reality. The plethora of debates on both aspects are apparent. Disputes between the Quinean mainstream (standard) meta-ontology and non-standard ontology, such as Meinongianism, are rife. So are the disputes on competing theories of truth. Considering this, selecting a decisive metaphysical view on either ontological matters or a truth theory that would prove comprehensively amenable with a religious doctrine, would prove difficult. The second is regarding those who are prepared to grant the existence of such objective religious truths yet dismiss epistemic access to them. The kind of epistemic access referred to here is not a mere intuition, optimism, or an inherent gut-feeling, which warrants the existence of such truths. Perhaps a form of Kantianism or neo-Kantianism may be willing to grant these subjective phenomena some credibility. This may be on the grounds that certain truths not only exist but transcend all human categories. In this case doctrines that are considered as religious axioms would be conceived of as metaphors of human *religious* experience.

2. The 'style that conforms to the prescriptions that are distinctive of analytic philosophical discourse':

The second of these ambitions concerns prescriptions on how analytic philosophy is done (or how it ought to operate). It focuses on the method and style of how analytic philosophy is supposedly done. Although, the above-mentioned prescriptions are not conclusive as to how analytic philosophy *ought* to be done. Rea has done a decent job in accumulating some of the primary methodological criteria. I suppose on the surface, most, if not all, of analytic philosophers would not have an issue with them. Though some features would be considered more integral than others, such as 'analysis'. The compliance to

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<sup>15</sup> I am not suggesting that the motivation in 'revising the concept of God' is exclusive under the circumstances where the current study of God is somehow made redundant. Rather, my point is specific to the method of analytic theology. On this point, Crisp (2011) emphasises that analytic theology should not be revisionist exercise. It should be descriptive in its approach, where it focuses on making sense on what we have at our disposal and not about producing novel theories.

‘analysis’ for analytic philosophers situated in academies across the anglosphere is evident. Glock (2008) makes reference to Beaney (2003) who suggests that, ‘If anything characterises “analytic” philosophy, then it is presumably the emphasis placed on analysis’. Glock (2008) appears unconvinced with any such characterisation, and for pretty good reason I suspect. He implies that this tightly knotted bond between analytic philosophy and analysis is essentially owed to the vast contributions made in the field, only while having firmly adopted the ‘single unifying method’. Much can be said on what ‘analysis’ exactly implies here as opposed to before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And, if clarity is a sufficient feature in characterising analytic philosophy. However, the matter which concerns us is how a strict compliance to the prescriptions would result in an antagonistic reception by some theologians and non-analytic philosophers. Rea has alluded to some of these contentions in relation to these prescriptions. I suppose we can categorise these contentions while approaching them from two positions.

The first of these contentions would imply the wrong set of priorities for those who approach religious doctrines with the prescriptions characterising analytic philosophy. If there already exists a level of commitment towards features like clarity and precision, it will diminish the theological or doctrinal import. I shall come to how this might happen. For now, we need to appreciate that an uncompromising commitment to features that are integral to the prescriptions would be unwilling to entertain alternative features. For instance, features that are not akin to the prescriptions and the analytic tradition overall, such as theological or religious mystery, metaphor, narrative, or literary tropes.

The second of these contentions, sums up the existing hostility between theologians, or non-analytic philosophers, and analytic theologians. It does this by posing an important question. The question seeks to inquire the utility of these prescriptions on the grounds that there are divine mysteries which lay far beyond our ken. If the theologian subscribes to certain religious doctrines that, according to him, transcend the very integral features of these prescriptions and analysis, then would the analysis be willing to give way to such doctrines? This question creates the adequate scenario from which we would ascertain the level of sympathy that analytic philosophy would be willing to exercise in its approach to theology.

### **Antagonistic Nature of the Ambitions**

In dealing with these ambitions, I shall focus on an underlying metaphysical issue. This will involve discussing the epistemological implications of metaphysical realism and anti-realism and whether they are theologically tenable. The relevance that both metaphysical realism and anti-realism bear to the ambitions shall become evident in moving forward. My aim shall be to establish whether realism and anti-realism is theologically amenable by measuring their application against a given religious doctrine. If the results are such where the take-away of the doctrine in question is overridden or misrepresented, then the theological cost of these ambitions shall be apparent. If, on the other hand, the results are such where the take-away of the doctrine in question is not diminished in anyway, then the theological success in applying these ambitions shall be apparent.

For the analytic philosopher, these ambitions may be taken for granted. However, that may not be the case for the theologian. The way the theologian receives these ambitions from a theological context is important. Its importance extends to meta-analytic theological concerns that I drew on earlier, such as the existence of analytic theology and how to go about doing it. Although, the kind of results one ends up with when approaching meta-analytic theological matters from a *proper* theological context, would depend on the theology they are committed to. Differing theologies would offer contrasting views on various religious doctrines. The differences in theological matters of just one religious tradition are numerous, let alone of different religious traditions. Considering the plethora of theological differences that exist, how would analytic theology (as a universal academic enterprise) exercise a sympathetic approach to all of them in an impartial way. Would it be possible to apply the specified analytic ambitions to radically differing theological perspectives without distorting the content in question? Of course, we could have a specified set of analytic theologies that are relevant to different religious traditions. However, this would not address how analytic theology would sympathetically deal with the differences within any one religious tradition.

I shall begin by assuming that the ambitions 1 and 2 would possess meaningful import in virtue of a realist perspective as opposed to an anti-realist one. Prior to discussing some of the implications of each of the ambitions, I shall discuss what it means to maintain a theological realist and anti-realist position. I will begin by outlining the defining features of realism. Thereafter, I shall consider anti-realism as a rejection of those defining features (of realism).

Realism aims at ascribing objective truth-value to the existence of various objects and properties. It purports that entities of a particular category exist in a manner which is independent of our minds. Things of a certain problematic nature exist independent of our belief or knowledge regarding their existence. To provide some sense of a realist criteria, i.e., what conditions must be met to qualify as a realist, I shall refer to Blackburn (1994). He resorts to five conditions that qualify a given subject matter S as realist. The first is the sorts of things described by S exist. The second is that their existence is independent of us. In the sense that it is not an artefact of our minds, autonomous of our perception, language, and mental schema. The third is that the statements with which we are referring to S are not reducible to other kinds of statements. Where we end up digressing so much that it results in something other than the subject-matter in question. The fourth is that the statements we make about S are truth-apt. This means they are such descriptions of S in the world that can be verified to either hold as true or false by facts in the world. The fifth is that the truths about S are attainable. Making them possible to acquire and upholding a belief about S that is intelligible<sup>16</sup>.

A commitment to such conditions would seem somewhat compelling. It endorses the position of common-sense. It does so in a manner that construes reality as it '*actually is*' and not just as it '*ought to be*'. A rejection of this position would be a rejection of one of

<sup>16</sup> Blackburn, S. (1994) *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

the outlined criteria. An alternative to any one of the outlined criteria would possibly resort to an anti-realist position (although not necessarily). An anti-realist position holds a mind-dependent reality. Where our conceptual faculties play an integral part in how we construe reality. An anti-realist position may be motivated in at least one of two ways. By rejecting the nature of a reality as construed by the realist. Or, by offering precedence to our conceptual faculties in construing the nature of reality. To the extent where our inferences about a mind-independent world would be deemed meaningless.

Both positions must confront some serious challenges. Realism, for instance, would need to account for our experiences or perceptions in yielding genuine knowledge of a mind-independent world? Despite the common-sense appeal to realism, it is charged with a form of scepticism. This is on the grounds for advocating a stark disconnection between our beliefs and their standard of correctness. The predicament this gives rise to is the failure to postulate a decisive causal connection between facts and our beliefs. Alternatively, anti-realism does not offer a more plausible position. In fact, it encounters severe objections as opposed to its counterpart. Take Moore's (1903) refutation of anti-realist views (termed 'idealism'). He subjects the anti-realists to be prisoners of their own perceptions. That is because they fail to apprehend the distinctions between the *act* of seeing a colour and the *object* itself which is the colour in question. Moore, sees referring to various experiences and ideas in virtue of apprehending reality as a linguistic/semantic misrepresentation.

Transposing a realist or an anti-realist epistemology over to the domain of theology is a fundamental task. It is not in any way straightforward. A smooth transitioning between both epistemologies and theology would require the pedantic task of comprehensibly disentangling the subtleties that exist on both sides. We may be able to obtain some sense of this task given the issues I have briefly highlighted in both regards. To elaborate on these matters any more than I already have would run the risk of digressing from the aim of this paper. I shall, therefore, rely on the standard philosophical definitions of both realism and anti-realism as I have drawn on above. Considering this, I shall discuss the implications of realism and anti-realism in theology. That is, what would it mean to be a theological realist and/or a theological anti-realist?

### 1. Theological Realism:

I shall offer two perspectives on each view of theological realism and theological anti-realism. These shall be views offered by different philosophers. I will begin with Rea's (2007) take on realism<sup>17</sup>. Subsequently, I shall present Insole's (2006) take on realism<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Michael C. Rea. (2007). Realism in Theology and Metaphysics. In: Candler, A. and Cummingham, C. *Belief and Metaphysics*. London: SCM Press. 323-344. Rea has argued in this chapter that 'a realist treatment of doctrines in theology and metaphysics is untenable'.

<sup>18</sup> Christopher J. Insole (2006). *The Realist Hope A Critique of Anti-Realist Approaches in Contemporary Philosophical Theology*. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited. 2-3. Insole has argues for a realist position in his book.

Rea offers the following characterisation of realism:

- A. Where 'x' is a singular term, *realism about x* is the view that there is a y such that  $x = y$ .
- B. Where 'F' is a putative kind-term, *realism about Fs* is the view that there are Fs *and* that F is a genuine kind-term.
- C. Where 'T' refers to the linguistic expression of some claim, theory, or doctrine, to *interpret or treat T realistically* is (a) to interpret T as having an objective truth-value (and so to interpret it as something other than a mere evocative metaphor or expression of tastes, attitudes, or values); and (b) to interpret T in such a way that it *has realist truth-conditions*—i.e., it is true only if realism about the xs and Fs putatively referred to in the theory is true.
- D. Where 'D' refers to a discipline (like metaphysics or theology), *realism in D* is or involves interpreting the canonical statements of theories or doctrines in D realistically. (Rea, 2007, p.234)

Insole (2006) has offered an approach to religion from both a realist and anti-realist perspective. He outlines four principles<sup>19</sup>. These principles are characterisations of a realist account of religion. A rejection of any one of them would amount to an anti-realist account of religion. The realist principles are as follows:

- A. There is an indispensable core of religious utterances that are fact-asserting, not merely expressive.
- B. Statements are made true by a non-epistemic state of affairs (the way the world is, rather than by standards of 'ideal justification').
- C. What is the case is independent of human cognition.
- D. We can, in principle, have true beliefs about what is the case independent of human cognition. (Insole, 2006, p.2)

Considering both characterisations of realism in a religious context would infer at least two fundamental claims:

- 1. Such a thing as 'divine reality' (let us take 'divine reality' to mean God and His attributes) *exists*.
- 2. We can make meaningful statements about the 'divine reality' in question.

Terms such as 'reality' and 'God' would require unpacking over here. Especially if we are to determine what the view in sum of both claims would amount to. The term 'reality' is ambiguous. Given this, let us adopt the following working definition: 'how things *actually* are'. This contrasts with how things may appear to us. This definition seeks to emphasise a stark distinction that lies between the world and man as its measure. Thus, it is a distinction between how intelligent perceivable beings may employ their cognitive faculties in attempting to make sense of the world and how the world *actually* is. There are at least two things we can take away from this distinction. Firstly, regardless of the striking similar-

<sup>19</sup> Insole (2006) has made reference to William P. Alston. (1995). Realism and Christian Faith. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*. 38 (3), 37-60. Although Alston has set out three defining principles which amount to realism, and which correspond to Insole's first three principles [A to C], he had made an addition of [D] which, as he says, 'Alston implicitly relies on in his criticism of Hick and Kaufman'.

ities between the reality of things and our conception of them, there is a stark ontological difference dividing them. Secondly, the existence of the world is completely independent of our cognitive faculties in the sense that it does not require it for its existence.

However, defining 'reality' becomes abstruse when attempting to determine what it includes. Are we to construe *all* things, whether it be things in themselves and their properties, under the guise of a realist view of reality? How would we ontologically account for various abstract properties, such as numbers and time? Is there a defining parameter in virtue of which we can neatly include certain objects and reject others? As pertinent as these questions may be in attempting to reach some definitive ground about what to include and exclude from this view of reality, we need something workable. In this case, it would suffice to consider reality as 'ontic reality'. This is a quality belonging to phenomena that is external, independent of human cognitive faculties, and objective. We could quite naturally think of this kind of reality in opposition to 'empirical reality' which is a reality we tend to experience.

The term 'God' bears divergent connotations. It is the object of study for theology. The way various religious traditions have earnestly sought to understand God has given rise to a plethora of concepts that continue to flourish. Despite this, I shall focus on a specific view of God that has two overarching purposes. The first is that it does not receive serious analytic philosophical attention as opposed to alternative concepts of God. Perhaps it is neglected by the analytic tradition since it cannot be squared with logical features such as completeness and consistency. The second is that it provides considerable weight for my argument. This God is one which bears standard conceptions situated within mainstream monotheistic religious traditions. These traditions may, in sum, be referred to as the Abrahamic Faiths. Although, a major departure from this standard conception would be that I shall consider this God to be transcendent. This means God is beyond our ability to conceive of Him and no meaningful proposition can be uttered about Him. God transcends all human categories, superseding all possible conceptions of Him. In other words, God is the other in the sense that He is not just another existing entity in the universe who occupies the same ontological space as His creation.

God's absolute nature can only be acknowledged through a sublime, mystical dimension, which bestows the seeker with a transcendental experience of Him. Tillich (1967) has supported such a view. Tillich draws an association between an inspirational experience (recognition) in being able to grant the presence of God with a rich set of metaphors. These metaphors are not actual representations of God in any way. Instead, they act as indirect cues that aid an experiential and mystical apprehension of God. We can trace this idea back to others such as the Greek Fathers. Moreover, proponents of this view can also be found after the 16<sup>th</sup> century, such as Blaise Pascal. Pascal had attributed an 'unknowability' to God since for him no propositional statement could linguistically express anything about His nature.

However, this view catastrophically fails to get off the ground. If nothing can be attributed to God, then there would be no purposeful religious content. Nothing with a meaningful import could be conceived of and expressed in substantiating any religious

claim. Rauser (2009) has neatly summed up William Alston's (1985)<sup>20</sup> reply to this objection.

To answer this question, William Alston has helpfully identified an ascending scale of transcendence. The lowest transcendence claim is infinity, which denies that God is subject to finitude; next is timelessness, which denies that God is subject to temporality; third is simplicity, which denies that God is subject to composition. But the highest transcendence claim is that God transcends the subject/object split and so is not a being but rather 'Being-itself'. (Rauser, 2009, p.43)

Removing God from the categorical divide of subject and object altogether, frees Him from the constructs of grammar and, more generally, language. Predicating God in any sense would cast Him within the grammatical divide of subject and predicate. God transcends this divide and lies beyond the limits of language. His being is not situated among the grammatical constraints of our linguistic expressions and nor is it located in our ontology. Instead, His being is 'Being-itself'. This distinguishes God Being-itself from a reality that encapsulates or inhibits Him. In this case God is by definition, Being-itself. Not in a pantheistic sense but in an absolutely unique sense.

I confess that this concept of God is not popular amongst theologians, let alone philosophers. Moreover, the validity of the objections raised above cannot be denied and nor should they be overlooked<sup>21</sup>. However, for the purpose of this paper, I shall consider this position on God and how it proves to be incompatible with analytic ambitions. It should be noted that the focus is not, and should not, be on the philosophical coherence and soundness of the concept of God that I have selected. Rather, if such a concept of God is devotedly espoused by any of the Abrahamic Faiths, then by analytic theology standards, the analytic ambitions ought to be sympathetic to them. Analytic philosophy should play its role as a handmaiden and not a superintendent. Considering this, my concern is how far can the analytic ambitions exercise a sympathetic approach to this view of God.

We now have a nuanced idea of both terms, namely, 'reality' and 'God'. This shall help put things into perspective. Let us now return to the above two statements and assess them in light of what has been drawn on so far.

1. Such a thing as 'divine reality' *exists*.

This statement appears to be somewhat evident and even conditional for anyone who is to believe in a God. In the absence of such a 'condition' how would it even be possible to inaugurate any kind of belief? Nonetheless, for the realist, 'God *exists*', amounts to

<sup>20</sup> William P. Alston. (1985). Functionalism and Theological Language. *American Philosophical Quarterly*. 22 (3), 221-230.

<sup>21</sup> I have discussed this objection in later works. See:

Ahsan, A. (2019) The Paradox of an Absolute Ineffable God of Islam. *Philotheos*, 19(2), pp.227-259.

Ahsan, A. (2020) God Beyond the Boundary-Stones of Thought. *American Journal of Islam and Society*, 37 (3-4), pp.50-97.

Ahsan, A. (2020) The logical inconsistency in making sense of an ineffable God of Islam. *Philotheos*, 20(1), pp.68-116.

two things; First, there is such a thing as an independent reality which does not depend on, nor is influenced by, our conceptions or linguistic expressions in any way. Second, that this reality includes God. This is opposed to the atheist who would reject this claim, arguing that reality does not include God. Now given the concept of God that I have selected, God cannot be subject to this reality. For God to be situated within this reality would imply that He is inhibited by it. It would impinge on God's greatness to be encapsulated by a created thing. Instead, God is 'Being-itself'. He is the ultimate reality, in the sense that He is not included or encapsulated by it. His existence is not conditional upon the existence of this reality. Nor does the existence of this reality have anything to do with sustaining His existence.

It would perhaps help referring to Hick's (1989) distinction between 'the real in itself' and the 'real as humanly thought and experienced'. Hick suggests that although it is ordinarily accepted that God exists regardless of our conceptions of Him, any inferences made on the part of God would inevitably fall in the latter distinction of 'real'. Nonetheless, if we consider the 'real in itself', as something independent not just of human conceptions of God but God Himself, then we run into the same issues. However, if we are to consider God Being-itself then He *is* by definition being itself who not only transcends reality but sustains it.

2. We can make meaningful statements about the 'divine reality' in question.

This statement on the other hand is problematic with regards to the concept of God that I have outlined above. This statement infers that despite there being an independent reality which is not reliant on human conception in any way, we can make meaningful statements about God. It ascribes objectivity to the statements we make about God. It offers an epistemic privilege in having access to the knowledge of God. It brings out the debate on semantic realism, which attempts to determine whether we should define the meaning of statements exclusively by their truth conditions that exist. Irrespective of whether we can establish them in any objective sense. Thus, this position would argue that meaningful statements that have an objective truth-value can be made while determining their truthfulness and falseness about the God in question. It would objectively quantify the transcendent God within our confinements of conceptual abilities and linguistic expressions. This would demote God to human postulates that seek to represent Him. What motivates this view is the idea that God and statements about Him correspond to the reality in question. That is despite ontic reality being independent of our experiences and conceptual considerations; it is within the grasp of our human reason. We can with the aid of intuition and intellectual insight propose scientific concepts which are adequately capable in verifying and evaluating reality in a manner which corresponds to how it actually is. In consequence, if God is to be considered as 'Being-itself', then it would imply a unique intelligible access to God from His perspective. It would provide a 'God's Eye point of view'. This would infer that the knowledge with which we manage to apprehend God in all His absoluteness would transcend God Himself.

### 3. Theological Anti-Realism:

Anti-realism would be distinguished from realism in the sense that it would reject one or more of the criteria that constitutes it. A rejection of anyone of the realist criterion would be responsible in formulating two of the foundational claims of anti-realism:

- a. There is no such reality which is independent of our conception.
- b. We do not have any intelligible access to it and thus fail to make any meaningful claims that accurately correspond to any such reality.

The first of these claims, in a theological context, would appear to be an outright rejection of God. It would not be prepared to grant the existence of any such reality which is independent of human conception and experience, let alone grant the existence of a reality that would actually *include* God. We could perhaps say this negation would also apply to a transcendent God. Where God is Being-itself in a wholly absolute sense of the matter. The anti-realist on this account would reject that any such reality exists, regardless of how it is considered or what it is constituted of.

The second of these claims, demonstrates the limited accessibility of human conception and experience. This is somewhat common and a rather distinctive characteristic of the anti-realist approach. It draws significant attention on the epistemological limitations of human capabilities. Despite this limitation, the reference to these faculties is considered foundational in construing reality. Consequently, our limited conceptual faculties are responsible in construing reality in the way we perceive it. If any such reality existed, which was totally independent of our conceptual abilities, then it would transcend the human ability in apprehending it. This is because it exceeds any possible means of acquiring knowledge of it. Any utterances which we make and experiences which we associate in being able to correspond to this reality would be meaningless. This point on failing to conceive of God, *if He existed* as Being-itself, would concur with the concept of God that I have selected. God would transcend all knowledge, superseding any conceptual ability which endeavours to comprehend Him. It would correspond in establishing what God is not by manifesting the limitations of human conceptual faculties.

The criticisms levelled against theological anti-realism mirror those of anti-realism without its theological context. Although, in this instance I am concerned with how we can possibly obtain any knowledge of God. That is, if the anti-realist were to hold a more hard-line view in asserting that no mind-independent reality exists, it would be implying an atheistic understanding of the matter. This brings me to Crisp's (2011) understanding. For Crisp it is compatible for analytic theology to adopt a theory which considers truths not to correspond to reality. In explaining his view, he says,

It seems to me that analytic theology, at least as I understand this method, is compatible with a range of theories of truth. One such theory or family of theories is the deflationary theory of truth. On this sort of view there are no truths as such, if we mean by that some property possession of which gives a sentence the truth function of being true. Sentences of the form '*p* is true', where *p* is some sentence expressing a proposition, have (it is said) an equivalent content to sentences that make no claim about the truth or falsehood of what is being stated. Truth is redun-

dant; it is merely a speech act that I perform when I affirm '*p* is true', or a means of demonstrating my assent to a particular assertion. (Crisp, 2011, p.47)

According to Crisp (2011) an analytic theologian can adopt this view in approaching any given theological or doctrinal matter. Any assertion made in this respect would be devoid of any truth. Instead, it would be considered as a linguistic utterance of some kind which is redundant of any meaning (a deflationary account of truth). Chingnell (2011) has taken this line of thought and attempted to align it with the Kantian position. Chingnell provides a distinction between '*believing*' from a merely theoretical perspective and '*believing*' from a perspective of 'assenting' or 'holding-as-true'. Despite the subtlety of this distinction, it paves the way for being able to engage in analytic theologising without assenting to or holding a theological or doctrinal matter as actually true. Atheists could quite casually occupy themselves in this kind of theologising without having to commit to the faith that is being analysed. It would offer them with the liberty in not having to conform to any set of religious doctrines. That is either while thoroughly subjecting them to critical scrutiny or making a case for them. But exactly what incentive would an atheist have in providing philosophical substantiation to any given religious doctrines? It would appear to be giving an opportunity to religious adversaries to strengthen their theoretical arguments against religion, undermining religion further. However, I find this particular concern rather trivial. Since when has religious investigation from any intellectual perspective been completely exclusive to religious proponents. The objection appears to give the impression that intellectual religious investigation is exclusively surreptitious, which is confined to only those who assent and hold-it-as-true.

An issue which is not as trivial as the one above, is if analytic theology would plausibly accommodate an atheistic approach to theologising, then what would stop it from introducing a vast array of methods and perspectives. It would be difficult to confine analytic theology to a specific mode of theologising. Instead, it would be open to contributions from a wide range of philosophical styles and methods. This would imply that the objectives would also considerably vary. It would be equally possible and plausible too, to take a given approach to any given theological and doctrinal matter without accepting God who is at the epicentre of all these matters. It would be as Macdonald (2014) has mentioned, while referring to Wolterstorff, as an 'epistemological pluralism' which would permeate the characteristics of analytic theology. Analytic theology would therefore be open to receiving contributions from anyone belonging to any tradition irrespective of religion. Every contributor would be eligible in providing arguments and defending their own views on a given matter while assuming to operate within the domain of analytic theology. This would further cloud the very nature of analytic theology. Making it an impossible task in deciphering its very nature.

Alternatively, granting the existence of a mind-independent reality while rejecting any objective knowledge of it would also prove problematic. It would be responsible for essentially distorting anti-realism. It would make it difficult to distinguish it from its counterpart. If anti-realism grants the existence of such a reality, it would be defying the fundamental criterion which sustains it. In fact, the latter statement of anti-realism, which

negates any intelligible (or objective) knowledge to reality, is precisely why it denies the former of its statements. The theological distinctions made so far shall establish whether they demonstrate a correlation with the ambitions outlined by Rea. Subsequently, I shall demonstrate how the correlated view equates to onto-theology.

In our brief investigation of the ambitions, we recognise an analytic sense of objectivity. Each of the ambitions which possess an integral role in characterising analytic theology strives to provide decisive accounts of the religious doctrines in question. These are driven by the defining features of clarity, coherence, and cogency. These features are uncompromising in acquiring their objectives. This kind of stringent objectivity would have no issue in accepting a mind-independent reality, which is appropriated for making meaningful claims. The ambitions, in this regard, would offer a methodological standard. The kind which corresponds to the meaningful objective claims made about reality. However, these ambitions would not demonstrate a correspondence with a mind-dependent reality. This is for at least two reasons. Firstly, the existence of any such reality is out rightly rejected. Secondly, the denial of possessing knowledge, which has the potential in making meaningful assertions, even if such a reality existed.

The ambitions then, bear a correspondence with a theological realist view. This also means that the correspondence between the two is not free from the problems that each view brings to the table. These problems are more hostile to the theologian (and non-analytic philosopher). That is because, it has serious implications on a transcendent God of the Abrahamic Faiths. The God is Being-itself in an absolute sense. A theological realist approach would construe all statements about God to be objective. Its objectivity would be in the sense that any claim made about God (or His attributes) would possess a truth-value and correspond to God in a meaningful way. It would permit propositional statements about God in adequately describing him. It would imply that God can be conceptualised and conceived of as He is. Even though His existence is not dependent upon, and nor can it be influenced by, our conceptions. This would amount to an onto-theological view in approaching and identifying God.

### Onto-theology

The term 'onto-theology' has initially appeared in the writings of Martin Heidegger during the twentieth century. However, its primary expressions can be traced back to Immanuel Kant<sup>22</sup>. Kant's reference to onto-theology is via the term '*ens realissimum*' (i.e. the most real being). He mentions this with God in mind. We can find a detailed account of how Kant approaches God in virtue of '*ens realissimum*' in his 'Lectures on Philosophical Theology'. He states,

In ontotheology we consider God as the *highest* being, or at least we make this concept our foundation. But how will I be able to think of a highest being through pure reason, *merely as a thing*? Every thing must have something positive which expresses some being in it. A mere not-being cannot constitute any thing. The concept *de ente omni modo negativo* [of a being in

<sup>22</sup> This can be found in Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and his Lectures on Philosophical Theology.

every way negative] is the concept of a *non entis*. Consequently, since each thing must have reality, we can present every possible thing either as an *ens realissimum* or as an *ens partim reale, partim negativum*. But in the case of any thing which has only some reality, something is always still lacking, and hence it is not a complete thing. The highest thing, therefore, would have to be one which has all reality. (Wood and Clark, 1978, p.44)

Let us briefly unpack Kant's position on the '*ens realissimum*'. The idea of 'sum of all reality' seems to offer a motivation for the onto-theological approach. An adequate place to begin is with Kant's view, 'that the determination of any individual thing is grounded in and presupposes some *being* in it'. In other words, it would not be possible to have something devoid of a being since that would result in a '*non entis*' (i.e., a non-being). He concludes that this determination of any given individual thing rests on, and presupposes, the idea of a 'sum of all reality'. This encapsulates *all* reality in the sense that it is free from lacking any possible instance of reality. This reality supersedes all other realities, while at the same time, it comprehensively includes all possible realities. It becomes the transcendental source from which the content of all possible predicates may be derived. Wood (1978) further clarifies this point by suggesting that the '*ens realissimum*' which is referred to as the 'sum of all reality' is not determined through any exterior concept or idea. Rather, it is one which, due to its unconditional comprehensiveness, is determined through its *own*. In the case of God, this would act as the cause within itself. It requires no further cause for its existence. It would be the ultimate cause from which the cause of everything else is determined.

Kant's reference to God as '*ens realissimum*' is rather complementary to Heidegger's approach to God as the highest being (*summum ens*). This is in addition to the first cause, which also identifies itself as the cause of itself (*causa prima* or *causa sui*). However, it should be noted that Heidegger's claim begins with an association between *Being* and Western metaphysics. This transition between *Being* and metaphysics, and its approach to God (and onto-theology), begins with Heidegger's refutation of *Being* and the thought of *Being* in faith.

Thomson (2000) provides a lucid understanding of the development regarding how Heidegger views metaphysics as onto-theological. He begins with Heidegger's own understanding of metaphysics which he presented in 1940 in what he termed 'The Concept of the Essence of Metaphysics'. He boldly states that 'metaphysics is the truth of the totality of the beings as such'. However, this statement requires unpacking. We need to understand what this concept of metaphysics tells us. For Heidegger, Western metaphysical thought is primarily guided by the founding question 'what are beings? That would be questioning the fundamental underlying nature of things in asking what is that which is? Just as we would investigate about this kind of reality, we would in the same manner question the reality and fundamental nature of the being in question. That is since metaphysics primarily begins with inquiring about 'what are beings?' It would quite naturally prompt the same question about the *Being* of those very same beings. The answer to this question would, on the part of metaphysics, be understood as '*Being*'. In other words, Heidegger purports that in answering the question 'what beings are?' would need to be understood as the '*Being* of things'. This would be reducing the question, from either a pluralistic perspective of 'what

beings are?’ and/or from a singular perspective of ‘what a being is?’ to the *Being* of those beings. Metaphysics, thus, refers to a totality of beings. That is because the *Being* of beings precedes the question ‘what are beings?’ As a result of this metaphysical approach, it brings us back to Heidegger’s initial statement. One which demonstrates that metaphysics is an attempt to establish a ‘truth about the totality of beings as such’.

In addition to this, the metaphysical understanding of beings is depicted in two ways. This divide provides two different perspectives of how the metaphysical approach of the totality of beings is conceived. In other words, the concept of beings in general is constituted of two components. Firstly, we have a superficial understanding of beings. Secondly, we have a profound understanding of beings that involves the totality of being (as *Being*). Despite the apparent contrast, both understandings are interrelated under the banner of metaphysics. Moreover, by deconstructing the fundamental question of metaphysics which inquires ‘what is being?’ we arrive at two distinct ways of looking at the same question. Firstly, we could inquire into ‘what is being?’. This would be from a perspective that focuses on answering the question by deciphering what makes a being a being. This attempts to unravel the nature or essence of the being in-and-of-itself by way of asking the ‘*whatness*’ of being. Secondly, we could inquire into ‘what is being?’. This would be from a perspective that focuses on the *way* in which a being is *actually* a being. This perspective could be further divided in two. Either the existence of the being in question could be investigated or its mode. Heidegger had attached the labels of ‘ontology’ and ‘theology’ to each one of the two ways in which we can approach the guiding question of metaphysics. The former was termed as ‘ontology’ and the latter was termed as ‘theology’.

Ontology seeks to investigate the common underlying nature of all beings. It attempts to find a common underlying nature which has a sort of relevance to all beings in question. This can be referred to as the *Being* of beings. The ontologists who probe into the *Being* of beings do so with the understanding that it is the most basic form of being which can be conceptually discovered. This *Being* despite commonly sharing the essential nature with all other beings, qualifying it as *Being* of all beings, lies within the conceptual confinements of human apprehension. As for theology, it is an addition to ontology as described above. It investigates about the *Being* of beings. It does so by seeking the transitioning of one being to another, and so on, until it reaches the highest *Being*. The highest *Being* would be the necessary condition for the possibility and actuality of all other beings. This connection of all beings would eventually culminate at an exclusive point that does not require an independent being for the actuality of its own being – hence the *Being* of beings. Theology in this respect strives for seeking answers regarding the highest of *Beings*. The way it does so lies in determining the mode and the existence of such a *Being*. This is where the theological aspect of these questions begins formulating a synonymous relation to God.

We can imagine how the question regarding God can be collectively approached from an ontological and theological perspective. For questions about God such as ‘what makes a being such as God divine?’ or ‘how do we conceive of God in terms of his essence and attribute’s?’ Or ‘what mode of existence constitutes divinity?’ These types of question possess obvious indications referring to features of both ontology and theology. Trying to

disassociate them would be, to some extent, potentially impacting the nature of its objective. Despite this, Heidegger found it plausible to demarcate between philosophy and theology, and further distinguish the position of faith from the two.

Heidegger (1927) championed the idea of the limits of human conceptual ability. For continental philosophers this was a major line of argument used to advocate a radical divide between knowledge and faith. For Heidegger, the divide between knowledge and faith was a consequence which followed the distinction he made between philosophy and theology. Philosophy is a discipline primarily concerned with the question of *Being*. It made philosophy, which he argued, ontological by nature. It did so with a limited recourse to the conceptual ability possessed by humans. It was venturing into the unknown while acknowledging the confines of the human conceptual abilities in failing to apprehend the underlying structure of reality. Theology, on the other hand, is something very different to philosophy. Theology, for Heidegger, seemed to be a calculated and systematic approach in expounding matters of faith. It provided tools that aided and organised our conceptual abilities, and theoretical methods, only to serve faith.

Theology's approach in explicating faith seems to come with unwarranted baggage. The very fact that it resorts to philosophical tools, would according to Heidegger, significantly hamper the objective of faith. Importing the confined and indeterminate methods of thought into matters faith is not helpful in reaching God. The philosophical methods and processes incorporated within theology would extend their influence in explicating God. Consequently, this would offer a philosophised conception of God. The very tools in this case would become the parameters by which we measure and ultimately confine God. This led Heidegger to term the notion of philosophical theology as a contradiction, namely a 'square circle'.

This did not just manifest the differences between philosophy and theology, but further demonstrated the disparity between faith and religion. We can understand this disparity while considering religion to take one of two possible routes. Either religion could be assisted by certain philosophical tools, giving rise to a theology as we have just witnessed. Or, religion, as Heidegger thought, could be comprehended without philosophical tools. Abandoning philosophical tools would amount to a religion which is devoid of theology. This religion would then be able to exercise faith and its doctrines without being contaminated by reason. Consequently, faith and philosophy, according to Heidegger, are incompatible.

To understand this incompatibility further, I shall refer to Westphal's (2001) eschatological depiction of onto-theology. He suggests that,

It is also a critique, by extension, not of theistic discourses as such, but of those who have sold their soul to philosophy's project of rendering the whole of reality intelligible to human understanding. (Westphal, 2001, p.4)

Selling your soul to philosophy's project may not seem all that sinister. Striking a deal with the devil would seem far worse. Nonetheless, there seems to be an insinuation that buying into philosophy's project, and more specifically, a Western metaphysics, would be a severe distortion of faith. Faith, for Heidegger (1993), is akin to how Luther had un-

derstood it. Faith is to be entirely independent of being and thought. Recourse to any of the two would be responsible for distorting the actual and true nature of faith. An analysis of faith with the aid of philosophical tools, would be somewhat equivalent to Tertullian's remark about 'what has Athens to do with Jerusalem'? It presents a dichotomy between the god of the philosophers and the God of Abraham, where there can be no middle ground or grey area in between. It expels the idea of philosophy being a handmaid to its mistress, theology. There cannot be a sympathetic approach which gives way to certain religious doctrines as unanalysable. Thus, any attempt to depict God within a framework of philosophical discourse would be a theological sell-out. God would become a victim to an onto-theology.

It is worth considering how the project of onto-theology impacts the life of faith<sup>23</sup>. I suppose this will reveal the substantial impact which onto-theology has on a type of faith that considers God to be inaccessible to us. Westphal (2007), while referring to Heidegger, states two significant dangers which the project of onto-theology has upon the life of faith. The first of these is that onto-theology quite explicitly means the loss of mystery. The second of these perils follows very closely from the first. It construes a God who is unworthy of worship. God would thus become, as Westphal puts it, 'religiously useless'. Let us very briefly take a closer look at each of these dangers.

Let us from the outset clarify what is meant by 'mystery'. Wainwright (2009) provides 'religiously relevant uses of the term [mystery]' to avoid any confusion. He mentions four uses. The first can be taken in the sense of human surprise. This would imply a kind of astonishment. He adds to this by suggesting that such surprises need not be restricted to the things which lie beyond our perception or things we cannot have any epistemic access to. Instead, they could quite naturally be things which are possible but we least expected. The second is where it is used to represent a lack of inconsistency. We may stumble upon instances which demonstrate sheer contradictions, but regardless of the incongruous nature of the thing in question, it is accepted as being the case. Perhaps various elements of religious belief would fall victim to this particular way of how the term 'mysterious' is conceived. The third is when a particular doctrine or truth is taken to be absurd or implausible due to which it is preposterous. This is because there appears to be a lack of intelligible evidence which supports the claim. Lastly, the term could be taken to mean a kind of epistemic dead-end. Regardless of developments in our conceptual abilities and in deciphering or penetrating the mysterious nature of the thing, we fail to make sense of it. The mysteriousness in this case would be something intrinsic to its nature.

I shall refer to Wainwright's last meaning of mystery. Though, I shall not adopt Wainwright's final use in its entirety. I shall add that the term 'mystery' is something that is inherently intelligible. This means that it is not something which appears obscure upon initial investigation, only to later reveal that it makes sense in some way. Instead, I shall take the term 'mystery', just as Toland (1978) has suggested. It is a radical meaning of mystery. One that is 'inconceivable in itself, however clearly revealed'. This type of mystery is *absolutely* in-

<sup>23</sup> I anticipate taking the same meaning of 'faith' as discusses in the former part of this paper.

accessible. This means it persistently remains inconceivable from the outset of acknowledging it, right up to conceding to the very fact that it shall indefinitely remain undecipherable.

This understanding of mystery is an integral part in conceding to a God who transcends all human categories. It would further be a central part of any religion that invests faith in such a God. But what are we to make of a God who is made devoid of any such mystery? A God who can be philosophised under the conceptual parameters of human apprehension? One way to appreciate the implications of this, is to refer to the following romantic parable. Westphal (2001) while retelling C. S. Lewis's story of the Cupid and Psyche expresses the delight of walking in the light of faith, despite being tougher, as opposed to the light of reason. He sketches the following scenario:

As Psyche tells her sister about the god to whom she has been married and with whom she lives in a magnificent palace, she explains, "Oh, Orual . . . not even I have even seen him – yet. He comes to me only in the holy darkness. He says I mustn't – not yet – see his face or his name. I'm forbidden to bring any light into his chamber – our – chamber." To make matters worse, although they are standing right in front of the palace, Orual cannot see it. It is hard to know whether to say that Psyche's God-relation takes place in hidden inwardness or in hidden outwardness. But even the site of their communion is invisible and inaccessible to her unbelieving sister.

Whether it is just that name that is forbidden, or in addition to that the beloved is not allowed to see her lover's face, the challenge of faith is the same: the believer is called upon to sustain a beautiful and loving relationship through trust in a lover about who she remains significantly (though not totally) in the dark and who, though he gives himself to her freely, is not at her disposal. The relationship is destroyed when the beloved succumbs to *Wissen's Sorge* and insists on Enlightenment, on dissipating the darkness of mystery with the light of human knowledge, on walking by sight and not by faith. (Westphal, 2001, p.26-27)

Demystifying faith with the light of reason would diminish its worth. It would reduce faith's mystical integrity and auspiciousness. That is not just in the case of having faith in God but also in loving Him. Thus, to maintain a pure faith in God, one that is free from the contamination of reason, would require resisting the temptation of intelligible insight. The faithful must then compel himself to remain content with the fact that his Lord is inaccessible with the aid of reason. Maintaining this would be an act of preserving the transcendence and exaltedness of his Lord to whom he invokes and pleads to.

This brings us to the second point, which is the abolishment of divine mystery. God, in this case, would not be worthy of worship. That is because, God would be reduced to human categories in virtue of which he can be conceived. The more we can make sense of God with the aid of reason, the more he becomes devoid of divine mystery. This ought to be very alarming from an Abrahamic Faith perspective since it would be indulging in a form of idolatry. The kind that denigrates God's holiness to the point where it becomes problematic in distinguishing this type of God from anything or everything else that is deceptively considered as divine in the world. Anthropomorphism and pantheism, respectively, would thus become the new source of an unwanted theology. To obtain a sense of the severity of this matter, John Robinson (the pastor to the Pilgrim Fathers in Leyden) is aptly quoted by Pailin (1986) while complaining that,

Some ambitious, and curious wits, but not able (& no marvel) to raise up, & advance their notions to *God* his infiniteness, for the comprehending of it; have laboured to depresse, & pull him down to their dwarfish conceptions of him: and have indeed rather made him some great, and giant-like man, or Angel; then (as he is in truth) an infinite *God*: allowing him an essence, power, and wisdom hugely great; but not properly infinite, and immense: as though *God* could not be that, which they cannot conceive of him.

The essence of *God* is *known* onely to himself; but is undiscernable to all men, and Angels: partly by reason of its infinitenes, which therefore no finite understanding can comprehend; and partly, for that, no voice, signe, or form can sufficiently express it either to sence or reason. (Robinson cited by Pailin, 1986, p.138)

If God is to be considered as the proper and compelling object of worship, He ought to be the one which elicits admiration. Where our engagement in encountering Him through the act of worship should create a sublime awe that loses us in divine wonder. The kind which exceeds beyond all possible experiences and qualifications. One which possesses an inherent justification which intrinsically demands sheer worth and value in loving and praising Him. Only one such God is worthy of this kind of worship.

## Conclusion

I have demonstrated that if analytic theology is essentially characterised with the ambitions outlined by Michael Rea (2011), then it corresponds to a theological realist approach. A theological realist approach results in an onto-theology. Consequently, an onto-theological approach, not only fails in conceiving a transcendent God, but proves to be hostile in attempting to make any intelligible sense of Him. Therefore, analytic theology, characterised in virtue of the ambitions outlined by Rea (2011), is not amenable with a transcendent God belonging to the Abrahamic Faiths.

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## Philo's version of the origin of the Septuagint

*Abstract:* Philo's work *On the Life of Moses* contains the story of the origin of the Septuagint (section 2.8–65). The scholars have examined this passage from two different perspectives: explaining the connection between Mosaic Law and the law of nature (2.12–14 and 2.45–53) or examining the very process of translation (2.25–44). Even though dealing with the different aspects of the story, both groups of scholars have come to the same conclusion: Philo claims that the Torah has universal significance. The starting point of this paper is that the two approaches, when taken separately, are insufficient. They both raise two essential questions. First, considering that Philo was using the LXX and not the Hebrew Bible, could it be possible that his claim that the Torah is “an excellent copy” of the law of nature also refers to LXX? Second, even though the Torah is finally translated into Greek – the *lingua franca* of its day – why would its laws be relevant for the people outside the Jewish communities? In this paper, the analysis of Philo's story on the LXX origin is compared with the LXX origin account in the *Letter of Aristeas*. The comparison will demonstrate that the changes Philo introduces into the story are indicative of his two major concerns: the universality of Mosaic law and divine intervention in the process of translation. The contribution of this paper is the acknowledgment that the two mentioned aspects – the universality of the Mosaic law and the divine intervention in the translation process are dependent on each other. The latter made the LXX not merely a translation but the same Torah that was once already given to Moses. Consequently, if the Hebrew Torah and the LXX are equal in every regard, that would mean that the LXX also perfectly reflects the natural law, which makes it relevant for all people.

*Key words:* Philo of Alexandria, Septuagint, *Letter of Aristeas*, natural law, Torah, translation

### Introduction

Philo is mainly known as an exegete who wrote extensively about the Pentateuch. However, in all of his works where he refers to the Law of Moses, Philo actually has its translation in mind: the Septuagint.<sup>1</sup> That is a striking fact because it means that, for Philo, the Hebrew Torah and the Greek translation of Torah were one and the same. Our starting position for examining this bold exclamation will be Philo's account of the origin of the Septuagint.

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<sup>1</sup> Y. Amir, “Authority and Interpretation of Scripture in the Writings of Philo,” in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin Jan Mulder (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988), 440; Adam Kamesar, “Biblical Interpretation in Philo,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, ed. Adam Kamesar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 71–2.

The story about the translation of Torah into Greek is placed in the second book of Philo's work *On the Life of Moses*. In the first book, he introduces the character of Moses, from his birth to the distribution of the land to Reubenites and Gadites.<sup>2</sup> Moses is described as a sage and a figure of extraordinary morality. Philo ascribes him titles such as "young king," "priest," and "prophet". The second book deals with Moses as a lawgiver. Therefore, the origin and the authority of the Mosaic law are explained first (2.8–65), after which Philo goes on to deal with more concrete issues of the law, such as the ones about the role of the High Priest (2.66–186). In the last part, he writes about Moses' prophecies (2.187–291).<sup>3</sup>

There are disagreements in categorizing this work. While Roys follows the mainstream by putting it into Moses's apologetic work, Niehoff and Goodenough place it as part of the *Exposition of the Law*.<sup>4</sup> Niehoff does not justify her position on that, while Goodenough reminds us that Philo himself shows in *On the virtues* 52 that he expects the audience to be familiar with the content of *On the Life of Moses* – thus, the two works are expected to go in pair. *On the Life of Moses* is thought to be an introduction to Judaism, addressed to non-Jews.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars have dealt with the passage 2.8–65 (where the story about Septuagint is placed) mainly from two different perspectives: either explaining the connection between Mosaic Law and the law of nature, thus focusing on sections 2.12–14 and 2:45–53, or examining the very process of translation described in sections 2.25–44. Although having different attitudes about the origin of the concept of the natural law, Horsley and Koester both agree that Philo reshapes it by identifying nature as God.<sup>6</sup> The same God who rules the world by his law, gave the law to Moses. Thus, Mosaic law reflects the law of nature – it is an "excellent copy" of that law.<sup>7</sup> Najman notices one more major change that Philo introduces – the claim that the Torah, a written law, can mirror the law of nature was quite radical,

2 Finn Damgaard, "Philo's Life of Moses as Rewritten Bible," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes*, ed. József Zsengellér (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 234.

3 *ibid.*, 234.

4 James R. Roys, "The Works of Philo," in *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, ed. Adam Kamesar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 51. M. Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, Lawrence H. Schiffman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 959; Erwin B. Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition of the Law and His De vita Mosis," *HTR* 26 (1933), 110; See also Hindy Najman, "The Law of Nature and the Authority of Mosaic Law," in *Past Renewals: Interpretative Authority, Renewed Revelation, and the Quest for the Perfection in Jewish Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 89.

5 Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition of the Law and His De vita Mosis," 109.

6 Helmut Koester, "ΝΟΜΟΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ: The Concept of Natural law in Greek Thought," in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Goodenough* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 531. See also: Markus Bockmuehl, "Natural Law in Second Temple Judaism," *Vetus Testamentum* 45 (1995), 39–42. Both emphasize that they took the term from Goodenough.

7 The expression "an excellent copy" is Najman's and I will use it further in the essay. For the same idea see also Koester, *ibid.*, 533; Peter Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An exegete for His Time*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 86 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 145–148.

since the law of nature is, by (Stoic) definition, the unwritten law (ἀγραφος νόμος).<sup>8</sup> That is how Philo made the Torah, a Jewish law, the law of every nation. Every wise human who lives in harmony with nature already lives according to the Torah. Or, in other words, every wise human who seeks to live in harmony with nature, should follow the Torah. However, even though these scholars revealed Philo's connection between the law of nature and the Mosaic law, the fact that he uses Septuagint, and not the original law in Hebrew, takes only few lines in their works. Borgen states that Philo "uncritically accepted the Septuagint text before him as identical with the Hebrew Bible."<sup>9</sup> Koester and Horsley do not even contain a line about Philo's use of the Septuagint. Najman does refer to the story about translation to state that, according to Philo, both versions of the Torah have the same authority.<sup>10</sup> What both Borgen and Najman do not mention, however, is the effort Philo put into his account about the Septuagint to show that, even though written in Greek, it can be equally important as the Hebrew Torah.

On the other hand, scholars interested in the process of translation described in Philo's *Moses* naturally emphasized God's interference into it, so that what was produced is the perfect translation, or, what is more, the same law both, in word and meaning.<sup>11</sup> Niehoff and Wasserstein recognize that behind Philo's version of the story of translation lies the belief that the Torah has universal significance.<sup>12</sup> Its rules can be followed by everyone.<sup>13</sup>

Both groups of scholars basically came to the same conclusion: Philo claims that the Torah has universal importance. According to the approach of the first group, what makes the Torah universally significant is the law of nature, which binds all of humanity, imprinted in it. According to the interpretation of the other group, universal importance is in the fact that it is translated into one of the two main languages of the Empire – the Greek language. However, thanks to God's interference it was not a mere translation. He helped it to be written "by the same prophetic forces"<sup>14</sup> which were engaged in the writing of the Hebrew Torah.

The conclusion about the universality of the Torah initiates two questions. Regarding the first approach, the question is, if Torah is indeed the copy of the law of nature, can the same statement be made about the *translation* of the Torah, as well? Regarding the second, the question is why particular commandments and prohibitions that one can find in Torah and, according to Philo, in the same meaning in Septuagint, would be important for non-Jews? These questions suggest that the two approaches are insufficient if considered

<sup>8</sup> Najman, "The Law of Nature and the Authority of Mosaic Law," 93.

<sup>9</sup> Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 144.

<sup>10</sup> Najman, "The Law of Nature and the Authority of Mosaic Law," 91.

<sup>11</sup> Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," 983; Amir, "Authority and Interpretation of Scripture in the Writings of Philo," 443; Adam Kamesar, "Biblical Interpretation in Philo," 64–72; Abraham and David Wasserstein, "The Hellenistic Jewish Tradition," in *The Legend of the Septuagint: From Classical Antiquity to Today* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 43–45.

<sup>12</sup> Niehoff, *ibid*, 976–978; Wasserstein, *ibid*, 39.

<sup>13</sup> Wasserstein speaks about proselytism, *ibid*.

<sup>14</sup> Amir, "Authority and Interpretation," 444.

separately, but when brought together, they can help us draw the whole picture of Philo's idea behind his account of the origin of the Septuagint. Therefore, I will argue that Philo needed divine intervention in the process of translation in order to present LXX as one and the same Torah that reflects the law of nature, which applies to all people without exception.<sup>15</sup> The law of nature imprinted in the Torah is indeed imprinted in its translation as well because the Septuagint is not a mere translation, but the Torah in Greek.

Again, what makes it possible for Philo to make such a radical statement is the intervention of God in the process of producing the Septuagint. This element is not to be taken for granted because, even though Philo adopts that story from the *Letter of Aristeas*, he is the one who introduces the motif of divine intervention.

Taking all the above into consideration, the argument will be developed by comparing the accounts in the *Letter of Aristeas* and in *On the Life of Moses*. It is obvious that the two versions, although narrating about the same event, differ significantly. The date of the *Let. Aris.* has been debated, but mainstream opinion states that it was written at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC by a Jew.<sup>16</sup> There is also debate over the purpose of the letter. While Wasserstein calls it "a piece of Jewish propaganda,"<sup>17</sup> an apologetic work addressed to non-Jews, Honigman considers this claim "an embarrassment."<sup>18</sup> Both Wright and Honigman argue that it was written for a Jewish audience in Alexandria, thus the purpose is not apologetic. Its aim is to answer the question of what it means to be a Jew in Hellenistic Alexandria and how one reconciles Jewish tradition and religion with his/her Greek upbringing and education.<sup>19</sup>

Interestingly, although the motif of translation is pervasive through the Letter, the part about the actual work of translation takes only one section (302.).<sup>20</sup> The preparations for the translation make the biggest part of the content of the *Let. Aris.* The story begins with Ptolemy II Philadelphus described as a king who has recently established what is to become the famous Alexandrian library. It was Demetrius of Phalarus, the chief librarian, who thought that the sacred books of the Jews were worth enough to be placed in such a valuable library. Ptolemy agrees and, on the advice of Aristeas, his officer of the royal guard (a pagan, the supposed writer of the work), released 100,000 Jewish slaves from different parts of his kingdom in order to win the sympathy of the Jews in Judea. After that, he sent

<sup>15</sup> In her comments on both books of *On the Life of Moses*, one can see that Niehoff notices both of Philo's changes: the connection with the law of nature and changing of Aristeas' account in order to emphasize the divine intervention. However, Niehoff has never pulled these insights together in order to make a coherent argument.

<sup>16</sup> Wasserstein, "The Letter of Aristeas," in *The Legend of the Septuagint: From Classical Antiquity to Today* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 20; Benjamin G. Wright, *The Letter of Aristeas: "Aristeas to Philocrates" or "On the Law of the Jews"* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 16–30; Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study In the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (London: Routledge, 2003), 11.

<sup>17</sup> Wasserstein, "The Letter of Aristeas," 23.

<sup>18</sup> Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 14.

<sup>19</sup> Wright, *The Letter of Aristeas*, 66.

<sup>20</sup> Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 13; See also Wasserstein, "The Letter of Aristeas," 24.

an ambassador to Jerusalem to ask Eleazar, the high-priest, to send him Jewish translators who would make him a copy of the Law. Eleazar was persuaded, and a richly ornamented copy of the Law was sent to the King along with seventy-two Israelites, six from each tribe. Although King Ptolemy put up a great reception for them, their capability for the task was put to the test, and in the period of seven days, they had to answer seventy-two questions. Since the test turned out to be a great performance of their wisdom, they were taken to the island of Pharos, to begin their work in solitude, away from the tumult of the world. The work of translation was finished in seventy-two days by them helping one another and comparing translations. The assembly of Jewish priests and people from Alexandria, in front of whom the translation was read, recognized and praised its perfect uniformity with the Hebrew original. That is how the copy of the Law found its way to the Alexandrian library.

Philo shortens the account to a great extent. There is no mention of the Alexandrian library (implies the shift of the reason for translation), Demetrius, the Librarian (implies the change of the subject who initiates the translation), Aristeeas, the officer of the royal guard,<sup>21</sup> the number of translators and, along with that, the number of days needed for the translation to be completed.<sup>22</sup> Although Philo mentions the character of the High Priest, he omits his name and a detailed correspondence between him and the King, as well as Eleazar's long explanation of the Jewish laws and the description of the Jerusalem temple. King's reception and the test of the translators were only briefly mentioned. On the other hand, Philo puts some additions to the account and narrates King Ptolemy's greatness, the complex nature of the translation work, and the holiday established on Pharos in remembrance of the translation. Most important of all, he expands the section about the very deed of translation.

The aim of this paper is to show that the mentioned alterations were conveyed as elements of Philo's two significant changes: 1) universality of Mosaic law and 2) divine intervention in the process of translation. Therefore, the first part of the essay will refer to the changes Philo makes in order to pursue the universality of the Mosaic law. The second and last part will present how he introduces and emphasizes divine intervention in the process of translation.

## 1. The universality of the Mosaic law

### 1.1 The reason for translation:

In the *Letter of Aristeeas*, the reason why the copy of the Jewish law is important for the library is simply to collect "if possible, all the books in the inhabited earth." (*Let. Aris.* 9). For Philo, however, the reason is stronger. The sacred books ought to be translated, so the rest of humankind is no longer deprived of an opportunity to get to know the law:

<sup>21</sup> Philo does not explicitly mention that the *Let. Aris.* is the background for his version of the story. For some reason, he wants his version to be accepted by the audience as the "right one." We can anticipate the shift in purpose.

<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, Kamesar states that the number of translators came to us through the Letter and Philo's account, see: Kamesar, "Biblical Interpretation in Philo," 64.

"25. In ancient times the laws were written in the Chaldean tongue, and remained in that form for many years, without any change of language, so long as they had not yet revealed their beauty to the rest of mankind. ... 27. Then it was that some people, thinking it a shame that the laws should be found in one half only of the human race, the barbarians, and denied altogether to the Greeks, took steps to have them translated."

## 1.2 The initiative for translation

In the *Let. Aris.* 9, the chief librarian Demetrius is the one who is aware of the significance of the Jewish law, thus he persuades king Ptolemy that it is worth translating.

According to Philo, the King himself "having conceived the ardent affection" (*Mos.* 2.31) for the Jewish laws, orders it to be translated. The whole section (2. 28–31) is actually dedicated to the praise of Ptolemy II, who is, in Philo's opinion, as distinguished by his greatness among the other kings from the dynasty of Ptolemies, as that dynasty is distinguished among the others. This section is not only praise of Ptolemy II, but it also shows that only the ones wise enough can recognize the universal importance of the Jewish laws.

## 1.3 The importance of translation

This is Philo's addition, hence, we do not encounter this explicitly in the *Let. Aris.* At the end of his story of translation, Philo writes about the feast that takes place on the island of Pharos every year since the work of translation is completed. It is a feast in the honour of translation, and it is attended, not only by Jews, "but multitudes of others" (2.41). This section reveals to us to whom the Septuagint is important – not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles. However, it is the following element that informs us why it should be important to the latter.

## 1.4 The Torah as an excellent copy of the law of nature:

Another feature that makes Philo's account of the translation distinct from Aristeas' is its philosophical framework. Philo prepared the context in which this story should be read and understood. In the beginning, he narrates the excellence of Moses as a lawgiver. He is the only one whose laws are "firm, unshaken, immovable, stamped, as it were, with the seals of nature itself" (2.14). His laws are unshaken and unchangeable because they correspond to the laws of nature. The "law of nature" is a Stoic concept.<sup>23</sup> It was an impersonal, unwritten law that keeps the cosmos in harmony, and people who wish to live happily are to submit to that law. Philo overtakes the concept, introducing two radical changes – that the law of nature is a divine law<sup>24</sup> and that it can exist in written form.<sup>25</sup>

As already stated, in section 2.12–14, Philo claims that Moses' laws are eternal and immovable because they reflect the law of nature. That is possible because "the Father

<sup>23</sup> Richard A. Horsley, "The Law of Nature in Philo and Cicero," *HTR* 71 (1978), 35; Koester, "ΝΟΜΟΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ," 52; Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," 976.

<sup>24</sup> Erwin Goodenough has shown that there are numerous occasions where Philo's discourse about nature, almost unnoticed, passes over into speaking about God, and vice versa. See Koester, "ΝΟΜΟΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ," 531.

<sup>25</sup> In his work Najman claims that the Greek philosopher held the law of nature to be unwritten, while the written, human laws, were just a shadow of that law, see "The Law of Nature and the Authority of Mosaic Law," 91.

and Maker of the world was in the truest sense also its Lawgiver" (2.48). The same God whose law runs the world, gave the law to the Jews, and the result is that "he who would observe the laws will accept gladly the duty of following nature and live in accordance with the ordering of the universe so that his deeds are attuned to the harmony with his words and his words with his deeds" (2.48). Looking from this perspective, the law is given at the very beginning with the creation of the world.<sup>26</sup> The patriarchs of Israel were the sages who lived according to the law of nature. They were highly moral figures who embodied that law.<sup>27</sup> Moses himself was one of these people, and now Philo's intention to present Moses' life in detail in the first book, describing him as the greatest of all, gains more weight. However, Moses differs from the rest of the patriarchs in the sense that, not only he embodied the law, but was the one *through* whom the law was written. Philo's Moses was just a medium through whom the divine inspiration was put to work.<sup>28</sup> Philo was, of course, aware that, in spite of his claim that Mosaic Law has divine origin and that, it is thus, an "excellent copy of the law of nature," it still remains a set of particular rules and prohibitions, primarily addressed to the people of Israel. That is why, in his commentaries on Pentateuch, Philo uses the allegorical method along with the literal one.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, Philo gains the universality of Torah, its cosmic importance, by identifying it with the law of nature, both created by God, and interpreting its particular rules in an allegorical way.

What we must not fail to see is that, while referring to the connection between the law of nature and that of Moses, Philo both times actually refers to the Hebrew Torah – the one written by Moses. In order to claim that the translation of the Hebrew Torah, too, contains the seal of nature, Philo needs divine intervention to happen again. The same inspiration that overtook Moses while he was writing the Torah, must be employed one more time – in the process of translation of the Hebrew Torah into Greek.

## 2. Divine intervention

### 2.1 Relationship with God

When Aristeas' Eleazar learns about King Ptolemy's intention, he writes back to him that he has read his letter in front of counsel so that they too "might know about your piety toward our God" (*Let. Aris.* 42). The king, thus, is not ignorant of the Jewish God. His piety is recognized and commended by the High Priest and the council in Jerusalem.

In Philo's version, this element is deepened. When the High Priest learns of the king's request, he sees God's providence in it. The king, not only feels certain piety toward

<sup>26</sup> Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," 976–7.

<sup>27</sup> Najman, "The Law of Nature," 94.

<sup>28</sup> Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 144.

<sup>29</sup> Y. Amir, "Exegesis of Mikra: Philo's battle on two fronts," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin Jan Mulder (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988), 444–5; The allegorical interpretation of the Pentateuch can be tracked down in the Letter of Aristeas, see vv. 128–31; See also Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," 977.

Jewish God, but is also guided by God's providence. Clearly, the whole process of translation was God's intention:

"The High Priest was naturally, pleased and thinking that God's guiding care must have led the king to busy himself in such undertaking, sought out such Hebrews as he had of the highest reputation, who had received an education in Greek as well as in their native lore, and joyfully sent them to Ptolemy." (Mos. 2.32)

## 2.2 Preparation for the translation

Once the translators in the *Letter of Aristeas* came to the island of Pharos,<sup>30</sup> they prayed and washed their hands before undertaking the task of translating (*Let. Aris.* 305). The practice of the washing of hands is then explained: "it is an evidence that they have done no evil, for all activity is done by means of hands" (*Let. Aris.* 306). As Wright insightfully observes, this explanation is further evidence of the allegorical interpretation of Jewish practices in the *Let. Aris.*<sup>31</sup> Whether the translators were evoking God to help them in the process of translation while praying, or this is supposed to be a regular Jewish daily prayer can be disputed.<sup>32</sup>

However, in Philo's account, there is no doubt that the translators are entirely relying on God's help in translation work. They took the sacred books and raised them toward the sky, "asking of God that they might not fail in their purpose" (*Mos.* 2.36). Once again, God's role emerges, this time directly provoked.

## 2.3 The manner of translation

In the *Letter of Aristeas*, the process of translation is described quite realistically. They compared their versions and improved them to reach an agreement. What Demetrius collected into one copy then was "the result of their agreement" (*Let. Aris.* 302). One could easily imagine the same method to be used today during the translation of the several books of the same corpus.

This part contains Philo's most radical change. There is no trace about the translators comparing versions, because then that would indeed be the process of *translation*. Philo aims for something beyond that:

"Sitting here in seclusion (*ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ*)<sup>33</sup> with none present save the elements of nature, earth, water, air, heaven, the genesis of which was to be the first theme of their sacred revelation, for the laws begin with the story of the world's creation, they became as it were possessed, and, un-

<sup>30</sup> It is not explicitly said that it is Pharos, although it is widely accepted. Philo provides us with the name of the island. See Niehoff, *ibid.*, 981.

<sup>31</sup> Wright, *The Letter of Aristeas*, 477–8.

<sup>32</sup> According to Wasserstein, it is the latter. See "The Hellenistic Jewish Tradition," 43.

<sup>33</sup> One more novelty that Philo introduces is that the translators were sitting in seclusion while working on the translation. In the later, Christian versions, this element was emphasized and the translators were actually sitting in separate rooms. As Wasserstein notices, the expression *ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ* does not by definition mean that translators were divided from each other. The only thing that Philo explicitly mentions is that they were separated from the distractions of the world by being on the isolated island of Pharos. Wasserstein, *ibid.*, 44.

der inspiration, wrote, not each several scribe something different, but the same word for word, as though dictated to each by an invisible prompter." (*Mos.* 2.37)

God, to whom they cried before the start of their work, indeed did not let anything to the case. They received revelation and were inspired. While in the *Let. Aris.*, the LXX is the result of human labour, in Philo's account, it is entirely the work of God completed through the mediums – translators. That is what enabled them to write the same. Although in the following section we encounter Philo's awareness about the difficulty of translation – because of the richness of the Greek language and many meanings that one word can carry – he claims that this is not what happened in this case. For, how would it? God himself operated through the translators, who are, thus, not translators, but prophets who were in the same spirit with Moses during the translation (*Mos.* 2.40). Moreover, if they are not translators, but the prophets receiving the same revelation as Moses when he wrote the Torah, then their result is not a translation, but the Torah itself: "they regard them (both versions, the "Chaldean"<sup>34</sup> one and the Greek one) with awe and reverence as sisters, or rather one and the same, both in matter and words" (*Mos.* 2.40).

Philo had to alter Aristeus' version of the LXX translation because what he was describing was not a process of translation but the same miracle of revelation that once happened to Moses. Some scholars go as far as to claim that, in this way, Philo disregarded the Hebrew version.<sup>35</sup> Considering how important the figure of Moses was for Philo and that this version could not be written without him – "the purest of all spirits," I would restrain myself from making such a claim. It is simply that, for Philo, Hebrew Torah could not be that relevant because he did not know Hebrew. Since the Septuagint was the only Torah that he and the other Alexandrian Jews could use, he needed it to have the same authority. When Philo speaks about the importance of the laws to exist in Greek so that they could reveal their beauty to the rest of humankind, we should not forget that Alexandrian Jews are also the rest of humankind. If God could once capture the natural law into "Chaldean" laws for the Jews, he could do it one more time in Greek letters for the rest of the human race part of whom are the Jews in diaspora, who do not speak Hebrew anymore.

## Conclusion

In summary, the Torah is the highest law for Philo because it reflects the natural law. He used this Stoic concept but merged it with Jewish doctrine about God, the Creator of the world.<sup>36</sup> God, who created the world and rules it by natural law, imprinted it in the Jewish laws by dictating it to Moses. That is why Philo can innovatively claim that the natural law can exist in a written form and, by allegorizing Jewish laws, show they can be addressed and carry on by everyone who wants to live his/her life in harmony with nature. For that to happen, Jewish laws have to exist in a language that is spoken by the majority of people. Aware that translation is a complex process and that meaning can be lost during its com-

<sup>34</sup> It is how Philo calls Hebrew version. See Niehoff, "On the Life of Moses," 979.

<sup>35</sup> Amir, Authority and Interpretation," 444; Kamesar, "Biblical Interpretation in Philo," 71–72.

<sup>36</sup> Koester, "ΝΟΜΟΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ," 531.

pletion, Philo claims that this does not apply to the Septuagint – because it is not a translation. To prove that and emphasize its divine origin and authority, he altered the account he found in the *Letter of Aristeas*. Thanks to the divine intervention he added to the story, Septuagint becomes one and the same with the Hebrew Torah and, thus, also contains the seal of the law of nature.

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## **Religion, Etnizität und Politik im Kontext der Rede über Beschneidung (Gal 5, 2 – 6)**

*Abstract:* Paulus spricht das Thema der Beschneidung zum ersten Mal im Galaterbrief 5, 2–6 ausdrücklich an. Die genaue Bedeutung der Beschneidung, sowohl historisch als auch exegetisch, wurde jedoch in der paulinischen Forschung viel diskutiert. Wenn es um die Beschneidung und die Argumentation des Gal geht, geht es um mehr als das, was die Neutestamentler normalerweise betont haben. Historisch gesehen war die Beschneidung auch mit der Unterwerfung von Gedanken und Leidenschaften unter den Willen Gottes sowie mit Idealen der Vollkommenheit und Heiligkeit verbunden. Exegetisch ist Paulus in Gal 5, 2–6 gegen die Beschneidung, weil dies die Aufrechterhaltung der fortwährenden Glaubenserfahrung der Gläubigen, d. h. der Heiligung, gefährden würde. Paulus antwortet auf die Sorge, seine Erfahrung in Christus aufrechtzuerhalten, indem er schreibt, dass der Christus durch seine völlige Hingabe an Gott durch Glaube erkannt werden sollte, eine Hingabe an das heiligende Werk des Geistes, das im Leben des Gläubigen Früchte trägt. Daher analysiert diese Studie, die sich der zeitgenössischen Diskussion der paulinischen Theologie anschliesst, Paulus' Beziehung zur Beschneidung in Gal 5, 2–6 im Kontext der galatianischen Welt des neutestamentlichen Zeitalters.

*Schlusswörter:* Paulus, Galaterbrief, Beschneidung, Juden und Heiden

### **Einführung**

Das Problem der Beschneidung beschäftigte Paulus während seiner Amtszeit und verbrauchte viel Zeit und Energie. Es handelt sich um ein Problem, das selbst nach dem Jerusalemer Konzil im Jahre 49 n. Chr. (Apg 15) in der frühen Kirche nicht vollständig gelöst wurde (vgl. Röm 2, 25–29; 4, 9–12; 1Kor 7, 18–20; Phil 2, 2–3; Kol 2, 11–13; Tit 1, 10–11).<sup>1</sup> Die Beschneidung ist einer der Hauptgründe, warum Paulus den *Brief an die Gala-*

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**1** Das Datum der Entstehung des Briefes ist unter Forscher umstritten. Das Fehlen eines direkten Verweises auf den Konzil von Jerusalem, der für die Galatianische Kontroverse besonders zeitgemäss gewesen wäre, und die Erwähnung von zwei Besuchen in Jerusalem (Gal 1, 18; 2, 1–10) sind eines der Hauptargumente für eine frühzeitige Unterstützung des Datums für die Zusammensetzung des Briefes, dh irgendwann nach der ersten Missionsreise des Paulus (ca. 46–48 n. Chr.) und vor dem Konzil von Jerusalem (49 n. Chr.). Andererseits weisen Autoren, die ein späteres Datum für Gal unterstützen, auf die vielen Ähnlichkeiten zwischen Paulus' Bericht in Galater 2, 1–10 und Apostelgeschichte 15 hin, auf die Möglichkeit, dass Paulus Galatia bereits zweimal besucht hatte (Gal 4, 13). Die Affinität in Sprache und Stil zu den Römern und den korinthischen Briefen

ter schrieb und es wirkt direkt auf die Auslegung der theologischen Argumente des Paulus (vgl. Gal 2, 3–6, 11–16; 5, 2–6, 11–12; 6, 12–15). Viele zeitgenössischen Forscher haben Gal benutzt, um die wichtigen Fragen der Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben, die Rolle der Thora im neuen eschatologischen Zeitalter, die von Christus eingeläutet wurde, sowie das Verhältnis zwischen Juden und Heiden und das Konzept der christlichen Freiheit zu diskutieren. Die Beschneidung ist mit all diesen Fragen verbunden - ob die traditionelle Interpretation von menschlicher Leistung gegen Glaube verteidigt werden soll oder ob das mosaische Gesetz argumentiert werden soll.

Natürlich beeinflusst das Verständnis der sozialen und historischen Wechselwirkungen zwischen Juden und Heiden sowie die sozio-politischen und theologischen Implikationen der Beschneidung eindeutig, wie man Gal liest und interpretiert. Es ist wichtig, als Umschreibebrief über eine bestimmte Situation in den Kirchen von Galatia zunächst herauszufinden, was diese Gelegenheit war und wie eine Entscheidung zur Beschneidung die Betroffenen beeinflusst hätte, um dann Schlussfolgerungen über die Auswirkungen von Paulus' Theologie zu ziehen, sowohl für das unmittelbare Publikum als auch für den allgemeinen Leser. Aus diesen Gründen wurde Galater 5, 2–6 für die vorliegende Diskussion ausgewählt.

Es ist das erste Mal, dass Paulus die Frage der Beschneidung in den Briefe explizit anspricht, und dies mit Leidenschaft und Intensität, was viele Autoren veranlasst, diese Perikope als den rhetorischen Höhepunkt der Galater zu betrachten.<sup>2</sup> Darüber hinaus gibt es zahlreiche Parallelen zwischen den Gal 5, 2–12 und andere Passagen, die für das Verständnis des Wesens der historischen und theologischen Fragen des Briefes von zentraler Bedeutung sind (vgl. Gal 1, 6–10; 3, 1–6; 6, 12–17).<sup>3</sup> Ob dies ein eindeutiger Beweis für die Galater ist oder nicht 5, 2–6 ist der Höhepunkt des Briefes. Zweifellos ist dies eine wichtige Perikope, um die Argumente des Paulus gegen die Beschneidung zu verstehen.<sup>4</sup>

In dieser Arbeit soll nun untersucht werden, wie Paulus die Frage der Beschneidung mit dem Wirken des Geistes in seiner Argumentation in Galater 5, 2 – 6 in Verbindung

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sind auch offensichtlich. In dieser Arbeit wird davon ausgegangen, dass Galaterbrief nach dem Jerusalemer Konzil geschrieben wurde. Ob kurz nach oder ein Jahrzehnt danach, zu der Zeit, als Römer geschrieben wurde, ändert das die hier vorgebrachten Argumente nicht direkt. D. A. Carson und D. J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2005), 461–65. Siehe mehr bei: S. C. Carlson, *The Text of Galatians and Its History*, WUNT II 385 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), R. Schäfer, *Paulus bis zum Apostelkonzil Ein Beitrag zur Einleitung in den Galaterbrief, zur Geschichte der Jesusbewegung und Pauluschronologie*, WUNT II 179 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), besonders 290 – 335.

**2** T.R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 310. B. Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 359; D. J. Moo, *Galatians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 316; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, Black's New Testament Commentary (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993), 260.

**3** Moo, *Galatians*, 316; R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary 41, (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 221–22; Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 359–60; A. A. Das, *Galatians*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2014), 515–16.

**4** Das, *Galatians*, 515–16.

bringt. In Anbetracht der historischen Umstände des Briefes und der Perspektive, aus der Paulus seine Leser anspricht, scheint die Annahme der Beschneidung durch die Galater Gläubigen nicht nur die Rechtfertigung durch den Glaube, sondern insbesondere die Heiligung durch den Glaube zu untergraben. Obwohl sich die Begründungs- und Heiligungsbegriffe von Paulus in erheblichem Masse überschneiden<sup>5</sup>, wird es hier argumentiert, dass Paulus Galater 5, 2–6 aus der Perspektive des fortlaufenden Lebens des Gläubigen schreibt, in der sich die Heiligung auf die fortschreitende Arbeit des Geistes bezieht, indem er die Werke des Fleisches in der sündigen menschlichen Natur neutralisiert.<sup>6</sup> So wie der Gläubige durch den Glaube gerechtfertigt ist, kann der Geist durch den Glaube im Leben des Gläubigen wirken.

### Die Grundprinzipien der Literaranalyse

Paulus befasst sich zum ersten Mal in Galater 5, 2–6 explizit mit der Hauptfrage des Briefes – ob die Galater Gläubigen die Beschneidung durchführen sollten oder nicht.<sup>7</sup> Diese Passage wird von vielen Kommentatoren als eine Schlussfolgerung der theologischen Hauptaussage des Paulus (3, 1–5, 12) angesehen.<sup>8</sup> In Gal 3 erklärt Paulus im Detail, dass diejenigen, die Glaube haben, berechtigt sind und als legitime Söhne Abrahams gelten (3, 7.14), nachdem er den Geist durch Glaube empfangen hatte (3, 2.14). Dies war die Erfahrung der Galater, denn Paulus betont wiederholt ihren Status als Söhne und Erben (3, 26–29; 4, 5–7). Da die Galater danach strebten, „unter dem Gesetz“ zu sein (4, 21), erklärt Paulus auch, welche Rolle das Gesetz tatsächlich spielt, und zwar anhand der Metaphern von Kindern und Sklaven (3, 17–26; 4, 1–7) und benutzte die Allegorie von Hagar und Sarah, um die beiden Bündnisse zu erklären (4, 21–31). In 4, 31 und 5, 1 betont Paulus erneut den Status der Galater: Sie waren durch Christus von der Sklaverei der Sünde befreit worden und wer-

<sup>5</sup> Rechtfertigung und Heiligung sind in Paulus oft so eng miteinander verbunden, dass einige Autoren sogar behaupten, sie seien ein und dasselbe. Diese Diskussion sprengt den Rahmen dieser Arbeit, da der Fokus eher auf einer exegetischen Studie über die Beschneidung in Paulus' Argumentation in Galaterbrief liegt. Für eine umfassende Diskussion dieses Themas siehe: J. C. Maschmeier, *Rechtfertigung bei Paulus: eine Kritik alter und neuer Paulusperspektiven*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament 189 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2010). Siehe auch: F. D. Macchia, "Justification through New Creation: The Holy Spirit and the Doctrine by Which the Church Stands or Falls," *Theology Today*, 58 (2001): 202–17; S. K. Williams, "Justification and the Spirit in Galatians," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 29 (1987): 91–100; D. L. Dabney, "Justified by the Spirit: Soteriological Reflections on the Resurrection," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 3.1 (2001): 46–68.

<sup>6</sup> "Die Rechtfertigung betont die anfängliche oder „Bekehrungserfahrung“ des Gläubigen, ist jedoch grösser als diese, einschliesslich des Lebens des Gläubigen „in Christus Jesus, unserem Herrn“ (Röm 6, 23). Die Heiligung ist, obwohl sie die Einweihung beinhalten kann (Röm 6, 22), das Ende (Telos), auf das das gerechtfertigte Streben nach ewigem Leben abzielt (Röm 6, 22–23). Die Heiligung ist in gewissem Sinne „die höchste Rechtfertigungsstufe“ ...Wenn die Rechtfertigung in den Römern für Paulus die Kraft Gottes beschreibt, gerecht zu werden...oft mit der Einweihung des Gläubigen in das Leben in Christus gleichgesetzt, aber nicht darauf beschränkt, wird die Heiligung von Paulus verwendet, um das fortdauernde Leben des Gläubigen zu beschreiben, der Gott dienen soll." S. E. Porter, "Holiness, Sanctification," in G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin und D. G. Reid (Hgg.), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 399.

<sup>7</sup> Schreiner, *Galatians*, 310.

<sup>8</sup> Moo, *Galatians*, 316; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 222; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 261.

den aufgefordert, in dieser Freiheit fest zu bleiben. Wenn die Beschneidung in 5, 2–6 eingeführt wird, versteht es sich, dass die Akzeptanz der Beschneidung das ist, was alles in den Glaubenserfahrungen der Galater bis zu diesem Punkt gefährden würde.

Mehrere Autoren betrachten diese Perikope als den rhetorischen Höhepunkt der Galater, da der Hauptpunkt der Auseinandersetzung mit solcher Leidenschaft und Intensität angesprochen wird.<sup>9</sup> Zwischen Gal 5, 2–12 und Gal 1, 6–10 und 6, 12–17 gibt es eine Reihe von Verbindungen. Alle diese Passagen beziehen sich auf das Hauptereignis des Briefes und sind von zentraler Bedeutung für das Verständnis der Natur der Debatte.<sup>10</sup> Des Weiteren wiederholt Paulus in 5, 2–12 eine Reihe der gleichen Themen wie in 3, 1–6, von denen einige Autoren glauben, dass sie der Beginn der theologischen Darstellung von Paulus sind.<sup>11</sup> Ob diese Feststellungen als eindeutiger Beweis dafür angesehen werden können, dass Galater 5, 2–6 der Höhepunkt des Briefes ist, ist zweifellos von Bedeutung für das Verständnis des Arguments von Paulus gegen die Beschneidung<sup>12</sup>, weshalb diese Verse für die Diskussion vorläufig gewählt wurden.

Es gibt mehrere Textangaben, dass die Verse 2–6 eine Einheit bilden. Das Teilchen Ἰδὲ gibt den Beginn der Perikope an. In Vers 2 wird die antithetische Beziehung zwischen Christus und der Beschneidung erwähnt, eine Parallele, die auch in Vers 6 zu finden ist. Obwohl das Nestle-Aland, 28. Ausgabe, Vers 1 als Teil dieser Perikope enthält, sind sich die meisten Autoren darin einig, dass es als Übergangsversus zwischen dem vorherigen Abschnitt (4, 21–31) und 5, 2–6 fungiert und dient als Einführung für die folgenden Ermahnungen.<sup>13</sup> Aus diesen Gründen wird für die Zwecke der vorliegenden Diskussion der Schwerpunkt auf Galater 5, 2–6 gelegt. In diesem Abschnitt wird die Passage anhand ihrer literarischen und strukturellen Merkmale betrachtet.

9 Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 359; Moo, *Galatians*, 316; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 260.

10 Parallelen zwischen 1, 6–10 und 5, 2–12: strenger Ton, Hinweis auf Desertion (1, 6; 5, 8), Abtrünnigkeit von der Gnade Christi (1, 6; 5, 4), parallele Aussagen von πάλιν (1, 9; 5, 3), doppelter Fluch (1, 8–9; 5, 10.12). Parallelen zwischen 5, 2–12 und 6, 12–17: Gesetz befolgen und einhalten (5, 3; 6, 13), „weder Beschneidung noch Unbeschneidung“ (5, 6; 6, 15), eine Verbindung zwischen Beschneidung und Verfolgung (5, 11; 6, 12). Siehe: Longenecker, *Galatians*, 221–22; Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 359–60; Das, *Galatians*, 515–16.

11 Parallelen zwischen 3, 1–6 und 5, 2–12: Verweis auf die Rührwerke (3, 1; 5, 7), das Kreuz (3, 1; 5, 11); die zentrale Stellung von Glaube und Geist (3, 2; 5, 5) im Gegensatz zum Gesetz (3, 2.5; 5, 2–4), die Genügsamkeit des Glaubens und des Geistes als Mittel der Gerechtigkeit (3, 6; 5, 5). Für Moo stützen sich diese beiden Passagen (3, 1–6 und 5, 2–6) auf Paulus' theologisches Hauptargument. Siehe: Moo, *Galatians*, 316. Ob Paulus seine theologische Hauptaussage in 2, 16 oder 3, 1 beginnt, ist jedoch umstritten.

12 Das, *Galatians*, 515–16.

13 Die Verwendung der koordinierenden inferentiellen Konjunktion von 5, 1 in Verbindung mit den beiden Imperativen weist auf eine Schlussfolgerung oder eine Zusammenfassung der vorherigen Diskussion hin. Martyn glaubt, dass es eher als Schlussfolgerung zum vorherigen Abschnitt funktioniert, und weist darauf hin, dass die imperativen Verben in 5, 1 mit den Imperativen in 4, 30 verbunden sind. Moo hingegen meint, dass es eher nach vorne als nach hinten schaut, da Pauls Ermahnung, in Freiheit fest zu stehen, eine geeignete Einführung in die Ermahnungen in Kapitel 5 ist. J. L. Martyn, *Galatians*, The Anchor Bible Commentary 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 468; Moo, *Galatians*, 319; Das, *Galatians*, 515; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 310. Siehe auch: D. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 673.

## Beschneidung und der Fluch der Einhaltung des Gesetzes

In Gal 5, 2–3 erklärt Paulus zwei Konsequenzen der Beschneidung: Christus wird keinen Vorteil haben, und seine Adressaten werden verpflichtet sein, das ganze Gesetz einzuhalten. Paulus macht jedoch nicht zwei separate und unkorrelierte Aussagen. Die beiden Aussagen sollten im Licht voneinander interpretiert werden, wie ihre Parallelstruktur zeigt:

Ἰδε  
 α ἐγὼ Παῦλος λέγω ὑμῖν  
   β ὅτι...  
     γ ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε,  
   β' ... Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει.  
 α' μαρτύρομαι δὲ πάλιν παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ  
   γ' περιτεμνομένῳ  
   β'' ὅτι ὁφειλέτης ἐστὶν  
     δ ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι.

Die obige Struktur folgt in etwa der Syntax der beiden Verse: α und α' entsprechen den Hauptsätzen (subjekt, verb, objekt); β, β' und β'' sind die beiden untergeordneten ὅτι-Klauseln; und γ und γ' beziehen sich auf die Beschneidung. In beiden Versen betont Paulus seinen Punkt, indem er den Satz mit Sprachverben beginnt, gefolgt von ὅτι (α + β; α' + β''). Zweimal wendet er sich an diejenigen, die die Beschneidung akzeptieren<sup>14</sup>, und bezieht sich zunächst direkt auf seine Leser („wenn sie die Beschneidung akzeptieren“; γ), indem sie eine allgemeinere Aussage machen („jeder Mensch, der die Beschneidung akzeptiert“; γ').<sup>15</sup> In Anbetracht dieser Parallelen Daraus folgt, dass die Konsequenzen der Annahme der von Paulus in beiden Versen bestätigten Beschneidung ebenfalls parallel sind (β' und β''/ d). Diese Parallelität wird ferner durch das Wortspiel zwischen dem Nomen „Vorteil“ (ὠφελέω; β'') und dem Verb zu verpflichten (ὁφειλέτης; β'') unterstützt.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Die Verwendung des betonten Pronomens (ἐγὼ Παῦλος λέγω) parallel zu Pauls Behauptung, ein Zeugnis für die Richtigkeit der Behauptung in Vers 3 (μαρτύρομαι δὲ πάλιν) zu sein, zeigt die starke Natur der in diesen Versen gemachten Ansprüche. Obwohl Paulus die von Herrn angeführte persönliche Beziehung zwischen ihm und seinen Lesern ansprechen könnte, ist es angesichts der literarischen Struktur wahrscheinlicher, dass er sich auf seine apostolische Autorität beruft, um die Gläubigen in Galatia zwangsweise über die Folgen der Beschneidung zu informieren. Witherington erinnert uns an die Wichtigkeit der Zeugenaussagen, insbesondere bei persönlichen Zeugenaussagen, in alten Rhetorik- und Gerichtsverfahren. Trotz der Zweifel, die Paulus von seinen Gegnern gemacht hat und die er in den ersten Kapiteln des Briefess (vgl. Gal 1, 11–12; 2, 7–8) zu korrigieren sucht, ist Paulus immer noch so leidenschaftlich über die Wahrheit des Evangeliums, dass er seinen Ruf als Apostel dafür auf die Linie stellt. Vgl. G. D. Fee, *Galatians*, (Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2007), 187; Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 365; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 265; J. M. G. Barclay, “Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31 (1987) 87.

<sup>15</sup> Paulus' Wahl von ἀνθρώπος, die die generische Bedeutung von Person, Mensch anstelle von geschlechtsspezifischem νῆρ, männlich haben kann, zeigt die Relevanz dieses Themas für mehr als nur für Männer bei Galatia. Das, *Galatians*, 513. Siehe mehr bei U. Schnelle, *Neutestamentliche Anthropologie. Jesus – Paulus – Johannes*, BthSt 18 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener 1991), 44–133.

<sup>16</sup> Auffallend ist die morphologische Ähnlichkeit zwischen ὠφελέω und ὁφειλέτης. Die Realisierbarkeit, dass ἐφελέω und ὁφείλω, die verbale Form von ὁφειλέτης, beide etymologisch von derselben Wurzel stammen, φέλλω,

Obwohl in Galater 5, 3 zum ersten Mal die Notwendigkeit bekräftigt wird, das Gesetz in Verbindung mit der Beschneidung im Brief beizubehalten, weist die Parallelstruktur zwischen Vers 2 und 3 darauf hin, dass Paulus die Behauptung in Vers 2 und die Konsequenzen von Annahme der Beschneidung für besondere Betonung (πάλιν; vgl. Gal 1, 8–9; vgl. Rom 15, 10–12; 1Kor 3, 20; 12, 21; Phil 4, 4) lediglich formuliert.<sup>17</sup> Es ist auch nicht wichtig, darüber zu debattieren, ob die Gegner die Gläubigen aus Galatia informiert wurden oder nicht, dass sie bei der Annahme der Beschneidung verpflichtet wären, das gesamte Gesetz zu halten: Eine Debatte, die in einer Reihe von Fällen beträchtlichen Raum Kommentare einnimmt.<sup>18</sup> Wie Barclay betont, spricht Paulus die Gegner nicht direkt an, und daher unterliegt dieser Vers einer Reihe von Interpretationen.<sup>19</sup> Wenn Paulus im Kontext gelesen wird, geht er mit dieser Behauptung über die bloße Information seiner naiven oder ignoranten Leser hinaus. Es ist ein Teil seiner theologischen Argumentation als Ganzes.<sup>20</sup>

Verbunden mit dieser Debatte ist die Frage, wie sich die Behauptung von Paulus hinsichtlich der Akzeptanz der Beschneidung und die Verpflichtung gegenüber dem gesamten Gesetz auf das Judentum im Allgemeinen beziehen. Für Fredricksen und Nanos war die Bekehrung zum Judentum progressiv: Zunächst mussten die Kandidaten die einfachen Anforderungen des Gesetzes akzeptieren und sich dann allmählich mehr und mehr integrieren, bis sie endgültig beschnitten waren, wodurch der Prozess des Proselytismus abgeschlossen wurde.<sup>21</sup> Paulus predigte eine „jüdisierende“ Botschaft, er widersetzte sich der Beschneidung und des vollen Proselytismus der Heiden, weil die Erfüllung der Verheissungen Gottes im neuen eschatologischen Zeitalter, das Christus eingeweiht hatte, Juden

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wird seit über einem Jahrhundert von Sprachwissenschaftlern unterhalten. Es wird argumentiert, dass ὠφέλῃω möglicherweise das Ergebnis der Verlängerung des anfänglichen Vokals von οφέλλω ist, und dass sowohl οφέλλω als auch φεῖλω von einer vorherigen Wurzelform abgeleitet sind. In Bezug auf den Zusammenhang ihrer Bedeutungen zeichnet James Clackson die unterschiedlichen Meinungen von Ruijgh und Slings auf: Ruijgh argumentiert, dass die Bedeutung „Zunahme, Überschuss“ zu „Gewinn, Nutzen“ führte, was „die Steigerung“ bedeutet, die realisiert werden sollte. Siehe mehr bei: J. Clackson, *The Linguistic Relationship between Armenian and Greek*, Publications of the Philological Society 30 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 156–57; R. S. P. Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, 2 vols. (Boston: Brill, 2010), 1132–33, 1684. Einige Kommentatoren stellen fest, dass Pauls Wortspiel, aber nicht näher ausgeführt wird: Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 368; Das, *Galatians*, 524; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 265.

<sup>17</sup> Moo, *Galatians*, 322 kontriert Morris, der darauf hindeutet, dass πάλιν ein Hinweis auf etwas sein könnte, das Paulus seinen Lesern beibrachte, während er in Galatia bei ihnen war. Vgl. L. Morris, *Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 155.

<sup>18</sup> Martyn, *Galatians*, 471; H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 259; R. Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 222–23.

<sup>19</sup> Barclay, *Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter*, 75, 86

<sup>20</sup> „Die Breite der Sprache, die Paulus in Gal 2, 16– 4, 17 verwendet, deutet darauf hin, dass die Agitatoren forderten - und die Galater verstanden - dass die Unterwerfung unter das Gesetz, das sehr weit gefasst war, erforderlich war.“ Moo, *Galatians*, 323.

<sup>21</sup> P. Fredriksen, „Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2,“ *Journal of Theological Studies* 42 (1991), 547; M. D. Nanos, *The Irony of Galatians: Paul's Letter in First-Century Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 88–91.

und Heiden zwang, ethnisch getrennt zu bleiben.<sup>22</sup> Dies impliziert, dass jüdische Christen weiterhin verpflichtet waren, das gesamte mosaische Gesetz<sup>23</sup> einzuhalten, während dies bei Nichtjuden nicht der Fall war. Sanders argumentiert dagegen, dass die übliche Politik des Gradualismus im Judentum zunächst einige der wichtigsten Gebote wie Beschneidung, Essen und Feiertage forderte. Erst nach Annahme der Beschneidung müssen die Konvertiten leben nach einem neuen Regelwerk für das tägliche Leben<sup>24</sup>, denn Beschneidung bedeutete, die jüdische Lebensweise und all das, was mit der Mitgliedschaft im Volk Gottes einherging, anzunehmen.<sup>25</sup> In diesem Fall lehnt Paulus die Beschneidung nachdrücklich ab, weil dies die Annahme impliziert. Evangelium ist ausschliesslich dem ethnischen Israel vorbehalten, und alles, was als Zeichen eines solchen Ethnozentrismus betrachtet werden könnte, hat keinen Platz mehr in der neuen Zeit Christi.<sup>26</sup> Sanders und Dunn werfen dem Gedanken vor, dass die Beschneidung die Verpflichtung zur Einhaltung des gesamten mosaischen Gesetzes unterstellt, eine falsche Darstellung und Verzerrung des Judentums zu sein; stattdessen implizierte die Beschneidung nur die Annahme einer jüdischen Lebensweise.<sup>27</sup> Zwar ist Dunn zu Recht der Ansicht, dass die unternehmerische Dimension der Beschneidung nicht vernachlässigt werden sollte und, dass Paulus unbedingt darauf aus ist, mit der Auswirkung eines ethnisch ausschliesslichen Evangeliums konfrontiert zu werden (vgl. Gal 3, 28–29).<sup>28</sup> Die Diskussion des Paulus geht über die Mitgliedschaft hinaus.<sup>29</sup> Longenecker hat durch eine Vielzahl ausserbiblischer jüdischer Texte bewiesen, dass „eine Lehre von der Notwendigkeit, alle Gesetze zu machen, nicht früh oder gar nicht vorhan-

**22** M. D. Nanos, "The Question of Conceptualization: Qualifying Paul's Position on Circumcision in Dialogue with Josephus' Advisors to King Izates," in M. D. Nanos und M. Zetterholm (Hgg.) *Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 125. Zu diesem Thema siehe auch die Band: M. Hengel und U. Heckel, *Paulus und das antike Judentum Symposium in Gedenken an den 50. Todestag Adolf Schlatters (19. Mai 1938)*, WUNT 58 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991).

**23** P. Eisenbaum, *Paul Was Not a Christian: The Original Message of a Misunderstood Apostle* (New York: Harper One, 2009), 109.

**24** E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 29. In diesem Punkt stellt Robert Gundry fest, dass Sanders von seiner ursprünglichen Position abweicht, dass der Eintritt in den Bund vollständig von Gottes Gnade abhängt. In einem persönlichen Brief von Sanders an Gundry, der teilweise von Gundry in seinem Artikel (Fussnote 23) zitiert wird, unterscheidet er zwischen Einreisebestimmungen, einschliesslich Beschneidung, und Verhaltensanforderungen. Gundry's Artikel versuchen, Sanders Behauptung in Frage zu stellen, Paulus und das Judentum hätten sich darauf geeinigt, durch Gehorsam gegenüber dem Gesetz im Volk Gottes zu bleiben, aber in dieser Fußnote und an anderer Stelle im Artikel fragt er auch, ob Sanders' Position sowohl Paulus als auch das Judentum glaubten in Gnade als einziges Mittel zum „Einsteigen“ ist haltbar. Vgl. R.H. Gundry, "Grace, Works, and Staying Saved in Paul," *Biblica* 66.1 (1985): 1–10.

**25** J.D.G. Dunn, "Neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision, But...": Gal. 5.2–12; 6.12–16; cf. 1 Cor. 7.7–20." In J. D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 319–320. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008)

**26** J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, New Testament Theology (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 100; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977), 12.

**27** Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 28; Dunn, *Neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision*, 319–20.

**28** Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 265–67.

**29** Moo, *Galatians*, 322–24.

den war prägendes Judentum<sup>30</sup> eine legalistische Mentalität, der sich Paulus widersetzte.

Witherington versteht Vers 3 auf der Grundlage der im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert etablierten protestantischen Bundestheologie: „Die Annahme der Beschneidung würde bedeuten, den mosaischen Bund anzunehmen, was impliziert, dass der neue Bund in Christus, zu dem die Gläubigen aus Galatia gehörten, für nichtig erklärt wurde. Bei der Annullierung des Bundes mit Christus würden die Gläubigen jedoch auch die Vorteile dieses Bundes verlieren und würden daher für die Einhaltung des mosaischen Gesetzes in vollem Umfang verantwortlich gemacht werden oder den Eidfluch, das Urteil Gottes über Bündnisbrecher erleben.“<sup>31</sup>

Dennoch muss die Aussage von Paulus, dass die Galater durch die Beschneidung ihre Vorteile in Christus verlieren würden, weiter qualifiziert werden. Paulus widersetzt sich nicht der Bekehrung zum Judentum oder dem mosaischen Gesetz an sich, sondern den Implikationen, die die Entscheidung der Galatianischen Gläubigen begleiteten, sich in diesem spezifischen Kontext beschneiden zu lassen. Die Adressaten hatten gehört, dass Paulus das Evangelium gepredigt hatte, dass Christus gestorben ist, um uns aus dem gegenwärtigen bösen Zeitalter zu befreien (1, 3–4; 3, 1; 4, 13). Sie hatten die Evangeliumsbotschaft erhalten und wurden getauft (3, 27; 4, 14). Sie hatten den Geist und Wunder empfangen und durch den Geist erlebt (3, 2–5, 14; 4, 6) und werden als adoptierte Söhne Christi, Nachkommen Abrahams und Erben der Versprechen von Paulus (3, 26–29; 4, 5–6). Dies waren jedoch nicht alle „Vorteile“ Christi; er ist auch gekommen, um sich vom Fluch des Gesetzes zu befreien (3, 13; vgl. 2, 4; 4, 5; 5, 1.13), eine Freiheit, die Paulus seinen Lesern jetzt anhält, fest zu bleiben (5, 1).<sup>32</sup> Wenn die Galater die Beschneidung akzeptierten, würden sie auf ihre Freiheit verzichten und in den Zustand der Sklaverei zurückkehren. Paulus verbindet die Akzeptanz der Beschneidung mit der Sklaverei sowohl in Galater 2, 3–5 als auch in 5, 1–2. In diesen beiden Passagen wird impliziert, dass „falsche Brüder“ den Druck hatten, Titus zu beschneiden, genauso wie es Druck gab von den Gegnern, um die galatischen Gläubigen zu beschneiden, und dies wird als „sich wieder einem Joch der Sklaverei unterwerfen“ (5, 1). Paulus schreibt, dass das Gesetz jeden unter Sünde gefangen hielt (3, 22–23), gerade weil beim Versuch, das Gesetz einzuhalten, die sündige menschliche Natur offenbart wird (vgl. 4, 23; 5, 16–21.24; 6, 8). Das Vertrauen auf Werke des Gesetzes ist ein Fluch, weil die Verpflichtung dazu behalten sie alles in sich (3, 10.13; 4, 3–5), um die sündige menschliche Natur zu bestätigen, und damit die Verurteilung zu besiegeln.<sup>33</sup> Christus ist gekommen, um allen, die im Glauben an ihn glauben, von dieser Verurteilung

<sup>30</sup> Morris, *Galatians*, 155; Betz, *Galatians*, 259–60.

<sup>31</sup> Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 366–67.

<sup>32</sup> Die Ermahnung, „standfest“ (στήκετε) zu sein, wird von Paulus für die bereits Gläubigen verwendet (1Kor 16, 13; Phil 1, 27; 4, 1; 1Thess 3, 8; 2Thess 2, 15). Selbst wenn die Gegner die Galater nicht als vollständig von Christus angenommen betrachtet hätten, wäre diese Ermahnung nicht sinnvoll, wenn Paulus seine Leser nicht als Gläubige betrachtete. Dies ist ein weiterer Beweis dafür, dass Paulus die Bedrohung durch die Beschneidung behandelt, nicht nur als eine Frage des Eintritts in das Volk Gottes oder als Rechtfertigung zur Rechtfertigung, sondern in Verbindung mit ihrem fortdauernden Leben in Christus als Gläubige.

<sup>33</sup> Martyn, *Galatians*, 471; Moo, *Galatians*, 318–19.

die Freiheit zu gewähren (3, 13–26; 4, 3–6). Es ist daher klar, dass Paulus aus der „Schon-in“-Perspektive schreibt, in der die heiligmachende Kraft des Geistes im Leben der galatischen Gläubigen wirkt.

Indem sie die Beschneidung akzeptieren, verlieren sie diesen Vorteil in Christus und es bleibt ihnen nichts anderes übrig, als die Pflicht, das Gesetz einzuhalten, und kehrt in einen Zustand der Sklaverei zurück (5, 1–3; vgl. 4, 3–9).<sup>34</sup>

Es ist nicht klar, ob der Wunsch der Galater, sich beschneiden zu lassen, ein Bestreben ist, unter dem Gesetz als ganzes zu stehen.<sup>35</sup> Auf der Grundlage der Argumentation von Paulus war die Verschuldung des gesamten Gesetzes jedoch eindeutig eine der Implikationen der Beschneidung. Wie es besprochen wurde, wurde im Judentum die Beschneidung auch als Mittel betrachtet, um die Gedanken und Leidenschaften des Menschen in Übereinstimmung mit dem Willen Gottes zu bringen. Nur in einem beschnittenen Zustand wurde einer als vollkommen und heilig erachtet.<sup>36</sup> Es war möglich, dass die Gegner von Paulus die Galater davon überzeugt hatten, dass sie nur durch die Beschneidung einen solchen aufrichtigen, geheiligten Status vor Gott erlangen würden. Die Beschneidung aus diesen Gründen unterstrich jedoch nicht nur, dass „der Tod Christi nicht das erreicht hat, was Paulus sagt, dass sie es vollbracht hat“<sup>37</sup> auch die Galater würden verpflichtet, das gesamte Gesetz zu befolgen, um geheiligt zu werden. Ungeachtet des genauen Inhalts der gegenwärtigen Botschaft oder der genauen Hintergründe der Absichten der Galater nähert sich Paulus dem Thema jedoch nicht nur aus der Perspektive eines „Zutrittsrituals“. <sup>38</sup> Schließlich waren die Galater schon in Christus (3, 26–29; vgl. 4, 6–7). Vielmehr würde die Akzeptanz der Beschneidung ihr anhaltendes heiligmachendes Wachstum im Geist gefährden, und sie würden stattdessen rückwärts gehen (5,7; vgl. 2,2; 1Kor 9,24–26; Phil 2,16; Heb 12,1).

### Von Christus getrennt

Galater 5, 4 bekräftigt Paulus' Argument in den vorhergehenden Versen. Der Satz „das ganze Gesetz zu halten“ von Vers 3 ist parallel zu „durch das Recht zu rechtfertigen“ und ergänzt somit die vorherigen Aussagen:

<sup>34</sup> Es ist wichtig zu erwähnen, dass die Galater früher Heiden waren. Siehe dazu F. John, *Der Galaterbrief im Kontext historischer Lebenswelten im antiken Kleinasien*, FRLANT 264 (Göttingen: V&R 2016). Die Annahme der Beschneidung und des mosaischen Gesetzes war für sie eine Neuigkeit. Da sie jedoch über diese Möglichkeit nachgedacht haben, muss Paulus ihnen die Rolle des Gesetzes im Erlösungsplan (3, 10–4, 7) detailliert erklären. Der ehemalige Zustand der Sklaverei, in dem sie sich befanden, war heidnische Anbetung und Götzendienst (vgl. 4, 8), aber um die Beschneidung und das Gesetz zu akzeptieren, war es, in einen Zustand der Sklaverei zurückzukehren, doch diesmal handelt es sich um die Sklaverei und die Verurteilung des Gesetzes, über das Paulus spricht. Martyn, *Galatians*, 370–73; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 278–79.

<sup>35</sup> Schreiner, *Galatians*, 312–13.

<sup>36</sup> Vgl. Deut 30, 6; Jub 15, 26–34; 1QH 14.20; Philon, *Spec. Leg.* 1.1–11.

<sup>37</sup> Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 222; F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 229–30.

<sup>38</sup> Das, *Galatians*, 524–25. Es ist wichtig das folgende Zitat von Francis B. Watson zu beachten: „Paulus ist gegen die Beschneidung, weil es der Ritus des Eintritts in das jüdische Volk ist, und das allein aus diesem Grund“. F. B. Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 130.

ὅλον	τὸν νόμον	ποιῆσαι
οἵτινες	ἐν νόμῳ	δικαιοῦσθε

Wiederum zeigt der Parallelismus, dass die Behauptungen von Paulus nicht ausserhalb des Zusammenhangs verstanden werden können. Das Problem ist nicht das Gesetz im Allgemeinen, als ob das Behalten des Gesetzes im Wesentlichen Legalismus und ein vom Gesetz gerechtfertigtes Bestreben bedeutet<sup>39</sup>, wie oft von Befürwortern der traditionellen Interpretation der Galater argumentiert wurde. Weder ist Vers 3 eine polemische Aussage über das Judentum, noch eine unparteiische Erinnerung an die Verpflichtungen des mosaischen Bundes, wie sie Sanders und Dunn implizieren.<sup>40</sup> Stattdessen deutet die Parallelstruktur darauf hin, dass die Akzeptanz der Beschneidung in diesem spezifischen Kontext tatsächlich ein Versuch der Rechtschaffenheit durch das Gesetz war,<sup>41</sup> was impliziert, dass die Vorteile in Christus (5, 2) verwirklicht werden und das ganze Gesetz eingehalten werden muss.<sup>42</sup> Die Tatsache, dass Paulus seinen Lesern aus einer bereits *in-Perspektive* schreibt (2, 4; 3,13,26–29; 4, 5–6, 14; 5, 1.13), lässt vermuten dass der Versuch, rechtschaffen zu sein, tatsächlich ein Hinweis auf die Heiligung durch das Gesetz sein könnte,<sup>43</sup> und ein Missverständnis der Rolle des Gesetzes in Bezug auf Christus widerspiegelt - nicht nur darauf, wie man geret-

<sup>39</sup> Fee, *Galatians*, 188–89.

<sup>40</sup> Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 265–67; Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 28–29.

<sup>41</sup> Die meisten Kommentatoren stimmen darin überein, dass das Verb δικαιοῦσθε in diesem Zusammenhang als konativ zu verstehen ist und daher etwas ausdrückt, was versucht wird. Wie Moo sagt, ist dies die einzige syntaktische Interpretation, die das Argument von Paulus hinsichtlich der Unfähigkeit des Gesetzes zur Rechtfertigung (2, 21; 3, 11.21) sinnvoll macht. Während Dunn der Meinung ist, dass das gegenwärtige Verb eine konative Kraft hat, gibt es in Galater kaum Anhaltspunkte dafür, dass selbst der Beginn eines solchen Versuchs (Präsens) einen entscheidenden Verstoss gegen Christus (Aorist) darstellt. Dieser spezielle Punkt wird ausführlicher erörtert eingehend in die syntaktische Analyse. Vgl. Moo, *Galatians*, 326; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 267.

<sup>42</sup> „Die Verfolgung des Gesetzes ist auch oder sogar hauptsächlich falsch, weil die Verfolgung des Gesetzes als Rechtfertigungsmittel den Versuch beinhaltet, durch menschliche Anstrengung Sicherheit bei Gott zu finden, ein „Tun“ des Gesetzes (vgl. Vers 2). das, mit welcher Haltung auch immer es verfolgt wird, führt in die göttlich-menschliche Beziehung einen Nexus der Verpflichtung ein, der mit der Natur unseres gnädigen Gottes unvereinbar ist.“ Moo, *Galatians*, 327. „Wenn er [Paulus] an die jüdisch-christlichen Kirchen in Judäa denkt, findet er kein Problem in ihrer fortgesetzten Einhaltung des Gesetzes, denn er ist zuversichtlich, dass sie ihre Errettung Christus zuschreiben, nicht ihrer Beobachtung... So können in gemischten Kirchen wie der in Antiochia die ehemals jüdischen Mitglieder das Gesetz nur dann weiter einhalten, wenn die Einhaltung des Gesetzes für sie zu einer Angelegenheit ohne Konsequenz geworden ist. . . Sobald man sich an die Einhaltung des Gesetzes hält, hat man das Evangelium Christi verletzt und sich von ihm getrennt (vgl. Röm 7,2). Luther hat in dieser Hinsicht den Ausdruck solus Christus verwendet.“ Martyn, *Galatians*, 471. Siehe auch: Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 230–31; Morris, *Galatians*, 155.

<sup>43</sup> Martyn wählt die δικαιο als Korrektur, gerade weil diese Übersetzung dem Verständnis des Begriffs keine Beschränkungen auferlegt, entweder als forensische Begnadigung (Rechtfertigung) oder als moralische Normen (Gerechtigkeit). Die Übersetzung von Martyn weist vielmehr darauf hin, dass das Konzept allgemein auf „Gottes Recht, was falsch gelaufen ist“ verweist. Obwohl die Übersetzung „Rektifizierung“ in dieser Arbeit nicht übernommen wurde, ist die Beobachtung von Martyn hilfreich, um zu erkennen, dass δικαιοῶ (v. 4) und δικαιοσύνη erkannt werden (V. 5) muss sich in diesem Perikop nicht auf die forensische Rechtfertigung beziehen. Tatsächlich erfordert die eschatologische Natur von Vers 5 eine alternative Erklärung, wie in der syntaktischen Analyse diskutiert. Martyn, *Galatians*, 250.

tet wird (vgl. 3, 17 - 4, 7), aber auch im Hinblick auf das Wachstum in der Gerechtigkeit in der Sphäre Christi (vgl. 5, 14 - 6, 10). Eine der Implikationen der Beschneidung war, dass Gerechtigkeit nur im Bereich des Judentums möglich war, so dass Christus in den Worten von Dunn auf einen „rein jüdischen Messias“<sup>44</sup>, beschränkt war. Aus den strukturellen Beobachtungen geht hervor, dass Paulus auch die breiteren theologischen Konzepte menschlicher Werke und die Rolle des Gesetzes für die Heiligung in der Sphäre Christi diskutiert.<sup>45</sup>

In Vers 4 werden die Folgen der Suche nach Gerechtigkeit durch das Gesetz durch Beschneidung in einer chiasmatischen Struktur dargestellt:

a καταργήθητε  
 b ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ,  
 c οἵτινες ἐν νόμῳ δικαιοῦσθε,  
 b' τῆς χάριτος  
 a' ἐξέπεσατε

Die Parallele zwischen den beiden aoristischen Verben (a und a') zeigt hier die gefährlichen Konsequenzen der Aufrechterhaltung eines solchen Rechtsbündels (c) durch die Annahme der Beschneidung (c): Es bringt den Gläubigen aus dem Bereich Christi heraus, wo der die Vorteile seiner Gnade haben keine Reichweite (b und b', beide Genitiven der Trennung). Wenn der Gläubige leugnet, was Christus in seinem oder ihrem Leben durch den Geist (Heiligung) leistet, indem er sich auf seine eigene Anstrengung stützt, gibt es nichts anderes, was Christus für diese Person tun kann, da dies implizit „die Grundanstrengung“ leugnet.<sup>46</sup> Moo stellt fest, dass das Verb καταργέω zusammen mit der Präposition ἀπὸ in der Paulus-Analogie in Römer 7, 1–6 bezüglich der Übertragung von einer Bindungsbeziehung zu verwendet wird.<sup>47</sup> Durch die Annahme der Beschneidung und das Streben nach Gerechtigkeit durch andere Mittel als durch den Glaube würden sich die Gläubigen von der Bundesbeziehung mit Christus trennen und sich aus dem Bereich entfernen, in dem Christus und seine Gnade wirken.<sup>48</sup> Diese Konsequenzen stehen parallel zu der Aussage von Paulus in Vers 2, dass Christus keinen weiteren Nutzen für sie haben wird. In Übereinstimmung mit dem allgemeinen Ton der Perikope könnten die Aoristenverben als *proleptisch*,<sup>49</sup> oder als *ingressiv* verstanden werden,<sup>50</sup> was erneut zeigt, dass Paulus das Thema aus der Perspek-

<sup>44</sup> Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 268

<sup>45</sup> Daher hat Moo zu Recht die Behauptung, dass „die Reformer zu Recht in Pauls Verurteilung der Beschneidung und des Gesetzes bestimmte breitere anthropologische und theologische Implikationen fanden. Obwohl sich die Galater offensichtlich auf ein besonderes Thema im Zusammenhang mit dem Judentum des ersten Jahrhunderts fokussierten, reicht Paulus' Argumentation über dieses historische Thema hinaus und befasst sich mit den grundlegenden und allgemeineren Themen des Handelns gegenüber dem Glauben.“ Moo, *Galatians*, 325.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 326–27; Das, *Galatians*, 525–26.

<sup>48</sup> Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 223; Fee, *Galatians*, 187–89.

<sup>49</sup> Der proleptische Aorist ist der „rhetorische Transfer“ eines zukünftigen Ereignisses, als ob es vorüber wäre. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 562–64; Moo, *Galatians*, 326.

<sup>50</sup> Der ingressive Aorist betont den Beginn einer Aktion. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics*, 558–59. In diesem Fall möchte Paulus betonen, dass ihre Abweichung vom wahren Evangelium bereits Folgen hat. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass Paulus sie für völlig verirrt hält und aus der Gnade gefallen ist.

tive der Gläubigen anspricht, die sich bereits im Bereich der Gnade Christi befinden.<sup>51</sup>

### Die gemeinsame Erfahrung des Geistes

Der Wechsel vom Singular der zweiten Person „du“ (Vers 2–4) zum Plural der ersten Person „wir“ (Vers 5) ist ein wichtiger Texthinweis auf die gemeinsame Erfahrung des Geistes zwischen Paulus und seinen Lesern. Die Verwendung des nominativen Personalpronomen ἡμεῖς dient der Betonung<sup>52</sup> und übertrifft den Gegensatz zwischen der Absicht der Leser, die Beschneidung anzunehmen, und ihren Folgen (Verse 2–4) und der Realität im Bereich Christi (Verse 5–6). Es gibt drei Möglichkeiten, diese Verschiebung in Pronomen zu deuten: 1) Paulus könnte „wir“ und andere jüdische Christen von „Ihnen“, nichtjüdischen Galater unterscheiden;<sup>53</sup> 2) er könnte den Kontrast zwischen wahren Christen und denen, die nach dem Gesetz Gerechtigkeit suchen, betonen;<sup>54</sup> oder 3) das „wir“ könnte inklusiv sein und sich sowohl auf Paulus als auch auf seine Leser beziehen.<sup>55</sup>

Bei den ersten beiden Interpretationen gibt es jedoch einige Einschränkungen. Obwohl Paulus an anderer Stelle im Brief ethnische Unterscheidungen vornimmt (vgl. 2, 14–15; 4, 3–9), lässt sich aus dem spezifischen Kontext von Galater 5, 2–6 nicht klar erkennen, dass Paulus auf ethnischer Basis Vielfalt argumentiert.<sup>56</sup> Ebenso würde die zweite Interpretation eine starke Unähnlichkeit zwischen dem wahren Gläubigen Paulus und seinen Lesern erfordern.

Stattdessen sprechen zwei Argumente für die dritte Interpretation, dass das „wir“ in Vers 5 inklusiv ist und sich sowohl auf Paulus als auch auf seine Leser bezieht.<sup>57</sup> Erstens

<sup>51</sup> Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 369; Das, *Galatians*, 525.

<sup>52</sup> Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 321.

<sup>53</sup> Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, 369.

<sup>54</sup> Morris, *Galatians*, 156; Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 224.

<sup>55</sup> G.D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 418.

<sup>56</sup> Das weist darauf hin, dass Galater 5, 6 keinen Sinn ergeben würde, wenn Paulus gerade Wir (5, 5) jüdische Christen von Ihnen unbeschnittenen nichtjüdischen Galater (5, 2–4) beschnitten hat. Das, *Galatians*, 526–27.

<sup>57</sup> Der Plural der ersten Person im Brief bezieht sich nicht immer auf eine Gruppe, die sich von den Adressaten unterscheidet. In den ersten beiden Kapiteln, in denen Paulus über seine persönlichen Erfahrungen spricht, bezieht sich der Plural der ersten Person hauptsächlich auf diejenigen, die den Galatern das Evangelium predigten, nämlich Paul und Barnabas (2, 9), und möglicherweise andere, die bei ihm sind (1, 2; vgl. 1, 8–9; 2, 4–5, 15). Wenn Paulus jedoch mit der Auseinandersetzung mit seiner theologischen Argumentation beginnt, bezieht sich der Plural der ersten Person sowohl auf den Autor als auch auf die Leser generisch. Dies wird besonders deutlich in den ermahnenden Passagen (inklusive „wir“: 3, 13–14, 23–25; 4, 3–6; 5, 1; einschliesslich „wir“ mit gortatorischem Konjunktiv: 5, 25–26; 6, 9–10). Die Verschiebung vom exklusiven zum inklusiven „wir“ erfolgt mit Feinsinn. Galater 2, 15 scheint immer noch exklusiv zu sein, da es die Argumentation von Paulus in seiner Konfrontation mit Petrus abschliesst, der Plural der ersten Person in Vers 16–17 kann jedoch in beide Richtungen argumentiert werden: Entweder als Schlussfolgerung von Pauls persönlichem Bericht (exklusiv „wir“) oder als Anfang seines theologischen Arguments (inklusive „wir“). Für diese zweite Ansicht scheint das ich in den Versen 18–21 kein direkter Verweis auf Paulus selbst zu sein, sondern eher eine verallgemeinerte Aussage. In jedem Fall wird der Übergang zwischen persönlicher Darstellung und theologischem Argument, exklusivem und inklusivem Wir, auf sehr polierte Weise erreicht. Bei 5, 5 scheinen sowohl die Verwendung des theologischen Arguments als Ganzes als auch der unmittelbare Kontext für ein inklusives Wir zu sprechen (vgl. 4, 31; 5, 1.25). See Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 391–92; Fee, *Galatians*, 186.

gibt es im Brief selbst wenig Beweise dafür, dass Paulus seine Leser jemals für ausserhalb des Reiches Christi hält (vgl. 3, 26.28; 4, 6). Die einzige Stelle im Brief, die eine solche Lektüre unterstützen könnte, wäre 5, 4, wenn die aoristischen Verben als gnomisch gelesen würden<sup>58</sup>, was impliziert, dass jeder Versuch der Rechtschaffenheit durch das Gesetz automatisch zu einem Zustand der Trennung von Christus und seiner Gnade führt. Dies entspricht jedoch nicht der Attraktivität Natur des Briefes als Ganzes, in dem Paulus seine Leser ständig ermahnt, in der Freiheit der Gnade Christi zu bleiben (vgl. Gal 3, 28; 4, 8–9; 5, 1–2) und passt nicht zum Ton der Konditionalität und möglichen Konsequenzen in den Versen 2–4.<sup>59</sup>

Zweitens verweist Paulus an anderer Stelle im Brief auf eine Reihe gemeinsamer Erfahrungen zwischen ihm und seinen Lesern: Der früheren Gefangenschaft unter dem Gesetz, der Erlösung aus dieser Gefangenschaft durch Rechtfertigung durch den Glaube an Christus (3, 13.23–25), die Adoption als Söhne (4, 5.31) und das Empfangen des Geistes (4, 6). Die Galater hätten sich mit dem Verweis auf „Glauben“ identifiziert und den „Geist“ auch in 5, 5, der auf diese gemeinsamen Erfahrungen anspielt.<sup>60</sup> Paulus betont die spirituelle Verbindung zwischen ihm und den GalaterInnen und fordert seine Leser auf, sich weiterhin auf die heiligmachende Arbeit des Geistes durch den Glaube zu verlassen.

### Weder Beschneidung noch Un-beschneidung

Galater 5, 6 schliesst die Argumentation der Perikope ab. Hier erklärt Paulus, warum die Galater (erklärendes γάρ) ihre Vorteile in Christus aufgeben würden (Verse 2–4) und warum sie durch den Glaube durch den Geist auf die Hoffnung auf Gerechtigkeit warten sollten (Vers 5). Die Galater sollten nicht beschnitten werden, weil dies in Christus nichts bedeutet. Im Bereich von Christus ist das einzige, was von Wert ist, „Glaube, der durch die Liebe wirkt“. Dies ist eine allgemeine Behauptung bezüglich der Realität in der Sphäre Christi.<sup>61</sup> Der Vers kann wie folgt strukturiert werden:

- a ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
- b οὐτε περιτομή
- a' τι ἰσχύει
- b' οὐτε ἀκροβυστία
- b'' ἀλλὰ πίστις
- c δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη.

<sup>58</sup> Schreiner, *Galatians*, 314.

<sup>59</sup> Bezüglich der Parallelität zwischen den in diesen drei Versen gefundenen Aussagen und der syntaktischen Analyse hinsichtlich der Konditionalität in Galater 5, 2–4 wird auf die beiden vorhergehenden Abschnitte verwiesen.

<sup>60</sup> Das, *Galatians*, 526–27. Siehe auch Dunns Erklärung bezüglich der Bindung von Erfahrung zwischen Paulus und den GalaterInnen, zu der insbesondere der Glaube an Christus und die Erfahrung des Geistes gehört: Dunn, *The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, 52–63.

<sup>61</sup> Das Verb ἰσχύω in Vers 6 wird in diesem Fall als gnomische Gegenwart verstanden, da Paulus darüber diskutiert, was im Bereich Christi im Hinblick auf eine allgemeine, zeitlose Tatsache gültig ist. Das Verb kann als „Bedeutung haben“, „gültig“ oder „in Kraft sein“ übersetzt werden und ist nach Dunn „Machtsprache“. Vgl. Fee, *Galatians*, 191; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 271.

Der Präpositionalatz „in Jesus Christus“ (a) zeigt an, dass es um das geht, was im Bereich von Christus (a“) zählt, was wiederum die bereits *in-Perspektive* hervorhebt. Die drei Nominativen (b, b', b“) bilden die zusammengesetztes Thema des Satzes. Vor allen drei Substantiven steht eine Konjunktion, die ihre Beziehung zum Verb klarstellt. Die zwei negativen korrelativen Konjunktionen von (b und b') zeigen an, dass keine der analogen Ausdrücke Beschneidung und Nichtbeschneidung irgendeinen Wert im Bereich Christi haben. Dies bedeutet, dass Paulus den Beginn des Kosmos ankündigt was jenseits religiöser Differenzierungen liegt.<sup>62</sup> Oder begründet damit Paulus eine neue Religion?<sup>63</sup> Dies sind extreme Behauptungen, die die älteren, traditionellen Ansicht widerspiegeln. Paulus lehnt alles ab, was jüdisch ist, obwohl Paulus nie aufgehört hat, Jude zu sein, und bricht nie vollständig mit seinem früheren Erbe, wie Gelehrte wie Paula Fredriksen und Mark Nanos ausführlich argumentiert haben.<sup>64</sup> Eine vollständige Ablehnung des Judentums erklären sie nicht, warum Paulus auch sagt, dass die Beschneidung keinen Wert hat (vgl. 1Kor 7, 18–20). Während Paulus dagegen zustimmen würde, dass ethnische Identität und sozialer Status für Gott nichts zählen (Gal 3, 28–29; vgl. Kol 3,11), interpretiert Paulus' Aussage „weder Beschneidung noch Un-beschneidung“ lediglich auf Sozioethnische Ausdrücke, die die Tendenz in Dunns *New Perspective*-Ansatz zu sein scheint<sup>65</sup>, bestehen darin, die tieferen soteriologischen Gründe hinter seinem Argument umzugehen.

Die Neigung, Paulus ausschliesslich auf sozio-ethnischen Begriffen zu interpretieren, kann vermieden werden, wenn die umfassendere Bedeutung der Beschneidung im Judentum des ersten Jahrhunderts betrachtet wird. Wie im Abschnitt über den historischen Hintergrund erörtert wurde, deutete die Beschneidung nicht nur auf die Einbeziehung in das Volk Gottes, sondern hatte auch Auswirkungen auf die Erlösung und die Heiligung. Es ist ein zutiefst theologisches Thema, das in den Versen 2–4 zu solch starken theologischen Aussagen geführt hat, was auch die Behauptung von Moo bestätigt, dass Paulus' Haltung zur Beschneidung „kontextabhängig ist“:

„Er ist unveränderlich dagegen, dass Nichtjuden beschnitten werden müssen, um sie für die Vollmitgliedschaft im Volk Gottes zu qualifizieren. Er hat nichts gegen die Beschneidung von Juden, wenn es nicht um das Erlösungserfordernis geht; Er freut sich daher sehr, dass Timotheus, dessen jüdische Mutter ihn als Juden qualifiziert hat, beschnitten wird (Apg 16, 1–3). Paulus würde sich auch nicht mit der modernen Praxis streiten, männliche Babys aus (diskutierten) gesundheitlichen Gründen zu beschneiden... Es ist nicht die physische Handlung als solche, die Paulus ablehnt; Es geht um seine rituelle Bedeutung im jüdischen Kontext des ersten Jahrhunderts.“<sup>66</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Martyn, *Galatians*, 472.

<sup>63</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 262–63.

<sup>64</sup> P. Fredriksen, „Judaizing the Nations: The Ritual Demands of Paul's Gospel.“ *New Testament Studies* 56 (2010): 244–52.

<sup>65</sup> Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 330; Dunn, *Neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision*, 330.

<sup>66</sup> Moo, *Galatians*, 322. Der Apostel selbst wurde beschnitten und akzeptierte die Beschneidung für die Söhne jüdischer Gläubiger (Apg. 21, 20–24), obwohl er den Ritus an sich für unwichtig hielt (vgl. Vers 6). Aber als es zum Christentum konvertiert wurde, war das eine ganz andere Sache. Morris, *Galatians*, 154.

In Anbetracht der sozialen und politischen Auswirkungen der Religion im ersten Jahrhundert nach Christus würde sich die Akzeptanz der Beschneidung natürlich auf den sozio-politischen Status der Beteiligten auswirken.<sup>67</sup> Dies ist jedoch nicht das Hauptanliegen von Paulus. Für ihn ist die Akzeptanz der Beschneidung in Galatia ein theologisches Problem mit soteriologischen Implikationen. Das Beschneidungsritual und seine Implikationen haben in Christus keine soteriologische Relevanz, und auch das Nichtbeschnitten ändert seinen Status vor Gott in keiner Weise.<sup>68</sup>

Im Gegensatz dazu ist das einzige, was im Bereich Christi von Wert ist, die *faitnote* der kontrastiven Konjunktion ἀλλά, die das Nomen πίστις (b') begleitet, das der Beschneidung widerspricht. Wie Fung feststellt, betont dies, dass der Glaube „ausreicht“, um gegen die totale Unwirksamkeit der Beschneidung zu kämpfen.<sup>69</sup> Paulus bezeichnet jedoch „Glaube“: Es ist „Glaube, der durch Liebe wirkt“.<sup>70</sup> Wie bereits erwähnt, bezieht sich die Behauptung von Paulus auf das Reich Christi - was hat und was keinen Wert für die Heiligung in Christi Wirkungskreis hat. Ein struktureller Vergleich zwischen Galater 5, 6 und 6,15 bestätigt diesen Punkt weiter<sup>71</sup>:

Gal 5, 6

ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ οὔτε περιτομή τι ἰσχύει  
οὔτε ἀκροβυστία, ἀλλὰ πίστις δι' ἀγάπης  
ἐνεργουμένη.

Gal 6, 15

οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστιν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία,  
ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις.

In beiden Texten wird zuerst die Beschneidung erwähnt, dann die Beschneidung, die beide von negativen korrelativen Konjunktionen begleitet wird. Das dritte Element in beiden Passagen wird durch die Konjunktion ἀλλά eingeführt. Die Tatsache, dass der durch die Liebe wirkende Glaube parallel zur „neuen Schöpfung“ ist, zeigt, dass das Problem in Galater 5, 6 das neue Reich in Christus ist und nicht der Zugang zu ihm (vgl. 2Kor 5,17; Eph 2, 13–16; 4, 21–24; Kol 1, 15).<sup>72</sup> Der dynamische Glaube in Vers 6 setzt Rechtfertigung voraus, und Rechtfertigung trägt Früchte in einem solchen Glauben. Wiederum bestätigt der „Glaube,

<sup>67</sup> Siehe die Diskussion über den historischen Hintergrund der Beschneidung: A. Blaschke, *Beschneidung. Zeugnisse der Bibel und verwandter Texte*, Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter 28 (Francke: Tübingen/Basel 1998);

<sup>68</sup> Morris, *Galatians*, 157–58; Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 228.

<sup>69</sup> Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 228.

<sup>70</sup> B. Schliesser, *Was ist Glaube? Paulinische Perspektiven*, Theologische Studien NF 3 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2011), 76.

<sup>71</sup> 1Kor 7, 19 ist auch vergleichbar mit Gal 5, 6 und 6, 15: „Denn weder die Beschneidung zählt noch die Un-Beschneidung, sondern die Einhaltung der Gebote Gottes“. Der Kontext von 1Kor 7 wird klargestellt, dass Paulus die vollständige Beendigung des Beschneidungsritus nicht predigt; vielmehr „sollte jeder in dem Zustand bleiben, in dem er berufen wurde“, sei es beschnitten oder unbeschnitten (1Kor 7, 17–20). Der Ritus selbst hat in Christus keinerlei Wert, ebenso wie die soziale Hierarchie, der Status oder die ethnische Zugehörigkeit keinen Wert haben, wenn man vor Gott steht (1Kor 7, 21–24; vgl. Gal 3, 28–29; Kol 3, 11). Siehe Martyn, *Galatians*, 471–74.

<sup>72</sup> Obwohl Moo anerkennt, dass „in Christus“ sich auf die neue Schöpfung bezieht, behauptet er, dass „der Glaube, der sich in Liebesakten ausdrückt, der Glaube ist, der zur Rechtfertigung gültig ist oder zählt.“ Moo, *Galatians*, 330–31

der durch die Liebe wirkt“, dass das Gesetz im Gläubigen lebendig geworden ist, was zeigt, dass der Geist in dieser neuen Schöpfung im Leben des gläubiger Menschen aktiv ist.<sup>73</sup>

### Zusammenfassung

Eine Literaranalyse von Galater 5, 2–6 zeigt, dass Paulus nicht nur über Legalismus des Judentums selbst oder Ethnizitätsprobleme spricht. Die unterschiedlichen Parallelismen in der Perikope zu erkennen, zeigt gleichzeitig, dass die Aussagen von Paulus hinsichtlich der Beschneidung und des Gesetzes kontextabhängig sind. Die Galater waren bereits Gläubige, und aus dieser Perspektive spricht Paulus mit ihnen über ihren Wunsch, beschnitten zu werden. Dafür appelliert er an ihre gemeinsame Erfahrung der Rechtfertigung und der Aufnahme des Geistes, die sie auffordert, im Bereich der Gnade zu bleiben. Beschneidung selbst ist nicht das Problem. Tatsächlich ist Paulus in anderen Zusammenhängen nicht dagegen, solange ihm kein Heil- oder religiöser Wert in Bezug auf die Erlösung von der Sünde zugeschrieben wird. Dies scheint jedoch in diesem Zusammenhang nicht der Fall zu sein. Die Argumente von Paulus haben weitreichende theologische Implikationen in Bezug auf die Rolle des Gesetzes, das Ausmass der Gnade Gottes und die Konsequenzen, wenn man sich auf andere Mittel als den Glaube zur Heiligung stützt, die auf andere Kontexte und Situationen zutreffen können. In ähnlicher Weise haben solche theologischen Debatten sozialpolitische Konsequenzen, wenn man die Wechselbeziehung zwischen Religion, Ethnizität und Politik im ersten Jahrhundert nach Christus betrachtet. Aber in diesem spezifischen Kontext ist selbst die allgemeine Aussage in 5, 6 bezüglich des Wertes in Christus eine theologische Aussage, die sich auf den Bereich der Gnade und der neuen Schöpfung bezieht. Für die Gläubigen aus Galatien, die Beschneidung in Betracht zu ziehen, um einen soteriologischen Vorteil zu erhalten, wäre dies in Wirklichkeit eine Leugnung ihrer Glaubenserfahrung. Sie würden ihren Nutzen in Christus einbüßen und liefen Gefahr, vom Bereich der Gnade getrennt zu werden. Für diejenigen, die in Christus sind, ist der Glaube immer noch das Einzige, was für die Heiligung wichtig ist.

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<sup>73</sup> Martyn, *Galatians*, 474.

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## **The Giant and the Underdog**

### **Patristic Reception of the Narrative of David and Goliath in the Works of Saint Hippolytus, Origen, Didymus, and Theodoret<sup>1</sup>**

*Abstract:* The story of David and Goliath is one of the most famous biblical stories. It had an impact on many branches of contemporary art. It is also an inevitable part of religious education and general education in all schools. Knowing the fact that the Church Fathers have an essential part in the lives of many Christians today (in the Orthodox Church, they were role models from the very beginning), it is interesting to see how did they, these *original* theologians, read and interpret the story of David and Goliath. Was it for them, in the time when the Bible was the most sacred book for all, important as it is for us today? Did people during the sports events of that time talk on the markets about the underdog who struck the giant? Additionally, if one looks at the ancient Greek and Hebrew text, one will find out that the Hebrew version, which was used as the source for most modern translations, is 40% longer than the Greek one. Could the works of the Fathers help us to determine which version of the story is the Holy Scripture for Christians today?

*Keywords:* patristic exegesis, reception, David, Goliath, 1 Samuel, commentary, Hippolytus, Origen, Didymus, Theodoret

## **1. Introduction**

“Just before halftime during the broadcast of Superbowl XXIX in 1995, an adolescent with shoulder-length hair and a simple white smock appeared on the TV screen. A leather sling dangled from his left hand, and he was leaning on a shepherd’s crook. Facing him was a line of burly men with thick beards, clad in bronze armor with crested helmets and clutching swords and spears. The men were all mocking and ridiculing the boy. The tallest among them began to threaten him.

Unshaken, the boy silently and deliberately loaded a stone in the pocket of his sling and started whirling it overhead. The camera focused in on the sling; the picture blurred with its increasing speed. Suddenly, the sling stopped, and the camera shifted to the giant’s stunned face, the stone now embedded in his forehead. The giant fell forward to the ground, and the boy knelt to retrieve the stone. He looked at it and smiled approvingly, then held it up to reveal the logo of a famous sporting goods manufacturer.

The advertisers never mentioned the names of the characters. They didn’t need to. Whether you have read the Bible or not, you know the story. It is the quintessential triumph of the underdog.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This paper is part of the larger research on the narrative of David and Goliath, which was carried out as a part of archaeological excavations in Tel Azekah (Israel) conducted by the Universities in Heidelberg and Tel Aviv.

<sup>2</sup> S. McKenzie, *King David: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 69.

As S. McKenzie vividly describes, the story of David and Goliath has become one of the most famous Bible stories today. Even those who have never read a single word of the Scripture know about this great battle. Newspaper titles, movies, commercials, sports events, and many other contemporary forms of information use the narrative of 1 Sam 17 to describe an underdog's victory against a much stronger opponent. This narrative eventually became a symbol of the weak ones.

From the theological perspective, the pages and pages of commentaries, monographs, and articles were written about it. Only some of them are already mentioned book by S. McKenzie, then commentaries by W. Dietrich, R. Klein, and many others. However, how important was this story in the life of the old Church? At a time when the Holy Scripture was read throughout the Roman Empire, and when the Bible was the most important book for almost all people of that era, how did they understand this story? Was it as popular as today? How did the greatest exegetes of the Christian East (and also West) perceive and understand the story? Below, we will examine the corpus of the works of Saint Hippolytus of Rome, Origen, Didymus the Blind, and Theodoret of Cyrus and present how they preached or wrote to their communities. Did they understand this story as a historical event, a simple allegory, or maybe both? In the end, a short overview of works of other Church Fathers, such as great Cappadocians, concerning 1 Sam 17 will be conducted. Before we engage in the analysis of the Church Fathers' works, we will first turn briefly to the narrative of 1 Sam 17.

### 1.1 Hebrew and Greek Goliath: Brief Introduction to 1 Sam 17

The story of David and Goliath is to be found in Chapter 17 of the First Book of Samuel. Already after the first reading, one can notice a problem with the text. It is said that Saul met David for the first time when he volunteered to fight Goliath, while the chapter before described their different encounter. David kills Goliath twice. At the end of Chapter 17, Saul does not recognize David. Part of the explanation for these contradictions is the legendary character of the Goliath story. David may have defeated a large opponent like Goliath at some point in his career. However, like all legends, the original story of that encounter has grown over time. The tendency to retell the story could have been to enhance David's faith and courage as well as his youth and inexperience.<sup>3</sup> The situation is even more complicated by the later narrative when 2 Sam 21:19 reports that Elhanan, the son of Jaareoregim, killed the Goliath.

If one looks at the tradition of the Septuagint (LXX), more specifically Codex Vaticanus (LXX<sup>B</sup>), one can note that the story is shorter by almost 40% (26 verses lacking).<sup>4</sup> Observing more carefully the Greek text, other differences can be noticed (for example, LXX does not speak about the Philistines, but about foreigners – ἀλλόφυλοι, Goliath's height is different, etc.). A solution to this problem could lead in two directions. One suggestion is that the tradition of Masoretic text (MT) is older and that LXX<sup>B</sup> represents a shortened version created to eliminate doublets and repetitions.<sup>5</sup> The other, however, say

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>4</sup> The whole story about the *brothers conflict* is missing: 1 Sam 17:11–31. It is also lacking the verses 40.51.55–58.

<sup>5</sup> See: W. Dietrich, "Die Erzählungen von David und Goliath in 1 Sam 17," *ZAW*, no. 108 (1996): 180–184.

that the shorter text is the original text and that the MT version represents a later addition or the assimilation of two traditions into one.<sup>6</sup> Also, it is not impossible to assume that there were two parallel traditions and that the LXX<sup>B</sup> version is simply a translation from a different source text.<sup>7</sup> When it comes to this topic, B. Johnson offers an excellent comparison of the Greek and Hebrew text in his dissertation.<sup>8</sup> It is interesting to note that the longer text, probably complemented according to MT, is to be found in the later LXX manuscripts: in the Codex Alexandrinus (LXX<sup>A</sup>) and the Antiochene, Lucian recension (LXX<sup>L</sup>). Since LXX was the only legitimate version of the Old Testament text of the early Church, it is correct to ask the question, which textual version of the story represented the Scripture of the Church? What story was read and interpreted as part of the divine worship? Within this paper, we will also briefly look into these questions.

## 1.2 Brief Introduction to Patristic Exegesis

The first theologians of the Church interpreted the Holy Scripture mainly within the framework of the divine worship after reading certain passages from the Scripture (John Chrysostom). They also wrote commentaries to explain the problematic Bible verses in more detail and compare different textual traditions (Theodoret, Origen, Didymus the Blind). Although they did not possess today's knowledge of historical criticism, they were excellent exegetes and very often contextual interpreters.<sup>9</sup> For them, the Scripture never represented a relic of the past and an abstract subject of study, but the Word of God, which is alive, present in all times, and directed to all people.

In the early Church, two centers of biblical exegesis were developed: two catechetical schools in which many Christian theologians were educated – one with its center in Alexandria and the other with its center in Antioch. Put simply, the most significant difference between them was regarding the allegorical interpretation of scriptural texts.

*The School of Alexandria* is formed in Alexandria, one of the centers of ancient education and a meeting point for various religious traditions. Eusebius of Caesarea reports that the founder of the catechetical school was Pantaenus, who gathered a circle of students around 180 CE, modeled on the philosophical schools of that time.<sup>10</sup> The most prominent representatives of this school were certainly Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Didymus the Blind. Relying on judeo-hellenistic tradition and Platonism, the Alexandrian School representatives developed a Christian theological thought, starting from the biblical exegesis, as Philo of Alexandria have done before them. As a key exegetical method, they used allegoresis, trying to find deeper spiritual meaning in the biblical text with the help of ancient philological and exegetical principles. So, same as Philo, who used the al-

6 See: R. Klein, *1 Samuel* (World Biblical Commentary, Vol. 10), (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1982), 172–175.

7 See: E. Tov, "The Composition of 1 Samuel 16–18 in Light of The Septuagint," in: *The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint*, ed. E. Tov (Leiden–Boston–Köln: Brill, 1999), 333–362.

8 See: B. Johnson, *Reading David and Goliath in Greek and Hebrew* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012).

9 Further on the hermeneutics of patristic commentaries see: M. Stojanović, "On the Genre of Commentary in the Biblical Exegesis," *Philotheos* 15 (2015): 71–82.

10 Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* VI, 10.

legoresis to show the unity of the revelation of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Hellenistic thought, the theologians of the School of Alexandria pointed to the unity of the Hebrew Scriptures and the revelation expressed in the early Christian Scriptures.<sup>11</sup>

*The School of Antioch* implies theologians and biblical interpreters who were associated with Antioch and were distinguished by their attention to the literal interpretation of the Scripture. One of the School of Antioch's main characteristics is a tendency toward the Aristotelian stress on concrete realities, the factual historicity of scriptural texts, and its analysis. The Antiochians form the school so that they share recognizable tendencies of approach to biblical interpretation, but not in the sense that they belong to a particular institution, even though several of them were in a teacher-student relationship. The pagan teacher of rhetoric, Lebanus (4th Century), had, in all likelihood, an influence on some of them. The oldest representative of the School of Antioch was Eustathius of Antioch, who wrote an interesting tractate in which he criticized Origen's allegorical interpretation of 1 Sam 28:3-25. Other great representatives of the School of Antioch were Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom, and Theodoret of Cyrus.<sup>12</sup> Because of their interest in literal meaning and polemics against the Alexandrian allegoresis, they were often praised as the predecessors of modern historical-critical exegesis. Basil the Great, who was very close to the Antiochians, was also a strong opponent of allegorical interpretation.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, the Fathers were very creative. Their conclusions and views were often very different and sometimes mutually exclusive. But they were not just simple theologians who read the Bible with an excessive plurality of meanings, as one would assume. They followed specific hermeneutical rules (although they were different from contemporary hermeneutics). However, they all had a common ground. They believed that the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament, were of crucial importance for the life of the Church. It was also the basis of Christian faith and dogmatics.<sup>14</sup> For Fathers, the Bible is primarily the living Word of God. Many of these aspects can be seen in our example – 1 Sam 17.

\* \* \*

In an effort to reveal the understanding of the story of David and Goliath by the early Church Fathers, all the works relating to direct exegesis or certain allusions about Samuel 17 will be analyzed. Firstly, the works in which the narrative of 1 Sam 17 is mentioned intensively will be examined – the works of Hippolytus, Origen, Didymus the Blind, and Theodoret. In the end, there will be a brief overview of the other Church Fathers who also spoke

<sup>11</sup> R. Kisić, "Aleksandrijska Škola," in: *Leksikon biblijske egzezeze* (LBE), ed. R. Kubat and P. Dragutinovic, (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2018), 56–59.

<sup>12</sup> J. B. Wallace, "Antiohijska Škola," in: LBE, 64–67.

<sup>13</sup> See: PG 29, *Hexameron*, IX.1.

<sup>14</sup> "From what source am I to begin my discourse? From whichever source you wish, either from the New Testament or from the Old. We can see that the glory of the only begotten shines forth with a great abundance of light not only in the words of evangelists and apostles, but also in what the prophets said and in the entire Old Testament. I think it is best to fight my adversaries with weapons taken from the Old Testament, because, if I draw my arguments from that source, I can strike down not only those enemies, but many other heretics as well. I mean Marcion, Manichaeus, Valentinus and all Jewish communities." John Chrysostom, *Contra Anomoeos*, XI.

and wrote about David and Goliath. Since John Chrysostom wrote and used the Story of David and Goliath more intensively than the others, separate research will be conducted concerning his opus.

In addition to an overview of their reception and exegetical methods, we will try through direct biblical quotes to answer the question: what kind of text did the Fathers use – shorter or the longer one? These notes will be generally indicated in the footnotes so that the main text would not be overloaded.

## 2. Saint Hippolytus of Rome

Saint Hippolytus was a Roman presbyter who lived at the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd Century. During the reign of Maximinus, Hippolytus was deported to Sardinia, and he died there.<sup>15</sup> As a truly creative pioneer in the field of Christian exegesis, he published at least twelve scriptural commentaries.<sup>16</sup>

According to R. Kubat, Hippolytus practiced allegoresis. The allegoresis of Hippolytus is highly typologized. For him, the events described in the narratives are real, but at the same time, they depict a deeper reality.<sup>17</sup> The idea according to which the Old Testament, or Old Testament events and characters, are a shadow and a pre-face of the New Testament and its events and characters, which represents reality, is interpreted in works of Hippolytus through allegory.<sup>18</sup> Hippolytus' allegory is a classic example of how a vivid Old Testament narrative is meaningfully transformed and fitted into the Christian *creed*. He thus revives the text in his own context, which is also the core of the application of the allegory. Interestingly, C. Kannengiesser claims, to the contrary, that Hippolytus does not know about the allegoresis.<sup>19</sup> However, the analysis of R. Kubat or S. Drake on the example of the Story of Susanna shows that the allegoresis is not strange to Hippolytus.<sup>20</sup> The same assumption will be made on the example of the Story of David and Goliath.

### 2.1. Commentary on David and Goliath

The Story of David and Goliath (*De Dauid et Goliath*) is a Hippolytus' homily on 1 Sam 17. It is preserved in Armenian and Georgian translation. German translation by G. N. Bonwetsch, used here, was made from Russian (which is, again, the translation from Georgian). The original Greek text is unfortunately lost. Altogether 13 passages from 1 Sam 17 are quoted in this work.<sup>21</sup> Regarding the text, according to E. Tov, the oldest attestation of the short text of the LXX is in this Hippolytus' homily (2nd century CE) in its omission of 1 Sam

<sup>15</sup> C. Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis, The Bible in Ancient Christianity (HPE)*, (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2004), 528.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 529.

<sup>17</sup> R. Kubat, *Tragovima Pisma II*, (Beograd: Biblijski institut, 2015), 164.

<sup>18</sup> Comp. for example: “...ἡ Σωσάννα προετυπούτο εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, Ἰωακείμ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν...” In Danielel, I.14-5, SC 14, 96.

<sup>19</sup> C. Kannengiesser, *HPE*, 532.

<sup>20</sup> R. Kubat, *Tragovima II*, 163–165. Comp. S. Drake, *Slandering the Jew. Sexuality and Difference in Early Christian Texts*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 62–66

<sup>21</sup> 1 Sam 17:2.4.5.8.33-37.43.45-46.53.

17:55–58.<sup>22</sup> But also, the whole part 1 Sam 17:12–31 is missing. According to J. Ziegler, Hippolytus' quotations mostly go together with LXX<sup>B</sup>.<sup>23</sup> It is impossible to date *De David et Goliath* with any precision. The Georgian version exists in two manuscripts, T (copied ca. 973–6) and J (12th–13th Century). Moreover, the Georgian version was not made directly from Greek but Armenian. The complete Armenian work is also lost, but a series of fragments are preserved in a 12th-century catena containing the Armenian Books of Kings and marginal comments by John Chrysostom, Ephraem, and Hippolytus. G. Garitte complains that the Georgian translator was far from a talented one. The translation is often obscure, incoherent, even incomprehensible.<sup>24</sup> G. Garitte made from this Georgian, a Latin translation.<sup>25</sup> Since the original work is lost, it is very hard to conduct serious textual analysis in order to reveal which text exactly uses Hippolytus. Most likely, he used the short LXX<sup>B</sup> version.<sup>26</sup>

At the beginning of his work, Hippolytus points out David's election and anointing by Saul. For him, David is the one who, even since his youth, carried written in his heart the Secret of Christ.<sup>27</sup> He exhibits the beginning of the story, the geographical location of the opponents, and describes the appearance of Goliath, mainly, as far as it can be perceived based on translation, following LXX<sup>B</sup>. He is the only one of the Fathers who brings the height of the Goliath. Also, here, Hippolytus follows the LXX tradition. Then, he describes the scene of Goliath's call on the Israelites to come out to fight with him and narrates about the fear of Saul and all of his men.<sup>28</sup>

Hippolytus sees this beginning as a typological allegory. For example, he sees the whole geographical setting as allegorical. Hills surround each valley. In this case, these two hills represent the two Covenants, one given through the Scriptures and the other given through the Grace. What is between them, the valley, is the captivity by the passions of this world and the place where people are enslaved by disobedience.<sup>29</sup> Through the Goliath, in fact, the devil acts. The one dressed in complete armor is ready to fight the whole world and against everything holy. His height is also symbolically described. The four cubits of height actually refer to the four sides of the world, where the devil shows his strength. The description of his armor also has a symbolic meaning for Hippolytus:

Es war „der Helm“ des Goliath „auf seinem Haupte“ aus einer Mischung (von Zink und Zinn) und „die Beinschienen auf seinen Hüftbeinen aus Kupfer“; es zeigt an seinen Stolz und seine Furchtbarkeit, gesondert mit allen Rüstungen bewaffnet.<sup>30</sup>

22 E. Tov, *Composition*, 333.

23 J. Ziegler, „Der Bibeltext im Daniel-Kommentar des Hippolyt von Rom,“ in: *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, no. 8 (1952), 173.

24 T. Kauhanen, *The Proto-Lucianic Problem in 1 Samuel*, (Göttingen; Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2012), 41.

25 G. Garitte, *Traité d'Hippolyte sur David et Goliath, sur le Cantique des cantiques et sur l'Antéchrist*, (Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO), 1965.

26 For more extent textual analysis see: T. Kauhanen, *Proto-Lucianic*, 39–55.

27 G. N. Bonwetsch, ed., *Drei georgisch erhaltene Schriften von Hippolytus*, (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904), 79.

28 Ibid., 82.

29 Ibid., 83.

30 Ibid., 84.

Hippolytus sees the words of Goliath as the power of the devil, who through Cain introduced murder and hatred into the world. Now, through the mouth of Goliath, he sowed the same hatred in front of David and the entire nation, all of whom, including King Saul, was terrified. According to Hippolytus, Saul was especially scared when he saw Goliath's war equipment.<sup>31</sup>

He then recounts the scene of David coming in front of Saul and Saul's opposition to permit David to fight. It is clear here that the whole story of the *brothers conflict* (LXX<sup>B</sup>-minus) is skipped. He obviously does not have it in his tradition. And when Saul says that Goliath is a warrior from his youth, Hippolytus sees here the entire biblical history, because it is the devil, who, from the time of Eve, Adam and Cain, and later to the time Ham, Esau, and to Joseph's brothers and Pharaoh acted against the righteous. He also armed Goliath and made him a warrior from the youth.<sup>32</sup>

Of all this, young David was not scared because David fought with bears and lions as early as his youth. For if God delivered him from the lion, he will save him from this stranger. In this scene, Hippolytus sees the type of Christ, because Christ is also a shepherd who watched his Father's sheep and saved them from Death, as David rescued his father's flock from lions:

Dieses sind die Worte, die schon zuvor von dir durch den Geist gesprochen, damit auch wir erkannten den gerechten Hirten und den durch ihn zur Kenntnis gebrachten Vater preisen.<sup>33</sup>

This is followed by a description of the battle itself. Saul tried to arm David with an earthly weapon, but that does not suit him, as he was not used to it. David carried the invisible crown, which was given to him from heaven. He wore the bronze armor made of faith, and the shield, given by the power of the Holy Spirit:

...den auf das Haupt setzen „Helm“, weil wir haben eine „unverwelkliche“ Krone „bereitet im Himmel“, in den „Panzer wie in den Glauben gehüllt, zögst du an die Liebe zu Christus, und um den umhüllten Leib tragst du „das Schwert“ aus dem Herzen, weil das von oben in dir gefestigte Wort mit dir.<sup>34</sup>

Still, tiny David was not scared of the big giant. The five round stones that David took from the stream and put them in his shepherd's bag Hippolytus also interprets spiritual:

Und „fünf runde Steine aus dem Bach“ legst du in das Täschchen: es zeigt zuvor an, weist zuvor hin auf die fünf Gesetze in der Kirche als in dem neuen Gesetz der Beruhigung. Du hast mit dir auch einen „Stab.“ Denn geistig bildest du hierdurch zuvor ab den König und Hohenpriester Christus. Du hast in den Händen auch eine „Schleuder“, welches ist das Gebot des Gesetzes, wie zu lieben den Herrn deinen Gott. Gut ist diese deine Bewaffnung, o seiliger David! Sie ist gewaltiger als der Dämon des Goliath, sie ist stärker mehr als Eisen und Stahl.<sup>35</sup>

After this, Hippolytus describes the conversation between David and Goliath, Goliath's anger, and David's great faith. Then he creatively and freely narrates about the giant's state of anger in his heart when David talked to him:

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

Sofort aber ward er erfüllt mit Wut des Herzens...erhob seine Arme, schüttelnd seinen Panzer und mit dem Haupt winkte und drohte er, im Herzen überlegte er, er brüllte wie ein Rind und brüllte wie ein Löwe...<sup>36</sup>

When David struck him with stone, Goliath fell with face to the ground. Hippolytus does not describe this as a coincidence but as the power of God. David cut off Goliath's head, writes Hippolytus, as Christ crushed the head of a serpent and showed the power over it (possibly an allusion to Gen 3:15).<sup>37</sup>

Further, Hippolytus continues to write about the first verses of Chapter 18, alluding clearly to the first five verses and meeting David and Jonathan, which is not present in LXX<sup>B</sup>. However, here should one be careful because, as T. Kauhanen states, the translations of Hippolytus' commentary are not the same length, and many places in the commentary can be read as a later interpolation.<sup>38</sup>

All things considered, one might conclude that Hippolytus could represent, as E. Tov suggests, the earliest source of the shorter version of the text, which one can read in LXX<sup>B</sup> (a Greek original of Hippolytus work could be placed at the end of the 2nd Century). He most likely understood this story as a historical one, but he also interprets it in his manner – allegorical and typological. He sees a more profound, spiritual meaning behind it – David's victory over Goliath is the type of Christ's victory over sin and the devil.

### 3. Origin of Alexandria

Another theologian of the old Church who mentioned 1 Sam 17 in his works was Origen, born around 185 CE in Alexandria. He was one of the first Christian interpreters of the Scripture. Origen is said to have learned the Scriptures by heart already as a child.<sup>39</sup>

As a well-educated young man, he became a teacher of the catechetical School in Alexandria. Besides the exegesis, he also taught geometry, arithmetic, and philosophy. In this context, he emphasizes that he was introducing the students into a deeper understanding of the divine Scripture.<sup>40</sup> That is why he was respected by him—opposing Greek contemporaries.<sup>41</sup>

Besides the Christian community, there was also a significant Jewish community with a rich heritage living in Alexandria. In its circles, the Septuagint was translated. However, already in the era of Origen, the translation was increasingly challenged by the very Jews, primarily because of the breakup of Christianity and rabbinical Judaism. That is why one of the problems with which Origen was caught was the question of the Old Testament text, that is, the textual and theological validity of the LXX. His most significant endeavor in this field was Hexapla, one of the most significant textual works of the ancient world. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote that Origen also learned the Hebrew language in order to study the

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>38</sup> T. Kauhanen, *Proto-Lucianic*, 41.

<sup>39</sup> H. J. Vogt, "Origin of Alexandria," in: HPE, 536.

<sup>40</sup> R. Kubat, "Zwei Aspekte (biblischer) Theologie: Der hermeneutische Entwurf," *Philotheos 10* (2010): 46.

<sup>41</sup> H. Von Campenhausen, *Die Griechische Kirchenväter*, (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1956), 45.

Scriptures.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, H. Vogt claims that he did not know Hebrew.<sup>43</sup> The fact that Origen was so interested in the scriptural text indirectly testifies how he considered the Scripture also in its literary expression. However, according to him, reading historical narratives should lead to more sublime truths. The goal of exegesis is to understand the deeper signs in the text, showing divine reality. According to R. Kubat, seeking deeper meaning means accessing an allegorical interpretation and then reaching spiritual content, free from all imagery. Under the strong influence of Greek philosophical tradition and in dealing with Greek philosophers, he tried to understand the Scripture in an allegorical way and thus give the Bible theological legitimacy. That is why, according to Kubat, Origen can rightfully be considered one of the most prominent representatives of the allegorical method.<sup>44</sup> However, he did not consistently implement in his exegesis such a hermeneutical insight. In reality, he used a double meaning, literary and spiritual. In his work *De Principiis*, he explicitly states that the historicity of many described events is indisputable and that in Scripture, there are more historical chapters than passages that contain only spiritual meaning.<sup>45</sup>

Origen died after 251, probably from the consequences of the torments suffered in the Decian persecution.<sup>46</sup>

### 3.1 1 Sam 17 in Works of Origen

Besides Hexapla, among exegetical works, Origen has left us not only extensive scientific commentaries on Genesis, Song of Solomon, Psalms, Gospels of Matthew and John, and on Romans. There are also numerous sermons, namely on the Pentateuch, as well as on Joshua and Judges, on Samuel, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and on the Gospel of Luke, but also works of a third kind, which were perhaps conceived of as preliminary work for major commentaries. They are short expositions on individual verses, the so-called scholia.<sup>47</sup> On the Books of Kings, only one sermon has survived through Rufinus's translation, but the fragment on 1 Sam 28:3–25 is still extant in the original Greek.

Since no complete commentary on the Book of Kings has been preserved to this day, we do not have Origen's direct interpretation of 1 Sam 17. However, in his three other works, Origen mentions events from 1 Sam 17. There are no direct quotations preserved, but since he was dealing with the textual tradition, he certainly knew both: the longer and the shorter version of the story. What was the *valid* version of his congregation is hard to guess. Likewise, regarding understanding the story, it is not clear whether he considered it as an allegory, a historical event, or, as Hippolytus, both. Rather, he used the story to explain other places in the Scriptures, so he understood it according to the needs of individual chapters.

In the *fragments of the Commentaries on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, interpreting Eph 6:12, where the Apostle Paul says that our wrestling is not wrestling against blood and flesh,

<sup>42</sup> Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* VI, 16.

<sup>43</sup> H. J. Vogt, *Origen*, 536.

<sup>44</sup> R. Kubat, *Tragovima* II, 176–183.

<sup>45</sup> See: J. Behr, ed., *Origen – On First Principles: Volume 2 (Exford Early Christian Texts)*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 528.530.

<sup>46</sup> H. J. Vogt, *Origen*, 539.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

but against the power of darkness, Origen says that the Apostle recalls the battle between David and Goliath. In the end, it is not clear whether Origen understands this parallel typologically or allegorically, because he writes:

For it is likely that each of these is a symbol of spiritual rulers which are either overcome or prevail. Our wrestling then is against certain authorities which are neither visible nor of the flesh...<sup>48</sup>

In the *fragments on Jeremiah*, he probably writes about Jer. 27:17,<sup>49</sup> when he mentions the sheep that the lions had driven away. The sheep that goes astray is the one who, in word and practice, does not join the hunt of what is proper, either by not seeking or by not finding. The one who misleads is the one whom the lions drove off, and the devil himself acts like a roaring lion who wants to seize his prey. He strives to drive us out from the *mountains of peace*.<sup>50</sup> So, it is still unclear how is he experiencing David and his struggle with the lions, for he writes:

But as David who took hold of the beard seized the lion (1 Sam 17:34-35), so let us beg the spiritual David, Christ, when taking hold of the lion, to abolish also every Sanhedrin of beasts.<sup>51</sup>

Reading Origen's twentieth book of *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, it might well be assumed that Origen still sees the story of 1 Sam 17 as a historical event. Speaking of John 8:44, where it is said that the devil is the murderer from the beginning, Origen writes:

It is true that one who has killed a man in whatever manner is a murderer in the common sense of the word. The term murder, however, is also a morally neutral term in the sense in which Phinees committed murder in the zeal of God when he killed the Israelite man and the Madianite woman when the Israelite committed fornication with her. (Nm 25:6-12) Phinees would not be said to be a murderer in a blameworthy sense, nor would David when he [smote] Goliath in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the army of Israel. (1 Sam 17:45) [Because of this ambiguity in the term murderer], we must ask about the true life of man and his death, which is opposed to this true life, that we may understand what murderer means in the blameworthy sense.<sup>52</sup>

So, Origen here separates the term *murderer* into blameworthy and non-blameworthy sense. However, as he writes mainly in spiritual categories, it remains unclear until the end whether he sees these two events as historical or not. But it is clear that he sees David here as someone who does something in God's name, not something that is directed against God, which is the character of the devil, who is the father of the lie and a first murderer. Unfortunately, if he ever interpreted 1 Sam 17 directly, that part of his opus remains lost, and we cannot with certainty know how he, as a representative of the School of Alexandria, really understood this story.

<sup>48</sup> R. Heine, ed., *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 256-257.

<sup>49</sup> According to LXX Israel is a wandering sheep that lions drove away. In MT see Jer 50:17.

<sup>50</sup> J. Smith, ed., *Origen: Homilies on Jeremiah and Homily on 1 Kings 28*, (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 295.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

<sup>52</sup> R. Heine, ed., *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel of John, Books 13-32*, (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 251-252. Comp.: PG 14, *Commentaria in Evangelium Joannis*, 630.

#### 4. Didymus the Blind

Blind from early childhood, Didymus (313-398) committed himself entirely to studying Origen's legacy.<sup>53</sup> Athanasius appointed him as a lecturer at the School of Alexandria. His central concern was the interpretation of Scripture. Unfortunately, because the anti-Origenistic decrees of 543 and 553 under Justinian included him in their condemnations, his work survives only in fragments (to be found in PG 39). The discovery of papyrus in Tura in 1941 with Origen and Didymus's writings offered new access to the exegetical work of Didymus. They are preserved in the form of transcriptions by students of oral lessons on Genesis, Job, Zechariah, Psalms, and Qohelet.<sup>54</sup>

He did not understand the Bible just as simple text, as much as the word of life, which should be the source of inspiration. For him, the Scripture is full of riddles and stories, which can be understood only by deeper subversion to the world of forms or ideas from which they appear. Didymus did, however, make a distinction between texts that can be understood in literary meaning and those that have a spiritual meaning.<sup>55</sup> Allegoresis is, for Didymus, only an auxiliary tool, which leads to more profound knowledge and experience of God and the perfection of spiritual life.<sup>56</sup>

##### 4.1 1 Sam 17 in Works of Didymus

Given that most of his works are lost and that only fragments are preserved – similar to Origen – we can only try to find out how he saw the story of David and Goliath based on the fragments. The narrative from 1 Sam 17 Didymus refers indirectly in three works. In his *Commentary on the Qohelet*, in the *Commentary on Job*, and the *Commentary on Psalms*. Since they are only fragmentary preserved, one cannot figure out which textual version of 1 Sam 17 he used. However, in all remarks of this narrative, none of the MT pluses are appearing. There are no direct quotes.

In essence, in all three works, the same strong motive prevails. Didymus repeatedly refers to 1 Sam 17:45, and to the fact that David achieves his success only thanks to God's help, when he interprets the verse from the Qohelet: *nor the battle (is) to the strong* (Eccl 9:11):

Nicht unbedingt beenden die Machtigen den Krieg siegreich. Goliath war mächtig, und der Krieg hatte (dennoch) für ihn keinen glinstigen Ausgang, sondern er wurde so niedergernacht wie ein Unbewaffneter, wie ein Nicht-Feldherr und Kriegerunfahrener. Für David aber ging der Krieg erfolgreich aus, obwohl er nicht vielen Streitkräften vertraute; denn er überwand diesen mächtigen Riesen "im Namen des Herrn." Jener, der so stolz auf sich war, hatte mit seiner Macht im Krieg keinen Erfolg.<sup>57</sup>

Several lines below, he writes again that Goliath had big and full war equipment but that he had no wisdom. David had the wisdom because he trusted in God, and there-

<sup>53</sup> R. Kubat, *Tragovima II*, 187.

<sup>54</sup> C. Kannengiesser, *HPE*, 725.

<sup>55</sup> R. Kubat, *Tragovima II*, 188.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>57</sup> G. Binder and L. Liesenborghs, ed., *Didymos: Kommentar zum Ecclesiastes 9,8-10,20 (Tura-Papyrus)*, Teil V, (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1979), 44.

fore he won the battle.<sup>58</sup> He repeats the same motif in his Commentary on Job.<sup>59</sup>

In his commentary on 32/33 Psalm, interpreting the second part of Verse 16: *...and a giant will not be saved by the greatness of strength...* Didymus recalls the examples from the Scripture that speak of the giants, who trusted only in themselves and who forgot about the Name of the Lord:

Auch dies hat seinen geschichtlichen Hintergrund: Goliath war ein gewaltiger Riese und hatte eine Fülle an Stärke und vertraute auf nichts anderes als auf seine Rüstung, seine Stärke und Grosse. Er war aber auch überheblich. Darum wurde er nicht gerettet; denn derjenige, welcher mit dem "Namen des Herrn (1 Sam 17, 45) "gewappnet war, überwand und fällte ihn.<sup>60</sup>

Speaking of 39/40 Psalm, he emphasizes, on the other hand, the fact that David did not trust in his shield, but his only hope was the Lord's Name. According to him, hope is nothing else but the expectation of good from God.<sup>61</sup>

As mentioned, given the very small number of fragments, one can hardly conclude on Didymus' views of 1 Sam 17. However, bearing in mind how he speaks of the battle between David and Goliath, one might assume that he did not see this particular episode allegorically, which was one of his primary exegetical expressions.

## 5. Theodoret of Cyrus

Theodoret, a well-known Antiochian theologian and exegete, wrote also about the story of David and Goliath. He was probably born near Antioch in 393 to a family of wealthy landowners.<sup>62</sup> In 423, he became bishop of the city of Cyrus,<sup>63</sup> where he successfully led an intense church and social life. He was a prominent participant in the Christological disputes of that time. As a writer, he also wrote history books. Possibly, he was taught to exegesis by Polychronius, who was the brother of Theodore of Mopsuestia.<sup>64</sup> In his exegesis, he relied heavily on Diodore of Tarsus. He was a great exegete of his time. He knew the former exegetical tradition very well, which can be seen in his exegetical works, which are among the best examples of the School of Antioch. Unlike Chrysostom, his approach to the text is not homilitical, but he attempts to provide a scientific interpretation.<sup>65</sup> In his interpretations, he relied heavily on historical-grammatical analysis, seeking to reveal the literal meaning.<sup>66</sup> Unlike other theologians from Antioch, he paid more attention to other textual versions of Old Testament writings. The fact that he considered the LXX as an inspired text, which authority prevails over other translations from Hebrew, did not prevent him from consult-

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 68-70.

<sup>59</sup> A. Henrichs, ed., *Didymos: Kommentar zu Hiob 5,1-6,29 (Tura-Papyrus)*, Teil II, (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1968), 46.

<sup>60</sup> M. Gronewald, ed., *Didymos: Psalmenkommentar 29-34 (Tura-Papyrus)*, Teil III, (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1969), 140.

<sup>61</sup> M. Gronewald, ed., *Didymos: Psalmenkommentar 35-39 (Tura-Papyrus)*, Teil IV, (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1969), 283.

<sup>62</sup> J.N. Guinot, "Theodoret of Cyrus," in: HPE, 885.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 886.

<sup>64</sup> J.N. Guinot, *Theodoret*, 886.

<sup>65</sup> S. Hidal, *Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Antiochene School with Prevalent Literal and Historical Method*, (Göttingen, 1996), 563.

<sup>66</sup> See: G. Florovsky, *Eastern Fathers of the Fifth Century*, (Belmont, Massachusetts: Notable & Academic Books, 1987), 85.

ing, on a relatively regular basis, versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and also to take into account the old Syriac version, *Peshitta*, because of its close relationship with the Hebrew text. He does so, even if sometimes he accuses them of having voluntarily denatured the meaning of the Hebrew text to prevent Christians from laying claim to it.<sup>67</sup> He could have at his disposal a copy of the Origen's Hexapla.<sup>68</sup> His basic text is most probably LXX<sup>L</sup>, the local Antiochian text known as the Lucian version.<sup>69</sup> He probably knew well the Hebrew language. Theodoret often sought to discover deeper layers of meanings. He was particularly close to typology and this way of interpreting the Old Testament.<sup>70</sup>

### 5.1 Commentary on Book of Kings and Book of Chronicles

Many of his interpretations of Old Testament books remained until today. For this topic, especially interesting is his work *Quaestiones in Libros Regnorum et Paralipomena*.

In the last years of his life, perhaps after the council of Chalcedon (451), at the request of his *very dear son Hypatios*, he drew up a series of Questions on Scripture, intending to explain certain difficult passages of the Octateuch, then Kings and Chronicles.<sup>71</sup> Even though the preface of his Questions on Scripture acknowledges no borrowing, it is clear, according to J.N. Guinot, that the Questions of Diodore are here his primary source of information.<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately, the works of Diodore are preserved only in fragments, and none of them covers 1 Sam 17.<sup>73</sup>

In his commentary on the First Book of Kings (which is the name for 1 Sam in the LXX), he clarifies certain passages answering various questions. He mentioned the story of 1 Sam 17 within the five questions. Unlike Chrysostom, which used the narrative of David and Goliath to explain something else, Theodoret approached the text exclusively scientifically and exegetically. He deals with concrete text, and looking at Question 40, it can already be concluded that there were several text versions in front of him. In addition to Hippolytus, Theodoret seems to be the only early Christian theologian whose works are preserved and who was exegetically directly concerned with the interpretation of 1 Sam 17. It could be assumed that Origen and Diodore also wrote about it, but unfortunately, their works are preserved only in fragments.

Since he often compares the texts and he is not afraid to deal with complex issues, it is interesting that he does not turn his attention to the beginning of 1 Sam 17. He does not at all mention the *brothers conflict*, nor the difference in the height of the Goliath. In fact, none of the early Church Fathers, except Hippolytus, refer directly to 1 Sam 17:4, which will later, in modern exegesis, receive pages and pages of attention. And this would be expected from Theodoret, as there were several text versions in front of him.

<sup>67</sup> J.N. Guinot, *Theodoret*, 902.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 903.

<sup>69</sup> R. Hill, ed., *Theodoret of Cyrus: Commentary on the Psalms 1-72*, (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 8.

<sup>70</sup> R. Kubat, *Tragovima II*, 280.

<sup>71</sup> J.N. Guinot, *Theodoret*, 890.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 893.

<sup>73</sup> See: C. Kannengiesser, *HPE*, 780-783.

It also seems that he either completely ignores or does not even know the text that Hippolytus read – the one we have today in LXX<sup>B</sup>. That he reads a longer version of the story, it is clear already based on Question 40, where he quotes 1 Sam 17:18. That Theodoret reads a longer version, corrected according to MT, it can also be concluded based on Question 43, where the question *How Saul did not know David?*<sup>74</sup> clearly refers to 1 Sam 17:55. Without explaining this as possible later interpolation, Theodoret assumes that *either Saul in anger did not recognize the one who played cythara (κινύρα), or hatred pushed him to find out more precisely where David is from.*<sup>75</sup>

In Question 41, Theodoret answers the question: *Why did Saul, when all others gave up going to fight Goliath, keep David, who earnestly wanted to do this deed?*<sup>76</sup> In the same Question, one can find 6 direct quotes from 1 Sam 17. Here, Theodoret introduces us to David, saying and explaining that David was at that moment 15 or 16 years old. Then follows the quotation from 1 Sam 17:36, which is almost identical to the one in LXX<sup>B</sup>,<sup>77</sup> and Theodoret's explanation that the one who does evil is no different from animals and is deprived of God's help. So David had faith. God was on his side:

Unarmed defeated the armed one, shepherd of the sheep [defeated] the one who was experienced in taking victories, the tiny and the young [defeated] the one who bragged with great growth.<sup>78</sup>

Saying that David goes into the battle and that he predicts that God is actually the one who governs and controls all events, Theodoret brings the quotation from 1 Sam 17:45-47:

...καὶ γὰρ πορεύομαι πρὸς σὲ ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου Σαβαωθ, Θεοῦ παρατάξεως Ἰσραὴλ, ὃν<sup>79</sup> ὠνείδισας σήμερον· (45) καὶ συγκλείσει<sup>80</sup> σε Κύριος σήμερον εἰς τὴν χεῖρά μου καὶ ἀποκτενῶ σε, καὶ ἀφελῶ τὴν κεφαλὴν σου ἀπὸ σοῦ· καὶ δώσω τὰ κῶλά σου, καὶ τὰ κῶλα τῆς<sup>81</sup> παρεμβολῆς τῶν<sup>82</sup> ἀλλοφύλων, ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ<sup>83</sup> τοῖς πετεινοῖς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ τοῖς θηρίοις τῆς γῆς.<sup>84</sup> (46) καὶ γινώσκεται πᾶσα ἡ ἐκκλησία αὕτη, ὅτι οὐκ ἐν<sup>85</sup> δόρατι, οὐδὲ ἐν μαχαίρᾳ σώζει Κύριος· ὅτι τοῦ Κυρίου ὁ πόλεμος, καὶ παραδώσει<sup>86</sup> ὑμᾶς εἰς χεῖρας ἡμῶν. (47)<sup>87</sup>

74 PG 80, *Quaestiones in Libros Regnorum et Paralipomena*, 568.

75 Ibid., 569.

76 Ibid., 565.

77 καὶ ἔσται ὁ ἀλλοφύλος οὗτος ὁ ἀπερίτμητος, ὡς ἐν τούτων· οὐχὶ πορεύσομαι καὶ πατάξω αὐτόν, καὶ ἀφελῶ σήμερον ὄνειδος ἀπὸ Ἰσραὴλ; Ὅτι (διότι in LXX<sup>B</sup>) τίς ἔστιν (missing from LXX<sup>B</sup>) ὁ ἀπερίτμητος οὗτος, ὅτι ὠνείδισε παράταξιν θεοῦ ζώντος; (1 Sam. 17:36) Comp.: PG 80, *Quaestiones*, 565.

78 Ibid. After this, comes the quote from 1 Sam 17:42: Εἶδε Γολιάθ, καὶ ἐξουδένωνσεν αὐτόν, ὅτι ἦν παιδάριον· καὶ αὐτὸς πυρράκης μετὰ κάλλους ὀφθαλμῶν. The verb form ἐξουδένωνσεν (to despise, treat with contempt) suits to the one in MT - וְהִקְלָטָהוּ. In LXX<sup>B</sup>, we can find the aorist of the verb ἀτιμάζω (to dishonor).

79 LXX<sup>B</sup> has ἦν.

80 LXX<sup>B</sup> offers ἀποκλείσει.

81 In LXX<sup>B</sup> τῆς is missing.

82 In LXX<sup>B</sup> τῶν is missing.

83 In LXX<sup>B</sup> witnesses ταύτῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ.

84 Theodoret here omits the part of the verse: γινώσκεται πᾶσα ἡ γῆ ὅτι ἔστιν θεὸς ἐν Ἰσραὴλ. But he quotes it a few rows below.

85 Missing: ...ῥομφαία καὶ... Instead οὐδὲ ἐν μαχαίρᾳ is added.

86 Theodoret omits: Κύριος, which is one of the LXX<sup>B</sup> pluses. See E. Tov, *Composition*, 361.

87 PG 80, *Quaestiones*, 568.

His brief answer to the question and the review of the story of 1 Sam 17 Theodoret ends with a typological turn, where he sees David's victory over Goliath with foreigner's sword as the type of the victory of Christ on the Cross. Likewise, as after David's victory, Saul's army defeated the enemies, so too, those who believed in Christ made the demonic army flee.

And using the sword of the foreigner,<sup>88</sup> he cut off his head, writing in advance the victory of Him who came from him [David] in the body. The devil, having hammered on the Cross our Lord, by the Cross he has been cast down and deprived of his power. And, as after the victory of David, the Israelite armies defeated a huge army of foreigners, so, after the destruction of the devil by the God and Savior, those who believed in Him made the phalanges of demons to run away.<sup>89</sup>

After this, in Question 42, Theodorite asks an interesting question about how David brought Goliath's head to Jerusalem, even though he still did not live there. Theodorite interprets this very freely and creatively, saying that David wanted to scare away Jebusites, who were still living in Jerusalem at the time.<sup>90</sup>

In addition, Theodoret only once more, in his *Commentary on Psalm 18*, very briefly mentions the David and Goliath story, saying:

You girded me with strength for war, you put all those assailing me under my feet (Ps 17/18:40): you granted me bravery and strength, whereas you handicapped the onset of the enemies. This is what happened in the case of Goliath and Saul: the former wasted time for action in empty words, and he brought him down with a sling; the other was disabled by sleep, and he easily got away from him. In this way, he also escaped the schemes of the inhabitants of Gath.<sup>91</sup>

Interestingly, apart from these two works, Theodoret no longer invokes 1 Sam 17 nor uses it to explain any other part of Scripture. Although, having in mind his exegetical approach and not so much inclination towards homilies and moral topics, one might say that it is clear why this is so. In dogmatic disputes, 1 Sam 17 could hardly have any significance for Theodoret. Chrysostom, though, did use this narrative in his Homilies against Anomoeans.<sup>92</sup>

## 6. A few more words about 1 Sam 17 in Patristic Tradition

The story of David and Goliath is mentioned a few times by a few other Fathers and teachers of the Church, such as the great Cappadocians, Athanasius of Alexandria, or Eusebius of Caesarea. Since they rarely mention 1 Sam 17, just a short overview of these passages will be given.

Saint Basil the Great was mainly engaged in the dogmatic discussions. One of his most famous works are the *nine Homilies on Hexameron*, which he preached within one week. They witness Basil's acquaintance with classical sources on natural sciences as much

<sup>88</sup> It is strange that exegete, such as Theodoret, does not mention verse 50, where it is already mentioned that David killed the Goliath. One assumption would be that Theodoret does not see that as a problem and the other, that perhaps in his tradition he does not have that verse, which is one of the LXX<sup>B</sup> minuses.

<sup>89</sup> PG 80, *Quaestiones*, 568.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> R. Hill, *Theodoret*, 129. Comp.: PG 80, *Interpretatio in Psalmos*, 985.

<sup>92</sup> Comp.: PG 48, *Contra Anomoeos XI*, 797.

as they engage into an exegesis of Genesis 1.<sup>93</sup> For example, Basil here very frequently follows the thinking of Aristotle in his observations of nature. However, he never engaged in writing a biblical commentary.<sup>94</sup>

Basil mentions the story from 1 Sam 17 only once in his *Homily on Humility*. This homily urges the folly of Adam in sacrificing eternal blessings to his ambition and the example of St. Paul in glorying only in the Lord. Pharaoh and Goliath were given as negative examples:

Such was the arrogance of the giants of old, because of their size and strength (Gen. 6:4); such also was the empty pride of Goliath who mocked at God (καὶ Γολιάθ ἀνοήτου φράνημα θεομάχον) (1 Sam 17:4); and such also was Adonias, who gloried in his beauty (1 Kings 1:5), and Absalom, who gloried in the beauty of his hair (2 Sam 14:26).<sup>95</sup>

Like Saint Basil, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus wrote no biblical commentary, but he often quotes both Testaments according to his own inspiration. Neither the systematic allegorism of the Alexandrians nor the rationalism of Antiochene interpreters imposed a distinctive mark on Gregory's attitude toward scripture. He seems to come closer to Gregory of Nyssa in his symbolic imagination. He even indulges in some allegorical elements. His truly personal reception of scripture is at once realistic and spiritual: he takes for granted the literal truth of the biblical history of salvation and applies it immediately to his actual experience of life shared with other members of the Church.<sup>96</sup>

In his *Oration 5*, Gregory just mentions David's victory as a historical event, but he says that David used the Mystic Stones (λίθοις μυστικοῖς).<sup>97</sup> In his *Oration 40*, he again recollects the biblical history and events led and done by God's help. Such an event is also the one where he *brought down Goliath, the arrogant and swaggering descendant of giants, when he dared to challenge the mighty David*.<sup>98</sup> In his *Homily on the baptism*, Gregory writes:

Art you young? Stand against the passions, be numbered in with the alliance in the army of God: Do valiantly against Goliath.<sup>99</sup>

Here we can see the spark of Gregory's allegorism. He remarks that David fought Goliath without allies, leaning only on God's assistance. He certainly means that a Christian who relies on the aid of his baptism is to stand firm in the battle against the devil. In the same homily, he speaks about three stones (interestingly, he changes the number from five to three), which David will throw at the foreigner,<sup>100</sup> emphasizing the importance and the symbolism of the number three.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa referred in his dogmatic treatises to Scripture as a font of divinely authorized knowledge. In his exegetical works, Gregory usually follows Origen's

<sup>93</sup> C. Kannengiesser, *HPE*, 742.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 741.

<sup>95</sup> PG 31, *De Humilitate*, 528.

<sup>96</sup> C. Kannengiesser, *HPE*, 749.

<sup>97</sup> See: SC 309, *Orationes 4-5*, 354.

<sup>98</sup> M. Vinson, ed., *Gregory of Nazianzus: Select Orations*, (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 37. Comp.: PG 35, *Orationes 6-19*, 853.

<sup>99</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory Nazianzen, in: NPNF 7, 1995, 365. Comp.: SC 358, *Orationes 38-41*, 232.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 376.

hermeneutical method. Most of his works are close to allegoresis with strong mystical moments. For example, when talking about the biblical narrative of Exodus and Numbers, he sees Moses, the lawgiver and spiritual leader of Israel, as the symbol of mystic migration and ascension of the soul to God.<sup>101</sup>

Gregory of Nyssa mentions 1 Sam 17 only twice. In his *Second Homily Concerning the Forty Martyrs*, talking about the fight against those who want us to renounce our faith in the Lord to suffer death, he recollects the glorious victory of David:

Although they threaten them with fire, cast them into pits and inflict other torments, they have one voice and holy confession which Christ hears. Resistance against this torment of the enemy's appalling insults troubles his heart and is like a stone in David's hand slung at the enemy's helmet. We behead the enemy when as noble soldiers we cast, as it were, our confession in Christ.<sup>102</sup>

In his *Answer to Eunomius Second Book*, Gregory recollects the battle. Goliath represents the enemy of the truth and the one who is separated from the true faith; he is far more truly beheaded than the Goliath. Gregory writes further: Christ is the head of every man. It is only reasonable to say that the one who is severed from the faith must be headless like Goliath.<sup>103</sup>

The story about David and Goliath mention sporadically even Eusebius of Caesarea, Saint Ambrose of Milan, and Saint John Cassian. The importance of faith in 1 Sam 17:45 is also mentioned by Saint Athanasius of Alexandria and Saint Ephrem the Syrian.<sup>104</sup> Cassian speaks of the weapons David took and that it was the weapon that suited him and which he could use, without giving any spiritual dimension to the story.<sup>105</sup> Ambrose writes similarly in his rules for the clergy:

David never waged war unless he was driven to it. Thus prudence was combined in him with fortitude in the battle. For even when about to fight single-handed against Goliath, the enormous giant, he rejected the armor with which he was laden. His strength depended more on his own arm than on the weapons of others. Then, at a distance, to get a stronger throw, with one cast of a stone, he killed his enemy.<sup>106</sup>

In *Commentary on the Psalms*, Eusebius mentioned a few times David's victory. But his *Onomasticon*<sup>107</sup> is interesting because it brings a directory of place names. It is a primary source that provides historical geographers with contemporary knowledge of 4th-century Palestine and Transjordan. A few quotes refer to the 1 Sam 17:

**101** C. Kannengiesser, *HPE*, 752.

**102** See: Encomium in quadraginta martyres, in: O. Lendle, ed., *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, Vol. 10.1, (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 150.

**103** Gregory of Nyssa, *Dogmatic Treatises*, in: NPNF 5, 1995, 250.

**104** Athanasius writes: ...so zittere auch Du wie David vor Goliath nicht, sondern vertraue auch Du wie David... O. Bardenhewer, ed., *Des heiligen Athanasius ausgewählte Schriften*, in: Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, Vol. 13, (München: J. Kösel & F. Pustet, 1913). Comp.: PG 27, *Epistula ad Marcellinum*, 37.

**105** J.R. Franke, ed., *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACC), Vol. 5)*, (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 272.

**106** Ibid., 273.

**107** Περὶ τῶν τοπικῶν ὀνομάτων τῶν ἐν τῇ Θεείᾳ Γραφῇ - About the names of places in the God's Scripture

*Aphesdomeim*: Where Saul fought. Aquila [interprets] *on the boundary of Dommein*.<sup>108</sup>

*Azēka*: City of the Chanaanites to which Josue pursued the five kings. It was given to the tribe of Juda. There is even now a village called Azeka between Eleutheropolis and Jerusalem.<sup>109</sup>

*Ēla*: [We read] valley Ēla [which] Aquila and Theodotion [interpret] *valley of the oak*.<sup>110</sup>

For other western Christian writers, such as Paulus Orosius, Bede, Caesarius of Arles, Maximus of Turin, and even Saint Augustine, one could say that they saw this story almost as pure allegory. They write about the fight against heresy (Paulus),<sup>111</sup> the humility of Christ (Bede),<sup>112</sup> Christ's victory over the devil (Caesarius).<sup>113</sup> For Maximus of Turin, this battle is actually a story of the superiority of heavenly weapons over earthly ones. Augustine writes that David, who wore God's armor, was fighting for Christ's glory.<sup>114</sup> Of course, the reception of 1 Sam 17 by the western Fathers is a separate issue and, as such, could be more intensively examined in the future.

## 7. Conclusion

In the introduction, we saw how much influence and what kind of reception the story of David and Goliath has today. Allusions can be found everywhere in everyday life. It is indeed an inexhaustible story. However, as we have seen, in the old Church, in the works of Church Fathers (preserved to us), 1 Sam 17 does not play any crucial role. It represents more a casual reference, and besides Hippolytus and Theodoret, none of them dealt particularly with it. In modern language said, only two *ancient Christian commentaries* mention 1 Sam 17.

We could conclude that for Theodoret, the historicity of the battle between David and Goliath is not in question. Hippolytus' view is not entirely clear. It could be presumed that he understands the story as a historical event, but he emphasizes its allegorical interpretation. Similar could be said about Origen, while for Didymus, nothing could be concluded with certainty due to the lack of his works. Still, it is difficult to imagine that any of the Fathers could doubt into the historicity of the Old Testament. Some of them just saw in these stories a deeper dimension, a meaning *behind the word*. But, even if they often emphasized different parts of 1 Sam 17, it is common ground for everyone that David has managed only with God's help to win an unbeatable and indescribably stronger opponent. David's faith and, in contrast, Goliath's pride are the center of the story for the Fathers. The youngster does not win the giant just because he is weak and small. He wins because he is

<sup>108</sup> E. Klostermann, ed., *Eusebius Caesariensis: Onomasticon*, in: *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte* (GCS), Vol. 11.1, (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1904), 34. Interestingly, LXX<sup>B</sup> does not mention this place.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 96. LXX<sup>B</sup> also omits the valley Ella.

<sup>111</sup> FC 99, 117.

<sup>112</sup> CCL 119, 151.

<sup>113</sup> FC 47, 200.

<sup>114</sup> For more about these fragments, see: J.R. Franke, *Joshua*, 266–276.

stronger and greater in faith. Saint Hippolytus, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, and Theodoret pointed out, also, some Christological elements in our narrative.

When it comes to text, it is clear that all of the Fathers read the Greek text (for example, no one talks about the *Philistines* but *foreigners*). However, it is likely that everyone, apart from Hippolytus, knows a longer version. We have already shown this for Theodoret, while for Origen, the writer of Hexapla, this is self-explanatory. Didymus, since he was the student of Origen, certainly knows the longer version. Consequently, this longer version, which contained verses 12-31, could have represented an integral part of the Scriptures, which were read during divine worships. However, the question is whether this *longer* version, represented in LXX<sup>L</sup> and LXX<sup>A</sup>, implies other MT pluses, or is it only supplemented by a story about the *brothers conflict*. From what we have seen, only Theodoret is writing about 1 Sam 17:55. However, Theodoret has several textual versions in front of him. Besides that, it seems that the other Fathers know a version of the story similar to LXX<sup>B</sup>, supplemented with the story from 1 Sam 17 12-31. Hippolytus, it is clear, reads the short LXX<sup>B</sup> text. Generally speaking, it can be presumed that the Church knew the longer text since its earliest days. The longer text was the part of the Old Testament, which was read, interpreted, and explained during the divine worships.

It is striking, however, that such a story was so little received compared to today (knowing how much the Fathers wrote on Scriptures). One could assume that the story was self-explanatory and that its events were clear to everyone. It would not be wrong also to presume that our story was just not so much attractive to the readers of that time. However, we do lack a few other sources to draw some definitive conclusions.

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# Is Nikolai Velimirovich the author of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window?*

*Summary:* Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich (1881–1956) spent WWII in Nazi captivity. After the war, in 1946, he left for the United States, where he lived for the rest of his life. During his life, he enjoyed great spiritual and moral authority, both in Eastern Orthodox Church as well as in a wider international and ecumenical context. However, his public image was significantly changed 30 years after his death, i.e. after the publication of several pieces attributed to him posthumously, and especially after the book entitled *To the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* was published. In the present paper, we will consider some aspects of this book, with special reference to the questions of the authenticity of this work.

*Key words:* Nikolai Velimirovich, Gavriilo Dožić, Dachau, Anti-Semitism, Nazism, Nationalism, Ethnophiletism.

## Introduction

In a sermon, attributed to Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich (1881–1956), we can read:

“We have gathered today to offer together and publicly full gratitude to the One who sees everything and knows everything and judges everyone according to justice... Why do I say together and in public? Because there is both a solitary and a secret thanksgiving to God...”

It is therefore right and proper to offer full gratitude to God. In our case, we will be fully grateful, if we thank God for the downfall of our state, as well as for its deliverance from downfall; for slavery as well as for liberation; for the horrors we have endured, as well as for the joy we experience; for losses as well as for gains; for that horrific bloody night, as well as for this bright and clear morning of a new day.”

In this sermon, which is most likely a liturgical homily, addressed to the church audience gathered at the worship, there are references to thanksgiving, deliverance from the downfall, end of slavery, etc. These could be ideas and motifs which we can find in other sermons and homilies of Bishop Nikolai, which he wrote or pronounced on various occasions. But the words quoted here are somehow different than other sermons of Bishop Nikolai. These words are allegedly composed in 1944 or 1945, in the Dachau concentration camp.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The text above is our translation from Serbian. For the original text, cf. Bishop Nikolai [Velimirovich], *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window [From the Dachau Concentration Camp]* (Himelsthür: Serbian Orthodox Diocese for Western Europe, 1985), 11–12.

In the footnotes, we will provide a provisional translation of Serbian references to English, as well as those

Namely, after they spent three years in isolation, i.e. surrounded by armed Nazi guards in confinement in Serbia, Bishop Nikolai was, in September 1944, together with Serbian Patriarch Gavriilo Dožić (1881–1950), moved to Dachau concentration camp. There is a controversy regarding the duration of their stay in Dachau.<sup>2</sup> They were imprisoned in Dachau for a certain time, most likely approximately until the end of 1944. On the other hand, there are also proposals this period could — and should — be extended to the first few months of 1945, since there is a possibility that they were moved from Dachau at the beginning of 1945 to a certain *sub-camp* of Dachau<sup>3</sup> — like the one in Schliersee,<sup>4</sup> in Bavaria, and afterward to another one, which was in Itter,<sup>5</sup> in Tyrol, Austria.<sup>6</sup> There is also a certain possibility and there are several claims that they were incarcerated in some other concentration camps,<sup>7</sup> but it is difficult to reconstruct this period (and so far it is

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references in other languages of former Yugoslavia. In the bibliography listed at the end of this article, however, we will additionally include original titles and other information in Serbian, Croatian, etc. — in square brackets.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., for instance, Predrag Ilić, *Serbian Orthodox Church and the Secret of Dachau: Myth and Truth about the Detention of Patriarch Gavriilo and Bishop Nikolai in a Concentration Camp* (Belgrade: Draslar Partner, 2006); Vladimir Dimitrijević, *The Defamed Saint: Bishop Nikolai and Serbophobia* (Gornji Milanovac: Lio, 2007); Jovan Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism: Post-Communist Remembrance of the Serbian Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović* (Budapest — New York: Central European University Press, 2008), esp. 89–96; and Velibor Džomić, *Saint Bishop Nikolai and UDBA* (Podgorica: Montenegrin Writers' Association, 2009). For a critical reconsideration of known facts, cf. Rastko Lompar, "The Incarceration of Patriarch Gavriilo and Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović in Dachau in 1944," *History Studies Ilarion*, Vol. 3 (2018): 9–29.

<sup>3</sup> There were more than 150 sub-camps of Dachau, both near and far away from Dachau — cf. Sabine Schalm, "Dachau Subcamp System," translated by Stephen Pallavicini, in *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945. Volume I: Early Camps, Youth Camps, and Concentration Camps and Subcamps under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). Part A*, ed. Geoffrey P. Megargee et al. (Bloomington — Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press — United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2009), 448–450: 448, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt16gzb17.20>. For short articles and literature on numerous different sub-camps of Dachau, cf. following 100+ pages of the same publication: Geoffrey P. Megargee et al., ed., *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos...* (Bloomington — Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press — United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2009), 451–558, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt16gzb17.20>.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bojan Belić, *Bishop Nikolai, Hitler and Europe: Controversies* (Valjevo: Gimnasium of Valjevo, 2019), 112–115.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Joachim Schäfer, "Nikolaus Velimirović," in *Ökumenisches Heiligenlexikon: Leben und Wirken von Heiligen, Seligen und Ehrwürdigen der Kirchengeschichte: der katholischen Kirche, der orthodoxen Kirchen, aus den protestantischen und anglikanischen Kirchen* (Stuttgart: Joachim Schäfer, 2018) [DVD-ROM] [also available online, at [https://www.heiligenlexikon.de/BiographienN/Nikolai\\_Velimirovic.html](https://www.heiligenlexikon.de/BiographienN/Nikolai_Velimirovic.html) (accessed on April 24, 2020)].

<sup>6</sup> For further reference, cf. Belić, *Bishop Nikolai*, 112–133.

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that in an article from 1970, i.e. in a necrology for Patriarch Gavriilo, Bishop Vasilije Kostić (1907–1978) — who was also imprisoned with Velimirovich in Serbia during WWII and spent some time with him and Dožić in Vojlovica — mentioned that Gavriilo and Nikolai have been moved through 14 different Nazi camps: cf. Bishop Vasilije Kostić, "Twenty Years Since the Death of Patriarch Gavriilo," *Orthodoxy: A Newspaper of Serbian Patriarchate*, Vol. IV, No. 75 (May 14, 1970): 1–2: 2. The same claim — regarding their movement through 14 different concentration camps — is preserved in a manuscript written by Kostić in 1952: cf. Milan D. Janković, *Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich: Life, Thought and Contribution. Vol. I* (Šabac — Belgrade: Diocese of Šabac and Valjevo, 2002), 655. However, in both accounts Kostić did not list various camps — he mentioned only Dachau.

probably impossible) since we do not know of any accurate records. However, it is certain that they were hostages of Nazis during WWII, and they were set free in May 1945.

After May 1945, Bishop Nikolai spent some time in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland,<sup>8</sup> and then moved towards the United States, passing through several places in the United Kingdom. He arrived in the US in January 1946. Six months later, he was honored at the Columbia University — as “known and revered for saintliness and charity; thinking first always of the poor and the unfortunate in a country which has suffered much; a great scholar, a great preacher, and above all, a great moral force”<sup>9</sup> — and he was awarded *honoris causa* degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology.<sup>10</sup>

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After Velimirovich died in March 1956, Vladimir Maevski (1893–1975), an acquaintance and colleague of Velimirovich in St. Tikhon from 1951–1956, wrote a necrology for Velimirovich. In this piece, there is a claim that Velimirovich and Dožić were incarcerated in Dachau and Buchenwald — cf. Вл. Маевский, „Кончина великого иерарха / Преосвященного Николая, епископа Жичкого/“ [1–6: 2], Hoover Institution Archives, Vladislav Al'binovich Maevskii papers, Box no. 37, Folder no. 5.

British scholar Stella Alexander (1912–1998) recorded in her study on Yugoslavia that Velimirovich and Dožić were moved after Dachau “from one concentration camp to another until they were set free by the U.S. Army” in May 1945 (cf. Stella Alexander, *Church and State in Yugoslavia since 1945*, Soviet and East European Studies (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 18).

**8** There is no precise account or reliable record of his whereabouts during 1945, but only a few traces which are not sufficient for a detailed reconstruction. Cf. Urs von Arx, “Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović (1880–1956) and His Studies in Bern within the Context of the Old Catholic–Serbian Orthodox Relationship,” *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies*, Vol. 20, Number 2 (2006): 307–339: 330–331, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ser.0.0027>. Cf. also Urs von Arx, “Bischof Nikolaj Velimirović (1880–1956) und sein Studium in Bern im Rahmen der christkatholisch — serbisch–orthodoxen Beziehungen,” *Philotheos: International Journal for Philosophy and Theology*, Vol. 7 (2007): 435–455: 450–451, <https://doi.org/10.5840/philotheos2007732>.

**9** As it was stated on this occasion on Columbia — these words are preserved in a copy of the citation used by acting president of the University of Columbia Frank Diehl Fackenthal (1883–1968), attached to a letter sent to Velimirovich by the secretary of the University of Columbia Philip Meserve Hayden (1882–1959); cf. “A Letter of Secretary of Columbia University to Right Reverend Nikolai Velimirovich, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1946,” Columbia University Archives, Central Files, Office of the President Records, Box 294, folder 18 [cf. also Irinej Dobrijević, “Saint Nikolai of Zhicha: A Contemporary Orthodox Witness,” *Philotheos: International Journal for Philosophy and Theology*, Vol. 7 (2007): 456–462: 459, <https://doi.org/10.5840/philotheos2007733>]. Cf. also a booklet printed for this event: *Columbia University: One Hundred and Ninety–Second Annual Commencement, June 4, 1946* (Columbia University 1946), 12. We found these documents by courtesy of Ms. Jocelyn K. Wilk, University Archivist at Columbia University Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Bishop Nikolai was known for his humanitarian activities, and he is regarded as a key person in humanitarian activities of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Yugoslavia prior to WWII: he is known also for his humanitarian effort in establishing public kitchens for the poor people, and also for founding orphanages, which cared not only for Christian but also for Muslim and Jewish children (cf. Vladimir Vukašinović, “Die theologischen Quellen und Geschichte der karitativen Tätigkeit der Serbischen Orthodoxen Kirche im Laufe der Jahrhunderte,” *Philotheos: International Journal for Philosophy and Theology*, Vol. 10 (2010): 337–359: 358–359, <https://doi.org/10.5840/philotheos20101026>).

**10** Cf. “Columbia Degrees,” *The New York Times*, Vol. XCV, No. 32,273 (Late City Edition) (June 4, 1946): 30L+; cf. also “Fackenthal Hails ‘Armies of Peace:’ The One Hundred and Ninety–Second Annual Commencement at Columbia,” *The New York Times*, Vol. XCV, No. 32,274 (Late City Edition) (June 5, 1946): 16L+; “Columbia Gives 4,421 Degrees To 192d Class,” *The New York Herald Tribune* (June 5, 1946): 5; “4,421 Graduates Given Degrees at Columbia,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 114th Year (Rochester, New York) (June 5, 1946): 14.

After his arrival to the US, Velimirovich spent a couple of years mostly among Serbian emigrants in New York, Illinois, and elsewhere. In 1951 he moved to the Russian Orthodox Monastery of Saint Tikhon at South Canaan in Pennsylvania, and became a professor of Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, where he spent the rest of his life (1951–1956), finally becoming the dean of the Seminary.

### Velimirovich in the Dachau Concentration Camp

According to claims which could be found in literature from the last three and a half decades (i.e. in literature published after 1985), Velimirovich wrote reflections, sermons, and prayers during the time he spent in Dachau. However, during his lifetime, Velimirovich did not publish these Dachau writings, i.e. he did not mention that any of his writings published until 1956 originated from Dachau. Interestingly, he did not use to talk much about Dachau. He mentioned Dachau scarcely.

There are mentions that he was a Dachau prisoner in an interview from 1946,<sup>11</sup> in a number of articles in the newspapers,<sup>12</sup> in memories of survived Dachau hostages,<sup>13</sup> in var-

**11** Cf. Elizabeth McCracken, "Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake," *The Living Church*, Vol. CXII, No. 15 (Palm Sunday) (April 14, 1946): 8–9.

**12** Cf. "Jugoslav Bishops in England," *The Church Times* (London) (October 12, 1945): 578; Rachel K. McDowell, "Tract Week opens in U.S. Wednesday [Serbian Bishop to Preach]," *The New York Times*, Vol. XCV, No. 32,179 (Late City Edition) (March 2, 1946): 11L+; "Yugoslav Bishop Who Was Dachau Prisoner Stresses Power of Faith to Attain Any Goal," *The New York Times*, Vol. XCV, No. 32,181 (Late City Edition) (March 4, 1946): 20L+; "The Rt. Rev. Nicholai," *Chicago Tribune*, Vol. CV, No. 101 C (April 27, 1946): 8; "Bishop of Yugoslavia to Speak in Evanston," *Chicago Tribune*, Vol. CV, No. 16 C (April 28, 1946): 9N; "Manning Honored by Serbian Church," *The New York Times*, Vol. XCV, No. 32,272 (Late City Edition) (June 3, 1946): 24L; William J. Faust, "Christianity Suffers Under Communism," *The Pittsburgh Press*, Vol. 62, No. 345 (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) (June 8, 1946): 5; "Serb Bishop Lauds Accused Mihailovic," *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, Vol. 38, No. 128 (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) (June 10, 1946): 2; "Episcopalians Hear Faith Appeal by Slav Bishop," *The San Francisco Examiner*, Vol. CLXXXVI, No. 37 (February 6, 1947): 5; "Europe Needs Spiritual Aid," *The Ventura (Calif.) County Star-Free Press*, 72nd Year, No. 78 (City Edition) (February 7, 1947): 3; "Church Leaders To Attend Service," *The Pittsburgh Press*, Vol. 64, No. 33 (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) (July 26, 1947): 5; "Serbs to Bless Building Site of New Church," *Detroit Free Press*, Vol. 118, No. 18 (May 22, 1948): 8; "Serbs' Guest [Bishop Velimirovich]," *The Akron Beacon Journal*, 110th Year, No. 90 (Akron, Ohio) (Final Edition) (March 7, 1949): 15A; "London Church Into Serbian Orthodox Cathedral," *The Church Times*, Vol. CXXXV, No. 4,665 (July 4, 1952): [1]; Preston King Sheldon, "Church Programs to Stress Family," *The New York Times*, Vol. CIII, No. 35,161 (Late City Edition) (May 1, 1954): 18L+; "Nation's Pioneers Praised for Faith," *The New York Times*, Vol. CIII, No. 35,163 (Late City Edition) (May 3, 1954): 19L+; "Sermon Excerpts Indicate Latest Religious Thought," *The Evening Sun*, Vol. 83, No. 48 (Hanover, Pennsylvania) (May 8, 1954): 5; "Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich Dies," *The New York Times*, Vol. CV, No. 35,851 (Late City Edition) (March 21, 1956): 37L+; "Death of Bishop Velimirovic, Friend of Britain," *The Church Times* (March 29, 1956): 13; Veselin Kesich, "Bishop Nicolai," *The American Srbobran*, Vol. LI, No. 11,892 (June 7, 1957): 1, 4, etc.

In the *New York Times* printed on January 17, 1946 (Vol. XCV, No. 32,135) we could not find the article entitled "Bishop, Ex Captive of Nazis, is Here," which is allegedly published in that issue (according to Ilić, *Serbian Orthodox Church and the Secret of Dachau*, 203, and Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism*, 103).

**13** Cf. articles written by two inmates of the Dachau "Priesterblock" — Serbian Orthodox churchman Branko (Branislav) Đorđević (1892–?) and Croatian Roman Catholic Živan Bezić (1921–2007): Branko Đorđević, "The Priests in the Concentration Camp Dachau," *Glasnik: An Official Gazette of the Serbian Orthodox Church*,

ious literature<sup>14</sup> etc. But in his writings — in his writings published during his lifetime as well as in his later published letters — as far as we know, there are only a few short reflections on the time he spent in Dachau. On the other hand, we can find interesting details in these several reflections on Dachau. Also, a few additional details can be collected from press articles and other sources.

Here we will quote an excerpt from an early source which is mentioning Velimirovich's imprisonment at Dachau. It is a letter sent by John Low Baldwin (1923–1999), from the Office of the Division Chaplain of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, to Reverend Canon Edward Nason West (1909–1990).<sup>15</sup> The letter is written in Kitzbühel (Tyrol, Austria),

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Vol. XXVI, no. 7 (July 31, 1945): 66–67; 67; Živan Bezić, "Dachau — the Largest Priest's Cemetery," *Church in the World*, Vol. 3, No. 6 (1968): 1–9; 6.

A Czech Roman Catholic priest Bedřich Hoffmann (1906–1975), who also was a prisoner of Dachau concentration camp, in his book entitled *And Who Kills You*, mentioned Bishop Nikolai and Patriarch Gavrilo were imprisoned at Dachau too; he recorded September 25, 1944 as the date they arrived to Dachau (cf. Bedřich Hoffmann, *A kdo vás zabije... Život a utrpení kněžstva v koncentračních táborech*, II. vydání (Přerov: Společenské podniky, 1946), 381). A few other inmates of the Dachau "Priesterblock" also mentioned Velimirovich and Dožić as Dachau prisoners in their memories (cf. Ilić, *Serbian Orthodox Church and the Secret of Dachau*, 114–115).

Bezić once again mentioned Serbian hierarchs as prisoners of Dachau concentration camp (i.e. "Ehrenbunker" of Dachau) in his recollections of Dachau published in 1975 (cf. Živan Bezić, *In the Shadow of the Crematorium: Memories of a Detainee* (Split, 1975), 205–206). It is interesting to note that Bezić arrived in Dachau on December 1, 1944 (cf. Bezić, *In the Shadow of the Crematorium*, 167). Another interesting detail in Bezić's book is his claim that Bishop Nikolai and Patriarch Gavrilo, together with other prominent prisoners of "Ehrenbunker," left Dachau in April 1945 (cf. Bezić, *In the Shadow of the Crematorium*, 239–240). Is it possible they were moved from Dachau after December 1944, and back to Dachau in April 1945? Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence of their movement in 1945, so this question remains open.

Velimirovich and Dožić as Dachau prisoners, and their participation in usual daily activities in the camp (i.e. forced labor), are also mentioned in the memories of Dušan Marić, another Dachau prisoner (cf. Dragoljub Janojić, *A Detainee with the Officer Honor* (Smederevska Palanka: 10. oktobar — Ben Akiba, 2001), 104.

**14** Cf. "The Return of His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Gavrilo to the Fatherland," *Glasnik: An Official Gazette of the Serbian Orthodox Church*, Vol. XXVII, No. 10–12 (December 1, 1946): 210–212; 211; "The Religious Situation in Central and South-Eastern Europe," in *World Christian Handbook*, ed. Kenneth G[eorge]. Grubb (London: World Dominion Press, 1949), 49–55; 54; Matthew Spinka, "Eastern Orthodox Churches," in *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge: An Extension of the New Schaff–Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Volume I: Aachen to Kodesh*, ed. Lefferts A. Loetscher (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1955), 356–360; 357; *In Memory of Bishop Nikolai* (Chicago, Ill.: Organization of Serbian Chetniks, 1956), 19, 60; cf. also *A Plan to Commemorate Bishop Nikolai of Zicha* [the leaflet attached to *Eastern Churches News Letter: A Quarterly Publication of the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*, No. 7 (December 1956)], [4]; Veselin Kesich, "In Memoriam: Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, New Series, Volume I (5), Number 1 (January 1957): 31–32; 32; cf. also *Church and State under Communism: Report of Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Vol. III: Church and State in Yugoslavia*, prep. Fran Gjukanovich (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), 18, etc.

**15** Both churchmen were from New York, and both were connected to St. John the Divine Cathedral: Baldwin was an organist and choir director there (cf. Douglas Martin, "John Low Baldwin, 76, Conductor of the University Glee Club," *The New York Times*, Vol. CXLIX, No. 51,262 (Late Edition) (January 9, 2000): 30), and West was Canon Sacrist, and later a Sub-Dean of the Cathedral. Interestingly, Velimirovich was connected to the same church decades earlier, and also again took part in the life of this church after WWII.

and dated May 23, 1945. Namely, after finding a communication from the secretary of Patriarch Gavriilo in the office, Baldwin looked for Velimirovich and Dožić, and found them in the “suburb of the town.” He contacted them and finally met Bishop Nicholai, spending four hours with him. In their conversation, retold shortly in the letter, Velimirovich mentioned some details regarding circumstances of living, worshiping and ministering during Nazi imprisonment, and particularly in Dachau:

“The party [i.e. Velimirovich and Dožić] was imprisoned in a monastery in northern Serbia for 21 months. Windows there were barred and shut twenty–three hours daily. This period was perhaps the hardest to bear physical and was responsible for the later breakdown in the health of both bishops but more especially of the Patriarch. After a trip to Vienna they were placed in Dachau, a concentration camp that I have been through and where I witnessed the release of 32,000 prisoners. They were not allowed to minister to even their own people there and the Bishop told of a particular request.

On a piece of paper the size of a thumbnail he received a request for prayers for a group of men who had been sentenced to death.

Tearing two pages from his Bible he wrapped a bit of the reserved sacrament in them and sent it to the prisoners. The guard who had been bribed into carrying the message returned with the undelivered sacrament. The men had been executed, 72-strong, before the guard could reach them...”<sup>16</sup>

### Dachau in Velimirovich’s recollections

It seems that for Bishop Nicholai, imprisonment at Dachau was a strong and deep experience. While he was in London, he met his old friend George K. A. Bell (1883–1958), Bishop of Chichester, on November 16, 1945. Bell described this meeting with Velimirovich in his *Diary*. This entry is preserved in the archives of the Lambeth Palace Library, in *Bell Papers* (Vol. 258).<sup>17</sup> In an introductory paragraph to this entry, Bell noted that Velimirovich “had changed greatly” — and the consequences of his sufferings which he endured during the war were visible. Velimirovich told him about his 4 years long imprisonment under Nazis, mentioning that he and Patriarch Gavriilo spent some time at Dachau, where a German Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller (1892–1984) was also present. However, according to Bell’s notes, in Nazi imprisonment Bishop Nicholai found spiritual wealth and mystical experience:

“He spoke of God’s presence with him in prison, and of angels, his real experience of God’s care and love. Suffering had taught him what nothing else could have done.”<sup>18</sup>

Dachau is, interestingly, the only place of Velimirovich’s imprisonment which is

<sup>16</sup> Cf. “Letter from John L. Baldwin to Edward N. West, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1945,” Episcopal Diocese of New York Archives, Bishop William T. Manning Papers, Serbian Correspondence. In this letter, some interesting facts about the time Serbian hierarchs spent in imprisonment during WWII can be found, but they do not look sufficient for a reconstruction of this period.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. “Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic,” Bell Papers, Vol. 258, ff. 128–129. For the excerpts of the text of this entry, which is partially published in the research of M. Heppel, cf. Muriel Heppel, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovic: The Story of a Friendship* (Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2001), 66–69.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted according to Heppel, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovic*, 68.

mentioned in Bell's notes dated November 16, 1945. We do not know how their conversation looked like, but that could mean Velimirovich stressed Dachau as the place of the most impacting experience of his imprisonment. On the other hand, Dachau is mentioned again in a first letter which Velimirovich sent to Bell from the United States (i.e. from the College of Preachers in Washington) two and a half months later, dated to February 6, 1946:

"My dear Bishop and Friend,

The Lord's grace be with you!

You see where I am — after Dachau in Preachers' College in Washington! Like a fairy tale, and yet dramatic reality. How wonderful are the Lord's dealings with men!..."<sup>19</sup>

One month later, in a sermon preached in the Church of St. John the Divine in New York, i.e. in the Cathedral of the U.S. Episcopal Diocese of New York, Velimirovich mentioned his experience from Dachau. Namely, he was invited to preach by his friend William Thomas Manning (1866–1949), the tenth Bishop of New York City. He delivered the sermon on the topic "Believe in the Unbelievable" on Sunday morning, March 3, 1946. While preaching, Bishop Nicolai remembered his previous sermons in the same church (where he already preached in 1921,<sup>20</sup> and also in 1927<sup>21</sup>). On this occasion he said (we will underline meaningful words regarding his experience of Nazi imprisonment):

"Then and now I have been invited to this pulpit by Bishop Manning, my old friend and brother, at whose episcopal consecration I was present as one who represents the ancient Church of the East. At that time I was young and he was not old. Now however we are both old, he — being old in years and me being old *on account of the tragedy which I have had to go through* together with my own Christian people. It was very doubtful *in the midnight darkness of this war* that I ever should see him in flesh.

And yet — in the *pitch dark time in Dachau*, when the *machine guns outside our barrack were very busy* in announcing what *a trifle was the human life*, and when the *angry officers* of our guard — *always angry*, as the godless children of wrath must be — cried to us: "No hope that any one of you will get alive from here!" Even in those days, when *all our days were nights*, a spark of belief in my soul confirmed my hope that I shall see in this body America and this brilliant City of New York, and meet my old friend the Bishop of this great city and many other friends of old. *It was illogical, yes it was unbelievable*, and yet I believed in that unbelievable. And now, after all is passed, I thank my God for His mercy upon me on earth, and at the same time I fervently pray that he may be merciful in heaven to *those who in agony died there...*"<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Quoted according to Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovic*, 71.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. "Cathedral of St. John the Divine," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, Volume XLIV, Number 139 (May 6, 1921): 3. He also was present in the same church for Manning's consecration — on May 12, 1921: cf. "Bishop Manning is Consecrated," *The New York Times*, Vol. LXX, No. 23,119 (May 12, 1921): 9.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. "Serbian Prelate in Cathedral Today," *The New York Times*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 25,397, Section 2 (Editorial) (August 7, 1927): 13E; "Yugoslav Bishop Heard at St. John's," *The New York Times*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 25,398 (August 8, 1927): 20.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. "Sermon Preached on Sunday morning, March 3, 1946 in the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, by His Grace, the Right Reverend Bishop Nicolai, Serbian Orthodox Bishop of Ochrida and Zicha, Yugoslavia, on the topic: 'Believe in the Unbelievable,'" Episcopal Diocese of New York Archives, Bishop William T. Manning Papers, Box 8 [WTM–8], File 1. I am thankful to Mr. Wayne Kempton, archivist and historiographer

In Dachau, Velimirovich's faith was challenged by Nazi officer, as he mentioned later in the same sermon:

"A Nazi captain *scornfully* said to me: "Show to me your God that I may see Him and I shall believe!" I answered, "If you, captain, would show to me the invisible electrons and protons your professor Planck is speaking of, then I will show you my invisible God and His angels and the souls of the departed."

A few details on Dachau experience are mentioned in an article in *The Akron Beacon Journal*. According to Bishop Nikolai's words, recorded by Helen Waterhouse in 1949, in Dachau prisoners were killed every night. Even the last communion was not a possibility for some of them. Velimirovich revealed that he was not allowed to talk to other prisoners and clergy imprisoned in the same cellblock where he was located:

"At Dachau I would gladly have died at any time," he said. "Each night I would hear them shooting my fellow prisoners. When six young Yugoslavs of my cellblock begged me to give them a last communion, they were refused and led out to die." The noted German Lutheran pastor, Rev. Martin Niemoeller, was a prisoner in the same row of solitary prison cells in which the bishop was held at Dachau. Several Catholic priests were also imprisoned there. "We were supposed never to talk or have communication with any one," the bishop said. "But one of my guards was a believing man who took pity and would talk with me sometimes and report what went on."<sup>23</sup>

Now, if we compare the words of the first paragraph quoted above, at the very beginning of this article — addressed to congregation, gathered at prayer in thanksgiving, with Velimirovich presiding, offering full gratitude to God for liberation, deliverance from ruin, etc., the question arises: how that paragraph fits the context of the life in Dachau according to Velimirovich's words?

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A few other brief testimonies on how life in Dachau looked like could be found in an article written by Velimirovich in 1952, two years after Patriarch Gavrilo passed away.<sup>24</sup> In a

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from the Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, who provided the text of this sermon of Bishop Nikolai and other material on Bishop Nikolai preserved there. I also owe gratitude to Mr. Patrick Cates, a librarian from Christoph Keller, Jr. Library at the General Theological Seminary in New York City, for kind communication and a huge help in archival research.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted according to Helen Waterhouse, "Serb-American Group Hears Visiting Bishop," *The Akron Beacon Journal*, 110th Year, No. 91 (Akron, Ohio) (March 7, 1949): 15.

<sup>24</sup> The article written by Bishop Nikolai, entitled "Patriarch Gavrilo," is published in *Amerikanski Srbobran* (printed in Pittsburgh) in 1952. For a while, I could not locate that issue of the journal. There is a clipping of that article, preserved in the Hoover Institution Archives, Vladislav Al'bionovich Maevskii papers, Box no. 37, Folder no. 6, and I am thankful to Sarah Patton and Diana Sykes, archivists from Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University, for providing me the copy of this clipping.

The text of the mentioned article, followed by the facsimile (but without a reference to original publication), is reprinted in Željko Z. Jelić, ed., *The Unknown Letters of Bishop Nikolai* (Belgrade: Christian Thought, 2009), 108–112. Text is also republished in Džomić, *Saint Bishop Nikolai*, 147–153, and elsewhere.

Finally, by kind communication and help of Mr. Miloš Rastović, Cultural Outreach Coordinator of Serb National Federation, Pittsburgh, PA — to whom I am deeply indebted, the issue of the original publication of the mentioned article is solved: cf. Bishop Nikolai [Velimirovich], "Patriarch Gavrilo," *The American Srbobran*, Vol. XLVI, No. 10,621 (May 23, 1952): 3.

few words, Velimirovich mentioned how after Patriarch's disobedience to Dachau authorities during airstrikes, i.e. after his refutation to leave the barrack during the bombing of Dachau, they were both punished. Namely, Gavriilo was seriously ill and he refused to leave his cell, even if guards would kill him. Officers left him in the cell, and the rest of the cells were emptied. Prisoners — and Velimirovich among them — were forced to sit in a shelter, actually in a huge hole in the ground, an already dug mass-grave. After the bombing was finished, Velimirovich was allowed to see the Patriarch:

"But the Germans did not forgive us. I was sent to a dark cell without a window. And so they kept us separated for 48 hours: the sick Patriarch without service and me without light. That was our punishment 'for opposing the authorities.'"<sup>25</sup>

On the whole, Velimirovich did not write lengthily on Dachau. As far as we know, he mentioned Dachau in a few of his writings, which makes only a few lines in total.

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Interestingly, there are no known archival records that could reveal some additional information or some details on the time Velimirovich spent in the Dachau concentration camp. It is also interesting that the Archives of the former Yugoslavian Red Cross lack the internment cards of Patriarch Gavriilo and Bishop Nikolai, while the files of all other priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church who were in Dachau are preserved and accessible.<sup>26</sup> The files from Dachau regarding Bishop Nikolai and Patriarch Gavriilo, which could be very helpful in reconstructing the historical frame and their life in the Dachau concentration camp are not preserved in the Dachau archives.<sup>27</sup> But if the account of D. Marić is reliable, their files were found outside the concentration camp of Dachau, in the town of Dachau, in the house in which the mayor of Dachau lived, among files of other prominent Dachau prisoners, and they were taken by American Army immediately after liberation in 1945.<sup>28</sup> However, if these files are preserved, they still need to be located and examined.

### Velimirovich's Dachau Experiences Retold by Other People

According to the claims of the author who wrote the memoirs of Patriarch Gavriilo, in Dachau Velimirovich and Dožić had to bring water for themselves, i.e. to carry a heavy water vessel from afar on a daily basis. Since they were already aged, and after almost four

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It is interesting to note Velimirovich's refusal of a suggestion to write down memoirs on imprisonment during WWII in the mentioned article. And also his caution to the writers of memoirs — regarding objectiveness and historical authenticity of accounts (our translation to English): "there is nothing harder than to write reliable memoirs provided with rechecked and correct facts, which could be useful to future writers and historiographers."

<sup>25</sup> Cited according to Velimirovich, "Patriarch Gavriilo," 3. Translation in English is ours.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Predrag Ilić, "Serbian Historiography and Dachau," *The History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (2006): 141–150: 149; Ilić, *Serbian Orthodox Church and the Secret of Dachau*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Predrag Janković and Dejan Ristić, "On the List of Serbian Detainees in the Dachau Concentration Camp," in *The List of Serbian Detainees in the Dachau Concentration Camp*, edited by Slobodan Tijanić et al. (Frankfurt — Himmelsthür: Serbian Orthodox Church — Diocese of Frankfurt and Germany, 2017), 8–16: 13.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Janojlić, *A Detainee with the Officer Honor*, 131.

years of imprisonment they were also weak, sick, and additionally they suffered hunger, it happened that Velimirovich once could not endure so he fell and hurt his knee seriously.<sup>29</sup>

Carrying heavy water vessels was a regular daily activity for some of Dachau prisoners.<sup>30</sup> It may be possible that Dušan Marić's recollection of the forced labor of Bishop Nikolai and Patriarch Gavrilo in Dachau has to do something with carrying such a vessel.<sup>31</sup> However, in recollections of survived Dachau prisoners, except the simple fact that Velimirovich was also imprisoned there and a mention of forced labor which brought Marić, there is not much on his life in Dachau.<sup>32</sup>

In literature and press, there are some brief claims that Velimirovich was tortured at Dachau. There are mentions of Velimirovich's sufferings in Dachau and consequences — visible in his health issues — published in the press even during his lifetime. For instance, in an article published in *American Srbobran* in February 1956, there is a statement that Velimirovich "suffered intense agonies as a Nazi prisoner in the infamous Dachau concen-

<sup>29</sup> Cf. [Gavrilo Dožić] [?], *Memoirs of Serbian Patriarch Gavrilo*, Vol. II (Paris: [M. Džaković], 1983), 81; for the very similar account, cf. also Mitar M. Džaković, *Life Work of the Serbian Patriarch Gavrilo* (Paris: [M. Džaković], 1983), 97–98.

<sup>30</sup> Cf., for instance, memories of Dušan Lalević (1907–?), a survivor of Dachau: Dušan Lalević, *Dachau* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1955), 85.

<sup>31</sup> Marić mentioned that other Dachau prisoners could not meet with Patriarch Gavrilo and Bishop Nikolai or see them often, "because they, like Léon Blum [1872–1950] and Dr. Šumenković, went to their honorary bunker after the work" — cf. Janojlić, *A Detainee with the Officer Honor*, 104.

<sup>32</sup> Previous researchers already noted a presence of a certain historiographical gap and lacking historical research, as well as lacking information on how treatment of prisoners and life in Dachau looked like in Yugoslavian, or more narrowly Serbian sources and publications (cf. Ilić, "Serbian Historiography and Dachau," 144–147; Ilić, *Serbian Orthodox Church and the Secret of Dachau*, 12–13). Additionally, there could be an ideological reason why the fate of clergy in Dachau was not in the scope of historical study in Yugoslavia, or Yugoslavian post-WWII literature. Interestingly, in a few recollections of survived Dachau prisoners published soon after the war was finished, obviously shaped for publication by the ruling agenda of the Communist party, there is practically nothing on how the life of imprisoned churchmen in Dachau looked like. It is very indicative how, for instance, the only mention of imprisoned clergy in Dachau in Lalević's recollections published in 1955 is for the purpose to mock the religion and religious people: cf., for instance, Lalević, *Dachau*, esp. 56–60, or 119–120, etc. Another survivor of Dachau, Milenko Beljanski (1923–1996), whose book, published in 1967, is toned by ruling ideology, also used his Dachau experience to clear his issues with religion — cf. Milenko Beljanski, *Four Meetings With People* (Novi Sad: Association of People's Liberation War Fighters of the Socialist Republic of Serbia for Vojvodina, 1967), 200. During Yugoslavian times, the only Yugoslavian survivor who mentioned Bishop Nikolai in his Dachau memoirs was, as far as we know, Živan Bezić (cf. Bezić, *In the Shadow of the Crematorium*, 205–206, and 239–240), who on the other hand — and this could be a significant fact — published privately both editions of his book with Dachau memories, in 1975 and 1976.

Maybe later political changes somehow impacted literature on Dachau. For instance, in Lalević's revised and expanded recollections, published in 1982, Patriarch Gavrilo is mentioned as a prisoner of Dachau (compare Lalević, *Dachau*, 116, where there is no mention of Dožić, and Dušan Lalević, *I Want to Testify: Records From the Dachau Concentration Camp* (Ivanjica: Cultural Center "Ivanjica," 1982), 94 — where Patriarch Gavrilo is mentioned as a Dachau prisoner). On the other hand, Bishop Nikolai, who unlike Patriarch Gavrilo at that time was regarded as a political enemy, is not mentioned at all in Lalević's memoirs. However, we can assume that there was no neutral attitude of the author regarding Bishop Nikolai, since a kind of disgustiveness towards the prominent prisoners of "Ehrenbunker" is a very striking detail that is recorded in this book (cf. Lalević, *I Want to Testify*, 156).

tration camp. He never fully recovered from this experience and his health has been deteriorating steadily.”<sup>33</sup> In another article from 1956, there is a claim that Velimirovich in Dachau “was made to clean latrines and scrub floors. He was cuffed about rudely, and even whipped to speed work on menial tasks. Bishop Nicolai never complained even when he was placed in the ‘hole’<sup>34</sup> and put on bread-and-water diet. For a long time after freedom, he could not hold solid food — vomiting up everything taken in. From long hours he was made to stand on his feet, he became footsore and weary. He needed a cane for support.”<sup>35</sup> It should be noted that the first biographer of Bishop Nicolai, Milomir Stanišić (1914–1991), mentioned that Serbian high clerics (i.e. Gavriilo and Nicolai) were forced to labor and were tortured in the Nazi camp, referring to their hard physical work, injuries and health issues they suffered at Dachau.<sup>36</sup>

There are also brief details on Velimirovich’s Dachau experiences in recollections of other people. A few lines can be found in a memoir of Sophia Zernova, who had an opportunity to talk with Velimirovich in New York after WWII.<sup>37</sup> In her short recollection, there are brief mentions of anti-Christian humiliations and verbal bullying which Velimirovich experienced in Dachau. On the other hand, a memory is preserved here, a memory of a certain Velimirovich’s mystical experience. Namely, Zernova was wondering if the sufferings and the deprivations of the concentration camps kill a person spiritually or do they revive people. She had on her mind devoted people who could not muster enough strength to pray during the torture in Nazi camps — how prisoners had been completely focused only on a piece of bread, on one onion, on a cup of warm water... Bishop Nicolai answered, as it is retold by Zernova, in the following way:

<sup>33</sup> Cf. “Bishop Nicolai Seriously Ill,” *American Srbobran*, Vol. L, No. 11,575 (February 29, 1956): 2.

<sup>34</sup> This could be a reference to the dark cell [in Serbian: ћелија мрачњача] mentioned by Velimirovich in an article on Patriarch Gavriilo quoted above.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. M. M. K. [= Milan M. Karlo?], “Piety and Simplicity Marked Bishop’s Life,” *American Srbobran*, Vol. L, No. 11,600 (April 4, 1956): 1.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Milomir N. Stanišić, *Nikolaj: A Brief Review of the Life and Philosophy of Bishop Nicolai of Žiča* (West Lafayette, Indiana: [n.p.], 1977), 58–59. Stanišić briefly retold what he allegedly heard from Bishop Nicolai — about forced labor, physical punishment and other humiliations that Patriarch Gavriilo and Velimirovich suffered in Dachau. Cf. also Jovan Radosavljević, ed., *On Bishop Nicolai: What Contemporaries Say* (Valjevo: Diocese of Valjevo, 2019), 234.

<sup>37</sup> In recollections of Zernova, published posthumously, the concentration camp in which Velimirovich was imprisoned is wrongly named Auschwitz: cf. С[офия]. М[ихайловна]. Зернова, „Четыре года в Сербии (Из писем к другу)“, in *За рубежом: Белград — Париж — Оксфорд: хроника семьи Зёрновых (1921–1972)*, ред. Николай Михайлович Зёрнов и Милица Владимировна Зёрнова (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1973), 50–57: 53–54; cf. also Sophia Zernov, “Bishop Nikolai (Velimirovich). Recollection of Auschwitz,” translated by Elisabeth Obolensky, *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Life and Thought*, No. 32 (May 1988): 33–34.

In Serbian translations of this text, the name of the camp is changed to Dachau, and the author, Sophia Zernova (1899–1972), sister of Nicolas M. Zernov (1898–1980), was replaced by his wife, Militza Zernova (1899–1994): cf. Orthodox Missionary, “Late Bishop Nicolai Velimirovich and Fr. Justin Popović,” *The Orthodox Missionary*, Vol. XXIX, No. 167 (January–February 1986): 26–32: 28–31; cf. also Milica Zernov, “It Was Like This in the Concentration Camp,” *The Voice of the Church*, Vol. 14/II, no. 2/86 (1986): 64. This account in Serbian is reprinted many times later according to versions from *The Orthodox Missionary* and *The Voice of the Church*.

"It was like this in the camp: you sat in a corner and repeated to yourself, I am dust and ashes. Lord, take my soul!

Suddenly your soul ascended to the Heavens and you saw God face to face. However, you could not bear it and so you said to Him: I am not ready, I cannot, take me back! Then you sat for hours on end and repeated to yourself: I am dust and ashes. Lord, take my soul! And, once again the Lord took your soul ... In short, if it were possible, I would give the remainder of my life for one hour in Dachau."<sup>38</sup>

Canon West mentioned both Velimirovich's physical injuries originating from Dachau ("Dachau had left its mark upon him — triple hernias and utter fatigue")<sup>39</sup> and also the spiritual dimension of Bishop Nikolai's imprisonment there. He referred to Nikolai's sermon where he told how Dachau transformed his *belief* that there is God to *knowledge* that there is God. Namely, Velimirovich was asked by a Nazi officer if he believed there was a God. Nikolai answered:

"No." The young officer was greatly pleased that anybody so distinguished and learned should not believe in God. Nikolai said, "I'm afraid you didn't understand me. You asked me if I believed there was a God. I don't believe it, I know it! And Dachau convinced me."<sup>40</sup>

Fr. Miodrag Djurich, a close friend of Velimirovich in the period after WWII, in a sermon preached on the occasion of the fifth annual commemoration of Bishop Nikolai in Lackawanna in 1961, offered a spiritual explanation why Velimirovich was quiet on his Dachau experience. It was because the ancient Christian rule is to keep quiet on your own sufferings. As Fr. Djurich inputted, Velimirovich once told him that he would not talk about his sufferings because "they are nothing comparing to the passions of Christ."<sup>41</sup> This standpoint could be in accordance with the fact that Bishop Nikolai skipped details on imprisonment in Dachau, starting from the statement which Velimirovich and Patriarch Gavriilo handed to U.S. Army authorities in Kitzbühel in May 1945.<sup>42</sup> As it was written

<sup>38</sup> Translated to English by Sister Michaela (Vavich); quoted according to Bishop Maxim Vasiljevic, ed., *Treasures New and Old: Writings by and About St. Nikolai Velimirovich*, Contemporary Christian Thought Series, No. 8 (Alhambra, Calif.: Sebastian Press — Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, 2010), 77.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Canon Edward N. West, D.D., "Recollections of Bishop Nikolai," *St. Nicholas Parish Reporter*, Year XLIV, No. 88 (Monroeville, Pennsylvania) (January 2013): 14–15: 14. This article is reprinted from an earlier publication — namely from the English Section of *Vidovdan — Serbian Journal*, Year 49, No. 197 (without referring to the year of original publication).

Velimirovich's injuries originating from Dachau, mentioned by several authors, are disputed in Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism*, esp. 94–95.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted according to West, "Recollections of Bishop Nikolai," 15.

<sup>41</sup> This sermon is published in the Serbian American press in 1961. The clipping of the article, i.e. 4 rows sermon of Fr. Miodrag, is preserved in the Hoover Institution Archives, Vladislav Al'bionovich Maevskii papers, Box no. 37, Folder no. 4. The note on margin dates this clipping to May 26, 1961.

By kind help of Mr. Miloš Rastović, who sent me a scanned copy of the original publication, here is the full reference for the mentioned paper: "Serbs of Lackawanna for Bishop Nikolai," *The American Srbobran*, Vol. LIII, No. 12,720 (May 26, 1961): 3.

<sup>42</sup> This "Statement of Archbishop Gavril, Patriarch of all Serbs, and Bishop Nikolai of Serbia," written by Velimirovich in May 1945, is preserved in the archives of Bishop Sava Vuković (1930–2001). Bishop Sava translated this document to Serbian and published it: cf. Bishop Sava of Šumadija [Vuković], "Fiftieth Anniversary of the Liberation of Serbian Patriarch Gavriilo and Bishop Nikolai of Žiča," *Kalenik*, Vol. XVI, No. 1–3 (1995): 14–15.

there, “in September 1944, under terrible circumstances, we were both dragged to Bavaria to a concentration camp in Dachau near Munich. It is not necessary to describe here the life we had in this place, whose history is known all over the world.”<sup>43</sup>

### Velimirovich's Writings from Dachau

As we noted above, Velimirovich did not write much on Dachau. On the other hand, almost 30 years after Bishop Nikolai died, in 1985 a book of his sermons and reflections appeared, allegedly written in Dachau concentration camp, entitled *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window: From the Dachau Concentration Camp*. Velimirovich supposedly wrote this book during his imprisonment in Dachau under the Nazis. Interestingly, the book appeared in a particularly critical moment when the public image of Velimirovich was being reshaped: its publication followed a very aggressive campaign in the Yugoslavian press of the time, a campaign against Velimirovich as an agent of imperialistic West and — paradoxically — also as a Nazi collaborator.<sup>44</sup> This publication from 1985, however, had a kind of its own prehistory.

Another book appeared a decade earlier, entitled *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, which was published under the name of Justin Popović (1894–1979), in Thessaloniki, Greece, in 1974.<sup>45</sup> In this book, the author quoted Velimirovich, trying to prove his own statements by finding support in Velimirovich's writings. A large part of the crucial chapter (entitled “Humanistic Ecumenism”) is compiled from various quotations from Velimirovich's works,<sup>46</sup> mixed with the author's additions and commentaries (but not in a critical and an acribic way — it is impossible to conclude which words are Velimirovich's and which words are author's, and it looks like the second part of that chapter was written by Velimirovich). The book is directed against ecumenism in general and against the participation of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical dialogue.<sup>47</sup> Interestingly, in the final chap-

<sup>43</sup> Cited according to Vuković, “Fiftieth Anniversary,” 14. The translation back to English is ours, so this is not the original wording.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. for instance, a short review of attacks on Bishop Nikolai in the Yugoslavian press, in an article entitled “Status of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Yugoslavia,” *American Srbobran*, Vol. LXXVIII, No. 15,694 (May 30, 1984): 1. A series of articles written by Hieromonk Atanasije Jevtić and other authors, defending Bishop Nikolai, appeared in *Pravoslavljje* during this period.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Justin Popović, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, Library The Signposts of Hilandar, no. 1 (Thessaloniki: Monastery Hilandar, 1974) [in Serbian: Јустин Поповић, Православна Црква и Екуменизам, Хиландарски путокази 1 (Солун: Издање манастира Хиландара, 1974)]. This book appeared in 1974 both in Serbian and in Greek [cf. also Ιουστίνου Πόποβιτς, Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία και Οικουμενισμός, μετάφρασις. ἱερομ. Ἀμφιλοχίου Ράντοβιτς καὶ ἱερομ. Ἀθανασίου Γέβτιτς (Θεσσαλονίκη: Εκδόσεις «Ορθόδοξος Κυψέλη», 1974)], and later it became very popular among Orthodox Christians, and had many editions until today.

<sup>46</sup> But without references — without any referring to the original editions of Velimirovich's works. Cf. Popović, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, 197–215; Πόποβιτς, Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία και Οικουμενισμός, 233–255; cf. also later Serbian edition: Justin Popović, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Thessaloniki: Monastery Hilandar, 1995<sup>4</sup>) [in Serbian: Јустин Поповић, Православна Црква и Екуменизам, 4. издање (Солун: Манастир Хиландар, 1995<sup>4</sup>)], 123–140.

<sup>47</sup> It should be noted that a Serbian Orthodox priest, theologian and writer Dimitrije Najdanović (1897–1986) — an acquaintance and collaborator of Velimirovich — criticized Popović's book already in 1975, and

ter of the mentioned book, which is allegedly composed of paragraphs taken from works of Velimirovich, there is not a single reference to Velimirovich's works. On the contrary, there are references to works of other authors in that book, as well as in other chapters as in the same chapter. Additionally, in the Greek edition of the same book, in the first paragraph from Velimirovich's writings, there is a short translator's note: it is written that the present message of Bishop Nicholai was written during WWII in a cell in Dachau, Germany, and that message is published for the first time.<sup>48</sup> In the Serbian edition, there is no such note.

However, somewhere around 11 years later, the mentioned passages appeared in another publication — now they were incorporated in the sermons of Bishop Nicholai and published in the book entitled *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, allegedly written by Velimirovich during his imprisonment in Dachau.<sup>49</sup> In a preface to

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commented about the strictness and limitations of his approach. Najdanović pointed that Popović is more influenced by Fyodor M. Dostoevsky (1821–1881) than by Velimirovich (cf. Dimitrije Najdanović, *The Three Serbian Great Men*, Library Svečanik, no. 49 (München: Svečanik-Verlag, 1975), 219–220, n. 15).

It is interesting that the question of the authenticity of the mentioned book, published in 1974, is recently raised in circles of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The question of the authenticity is also posed by some pupils of Popović, which later became Serbian bishops. Cf., for instance, comment of Bishop Atanasije Jevtić on Pan-Orthodox Council held in Kolymvari, Crete, from 19<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016 (sometimes called the Council of Crete), where Jevtić said the book *Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* does not express opinion of St. Justin, and also that book, published in 1974, does him an injustice: cf. [Bishop Atanasije Jevtić, "An [authorised] Address by Bishop Atanasije Jevtić, Regarding Document 'Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World,' Kolymvari, Crete, June 24<sup>th</sup> 2016," Notes from the Council (vendredi 24 juin 2016), accessed April 1, 2020, [http://beleskesasabora.blogspot.com/2016/06/blog-post\\_59.html](http://beleskesasabora.blogspot.com/2016/06/blog-post_59.html); cf. also Bishop Atanasije Jevtić, "An Address at Holy and Great Council of Crete by Bishop Atanasije, Regarding Document 'Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World,'" in Bishop Maxim Vasiljević, *Diary from the Council: Holy and Great Council of Orthodox Church in Orthodox Academia in Crete, from 19th to 26th June 2016* (Alhambra, Ca. — Vrnjci: Sebastian Press — Interklima–Grafika, 2016), 63–65: 63.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Πόποβιτς, Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία και Οικουμενισμός, 234.

The first English translation of the mentioned chapter of the book *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, composed by alleged quotations from Velimirovich's works, was published in 1994, in a book compiled from several shorter works of Fr. Justin as well as selected excerpts of his various works (cf. Father Justin Popovich, *Orthodox Faith and Life in Christ*, Translation, Preface, and Introduction by Asterios Gerostergios et al. (Belmont, Massachusetts: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1994 [1997<sup>2</sup>; 2005<sup>1</sup>]), 169–196). Since this is a translation from Greek, a note on Velimirovich's Dachau writings from the original Greek edition can also be found (cf. Popovich, *Orthodox Faith*, 177, n. 1). The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> editions of the mentioned book appeared in 1997 and 2005.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*; for parallel paragraphs compare Popović's *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* from 1974, pp. 197–215, to Velimirovich's *Words* from 1985, pp. 31–32, 39–40, 43–44, 57–58, 61–62, 67–68, 72, 77–78, 87–88, 91–92, 95–96.

As we mentioned, in 1994's edition of Popović's book, Rev. Asterios Gerostergios (1936–2019) also translated a note regarding passages attributed to Velimirovich, which were allegedly taken from his Dachau writings — cf. Popovich, *Orthodox Faith and Life in Christ*, 177, n. 1.

Anyway, the situation becomes more confusing. Namely, Bishop Atanasije Jevtić, one of the editors of Popović's book later mentioned that *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* from 1974, pp. 197–215 is composed of excerpts from Bishop Nicholai's sermons. He did not make a reference to his writings from Dachau. He also added that there are some omitted passages. He quoted a few of these passages — which were not published in the book composed from Velimirovich's handwritings from Dachau in 1985. Moreover, even some similar

the book, Bishop Lavrentije (Trifunović) said Velimirovich wrote those sermons in the Dachau concentration camp in 1945.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, Velimirovich maybe was not in Dachau in 1945.

But there is more controversy regarding this book. There are also claims that the book was published in Linz for the first time, in 1981,<sup>51</sup> or in 1985.<sup>52</sup> We could not find copies of those editions from Linz. And that is just the beginning of obscurity. In the Himmelsthür edition from 1985, there are 82 chapters (78 sermons and reflections, and 4 prayers). On the other hand, Bishop Jovan (Velimirović) of Valjevo and Šabac (1912–1989), a nephew of Bishop Nikolai, who prepared the material for publication, said there were 100 sermons from Dachau.<sup>53</sup> Anyway, the Himmelsthür edition of this work was incorporated in *Collected Works* of Velimirovich already in 1985,<sup>54</sup> and later it became very influential, although the authenticity of this book is questioned, which is worthy of mention.<sup>55</sup> A Linz edition with 76 chapters appeared later — 6 sermons from the Himmelsthür edition were omit-

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wordings are found in sermons whose number, according to Jevtić, differs from those in Dachau writings (Sermon XVIII — similar, but not exact words are found in Sermon XIII in *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*; Sermon XXI — similar words are in Sermon XV) — cf. Bishop Atanasije's comment in St. Abba Justin [Popović], *Notes on Ecumenism*, edited by Bishop Atanasije [Jevtić] (Trebinje: Monastery Tvrdoš, 2010), 30–31; cf. also a newer quadrilingual edition of the same book — in Serbian, Greek, Russian and English — Saint Justin (Popovich), *Записи о Екуменизму = Σημειώσεις περί Οικουμενισμού = Заметки об Экуменизме = Notes on Ecumenism*, edited by Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić) (Врњци — Ђелије — Требиње — Лос Анђелес: Интерклима—графика — Манастир Ђелије — Манастир Тврдош — Севастијан прес / Vrnjci — Ćelije — Trebinje — Los Angeles: Interclima—graphics — Monastery Ćelije — Monastery Tvrdoš — Sebastian Press, 2019), 31–32, 134–135, and cf. also Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 33–34, 37–38.

These differences suggest, however, that there are *variations* of the manuscripts of the text attributed to Velimirovich, of which one variant is published in the book entitled *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* in 1985, while another variant, apparently different, was the source for the book directed against Ecumenism from 1974, with different excerpts published in the book *Notes on Ecumenism* in 2010.

**50** Cf. Bishop Lavrentije [Trifunović], “Instead of a Foreword,” in Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 5–6: 5.

**51** Cf. “Nicholai Velimirovich (Lelić, January 5, 1881 — Pennsylvania, March 18, 1956),” Serbian Treasury — Pride of the Serbhood (March 27, 2011), accessed April 1, 2020, <http://www.riznicasrpska.net/ponossrpstva/index.php?topic=27.0>.

**52** Cf. Bosiljka Delić, “Nicholai Velimirovich,” in *St. Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich: Selected Works*, Library “Treasury,” 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Slađana Perišić (Belgrade: ID Leo Commerce, 2014), 5–9: 9.

**53** Cf. Bishop Jovan [Velimirović], “Short Notes from the Life of Bishop Nicholai (An Address on Slava of ‘Voice of the Church’ in Valjevo in 1988),” *The Voice of the Church*, Vol. 19/VII, no. 2 (1991): 21–25: 25.

**54** In the last, 13<sup>th</sup> volume, and later is reprinted in following editions — cf. the last edition of Velimirovich's *Collected Works* from 2016 — Bishop Nicholai [Velimirovich], *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, in Nicholai Velimirovich, *Collected Works* [hereafter: *CW*], Vol. XIII (Šabac: Monastery of St. Nicholai — Soko, 2016), 181–350.

Bellow we will give references to the latest edition of Velimirovich's *Collected Works*, from 2016, abbreviated as *CW*.

**55** Cf., for instance, an interview with Jovan Ćulibrk, nowadays Serbian Orthodox Bishop of Slavonia: Saša Ristić, “Protosyncellus Jovan Ćulibrk: Israelis Understand Us Very Well,” *Jewish Review*, Year XVIII (LV), no. 2 (Belgrade, February 2009): 6–8: 7.

ted, some were shortened.<sup>56</sup> There is also an edition with 81 chapters;<sup>57</sup> there are many other editions as well, published by both ecclesiastical and commercial publishers. However, it seems this book radically reshaped the reception of Velimirovich's thought — in the first place his attitude towards ecumenism, and moved the focus to different aspects of his thought, which were previously launched in Popović's book in 1974. The same applies regarding the reception of Velimirovich's standpoints towards the contemporary world, culture, civilization, etc. Moreover, this publication additionally altered the reception of Velimirovich in a very strange way: after this publication, he became known as an anti-Semite.

### Velimirovich's Spurious Works: An Introductory Note

In one of his letters to Fr. Aleksa Todorović (1899–1990), probably written before 1952, Velimirovich mentioned that he gave his translation of the New Testament, which he accomplished together with Vasilije Kostić and Jovan Velimirović during their imprisonment in Vojlovica in 1943–1944, along with some writings from Dachau, to Fr. Milan Jovanović in Ferde.<sup>58</sup> But he did not refer to a particular book, and also did not mention the amount of Dachau writings. In the same letter, he also mentioned some of his lost WWII writings, hidden by Fr. Jovan Rapajić (1910–1945) after Velimirovich left Ljubostinja in 1943. On the other hand, Velimirovich mentioned in one later letter some Ljubostinja (WWII?) writings, found by a certain Arsić,<sup>59</sup> but it is not clear what happened with this material.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, in a conversation with Fr. Dragoljub Cokić, not long before his repose

<sup>56</sup> Cf. St. Nikolai of Žiča [Velimirovich], *Through the Dungeon Window* (Linz: Orthodox Church Parish in Linz, 2000).

<sup>57</sup> Cf. St. Bishop Nikolai [Velimirovich], *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window (from Dachau Concentration Camp)*, edited by Hieromonk Serafim Živković and Željko Perović (Divljana: Znamenje, [2011]).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. *CW*, Vol. XIII, 659–660: 660. It is not clear who is Fr. Milan Jovanović, and where is Ferde (there is Ferde — Førde — in Norway, but we could not identify the person of Fr. Jovanović nor location of Ferde mentioned by Velimirovich).

<sup>59</sup> Cf. a letter sent by Velimirovich to Todorović on March 19, 1953, in *CW*, Vol. XIII, 693–694: 694. At the same place there is another Velimirovich's caution regarding writers of memoirs: "O Lord, save us from memoirs!" — writes Velimirovich.

<sup>60</sup> We can guess that Ljubostinja writings could be the works published in the 5<sup>th</sup> volume of *Collected Works* of Velimirovich in Düsseldorf in 1977: *The Ljubostinja Century* (in Serbian: Лубостињски стослов = *CW*, Vol. V, 861–882), or *Beyond East and West* (in Serbian: Изнад Истока и Запада = *CW*, Vol. V, 793–810), or maybe somehow peculiar works, allegedly written by Velimirovich, like the *Theodule* (in Serbian: Теодул = *CW*, Vol. V, 499–650; in an unsigned [editorial?] foreword to *Theodule*, there is a claim that is Velimirovich's unfinished work from Ljubostinja, written in 1941–1942 — cf. *CW*, Vol. V, 501–502), or *Serbian People as A Servant of God* (in Serbian: Српски народ као теодул = *CW*, Vol. V, 651–684), or *Indian Letters* (in Serbian: Индијска писма), as Fr. Ljubomir Ranković suggested (cf. Ljubomir Ranković, *Saint Bishop Nikolai: Life and Work* (Šabac: Voice of the Church, 2013), 126), or some of the other works from the 5<sup>th</sup> volume of *Collected Works*, or from the later volumes as well. However, we do not know if there was any critical research of this material published more than two or three decades after Velimirovich's death. For sure, a critical edition of mentioned works does not exist, and existing editions of mentioned works are — except the mentioned *Theodule*, equipped with a very short and confusing introduction — lacking in any introductory and explanatory notes, as well as in information on manuscripts, editorial principles and methodology, text, context, etc. There

in 1956, Bishop Nikolai mentioned another collection of his lost writings, those hidden (i.e. buried) in Žiča monastery by monk Jakov Arsović and protodeacon Vladimir Lekić in 1941, and also some writings lost in London in 1946.<sup>61</sup> Another missing piece — a manuscript for the book entitled “With the Gospel Through Nature” — he mentioned earlier in correspondence with Cokić. According to Cokić, this manuscript disappeared after Velimirovich passed away.<sup>62</sup> However, it appears that a number of Velimirovich’s manuscripts were circulating after WWII. In certain churchly circles, these manuscripts were regarded as authoritative, because Velimirovich was considered as an authentic author and an authentic interpreter of Orthodox tradition.

On the other hand, these circumstances, as well as the fact that Velimirovich was far away from Europe, provided opportunities for publishing the works attributed to Velimirovich even during his lifetime. Since he enjoyed great spiritual and moral authority, his name became a kind of tool in achieving political goals for different parties of Serbian emigration. Velimirovich tried to avoid political issues of Serbian emigration, distancing himself from various parties, as it can be seen in his correspondence.<sup>63</sup> And that can perhaps also be seen in his life: the last five years of his life he spent in an American Russian Orthodox monastery, not among Serbs.

However, after Velimirovich went from Europe to the USA, a Velimirovich’s sermon appeared in one publication of Yugoslavian nationalist organization ZBOR — the sermon which he allegedly said at the burial of a leader of that organization Dimitrije Ljotić (1891–1945).<sup>64</sup> This publication was warmly welcomed by the Yugoslavian regime of the time, because it was a proof that Velimirovich was a Quisling and a collaborator of Nazis.<sup>65</sup> Serbian

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is still a lot of work to be done in order to clarify the circumstances in which these works were published, and a lot of effort to be invested in order to establish a proper frame for contextualization and interpretation of posthumously published Velimirovich’s works in general.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Radosavljević, *On Bishop Nikolai*, 405.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Radosavljević, *On Bishop Nikolai*, 406.

<sup>63</sup> Cf., for instance, Bishop Nikolai’s letter to Milan Gavrilović (1882–1976), sent from Libertyville, Ill., on May 11, 1946, preserved in Hoover Institution Archives — Milan Gavrilović papers, Box no. 18, Folder no. 14, Hoover Institution Archives. Cf. also his letter to Fr. A. Todorović, dated April 30, 1952 (published in *CW*, Vol. XIII, 676–677), or another one, dated April 2, 1953 (published in *CW*, Vol. XIII, 699–700). Cf. also Bishop Nikolai’s letter to Božo Marković, President of the SNO in Canada, written on June 25, 1955, preserved in Canadian Archives, in Pero Bulat papers (Bulat, Pero, MG 30, D 325), MG30–D325, Volume 9, File 68. Cf. also Velibor Džomić, *Serbian Church, Ljotić and Ljotičians* (Belgrade — Podgorica: Štampar Makarije — Oktoih, 2009), 254.

<sup>64</sup> In this sermon, Ljotić is described as a “politician with a cross,” a “Christian statesman” and so on — only in superlatives. Although this sermon was published after some of the members of this movement wrote it “by remembrance,” a few years after Ljotić’s burial, it is regarded as an authentic sermon in some circles nowadays. This sermon, attributed to Velimirovich, is published in Boško N. Kostić, *For the History of Our Days* (Lille: Jean Lausier, 1949), 250–256. For the critical remarks regarding the authenticity of this sermon, cf. Bishop Atanasije Jevtić, ed., *Saint Bishop Nikolai of Ochrid and Žiča* (Kraljevo: Diocese of Žiča, 2003), 558; cf. also Džomić, *Serbian Church, Ljotić and Ljotičians*, 235ff. Additionally, there is also a poem, which is allegedly written by Velimirovich, in honor of Ljotić (cf. Kostić, *For the History of Our Days*, 244–246), as well as several other Ljotičian pieces attributed to Velimirovich.

<sup>65</sup> Before that, Yugoslavian Communist propaganda already worked a lot on presenting Velimirovich as a trai-

nationalists and chauvinists also found this sermon very interesting, and very often referred to it in order to prove that Velimirovich was a promoter of their ideas and visions.<sup>66</sup>

To conclude, as one can see, there were pseudepigrapha attributed to Velimirovich in the past, even during his lifetime.<sup>67</sup> But what about Velimirovich's Dachau writings and sermons, i.e. the book published in 1985, almost 30 years after Velimirovich's death?

### ***The Words to Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* attributed to Bishop Nicholai: some critical remarks**

According to the explanation of the editor of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, Velimirovich wrote these homilies and treatises during his imprisonment in Dachau. He used the simplest paper as a material for writing.<sup>68</sup> Somehow he brought those papers with him when he left Dachau, and it is not clear how and who had found them. There are claims that in Velimirovich's handwriting on the manuscript of this work the following warning was written: "It is not for publishing!"<sup>69</sup> In literature, there are claims that the publication of this book is connected with the Serbian émigré group from Linz, where Serbian émigrés from circles of ZBOR were active. As it is mentioned above, the book had many editions after the Himmelsthür edition, and some of these editions are different — the material is again edited for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and maybe even some more editions, some chapters are omitted,<sup>70</sup> and there were maybe some other interventions in the text.

However, in a foreword to the original publication of that book, it is written that the author, Bishop Nicholai, in order to hide the manuscript from Nazis, never put the word "Germany" and word "Germans" [Serbian: Немачка, Немци] in the text, but in-

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tor and as a Quisling, from the end of WWII onwards. Starting from the summer of 1945, the name of Bishop Nicholai was mentioned in Yugoslavian courts, in trials to political and ideological enemies of the newly established regime (cf. *The Trial to the Members of the Political and Military Leadership of Draža Mihailović's Organization* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1945), 246, 248). Serbian Orthodox priests were also involved in this state propaganda directed against Velimirovich and other opponents of the communist regime; cf. for instance, "The 'People's Church' in Yugoslavia," *The Church Times*, Vol. CXXXII, No. 4,494 (March 25, 1949): [1]. This process resulted in the official condemnation of Bishop Nicholai — as a traitor and a Nazi collaborator who ran away from Yugoslavia before liberation and later joined imperialistic U.S. regime — and the official deprivation of his Yugoslavian citizenship: cf. Dimšo Perić, "Deprivation of the Citizenship of Bishop Nicholai," *The Christian Thought*, Vol. III, No. 1–3 (1995): 14–15; cf. also Miloje Ž. Nikolić, "Deprivation of Citizenship of Bishop Nicholai (Velimirovich) of Žiča," *Museum: The Annual of the National Museum in Šabac*, Vol. 15 (2014): 297–302.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Kostić, *For the History of Our Days*, 250ff; cf. also Božidar Purić, *Biography of Boža Ranković: Contribution to the History of Serbian Emigration in North America* (Munich: Iskra, 1963), 213; cf. also Džomić, *Serbian Church, Ljotić and Ljotićians*, 236–244.

<sup>67</sup> It is interesting to note that Milan Jovanović Stoimirović (1898–1966) suggests that apocryphal Velimirovich's sermons may have existed even before WWII — cf. Milan Jovanović Stoimirović, *Portraits According to Living Models*, edited by Stojan Trečakov and Vladimir Šovljanski (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 1998), 59.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Trifunović, "Instead of a Foreword," 5–7 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 183–185].

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Jevtić, ed., *Saint Bishop Nicholai*, 564–565; "Nicholai Velimirovich (Lelić, January 5, 1881 — Pennsylvania, March 18, 1956)."

<sup>70</sup> As it is noted above, the 1<sup>st</sup> edition from 1985 contains 82 homilies/chapters, and another edition from 2000 contains 76 homilies/chapters.

stead just acronyms — G. [H.].<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, there is *no mention* of Germany throughout the whole book, and there are just *two* mentions of Germans (in homilies 1 and 4). So we are wondering what *acronyms* for what *words* are mentioned in the foreword.

In the same foreword, it is written that Bishop Nicholai wrote these reflections during his imprisonment in the Dachau concentration camp. On the other hand, according to the witness of the text, homilies 1, 6, 18, 19, 29, 36, 44, 61, 64, 69, etc. were all written after WWII, because in those homilies the past *two world wars* are mentioned. In some homilies from the book, there are mentions of a *future* world war, namely the *Third* World War. According to this witness, the text (or at least some portions of the text) was written after WWII. Italics in paragraphs quoted below, in our translation, are ours:

“The two terrible warnings of God to the present generation are the last two World Wars in the time span of twenty years. Let the Christian people kneel before the offended Christ and return to Him the power, honor, glory, and respect which belongs to Him alone. So you do the same, Orthodox brothers, if you want to save yourself from the *third* World War, which is more terrible than *both of the past*.”<sup>72</sup>

[Serbian original: Две страшне опомене Божје садашњем поколењу то су два последња Светска рата у размаку од двадесет година. Нека хришћански народи клекну пред увређеним Христом и поврате му ону власт, част, славу и пошту која једино Њему припада. Тако чините и ви, браћо православна, ако хоћете да се сачувате од трећег Светског рата страшнијег од оба прошла.]

“Evil in the heart and a lie on the tongue, my brothers, that has become the fate of humanity in our time. Evil and lies are the two arsonists who made the fire of the whole world in the *last two* World Wars. Evil and lies — those two witches of the world, you know, will work incessantly to create the *third world fire*, more terrible than the *two earlier ones*.

Fight, brethren, against malice and lies.

Fight against the malice in your heart and the lies on your tongue to prevent *a new* World War between nations.”<sup>73</sup>

[Serbian original: Злоба у срцу и лаж на језику, браћо моја, то је постало коб човечанства у наше време. Злоба и лаж то су две паликуће које су произвеле пожар целог света у прошла два Светска рата. Злоба и лаж — те две вештице света, знајте, радиће несустало да створе и трећи светски пожар, страшнији од она два ранија.

Ратујте, браћо, против злобе и лажи.

Ратујте против злобе у срцу своме и лажи на језику своме да би спречили нови Светски рат међу народима.]

In homilies 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 49, etc. there is a mention of a single past world war (or only of an *European* war — homily 55) — which could be understood as mention of the

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Trifunović, “Instead of a Foreword,” 5, 7 — on p. 7 there is an unreadable facsimile, described by the mentioned explanation [cf. also *CW*, Vol. XIII, 183, 185].

<sup>72</sup> Sermon 18 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 44 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 222].

<sup>73</sup> Sermon 19 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 46 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 224].

only one world war, so probably the text of these homilies (or at least some portions of the text) could be written in period after WWI and before WWII:

“Do you understand now, my brothers, what I am telling you? I am telling about why the *last* world war was inevitable and why *another*, even more difficult one, will come into the world if the world does not obey the truth.”<sup>74</sup>

[Serbian original: Разумете ли сад, браћо моја, о чему вам говорим? Говорим о томе зашто је неминован био прошли светски рат и зашто ће још један, и тежи, доћи на свет ако се свет не покори истини.]

On the other hand, interestingly, in the homilies of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, a *present* war is not directly mentioned; yet it appears that some of the homilies were probably written during WWII. Or at the very beginning of WWII, like homily 52 — which is likely echoing 1940–1941 politics, and also homily 54, etc.

Besides that, it looks like some of these homilies were composed of texts and motifs taken from Velimirovich's sermons or works already published before WWII, reworked and rendered, adopted in a certain way (for instance, homilies 4, 5, 7, 8, etc.). For example, a motif which is found in a sermon which Velimirovich preached in Šilopaj in 1939 — regarding the twenty years during which God has been suffering all sorts of insults and waiting for our improvement<sup>75</sup> — is repeated at several places in the *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* (cf. homilies 1, 5, 61, etc.).

But there are interesting changes and shifts in motifs and ideas found in this work if we compare it to other Velimirovich's works, published during his lifetime.

Harsh criticism of the Yugoslavian idea is something that could not be found in Velimirovich's original works. However, in the book published in 1985, there are many bitter words towards Yugoslavia and Yugoslavism (cf. homilies 3, 4, 10, etc.). On the contrary, Velimirovich was not an opponent of Yugoslavia — but rather its supporter. Starting in his early years, he was a supporter of the Yugoslavian idea, and his contribution and involvement in uniting Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian people in one state in the 1910s were huge. He also offered theological and historical arguments to support the new Yugoslavian Kingdom in Eastern Europe, which is evident in his literal activity of the time. Moreover, his vision of accord of different nations in the Yugoslavian state was shaped by his greater vision of panslavism and furthermore by his vision of pan-human fraternity,<sup>76</sup> which he repeatedly underlined during his lifetime. But in his sermons, published in 1985, there are words as such:

“Yugoslavia meant defiance of Christ, defiance of Saint Sava, defiance of Serbdoom, defiance of the Serbian people's past, defiance of the people's wisdom, and the people's honesty, defiance of

<sup>74</sup> Sermon 15 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 38 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 216].

<sup>75</sup> Cf. “Serbian People, Do Not be Afraid, Just Improve Yourself!,” *The Slovenian*, Vol. LXVIII, No. 119a (May 28, 1940): 4.

<sup>76</sup> He was not only a supporter of the Yugoslavian idea, but also a prominent leader in tracing pathways to a wider, Balkan pan(Yugo)–slavism, which is obvious, for instance, in his engagement towards improving Yugoslavian–Bulgarian relations: cf., for example, Janković, *Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich*, 494–497.

each people's sanctuary — defiance and only defiance. Because of that, we had a country without Christ's blessing, freedom without joy, war without struggle, collapse without glory, suffering without example."<sup>77</sup>

[Serbian original: Југославија је значила пркос Христу, пркос Светом Сави, пркос Српству, пркос српској народној прошлости, пркос народној мудрости, и народном поштењу, пркос свакој народној светињи — пркос и само пркос. Због тога смо имали државу без Христовог благослова, слободу без радости, рат без борбе, пропаст без славе, страдање без примера.]

It is not clear how these viewpoints, regarding the damned Yugoslavian state, could be incorporated in Velimirovich's stances witnessed in his works and more generally in his life and thought, especially in the context of his closeness with, for instance, Yugoslavian King Alexander Karađorđević (1888–1934),<sup>78</sup> or his closeness with prominent Yugoslavian public figures of that time, including Croatian, and especially Slovenian authors, scholars, politicians, etc.

Obscurities are emerging one after another. There are more inconsistencies and controversies between Velimirovich's works and the book from 1985. For instance, in homily 11 a monument at Avala, near Belgrade, built by King Alexander (finished after his death, in 1938), constructed and designed by Velimirovich's acquaintance and maybe even friend Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962), is criticized as "a pharaonic monument,"<sup>79</sup> but it seems Velimirovich actually appreciated this monument.<sup>80</sup> In homily 35 there is criticism directed against symbolism<sup>81</sup> — but Velimirovich wrote a book on symbolism, praising its positive values, and published this book before and again after WWII.<sup>82</sup> And so on.

Velimirovich was influenced by Russian culture, and he had many close ties with the Russian Orthodoxy and Russian Orthodox churchmen. On the other hand, while holding a benevolent and friendly attitude towards Russians and Russia, Velimirovich has a critical

<sup>77</sup> Sermon 3 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 14 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 192]. One can imagine how these words were received in the Yugoslavian society of that time, starting from the ruling structures and the officials of then the single existing Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

<sup>78</sup> Starting from the very making of Yugoslavia, Velimirovich was involved in the project of the Yugoslavian state; however, there is a question of the actual extent of Velimirovich's influence and his contribution: cf. Christian Axboe Nielsen, *Making Yugoslavs: Identity in King Aleksandar's Yugoslavia* (Toronto — Buffalo — London: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 22.

<sup>79</sup> Sermon 11 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 29 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 207].

<sup>80</sup> Cf. "American Yugoslavs Vow Allegiance to Yugoslavia and King Peter II," *Belgrade Communal Newspaper*, Vol. LV, No. 4–6 (April–June 1937): 317–319: 317; cf. also Janković, *Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich*, 589–591 (for Velimirovich's sermon from 1941, referring to this monument), etc.

<sup>81</sup> Sermon 35 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 77 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 255].

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Nikolai D. Velimirovich, *The Universe as Symbols and Signs: An Essay on Mysticism in the Eastern Church* (Libertyville, IL: Serbian St. Sava Monastery, 1950). The previous version of this publication appeared earlier in Serbian, in 1932 (cf. Nikolai Velimirovich, *Symbols and Signs* (Bitolj: Pobeda, 1932) [= *CW*, Vol. V, 323–365]).

For an interesting appreciation of Velimirovich's concept of symbolism, cf. Canon Edward N. West, *Outward Signs: The Language of Christian Symbolism* (New York: Walker and Company, 1989), 167–172 [chapter "Symbolism in a Life: Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich"].

attitude towards the history and culture of the Russian people, which he observed through a kind of theological prism, that is, through his characteristic critical and eschatological perception of historical phenomena and events.<sup>83</sup> And this is especially obvious in his criticism of the Soviet regime, Russian Communism, etc.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the meaning of the following passage, allegedly written during WWII — while Nazi and Soviet armies were fighting on the Eastern front and Russia was ruled by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in a Stalinist variant, is not quite clear:

“Look at the Russian land. The most spacious country of all countries in the world. And it is the land of meek people. The largest country in our century is *owned by the meekest people* in the world. Here is an obvious proof that the word of Christ is true; Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. You indeed do not need a clearer and more real proof than *Orthodox Russia* and Orthodox Russians. Countless kidnappers and thugs held that vast land, which was now inherited by the *meek Russians*.”<sup>85</sup>

[Serbian original: Погледајте руску земљу. Најпространија земља од свих земаља у свету. И то је земља једнога кроткога народа. Највећу земљу у нашем веку поседује најкроткији народ у свету. Ето вам очигледног доказа, да је истинита реч Христова; благо кротким, јер ће они наследили земљу. Заиста не треба вам јаснији и стварнији доказ од православне Русије и православних Руса. Безбројни отмичари и насилници држали су ту пространу земљу, коју су сад наследили кротки Руси.]

Even stranger are the claims regarding regaining freedom, i.e. liberation, and regarding regaining the Serbian statehood. It is not quite clear what the following words are referring to, especially if one imagines that they were written during WWII, in Dachau 1944/5:

“Our country has collapsed — we say: Glory to You and thank You God! The country was won — we say: Glory to You again and thank You God! ...

Here we have our country again! Here is our golden freedom again! Glory to You and praise, Lord, for Your gift, for Your prayer, and for Your unspeakable love for humanity. But, let me blow a terrible word in your ears from this holy and terrible place: if we are as naughty and apostate as we were again, God will strike both the state and the people, and both will perish forever. And we will be laughed at, and a story and a warning to others.”<sup>86</sup>

[Serbian original: Пропала нам је држава — кажемо: слава ти и хвала Боже! Добијена је држава — кажемо: опет слава ти и хвала Боже!...

Ево нам опет наше државе! Ево нам опет златне слободе! Слава Ти и хвала Господе, на Твоме дару, на молитви Твојој и на неисказаном човекољубљу Твоме. Но, дозволите да вам затрубим у уши једну страшну реч са овог светог и страшног места: ако опет будемо

<sup>83</sup> See, for instance, his critical reflections on events from Russian history, found in his book *The War and the Bible* from 1931: cf. Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich, *The War and the Bible* (Kragujevac: PNHZ, 1931) = *CW*, Vol. V, 177–251: 224, 229, etc.

<sup>84</sup> Cf., for instance, Velimirovich's numerous insights on the tragedy of Russia under Communism, published in his *Missionary Letters* from 1933–1934, collected in *CW*, Vol. VIII, 15–297 (esp. letters 25, 70, 152, 219, 265, etc.).

<sup>85</sup> Sermon 6 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 19 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 197].

<sup>86</sup> Sermon 2 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 12 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 190].

неваљали и богоотпадни као што смо били, удариће Бог и по држави и по народу, па ће обоје пропасти заувек. И бићемо подсмех, и прича и опомена осталима.]

There are more similar paragraphs:

“But this time, too, the grace of God overcame all human evil, even the human reason. When every Serbian heart cried, God extended His hand to the drowning man. When all the people looked at the living Lord, whispering with bloody hearts to Him: We do not hope for human help, but we do hope for Your mercy and wait for salvation from You (evening prayer), then the Lord *delivered us*, and *cleansed our land from Germans*, he *restored our freedom and gave us the country*. Glory and praise to You, gentle Lord.”<sup>87</sup>

[Serbian original: Но, и овога пута милост Божја превазишла је сву злобу људску, чак и разум људски. Кад је проплакало свако срце српско, Бог је пружио руку своју даљенику. Кад је сав народ упро поглед у живог Господа шапћући му крвава срца: Не надамо се у помоћ људску, него се надамо у твоју милост и чекамо спасење од Тебе (молитва на вечерњу), онда нас је Господ избавио, и очистио земљу нашу од Немаца, повратио нам је слободу и даровао државу. Слава Ти и хвала, Господе благи.]

“For insults with thoughts and words and deeds, for countless unheard-of insults to His Majesty the King over kings, the Lord God, for full 20 years, we were sentenced to death. The sentence began to be carried out. And every eighth Serb was killed. Then the death penalty was reduced, and we were sentenced to eternal imprisonment, to eternal slavery in the shackles of the Germans. But, ... All-Merciful Lord mitigated the punishment again, so He reduced eternal imprisonment to *two years in imprisonment*. In twenty years of his evil life, the Serbian people received only *two years in imprisonment*. Is not that God's grace?”<sup>88</sup>

[Serbian original: За увреде мислима и речима и делима, за безбројне нечувене увреде Његовог Величанства Цара над царевима, Господа Бога, у току пуних 20 година, били смо осуђени на смрт. Осуда је почела да се извршује. И убијен је сваки осми Србин. Онда је смртна казна ублажена, те смо осуђени на вечиту робију, на вечито робовање у оковима Немаца. Али, ... Свемилостиви [је] поново ублажио казну, па је вечито робијање свео на две године робије. За двадесет година свога злотворнога живота добио је народ српски свега две године робије. Зар то није боговска милост?]

“Let the Serbian land rejoice! God had mercy on her again. He hit her first, and then pardoned her.”<sup>89</sup>

[Serbian original: Нек се радује земља српска. Бог ју је опет помиловао. Најпре ју је ударио, па онда помиловао.]

“Did not we look at each other helplessly ... and cried out to Him: Lord, save us, we perish! ... And He rose up, and threatened to a wicked storm, and behold, there was a great silence. ...

... Oh, my brothers, do not repeat *our failure and our fall from that time between the two great wars*, and do not let fate throw us again under the grindstone of all the horrors of the earth and

<sup>87</sup> Sermon 3 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 14 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 192].

<sup>88</sup> Sermon 1 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 9 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 187].

<sup>89</sup> Sermon 9 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 25 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 203].

the underworld, under the grindstone even sharper and toothier than the one under which we, the wounded, *had just pulled out of*.<sup>90</sup>

[Serbian original: Зар нисмо беспомоћно гледали један у другога ... и к Њему завапили: Господе, спасавај, изгибосмо! ... И Он се дигао, и запретио опакој бури, и ево настала је велика тишина. ...

... Ај, браћо моја, немојте да поновимо свој неуспех и свој пад из оног времена између два велика рата, те да нас судба опет не баца под жрвањ свих грозота земних и подземних, под жрвањ још оштрији и зубатији него онај испод кога смо се рањави тек извукли.]

Some of the sermons from the book could easily fit the context of preaching, addressing congregation (cf. homilies 2, 7, 8, 11, 14, 41, etc.). A number of sermons from the book opens with a quotation from the Old Testament prophets (cf. homilies 3, 4, 5, 12, etc.). Some of them are beginning with a verse from the Gospel, or Apostolos, in a manner of a liturgical homily (cf. homilies 6, 7, 13, 15, 39, 40, etc.). Sermon 18 looks like a sermon addressed to the congregation on the feast of Epiphany — it begins with a traditional Serbian Epiphany festal greeting.<sup>91</sup> Sermon 2, quoted at the beginning of the present article, is addressed to a gathering of the faithful. Sermon 37 begins: “Today we hold a memorial service for the dead.”<sup>92</sup>

However, as it is shown above, Velimirovich was clear: at Dachau, he could not minister even to his own people.<sup>93</sup> He was not allowed even to give the last Communion to the men sentenced to death.<sup>94</sup> Although there was a kind of a chapel for religious services at the Dachau concentration camp during WWII, Orthodox clergy was not welcomed there, as it is witnessed by a survived prisoner of “Priesterblock,”<sup>95</sup> so it would be hardly imaginable that Velimirovich was ministering at this chapel. Additionally, Velimirovich mentioned that he and Patriarch Gavrilo were not allowed to walk and talk to other people,<sup>96</sup> so it is questionable to whom he would have preached in Dachau?

A kind of an indirect witness that Velimirovich was not ministering at Dachau may be recorded in the testimony of pastor Martin Niemöller. Namely, Niemöller was imprisoned in the same barrack with Bishop Nicholai and Patriarch Gavrilo, i.e. in the “Ehrenbunker,” together with some other Church dignitaries. On December 24, 1944, i.e. on Christmas Eve, six prisoners of “Ehrenbunker,” coming from different counties and belonging to different creeds, had an unusual plea for the German pastor. Among these six

<sup>90</sup> Sermon 10 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 27 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 205].

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 43 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 221]. If, however, this is a sermon held at the feast of Epiphany in Dachau, a question arises: when? In 1944 or in 1945?

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 81 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 259].

<sup>93</sup> Cf. “Letter from John L. Baldwin to Edward N. West, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1945,” etc.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Waterhouse, “Serb–American Group Hears Visiting Bishop,” 15.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Đorđević, “The Priests in the Concentration Camp Dachau,” 67.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Waterhouse, “Serb–American Group Hears Visiting Bishop,” 15. That could be a reason why Velimirovich could see Martin Niemöller, a hero of faith and hero of anti–Nazi resistance, also a prominent prisoner of Dachau, but never could meet him or talk to him (cf. Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovic*, 66).

prisoners, there were two Orthodox Christians: “Dr. Popavich,”<sup>97</sup> and also “little Macedonian journalist” (the name is slipped), so far unknown person whose description in Niemöller’s recollections is the same as in the recollections of Velimirovich.<sup>98</sup> And they asked Niemöller, through the words of their Duch inmate: “We... have had for such a long time no divine service that we have an urgent wish that we might have in common with you this night... Holy Supper — Communion.” Niemöller accepted this challenging wish, and on that Christmas night, they were gathered and secretly had an inter-communion service.<sup>99</sup> It is interesting to note that two Orthodox Christians from the “Ehrenbunker” of Dachau, faced with death, went to the Lutheran pastor to ask him for a communion, since they have had no divine service “for *such a long time*.”<sup>100</sup> This happened three months after Velimirovich’s arrival to Dachau. It looks like he was not able to minister to them.

Nevertheless, a number of sermons attributed to Velimirovich, allegedly composed in Dachau, suggest that he preached, and he was ministering there. For sure, a kind of mystical explanation is always possible. A few earlier researchers already offered different explanations regarding certain controversial aspects of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* — in a sense that Velimirovich, sitting in a cell in Dachau, wrote down his prophetic visions, etc. But there are more controversies in this book.

Word “philosophy” is mentioned in this book 39 times. *Every time in a negative context*. In the book, there is no single appreciation of philosophy. In sermon 53, there is a rejection of *the whole* European and American philosophy<sup>101</sup> — although Velimirovich, who earned two doctoral degrees at the University of Berne (and also was awarded two honorary doctoral degrees — at the University of Glasgow and the University of Columbia),<sup>102</sup> was familiar both with history of philosophy and with contemporary philosophy, and even praised both past and contemporary philosophers in his writings.

In several other sermons there is a rejection of the whole culture — which is interesting if it’s coming from the man who spoke five or more languages fluently. However, the word “culture” is repeated in a negative context more than 110 times in the book. With *no*

<sup>97</sup> This is probably Dr. Vladeta Popović (1894–1951), professor at the University of Belgrade, a survived Dachau prisoner.

<sup>98</sup> Velimirovich also mentioned his friend at Dachau, “a Macedonian journalist” who was imprisoned at the same barack with Niemöller, i.e. barack in which Velimirovich and Dožić were imprisoned: cf. Velimirovich, “Patriarch Gavriilo,” 3.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. “Address by Pastor Martin Niemoeller, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Dayton, Ohio. Tuesday, February 4, 1947. 8:00 P.M.,” 1–26: 18–22, WCC Archives, Geneva. Box 42.0059. WCC General Secretariat : General Correspondence. Near East Christian Council — Niemöller, Martin, 1914–1964, File 4.

<sup>100</sup> A Duch prisoner, named Dr. Van Dyck, mentioned that he “have never had a service for four years” — cf. “Address by Pastor Martin Niemoeller,” 19.

<sup>101</sup> Sermon 53 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 114 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 292].

<sup>102</sup> Additionally, a doctoral degree is mentioned 4 times in the book — every time in a negative context (cf. homilies 44, 48, 74).

*single one* positive or at least neutral meaning — strictly and clearly as “a golden calf,”<sup>103</sup> as a Satanic idol of the contemporary world,<sup>104</sup> etc.

One could note this kind of critical vision of culture is somehow in accordance with Velimirovich's attitudes found in his earlier works. However, there is an important difference. Velimirovich has indeed developed a critique of culture, and also pointed to its negative aspects — to culture as a contemporary idol, for instance in his work *The War and the Bible*.<sup>105</sup> But that should be understood in a proper context, since he underlined in the same book that culture is inspired by God,<sup>106</sup> and the European culture is, in its very basis, fundamentally *Christian*.<sup>107</sup> It would be very strange if the same author wrote such bitter words on culture recorded in the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*. Especially if we know that Velimirovich spent a lot of time and invested huge efforts in order to publish books dedicated to the Christian approach to cultural problems of the contemporary world during the last years of his life, as it is shown in his correspondence regarding the publishing institution “Svečanik,” partially published in his *Collected Works*.<sup>108</sup> Bishop Nikolai even wrote forewords to such books: for instance, a foreword to the monograph on Ethics written by a philosopher, jurist, and historian of culture Evgeny Vasilyevich Spektorsky (1875–1951),<sup>109</sup> or a foreword to the book dedicated to the problems of the contemporary culture, written by a philosopher Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin (1883–1954) and philosopher Boris Petrovich Vysheslavtsev (1877–1954).<sup>110</sup> These engagements of Velimirovich are simply not corresponding to suggestions which are found in the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*. In the mentioned book, there is a rejection of the whole culture, there is a harsh critique towards educated and cultural people, and there is also a kind of glorification of the simple peasant's life as a valuable model for Christians. However, in another work, entitled *The Harvests of the Lord*, published in 1952,<sup>111</sup> Velim-

**103** Sermon 64 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 136 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 314].

**104** Sermon 59 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 125 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 303].

**105** Cf. Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, *The War and the Bible* (Kragujevac: PNHZ, 1931) = *CW*, Vol. V, 177–251.

**106** Cf. *CW*, Vol. V, 235–236.

**107** Cf. *CW*, Vol. V, 227. However, improper understanding of Velimirovich's critical stances towards contemporary culture — primarily directed towards the *materialistic culture* and the *culture of war* — was later interpreted as a denial of the culture itself, and as a suggestion of the simple medieval peasant's life as a kind of proper model. This also may be the reason why in Serbia nowadays Velimirovich is sometimes rather seen as a peasant with frula, looking after his sheep in Serbian mountains, than the European scholar with double doctorate — an erudite and polyglot.

**108** Cf. *CW*, Vol. XIII, 697ff.

**109** Cf. Bishop Nikolai [Velimirovich], “Evgeny Vasilyevich Spektorsky,” in E. V. Spektorsky, *The Christian Ethics* (München: Dr. Peter Belej, 1953), 7–9 (= *CW*, Vol. X, 95–96).

**110** Bishop Nikolai [Velimirovich], “A Foreword,” in [B. P. Vysheslavtsev and I. A. Ilyin], *Cultural People on Cultural Problems* (München: Logos, 1955), 7–9 (= *CW*, Vol. X, 91–92).

**111** Cf. Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, *The Lord's Harvests* (München: Logos, 1952); 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of this book is published in 1953, and it is the version which later was included in the *Collected Works* (cf. *CW*, Vol. XII, 205–244)].

irovich stated that God is welcoming the whole of humanity — peasants and shepherds, as well as educated and literary people of high culture.<sup>112</sup>

Author of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* harshly criticized contemporary science — although Velimirovich, for instance, was in a way familiar with contemporary science,<sup>113</sup> and praised, for example, great American Serbian inventors and scientists, like Mihajlo Idvorski Pupin (1858–1935) and Nikola Tesla (1856–1943), with deep respect towards their contribution. As well as for the science, which is simply rejected, in the book *Words to the Serbian People* similar can be applied for the treatment of contemporary civilization in general — politics, economy, literature, etc. — everything is subject to harsh criticism.

A question of attitudes towards Jewish people in this book is enigmatic. It appears that the author is very concerned regarding Jews, since the words “Jews” and other terms for Jewish people are repeated more than 140 times in the book. Again, it seems some portions of the text regarding Jews were taken from previous works of Bishop Nicholai and prefabricated. For example, homily 33 — which is in its first half dedicated to the topic of *Jewish people as the messianic people*. And so on. However, topics are different, and the context of homilies is different.

But there is one unique chapter. In homily 77 — in which Jews are harshly criticized as being the creators of all world problems<sup>114</sup> and in which it is stated that they are in the service of the devil — the language unusual for Velimirovich is used. Namely, there are different words for Jewish people in the Serbian language. Jews as a nation and as followers of Judaism are called *Jevreji* (Jews), *Judeji*, *Judejci* (Judaicans), *Judaisti* (Judaists), then there is an archaic and somehow pejorative form *Čivuti*, and a very rare and a very pejorative (more characteristic for Croatian language, becoming very pejorative especially during the WWII), word *Židovi*, and the word *Židi*. The last two words were often used in pro-Nazi Serbian and Croatian propaganda during WWII. So, only in an anti-Semitic homily 77, for referring to the Jewish people word *Židovi* was used 18 times, and the word *Židi* was used 2 times.<sup>115</sup> In

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Velimirovich, *The Harvests of the Lord* = *CW*, Vol. XII, 233.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich, *The Science on the Law: Nomology* (Kragujevac, 1940) = *CW*, Vol. V, 253–321: 321.

<sup>114</sup> It is interesting to note how standpoints from this chapter — that Jews invented Communism, Socialism, Capitalism, World Revolution, Atheism, etc. — are in accordance with claims from Nazi WWII propaganda and its claims regarding a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. On the other hand, it is interesting to note how this chapter is in accordance — both in standpoints and also in a vocabulary — with certain claims from pro-Nazi Croatian press from WWII (cf., for instance, *This is Artukovic* (J.W. Campbell, 1958), 14), or to pro-Nazi Serbian propaganda, namely with the texts written by Serbian Quisling WWII propagandists such as Lazar Prokić (1911–?), Milorad Mojić (1895–1944), etc. Interestingly, in the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, allegedly written in the Dachau concentration camp, there are such bitter words regarding Jewish people being the creators of all the world problems, while there is not a single word on the wickedness of the Nazis. This is somehow a very significant detail. The conclusion which was made when scholars took this book as an authentic work was very logical: Velimirovich must have been a radical anti-Semite, and also an admirer of Hitler's politics.

<sup>115</sup> Sermon 77 — cf. Velimirovich, *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, 161–162 [= *CW*, Vol. XIII, 339–340].

the whole book, these two words were never used again. And not just in the whole book. In Velimirovich's works, published during his lifetime, there is practically no use of these words, which were not included in his vocabulary. Although he was criticizing Jews and Judaism, he had never used the words *Židovi* / *Židi*.<sup>116</sup>

To resume: in homily 77, the word *Židovi* (and its derivatives) occurs 18 times; in the whole opus of Velimirovich, it occurs only once, which is somehow questionable (plus twice in another spurious work, published at the same time as the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*). Except in the homily 77, where it occurs twice, the word *Židi* in other works of Velimirovich is — as it seems — not attested at all.<sup>117</sup>

Interestingly, what we found here, in the most quoted passage of Velimirovich, included in many scholarly works as an example of rude anti-Semitism, a passage which made Velimirovich world widely infamous, is actually probably a *happax* — it does not occur anywhere else in the corpus of Velimirovich's works, but only in this book.<sup>118</sup>

However, after the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* has been published, Velimirovich became known as an anti-Semite, and his imprisonment at the Dachau concentration camp was regarded as if he was enjoying the hospitality of SS officers there, eating tasty food in their kitchen, and somewhat as if he stayed in a tourist resort.<sup>119</sup> It

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**116** In Velimirovich *Collected Works* the word “*Židovi*” (but not the word “*Židi*”) appears at one more place — in a hagiography of St. Apostle Thomas, where it occurs twice in the introductory paragraph (cf. *CW*, Vol. XIII, 172). Interestingly, this hagiography was not published before 1985; in a note under the text, there is information that the publisher holds the manuscript. So we can guess that mentioned manuscript is maybe of the same origin as the manuscript of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*.

There is one more place where the word “*Židovi*” occurs: in Velimirovich's sermon on Good Friday, published in 1936 in a supplement to the Serbian Orthodox journal named *Missionary*, i.e. in the journal *The God's Husbandry* (the word “*Židovi*” occurs once here: cf. Bishop Nicholai [Velimirovich], “Sermons for the Holy Week,” *The God's Husbandry*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (On Easter, 1936) [in Serbian: Еп. Николај [Велимировић], „Беседе уз Велику Недељу“, Нива Божија: додаток Мисионару, година 2, број 2 (О Васкрсу 1936)]: 2–8: 7 [= *CW*, Vol. IX, 208–221: 219]). Here it should be mentioned that the editor of this journal was Radoje (later Jakov) Arsović (1893/4–1946), who at that time wrote several anti-Semitic articles, publishing them anonymously, or signed just by acronyms. Certain Arsović's writings are later attributed to Velimirovich, although they were originally published without the signature of the author, or signed by Arsović's initials — and a few of these Arsović's articles are incorporated in Velimirovich's *Collected Works*.

The word “*Židi*,” however, is not attested in Velimirovich's corpus at all — except in chapter 77 of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, with 2 occurrences.

**117** To keep ourselves from drawing conclusions — maybe this word is used somewhere else, but we were not able to locate it.

**118** The mentioned chapter, as well as some other passages, is not included in shorter editions of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*. Probably that was a solution for the problem of anti-Semitism, noted by editors of these publications.

On the other hand, several authors offered an interpretation of the homily 77 (and also some other passages of the book), introducing it as a rendering of the biblical anti-Semitism, and so on. These attempts only raised controversy and added some oil to the fire of discussion on Velimirovich's anti-Semitism, so nowadays he is widely known as an anti-Semite. Chapter 77 of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* was the crucial argument in reshaping the public image of Velimirovich.

**119** Following a campaign in Yugoslavian and Croatian press, a dermatologist Philip J. Cohen further developed and popularized ideas on Velimirovich as an anti-Semite, in a somehow strange manner — without referring to

was an interesting and strange shift in the public image of Bishop Nikolai.<sup>120</sup> And it was a shift that came through an aggressive campaign in the Yugoslavian press, by constantly quoting these words attributed to Velimirovich, by ignoring his other works, and also by ignoring the facts from his life. That is how a former prisoner of Nazis, an inmate of the Dachau concentration camp, became a Nazi collaborator. So after 1985, a “vigorous opponent of Nazism”<sup>121</sup> became known as an anti-Semite and also a pro-Nazi author.<sup>122</sup> According to some claims found in literature, the Dachau concentration camp played an important role

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Bishop Nikolai's original works, or simply ignoring any fact which could jeopardize his construct (cf., for instance, Philip J. Cohen, *Serbian Anti-Semitism and Exploitation of the Holocaust as Propaganda* (Philip J. Cohen, 1992), 3–4). Without referring to any historical source, Cohen popularized the claim that Velimirovich in the Dachau concentration camp “lived in a special section in private quarters, dined on the same food as the German officers, and made excursions into town under German escort” (*ibid.*). From Dachau Bishop Nikolai “endorsed Holocaust” (cf. *ibid.*). Without critical reconsideration of Velimirovich's opus, Cohen repeated such claims (cf. Philip J. Cohen, *Desecrating the Holocaust: Serbia's Exploitation of the Holocaust as Propaganda* (Philip J. Cohen, 1993)), and finally, they became widely known after an academic publisher launched his book in which he argued on Velimirovich's anti-Semitism (cf. Philip J. Cohen, *Serbia's Secret War: Propaganda and the Deceit of History*, Eastern European studies (College Station, Tex.), no. 2 (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1996), 59, 82–83). Although scholars criticized Cohen for his uncritical approach and quasi-historical writing (cf., for instance, Dennis Reinhartz, “Serbia's Secret War: Propaganda and the Deceit of History, Philip J. Cohen (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), xxvi + 235 pp.,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Volume 14, Issue 2 (Fall 2000): 300–302, <https://doi.org/10.1093/hgs/14.2.300>; Marko Zivkovic, “The Wish to be a Jew: The Power of the Jewish Trope in the Yugoslav Conflict,” *Cahiers de l'URMIS*, No. 6 [Multiculturalisme: politiques publiques et usages de l'ethnicité] (mars 2000): 69–84: 76–76, <https://doi.org/10.4000/urmis.323>; cf. also David Bruce MacDonald, *Balkan Holocausts?: Serbian and Croatian Victim-Centered Propaganda and the War in Yugoslavia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 138, 266, etc., <https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526137258.00010>), his presentation influenced later studies which dealt with Velimirovich's life and work.

**120** Another characterization of Bishop Nikolai as an anti-Semitic thinker — again in a way lacking in critical approach, mostly based on the uncritical reading of spurious Velimirovich's works, initially more limited to the theological and not racial anti-Semitism — came from European researchers. One of the initial studies which deals with Velimirovich's anti-Semitism — limited to the theological meaning of this term — is a remarkable study on Velimirovich, actually a Ph.D. thesis of R. C. Grill, defended in Rome in November 1992 (cf. Rudolf-Chrysostomus Grill, “Eine heilige Kirche in einem heiligen Europa, in der Sicht der Serbisch-Orthodoxen Bischof Nikolaj Velimirovic (1880–1956)” (Ph.D. Diss., Rome, Pont. Inst. Or., D.S.E.O., 1992)), published partially in 1993 (cf. Rudolf Chrysostomus Grill, *Serbischer Messianismus bei Bischof Velimirovic (†1956)* (Romae: Pontificium Institutum Orientale, 1993)), and as a monograph in 1998 (cf. Rudolf Chrysostomus Grill, *Serbischer Messianismus und Europa bei Bischof Velimirovic (†1956)*, Dissertationen / Theologische Reihe 77 (Erzabtei St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 1998)). However, more studies appeared later; those studies moved more towards Cohen's understanding, in which the thought of Bishop Nikolai is characterized as anti-Semitic not only in theological terms, and this somehow remains a dominant paradigm.

**121** Cf. “Service Held Here For Serb Prelate,” *The Gazette* (Montreal, Quebec, Canada), Vol. 178 (March 27, 1956): 31.

**122** A kind of similarity with an older scheme, used before in the political arena of post-WWII Yugoslavia, can be found here. Namely, a myth of former Dachau prisoners being the Nazi collaborators and kind of guests of the Dachau concentration camp was launched in farcical processes against “people's enemies,” i.e. against political rivals (known as “Dachau processes”) in Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia already in 1946–1948 (cf. Boro Krivokapić, *Dachau Processes* (Belgrade — Ljubljana: Prosveta — Partizanska knjiga, 1986), 12–16, and esp. 34–35ff). Similar to other Dachau inmates, accused and condemned as Nazi collaborators by the Yugoslavian Communist regime, Velimirovich became a pro-Nazi author, and also a kind of Quisling.

in Velimirovich's anti-Semite worldview: Velimirovich was inspired to change his views to pro-Nazi attitudes during his stay in Dachau.<sup>123</sup> And so on. Consequently, the name of Nikolai Velimirovich was included in an Encyclopedia of World Fascism,<sup>124</sup> and he is regarded as an anti-Semite today.<sup>125</sup> This shift was made possible by chapter 77 from the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* — probably the most quoted chapter from Velimirovich's works, which made him worldly infamous.

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It would be interesting to compare standpoints from the mentioned chapter 77 of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* with standpoints from another Velimirovich's work published after WWII. Namely, not long after WWII, Velimirovich wrote a piece entitled "Never Never Land." This work is published in 1950.<sup>126</sup> It is a kind of a novel, with numerous layers of meaning, rich in biblical motifs, impregnated by symbolism, in which the main character is, interestingly, a Serbian historian and theologian, officer Spaso Spasović (wordplay in Serbian — also translation of the name of Jesus Christ, as it is suggested in the book itself), imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp during WWII. Between the lines, there could be some autobiographical details, and we guess there could be some recollections from Dachau, but unfortunately, it is impossible to discern history from imagination in *Never Never Land*.

However, the interesting feature of the mentioned work of Velimirovich is the sharp critic of Nazi totalitarianism, aggressive politics, dictatorship, war, etc. The strong opposition to Nazi racism and racial theories is at the very heart of the book. There is also an opposition to anti-Semitism, based on the Christian worldview.<sup>127</sup> Since this aspect of Velimirovich's thought is often ignored, and maybe even forgotten, here we would quote a passage from the mentioned book — a dialogue between the main character and a Gestapo officer in the second night of trial to Spasović:

"Spaso: Truth and life are inseparable as eyes and sight, according to the words of the One who said: I am the Truth and the Life.

**123** Cf. Zlatko Kudelić, "The Serbian Orthodox Church as a Theme for Recent Research (Among Croatian and Non-Croatian Authors)," *The Journal for Contemporary History*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (1997): 157–176: 173–174.

**124** Cf. Cyprian Blamires, ed., *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia (Volume 2: L–Z)* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC — CLIO, 2006), 492.

**125** Cf., for example, Karin Hofmeisterová, "The Serbian Orthodox Church's Involvement in Carrying the Memory of the Holocaust," *Südosteuropa: Journal of Politics and Society*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (2019): 500–533: 512ff, <https://doi.org/10.1515/soeu-2019-0038>.

**126** Cf. [Bishop] Nikolai D. Velimirovich, *The Never Never Land: A Modern Tale* (Windsor, Ont.: Voice of the Canadian Serbs, 1950) = *CW*, Vol. XII, 9–57. As Velimirovich mentioned in one of his letters to Fr. A. Todorović, dated to June/July 1951, that he had an idea to write three books (the one directed against Nazism, the second directed against atheism, and the third one as a calling for repentance), of which he finished just the first one, directed against Nazism — *The Never Never Land* (cf. *CW*, Vol. XIII, 662).

**127** There are also more interesting aspects of this book. One of them is a positive evaluation of basic principles of other religions, and an openness for other faiths — in a sense an ecumenical aspect. For a short review of the mentioned book, cf. Clarence A. Manning, "Zemlya Nedodjija by Nikolaj D. Velimirovich," *Books Abroad*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer, 1951): 295, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40090365>.

— You mean that Jew Jesus? said the Gestapo officer.

Spaso: I mean, Mr. Obersturmbannführer, the Lord Jesus Christ who was a Jew as much as He was a German and a Spaniard and a Serb and an American and an Asian and an African. He called himself the 'Son of man' and not the son of a Jew.<sup>128</sup>

— Ha, ha, ha, ha! The Gestapo officer laughed wickedly. You should add — and a Negro and a Papuan!

Spaso: Yes, and a Negro and a Papuan, and all to all, to save all, as the Messiah of all and the Lover of man.

Gestapo officer: I consider it an insult to the German race when you call that dreamer a German!

Spaso: And I am convinced that the majority of the German people do not consider it an insult but a great honor."<sup>129</sup>

[Serbian original: Спасо: Истина и живот су нераздвајни као очи и вид, по речи Онога који је рекао: Ја сам Истина и Живот.

— Ти то мислиш на онога Исуса Јеврејина? Обрећну се Гестаповац.

Спасо: Ја мислим, г. оберштурмбандфирере, на Господа Исуса Христа који колико је био Јеврејин толико и Немац и Шпањолац и Србин и Американац и Азијат и Африканац. Он је себе називао „Сином Човечјим“ а не сином јеврејским.

— Ха, ха, ха, ха! насмеја се злобно Гестаповац. Додај још и Црнац и Папуанац!

Спасо: Да, и Црнац и Папуанац, и све свима, да све спасе, као Месија свију и Човекољубац.

Гестаповац: Ја сматрам за увреду немачкој раси када ти називаш онога сањалицу Немцем.

Спасо: А ја сам уверен да већи део немачког народа не сматра то за увреду него за велику почаст.]

## Conclusion

All of the mentioned facts lead us to a conclusion that the authenticity of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* should be examined. There are several reasons which suggest that is hardly a work written by Velimirovich.

However, it may be that some of his homilies are used as material for certain chapters of this book, and there are chapters of this book that would easily fit into the context of Velimirovich's thought. And even into the context of WWII (for instance, homily 70). It may also be true that some of his unpublished writings are included in the book. There are 4 prayers (62, 66, 78, 82), of which the first and the last one sound like they were written by Velimirovich. In any case, the manner how this material was edited and organized is also questionable. Obviously, the material presented in this book is not systematically edited, not in the first nor in any edition which followed the first, figuratively speaking, canonical edition. We use this word in a limited sense: the book is canonical — in a sense that it is incorporated in Velimirovich's *Collected Works*. The book is, however, lacking in logical, chronological, or thematic order. Therefore the book is difficult for reading. On the other hand, the disorder of this book provides a nice opportunity for mystical reading. And also an opportunity for numerous and different interpretations.

<sup>128</sup> There is a similar description of a conversation between Velimirovich and a Nazi officer at the Dachau concentration camp, preserved in Zernova's recollections — cf. Vasiljevic, ed., *Treasures New and Old*, 77.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Velimirovich, *The Never Never Land = CW*, Vol. XII, 19.

Anyway, although some chapters of the book or some portions of the text could be authentic, some of these homilies are very questionable, as is the most quoted and the most known homily 77.

The problem of authenticity of this chapter of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* becomes more striking when we consider the fact that this book does not correspond to Velimirovich's attitudes. For instance, he was, in the context of WWII, very well informed and well aware of the dangers of totalitarianism of any kind. During the 1930s, Velimirovich was included — and sometimes he was even a leader — in activities of international ecumenical organizations and commissions, such as World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches, or Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, which dealt with questions of peace, racism, anti-Semitism and so on. As archival records show, i.e. documents preserved in the archives of mentioned international organizations as well as in the archives of the Serbian Orthodox Church, he was fully aware of the dangers of Nazi expansion and racial issues during the years prior to WWII, and he was an opponent of radical standpoints.<sup>130</sup>

Another problematic feature of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* emerges here. What is stated above can also be applied to bitter words spoken in the book on behalf of Western Christendom. Since Bishop Nicholai nurtured close and friendly connections to Western Christian brothers for his lifetime, viewpoints from the book simply do not correspond to the attitudes of Velimirovich.

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**130** For instance, he was involved in the first international critique of so-called Aryan paragraph in 1933, as it can be found in the archival material of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches, and also in the archival material of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, i.e. in the Archives of the World Council of Churches in Geneva (cf., for example, "Universal Christian Council for Life and Work: Meeting of the Executive Committee, Novi Sad, September 9–12, 1933. Timetable," 1–2: 1, WCC Archives, Geneva. Box 24.243. Life and Work. File 1; "Resolution on Racial Minorities [Executive Committee of the World Alliance, meeting at Sofia September 14 to 21, 1933]," 1, WCC Archives, Geneva. Box 301.43.09. WCC General Secretariat. Country Files and Correspondence 1932–1957 : Germany : Kirchhenkampf, Dossiers 3. File 1. Life and Work, Official Action with German Church : Resolutions Novi Sad and Sofia; Velimirovich's contribution and role in the international action against Nazism in 1933 are also mentioned in the press from the time, for instance in the Yugoslavian newspaper *Politika*, etc.). On the other hand, as an active bishop and a member of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, he was without a doubt a confirmed supporter of the international efforts against Nazism, and he was aware of the dangers of racism (cf., for instance, a report on participation in the international meetings in 1934 by Bishop Irinej Ćirić (1884–1955), praised and appreciated by Velimirovich, preserved in the Archives of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade — E. 761/1934, 7925/2121/1934, 803/1935, all in the Archives of the Holy Synod of Bishops, Belgrade, Box Various, Folder Various Conferences. Besides that, Velimirovich's anti-racial and anti-Nazi viewpoints are also attested in publications and periodicals from his environment, in the press of his diocese etc. And this likely was his constant and lasting commitment, not only in mid-1930s: his anti-Nazi views are also attested in his well-known letter to the World Conference of Christian Youth in Amsterdam in 1939 (cf. Bishop Nicholai [Velimirovich], "The Three Ghosts of European Civilization," *Christian Thought*, Vol. 5, No. 7–8 (August–September 1939): 99–101 [= *CW*, Vol. X, 622–627]), etc.

However, mentioned questions deserve separate studies; hopefully, there will be time for further elaborations in the future, and this issue will become more clear.

Answering the question raised in the title of this article, we can offer a preliminary proposition that Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich is hardly the author of the book published in 1985, entitled *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, allegedly written by him during his imprisonment in Dachau during WWII. On the other hand, we would prefer not to draw final conclusions. Before conclusion, there is a lot of research to be accomplished, and as for research, there are several preconditions that should be fulfilled.

Concerning the work *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window*, first, the Velimirovich's manuscript should be located and examined, that is, if it has been preserved.<sup>131</sup> A critical edition — of both the aforementioned manuscript and Velimirovich's collected works — would be a necessary precondition to continue the research and consideration of Velimirovich's thought. Also, studious research of archival material could reveal additional details, little-known and neglected aspects of the personality and work of Bishop Nikolai. Until these basic conditions are met, researchers run the risk of falling into the trap of prejudice and arbitrariness, depending on their personal affinities or animosities.

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<sup>131</sup> In a foreword to an edition of the book *Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* from 1999, Bishop Lavrentije Trifunović mentioned that the Velimirovich's manuscript is preserved in the Diocese of Valjevo and Šabac (cf. Bishop Lavrentije [Trifunović], "Foreword," in Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, *To the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window* (Belgrade: Orion, 1999), V–VII: V.

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## Heights We Live By: On the Religious Coherence between Space and Cyberspace

*Abstract:* This paper deals with the latent religious aspects of the tremendous impact that the Internet manifests in every single segment of contemporary culture. Through comparative research of the ways primordial, archetypal cognitive matrices migrated throughout different modalities of our thinking and behavior in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the following research argues that deep religious longings might have been hidden (ignored, even abused) in the various ways the planetary informational network is exploited in our times. As a consequence, an alarming need for philosophical and theological rethinking and re-inspiring of this prodigious, unprecedented and omnipresent social prosthesis is recognized.

*Key words:* flying, spacefaring, verticality schema, Internet, cloud, electronic eidon, Plato

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man...  
Revelation 14:14

A few years ago, I came across the news item that the government of India decided to send astronauts into space. Thus, the world's second most populous country entered a select club of nations – after Russia (USSR), USA, and China – capable of such an endeavor. The \$1.4 billion budget made it the least expensive mission of its kind: much cheaper than the Chinese (\$2.3 billion) and incomparably cheaper than the iconic American mission to the Moon (in current dollars, it would cost some \$110 billion). The Prime Minister of India stated that the project is very important for the progress of science, for the prestige of his country, and finally, for the employment of numerous workers. Articles that announced the mission across the information universe usually came with an iconic – I would even call it archetypal – image of a rocket detaching from the ground, emitting enormous amounts of fire and smoke.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Cf. for example: Chethan Kumar, "India to launch first manned space mission by 2022: PM Modi," *The Times of India*, Aug. 15, 2018 <[timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-to-launch-first-manned-space-mission-by-2022-pm-modi/articleshow/65410373.cms](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-to-launch-first-manned-space-mission-by-2022-pm-modi/articleshow/65410373.cms)> [this, and all following electronic addresses, last accessed at: February 16, 2021]; Surendra Singh, "Rs 10,000 crore plan to send 3 Indians to space by 2022," *The Times of India*, Dec. 29, 2018 <[timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/union-cabinet-clears-rs-10000cr-for-indias-gaganyaan-project/articleshow/67288124.cms](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/union-cabinet-clears-rs-10000cr-for-indias-gaganyaan-project/articleshow/67288124.cms)>; Mukund Kadursrinivas Rao, Kuppam Ramaiyer Sridhara Murthi, and Malapaka Yejneswara Satyanarayana Prasad, "The Decision for Indian Human Spaceflight Programme – Political Perspectives, National Relevance, and Technological Challenges," *New Space* 7 no. 2 (2019): 99–109 <[doi.org/10.1089/space.2018.0028](https://doi.org/10.1089/space.2018.0028)>.

## The Migrations of the Spacefaring Enthusiasm

This ‘archetypal’ image reminded me of a different, a contrasting bit of information, concerning the geography of India. Namely, India is not a very big part of the world map – much smaller than China, for example. This means that with an almost unbelievable 460 inhabitants per square kilometer, it is one of the most densely populated areas on the globe. For comparison, Japan has 348, the United Kingdom 279, and hyper-populated Netherlands 507.<sup>2</sup> Yet another image (I would say negatively-archetypal) of Indian overpopulation is that of poverty, which does not seem congruous with the image of fire-emitting rockets. In this context, how much does this project truly costs and who really needs it? How can we put all of these images within some kind of interpretative frame without lapsing into complete confusion?

Today, space missions are not as popular as they once were.<sup>3</sup> The USA has reduced its space programs long time ago. Who needs clouds of dust and fire anymore, and why spend money on sending astronauts into the unknown? Since the abandonment of the progressive but dangerous space-shuttle programs, American (and all other) astronauts have been launched into space (when needed) from the dusty Baikonur area in Kazakhstan, rented by the Russian Federation after the collapse of the USSR. If this trend continues, Russians and Kazakhs will probably soon get bored of being used as launch facilitators.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the most developed economies in the Muslim world are also deciding to demonstrate their strength by developing space programs, such as the recent announcement by Turkey of intent to send a human expedition to the Moon.<sup>5</sup> After all, the way the ‘second’ and ‘third world’ have embraced the ideology of (industrial) progress, it is not surprising that they also embraced its ultimate symbol: the space programs.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the First World may peacefully contemplate, from the unreachable (one could say

2 Among different data sources, I decided to put trust in: *World Population Prospects 2019: Data Booklet*, published by United Nations – Department of Economic and Social Affairs <population.un.org/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2019\_DataBooklet.pdf>.

3 Cf. for example: J. R. McNeill, “Gigantic Follies? Human Exploration and the Space Age in Long-Term Historical Perspective,” in *Remembering the Space Age*, ed. Steven J. Dick (Washington, DC: NASA, Office of External Relations, History Division, 2008), 3–16; Taylor E. Dark III, “Reclaiming the Future: Space Advocacy and the Idea of Progress,” in *Societal Impact of Space flight*, eds. Steven J. Dick and Roger D. Launius (Washington, DC: NASA, Office of External Relations, History Division, 2007), 570–571.

4 Eric Berger, “Russia may soon decommission the world’s most historic launch pad,” *Ars Technica*, April 23, 2019. <arstechnica.com/science/2019/04/gagarins-start-nears-the-end-historic-launch-pad-to-be-decommissioned/>.

5 Marwa Rashad, “Saudi Arabia plans \$2 billion boost for space programme by 2030,” *Reuters*, October 28, 2020 <reuters.com/article/us-saudi-economy-space-idUKKBN27D1ZH>; Tuqa Khalid, “Mission accomplished: UAE Hope Probe successfully enters Mars orbit,” *Al Arabiya English*, February 9, 2021 <english.alarabiya.net/News/gulf/2021/02/09/-Mission-accomplished-UAE-Hope-Probe-successfully-enters-Mars-orbit-after-204-days>; Tuvan Gumrukcu, “Turkey aims to reach moon in 2023, Erdogan says,” *Reuters*, February 9, 2021 <reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-erdogan-space/turkey-aims-to-reach-moon-in-2023-erdogan-says-idUSKBN2A92SY>.

6 For the fundamental connection of the space-faring enthusiasm with the (archetypal) notion(s) of *progress*, see Taylor E. Dark III, “Reclaiming the Future: Space Advocacy and the Idea of Progress,” 555–570.

mystical) heights of the progress: ‘let the beginners choke in dust and burn their soil, as we did it in the past, who needs space after all; why not to focus (now) on our planet and its cultivation...’

Even if this decision was neither strict nor revolutionary, reasoning that can be noted in our times actually confirms its authenticity. Namely, the ultra wealthy have recently expressed a new kind of interest in cosmic journeys, facing us with – one could say, bitterly comical – ideas about future human travel to Mars, or even its colonization. “You want to wake up in the morning and think the future is going to be great – and that’s what being a spacefaring civilization is all about. It’s about believing in the future and thinking that the future will be better than the past. And I can’t think of anything more exciting than going out there and being among the stars.”<sup>7</sup> But, if we take these words from the introductory advertisement of Elon Musk’s Mars program at all seriously, we can see that the new sort of cosmic-journey narrative is far from the universal enthusiasm of early space missions. It is not much more than fun for the rich and select (by being rich), and an eschatological fairytale for all others.<sup>8</sup> These stories actually look more like the fictional use of the already abandoned progressivist archetype by the highest social cast to enshroud their role of the prime exploiters of humans, animals, plants, resources, and anything else the Blue Planet had to offer. This is what makes such narratives bitterly comical: *we* will leave this dirty place after *we* realize that no one can clean the mess *we* made. And, from the perspective of the civilization ill-equipped to fight against a small parasite coming from nowhere, the irony of refurbished spacefaring narratives becomes even more brutal than images of fire-spitting rockets in India. Is it not a bit hard – especially in the contemporary context – to put the revamped narrative of the ‘spacefaring civilization’ in some kind of interpretative frame where it will not look deeply disturbing?

However, these bizarre stories have at least one capacity: to pose some more interesting questions. Namely, how did cosmic-journeys became so archetypal that the most advanced capitalists could now decide to exploit them for refurbishing their social (self) representation? And, what could actually bring together Silicon Valley trend-setters (an area so rich) and the Indian government (a country so poor) over a story that seems little more than an obsolete myth today? Well, it seems to be exactly its mythological status. Or – I would like to generalize this interpretation even further – the very archetypal power of the story. But, are the archetypes and myths appropriate terms for discussion about narratives construed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? If these narratives pushed the biggest world economies into competition, and excited billions of people around the globe to support spending their tax-money on projects based on these narratives, than it is hard to escape its mythological categorization and its further discussion in archetypal terms.

<sup>7</sup> Elon Musk – an introductory statement for the page of *spacex.com* website: “Mars & Beyond: The Road to Making Humanity Multiplanetary” <[spacex.com/human-spaceflight/mars/](https://spacex.com/human-spaceflight/mars/)>.

<sup>8</sup> The word *future* is used twice in the central sentence and three times overall, in this short, three-sentence quote.

## The Archetypes of High

Some half a century ago – when generation X was dreaming its childhood dreams – flying was an exciting and highly respectful human endeavor.<sup>9</sup> It would not be an exaggeration to say that in those times, almost half of all boys dreamed of becoming pilots, and almost half of all girls dreamed of becoming stewardesses. *Let us fly* – this was surely one of the most prominent mottos of the imaginary world of those generations. Of course, the elite version of this imagery, reserved for the bravest among the dreamers, was to become *an astronaut*. But times have changed, especially when it comes to elite, astronaut-dreaming. After the public around the globe was satiated by the repetition of orbit broadcasts, another sensational episode was needed. And in the following episodes people probably realized that apart from the joys of zero-gravity astronauts were not doing much interesting in their claustrophobic space modules. What could they, after all, do there: conduct experiments designed by scientists (on Earth), pilot or repair the module according to instructions coming from engineers safely nested at their computers... Thus, from the perspective of the average citizen (who pays the taxes spent on these projects), space adventure must have seemed a sort of fake promise: apart from a spectacular beginning, with lots of fire and smoke, there was no true dramaturgy or excitement in the rest of the narrative. Moreover, with explosions of shuttles and deaths of astronauts the narrative acquired a deeply tragic aspect. From here, the initial enthusiasm could not but return to point zero. And while this letting-down scenario was probably the main reason for the export of space-faring enthusiasm to the Third World, it was also the most likely reason for the huge archetypal change, which is under scrutiny here.

Today, probably much more than half of the boys dream of becoming IT experts, while probably much more than half of the girls dreams of becoming – IT experts as well. Or, if we want to be more accurate and up to date, nerds want to be true experts, while most kids desire to become – what we could designate as – an *Internet face* or *Internet influencer*. (Let us try to avoid the transitory colloquial terms derived from the names of companies possessing the adequate portions of Internet space; those new forms of self-‘employment’ can be phenomenologically described as sitting in front of the camera and uploading your ‘self’ to the Internet in order to be watched and/or listened by numerous followers, who are targeted by the following commercials).<sup>10</sup> “When I was a kid, I watched You Tube all the

9 About the ‘generation X’ (‘Y’ or ‘Z’) concept, cf. in: Stephen Katz, “Generation X: A Critical Sociological Perspective,” *Generations – Journal of the American Society on Aging* 41, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 12–19; Mark McCrindle and Emily Wolfinger, *The ABC of XYZ: Understanding the Global Generations* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2011).

10 About the influence of Internet culture(s) on young generations, with a special accent on the YouTube platform, cf. in: Hyunjin Seo et al., “Teens’ social media use and collective action,” *New Media & Society* 16, no. 6 (2014): 883–902 <doi.org/10.1177/1461444813495162>; Sara Pereira, Pedro Moura, and Joana Fillol, “The Youtubers Phenomenon: What Makes YouTube Stars so Popular for Young People?” *Fonseca, Journal of Communication* 17 (2018): 107–123 <doi.org/10.14201/fjc201817107123>; Susanne Ault, “Survey: YouTube Stars More Popular Than Mainstream Celebs Among U.S. Teens,” *Variety*, Aug 5, 2014 <variety.com/2014/digital/news/survey-youtube-stars-more-popular-than-mainstream-celebs-among-u-s-teens-1201275245/>.

time. It was always my dream job. I didn't want to be an astronaut or a doctor – I couldn't envision a world where I wasn't a You Tuber. ... Now I have one of the fastest growing channels in the world.”<sup>11</sup> This is the way Derral Eves – a celebrity of the kind quite unfamiliar to generations that dreamed to become astronauts – opens the *Forward* to the book in which he reveals the secrets of his planetary success. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, this ultimate trend of the 21<sup>st</sup> century finally came to its very paroxysm: today every boy and girl know that the safest, most comfortable, most inspiring, most uplifting – and (thus) most desirable place to work and dwell is – the Internet. While noting an obvious improvement concerning the questions of gender equality, it is interesting to note some other hermeneutic aspects of this change on the ‘archetypal throne’. How come humans of the recent past wanted to fly so badly, and how come contemporary humans care much less about this? Since an article format does not give enough space to analyze this problem across all of its aspects, the focus here will be primarily on the very meaning of the switch that happened on the archetypal plane.

It seems truly hard to escape the impression that the transformation of human dreaming about flying into human dreaming about sitting (in front of a screen), was followed by the huge switch in the ‘order’ of the archetypal imagery. But, is this change as radical as it seems at first glance? If one considers that humans do not change too easily, the question becomes how much have they truly changed with *homo astronauticus*’ being overshadowed by *homo informaticus*? In the context of their appearance, these questions – in this opinion – point towards deeply religious issues. In order to approach our subject from this side, however, we need to enter some less popular and less exciting cognitive spheres.

Contemporary humanities have largely revised the dogmatics of radical conventionalism, surely one of the strongest trends of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In other words, today we do not have to spend time proving that not every single human (cognitive) activity is primarily governed by social conventions. Some activities can be, for example, the consequence of our embodiment. One of those bodily determined functions is the so-called ‘verticality (image) schema’, by which the primary bodily experiences spontaneously find a way to be firmly nested within our basic linguistic structures.<sup>12</sup> “Because we exist within a gravitational field at the Earth’s surface, and due to our ability to stand erect, we give great significance to standing up, rising, and falling down.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, together with the simple means of representing vertical orientation of up and down, somewhere on their deep-

<sup>11</sup> Derral Eves, *The YouTube Formula: How Anyone Can Unlock the Algorithm to Drive Views, Build an Audience, and Grow Revenue* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2021), xiii.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), ix–xvi, 121–123; Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr., “Embodied standing and the psychological semantics of *stand*,” in *The Linguistics of Sitting, Standing, and Lying*, ed. John Newman (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002), 387–400; Maria M. Hedblom, *Image Schemas and Concept Invention: Cognitive, Logical, and Linguistic Investigations* (Cham: Springer, 2020), 57–58; on the ‘image schemata’ concept and its developments in general (with bibliography), see *ibid.*, 33–51.

<sup>13</sup> Mark Johnson, “The philosophical significance of image schemas,” in *From Perception to Meaning: Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, ed. Beate Hampe (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2005), 20.

est levels, our languages keep the universal sense that orientation up is something positive, while the opposite orientation is something negative. When we say that something perks us *up* or that we feel *high*, we basically think about good, positive moods and feelings. While being *down* surely is not good. In the same way our mood can go up or down, our other 'functions' are perceived and expressed. Our reputation or self-confidence can be *low*, we can *climb up* towards the *higher* social status, we are very happy if our income is *high*, while all of society can strive towards a *high-income* economy or be truly frightened if the economy *plummets*. Moreover, the conceptual metaphor describing processes in categories of up-down orientation is so primordial for the human race that we actually never think of it in metaphorical terms.<sup>14</sup> And, if we are not speaking about negative things, such as mortality, when falling down means a double negation – falling down is always a negative thing while going up is always a positive trend. Thus, on some primordial level, our basic symbolic and metaphoric orders are spatially structured according to the very bodies we have. After all, we *fall* asleep, and get *up* after sleep, we *fall* sick or *drop* (*down*) dead and – if we believe in Christ – we hope to be *raised up* from the dead, the way Christ himself has been *Resurrected* (*Risen*). It is obvious that this deep, unconsciously assumed, conceptual-metaphorical cognitive structure is based on the natural, God-given posture of the human body. Falling down draws the human being towards the earth, from which they were created but to which they do not wish to go back, while turning upwards means something completely different, and directs humans towards... Towards what? Let us consider this further.

The answer is, of course, very simple: towards the sky, towards the heavens. Nevertheless, simple answers usually open up myriad new questions. What and where is actually this uplifted upper space, towards which we prefer to be directed? Is it the air, or the sky, or something beyond the sky, or something even further...? If history teaches us that in different cultural contexts this primordial cognitive striving could be hypostatized (or interpreted) in quite different ways, then the goal of this discussion is to ask ourselves how is it hypostatized (or how can it be interpreted) today? In search for an answer to these questions, it is very easy to slip from archetypal to the religious domains. It could be said, moreover, that our orientation upwards can hardly ever be detached from its religious semantic layers, acquired throughout different historical periods. Taking this into account can reveal very interesting symbolic potentials beneath the previously discussed spatial adventures. Namely, from this perspective, the first flights to space can be interpreted as a kind of ecstatic movement of humanity's longing to liberate itself from its basic physical restrictions. Are we not actually speaking about the vertical, upward-directed move towards the archetypal good, undertaken by humanity attempting to run away from its own mortality, and from the planet whose relentless gravity pulls everyone

<sup>14</sup> Cf. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, "Conceptual Metaphor in Everyday Language," *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 77, issue 8 (Aug., 1980): 461–467; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 14–21, 243–274; Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 18–19, 223–227.

down, towards its insides, where no one longs to dwell? Up there, levitating freely in the space-module as if in mother's warm womb, surrounded by the endless horizon awaiting to be discovered, the human being must have finally found itself in a primordial/archetypal condition of childlike, embryonic unknowing – unknowing of death. In that peculiar place, while watching the blue planet as it glitters and joyfully moves away, the human being is so far from its grave that it could feel only the overwhelming flash of utter freedom. It is not an issue of the individual astronaut and their private inner feelings, but about humanity as such, which invested its hopes (and its money) in these projects, and was reborn inside the cosmic womb through its foremost, chosen representatives. This is why it was important – prior to the cosmic upbringing – to broadcast the process of choosing the best of the best to be astronauts, not unlike the initiation of priests who represent their flock in front of their deity. Finally, this is why the entire human race has been so joyfully and euphorically making “huge steps” together with their cosmic heroes, sending messianic messages from their space hermitages – colored in white and sprinkled by glitter of unearthly lights.<sup>15</sup>

From this perspective, it is easy to understand why kids wanted to fly, why they wanted to be pilots if not (as cosmic high priests) through the stratosphere then at least (in a lower priestly ranks) some 10 kilometers above the ground. But, it is also easy to understand why this kind of (messianic) euphoria could not last for long. Those chosen and exemplary super-humans, without a single bad tooth, could not stay forever in their space-wombs, but had to grow old and lose their super-powers. Of course, they have been replaced by newly-elected recruits; yet new generations not only could not reach the same levels of the spacefaring patriarchs' glory, but had to face the horrible accidents and deaths proving that space is no less a graveyard than a place of freedom. Thus, the everlasting tragic fight between life and death contaminated and corrupted the spacefaring narrative. The high-budget films about the tragic flights have been shot, space-shuttles dumped in the trash, and cosmonauts have serenely gone out of fashion. Their patriarchs, of course, have never been forgotten, but the messianic aura has gradually weakened and evaporated from this endeavor. Nevertheless, this kind of space adventure showed that humanity's religious hopes could change form and inhabit the most peculiar aspects of our human experience. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that such hopes would not literally evaporate and vanish, but rather inhabit some other spaces of our civilization. Thus, it might be fruitful to ask where those hopes have gone once the stratosphere went out of fashion?

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**15** Though on a slightly different basis, Carl Sagan, the contemporaneous scientific Space Age enthusiast, also comes to conclusion that “it is striking how space exploration leads directly to religious and philosophical questions.” Carl Sagan, *The Cosmic Connection: An Extraterrestrial Perspective* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1975), 55. Cf. also: “Astronauts and cosmonauts have remarked with great feeling about the beauty and serenity of the Earth viewed from space. For many of them, a flight into space has been a religious experience, transfiguring their lives. National boundaries do not appear in photographs of Earth from space” (ibid., 58). Additionally, cf. Wendell Mendell, “Space Activism as an Epiphanic Belief System,” in *Societal Impact of Space flight*, ed. Steven J. Dick and Roger D. Launius (Washington, DC: NASA, Office of External Relations, History Division, 2007), 573–583.

## The Migrating Heights

There is no need to explain the fact that messianic hopes have not returned to the churches and temples. Although the end of the previous millennium witnessed a turn towards ‘post-secular philosophy’, together with other theoretical and practical confirmation that religious life has not been washed away by 20<sup>th</sup> century’s flood of scientific progressivism,<sup>16</sup> this does not necessarily mean that these currents were comparable to the effort involved in the very ideology of progress, symbolically first crowned by spacefaring and then brought down by its failures. Thus, if this energy has not filled up the churches and led us to a ‘new Middle Age’, where could it have migrated, after all?

If I have addressed my previous questions to the generation described as *humans dreaming about flying*, then it seems quite natural to address the last question to the generation recognized as *humans dreaming about sitting (in front of a screen)*. But is there a bridge of any kind that could provide archetypal migrations between such diverging dreaming teams? Maybe our human body should be asked, once again? If our primordial, bodily conditioned cognitive matrices, which made orientation upwards so positive, are much more than software that can be erased and replaced, then it is not irrelevant to note that even *humans dreaming about sitting* are naming or describing their most desired dwelling places in heavenly terms.

First, let us take a closer look at the term *cloud*. As we all know, data is the most important treasure of *homo informaticus*. But, why has no one had the idea to designate the space where data are most efficiently nested and protected by some heavy and earthly terms such as *building, safe, basement...*? While gold, diamonds, and similar material treasures are still best protected when underground, from where they after all originate, data is kept in the space with different (symbolic) qualities. Data is an (almost) immaterial and disembodied, one could say even spiritual class of entities and it would not be nice to symbolically connect it to earth, where their banal physical bearers dwell. After all, data easily and unstoppably changes physical bearers, so it is quite reasonable to think about data apart of its temporary earthly localization(s). Data are, not unlike Platonic ideas, precious entities unconstrained by their material dwelling places. Thus, it is also reasonable to suppose that this new kind of treasure has essentially different origins and (symbolic) value than the traditional chthonic treasures of the past times. From this perspective, finally, the world of electronic communications has much reason to adjust the use of our primordial bodily oriented cognitive matrixes according to its own needs and unearthly qualities: it simply could not stay down but needed to be (spontaneously) uplifted to symbolic heights. This is why no one could feel uncomfortable when the term *cloud* was introduced to designate the mystical space where our most valuable

<sup>16</sup> Cf. for example: Colby Dickinson, *Theology and Contemporary Continental Philosophy: The Centrality of a Negative Dialectic* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), 114–121; Dominique Janicaud, *Phenomenology and the “Theological Turn”: The French Debate*, trans. Bernard G. Prusak (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 16–103; Phillip Blond, ed., *Post-Secular Philosophy: Between Philosophy and Theology* (London: Routledge, 1998); John Panteleimon Manoussakis, ed., *After God: Richard Kearney and the Religious Turn in Continental Philosophy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006).

(cognitive) treasures are kept. Is it possible to suggest, on this basis, that the true origin of our precious data is best comprehended – at least in symbolic terms – as some kind of heavenly sphere? And does all of this add some kind of a (hidden) religious aura to the hyper-accelerated, irrepressible growth of the world of electronic communications?

In order to answer these sort of questions we should first discuss some related issues. Why is data a treasure, and what kind of a treasure is it? Namely, apart from data distributed by intelligence services, which literally cost much and are not kept in previously discussed *clouds*, the treasure of the average human being (whose vast presence on the web makes it so important) are usually their photos, texts, music, films... Some of those digital entities are produced by their owners, while some are just consumed and liked; but all of them together form the trace of our personal existence within a wider cultural domain. In other words, what made us subjects that we are, is not only recorded in ourselves but also outside of ourselves, in the world of electronic data. Of course, this is not an essentially new possibility in the world of (human) communication, but the efficiency of the mechanism is quite novel. The hyper-accelerated and omnipresent electronic data exchange allows not only personal traces in human culture, but a precise image of unique human beings in this domain. With the help of (electronic) social networks, finally, this kind of image becomes so precise and detailed that it can represent us – as experts in this field persistently assure us – better than we could ourselves. Thus, if our electronic *eidos* becomes even more truthful than the biological one, than it is easy to understand why the world of electronic data is the most valuable treasure of contemporary humanity. Its value is neither economic nor physical, it is actually – for lack of a better word – metaphysical.

### Idealism Reloaded

It is important to note here that this discussion is not focused on our electronic ‘avatars’, construed by social networks and exploited primarily for commercial purposes. This kind of *avatar* is inevitably connected to the *image* introduced in the previous paragraph, but it actually lives in it like a parasite. Of course, a parasite is always dangerous, and can suck out the life from its host, not only in virtual domains, but also – as it turns out to be taking place – in the domains of our very psychological, social and biological existence.<sup>17</sup> But the parasite itself could not live if there is not something substantial to feed it. In other words, if our Internet image was just a virtual doll for playing advertising games, then its exploitation would not be a huge social dilemma. If we were not attached to this image by much stronger connections, we would easily beat the unscrupulous advertisers and they could not play games with our brains. But advertisers are profiting (as parasites) precisely on the fact that our Internet image of ourselves means so much to us. Let us try to find out what the reasons are for such metaphysical importance of our virtual images (which consequently allows its economic exploitation).

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. an alarming documentary movie: *The Social Dilemma*, written by Davis Coombe, Vickie Curtis, and Jeff Orlowski; directed by Jeff Orlowski <[imdb.com/title/tt11464826/](http://imdb.com/title/tt11464826/)>; the phrase ‘avatar’ is taken from this dramatic interpretation of manipulative aspects of contemporary electronic media.

In my opinion, our virtual image is raised to metaphysical heights for the three reasons. 1) Having an image is not a privilege. It does not belong primarily to powerful, rich or highly creative people, who have been privileged to leave historical trace in previous millennia. Possession of this electronic, metaphysical image today is the universal possibility belonging to almost everyone. 2) Although it can be detailed, the image strives to be, more or less, ideal. This idealization is primarily the result of the selection and production of data by ourselves, the very subjects (archetypes?) of the images, but also by the 'depersonalized' medium, which, for example, filters photos for indecent and disturbing content. However, since we are the primary authors and editors of our images, this gives us the impression of freedom from earthly restrictions, or freedom to live within a horizon virtually designed by ourselves and for ourselves. 3) Finally, from the perspective of its subject, the media image has potential to live almost infinitely. Not unlike the way ancients comprehended the human eternal soul, our virtual image is an ethereal entity only partly bound to ourselves or its physical bearers (hardware). Thus, although we cannot be positive, we have enough reason to hope and believe that it can live forever. Or, if we reframe it through another metaphor: the image is like a word within a linguistic structure; this (idealized) image of our self has the potential to dwell intertwined within the electronic network virtually forever.

Thus, our ideal and highly durable, almost everlasting 'I' finally became reality. Maybe we do not comprehend this 'eidos' of ours in an analytic manner, maybe we do not think of it rationally at all, but somewhere deeply in our hearts, we are ready to believe that our individual trace is finally firmly stamped on human culture and that the better part of us is persistently present up there, on the web, as an ideal image, inextricable from our individual self. In a bit more poetic and theological manner, one could say that we all have our true *icons*, somewhere in between the clouds, in the heights. Put in philosophical language, what is recalled here is the notion of ideal forms, or the very ideas of ourselves, nested in the higher domains of being. Furthermore, it is equally important to note that not only we, humans now have our idealized and everlasting forms in this world: everything that finds its place inside the network looks better and loftier than in reality. Not only films, photos, music or texts created by artists as an embellished or stylized image of reality: our family lunch or shopping, our vacations, pets, homes, our coffee breaks or kitchen recipes, our (jotted down) thoughts, our jokes, our gestures, and even our failures – all of this becomes more vivid, more sublime, and more important when it is uploaded to the network. It is the authentic and universal feeling of our era that even the most banal aspects of everyday routines can acquire sense if they enter this higher sphere.

From such a perspective, it is not surprising that we think of data as *uploaded* to the Internet, and *downloaded* from it (back into the mundane, individual existence), and that the Internet can be anywhere but *up*. This inconspicuous detail is, in my opinion, one of the most important conceptual metaphors of our times – the key metaphor for reflecting on the world radically transformed by the influence and pervasiveness of electronic media. This conceptual metaphor tells us, dozens of times a day, that the electronic network should be perceived as a lofty reality belonging to the heights, in the deepest, most archetypal meaning of the word. After all, our primordial cognitive matrices still remind us that

*up is good and higher is better*: so, if we know that the Internet is a good place for us, then we cannot but feel that being there is a kind of flight above earthly existence. Now our discussion finally has the means to trace the migration of the archetypal dream of flying and find where it has settled. Moreover, this specific archetypal migration through cognitive dimensions does not carry only formal changes but radically reconstructs the entire social setting: unlike ancient spacefaring, dwelling in the heights is not a privilege of those few chosen by destiny to represent humanity in higher domains. Due to radical changes in the way genuine verticality schemes are intimated and lived by today, the (archetypal) pyramidal structures of the spacefaring civilization are totally falling apart. The dream of flight finally becomes reality available to literally anyone on Earth. Moreover, every flight, every moment spent in this higher domain of existence, is remembered in the eternal memory of a warm and welcoming network, which will never reject us and never fall asleep.

This way, it seems, Plato's never forgotten, archetypal-utopic vision not only becomes more actual, but maybe for the first time in history gets its true incarnation.<sup>18</sup> An ideal, etheric, immaterial world truly exists today, and what is more important, it is radically open and accessible. To enter this space, we do not need Plato or any other teacher, we need neither philosophy nor theology, we do not need initiation nor ascetics. And if we do not belong to those lucky few whose livelihood comes directly from the 'grace' of the Internet – that is, who do not have to 'suffer' a split between work and pleasure – then we are among those who cannot wait to finish our 'banal' earthly jobs and attend to the precious machines that lift us to this idealized, immaterial world. Let half of us diligently work on its maintaining and the other half on its consuming: what is most important is that we are all up there, in the ideal world. Even if we were (as in an intellectual experiment) astronauts returning from some kind of real (physical) space journey, we could barely wait to reach Earth and direct our gaze back towards the sphere today considered the highest rung on the ladder of human archetypal ascent. Even if we have to force our bodies to enter uncomfortable spaces, like administrative waiting rooms or public transport, the blessed smile will not fall from our faces provided access to the network. And if we, on the contrary, drove our bodies to some desired place, like a friendly social gathering or noble natural environment, our experiences would make much less sense if they were not uplifted and nested within the never-sleeping network. After all, who would care about remembering any of their experiences if they could not be nested in the heights.

### (Heights) Beyond Heights

No one can guess whether the wise Athenian philosopher would be more delighted or more frightened if he could see this kind of utopian incarnation of his greatest and most

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<sup>18</sup> This kind of interpretative possibility was already recognized at the pioneering beginnings of the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century, in: Michael Heim, *The metaphysics of virtual reality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 83–108. Cf. later discussions in: David R. Koepsell, *The Ontology of Cyberspace: Philosophy, Law, and the Future of Intellectual Property* (Chicago: Open Court, 2003), 19–23; Eric Trozzo, *The Cyberdimension: A Political Theology of Cyberspace and Cybersecurity* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019), 38–47.

influential intellectual project. However, just like with space faring imagery, it is hard to escape the impression that the peculiar contemporary incarnation of the world of ideal and eternal forms has deeply religious aspects. Not only because Plato's philosophy was in itself religious, nor primarily because it radically influenced Christianity and the whole of European civilization right up to the time of exotic spacefaring excursions.<sup>19</sup> The (religious) feeling that our better world, the better part of life that we are made for, is constantly present somewhere above us is as old and as universal as humanity itself. After all, both the New and Old Testament posit divine realms in this space above our heads. Christ has left earth in this direction and is said to be coming back the same way, at the time of his second, glorious coming.<sup>20</sup> The divine realm is repeatedly designated as the "kingdom of *heaven*" (βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν) in the Gospels, particularly frequently by Matthew.<sup>21</sup> In the Gospel of John, Christ himself speaks about his own *ascension* in spatial terms, turning our minds "up (to) where He was before" (John 6: 62).<sup>22</sup> The epiphanic opening of the Heavens during his baptism was oriented in the same direction, from where the Spirit of God was "descending" upon Christ (Matthew 4: 16; Mark 1: 10). This is why the spatial terms are also used by Saint John the Baptist in his prophetic preaching: "the kingdom of *heaven* is at hand" (Matthew 3: 2);<sup>23</sup> "He that cometh *from above* is *above* all: He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh *from heaven* is *above all*" (John 3: 31).<sup>24</sup> Finally, this is why before his (proto)martyrdom Saint Stephen "looked up steadfastly into *heaven*" (Acts 7: 55), while during the stoning he saw the "*heavens* opened" (Acts 7: 56).

After all, it is well known that ancient curiosity about the mysterious space above our heads was not less intense than ours, so that the heavens themselves could have been

<sup>19</sup> While the subject of Plato's influence on European culture is too huge to be properly addressed in a footnote, even the subject of the influence of Platonism on Christianity can only be denoted as the wide and permanently opened field of theoretical studies; cf. for example: James K. Feibleman, *Religious Platonism: The Influence of Religion on Plato and the Influence of Plato on Religion* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1959); Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Werner Beierwaltes, *Platonismus im Christentum* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Klostermann, 1998); Jaroslav Pelikan, *What Has Athens to do with Jerusalem? Timaeus and Genesis in Counterpoint* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000); Vladan Perišić, "Platonism and Christianity: Different Approaches," *Philoteos* 9 (2009): 84–89; Alexander J. B. Hampton and John Peter Kenney, ed., *Christian Platonism: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>20</sup> Mark says "he was received up into *heaven* (οὐρανόν)" (16: 19); Luke says: "he was parted from them, and carried up into *heaven* (οὐρανόν)" (24: 51); Acts say: "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud (νεφέλη) received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven (οὐρανόν) as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven (οὐρανόν)? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven (οὐρανόν), shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (οὐρανόν)" (Acts 1: 9–11).

<sup>21</sup> I have found 32 occurrences of this phrase in the Gospel of Mathew alone.

<sup>22</sup> Term ἀναβαίνο(ντα) is spatially determined by itself, suggesting *going up* in any semantic context; cf. Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones, ed., *A Greek–English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 98. Cf. also: John 1: 51; 3: 13; 20: 17.

<sup>23</sup> This sentence is also uttered by Jesus himself, at the beginning of his ministry; cf. Matthew 4: 17.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. also, John 8: 23.

imagined through several different cosmological layers.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, Saint Paul, who mentions at least three heavens (2 Corinthians 12: 2), insists that Christ “ascended up far *above all heavens*” (Ephesians 4: 10) and that he is a high priest who is “*higher than the heavens*” (Hebrews 7: 26).<sup>26</sup> Since this kind of theology is based on typically biblical faith in a transcendent God, who is beyond the created realms, theological imagery that tries to represent transfer from one (created) to another (uncreated) realm inevitably relies on the image of *ascension beyond* the area called the *heavens*. This area was obviously comprehended as a kind of gnoseological screen, radically dividing created and uncreated worlds, but could also become the background through which revelation comes. What is most important for the present discussion is the fact that in the minds structured by the biblical civilization, ascending towards heavens is deeply intermingled with the imagery of the ultimate human religious ascent.<sup>27</sup> Further, our civilization is marked by the longing for mystical space beyond the heavens. Thus, if our primordial, biologically defined, archetypal imagery (of verticality) could foster our spacefaring curiosity, our basic religious archetypes have not been a less important motivational engine for the endeavors born out of this curiosity. Moreover, our biblically structured religious archetypes suggested that this kind of quest should not be our ultimate endeavor, but needs to proceed towards the metaphysical *heights beyond the heights*. One possible answer to this expectation is, as we have seen, to simply proceed with the spacefaring (towards Mars, for example); another opportunity, however, was less literal, assuming that the metaphysical heights do not have to be so far from us humans, and can be once again found through some kind of Copernican turn towards novel cognitive dimensions. Luckily or not, such novelty truly appeared on our horizon only a few decades ago, so the majority of the world’s inhabitants have decided to try finding their metaphysical *heights beyond the heights* inside the network that forever shines and never falls asleep.

All that has been said so far, finally, points towards the religious dimensions of this decision. The very fact that we are trying to posit our electronic network on symbolic heights, radically ignoring the fact that it primarily dwells on Earth (or even below its surface), additionally confirms that we are investing our religious feelings in it. And if this kind of symbolic tension is observed against the backdrop of previously noted idealistic capacities of the new beyond the heights cognitive space, then it is hard to escape the impression that the network is connected to our religious needs much more than we are aware.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel Sambursky, *The Physical World of Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 122–153.

<sup>26</sup> On Paul’s vision and knowledge of heaven(s), see in: Andrew T. Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the role of the heavenly dimension in Paul’s thought with special reference to his eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 77–84; on Christ’s ascension *above all heavens* [Ephesians 4: 10], see: *ibid.*, 155–163.

<sup>27</sup> On the medieval understanding of the relation between physical heavens and Divine realms/revelations, cf. Maja Kominko, *The World of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 42–52; Stephen Toulmin and June Goodfield, *The Fabric of the Heavens: The Development of Astronomy and Dynamics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 153–173.

One peculiar detail connected to the life of network can additionally confirm this claim. Somewhere in the year 2007, bloggers calculated that large amounts of energy could have been saved if only Google had decided to switch its home page from white to black.<sup>28</sup> Although this possibility was lost shortly thereafter with the gradual universal conversion from CRT to LCD screens, for the current discussion it is quite interesting to note that Google never even considered this idea. Even if it might have derived a brilliant advertising campaign for a company with demiurgic status, giving it recognition for environmental awareness and energy efficiency,<sup>29</sup> this kind of a switch was not possible exactly because the demiurge has to be situated in the heights of metaphysical dimensions. Namely, the archetypal opposition of light and darkness belongs to the same kind of bodily predefined cognitive matrices as our primordial, pre-reflexive verticality scheme. Moreover, those two types of primeval schemata are transferred to symbolic domains in a rather congruent manner, and interactively settle into the world of archetypes and religious cognition. In simpler words, like height, light is good, while dark, like falling, is bad. From mythological times, via Plato, up to our popular culture, this symbolic parallelism will probably continue operating as long we are standing on our feet and using our eyes.<sup>30</sup> From this perspective, finally, there is nothing surprising in Google's decision to skip the previously described ecological ride and disregard the potential boost in status connected to it. Moreover, the 'world mind' and demiurge that lives within the metaphysical core of the waking network, will decide to redesign its homepage to be even clearer and more white than it was before (inspiring the continuing fashion of white website design across the globe). After all, is it reasonable to force people to look at darkness and not light at the very entrance into the ideal world? How would we find our ideal images, our better and everlasting existence through the darkness? The sight that represents the symbolic heart and soul of the universal electronic network cannot be anything other than pure light. There is no ecology that could

**28** Cf. Mark Ontkush, "Black Google Would Save 750 Megawatt-hours a Year," *ecoIron* blog, January 20, 2007 <ecoiron.blogspot.com/2007/01/black-google-would-save-3000-megawatts.html>; Mark Ontkush, "The Full Story on Black Google, Blackle, etc.," *ecoIron* blog, August 6, 2007 <ecoiron.blogspot.com/2007/08/history-in-january-2007-mark-ontkush.html>; Larry Greenemeier, "Fact or Fiction?: Black Is Better than White for Energy-Efficient Screens," *Scientific American*, September 27, 2007 <scientificamerican.com/article/fact-or-fiction-black-is/>.

**29** Cf. Loren Baker, "Google Runs Black Homepage For a Day," *Search Engine Journal*, October 21, 2007 <searchenginejournal.com/google-runs-black-homepage-for-a-day/5857/#close>; Asher Moses, "Search site cashes in on eco-guilt," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, August 1, 2007 <smh.com.au/technology/search-site-cashes-in-on-eco-guilt-20070801-gdq7k.html>.

**30** Cf. Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 36–38; Svitlana Martinek, "Light and Dark: oppositional metaphor as the interaction of cognitive mechanisms," *Jezikoslovlje* 20, no. 2 (December 2019): 279–302; Zsolt Párista, "Dichotomous Structures: The Metaphors *Knowledge Is Light* and *Ignorance Is Darkness* in English and Serbian," in *Languages and Cultures in Time and Space VIII/1*, ed. Snežana Gudurić and Biljana Radić-Bojanić (Novi Sad: University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Philosophy, 2019), 125–141; Charles Forceville and Thijs Renckens, "The Good is Light and Bad is Darkness Metaphors in Feature Films," *Metaphor and the Social World* 3, no. 2 (2013): 160–179; Hans Blumenberg, "Light as a Metaphor for Truth: At the Preliminary Stage of Philosophical Concept Formation," in *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision*, ed. David Michael Levin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 30–62.

compete with this kind of archetypal need. *We do not need the planet pulling us down, towards its dark womb, without network; we need the network, which lifts us up towards the light.* Thus the archetypal imagery keeps resounding across the glittering cognitive horizon of the networking civilization.

### Heights In Between Us

In all that has been said, can we now recognize the mere delusion of fallen humanity? Is this, not unlike Plato's ingenious system itself, just another attempt to ignore the true problem and stick our head in the sand? Although we cannot avoid such questions, we need not to rush to answer them in an exclusivist manner. Numerous civilizational movements – whether forward or backwards, whether inside or outside, left or right – have looked like mere delusions until it turned out that they were not (and vice versa). One phenomenon that looked especially delusive in this context was the mysterious delicate smile, so often shining upon our faces when our minds (and eyes) are 'uploaded' to the network. Is it possible that entering the world of the ideal (electronic) forms is really the source of tranquility and joy that overwhelms us in front of our devices radiating light? If we consider everything that has been said so far, part of the answer to this question has to be positive. But the other part could be the very important element of the puzzle I was trying to decipher here. Namely the low level stimuli that keep us *up* while we are connected to the net are not coming only from the impression of being present in the world of ideal forms, nor solely from the impression that our own personal ideal form exists (up) there. We are also stimulated by the impression that our ideal form is in contact with the ideal forms of other people. We should once again be honest: without this second impression, the blessed smile of the scrolling civilization would never be so blessed or so high. The ideal world, after all, is not only ideal; behind or below it are still living people. And I am not talking primarily about the social networks.

Actually, every single entity that exists on the Internet is, in one way or another, someone's creation, and although we do not often analyze this fact, we cannot but be silently aware that this network is a purely artificial reality, made exclusively by humans and for humans. Furthermore, while (almost) all of human culture is made this way, for the first time in history we have (almost) unlimited and instant access to not only any human being, but also to any creation of human culture around the globe. (And, after the touching of people became prohibited the way touching of paintings or sculptures is prohibited in museums, the value of our untouched, optically mediated presences and activities increased even beyond the matchless trust we traditionally put in our eyes.) Thus, the moment we are uploaded up there we cannot but become (unconsciously) overwhelmed by the proximity of every creative act of the entire human race. One could say that we have the treasure of all of human culture, the mind of all civilizations and the totality of human wisdom in the palm of our hand. Thus, whether users are more or less mindful of this, the network is an ultimately social space. It can be called a hyper-social reality. Surely, it is the first of its kind on the human horizon: it is nothing but social, omnipresent, and it allows traversing any kind of boundary between humans. From such a perspective, one could say that dis-

solving our minds in this kind of medium is so eagerly and willingly practiced exactly because we are longing to jump and bathe in this very ocean of hyper-sociality. Or, in terms more congruent to the subject of this discussion, we long to fly towards the social heights where all of humanity (empowered by all the creativity of its ancients) constantly and unrestrictedly gathers and meets. Hence, despite being more interesting and inspiring in their ideal forms, humans are not necessarily becoming less important in this space. Moreover, if we are aware that happiness provided by the medium would not exist without its hyper-social dimensions, then the presence of humans in it is not just collateral damage of our transition to the idealized realms; on the contrary, it would seem that our longing to be there is a consequence of our need for the ideal community, which will not be restricted by perishability and transience of earthly existence. Is it possible to imagine something more religious than this?

Recall that the *cloud* is the only Old Testamentary epiphanic entity or sign that persists through into New Testament epiphanies – and after taking into account all that has been presented here – this might not seem entirely insignificant. Namely, all those mystical clouds have been hiding (and announcing) the most precious revelations of biblical civilization: “... behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’”<sup>31</sup> Are not, ultimately, the *clouds of heaven* one of the recognizable signs of Christ’s eschatological second coming: “... and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”<sup>32</sup> Which is not to say that electronic clouds are the ‘space’ where Christ’s second coming should be expected, although it may be reasonable to contemplate some less pretentious images in our close future. What if we are actually, in spite of being exposed to the most bizarre forms of greedy exploitation, unconsciously but persistently trying to construe the icon of eternal life ‘up there’? And what if we become aware of this at some point? What if the loftiness and shining the network adds to our existence is the consequence of our need for the special kind of meeting and gathering, in the *heights* and in the *light*? Can we, at the conclusion, recognize some kind of deep religiosity and specific messianic hope, diluted but strongly infused in the mysterious knotting of the network we live by?

Should we, finally, think about all of this the way Ancient Christians thought about the medium of writing, when they added the motive of the book to the image of Heavenly Pantocrator?<sup>33</sup> Or should we, rather, ignore the new medium, pretending it reached the mythological ideal of absolute transparency, and just keep piously smiling in front of our bluish screens? Is the fact that the new medium is heavily and unscrupulously abused by earthly powers enough to condemn it to the (symbolic) death penalty, or – which is more

<sup>31</sup> Mathew 17: 5; cf. Mark 9: 7; Luke 9: 34–35.

<sup>32</sup> Mathew 24: 30; cf. Mark 13: 26; 14: 62; Luke 21: 27; Revelation 1: 7.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Sergej S. Averincev, *Poëtika rannevizantijskoj literatury* (Sankt-Peterburg: Azbuka-klassika, 2004), 188–215; Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1995), 49–66; Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2006), 43–93.

likely – accept the potential death penalty to humanism its abuse presents? After all, has not medieval Christianity, in spite of the unbelievable abuse and exploitation it suffered from earthly powers, succeeded in drawing an icon (a conceptual metaphor) of universal human *brotherhood*, *freedom* and *equality* in the minds and hearts that built modern Europe? Although this sacred ideal of our culture is still far from being fully realized, but is nevertheless subject to unscrupulous abuse and exploitation, today no one thinks of it as mere phantasm or delusion. What I suggest on the basis of the preceding discussion is to resist the temptation of being blessed by ignorance, and that we recall a time when Christian piety pursued a redefinition of European media in the most avant-garde and radical ways.<sup>34</sup> Finally, the way we are currently being cautioned that our life in the parallel universe called the Internet still awaits to be submitted to thorough (and effective) social, psychological, and political analysis (and power-control), it also persistently invites meaningful re-exploration and, perhaps even more importantly, *re-enchantment* from *philosophical* and *theological* perspectives.<sup>35</sup> No more, but also no less than this.

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<sup>34</sup> I have discussed these subjects (and gathered bibliography) in: Todor Mitrović, "Slike koje tumaraju: O rađanju ikone iz krize ikoničkog poretka," *Bogoslovlje* 77, no. 1 (2018): 160–185.

<sup>35</sup> Numerous initial steps in this direction have certainly already been made; cf. for example: Morten T. Højsgaard and Margit Warburg, ed., *Religion and Cyberspace*, (New York: Routledge, 2005); Jos de Mul, *Cyberspace Odyssey: Towards a Virtual Ontology and Anthropology* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2010); Antonio Spadaro, *Cybertheology: Thinking Christianity in the Era of the Internet* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014); Eric Trozzo, *The Cyberdimension: A Political Theology of Cyberspace and Cybersecurity* (especially pp. 223–263).

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## **The powerful and disturbing touch: gendered supplication in Euripides' *Hecuba*\***

*Abstract:* This paper proposes a reading of two episodes of Hecuba's supplication in Euripides' drama *Hecuba*. I am hoping to show that the female protagonist Hecuba, when begging for mercy, uses the ritual potential of the supplication act, while the two male characters secularize the primarily ritual act, with the result of escaping from it. The dramatized rite of supplication can serve for examination of normative engagements in the sphere of religious issues and gender roles, and the relationship between speech and gesture on stage. I am examining some aspects of the supplication rite and analysing chosen sections of the dramatic text, with the goal of mapping them within the coordinates of ritual/secularized, gestures/words, female/male.

*Key words:* ἱκετεία (supplication), ritual, Euripides, gender, *Hecuba* (424 BC)

“Which inflection is right? Urgency? Modesty? Culture provides choices, but does not tell suppliants which choice to make. They must communicate an intent to supplicate, and they must do so clearly, but they must do more, even when they must seem to do less.” (Naiden 2007: 62)

One of the prominent situations favoured in the Athenian theatre is the act of ἱκετεία – *supplication*, a ritual act based on the right of the powerless one (*suppliant*) to plead for help and protection with the powerful one (*supplicandus/a*), under certain circumstances and according to certain rules. It is a stylized practice that grasps religious, moral, and legal elements, and it is therefore an extremely fertile ground for the concerns of tragic drama. It is crucial to remember that drama, a far broader category than “literature”, is an official social institution sponsored by the city-state which not only reaffirms, but also questions and debates various ideological norms and overall social *status quo*. Classical Greek dramatic texts are not, of course, historical documents representing reality, but they do reflect life communicating some of the factual social, historical, anthropological, religious, cultural circumstances, adapting the epic narratives to the specific Athenian context. The dramatized rite of supplication can therefore serve for examination of normative engagements in the sphere of religious issues and gender roles, and the relationship between speech and

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gesture on stage. I hope to contribute to such scholarly topic with the reading of Euripides' *Hecuba* presented in this paper.

The most influential study in the scholarship of supplication was the article of John Gould, according to which *ἱκετεία* is a ritual performed in a certain form bringing success to the suppliant provided that certain rules of the ritual are respected (Gould 1973, 74sqg). If begging according to the rules, the suppliant (powerless one) begs with a certain dose of self-confidence, knowing that s/he is guarded by Zeus Soter, the god of suppliants *par excellence* (cf. Aeschylus, *Suppliques* 359sqg, 641, 478). Also, one can expect that the supplicated (powerful one) will not want to refuse the request. Namely, it is an infamy to refuse a suppliant, and refusal means pulling the ritual impurity onto oneself. The consequence of this „game“ (as Gould names it) is a newly established reciprocally binding relationship between the suppliant and the supplicated. Gould classifies all the supplication rituals in two major groups: „complete“ and „figurative“. As Gould points out, the power and ritual nature of the act rely on physical contact with the parts of body which are regarded to be having peculiar sanctity and vitality – then, a „complete“ act is being established. A „figurative“ act, which lacks the ritual importance and power of the „complete“ one and does not include the physical contact of the two parties, is being performed when nothing more than an intense verbal act is required or when the circumstances do not allow a „complete“ act (Gould 1973, 76–78, 96). There's a whole spectrum of supplication rituals whether the supplicated persona is another human or a divine being, if there is any physical contact between two parties or not, if the suppliant touches a sacred object/place or not (Freyburger 1988, 503). The importance of (present or absent) physical contact has always been underlined; what I would like to put into focus and examine further is the correlation of physical contact and speech in the supplication rite on tragic stage.

This interdependence was generally noticed in the most extensive study of ancient supplication to date, focused on its ethical and quasilegal dimension (Naiden 2006). In this study four steps of supplication procedure are determined: the approach, the gesture, the request (with the arguments), and the decision. The first three steps derive from the suppliant's initiative, and the final, decisive step represents the supplicandus' response. (Naiden 2006, esp. 29–171). Naming the second and the third step as „gestures“ and „words“ respectively, Naiden accurately notices that they are *complementary* signals, i.e. means of communication and expression (Naiden 2006, 43).

„Gestures“ and „words“ have received the most of the scholarly attention. One direction of scholarship on supplication was led by the ritualists; they were focused on several gestures that were held to contain magical power and that guaranteed the suppliant's safety, a phenomenon termed as *Kontaktmagie*. This prevailing view has been developed through years combining approaches of history of religions, anthropology, sociology, and classics by authors such as William Robertson Smith (1846–1894), Arnold Van Gennep (1873–1957), Richard Broxton Onians (1899–1986), Louis Gernet (1882–1962), Karl Meuli (1891–1968), Walter Burkert (1931–2015), and the most influential John Gould (1927–2001). The other direction taken by classicists saw the supplication ritual as a kind of narrative, thus restoring the attention to the arguments of the suppliant and the rhetoric skills.

This view opposed the prevailing one and it went along with the rise of narratology in literary theory, in particular Pierre Bourdieu's (1930–2002) attack on the ritual approach as definitive. The rite of supplication within the context of Greek tragedy has been studied mostly through the lens of the prevailing approach of Gould's school, while the studies that employed the other approach saw supplication acts mainly as idiosyncratic scenes, as tools of dramaturgy and characterization.<sup>1</sup>

This paper analyses the dynamics between the gestures and words in the Euripides' tragedy *Hecuba* focused on the gestures of physical contact, with the awareness of the gender roles and supported by the approach of Gould's school – after all, Greek tragedy as deeply rooted in the ritual context is a bottomless pit (e.g. Sourvinou-Inwood 2003). Through this analysis or „reading“ I am hoping to show that the concrete sphere of gestures, i.e. the ritual and corporeal layer of the supplication rite, coincides with the feminine agency on stage (while the more elusive sphere of words and rhetorics corresponds with the male agency).

Since our analysis relies on the presence or absence of physical contact between suppliant and supplicandus, we will briefly look into those gestures that enable touch to happen. First, what Naiden calls „approach“ happens: lowering the body and crouching (by sitting or kneeling) and stretching unarmed arms demonstrating harmlessness, humility and inferiority (Gould 1973, 94–5; cf. Cairns 1993, 276) – these signals of bodily language are already announcing the physical contact, they are anticipating it.

Afterwards, the suppliant moves his body to touch the supplicandus: clasping the knees, touching the chin, touching/kissing the hand, touching the feet. These ritual gestures according to Gould's school rely on the principle of contagious magic, i.e. the potency of tactile interaction with those body parts which contain, as it was argued, a particular sanctity and embody *male* physical strength and sexual/reproductive power. Hands, knees and chin/beard are explained as seats of sanctity, strength, generative power, and seed throughout in Onians 1988[1951], listed in the bibliography index; cf. Gould 1973, 77, 96 n. 112. The ritualist explanation is that the vital power thus flows from the supplicated to the suppliant via touch, and/or that these most vital parts are simultaneously most vulnerable, so touching them means a threat (albeit not harmful) and it puts the suppliant in a symbolically aggressive position (Gould 1973, 97). There is another point of view, particularly useful in theatre: these gestures are expressive, rich in content and arresting, they lend urgency to the appeal and oblige a response. Being signs of nonverbal communication, the gestures form a „paralanguage“ from which the suppliant can borrow chosen signs (Naiden 2006, 44).

Because of the potency and poignancy of all the verbal and gestural elements, it is no wonder that the supplication act has a prominent place in Greek literature and art. How many ritual elements will the suppliant use and to what extent? That depends on the severity of the situation and the goal of the suppliant, practical circumstances, symbolisms of particular body parts, social and literary reasons (Gould 1973, 77; Naiden 2006, 46–7). Every specific situation means that specific choices are to be made, with their risks and consequences.

<sup>1</sup> The detailed review of both scholarly approaches with bibliographies, their strongpoints and shortcomings is given by Naiden 2006, 8–18.

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The steps of the supplication rite provide for repetition and formality, for structure – but also for variety. If we consider this ratio (especially between gestures and words) in the theatrical context, we will come to conclusion that inside of the structure there is space for manipulation by the tragic poet. Like such poetic interventions in mythical patterns as are particularly favoured by Euripides, the dramatized supplication rite is the occasion for artistic freedom, innovations, and conscious choice of this tragic writer.

The supplication rite was a religious and social institution characteristic of archaic and early classical Greece). By the time of Euripides it was weakening and becoming more and more metaphorical (Gould 1973, 101). Nevertheless, its ritual – corporal and gestural dimension – was still alive enough, as we shall see, to permit reference to it and to draw dramatic potency from it. The aforementioned gestures are quite striking and the established intimate physical contact (which rarely happens publicly and on stage) provides for spectacular moments of emotionally expressive theatre. Not least important, the moment of ritual supplication can elicit a talented actor's exemplary use of his body, i.e. the most accessible and the most valuable stage property (Huston 1992). The study of dramatized supplication with its physical gestures can therefore be a helpful tool in ongoing research on the relation of text to performance (Ubersfeld 1999 [1976], 3–11), particularly in the context of ancient theatre. The performative potential of a polyvalent dramatic text is undeniable, but so is the fact that so many classicists have experienced the plays solely as texts far too often. Therefore, „It would be an interesting experiment, as well as a useful corrective of classicists, (...) to watch an ancient play „with the sound turned off“, so we could direct our full attention to the wordless discourse of the actors' bodies.“ (Griffith 1998, 231).

Moreover, if we are to speak about the „displacement of the body by speech“ which „remains central to tragedy“ (Murnaghan 1988, 29), we cannot do so without considering gender roles. Needless to say, all male and female characters were *embodied* by male actors, and the plays were seen by mostly if not solely male audiences.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the social institution called theatre, whether confirming or debating civic ideology, communicated it together with its gender norms, and the corporeal self in tragedy and its catastrophes were regularly represented through feminine agency. As Froma Zeitlin in her seminal study has shown: „Men too have bodies, of course, but in a system defined by gender the role of representing the corporeal side of life in its helplessness and submission to constraints is primarily assigned to women.“ (Zeitlin 1996, 352). This was the same patriarchal civic ideology that reserved the aesthetic ideals of somatic strength and beauty to the male athlete, and that kept the voices of women (and other socially inferior categories) generally muted and hence assimilated to their (weak, flawed) bodies. One sphere of life where women never-

2 Were women allowed to attend theatre? This topic was largely discussed. It seems that coming to theatre was not prohibited to them and that Athenian women, female foreigners and female slaves were allowed to come but were rarely actually coming (Podlecki 1990, Henderson 1991, Goldhill 1994). For the contrary opinion, cf. Csapo, Slater 1995: 286, where it is claimed with some certainty that women (and boys) were attending theatre. At any rate, even if there was a limited number of women present in the audience, the plays were primarily addressing male citizens (Gould 1980, 38–39 f. 2; Foley 2001, 1 f. 1).

theless were heard and seen was that of rituals.<sup>3</sup> In life (and likewise in theatrical space) through birth, nurture of children, tending to the sick and caring for the deceased, woman seems to be a link particularly to the fragility and mortality of the human body, and to the concrete embodied life experience: the perishable physical being. Therefore, ritual supplication with gestures of physical contact (or their absence) deserves further analysis.

In order to examine how withdrawal of ritual gestures consequently corresponds with a rather secularized, rhetorical and politicized status of supplication, I have chosen two suppliant episodes involving a female character, both from Euripides' drama *Hecuba*, staged for the first and only time in its author's lifetime in 424 BC.

\* \* \*

After losing almost all her family and her freedom in the late Trojan war, Queen Hecuba of Troy, confined in the victors' camp with other enslaved Trojan women, is informed that at the demand of Achilles' ghostly apparition *and at the instance of Odysseus* the Greeks will sacrifice one of her very few children [Note: I would *not* number them; they would be in fact *four*, including grown son Helenus and, besides Polyxena, another daughter Cassandra and the youngest child Polydorus—whom Euripides may have kept alive *pace Iliad* in order to grant Polymestor, not Achilles (who in *Iliad* 20 kills Polydorus son of Priam *and Laothoe*), the dishonor of murdering a son of Priam *and Hecuba* by the same name--unlikely to have been given to two different sons of the late king!] who remain alive out of the eighteen she had born to Priam, her maiden daughter Polyxena. Hecuba supplicates Odysseus and begs for mercy, all in vain. The girl is ritually slain. While her mother is mourning Polyxena, she finds learns that her youngest son has also been killed: his dead body is washed up into the nearby beach. Polydorus has been murdered by Thracian king Polymestor, a friend and ally of theirs. Late in the war his parents had entrusted their little boy to this man for safe-keeping and with him much royal treasure. However, that "friend" killed his little guest out of greed for the gold and, he will say, to please the Greeks who will not now have to worry about a future avenger of Priam and Troy. Hecuba now supplicates again. She begs the Greek commander-in-chief Agamemnon to take revenge on the Thracian. All that she receives is his consent to her taking the matter in her own hands. With the help of Trojan women, Hecuba will deprive the Thracian king of his eyesight and his children. Only then she can meet her own destiny.

The core of the play's complex dramatic plot lies in Hecuba's dominant role as sufferer. Her suffering unites the two stories of Polydorus and Polyxena and is a focal point toward which all Troy's misfortunes are concentrated. The play is masterfully structured so that it leads to, and then from, each acme moment of her pain. Thinking that it is Polyxena's body, newly washed in seawater, buried to her beneath a shroud Hecuba uncovers it only to discover Polydorus' corpse. Unlike Homer's Hecuba who is static, passive, pathetic, and rarely in the foreground, Euripides' Hecuba turns out to be an active and dominant character in *Hecuba*, as she will be in *Troades* and probably in the lost *Alexan-*

<sup>3</sup> On the role of women in Greek religion, see Winkler 1990[1972], 188–209, Osborne 1993, Blundell, Williamson 1998, Dillon 2001, Goff 2004.

der as well.<sup>4</sup> The old woman, helpless at the beginning of this play, will show herself to be a dreadful avenger.<sup>5</sup> Prior to this, however, the ex-queen will have to supplicate Greek enemies twice but with negative outcome: she begs Odysseus to spare her daughter, Agamemnon to punish her son's murderer.

### Hecuba's supplicates Odysseus (vv. 251–295)

In her first plea, directed towards Greek hero Odysseus, Hecuba skilfully and confidently argues the justice of her request. For once during the Trojan War Odysseus, pretending to be a blind beggar, had purposely fallen into Trojan hands in order to spy on the Trojans. However, Hecuba recognized archenemy Odysseus. His true identity detected, he urgently and effectively supplicated Hecuba. Consciously, conscientiously respecting the hallowed rules of supplication he concealed him and saved his life. She acted in accordance with the gods' law. For this reason she believes that she has acquired a right to reciprocal favor.<sup>6</sup> Back to the present moment in the play: Hecuba's suppliant plea for Polyxena's life to be spared is actually a request for returning a favor already done (vv. 273–278 with my translation):

ἦψα τῆς ἐμῆς, ὡς φῆς, χερὸς  
καὶ τῇσδε γράϊας προσπίτνων παρηίδος:  
ἀνθάπτομαι σου τῶνδε τῶν αὐτῶν ἐγὼ  
χάριν τ' ἀπαιτῶ τὴν τόθ' ἵκετεύω τέ σε,  
μὴ μου τὸ τέκνον ἐκ χερῶν ἀποσπάσης,  
μηδὲ κτάνητε: τῶν τεθνηκότων ἄλλις.

Once you fell at my feet, as you yourself say,  
grasped my hand and my elderly cheek.  
Now, it is me clutching you, asking a favor  
in return for the one then. I supplicate you:  
do not you wrest my child away from my arms  
nor, all of you, kill her: those dead are enough.

These lines are all about physical contact. Be it between the former suppliant Odysseus and the queen in the past, between mother and daughter with him in the present moment (cf. vv. 338, 409sq, 424), or the daughter and her captors in the nearest future – the intense, intimate and compelling touch is the pivotal sensation. The central point of this section is ἀνθάπτομαι σου (v. 275) | “I am laying hold of you in return”, stressing the dimension of physical contact in the reciprocity between two parties that is established in a successful ritual supplication. But where Hecuba through this spectacular action resumes a dialogue that began long ago by like physical contact, Odysseus finds a way, as we shall see, against and avoiding further touch.

4 For Homer's Hecuba v. *Iliad* 6.251–311, 22.79–92, 24.193–227, 283–301, 747–60. Hence, I disagree with Justina Gregory who claims that for building the character of Hecuba as fierce and decisive motherly figure Euripides found source in *Iliad* (Gregory 2005, xviii).

5 We cannot pinpoint precisely when this alteration of Hecuba is complete. It is a general opinion that Hecuba transforms herself from passive victim to an active executor of revenge punishing Polymestor. However, Hecuba is active all along, whichever child of hers is the matter, whether trying to prevent Polyxena's death, or trying to exact revenge for the murder of Polydorus (Kovacs 1987, 99).

6 Plea for χάρις | “a favor in return” is an utterly personal appeal (v. 830); it is about trading favors, „quid pro quo“. In colloquial language, the term χάρις could be well understood from the expression χάρις χάριν τίκτει, „I'll scratch your back, you'll scratch mine“. Furthermore, when it comes to Hecuba's plea, gods were believed to be pleased when the rights of the weak ones are taken care of, and such a weak one would be a prisoner of war that is also a blind pauper – precisely what Odysseus back then counted on.

Hecuba also tells Odysseus: ἐλθὼν δ' εἰς Ἀχαιικὸν στρατὸν παρηγόρησον | „Go to the Achaean army and appease them“ (vv. 287sq.). The chosen verb παρηγορέω | „advise“, „soothe“, „comfort“, is developed from the word ἀγορά. Ἀγορά, „assembly“, „market“ is the public space within which men assemble to carry out all manly business: to sell and buy, to negotiate and come to agreements, to discuss, give speeches, even vote – in short, to use their rhetorical skills for various ends. In *Hecuba*, the function of ἀγορά is served by an *open field* at which the Greeks gather and act (deliver speeches, debate, persuade, vote, decide, sacrifice). On this open field there is no place for Trojans, especially Trojan *women* (who act in the *indoor space*, an *enclosing text* which men can enter but where they are not welcome and might be harmed).

Touching Odysseus' hand cheek, and beard (vv. 273–6, 286) and thereby activating the full potential of contagious magic in ritual supplication, Hecuba completes her plea with these words (vv. 293–5 with my translation):

<p>τὸ δ' ἀξίωμα, καὶ κακῶς λέγει, τὸ σὸν          πείσει: λόγος γὰρ ἔκ τ' ἀδοξούντων ἰὼν          κακὸν τῶν δοκούντων αὐτὸς οὐ ταῦτ' οὐ σθένει</p>	<p>Your rank, even if words are meagre, will persuade: for the same argument by ones of ill repute does not have the same persuasive power as when used by ones held in high esteem.</p>
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These lines, built up around the word λόγος | „argument“, form a fitting introduction to Odysseus' response. Let us recall the spectrum of epithets that characterize Odysseus. He is capable, cunning, skilful, clever, adroit; but if we are to be frank, he is also devious, guileful, and mendacious. It is obvious why many regard him as a gifted politician! In sum, he will most certainly win a debate. Maybe the most suitable epithet of Odysseus is the one that frequently completes his naming: πολύτροπος | „one with many turns“, „very resourceful“. Naturally, a man with such a quality comes up with an „exit“, i.e. a well-argued denial of what Hecuba rightfully demands. For he replies to Hecuba that he is willing to spare *her* life in return for the old favor. Therefore, they will be even. Moreover, he claims, it is not just or righteous to disrespect the deceased by ignoring their desires, the deceased one in this case being Achilles, whose ghost demands Polyxena's life. Odysseus concludes that Greeks have superior attitudes, customs, and deeds—in broadest terms, Greek „politics“ (vv. 330sq.), in contrast to the ways of barbarians who do not pay respect to either their living or their dead. His specious yet offensive response exemplifies his cynical manipulation of the principal institutions of rational, „civilized“ male Greeks, as opposed to the barbarian women who stand for the sphere of „primitive“ laws, of rituals and magic.

Let's have a closer look at both participants in this *agōn*. On one side there is an aged woman from the royal Trojan family, i.e. a member of the aristocracy with lifelong experience in and knowledge of rituals, protocol, and diplomacy, of war, of life and death. On the other side there is Greek hero Odysseus, portrayed in this play as an arrant demagogue whose success relies on the shortcomings of the masses. This is not to say that Odysseus is not objectively smart, eloquent, and charismatic; however, all these qualities imply an audience such as he can influence.<sup>7</sup> Hecuba is hoping that the crisis can be resolved on the level

<sup>7</sup> On Odysseus' manipulation of Greek soldiers by means of „patriotic conventions“ in *Hecuba*, v. Synodinou 1994, where an analysis of the *agōn* between Hecuba and Odysseus and an extensive survey of Odysseus'

of personal reciprocal favor (χάρις) and invites Odysseus to do what he does naturally: to make a decisive impact on public opinion. However, the current disproportion of political power between them is such that Odysseus can afford to choose not to do/to return Hecuba a real favor, and to displace the whole thing onto a political level. It is nothing personal!

Helen Foley observes that in spite of Odysseus' problematic character Hecuba cannot refute his defence of *public* interest by pleading *private* reasons, however valid, for returning a favor and upholding a personal justice (Foley 2001, 284). On the level of politics, the *agōn* of Odysseus and Hecuba represents confrontation of democracy and aristocracy, where Hecuba, even if she seems narrow<sup>8</sup> in her aristocratic manner of arguing for her personal interest against the public one, builds her case upon principles that are, she asserts, „universal to a stable social and religious order and political equality“ (Foley 2001, 285). With this last claim in mind, we cannot say that Hecuba's very personal plea is solely personal, can we?

The enslaved Trojan queen, who doesn't belong to the common people by birth or marriage, is aware of the huge gap between ruling royalty and δῆμος (cf. v. 293–295 above), even as Odysseus is. She is also aware of the power of λόγος over pliable “plebeians” in the association of Greek males in general, in this case that of the Greek army. If we could say that Hecuba learned to supplicate from a “civilized” male Greek just like another murderous barbarian woman Medea (Castellani 2012, 97), we could also say that the same barbarian(s) used the means of λόγος to play by Greek rules. Being an aged, enslaved and wretched mother, her domain and resource should well be the ritual sphere and the gestures of physical contact ought to provide her with protection. However, enactment of a rite is so inadequate in this devastating scene that Hecuba has to look for another tool: verbal manoeuvre. She grasps the foot, hand, and beard of Odysseus, the last of these being the site of his mature masculinity and symbolic site of power. However, he proved to be not strong (if strength is obliged to honour the weak), but arrogant, abusing his position to actually humiliate her. Her persuasive argument derives from obvious factors, her characterization and the playwright's dramaturg; but it emerges furthermore from circumstances in which bodily gestures and ritually and emotionally charged physical contact mean little.

Odysseus chooses to keep their interaction on the level of politics and to act according to the principle of democracy, i.e. in line with the decision of majority in the Assembly. This choice entails another one: the choice to disregard the ritual that Hecuba activates. Not only does the tragic poet deliberately indicate that Odysseus manipulated a divided Assembly. The account of Hecuba's reception of humbled, vulnerable Odysseus during the Trojan war is most probably Euripides' mythic innovation, as one scholium suggests.<sup>9</sup> By

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character are given together with many pertinent references. This author belongs to the group of critics who discern that Odysseus got soldiers in Assembly to vote for the sacrifice of Polyxena by rhetorical manipulation, and that he draws on this power during debate with Hecuba. When describing Odysseus' decisive role in convincing the soldiers, the enslaved Trojan women apply the following epithets: ποικιλόφρων, κόπις, ἡδυλόγος, δημοχαριστής (v. 131sq), which are consonant with Odysseus' traditional characterization as well as that of the demagogues in the Athenian Assembly of that time (Synodinou 1994, 194; Michelini 1987, 143).

<sup>8</sup> On Hecuba's aristocratic approach, v. Kovacs 1987, 80–83 and 98sq.

<sup>9</sup> Schwartz 1887, 32 ad 241: ἀπίθανον τὸ πλάσμα καὶ οὐχ Ὀμηρικόν· οὐ γὰρ ἂν εἰτάσεν Ἑκάβη πολέμιον θεασαμένη κατοπτέοντα τὰ κατὰ τοὺς Τρώας πράγματα, ἢ δὲ Ἑλένη εἰκότως–ἄτην γὰρ μετέστενεν Ἀφροδίτη.

means of such invention the poet makes Odysseus personally repellent and increases empathy for the old woman's calamity. Finding himself in his present position of superiority, Odysseus abuses it and ignores the fact that, with regard to supplication, a position of power does not merely make him „powerful“, it also obliges him. A position of power should also be a position of responsibility. Not, however, for him, now.

Hecuba therefore urges her daughter to supplicate Odysseus herself by clasping his knees (v. 339). Her calculation is astute. Through this new act of supplication a new ritual cycle would be activated, a new relationship established to which Odysseus would need to respond. However, Polyxena notices how Odysseus avoids contact with her, hides his right hand and turns his beard away (vv. 342–44). Evidently, he *is* conscious of the ritual power of supplication that physical contact activates. Indeed, he is actually disturbed by the very thought of this and thus tries to keep the situation in the intangible domain of words and discussion. He tries to *displace* the topic into that domain from its original, ritual and physical context. Where abstracting and reducing life to words and ideas dominates, there he „has many ways“. Polyxena chooses not to beg, thereby choosing death, and explicitly sets Odysseus free from his duty towards her in the case of supplication.<sup>10</sup> According to Polyxena, to supplicate, to implore is a humiliation which she refuses to endure (cf. vv. 342sq, 405sq). A mother about to lose yet another child cannot afford that attitude: that is why Hecuba, on the contrary, calls her supplication an act of *courage* (τολμᾶν ἀνάγκη, v. 751), not without paradox and dramatic impact.

### Hecuba supplicates Agamemnon (vv. 752–888)

Shortly afterwards Hecuba discovers that her last-born son Polydorus is dead, murdered at the hand of that treacherous barbarian „ally“, Thracian king Polymestor. In consequence enslaved Hecuba supplicates her master Agamemnon, the supreme Greek commander. A general and conqueror of her nation, a *man* and her owner, Agamemnon is a superior figure *par excellence*. Just as in the previous case with Odysseus, Hecuba the suppliant righteously expects Agamemnon to accept her ritual plea, on two principles. First, she believes that he is obliged to stand in defence of a universal and paramount concept of customary law, ξενία or „guest-friendship“. The Thracian king violated and profaned this rule, as he took in a child entrusted to him and murdered him.<sup>11</sup> Second, Hecuba also tries to bind

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Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 4.242sq, where Hecuba does not appear nor does Odysseus pretend to be blind, and where he is recognized only by infamous beautiful Helen. On Odysseus' ungratefulness towards Hecuba, v. Synodinou 1994, *pastutr.* 6.

<sup>10</sup> Polyxena's attitude transforms the atrocity of murdering a slave into a highly affecting spectacle of human strength, dignity, and above all free will. *Sophoclean* Polyxena (Conacher 1961, 19) does not accept being the victim of an external force, but instead maintains her free will even though facing an imposed death. Not only is she free, but she, the captive, sets free the captor, free from his fear that he will be coerced to help her should she invoke Zeus Soter her supplication (v. 345). This act of expressly forgoing the right to supplicate, when this right belongs to her and she is expected to use it, indeed told to do so by her mother, is a masterful *coup de théâtre*. On the concepts of freedom and slavery in *Hecuba*, v. Daitz 1971.

<sup>11</sup> Both ἱκετεία and ξενία as ancient ritual practices form an unbreakable bond comparable to blood relationship, not only between the two individuals who establish it, but also between their collaterals and progeny.

Agamemnon to take revenge for Polydorus' death as his kin, since the Greek warlord chose Polydorus' sister Cassandra for his slave concubine. This second, quite personal appeal is a request for a reciprocal favor, *χάρις* (v. 830).<sup>12</sup>

Accordingly, Hecuba, whose case customary law supports, activates the ritual potential of supplication: she touches Agamemnon's knees, beard, and right hand (vv. 752sq, 787). Complementing her gestural plea with words, Hecuba appeals to *Nómos* personified, a divine Law that exists „since the beginning of time“, and imposes a duty to punish the wicked (vv. 798–801 with my translation):

<p>ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν δοῦλοι τε καὶ σθενεῖς ἴσως:  ἀλλ' οἱ θεοὶ σθένουσι χά' κείνων κρατῶν  Νόμος: νόμῳ γὰρ τοὺς θεοὺς ἡγούμεθα  καὶ ζῶμεν ἄδικα καὶ δίκαι' ὠρισμένοι:</p>	<p>I might be a powerless slave, but gods are  almighty and over them the divine Law rules.  It is by this law that we believe in them  by discerning right and wrong we live.</p>
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If we don't abide by this principle, Hecuba says further on, there's no justice. Hecuba deploys the ritual potency of supplication and calls for *Nómos*, a principle that needs no argument and no rhetoric, that divine Law which is eternal and universal, unlike ephemeral and local regulations codified by mortals (*νόμοι*).<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately for her, Agamemnon tries to prevent or curtail physical contact with his suppliant, as we learn from the stage direction implied by verse 812. For he is well aware of supplication's ritual power and the duties that *ἱκετεῖα* would impose on him.

As Odysseus has done earlier, Agamemnon closes himself off from the realm of direct and transparent life experience, and hastens into that of politics, diplomacy, negotiation, that is, where life experience is *mediated and rationalized*. Agamemnon says he agrees with Hecuba and would gladly punish the villain,<sup>14</sup> but he fears that this could be misunderstood among his soldiers as favoritism, demonstrating weakness, a selfish desire to

<sup>12</sup> Nusbaum 2001[1986], 414, 416 claims that Hecuba uses her daughter's body and her own as mere tools for her vengeful plan. It seems to me that in this and her subsequent remarks about Hecuba's doggishness this scholar's ethical analysis does not take into consideration the tragedy's socio-religious dimension as regards supplication, guest-friendship, and reciprocated favors nor the function of the physical person in this domain. Conacher is particularly sharp and, dare I say malicious, calling Hecuba her daughter's pimp (Conacher 1961, 22–23). In contrast, Gregory defends Hecuba, pointing out that in the realm of tragedy parents freely talk about their children's sexuality and that Hecuba's dubious definition of Cassandra's status (as if were a marriage, and not a slavery) is not a solitary case (Gregory 1991, 106–107).

<sup>13</sup> The term *νόμος* relates to the wide spectrum of normative concepts, from customary and habitual to law decrees. This term should not be limited to guidelines of human arbitration only, as is suggested by Heraclitus' remark on the difference between human *νόμοι* and one divine *νόμος* (Heraclitus, *On Nature* B114). On notorious sophistic antithesis *nomos* : *phusis* within Greek tragedy, v. Lanzillotta 2013, 894–896.

On Hecuba's appeal to divine Law (*Nóμος*) and the human art of persuasion (*Πειθώ*), *pn* Odysseus' and Agamemnon's attitude towards *Nóμος*, v. Kirkwood 1947. Kirkwood deems *Nóμος* the very thread that unifies *Hecuba*, a view rejected by numerous scholars. Hecuba's attitude to *Nóμος* and the proposed understanding of this term when used in Hecuba's lines 798–805 constitute one of the strongpoints of the philosophical interpretation of Martha Nusbaum (Nusbaum 2001[1986], 397–422), who defines the afore-mentioned Hecuba's attitude as ethical anthropocentrism.

<sup>14</sup> Agamemnon condemns Polymestor's cruelty and greediness without hesitation (v. 775) and he feels sorry for Hecuba (v. 783, 785, 850), sincerely *sowe* believe; but that's as far as he is willing to go.

please Cassandra and her mother—both Trojans, both *enemy*. (Barbarous Polymestor, on the other hand, is *not* an enemy at all under the present circumstances, but even, albeit perversely, may be perceived a *friend*.) On these realities Hecuba can have only one, desolate comment (vv. 83–867 with my translation):

φεῦ.   οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἔστ' ἐλεύθερος;	Alas. No mortal is free.
ἢ χρημάτων γὰρ δοῦλός ἐστιν ἢ τύχης,	He's a slave either to money or fate,
ἢ πλῆθος αὐτὸν πόλεος ἢ νόμων γραφαί	either the majority or the public prosecutions
εἴργουσι χρῆσθαι μὴ κατὰ γνώμην τρόποις.	keep him away from acting on conscience.

Mercier offers an analysis of the text according to which Hecuba performs „prolonged“ supplication: announcing it already at vv. 737sq, falling to her knees the latest at vv. 752sq (when she starts using the language characteristic for supplication), and is surely on her knees until vv. 888.<sup>15</sup> Such long kneeling of an old woman who clings to the king's legs while he is trying to shake her off can have been extremely disagreeable stage business for the two actors involved, for other actors (i.e. internal spectators), and especially for the audience (Mercier 1993, 158). This second supplication scene is more startling than the first one, because clasping the supplicandus' knees, in comparison with falling at his feet, is intense contact with so much more proximity and intimacy.

After her futile yet highly dramatic appeal, Hecuba releases Agamemnon from her suppliant grasp, and dismisses his fear of consequences of neglected duty (vv. 868sq). Paradoxically, and again with huge dramatic charge, the slave liberates the master.

Agamemnon has refused to execute the revenge himself. Instead he merely gives his permission to Hecuba. He will turn a blind eye till she carries out her plan, and promises to arbitrate in her favor at a later pseudo-trial. How grimly playful language can be: by *turning a blind eye* Agamemnon enables Hecuba to make Polymestor *blind*. Greek king and barbarian king actually share a moral blindness (Segal 1990, 129). Fundamental customary regulations are conspicuously violated; the *polis* and its institutions are far away and effective legal intervention is absent, while men in power, the Greek high command, have disowned moral authority because with it comes obligation to act in certain way. They retain power but close their eyes to the responsibilities that come with it. Under these conditions of manifold social inversion a Dionysiac reversal occurs, typical for Euripidean theatre. The time has come for women to conceive a plot, and take matters into their own hands – literally.<sup>16</sup> After physical contact and its ritual potency the denied by Odysseus

<sup>15</sup> Although the spectacle of prolonged supplication with kneeling is characteristic of Euripidean theatre, this Hecuba's act lasts for more than 130 lines according to Mercier's analysis, which is exceptionally long and comparable only to the 144 lines-long Andromache's kneeling in front of Peleus in *Andromache*.

<sup>16</sup> Let it be briefly mentioned that one direction of this play's analysis asserts that from the perspective of Athenian criminal law some kind of retribution is not only Hecuba's right but also her duty towards both the murdered son and society. In fact, Euripides purposely left few signs, if any, to invite interpreting the vindictive act of Trojan women in the context of judicial law. V. MacDowell 1963:1; Tulin 1996. Within the framework of interpreting the revenge as a legally authorized reaction to a crime, we can „read“ in the play that Hecuba does not explicitly with her own hands either murder Polymestor's children (vv. 1161sq) or blind him (vv. 1167–71). This is in accordance with the Athenian law that explicitly prohibits handing a killer over to the family of the victim (Meridor 1978: 30).

and minimized by Agamemnon, an unavoidable, irrefutable *touch* will be fully discharged on the culprit Polymnestor. Trojan *female hands* will see to their version of justice which is “blind” in a completely different sense, as impartial and objective. After Hecuba has lured the greedy, wicked Thracian into the female space of the captive women’s quarters, they kill his children. After he has seen this they blind his eyes. The wretched Polymnestor is messenger who narrates his own catastrophe, giving us a picture, the last *he* will ever see, of unparalleled female violence (vv. 1145sq). Female hands, all over his body, almost multiply into countless spots of relentless touch, seizing his male hands and feet, not *now* in a female suppliant mode. Their Erinyes-like action of retribution accords with female chthonic powers, with natural laws of Mother Earth that antedate *polis*, the patriarchal system, the Olympic gods, and the reign of *logos*. This is where Euripides, the alleged rationalist from the sceptical era of the Peloponnesian War, enters the world of rituals as deeply as he ever does: „Thus we see that blessing as well as cursing lies in the power of the Chthonian people, the dead, the Erinyes, and collectively of Mother Earth. (...) The law that ‘The doer shall suffer’ is a natural law like the maturing of a seed, or the return of spring; (...) The law of the Erinyes neither understands nor forgives. It simply operates.“ (Murray 1925: vii, ix).

The abhorrent, extremely harsh punishment of Polymnestor serves not just as escalated cruel retribution for a single cruel crime, but also as a cumulative response to the male behavior that ignoring corporal touch, ritual acts, and *Nomos*. The phallogocentric veneer is not rooted firmly, and it collapses. Greek leaders and Polymnestor alike slip away from the directness of life into demagoguery, escape from the zone of ritual supplication into politicized calculation. Trojan women dispense them from selfishly conceived duty and themselves act instead, now not clasping knees but with a malevolent, violent, bloody physicality.<sup>17</sup>

\* \* \*

Both cases of Hecuba’s rejected and failed supplication point out the gap between two ethical modes that belong to different areas of life, to different sexes.

<sup>17</sup> This immediacy that I argue is, believe, very well evoked in the baroque painting *Hecuba Blinding Polym(n)estor* by Giuseppe Maria Crespi (oil on canvas, Bologna circa 1700, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique). The painting, characterized by monumentality and dramatic effect along with excellent painting technique, shows Polymnestor being held by one of the Trojan women while Hecuba attacks his face to blind him. The image emerges from the darkness of its background with the effect of expressive precision, pioneered in the later works of Titian and Caravaggio. The dynamics of the movements of the two protagonists and the somatic dimension of their relation are underlined by the motion of their clothing. Polymnestor is losing his balance. We see him losing control in the flailing free arm and a foot in the air. The avenger stands firmly with both feet on the ground and acts with elegant accuracy of a determined and calm assault. (Let us also notice that in this baroque visual representation Hecuba is a vigorous woman and not an old lady as in the ancient prototype, and that she performs the blinding explicitly herself, which is not the case in Euripides’ drama, cf. f. 16. Polymnestor’s sons are not to be seen, which keeps this baroque representation of Hecuba’s retribution far from its full ferocity. Not only that the aforementioned directness exists between Hecuba and Polymnestor. The onlooker stands directly in the scene as well. Considering the position that the painter chose for Hecuba’s figure—facing away from us towards the depth of the image and her victim, thus anticipating the body position of observers who approach the painting from its right—could each observer identify with the wrathful mother to some extent, as with co-executor of a just retribution?

Childbearing and nurture of children, a central role in funeral rites and in wide range of cult practices all belong to the domain of the female. Those activities indicate care for the bonds between past and present, present and future, and belong to the arena of universal and concrete facts of life. Therefore, they relate to a bigger and a deeper picture in contrast to male civic activities and current, ephemeral issues of *agora*, however grave and acute they can be, the subject of public politics discussed in the Assembly.

An offence in the area of personal yet also universal facts of life involves violation of rules that can be described as timeless, common to all humankind, unwritten customary law.

Those norms and rules to which Hecuba appeals, and to violation of which Trojan women respond literally ‘with a vengeance’, belong to this unwritten law: the rights of the deceased, of surrendered prisoners of war, and of slaves; suppliants’ rights, a code of reciprocated favors and of guest-friendship. Appealing to such norms as are founded in divine *Nomos*, aged and enslaved Hecuba invokes the potency of ritual supplication. Those to whom she appeals – resourceful hero Odysseus and supreme commander Agamemnon, the two leaders of the victorious Greek army, step back from the gestures of ritual supplication, avoid physical contact, and in return they transform the ritual into a secularized, rhetoricized, politicized form of mere request, and so they succeed in deflecting moral responsibility and thus evade it.

Being witness to this, powerless Hecuba, not yet empowered, speaks of her sorrows, yearning to amplify the ritual potency of her pleas. In fact, she is on her painful way to empowerment. It as if Euripides places corporeality under a magnifying glass: While some scholars have seen the image in the utterance quoted below as a grotesque degradation that corresponds to Hecuba’s moral fall (Micheline 1987, 152–153; Nusbaum 1986, 415), I would like to turn attention in another direction: the dramatic and magic potency of the ritual suppliant gestures.

There is a unique moment in the play where words complement the performative reality of the script, with graphic imagination: as if each *part* of Hecuba’s body could present its own supplicating plea. Even though this can hardly be staged, the *image* of diverse parts of her body supplicating, each on its own account and thus speaking for itself in bodily “paralanguage” must not pass unperceived in the mind’s eye and ear. „The first prerequisite for the semiotic use of the body (...) is an ability to see it as *Ding an sich*, (...) divorced from the person who inhabits it.“ (Griffith 1998, 232). Hecuba wishes that parts of her, as numerous as locks of hair on her head, might each find a voice in a massive tearful chorus stark, vivid, and palpable (vv. 836–840 with my translation):

εἴ μοι γένοιτο φθόγγος ἐν βραχίονι	If only I had voice in arms and palms,
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ κόμαισι καὶ ποδῶν βάσει	in hairs and legs, placed there
ἢ Δαίδαλου τέχνησιν ἢ θεῶν τινος,	by skilled Daedalus or some god,
ὥς πᾶνθ' ὁμαρτῇ σὼν ἔχοντο γουνάτων	so that all my cells wrapped around your knees
κλαίοντ', ἐπισκῆπτοντα παντοίους λόγους.	shed tears begging in countless ways.

The mythical craftsman Daedalus was known to possess not only manual skill but also wisdom. The artist who created lifelike figures of divinities (*δαίδαλα*) that could move and speak, he knew how powerful the touch of hand is, and that it possesses magic that can even impart breath and movement to a sculptor’s material. Hecuba wishes to be Daedalus’ living

statue, a manifestation that is visible and will thereby confirm rights that, to this point, she been asserting to no effect. The grieving, angry mother wishes to have a plural body that multiplies ritual potency and the magic of physical contact by each of its countless cells, to compensate for the absence of her children whom she cannot save or ever again *touch*.

## Conclusion

This paper aspires to direct attention of thoughtful readers to a striking but underappreciated feature of Euripides' dramaturgy that in this respect as in others reflects his analysis of Greek society, mythical and contemporary. It may guide in particular all who make an effort to visualize tragedies, who have the good fortune to see their careful cinematic realization or, better yet, to attend live performances of the plays.

Its findings are clear. A thorough case study of Euripides' *Hecuba* reveals a striking difference between attitudes toward ἱκετεῖα, "supplication" on the part of male characters (Odysseus and Agamemnon) and of female ones (Clytemnestra and Polyxena). That is, toward a venerable institution and practice: ritualized appeal for help, particularly for a suppliant's protection from grave harm. In this troubling play's dialogue, which we read (and in imagination hear, embarrassed silences included), and in stage business, which we may confidently visualize, *Hecuba* dramatizes an essential gendered antithesis. The pairs of male characters and female ones, despite stark contrasts between the two unheroic Greek "heroes" and between royal Trojan mother and daughter, show very different understandings, male versus female, of supplication and of a suppliant. The males, on the one hand, regard supplication as an instrument, like a sword that can stab or, in another's hand, can be parried. It is a social-political construction and man-made—literally *man*-made. As such it is subject to negotiation and qualification. It deploys words and bodily gestures that may be taken up, put aside, even dismissed. When a male supplicates, he "goes through the motions," making tongue, arms, kneeling legs his means to an end: his survival. When a woman does so, on the other hand, her voice and her body are her self, each limb and organ allied with a self which she strives to defend or which she risks for a beloved other's survival. *Her* supplication belongs to a non-negotiable ritual sphere and has, or should have, absolute universal force, an invisible, magical one such as another mortal ignores or quibbles about only at great peril. The source of that force is *Zeus*.

Supplication is a favorite theme of this poet-playwright. Suppliant language and associated ritual bodily gesture, whether merely mentioned for compelling metaphor or, often, enacted in rare yet sometimes extended moments of interpersonal physical contact, occur in over half of Euripides' surviving plays (and in lost but well known *Telephus* as well as in two lost *Alcmaeon* tragedies among others). Scholars and students might well look again at suppliant scenes of plays that precede *Hecuba* (besides *Telephus*, *Children of Heracles*, and *Medea*), of others from about the same period in the aging playwright's career (*Hippolytus* II, *Andromache*, *Suppliants*, *Ion*), of those from his old age *Iphigenia Among the Taurians*, *Trojan Women*, *Helen*, *Heracles*, *Phoenician Women*, *Orestes*), even of posthumous *Iphigenia at Aulis*. His relatively few instances of supplicating males particularly invite study under this new light, as well as the even fewer places where females are *supplicandae*.

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