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2

CONTENTS

FOCUS ON THE SYNODALITY

Synodality is the central theme of this issue of our journal, as it is the topic that is most preoccupying the Catholic Church and theology today. The authors approach the topic from different perspectives: Korinna Zamfir examines the relevant texts of the WCC, Moses Nóda analyses the local history of synodality in the context of monasticism, Norbert Nagy places the research of the concept in the context of liturgical reform, while Sándor Fazakas brings the theology of the concept of koinonia from Reformed theology to a multifaceted understanding of this topic.

Of special note in the contents of our publication is Fr. Arturo Sosa Abascal SJ's presentation on Latin American Synodality, an edited version of his speech delivered on 17 November 2023, when he received his Doctor Honoris Causa award. Here we publish the laudation of the Dean of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology of the Babeș-Bolyai University, Dávid Diósi.

In our publication we aim to present the research activities of the members of our institution, and in this issue, we publish István András' study on the 97th letter of Saint Anselm. Finally, a book review is also included.

Szabolcs András
Executive Editor

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CONCILIARITY IN WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES TEXTS. INTERSECTIONS, INTERACTIONS, SPECIFIC EMPHASES

Korinna Zamfir[1]

Abstract. The Synod of Bishops on Synodality has placed the church as a synodal community at the core of Catholic theological reflection. The conciliar or synodal nature of the church is also a topic of ecumenical dialogue. This essay surveys the theme of conciliarity in some WCC texts over the past 50 years, arguing that discussions of conciliarity reflect the interrelation between contemporary ecclesial events and theological developments. This diachronic analysis also indicates that while for two decades conciliarity has been regarded as a hopeful model for achieving communion and collaboration between the churches, the concept has gradually lost its appeal. The twin concept of synodality emerged in the latest ecclesiological convergence texts with a different focus. The study reveals the shift from an understanding of conciliarity centred on the people of God and baptism to one increasingly focusing on ordained ministry. At the same time, the topic of synodality, which remerged recently in Catholic theology, indicates the reception of some ideas developed in ecumenical dialogue.
Keywords: Conciliarity, synodality, WCC, Faith and Order, Catholic Church, *The Nature and Mission of the Church*, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, *episkopé*, primacy, *sensus fidei*.

The recently concluded Synod of Bishops on Synodality and the synodal process initiated by Pope Francis have placed the church as a synodal community at the core of theological reflection.[2] The conciliar/synodal nature of the church is

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2 *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission Vademecum for the Synod on Synodality* (*Bolletino*, 2021.09.07.); International Theological Commission, *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church* (2018) [=Synodality]; *Instrumentum Laboris. XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops*. See also Pope Francis, *Ceremony Commemorating*

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also an important theme of the ecumenical dialogue. This essay surveys the topic of conciliarity/synodality in some documents of the World Council of Churches, to argue that the focus on conciliarity stands at the intersection of various contemporary events and theological perspectives. On the one hand, Vatican II has influenced the ecclesiological dialogue within the WCC. Conciliarity has become a key concept of ecumenical ecclesiology, as attested by the final reports of the General Assemblies as well as by the Faith and Order studies and convergence texts. The importance assigned to conciliarity increased due to the contribution of Orthodox theology and the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue. At the same time, while the topic of conciliarity faded in the Catholic Church during the decades following Vatican II, some of the insights of the ecumenical dialogue are echoed in recent Catholic documents and studies on synodality.

I will review here the main insights on conciliarity in WCC reports and in Faith and Order papers, as well as the particular emphases of the two Faith and Order ecclesiological convergence texts. I propose an exegetical, diachronic analysis of these WCC texts, focusing mainly on the changes that occurred over the past decades.

The period starting with the Final report of Uppsala (1968) can be described as the decade of conciliarity. Conciliarity will become a key concept in ecumenical ecclesiology, as evidenced by the Faith and Order studies (Louvain, 1971, Salamanca, 1973), the final reports of the WCC (notably Nairobi, 1975), the convergence texts (*The Nature and Mission of the Church*, 2005; *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, 2013) and the responses of the churches.

After a decade when it would be understood as a model providing hope for achieving a real communion and collaboration between the churches in the wake of Vatican II, the notion of conciliarity will gradually loose its appeal. The analysis of WCC texts also reveals the shift from an understanding of conciliarity centred on the people of God and baptism to one increasingly focusing on ordained ministry. During the last decade, the twin concept of synodality emerges in WCC documents, attesting an Orthodox influence, and the interpretation of conciliarity/synodality is revised as a result of the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue.

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the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops (2015.10.17.), *AAS* 107 (2015) 1139; *Synod23 – Relazione di Sintesi della prima Sessione della XVI Assemblea Generale Ordinaria del Sinodo dei Vescovi (4–29 ottobre 2023) e risultati delle Votazioni*, *Bolletino* (28.10.2023).

Conciliarity or synodality?

Notwithstanding their different etymologies, the Greek *synodos* and the Latin *concilium* describe essentially the same ecclesiological phenomenon, the gathering of the church (of its representative body) to settle with authority important matters of faith and/or practice. As indicated in the study authored by the International Theological Commission [ITC] on *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, the distinction between the two concepts is new in the Catholic Church. While Vatican II documents still use the two terms synonymously, the canonical distinction between the two is enshrined in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.[3] The creation of the Synod of Bishops after the Council (1985) played a significant role in this differentiation. As a result of these changes, the term *concilium* (council) is used in Catholic terminology to denote occasional, exceptional, solemn, mainly universal gatherings of bishops to discuss major issues (such as Vatican II). The synod has a more permanent character, and is more comprehensive, since it presupposes the contribution of the entire people of God, including the lay faithful. This can be seen in the way the ITC study links synodality with the ecclesiology of Vatican II. Synodality is a particular manifestation of the life of the Church, of the people of God, which makes visible and tangible the intrinsic nature of the Church as community or communion whose members walk together, gather, and actively participate in the mission of evangelization.[4]

It is probably because of this conceptual distinction and the broader meaning of synod that when Pope Francis announced the Synod of Bishops and the synodal process, it was the neologism synodality that came to the fore, and not, as one might have expected, the Latin conciliarity. [5]

The WCC texts examined here have consistently used the notion of conciliarity, largely in the sense in which Catholic documents speak of synodality, even when its

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3 Synodality 4. On the trajectory of the concept of synodality in the Catholic Church: Carlo Fantappiè, "Variazioni della sinodalità", *Ephemerides Iuris Canonici* 62 (2022) 371–404.

4 Synodality 6.

5 The omission of the latter may also be attributed to the historical controversies which divided the Western Church, with the advocates of conciliarism placing the authority of the universal council above that of the Pope (especially after the Western schism). On the background to the crisis: Paul Valliere, *Conciliarism. A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 137–148.

understanding reflects specific trends within the ecumenical movement. Moreover, ecclesiological texts will introduce the twin concept of synodality.

Conciliarity in the documents of the WCC

The final report of the Uppsala General Assembly (*The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church*, 1968) argues for the first time that ecumenical endeavors have to lead to truly universal, conciliar forms of common life and witness, and that the churches should work for a genuinely universal council, which can once again speak for all Christians.[6] These objectives are a striking indication of the impact of Vatican II that came to a conclusion shortly before Uppsala. However, beyond this brief paragraph, the final report does not elaborate on the nature of conciliar forms, of the conciliar communion. In any case, by suggesting a universal council, it conceives the unity of the churches as their conciliar cooperation. Implicitly this means that within the universal church the individual churches are conceived as regional (or quasi-local) churches, whose communion is embodied by the universal council. The concept will play a major role in the subsequent ecclesiological texts and studies of the WCC.

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6 *The Uppsala Report 1968. Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Uppsala, July 4th-20th 1968*, edited by Norman Goodall, Geneva: WCC, 1968 [henceforth Uppsala] 19: "[…] its regional councils and its World Council may be regarded as a transitional opportunity for eventually actualizing a *truly universal, ecumenical, conciliar form of common life and witness*. The members of the World Council of Churches […] should work for the time when a *genuinely universal council* may once more speak for all Christians, and lead the way into the future." (Uppsala 19). At the assembly, Roberto Tucci SJ discussed extensively the ecclesiology and ecumenical principles of Vatican II, based on *Lumen gentium* and *Unitatis redintegratio*: "The Ecumenical Movement, the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church", in *The Uppsala Report 1968*, 323–333. Uppsala took over the report of an ecumenical working group, drafted with significant Orthodox input, on *Councils and the Ecumenical Movement* (1968); Lukas Vischer, "Drawn and Held Together by the Reconciling Power of Christ. Reflections on the Unity of the Church towards the Fifth Assembly of the WCC", in *What Kind of Unity? Faith and Order Commission, Salamanca, 1973* (Faith and Order Paper no. 69), Geneva: WCC, 1974, 29–32 (29). See also: *Conciliarity and the Future of the Ecumenical Movement*, Commission on Faith and Order, Louvain, 1971, *ER* 24.1 (1972) 88–91 [henceforth Louvain] 4, 7.

The concept of conciliarity will be discussed in some detail in the Report of the Faith and Order meeting in Louvain (1971)[7] and by the Salamanca Consultation (1973),[8] and eventually consecrated at the General Assembly in Nairobi (1975).[9] One can add here the German ecumenical study document on *Councils, Conciliarity and a Genuinely Universal Council*, published by the WCC in 1974.[10])

Over the following two decades the topic is less prominent. The theme of conciliarity will become again more conspicuous in the two comprehensive ecclesiological convergence texts, *The Nature and Mission of the Church* (NMC,

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7 The Louvain-report (note 5 above) relies on the homonymous study of bishop Lesslie Newbigin, cf. Konrad Raiser, *The Challenge of Transformation. An Ecumenical Journey*, tr. Stephen G. Brown, Geneva: WCC, 2018, 14–16. It was the Louvain Faith and Order meeting that Catholic theologians attended for the first time as full members (*Louvain 1971. Study Reports and Documents* (Faith and Order Paper 59), Geneva: WCC, 1971, 5–6). On the initiative of a joint working group of the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, a joint theological commission drafted a study on Catholicity and Apostolicity, which was adopted by the WCC at its May 1970 meeting (*Louvain 1971. Study* Reports, 216). The appendices cover topics requiring further examination. Appendix 5 deals with the issue of conciliarity and primacy (ibid., 151–153).

8 The Unity of the Church – Next Steps. Report of the Salamanca Consultation Convened by the Faith and Order Commission, WCC, on Concepts of Unity and Models of Union, September 1973, in *What Kind of Unity* (Faith and Order Paper 69), Geneva: WCC, 1974, 119–130 [henceforth Salamanca].

9 What Unity Requires, in *Breaking Barriers. Nairobi 1975: The Official Report of the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Nairobi, 23 November–10 December, 1975*, edited by David M. Paton, SPCK, London, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1976, 57–61 [henceforth Nairobi]; André Birmelé, *Kirchengemeinschaft. Ökumenische Fortschritte und methodologische Konsequenzen*, Münster: LIT, 2003, 294–295; Odair Pedroso Mateus, "The Ecumenical Vision: An Overview of World Council of Churches' Statements on Unity", 19-20; see also Joint Lutheran/Roman Catholic Study Commission on the Gospel and the Church, *Facing Unity: Models, Forms and Phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church Fellowship* [1984], The Lutheran World Federation, 1985, 27–30.

10 *Councils, Conciliarity and a Genuinely Universal Council* (Faith and Order Paper no. 70), *Study Encounter* 10.2 (1974) 1–24; a study by the German Ecumenical Commission. The work of the commission was led by Old Catholic systematic theologian Werner Küppers from Bonn. Although it has no official character, by publishing it, the WCC considered it authoritative.

2005, following up on *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* of 1998 [NPC])[11], and *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013),[12] and their reception (*What Are the Churches Saying About the Church*, 2021). While some insights are preserved throughout, changes and new emphases are also noticeable.

The church as conciliar fellowship. Conciliarity pertains to the nature of the Church and is rooted in baptism.

Early documents emphasise the conciliar forms of life and witness (Uppsala), the conciliar process, the coming together of Christians (Louvain). Conciliarity is thus understood as a local, regional, or global forum for deliberation and decision-making, an instrument used by the Holy Spirit for the reconciliation, renewal, and reformation of the Church, leading it towards the fullness of truth and love.[13] Soon, however, the object of reflection will be the Church itself as the conciliar fellowship of local churches.[14]

Conciliarity describes a permanent feature of the life of the Church at all levels, in the individual churches as well as in the relationships between churches.[15] It belongs to the nature of the Church as communion, it expresses the fraternal communion between churches. Conciliar fellowship is the medium through which the churches express their unity in the one Church. Its source and fundamental bond is the one baptism.[16] This shows that conciliar communion is not understood primarily as a forum for consultation and decision-making bringing together ordained church leaders, but it is an attribute of the entire people of God.

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11 *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* (Faith and Order Paper no. 181), Geneva: WCC, 1998; *The Nature and Mission of the Church – A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement* (Faith and Order Paper no. 198), Geneva: WCC, 2005.

12 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (Faith and Order Paper no. 214), Geneva: WCC, 2013. On the process: Odair Pedroso Mateus, "The Making of an Ecumenical Text: An Introduction to The Church: Towards a Common Vision". The document resulting from the repeated reworking of the NMC was adopted at the Faith and Order as the assembly in Penang in 2012. It proposes a significantly shorter discussion of *episkopé* and conciliarity.

13 Louvain 3 (*ER*, 88).

14 Salamanca A.III (*What Kind of Unity*, 121); Nairobi 3 (*Breaking Barriers*, 60).

15 Louvain 4 (*ER*, 88), cf. Vischer, "Drawn and Held Together", 30.

16 Salamanca, A.III (*What Kind of Unity*, 121).

These insights may still be found in the first ecclesiological convergence text: conciliarity is a fundamental feature of the life of the Church, rooted in common baptism (NPC 107, NMC 99). However, the emphasis on conciliarity and the reference to 1 Pet 2,9-10, which would ground conciliarity as a characteristic of the entire Church, are no longer found in the second ecclesiological text: the CTCV does discuss the priesthood of all believers in other contexts (18, 20, 41) but the quote from 1 Peter is not used to define conciliarity as a feature emerging from universal priesthood. According to the CTCV, synodality or conciliarity is a specific exercise of the ministry of *episkopé* (53). Citing the Orthodox-Catholic Ravenna Document (*Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority*, § 5),[17] the CTCV introduces the concept of synodality, which comes closer to Orthodox terminology, while also noting that the meaning of the two terms is not identical. Synodality/conciliarity refers to the fact that by virtue of baptism, each member of the Church has his / her place and proper responsibility in the communion of the Church. Although the text does not rehearse the opening sentence of Ravenna 5 according to which synodality "primarily denotes a gathering of bishops exercising a particular responsibility", the overall train of thought points into this direction, significantly more that the NPC or even the NMC. With regard to the significance of baptism the text emphasises in fact that each person has a particular place and role in the Church. CTCV 53 follows the definition of *episkopé* in the previous paragraph as one meant to co-ordinate the diversity of gifts or ministries, exercised "by persons chosen and set aside for such ministry".

Conciliarity and the local church

Early documents assign a greater role to the local church in the implementation of conciliarity. Seeking unity must already be pursued at local level (the initiative belongs to the local churches).[18] Conciliarity points towards the universal council but is not limited to it. Local churches also have an important role in the reception of synodal / conciliar decisions.[19] The ecclesiological convergence texts still discuss the

[17] Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, *Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church. Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority* (Ravenna Document), 2007.

[18] Salamanca, A.III (*What Kind of Unity*, 123).

[19] *Councils*, 11 (III.3) The study also discusses the forms of reception (5–6, p. 16).

church as the communion of the local churches,[20] but do not emphasise the agency of the local church with regard to the ministry of *episkopé* and to conciliarity. The CTCV only stresses that those who exercise the ministry of *episkopé* have the duty to respect the integrity of the local churches, giving a "voice to the voiceless" and maintaining unity in diversity (54).

Conciliarity characterizes all levels of the life of the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, from the smallest eucharistic community to regional bodies, and, in some churches, it even engages the whole Christian community. In the eucharistic community, conciliarity is a bond of love and faith between the members of the community and the minister presiding at the celebration. It excludes divisions, domination, and discrimination.[21] The CTCV takes over from NMC 99 the idea that the entire Church is conciliar, at all its levels (local, regional, and universal), and rehearses the importance of eucharistic fellowship, but no longer mentions the exclusion of division, domination and discrimination based on Gal 3,28.[22]

Eucharistic fellowship and ordained ministry

In early documents, the conciliar community is intimately linked with eucharistic communion. Thus Louvain emphasises that the churches should seek to widen the possibilities of eucharistic fellowship.[23] This also requires clarifying the issue of ordained ministry. Through history, Eucharistic fellowship has also expressed the reception of universal councils. Salamanca and Nairobi stress that conciliar communion grounded in the one baptism is inseparable from eucharistic communion.[24] The source of conciliar communion is the encounter of present-day disciples with the ever-present Christ, experienced in eucharistic communion.[25] This also involves the mutual recognition of ordained ministry

[20] NMC 64–66; CTCV 31–32.

[21] NPC 107, NMC 99, cf. Gal 3,28.

[22] The exclusion of domination and coercion appears though in the description of the proper exercise of authority in the church, understood as a service of love, practised in the spirit of Phil 2,7-8, Mark 10,41-45, Luke 22,25 and John 13,1-17, cf. CTCV 49.

[23] Louvain 10b (*ER*, 90); *Councils*, 20–21 (V.3).

[24] Salamanca, A.III.2 (*What Kind of Unity*, 122); Nairobi 5 (*Breaking Barriers*, 60–61).

[25] Ibid.

(which, in its turn requires clarifying the related questions). Churches should aim to move from imperfect to full conciliarity including eucharistic communion.[26]

In later documents, eucharistic communion is the central locus of conciliarity. However, eucharistic fellowship that would bind the churches together does not appear as an imperative, but among the open questions, or is dropped altogether in this context.[27]

Mutual recognition of the churches and the aim of the ecumenical endeavour

According to Salamanca and Nairobi, in conciliar fellowship "each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fulness of catholicity, witnesses to the same apostolic faith and therefore recognizes the others as belonging to the same Church of Christ and guided by the same spirit".[28] Conciliar fellowship presupposes the mutual recognition of church members and ministries. This goes beyond the minimalism of the Toronto Statement. In effect, churches of different denominations are regarded as local churches between which communion is achieved. This idea is later reflected in the Rahner-Fries theses.[29] The goal of mutual recognition is also spelled out in the Canberra Final Report: "The goal of the search for full communion is realized when all the churches are able to recognize in one another the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church in its fullness. This full communion will be expressed on the local and the universal levels through conciliar forms of life and action. In such communion churches are bound in all aspects of their life together at all levels in confessing the one faith and engaging in worship and witness, deliberation and action".[30]

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26 The integrating role of the church ministry contributes to this. *Councils*, 12–13 (III.5–6).

27 NMC, after §81: some churches link Eucharistic communion to the full agreement in faith and to communion in life. CTCV no longer mentions it in this context. Eucharistic fellowship is mentioned explicitly as a goal to be fostered by the Faith and Order commission and the WCC (Preface and Introduction), and in a footnote to §37 on the tasks to be agreed on regarding "the fundamental aspects of the life of the Church".

28 Salamanca, A.III. (*What Kind of Unity*, 121–122); Nairobi 3 (*Breaking Barriers*, 60).

29 Theses III, V and VIII: Heinrich Fries, Karl Rahner, *Einigung der Kirchen - Reale Möglichkeit*, Freiburg: Herder, [5]1983, 54–69, 109–122, 139–156.

30 The Unity of the Church: Gift and Calling [henceforth Canberra] 2.1, 3.2; see also Birmelé, *Kirchengemeinschaft*, 296–298.

The convergence texts, on the other hand, mention mutual recognition only marginally, as a remote goal, not as a self-evident expectation.[31]

The change also reflects a shift in the purpose of ecumenical endeavour. By envisaging a universal council, Uppsala implied that the unity of the churches could be conceived as their conciliar fellowship. The reception of the principle of conciliarity seemed to confirm the concern that churches would interpret conciliar fellowship as an alternative to organic unity.[32] Louvain left the question open. The Salamanca and Nairobi report made it clear that conciliar fellowship and organic unity presuppose each other.[33]

Nonetheless, ecclesiological emphases shifted during the following general assemblies.[34] Starting with Vancouver (1983), visible unity was linked to eucharistic communion, not conciliar fellowship, and based on the Lima Document (1982), attention focused on the reception of a common understanding of baptism, eucharist and ordained ministry.[35] With the Canberra Final Report (1991), the concept of *koinonia* becomes central.[36] Subsequently, conciliarity is mentioned only tangentially (with reference to conciliar forms of common life and action).

As opposed to earlier visions, the aim of achieving unity proper (as in organic unity) will gradually recede into the background. The emerging principle of reconciled diversity involves instead preserving confessional identities and legitimate differences. The ecumenical endeavour aims thus to achieve the communion of

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31 NMC 66, following Canberra 2.1; briefly in the introduction of CTCV, as a distant goal.

32 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Lesslie Newbigin: A Theological Life*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 116 (this is how the LWF interpreted conciliarity); M. Scot Sherman, *Ut Omnes Unum Sint: The Case for Visible Church Reunion in the Ecclesiology of Bishop J.E. Lesslie Newbigin*, doctoral dissertation, University of Wales, Lampeter, 2010, 213, 217.

33 Salamanca, A.IV (*What Kind of Unity*, 123–124); Nairobi 4 (*Breaking Barriers*, 60). See also Vischer, "Drawn and Held Together", 31.

34 On the changing ecumenical situation (the gradual distancing of Orthodox churches, the growing prominence of churches from developing countries in the WCC, which involved that traditional European theological debates became less relevant compared to social issues): Birmelé, *Kirchengemeinschaft*, 298–300.

35 Taking Steps Towards Unity, in *Gathered for Life*, edited by David Gill, Geneva: WCC, 1983, 43–52, Pedroso Mateus, "Ecumenical Vision", 20–21.

36 Canberra 2.1, 3.2; Birmelé, *Kirchengemeinschaft*, 296–298. This idea of unity goes beyond the Toronto Declaration's assertion that member churches of the WCC do not have to recognise each other's ecclesial character.

local churches (NMC, CTCV).[37] Although the NMC closely follows the Canberra Declaration, it no longer spells out of the unity of the Church materialised in the koinonia of faith and eucharistic fellowship, speaking instead more generally of the goal of full communion.[38] The aim of a universal council disappears from the ecclesiological convergence texts.[39]

Conciliarity and unity in diversity

The principle of unity in diversity is associated with conciliarity at least since Nairobi. Thus conciliarity expresses the unity of the churches in spite of their temporal, spatial and cultural distance. Unity does not imply uniformity, nor does it rule out the endurance of specific values.[40] At the same time, cultural, sociological, psychological, political, and historical differences should not undermine the integrity of the apostolic faith. Christ is the living Truth to which all the Churches aspire. The unity of the Churches is expressed in conciliar gatherings, notwithstanding their differences.[41] The principle of legitimate diversity, of unity in diversity, will be retained by ecclesiological convergence texts.[42]

Representativity and the role of laypersons

Documents that emphasise the importance of conciliarity also address the issue of representativity. The authority of the councils is linked to the work of the Holy Spirit in a representative body and to the reception of conciliar decisions.[43] The representativity of conciliar assemblies involves the representation of the

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37 Pedroso Mateus, "Ecumenical Vision", 21–22; Erin Brigham, *Sustaining the Hope for Unity: Ecumenical Dialogue in a Postmodern World*, Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012, 98.

38 NPC 65–67; NMC 64–66, following Canberra 2.1.

39 The NMC 72, 101–102 addresses the authority of ecumenical councils. The CTCV has a few references to the early councils (22, 30, note 27).

40 Nairobi 4–5 (*Breaking Barriers*, 60–61): these have to be valued and defended.

41 Nairobi 5 (*Breaking Barriers*, 61); see further the reception of in the Lutheran/Catholic *Facing Unity: Models, Forms and Phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church Fellowship*, on the margin of the model of conciliar community and the reconciled differences.

42 NMC 60–63, CTCV 12, 28–30.

43 Louvain 6 (*ER*, 89).

entire people of God. This requires clarifying who is entitled to speak on behalf of the local, regional, national church, or at international level, and what is the relationship between these ministries.[44]

As conciliar fellowship is called to discern the truth, the question of authority, its sacramental and ecclesiastical implications, should also be addressed, just as the ways in which decisions are made at different levels.[45]

The involvement of lay believers is emphatic. This results already from the definition given by Louvain: the conciliar community is a "coming together of Christians",[46] not exclusively or primarily a body of ordained ministers exercising the ministry of *episkopé*. The involvement of the laity is also explicitly mentioned.[47] Salamanca also stresses the need to clarify the role of women.[48]

Conciliar practice and attention to the challenges of the time

Conciliarity is expected to be manifested in the life of the churches. Early texts indicate that conciliarity is embodied in conciliar (synodal) consultation and decision-making.[49] Existing church councils or the WCC are not full-fledged conciliar bodies, because they do not enjoy the full unity in apostolic faith, ordained ministry and the Eucharist. The consultations also lack the universal character and authority of the early councils. However, ecumenical councils can provide a frame for the development of conciliar communion, expressing and anticipating the desire of member churches for full conciliar communion. Conciliar practice maintains the communion of churches and ensures that legitimate differences do not lead to division. [50]

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44 Salamanca, A.III.3 (*What Kind of Unity*, 122).

45 Ibid.

46 Louvain 3 (*ER*, 88).

47 Louvain 4 (*ER*, 88).

48 Salamanca, A.III.3 (*What Kind of Unity*, 122), also Nairobi 9 (*Breaking Barriers*, 62).

49 Councils, 7 (II.1: local, regional, national, general councils (including the great councils of the Western Church), and ecumenical/universal councils).

50 Louvain 6 (*ER*, 89), Salamanca, A.III (*What Kind of Unity*, 122); Nairobi 3, 6 (*Breaking Barriers*, 60–61). Anton Houtepen proposed a rethinking of the functioning of the WCC, whereby the transitional conciliar community would be a communion of communions, allowing for real conciliar cooperation between representatives of the churches. To this end, the WCC should become a worldwide conciliar forum for the discussion and reception of the conventions, confessional statements, liturgical reforms, pastoral approaches of

The same early documents agree that conciliar practice should be renewed, with due attention to contemporary challenges.[51] In this respect, the church must move beyond a narrow ecclesiastical worldview and find new forms of open encounter with the world. It must seek ways of living and speaking that can adequately express defined truth.[52] This goal comes close to the programme of aggiornamento advanced by Vatican II. Attention to contemporary social challenges and the need to seek dialogue with the world, responding to changing circumstances is also emphasised in the ecclesiological convergence texts.[53] However, NMC 73 no longer links the response to the challenges of the times to conciliar gatherings. Social justice and the protection of the powerless, of those who do not have a voice in the Church are also reiterated.[54] To be sure, the two ecclesiological convergence texts essentially refer to the councils of the past.[55]

The universal councils and conciliar reception

The significance and reception of the universal councils is also a matter of discussion. Conciliar practice bridges temporal distance and involves the re-reception of the early

individual churches and regional bodies ("Towards Conciliar Collaboration: the WCC and the Roman Catholic Communion of Churches", *ER* 40 (1988) 473–487).

51 Louvain 4 (*ER*, 89), Salamanca, A.III.4 (*What Kind of Unity*, 121–122), cf. Nairobi 8 (*Breaking Barriers*, 61–62).

52 *Councils*, 15 (IV.1). Conciliar acts carried out in the spirit of fraternal dialogue are in themselves (not only by the outcomes achieved) part of the encounter and of the building of communion and serve the mission of the Church.

53 NPC 100, NMC 73.

54 The conciliar communion of the Church promotes the unity of humankind and demands a commitment to social justice on behalf of the marginalized and powerless. Louvain 4 (*ER*, 88), Salamanca, A.IV (*What Kind of Unity*, 124), Nairobi 2, 4 (*Breaking Barriers*, 59–60). Salamanca articulates the correction of power in the spirit of the Louvain Declaration: because authority is linked to power, the voices of the powerless, the marginalised and the oppressed must be heard, to allow everyone to express their identity (A.III.3, *What Kind of Unity*, 122). The one who presides has the duty to give a voice to the voiceless: NPC 109, NMC 101.

55 NMC 92–93, 100, in the definition of the local church and among the forms of *episkopé*; further among the sources of authority (NMC 107); CTCV 30 and 53, with n. 27 (Nicaea). CTCV 30 adds the more recent condemnation of the apartheid as an implication of such foundational doctrine and an expression of "firm ecclesial teachings". But this example is quite different from that of the councils that establish(ed) doctrinal issues.

councils.[56] However, the significance assigned to universal councils is debated. Already the early study on councils and conciliarity notes that the authority of the councils, the binding force of their decisions depends on what the churches consider to be the authoritative source of faith.[57] From an ecclesiological point of view, conciliarity involves a certain consensus within an existing, albeit incomplete, community, or it aims at the realisation of a new, deeper and more inclusive community.[58]

Councils are manifestations of conciliarity through history.[59] They were commonly convened during crises, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to discern the apostolic truth, to overcome threats to the life of the Church and to achieve unity. The CTCV refers to doctrinal or moral dangers or heresies which threaten the apostolic faith.[60]

The ecumenical character of universal synods is linked to the fact that they were convened by the leaders of the universal Church, their decisions were received by the entire Church, and thus promoted and maintained universal communion.[61]

The reception of the synods, according to the CTCV, is a recognition of their role in promoting and maintaining communion. The footnote reminding that the

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56 Louvain 7 (*ER*, 89).

57 *Councils*, 13–14 (IV.1): some churches may regard Scripture as the sole source of faith, others also assign importance to tradition or to contemporary discoveries in matters of faith. The authority of the councils is also related to the question about the locus of the work of the Holy Spirit: the individual believer, the community, or ordained ministry. The study is merely descriptive: it does not state a preference or position regarding these issues. It also mentions a number of other factors at play when deciding on the binding force of conciliar decisions: the cooperation of the ministers of the Church, the representativity of the delegates, the appeal to the work of the Holy Spirit, the consistency with scriptural witness (the criterion of apostolicity), with the tradition of the Church or with the faith of the believers (*sensus fidelium, sensus ecclesiae*). *Councils*, 16 (IV.2). These are criteria for reaching *certitudo*, but not *securitas* in matters of faith. Therefore finding the truth requires permanent inquiry during the conciliar process. This also underscores the importance of conciliar reception.

58 *Councils*, 18 (V.1).

59 Synods express the unity of the Church at a given time. *Councils*, 4 (I.3).

60 CTCV 53: they preserved the apostolic faith in the face of doctrinal or moral threats to the life of the Church or heresies. The document has three references to heresies. CTCV 30 repeats NMC 63 on the distinction between legitimate diversity and divisions (heresies and schisms) but names heresies twice. The third occurrence, in §53, appears in the context of conciliar practice.

61 NMC 100, cf. NPC 110.

background to the Council of Nicaea was the Arian Christological controversy, is meant to exemplify the importance of the councils.[62] However, having to explain such basics of church history and history of theology indicates that following the denominational and geographical shift in the WCC, the meaning and authority of the universal councils is far from self-evident. This confirms the observation that churches hold different views on the doctrinal authority of the early universal councils.

Particular issues in the ecclesiological convergence texts

The ecclesiological convergence texts discuss conciliarity from a new perspective, in the context of *episkopé* and primacy, and they also reflect a certain reinterpretation of conciliarity.

The relationship between episkopé and conciliarity

The NPC has an ample discussion of the forms of *episkopé*, which includes conciliarity. The Church is held together by the ministry of *episkopé*, exercised in a communal, personal, and collegial manner.[63] Conciliarity is the communal dimension of *episkopé* and expresses the responsibility of the faithful resulting from baptism and the *sensus fidei*. All the baptised share in the responsibility of the Church for the apostolic faith and witness, participate in common consultations, through representative and constitutional structures. The *sensus fidei* plays an essential part in the discernment, reception, and expression of the faith, but the faithful also need to pay attention to those exercising the particular ministry of oversight.[64] In addition, the personal exercise of *episkopé* has the task of preserving the unity, holiness and apostolicity of the Church, discerning vocations, ordaining ministers for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and maintaining discipline.[65] Its specific

[62] Note 27 on the ecumenical councils refers to further ecumenical documents.

[63] NPC 96 ("The interconnectedness of the life of the Church is maintained by a ministry of *episkopé*, exercised in communal, personal and collegial ways, which sustains a life of interdependence. By synodality (communality) we mean the "walking together" of all the churches; by collegiality, the "communion" of all those who exercise oversight in them"). Also the remark after §.93: while in some churches oversight is mainly synodal, in others the role primarily pertains to the bishop.

[64] NPC 98–100.

[65] NPC 102–103.

form, primacy, or the ministry of presiding in charity and justice, is inseparable from the communal and collegial dimension of the Church. It strengthens the unity of the Church and enables it to speak with one voice. [66] Collegiality is the communion of those who exercise oversight in the Church.[67] The collegial exercise of *episkopé*[68] is based on the scriptural witness of Christ's commissioning of the community of the apostles to proclaim the Gospel and to lead the Church. Collegiality is the collegial, representative practice of leading, consulting, judging and decision making.

The NMC, conversely, reflects a shift in the understanding of *episkopé*. It starts from its personal exercise, and it no longer refers to conciliarity or to the *sensus fidei fidelium* in relation with the communal dimension of *episkopé*.[69] Conciliar *episkopé* is understood as an expression of the collegial dimension of oversight.[70] On the other hand, persons who exercise the *episkopé* have to make sure that the entire community is involved in the life of the church and are expected to listen to the insights of the faithful.[71] In the second ecclesiological text it is even clearer that the *episkopé* is the role of ordained ministers.[72] The responsibility of Christ-believers resulting from baptism is no longer mentioned.[73]

Primacy and conciliarity

The ecclesiological texts discuss the relationship between conciliarity and primacy starting from the early ecclesial practice.[74] The ecumenical councils

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66 NPC 103. See also the historical overview (92–93).

67 NPC 96.

68 NPC 104–106.

69 NMC 94.

70 NMC 92.

71 NMC 96.

72 CTCV 52 (compare BEM, M26). Beyond preaching the Word and celebrating the sacraments this includes preserving the apostolic faith and unity, handing down revealed truth, ensuring the communion of local communities, and supervising charities.

73 The *sensus fidei* is related here to acknowledging the authority of ordained ministers: the community can thereby understand the Word of God, receive the guidance and teaching of the ordained ministers, testifying thereby to the authenticity of their leadership (CTCV 51). The *sensus fidei* is therefore not related here to the *episkopé* exercised by the baptized.

74 NMC 101–104, taking over with slight changes NPC 107–109, adding a more detailed discussion of the primate. It also addresses the summoning and presiding over the conciliar

sanctioned the ministry of primacy, a personal exercise of oversight performed by the heads of the patriarchal sees; thus primacy is not opposed to conciliarity, which is a more communal and collegial service of unity.[75]

The historical overview regarding the practice of the patriarchal churches points both to the legitimacy of the ministry of primacy and to the difficulties arising from its exercise.[76] Primacy, understood as presiding, cannot be separated from the communal and collegial dimension of the Church.[77] Despite jurisdictional difficulties (the rivalry between patriarchates, the claim of the Bishop of Rome to universal jurisdiction), ecumenical dialogue has allowed the churches to see in it a gift rather than a threat.[78] This positive perception evokes the understanding emerging with the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order [Santiago de Compostella] on "the universal service of Christian unity".[79] The NMC quotes here the invitation addressed to church leaders and theologians by Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Ut unum sint* to engage in fraternal dialogue with him

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gathering and the way consensus can be reached, recognised and expressed, at all levels. CTCV 54–57 largely follows the NMC, with a few changes.

75 NMC 102, CTCV 55 (dropping "communal").

76 NPC 92–93, 103, NMC 101–104, CTCV 55. The CTCV is more positive about primacy: in the early centuries, many churches recognised the jurisdictional and doctrinal authority of the Bishop of Rome, given the special relationship of Peter and Paul to the Church of Rome.

77 Collegiality was reflected in the early requirement that the first of the bishops could take decisions only in agreement with the other bishops, while the latter could decide on important matters only in agreement with the bishop who exercised primacy (cf. *Apostolic Canons* 34). NMC 102, CTCV 55.

78 NMC 103.

79 NMC 103; a reference to the final declaration of Santiago de Compostella, which recommended Faith and Order to undertake a study of the universal ministry of Christian unity, and asked the WCC and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to prepare a joint meeting on the occasion of the 1998 Jubilee, as a step towards conciliar communion, to express the *koinonia* already achieved (31.2–31.3). See *Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness*, Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, Santiago de Compostela1993 (Faith and Order Paper No. 164), Geneva: WCC, 1993. See also Geoffrey Wainwright, "Ut unum sint in Light of 'Faith and Order' – or 'Faith and Order' in Light of Ut unum sint?", in *Church Unity and the Papal Office: An Ecumenical Dialogue on John Paul II's Encyclical Ut Unum Sint (That All May be One)*, edited by Carl E. Braaten, Robert W. Jenson, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001, 76–96 (78–93).

on a unanimously acceptable way of exercising the Petrine ministry (UUS 95-96). The CTCV no longer quotes the UUS, but paraphrases it (without any reference), asking the churches, provided that the present divisions could be overcome, to reflect on ways a ministry that promotes and supports the unity of the Church at the universal level could be understood and practised.

What do the churches say about the Church (and conciliarity)?

The CTCV was followed by a lengthy process of consultation. The Catholic Church issued its response in 2019, through the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity [PCPCU].[80] The responses of the other churches were published in the Faith and Order text *What Are the Churches Saying About the Church* (2021).[81] This synthetic summary reflects some tendencies, without detailing the responses of individual churches.

Thus respondents appreciated the understanding of conciliarity expressed in the CTCV, emphasised the importance of conciliarity/synodality, valuing the role of conciliar structures and of synods in preserving the unity of the church. Several churches noted that they actually practiced conciliarity. The local ecclesial community, respondents argued, can only exist in communion with other churches. Responses also showed a growing openness to various forms of *episkopé* within the Church, at local, regional, or even universal level, with a view to promoting unity.[82]

The churches placed great emphasis on the people of God and the importance of baptism.[83] The mission and unity of the church should be addressed based on the role of the people of God. Baptismal ecclesiology could open up new avenues for ecumenical dialogue, clarifying questions related to ordained ministry, conciliarity/synodality, primacy and some Christian anthropological assumptions. The role of the baptised in conciliar processes beyond the local church as well as their specific

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80 The Church: Towards a Common Vision (Faith and Order Paper no. 214, 2013). A Catholic Response.

81 What Are the Churches Saying About the Church? Key Findings and Proposals from the Responses to The Church: Towards a Common Vision (Faith and Order Paper no. 236), 2021. On the responses of the Orthodox Churches: Radu Bordeianu, „The Church: Towards a Common Vision", *Exchange* 44 (2015) 231–249.

82 What Are the Churches Saying 18.

83 What Are the Churches Saying 17, 42.

responsibility for faith require further in depth studies. Some churches reported that the baptised were involved in decision-making structures.[84]

The Catholic reception of the CTCV is essentially positive, and this includes its understanding of conciliarity, the emphasis on the ecclesiological significance of baptism and the ministry of the baptised. The results on *episkopé* and primacy are deemed insufficient. The synodal/conciliar exercise of the ministry of oversight is consistent with the way the Catholic Church addresses ecclesial, doctrinal, moral issues. It involves the participation of the whole people of God, at various levels. The co-responsibility of all the baptized and the emphasis on universal priesthood are also consistent with the Catholic position.[85] The response also appreciates the attention given to the specific role of ordained ministry and its threefold, personal, collegial and communal dimension. This latter aspect matches the initiatives and reforms of Pope Francis.[86] The discussion of the *episkopé* evokes the growing synodal experience of the Catholic Church at local, regional and universal level.[87] However, beyond acknowledging this convergence, the response of the PCPCU finds the understanding of *episkopé* and primacy deficient. The ministry of *episkopé* pertains foremost to the bishop (LG 23-24, 27). While acknowledging the progress, the Catholic response misses the recognition of the role of the head of the episcopal college in articulating doctrinal truth and in performing the ministry of strengthening his colleagues in oversight (cf. Luke 22,32).[88] The CTCV, following the Lima Document, speaks of the personal, collegial and communal exercise of oversight. The way consensus was reached at Vatican II indicates however that after the collegial discussion of various issues, consensus is formulated in agreement with the head of the college of bishops. The response emphasises that consensus does not produce truth: it is the truth that promotes consensus. The authority of the councils does not therefore depend on consensus. The Petrine ministry and the relationship between the bishops and the head of the episcopal college is a normative Catholic teaching. As opposed to that there is currently no consensus among the churches on the necessity or even desirability of a universal primacy. At the same time, several bilateral dialogues have recognised the importance of such ministry. The pastoral and ecumenical ministry of the conciliar and post-

84 What Are the Churches Saying 19.

85 A Catholic Response 8, as part of the general issues converging with the Catholic position.

86 A Catholic Response 8.

87 A Catholic Response 40 (as shown notably by Vatican II and the practice of local synods).

88 A Catholic Response 41 (under the heading 'The Authority of Ecumenical Councils').

Vatican II popes, from John XXIII to Pope Francis, and the latter's advocacy of the synodal way testify to the pastoral nature of the universal ministry of unity.

From the perspective of the interactions between ecumenical documents and Catholic developments, it is worth considering that according to the Catholic response the CTCV (53) calls on the Catholic Church to deepen its synodal practice. Synodality and collegiality gained momentum after the ecclesiological shift of Vatican II. The response quotes Pope Francis' speech on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Synod of Bishops, reflecting on the central importance of synodality: the synodal Church is a listening Church, where mutual listening and learning are important. [89]

The Catholic Church is also aware that the hope of Vatican II about decentralisation, collegiality and the exercise of synodality is not completely fulfilled. Therefore, the study of the ITC on Synodality offers guidelines regarding a renewed theology of synodality and provides pastoral orientation for its implementation. A commitment to the synodal principle promotes the exchange of gifts and experiences between local churches; this exchange is facilitated by the oversight of the Bishop of Rome, which is indispensable in an increasingly global and pluralistic world. Synodality is not only a particular style of exercising authority, of performing ordained ministry and cooperation between church structures, but a form of ecclesial behaviour that all Christians can appropriate. It implies a radical change in behaviour and action, a more inclusive attitude with regard to structures, involving e.g. consultation and cooperation in pastoral councils at diocesan and parish level.

The Catholic Church also recognises the ecumenical significance of synodality as this brings it closer to the churches that have practiced it. Synodality promotes cooperation between denominations. This also means that churches should refrain from making important decisions that could have a significant impact on other churches until they have been consulted. Synodal attitude, consultation prevents one-sided decisions that would cause division. The ecumenical significance of synodality is also confirmed by the study of the ITC: synodality is an invitation to Christians to walk together on the path to full communion, which reveals a church in which legitimate differences are given a place in the light of truth, in the mutual exchange of gifts.[90]

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[89] Cf. note 2 in this paper. See also Synod23, Introduction; I.1.(a), (e), and esp. III.16.

[90] Synodality 9.

Synodal thinking can shed new light on the relationship between primacy and synodality. It challenges the Catholic Church to exercise the ministry of primacy in a collegial way at all levels of the Church. This applies within the parish, where the priest needs to exercise his ministry in collaboration with other priests and the faithful. And this is also true in the local church, where the bishop represents the principle of unity, but shares his responsibilities with priests, deacons and lay people, ensuring that the various gifts build unity. The response quotes Pope Francis' affirmation that the Pope is not above the Church, but within the Church, to lead the Church of Rome as the successor of Peter. The Bishop of Rome exercises the universal ministry of primacy as a principle of unity. Synodality on the other hand must be exercised in communion with the Bishop of Rome.

The Catholic Church is aware that other churches and ecclesial communities do not recognise the Petrine ministry. However, in the new situation created by the ecumenical movement, following the invitation in UUS 95, it must find a way of exercising it as a ministry of charity recognised by other Christians.[91]

Concluding remarks. Interactions and specific emphases

Conciliarity became a major theme of the ecumenical dialogue in the aftermath of Vatican II. The reappraisal of conciliar practice in the WCC and the awareness of the importance of the universal councils starting with Uppsala, can be seen as an influence of Vatican II. The churches recognised that conciliar practice had been part of the life of the Church for centuries.

Conciliar cooperation has become a model within the quest for unity. But its prominence has also led to a gradual shift away from the search for organic unity towards the conciliar fellowship of churches that would preserve their independence, in the spirit of reconciled differences. The fading of the goal of visible unity is also reflected in current receptive ecumenism, which is no longer concerned with the resolution of controversial issues and organic unity, but with the mutual enrichment of the traditions of each church in dialogue with other denominations, in the process of learning and in the exchange of gifts.[92] The

[91] A Catholic Response, 57–59.

[92] Mary-Anne Plaatjies van Huffel, "From Conciliar Ecumenism to Transformative Receptive Ecumenism", *HTS Theological Studies* 73.3 (2017).

shift of the geographical and theological centre of the ecumenical movement from Europe/the global North towards the global South also contributed to this change.

In the WCC, mainly due to the Orthodox influence, the understanding of episkopé and conciliarity shifted from an interpretation centred on baptism and *the sensus fidei fidelium*, closer to Protestant theology (as reflected in the NPC), to an approach which understands *episkopé* primarily as a personal, specific, responsible role of ordained ministers, and links synodality to the ministry of those who hold authority in the Church (CTCV). The emphasis on the role of ecumenical councils in countering doctrinal dangers/heresies belongs to the same tendency.

The quote from the Ravenna Declaration in the CTCV points to the influence of the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue. On the other hand, through the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue, the Orthodox concept of synodality may have influenced Catholic theology as well. While defining conciliarity or synodality primarily as the gathering of bishops exercising specific responsibilities, the Ravenna Document applies it in a broader sense to all members of the Church (5).[93]

The response of the Catholic Church to the CTCV underscore the interplay of theological ideas and ecumenical texts. Some of the insights of the ecumenical dialogue, notably the role of the baptised in conciliar practice are also echoed in the Catholic response to the CTCV (discussed in detail above) and more recently in the synodal documents of the Catholic Church.[94]

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[93] See Susan K. Wood, "Walter Kasper on the Catholic Church", *Ecclesiology* 14 (2018) 203–211 (209–210), in response to Kasper's suggestion that synodality is primarily an episcopal characteristic. In the eucharistic communion of local churches in communion with the bishop, at the regional level in the communion of local churches, and at the level of the universal church (*Ravenna* 10, 17), the church includes the entire people of God gathered and on the move (they are therefore *synodoi*). Therefore synodality/conciliarity is an attribute of the people of God, before being one of the hierarchy (which does not deprive the bishop of his magisterial attributions, his oversight role, in the church, not over the church).

[94] For a Synodal Church 2, 12 (by virtue of baptism, all share in the task of evangelization), 13 (as a gift of the Holy Spirit received in baptism, the people of God cannot err in matters of faith). Synod23, I.7, Convergence (b): baptism, as the root of synodality, also constitutes the foundation of ecumenism. Through it all Christians participate in the *sensus fidei* and must be listened to carefully, regardless of their tradition. There can be no synodality without the ecumenical dimension.

The Catholic Church discover in the ecumenical dialogue a call to deepen its own synodal practice (2019). The synodal process started by Pope Francis undoubtedly took up this task. Two proposals formulated in the concluding synthesis of the Synod refer to the ecumenical practice of synodality. Thus the document envisages the possibility of involving Christians of other denominations in Catholic conciliar processes at all levels and inviting a larger number of delegates at the synodal assembly in 2024.[95] A further proposal envisions convening an ecumenical synod in the future, to address the common mission of Christians in the present world.[96] This is a less ambitious, but perhaps somewhat more realistic goal than the universal council proposed by Uppsala, but the chances to achieve it are uncertain.[97]

Along conciliarity, other topics also reflect a convergence between ecumenical texts and Catholic documents on synodality: the responsibility for the poor and marginalised[98] and the need to protect the vulnerable in the Church.[99] The Synod also pays attention to the role of women in the mission of the Church.[100]

Notwithstanding this convergence, it is clear that agreement does not cover all issues. Remaining differences include the role of the people of God, the understanding of the relationship between personal and communal or collegial *episkopé*, the meaning and necessity of primacy. Thus the discussion of primacy raised an important issue for Catholic theology. The NMC even quoted John Paul II's call for dialogue on primacy (UUS 95). But in this respect the rapprochement did not go beyond a few general statements on the legitimacy (not the necessity) of such a ministry.

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95 Synod23, I.7, proposal (m). Adopted with 319 votes (25 votes against). "Si desidera anche continuare a coinvolgere i cristiani di altre confessioni nei processi sinodali cattolici a tutti i livelli e invitare un maggior numero di delegati fraterni alla prossima sessione dell'Assemblea nel 2024." Only the previously cited Convergence point (Synod23, I.7, Convergence (b)) had more voices against (28).

96 Synod23, I.7, proposal (n).

97 The proposal (adopted with 321 votes, vs. 23 nays) is formulated in an impersonal and noncommitting way: "È stata avanzata da alcuni anche la proposta di convocare un Sinodo ecumenico sulla missione comune nel mondo contemporaneo".

98 For a Synodal Church 5, 9, 29; Synod23, I.4.

99 For a Synodal Church 2, 6 (against the abuse of power).

100 Synod23, II.9 (although the passages regarding the ministry of women, in particular the perspective of (re)opening the diaconate to women, have received the highest number of votes against, more than e.g. the proposal to promote theological and pastoral discernment on the issue of polygamy and the accompaniment of people in polygamous unions coming to faith.)

As to the dialogue within the WCC, reaching convergence is a complex and difficult process. The documents reviewed here reflect some fifty years of ecumenical dialogue. During this time, several generations of theologians have succeeded each other, the composition of the WCC has changed significantly, and priorities, geographical and ecclesial paradigms have shifted. The ecclesiological convergence texts have been rewritten countless times. This points to a deeper difficulty, namely the near impossibility of formulating a lasting consensus. Not to mention the political and church political factors that influence the position of the member churches and of their representatives.

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SYNODALITY BEFORE THE SYNOD AS THE PATH OF A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. THE THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL INITIATIVES OF THE SISTERS OF SOCIAL SERVICE IN TRANSYLVANIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Abstract. As the Society of the Sisters of Social Service, an international religious community established in Hungary, celebrates the centenary of its foundation, evoking the early stages of its mission provides an opportunity for re-examining the charism of the society. The success of the Sisters of Social Service, their ability to deal effectively with the challenges of their time, in particular those emerging in the interwar period and during the second world war, was largely due to their modern and open-minded vision. This paper discusses the charism of the society, shaped by Benedictine spirituality and devotion to the Holy Spirit, focusing on two aspects of their activity, their social sensitivity and commitment to social work, and their contribution to the dissemination of the ideas of the liturgical movement. These initiatives also highlight the contribution of women to the mission of the Church before their explicit acknowledgement in contemporary synodal documents.
Keywords: Society of the Sisters of Social Service, community charism, modernity, social work, liturgical movement, synodality, women in the Church.

On 24 November 2022, Pope Francis, meeting with the members of the International Theological Commission, advocated for doing theology in a synodal way: the vocation of theologians is not only an individual endeavour, but also has a communitarian and collegial dimension. To do theology in a synodal manner means fostering the ability to listen, to engage in dialogue, to discern and to harmonise different perspectives. The Pope also pleaded for increasing the number

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of female members, because women bring a different perspective, and they make theology deeper and more 'flavourful'.[2]

The recently concluded Synod of Synodality highlights the contribution of women to the mission of the Church, envisaging women from different walks of life, working and consecrated women.[3] Consecrated women, – whether in contemplative or apostolic life, are a gift, a sign, and a witness. The Report evokes the long history of missionary women, saints, theologians, and mystics, as a powerful source of inspiration for both women and men. It largely focuses (with good reason) on women's call for social and economic justice and ecclesial recognition. While acknowledging their role in the Church, specifically as missionaries and theologians, it does not address women's role in promoting social justice.[4]

In response to these perspectives emphasising synodality and the contribution of women to theology and the mission of the Church, I will highlight some aspects of the charism of the Sisters of Social Service that have marked the history of the Society and have placed them ahead of their time, encouraging them to take this path before the synodal vision of the Church emerged. I will address their commitment to the social question, their social and educational initiatives, but also an issue less often discussed, their contribution to theology and to the liturgical renewal.

The Sisters of Social Service and the social question

Social sensitivity towards the poor and marginalised, commitment to disenfranchised categories have been recently highlighted as a feature of a synodal Church.[5] Religious communities, whether monastic orders, institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, are a sign of their time in the Church and in

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2 "Credo che forse sarebbe importante aumentare il numero delle donne, non perché siano di moda, ma perché hanno un pensiero diverso dagli uomini e fanno della teologia qualcosa di più profondo e anche di più 'saporito'.", Discorso del Santo Padre Francesco ai membri della Commissione Teologica Internazionale; Christopher Wells, "Pope: Women Can Give More 'Flavour' to Theology", *Vatican News* (24.11.2022). Vértesaljai László, "Hármas irányelv a II. Vatikáni Zsinat tanítása jegyében" (2023).

3 Synod23 – Relazione di Sintesi della prima Sessione della XVI Assemblea Generale Ordinaria del Sinodo dei Vescovi (4–29 ottobre 2023) e risultati delle Votazioni, 9, *Bolletino* (28.10.2023).

4 Synod 23, 9, Convergenze (c) and (d).

5 Synod23, 4.

society. Those communities that reimagine lifestyles and implement new forms of service and proximity to the poor are particularly significant.[6] Such communities provide answers to the specific, often unprcedented questions of their time. The ability of a community to transpose its charism and mission in life in a way that benefits fellow humans is a mark of its authenticity.

The social question was such a pressing issue in the early the 20th century, when the Society of the Sisters of Social Service was founded, while the Catholic Church was still striving to find responses to this challenge. The wide social gap between employers and workers following the industrial revolution, the lack of ethical principles in an economy based solely on free competition, the increasingly difficult life of workers marked out the worker question as one of the most stringent problems. Since the late 19th century several economic and sociopolitical initiatives and ideological approaches sought solutions to these issues. The trade union movement, increasingly linked to the socialist party, or the Marxist scientific socialism that emerged as a political response to the need to improve the condition of workers were prominent attempts.

In addition to the theoretical contribution of the emergent Catholic social movement and the education of clergy and faithful on social issues, the Catholic Church responded with charitable initiatives, support for workers' organisations and social programmes. Such initiatives are linked to personalities like Frédéric Ozanam in France, Adolph Kolping and Emmanuel von Ketteler in Germany. At the end of the 19th century, Christian trade union movements were established in the United States, in France and Belgium.[7]

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued the social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.[8] Pius XI returned to the social question in 1931 with the encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*.[9]

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6 Synod23, 8, Convergenze (d); 10.

7 Thomas C. Behr, "The Nineteenth-Century Historical and Intellectual Context of Catholic Social Teaching", in *Catholic Social Teaching. Volume of Scholarly Essays*, edited by Gerard Bradley and E. Christian Brugger, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, 34–65; Franz-Josef Stegmann – Peter Langhorst, *Geschichte der sozialen Ideen im deutschen Katholizismus* (*Geschichte der sozialen Ideen in Deutschland: Sozialismus — Katholische Soziallehre — Protestantische Sozialethik. Ein Handbuch*, edited by Helga Grebing, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, ²2005, 613–624, 672–674, 685–700, 704–712, 733–736.

8 *AAS* 23 (1890/91) 643–652.

9 *AAS* 23 (1931) 190–216.

Early magisterial statements condemned the views associated with socialism and communism and called for patience and the defence of private property. The Catholic response to the social question was belated and insufficient. The working class embraced socialism, understood as a more adequate defence of workers' interests, and adopted atheistic Marxism.[10] It is probably because of this conceptual distinction and the broader meaning of synod that when Pope Francis announced the Synod of Bishops and the synodal process, it was the neologism synodality that came to the fore, and not, as one might have expected, the Latin conciliarity.[11]

Emerging Catholic social teaching was received in Hungarian Catholic circles, as well. In Transylvania, between the two world wars, the Catholic press emphasised the importance of the social question and its Christian foundations. In an article written in 1932, Béla Barát pointed to the importance of social protection, moral and cultural education and argued that only selfless intellectuals with a genuine Christian foundation could be credible social and political leaders.[12] József Venczel, one of the leading sociologists of Transylvania, emphasised the importance of social education in the formation of college students, of future intellectuals, alongside ideological and cultural education.[13]

The initiatives of the Sisters of Social Service need be considered in this social and ecclesial context. The roots of the society go back to the Social Missionary Society in Hungary, founded by Edit Farkas in 1908, with the endorsement of Bishop Ottokár Prohászka, to respond to these challenges. The Sisters of Social Service were founded in Budapest in 1923 by Margit Slachta (1884–1974), after

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[10] August Franzen, *A History of the Church,* tr. Peter Becker, rev., ed. John P. Dolan, New York: Herder & Herder, 1969, 405–406.

[11] The omission of the latter may also be attributed to the historical controversies which divided the Western Church, with the advocates of conciliarism placing the authority of the universal council above that of the Pope (especially after the Western schism). On the background to the crisis: Paul Valliere, *Conciliarism. A History of Decision-Making in the Church*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012, 137–148.

[12] Barát Béla, "Az ifjú katholicizmus szociális programja", *Erdélyi Tudósító* 15.1 (1932) 430–433.

[13] Venczel József, "Értelmiségi-nevelés és a főiskolás mozgalmak", *Erdélyi Tudósító* 18 (1935) 228–229; Id., "Főiskolás mozgalmaink közszelleme", in *A falumunka útján. Válogatott írások*, ed. Székely András Bertalan, Székelyudvarhely – Budapest: Magyar Művelődési Intézet, 1993, 71–78. The education of college students, the formation of intellectuals is primarily a qualitative problem.

parting ways with the Social Missionary Society. Margit Slachta, a schoolteacher from Kassa (present day Košice, Slovakia), from a Hungarian family with Polish roots, was a Christian feminist, social activist, and publicist, to become a member of the Hungarian Parliament, and a rescuer of Jews during World War II.[14]

The charism of the Society[15] combined Benedictine spirituality and devotion to the Holy Spirit with commitment to the social mission of the Church. The ability to act on the signs of the times was inspired by the devotion to the Holy Spirit, experienced as the Spirit of youthfulness and enthusiasm.[16] Benedictine spirituality,

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[14] Ferenc Hörcher, "Margit Slachta (1884–1974): Christian Feminism Against Totalitarian Powers", in Réka Mónika Cristian, Anna Kérchy (eds.), *Pioneer Hungarian Women in Science and Education* II: *Pioneer Hungarian Women in Education*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2023; Jessica A. Sheetz-Nguyen, "Transcending Boundaries: Hungarian Roman Catholic Religious Women and the 'Persecuted Ones'", in *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack, New York – Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2001 (repr. 2010), 222–242. For the speeches of Margit Slachta in the Hungarian Parliament: Petrás Éva, Schlachta Boglárka Lilla, Szabó Róbert (eds.), *Slachta Margit beszédei a magyar parlamentben*, Budapest: Barankovics István Alapítvány – Gondolat Kiadó, 2021. For a brief overview in the broader context of Hungarian religious life: James P. Niessen, "Catholic Monasticism, Orders and Societies in Hungary. Centuries of Expansion, Disaster, and Revival", in *Monasticism in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Republics*, edited by Ines Angeli Murzaku, London – New York: Routledge, 2016, 86–109 (100, 102, 105). [The title of the volume adopts the imperial perspective of the Soviet Union, obscuring the identity of the countries discussed under this heading.] Niessen refers to Sztrilich Ágnes, "Slachta Margit és a Szociális Testvérek Társasága," in *Boldog Salkaházi Sára: Emlékkönyv: 2006. szeptember 17-i budapesti boldoggáavatása alkalmából*, edited by Hidvégi Máté, Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 2006, and Révay Edit, *Újrainduló szerzetesrendek egy megújuló társadalomban*, Budapest – Csíkszereda: Magyar Egyházszociológiai Intézet, 2003. On the history of the SSS in Romania: Murányi Teréz, "Szellemben, irányzatban, szeretetben egyek vagyunk veletek. A Szociális Testvérek Társasága romániai kerületének rövid története", *Keresztény Szó* 24.8 (2013) 3–4.

[15] Currently organised as a society of apostolic life, the SSS is present in Europe (Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Romania), Canada and the US (California, Buffalo, Miami), in Latin-America (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Mexico), and Asia (Philippines, Taiwan). "Who we are", https://2021.sssinternational.org/who-we-are/.

[16] Slachta Margit, *A megszentelő Szeretet küldetésében,* Kolozsvár: Minerva, 1944, 62 (The Spirit of God is youthful).

captured by the motto *ora et labora*, provided on the other hand for the unity of *actio* and *contemplatio*. Daily activity was understood thus a theological locus, an experience of the encounter with God, which encouraged the sister to offer her life to others.[17]

The Society was characterised since its inception by modernness, by readiness to deal with stringent issues in innovative ways, by finding ways of living and acting that fitted the needs of contemporary society, with particular attention to families, women, and children.[18] The foundation was inspired by the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. The success of the Sisters of Social Service resided in their ability to provide concrete answers to the sensitive social issues of the early 20th century. To alleviate the social problems, the Society set itself the task to train qualified social workers, and to educate the youth to respond to these problems. Social consciousness involved acting on the principle of prevention, addressing social problems through legislation, and working for the large scale transformation of society through social reforms. Due to these perspectives, the Society has been ahead of its time with regard to the social question and continues to be relevant today.[19]

Modernity meant freedom from the slavery of ancient forms, coupled with fidelity to the original essence; in this spirit, the sisters felt bound by love for God and neighbour to apply new means and possibilities in the service of the unchanged essence.[20] Modernity and novelty resided thus in their ability to respond to problems emerging in all social strata, from maids to female students, in the university and in politics, in orphanages and children's homes.

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17 Dănescu Teodora, Farmati Anna, Hegedűs Enikő, "Lelkiségünk pillérei", in *Jelnek állítottalak… Emlékkönyv a Szociális Testvérek Társasága és Romániai Kerülete alapításának 80. évfordulójára*, edited by Farmati Anna and Gábor Csilla, Csíkszereda: Tipographic, 2003, 8–17 (12).

18 According to the mission statement, the Sisters of Social Service "focus on the various needs of society, arising from social, religious, economic, cultural, civic and environmental conditions in which we live." The statement highlights the focus on families, women, and children. The Society, "which is called to an active apostolate, also emphasizes the necessity of a life of prayer". "Who we are", https://2021.sssinternational.org/who-we-are/.

19 Dănescu, Farmati, Hegedűs, "Lelkiségünk pillérei", 12.

20 Dănescu, Farmati, Hegedűs, "Lelkiségünk pillérei", 14 ("aki nem rabja a régi formának, de hűséges a régi lényeghez, az éppen isten- és emberszeretettől indíttatva érzi kötelességének, hogy az új eszközöket és lehetőségeket beállítsa a változatlan lényeg szolgálatába.").

Formation played an important role. The sisters trained themselves and trained skilled social leaders and workers. In 1933 the Society founded a School for the Training of Parish Sisters in Oradea. In 1939 they established a Social Seminary in Cluj, and shortly thereafter a three-year social college, the Catholic Women's Social Sciences Vocational School.[21] In 1941, the Report of the Transylvanian District shows that 50% of the sisters were active in social work.[22]

Two examples illustrated well the modernity, the entrepreneurial spirit of the Sisters of Social Service in Transylvania. To secure the financial basis of their mission, the Society took over the Central Hotel in Cluj (Kolozsvár) in 1927 and the Excelsior Hotel in Stâna de Vale (Biharfüred) in 1934. The proceeds were used to enlarge their first house in Cluj (Kolozsvár), the Little House, and the chapel, and to purchase the Villa Pax in Marosfő (Izvorul Mureșului).[23] It was not a matter of course for religious communities to rent and operate hotels at the timebut this pioneering enterprise undertaken by women supported their social activities and was itself a way of practising social service.

Associations were important pillars of Catholic communities in Transylvania. In the first half of the 20th century they were organised in two large networks. Whereas male devotional and charitable associations belonged under the umbrella of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic National League (founded in 1921), Catholic women's organisations were included in the Catholic Women's Association of Transylvania, established in Arad in 1926. The Sisters of Social Service were active in the latter, in the Social-charitable section and in the Youth section. They also steered several groups for women from different walks in life: the Girls' Clubs, the Circle of College Students, the Circle of Catholic Teachers, and the Association of Working Girls. The Zita-, Catherine- and Martha Circles focused on maids, the St Margaret Circle addressed female university students. The Day of a Thousand Szekler Girls, an event marking out the effort to preserve folk traditions and communal identity, which survives up to present day, was also founded by the Sisters of Social Service.[24]

The formation provided by the Sisters of Social Service within the Club of Catholic Female University Students of Cluj (Kolozsvár), established in 1929

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21 Marton József, *A keresztény jelenkor*, Marosvásárhely: Mentor, 2008, 185.

22 "Az Erdélyi Kerület jelentése", *A Testvér* 12.7 (1941) 5.

23 Murányi, "Szellemben", 3–4.

24 Marton, *A keresztény jelenkor*, 187.

also deserves attention. The Sisters recorded the female students enrolled at the University and hosted regular, bi-weekly meetings. Starting with the second year, they offered lectures on ethical, cultural, and social issues. Students visited social institutions and factories, where they learned about the working conditions. They were involved in charitable work in the city, conducted social surveys and helped in soup kitchens. They also participated in the social life of the city. Guest lectures were offered by social, ecclesiastical or cultural personalities – Countess Paula Bethlen, wife of Count György Bethlen, president of the Catholic Women's Association, Fr. Imre Sándor, educator (later vicar and governor of the diocese of Alba Iulia),[25] Áron Márton, at the time the students' minister (later bishop),[26]

[25] Bishop Áron Márton later appointed Imre Sándor his vicar (1939) and after the Second Vienna Award (1940), which split the diocese of Alba Iulia between Hungary and Romania, governor of the Northern part of the diocese, residing in Cluj. Bishop Áron Márton decided to remain in the Southern part (in Romania), at the episcopal see in Alba Iulia. Due to his resistance to the attempts of the Romanian Communist regime to dismantle the Church loyal to Rome, Sándor was tried in 1951 as 'enemy of the people' and detained in the infamous political prisons of Bucharest, Jilava, and Râmnicu Sărat. He died in the latter in 1956. Ferenczi Sándor, *A gyulafehérvári (erdélyi) főegyházmegye történelmi papi névtára*, Kolozsvár: Verbum – Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 2009, 389; Andrea Dobes, "Sándor Imre – egy erdélyi vértanú", *Szabadság* (25.09.2017), http://szabadsag.ro/-/sandor-imre-egy-erdelyi-vertanu, referring to Cosmin Budeancă and Jánosi Csongor, "Sándor Imre (1893–1956) – destinul unui preot romano-catolic" in *Identităţi sociale, culturale, etnice şi religioase în comunism*, edited by Cosmin Budeancă and Florentin Olteanu, Iaşi: Polirom, 2015, 467–481.

[26] Áron Márton (1896–1980) was one of the most prominent personalities of the 20th century: students' minister and orator at St Michael's Church in Cluj, educator and editor, and from 1938/1939 bishop of the Roman-Catholic diocese of Alba Iulia (Transylvania). As bishop, he stood up against the deportation of the Jews and against the Communist repression of the Catholic Church. He spent several years in prison (1949–1955), in Jilava, Aiud (Nagyenyed) and Sighet (Máramarossziget) and in house arrest (1957–1967). Due to his outspoken critique of all forms of injustice and his extraordinary moral authority, Áron Márton is a legendary figure of the Catholic Church in Transylvania. János Szőke, *Márton Áron*. Nyíregyháza: Görög Katolikus Püspöki Hivatal, 1990; Stefano Bottoni, "Non recuso laborem. Áron Márton e il regime comunista romeno", in *La Chiesa cattolica dell'Europa centro-orientale di fronte al comunismo. Atteggiamenti, strategie, tattiche*, edited by András Fejérdy, Roma: Viella, 2013, 157–172; Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930–1965*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000,

Arthur Reischel, teacher and head of the Piarist Gymnasium in Cluj (Kolozsvár), or the poet and publicist Sándor Reményik. [27]

The social and educational dimension of the work of the Sisters of Social Service and their ability to respond to contemporary questions is well summarised in a sentence from the 1941 report of the Transylvanian District: "Historical circumstances determine historical tasks".[28]

The Sisters of Social Service and the liturgical renewal

The first decades of the Society coincided with the peak of the liturgical movement, which sought to place the liturgy in the centre of ecclesial life and spirituality, to make liturgy accessible to all believers, strengthening thereby the sense of communion.[29] The liturgy came to be understood as the centre of spirituality, the first and indispensable source of Christian life.[30] Liturgy, – Belgian Benedictine Lambert Beauduin argued –, had to nourish everyone; it had to be democratised.[31] This perspective can be seen as a synodal vision of the liturgy, as walking together, as celebrating together in the community.

106–107; *Márton Áron – Un vescovo sulla via della croce*. Atti della commemorazione organizzata dal Pontificio Consiglio della Cultura in collaborazione con l'Accademia di Romania in Roma; Giovedì, 11 ottobre 2012, Roma, edited by Gergely Kovács, Cluj: Verbum, 2013; [Valer Moga], "A Prelate Against Communism. Áron Márton, Roman Catholic Bishop of Alba Iulia (1938–1980)", *Memoria Urbis*, http://memoriaurbis.apulum.ro/en/story/96. On his work as educator: Márta Bodó, "Márton Áron, az ifjúság és a nép nevelője", *Keresztény Szó* 27.8 (2016) 19–26. On his interventions against the deportation of the Jews: Zoltán Tibori Szabó, "Márton Áron – a népek igaza". *Keresztény Szó* 26.4 (2015) 19–23.

27 Jánky János, "Mozgalmaink", *Erdélyi Tudósító* 15.10 (1932) 385–389 (390).

28 "Az Erdélyi Kerület jelentése", *A Testvér* 12.7 (1941) 5.

29 Szunyogh Xavér Ferenc, "A szentmise lelke", *Pannonhalmi Szemle* 10.2 (1935) 118–125.

30 Lambert Beauduin, *La piété de l'Église. Principes et faits*, Leuven: Abbaye du Mont-César, 1914, 47.

31 Whereas Benedictines are the aristocrats of the liturgy, Lambert claimed, everybody should be nurtured by the liturgy. In accordance with its etymology, the liturgy should be democratised. Cf. Ferdinand Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, Aschaffenburg: Paul Pattloch, 1964, 33; Benedikt Kranemann, "Glaubenstradition und Zeitgenossenschaft. Die Liturgiereform des 2. Vatikanischen Konzils im Kontext neuzeitlicher Reformen des Gottesdienstes", in *Gottesdienst in Zeitgenossenschaft: Positionsbestimmungen 40 Jahre nach*

In Transylvania, the first initiatives of the liturgical renewal were inspired by the motu proprio on sacred music *Tra le sollecitudini* of Pope Pius X[32] and consisted largely of instruction in liturgical chant. Gyula Glattfelder, the bishop of the diocese of Csanád, established a chant school to enhance the knowledge of Gregorian chant among canons and parish priests.[33]Gusztáv Károly Mailáth, Bishop of Transylvania, moved to renew church music in accordance with Pope Pius X's intention, and was inspired by the Cecilian Movement.[34] In 1903, the first course of church music was organised during the pastoral retreat in Csíksomlyó (Șumuleu Ciuc).[35] Following the *Tra le sollecitudini*, he introduced the mandatory liturgical formation of priests and cantors.[36] He also provided for the liturgical education of the faithful.[37]

The main ideas of the liturgical movement were promoted in Hungary mainly by the Benedictines, particularly through their extensive publishing activities. Hildebrand Várkonyi published a series of articles concerning the participation in the Mass in the youth magazine *Szent Gellért*. He obtained Lambert Beauduin's permission to translate his works. Ferenc Xavér Szunyogh OSB, the father of the Hungarian liturgical movement, corresponded with Lambert Beauduin, Ildefons Herwegen and Odo Casel. In 1922 he visited Maria Laach and met Odo Casel and

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der Liturgiekonstitution des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils, edited by Martin Klöckener and Benedikt Kranemann, Fribourg: Academic Press, 2006, 49–72 (60).

32 *Tra le sollecitudini*, *AAS* 36 (1904) 325–329.

33 *Havi közlöny* 34 (1911) 791–794 (781). Attendance of the chant school was mandatory, under penalty of a fine. The members of the Chapter and the parish priests protested jointly against the decree.

34 In 1901 he took part in the general assembly of the German Cecilia Association in Regensburg. He strongly supported the activities of the Hungarian Cecilia Association, founded in 1897. In 1903, the diocesan Cecilia Society, founded in Csíksomlyó, elected Bishop Mailáth as its patron.

35 The bishop reprimanded his priests for the poor attendance and the failure to observe the rules of worship "as the holiness and magnificence of the cause" required and ordered their observance.

36 Mailáth Gusztáv Károly, "Liturgikus továbbképzés", Archiepiscopal Archives of Alba Iulia [AAAI] 2360/1903. He called on cantors to take part in continuous formation and to establish church choirs.

37 Mailáth, "Liturgikus továbbképzés", AAAI 2360/1903. He instructed the clergy to explain the sacred rites to the faithful in sermons and catecheses, highlighting the magnificence of the liturgy, and endorse the instruction of the youth in chant.

Romano Guardini. Guardini granted him the permission to translate his works into Hungarian. In 1933, Szunyogh published the Hungarian-Latin Missal, provided with introductions and explanations. The liturgical apostolate was organised on the model of the popular liturgical apostolate of Pius Parsch, endorsing the participation of lay Christ believers in the liturgy.

The two female religious communities close to the Benedictines, the Social Missionary Society and the Sisters of Social Service, were actively involved in liturgical apostolate, which was understood as an expression of modern spirituality. The Social Missionary Society opened a liturgical bookstore, manufactured and sold religious objects and liturgical vestments. Their publishing house contributed to the dissemination of liturgical literature.

In Transylvania, the Sisters of Social Service disseminated the ideas of the liturgical movement through their publications. One of their journals, *A Nap* (*The Sun*, 1921–1946) published articles authored by Xavér Szunyogh. In ones of his articles, Szunyogh encouraged the readers to participate in the Mass with full awareness, to celebrate the times of the liturgical year, and pleaded for a celebration of the sacraments understandable to everyone.[38] In the internal journal of the Society, *A Testvér* (*The Sister*), the Sisters of Social Service encouraged the improvement of the quality of liturgical life. The official journal of the community, *A Lélek szava* (*The Word of the Spirit*), published the liturgical writings of Benedictine oblate Benedicta Balázs, under the heading "Liturgy: one minute!". These short writings explained the parts and texts of the Holy Mass.[39] Augusta Ikrich,[40] the founder of the Transylvanian District, discovered the ideas of the liturgical movement in Beuron and became a fervent supporter of the liturgical renewal.[41] The first bilingual, Hungarian-Latin Book of Hours, published in 1936, was compiled by Sister Erzsébet Bokor. The translations of the psalms were taken from Sándor Sík, the translations of the hymns from Miklós Bihari, and the antiphons from the *Szent vagy Uram!* (*You are holy, Lord!*) book of chants.[42] The Sisters of Social Service also published the Book of Hours for the deceased, in Hungarian.

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38 Szunyogh Xavér Ferenc, "A liturgikus mozgalom", *A Nap* 15.5 (1925) 3.

39 Farmati Anna, "Nihil operi Dei praeponatur", in *Minden kegyelem!, A 65 éves Jakubinyi György érsek köszöntése,* edited by Marton József and Oláh Zoltán, Budapest: Szent István Társulat – Kolozsvár: Verbum, 2011, 544–550 (550).

40 Marton József, "Miért éppen Ikrich Auguszta?", *Keresztény Szó* 24.8 (2013) 8–12.

41 Ikrich Auguszta, "Néhány nap Beuronba", *A Testvér* 2.1 (1930) 4.

42 Farmati, "Nihil operi Dei praeponatur", 548–550.

In 1925, the Social Missionary Society and the Sisters of Social Service organised a one-month course for the training of cantors in Cluj (Kolozsvár). The curriculum included topics in liturgy, music theory, harmony, musical forms, music history, music aesthetics, methods of vocal instruction, individual singing, piano, organ, choir, and practical training, with a total of 140 hours of lectures. Students performed cantorial duties at St. Michael's Church, sang with the choir and participated in exercises of group musical performance.[43]

In 1926, the sisters also organised a social course and a liturgical week, which included lectures on the liturgical movement, its implications for the social question, for the spiritual life of the social worker, and liturgical mass hearing.[44]

Conclusion

The synodal understanding of the Church, which challenges clericalism and emphasises the participation of all the baptised in every aspect of the life of the communities, in a sense rediscovers an ecclesiological vision that marked not only the early Church but has also found many recent expressions. This perspective also acknowledges the contribution of women, in particular of religious women, to the social and theological mission of the Church.

While the Catholic Church hesitantly rediscovers the importance of women in the Church, the Sisters of Social Service have played a significant role in addressing contemporary issues throughout their century-long history. Their charism, their social sensitivity, their modernness inspired by their devotion to the Holy Spirit, their practical sense, have contributed decisively to the prevention and healing of social problems. They have recognised the importance of education, of professional formation, and have given particular attention to the education of women, female students, and young professionals in social work. They have shown notable solidarity and found practical solution to rescue the persecuted, in particular the Jews. Their Benedictine spirituality also played a part in their involvement in the liturgical renewal that preceded and prepared Vatican II. This paper has highlighted mainly their activities related to Transylvania, a region that

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43 Mailáth Gusztáv Károly, "Kántor tanfolyam Kolozsváron", AAAI, 1723/1925.

44 Walter Ilona, "A megszentelő szeretet szolgálatában", in *Jelnek állítottalak… Emlékkönyv a Szociális Testvérek Társasága és Romániai Kerülete alapításának 80. Évfordulójára*, edited by Farmati Anna and Gábor Csilla, Csíkszereda: Tipographic, 2003, 17–63 (38).

is not commonly known as a region that would have had a significant impact on the renewal of the Church. The mission of the Sisters of Social Service continues to be a source of inspiration for women and men in the community.

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DAS BILD DER PILGERNDEN KIRCHE IM ORDO DEDICATIONIS ECCLESIAE ET ALTARIS (1977)

NORBERT NAGY[1]

Abstract. The image of the church as a pilgrimaging community under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the high priest of his flock (SC 41) is central to liturgy in which church buildings and altars are dedicated. This article sums up the reform of that part of the Roman Pontifical, which contains these rites. It also offers some liturgical and ecclesiological insights, which could be of interest in the context of the current worldwide synodal process in the Roman Catholic Church. An undoubtably positive result of the reform of these rites is the pneumatical effort which can be observed throughout the entire celebration. Much more important than the church building is the trinitarian focus on the church as People of God, Body of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit.
Keywords: liturgical reform, Vatican II, dedication, consecration, church, altar, Bishop, shepherd, high priest, local church, ecclesiology, sacramental life, communion, pilgrim, synodality, *communio viatorum*, *communio sanctorum*, *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, *Pontificale Romanum*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

In der Reihe der im Auftrag des Konzils erfolgten Reform des *Pontificale Romanum* nimmt der *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*[2] von 1977 einen bedeutenden Platz ein. Erschienen am Ende der Erneuerung der im Pontifikalen kodifizierten bischöflichen Liturgien[3], bildet der Band mit den Riten für die Weihe von Kirchen

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2 *Pontificale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum, auctoritate Pauli PP VI promulgatum*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Editiones typicae: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 1977.

3 Die Feier der Krönung eines Marienbildes wurde zwar 1981 als eigener Faszikel unter dem Titel *Ordo coronandi imaginem beatae Mariae Virginis* veröffentlicht, ohne jedoch als Ritus des Pontifikales bezeichnet zu werden. Mehr dazu: Martin Klöckener, *„Das Pontifikale als liturgisches Buch"*, in *Manifestatio Ecclesiae – Studien zu Pontifikale und bischöflicher Liturgie*, (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 17), Hg. von Winfried Haunerland – Otto Mittermeier – Monika Selle – Wolfgang Steck, Regensburg: Pustet, 2004, 91–92.

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und Altären zusammen mit der Feier der Bischofsweihe[4] und den Bestimmungen des *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*[5] wichtige liturgie-ekklesiologische Quellen für eine Studie über das Bild der pilgernden Kirche. Dieses Bild wiederum steht in enger Verbindung zu dem von Papst Franziskus eingeleiteten synodalen Prozess. Liegt der Akzent bei der Weihe eines Bischofs auf der Frage, wer dieser im Leben seiner Ortskirche ist, so richtet die Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe den Blick auf die Frage, was eigentlich Kirche ist: als Gebäude und mehr noch als pilgernde Gemeinschaft. Die Gestalt des Bischofs ist in beiden Fällen sowohl sakramententheologisch als auch ekklesiologisch zentral, denn er wird geweiht, um als Hoherpriester die Einheit seiner Herde zu fördern und durch die Feier der Eucharistie die Einheit des pilgernden Volk Gottes an dem einen Altar auf eine vorzügliche Weise sichtbar zu machen.[6]

Reformarbeiten und der neue *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*

Die Revision der Weihe von Kirchen und Altären[7] wurde 1970 mit der Gründung einer *Coetus 21 bis* genannten Studiengruppe in die Wege geleitet. Zum Relator der Gruppe wurde Pierre Jounel ernannt, als Sekretär diente zuerst Domenico Sartore (1936-2006), danach der spanische Liturgiewissenschaftler Ignazio Calabuig (1931-2005). An den Revisionsarbeiten war ferner der belgische Kanoniker André Rose (1920-1981) als Mitglied der Studiengruppe beteiligt.[8] Das Ziel der Reformarbeit

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4 *Pontificale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II renovatum, auctoritate Pauli PP. VI editum, Ioannis Pauli PP. II cura recognitum: De ordinatione episcopi, presbyterorum et diaconorum,* Editio typica altera, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1990.

5 *Caeremoniale Episcoporum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatum*, Editio typica, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1984; *Reimpressio (emendata)* 1985; *Reimpressio (variata et emendata)* 1995; *Reimpressio (emendata)* 2008.

6 Vgl. SC 41.

7 Die kurz vor Konzilsbeginn, im Jahr 1962 veröffentlichte *Editio typica emendata* des zweiten Buches des tridentinischen *Pontificale*, die den Ritus der Kirch- und Altarweihe gekürzt und vereinfacht wiedergibt, war ein Zeichen für die Unausweichlichkeit einer umfassenden Revision dieser (und anderer) Riten durch die bevorstehende Liturgiereform in der katholischen Kirche. Vgl. Reiner Kaczynski, *Ein neues Pontifikale für die katholischen Bistümer des deutschen Sprachgebietes*, in *Liturgisches Jahrbuch,* Münster: Aschendorff, 43, 1993, 223–263, hier 257.

8 Zur Geschichte der Revisionsarbeiten vgl. Annibale Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform 1948-1975. Zeugnis und Testament*, deutsche Ausgabe hg. von Johannes Wagner unter Mitarbeit von

war eine rituelle Vereinfachung und Befreiung der Kirchweiheliturgie von den im Pontifikale von 1596 kodifizierten Überlastungen und Vervielfältigungen von Kultakten[9] sowie eine theologische Anreicherung der Feier, die eine tätige Teilnahme der Gläubigen begünstigen und die neue Gottesdienststätte – in der Formulierung Bugninis – als «Zeichen der Nähe Gottes bei seinem Volk» darstellen sowie einen pointierten Akzent auf «das Heranreifen zu einer christlichen Gemeinde» setzen[10]. Ebenso stark war die Überzeugung der Mitglieder der Studiengruppe, dass aus einer theologischen Perspektive die «ureigenste liturgische Handlung für die Kirchenweihe» die vom Diözesanbischof geleitete Feier der Eucharistie ist. Daher musste sie in der Gesamtgestalt der Feier «besonders hervorgehoben» werden[11]. Schliesslich musste die gesamte Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe auf ein neues Fundament gestellt werden[12], um diese Ziele zu erreichen.

Die ersten Ergebnisse der Revisionsarbeit wurden in Form von zwei *Schemata*[13] auf der ersten Plenarsitzung der Gottesdienstkongregation, die vom 10.-13. November 1970 in Rom tagte, vorgelegt[14] und umfassten drei grosse Themen: allgemeine Prinzipien und Grundlagen für den künftigen Ritus, den Entwurf des Ritus der Kirchweihe, einen Vorschlag zu *Praenotanda* zur Feier der Kirchweihe. Da einige Aussagen dieser Entwürfe grundlegend für die spätere Neugestaltung

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François Raas, Freiburg i.Br.: Bamberg, 1988, 827–832, hier 827; Kaczynski, *Ein neues Pontifikale*, 257–260; Thomas G. Simons, *Holy People, Holy Place: Rites for the Church's House*, Chicago: LiturgyTrainingPublications, 1998, 25–30; Torsten-Christian Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus. Die Feier der Dedikation einer Kirche nach dem deutschen Pontifikale und dem Messbuch vor dem Hintergrund ihrer Geschichte und im Vergleich zum Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae und zu einigen ausgewählten landessprachlichen Dedikationsordines*, Aachen: Schaker, 1999, 162–164; Félix María Arocena, *El altar cristiano*. Barcelona: Centro De Pastoral Liturgic, 2006 (Biblioteca Litúrgica 29), 45–48.

9 Vgl. Markus Eham, „*«Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft» (Ps 84,8). Kirchen-Bilder, Liturgie- und Psalmendeutung in Prozessionsgesängen der Kirch- und Altarweihe*", in *Manifestatio Ecclesiae – Studien zu Pontifikale und bischöflicher Liturgie*, (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 17), Hg. von Winfried Haunerland – Otto Mittermeier – Monika Selle – Wolfgang Steck, Regensburg: Pustet, 2004, 351–380, hier 359.

10 Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 827.

11 Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 827.

12 Vgl. *Relatio* von Pierre Jounel zum *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, I, I.

13 *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, 8. Oktober 1970; *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 21. Oktober 1970.

14 Vgl. *Prima Congregatio Plenaria*, in *Notitiae* 6, 1970, 388-394, hier: 389–394.

der Riten für die Kirch- und Altarweihe sind, werden sie an dieser Stelle kurz erörtert und dargelegt.

Bereits die von Pierre Jounel als Relator der Studiengruppe verfasste *Relatio* fordert eine Neuausrichtung der Feier der Kirchweihe. Jounel zitiert am Anfang seines Exposés Artikel 23 der Liturgiekonstitution und betont, dass der Erarbeitung des neuen Ritus gründliche «theologische, historische und pastorale Untersuchungen» vorangehen sollen, damit die «gesunde Überlieferung» (*sana traditio*) auch angesichts der Kirchweihe bewahrt wird und gleichzeitig der «berechtigte Fortschritt» (SC 23) Platz erhält. Im Rahmen der *investigatio theologica* stellt er zuerst fest, dass die Tempel der Christen (*christianorum templa*) die Kirche (*ecclesia*) sind, die wiederum nicht als Weiterführung des alttestamentlichen Tempelkultes, sondern als der Leib Christi, der wahre Tempel Gottes (*verum Dei templum Corpus Christi est*), zu verstehen ist.[15]

Jounel betont ferner, dass mit «Kirche» zuerst das Volk Gottes (*Populus Dei*) und nicht ein Gebäude gemeint ist. Die Kirche wird aus lebendigen Steinen aufgebaut, aus Christgläubigen (*Christi fideles*), die sich zum Hören des Wortes Gottes und zur Feier der Eucharistie in einer Kirche versammeln (*congregatur*). Diese Gemeinde ist ein sichtbares, wenn auch zugleich unvollkommenes Zeichen des neuen Jerusalem, auf das sich die Christen ausrichten. Damit diese ekklesiologische und eschatologische Dimension besser zur Geltung gebracht werden kann, schlägt Jounel für die künftige Feier der Kirchweihe vor, den entsprechenden neutestamentlichen Lesungen den Vorrang zu geben.

Der ekklesiologische und christologische Ansatz sowie der starke Gegensatz zwischen den alttestamentlichen Kultakten und der neutestamentlichen *Ecclesia* in der *Relatio* kann nur im Kontext der vorkonziliaren Lage der Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe angemessen interpretiert werden. Am Vorabend des Konzils gehörte die Neugestaltung dieser Ritus zu den dringlichsten Reformwünschen aus dem liturgischen Bereich, da die Situation weder pastoral noch liturgietheologisch haltbar war.[16] Die in die tridentinische Form der Kirchweihe eingeflossenen Kultakte und deren «Überrezeption» stellten die «Gefahr» dar, grundlegende neutestamentliche und ekklesiologische Aspekte zu verdecken.[17] Die *Relatio* von

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15 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, II, I.

16 Eham verweist auf eine Quelle, die dieses Reformanliegen bereits vor dem Konzil formulierte: Abert Stohr, *Um eine Kürzung des Kirchweiheritus*, in: *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 6, 1956, 139–141. Vgl. Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 359.

17 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 360.

Jounel betont daher den Vorrang der Feier der Eucharistie[18] angesichts der anderen Ritenelemente und markiert damit einen liturgie-ekklesiologischen Wendepunkt in Theologie und Praxis der Kirch- und Altarweihe. Die Umsetzung durch die Neugestaltung dieser Riten sollte allerdings noch einige Jahren in Anspruch nehmen.

Nach der *Relatio* folgt ein Überblick der vorgeschlagenen Elemente des künftigen Kirchweiheritus sowie eine detaillierte Aufführung der Rituselemente, bereits versehen mit Rubriken und Anweisungen für die Feier. Der Duktus der Feier ist einfach und überschaubar gegliedert: Eröffnungsriten (*ritus initiales*), Feier des Wortes (*liturgia verbi*), Unterbringung von Reliquien und Salbungen (*depositio reliquiarum et unctiones*). Das ganze Fest der Kirchweihe mündet in die vom Bischof geleitete und konzelebrierte Feier der Eucharistie (*liturgia Eucharistica*), als Höhepunkt der ganzen liturgischen Versammlung in der neuen Kirche.[19]

Die dem *Schema* beigefügten *Praenotanda* sind umfangreich[20] und beinhalten zahlreiche Aussagen, die für die Feier der Kirchweihe und darüber hinaus von grosser liturgie-ekklesiologischer Relevanz sind. Da diese pastoralen Einführungen in der 1977 veröffentlichen Endfassung des *Ordo dedicationis* bedauerlicherweise «beträchtlich verkürzt, manchmal sogar sehr ungeschickt»[21] wiedergegeben sind und da sie aus der Sicht einer liturgie-ekklesiologischer Studie Aussagen beinhalten, die von erheblicher Bedeutung sind, wird dieser *Praenotanda*-Entwurf an dieser Stelle als Zeugnis für eine fruchtbare liturgie-theologische Neuorientierung und einen Umsetzungsversuch der Liturgiereform im Anschluss an das letzte Konzil etwas ausführlicher in Erinnerung gerufen.

Der *Praenotand*a-Entwurf ist in fünf Kapiteln aufgeteilt und beginnt mit Aussagen über die Natur und Würde der Kirchen (*De ecclesiarum natura et dignitate*). Die ersten Zeilen wiederholen den aus dem *Schema* bekannten Gegensatz zwischen dem Tempel des Alten und des Neuen Bundes: Nach Christi Tod und Auferstehung besteht das Haus Gottes (*mansio Dei*) nicht mehr aus einem durch Menschenhand erbauten Tempel. Das Haus Gottes des Neuen Bundes ist vielmehr der menschgewordene Christus selbst, sein Leib, sowie sein mystischer Leib, der die Kirche ist (*Corpus eius mysticum, quod est Ecclesia*). Diese Kirche

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18 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, II, III.

19 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, IV.

20 *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 1–8.

21 Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 830.

ist nicht primär an einen Ort gebunden, wie dies im Alten Bund der Fall war, sondern sie wird aus denjenigen Menschen aufgebaut, die – mit den Worten des Johannesevangeliums – den Vater im Geist und in der Wahrheit anbeten.[22] Mit dieser Aussage verleiht die Einführung zum *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae* dem Kirchenbegriff einen dynamischen und communio-bezogenen Charakter. Vom Gebäude ist zuerst noch gar nicht die Rede.

Der zweite Abschnitt des ersten Kapitels der *Praenotanda* verwendet weitere, vorwiegend neutestamentliche Bilder, um diese *Ecclesia* zu beschreiben. Sie wird als Tempel Gottes (*templum Dei*) bezeichnet, als das neue Jerusalem (*nova Ierusalem*), aus lebendigen Steinen aufgebaut (*ex vivis lapidibus aedificata*), das bis zur Vollendung am Ende der Zeiten weiterhin wächst. Durch die Taufe werden Menschen Christus eingegliedert und somit zum Tempel des Heiligen Geistes, in dem der Vater und der Sohn Wohnung nehmen (Joh 14,23)[23]. Die Erwähnung der Taufe als Sakrament der Eingliederung in die Kirche ist an dieser Stelle als sakramentale Verbindung zwischen der Kirche als Tempel des Heiligen Geistes und der konkreten, versammelten Gemeinschaft zu verstehen, die wiederum nach sichtbaren Ausdrucksformen des *Corpus mysticum* in Zeit und Ort sucht.

Darum wird der Versammlungsort der christlichen Gemeinde in den ersten Zeiten (*a primis saeculis*) des Christentums gemäss den *Praenotanda* mit Recht zuerst als «Haus der Kirche» oder «Hauskirche» (*domus ecclesiae*)[24] und später

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[22] Ein Verweis auf Joh 4,24, ohne jedoch die Stelle anzugeben. Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 1, 1.

[23] Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 1, 1.

[24] Zum Begriff *domus ecclesiae* und seiner Bedeutung für die Liturgie- und Baugeschichte der christlichen Kirchen: Jozef Boguniowski, *Domus Ecclesiae. Der Ort der Eucharistiefeier in den ersten Jahrhunderten. Tatsachen und theologische Sicht und Folgerungen daraus für heute*, Rom – Kraków, 1987; Peter Maser, „*Synagoge und Ekklesia. Erwägungen zur Frühgeschichte des Kirchenbaus*", in *Begegnungen zwischen Christentum und Judentum in Antike und Mittelalter* (FS für Heinz Schreckenberg). Hg. von Dietrich-Alex Koch – Hermann Lichtenberger, Göttingen: Matthias Grünewald, 1993 (Schriften des Institutum Iudaicum Delitzchianum), 271–292; Kristina Sessa, *Domus Ecclesiae: Rethinking a Category of Ante-Pacem Christian Space*, in *The Journal of Theological Studies,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 60, 2009, 90–108; Ulrich Mell, *Christliche Hauskirche und Neues Testament. Die Ikonologie des Baptisteriums von Dura Europos und das Diatessaron Tatians*, Göttingen: Vanderhoeck&Ruprecht, 2010 (Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments 77); Michael Jonas, *Mikroliturgie. Liturgische Kleinformeln im frühen Christentum*, Tübingen:

einfach als Kirche bezeichnet, wo die christliche Gemeinschaft (*communitas christiana*) zusammenkam (*congregare*) um den Herrn anzurufen, sein Wort zu hören, zu beten und Eucharistie zu feiern (*Eucharistiam celebraret*).[25] Diese Versammlungen verfolgen ein zweifaches Ziel: Zum einen bieten die (Haus-) Kirchen Möglichkeiten der Zusammenkunft der Glieder des Leibes Christi, zum anderen sind sie Orte, wo Menschen Gott in Jesus Christus begegnen können (*loca ubi homines cum Deo congrediuntur in Christo Iesu*),[26] in dem sie seinen Tod und Auferstehung in der eucharistischen Mahl feiern.

Erst nach diesen biblischen, ekklesiologischen und liturgie-theologischen Aussagen über die Kirche als *plebs Dei* (Gemeinschaft) und *domus* (Gebäude) kommt der *Praenotanda*-Entwurf im zweiten Kapitel auf den *Episcopus populi Dei* zu sprechen. Beim Ortsbischof liegt die Verantwortung für den Bau und die Weihe aller Gotteshäuser seiner Diözese, daher soll er einer solchen Feier möglichst persönlich vorstehen. Im Fall seiner Verhinderung kann er diese Aufgabe einem anderen Bischof übertragen oder damit den Priester beauftragen, der für die Seelsorge der Gemeinschaft zuständig ist, für welche die Kirche gebaut wurde.[27] Die Verantwortung des Ortsbischofs soll, so betont der Entwurf, keinesfalls als rein zeremonieller oder formeller Art betrachtet werden: Der Bischof soll sowohl die Pläne als auch die Realisierung des Kirchbaus beobachten und darauf achten, dass das neue Gebäude zweckgemäss gestaltet wird. Es soll sich sowohl im Hinblick auf die Zusammenkunft der Gläubigen (*sacrae synaxi*) als auch für die Feier des Kultes (*Dei cultui*) als geeignet erweisen.[28]

Mohr Siebeck, 2015 (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 98); Albert Gerhards, „*Liturgie in den ersten Jahrhunderten*", in *Geschichte der Liturgie in den Kirchen des Westens. Rituelle Entwicklungen, theologische Konzepte und kulturelle Kontexte*, Hg. von Jürgen Bärsch – Benedikt Kranemann – Winfried Haunerland – Martin Klöckener, Bd. 1. Münster: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, 83–153, hier: 98–103;

25 *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 2, 1.

26 *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 3, 1.

27 «Itaque ad Episcopum spectat omnes ecclesias in sua dioecesi aedificatas Deo dicare, sive ritum dedicationis ipse peragens, sive id munus committens ali Episcopo aut presbytero quem socium et adiutorem habuerit in muneribus pastoralibus exsequendis apud fideles, pro quibus ecclesia est aedificata.» *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 5, 2.

28 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 6, 2. Der Praenotanda-Entwurf unterstreicht diese Forderung mit einem Zitat aus dem *IGMR 1969*: «Generalis itaque dispositio aedis sacrae ea sit oportet quae coetus congregati imaginem quodammodo

Im Hintergrund dieser Darstellung des Ortsbischofs als Verantwortungsträger für die Bau und Weihe der Kirchen und anderer Gottesdienststätten seiner Diözese ist das Bild des Bischofs als «Hoherpriester seiner Herde, von dem das Leben seiner Gläubigen in Christus gewissermassen ausgeht und abhängt», der für das «liturgische Leben des Bistums, in dessen Mittelpunkt [er] steht» (SC 41), zu erkennen. Da er «nicht immer und überall in eigener Person den Vorsitz über das gesamte Volk seiner Kirche führen kann, so muss er diese notwendig in Einzelgemeinden aufgliedern» (SC 42). Weiht der Bischof eine neue Kirche oder Kapelle ein, nimmt er seine Verantwortung für eine bestimmte Region oder Gruppe des «gesamten Volkes seiner Kirche» (SC 42) wahr und sorgt dafür, dass das neue Gotteshaus die Zusammenkunft der Gläubigen und die Feier der Sakramente und übrigen liturgischen Handlungen gewährleisten kann. Die Feier der Kirchweihe ist eine zeichenhafte Manifestation dieser Verantwortung des Bischofs für seine Ortskirche, die aus pastoralen Gründen zwar aufgegliedert ist, aber eine Einheit bildet. Diese Einheit wird durch die Feier der Eucharistie in Konzelebration mit den anwesenden Priestern und Diakonen unter möglichst zahlreicher Beteiligung der Gläubigen[29] und anderer Diener an der Feier sakramental sichtbar.

Es seien noch einige Aussagen dieses Entwurfs aufgegriffen, die eine gründliche liturgie-theologische Überlegung bezeugen, jedoch in der *Editio typica* bedauerlicherweise nur verkürzt vorkommen. Die Feier beginnt mit dem Einzug (*ingressu in ecclesiam*) in das neue Gotteshaus. Nach der Übergabe der Kirche an den Bischof (*traditio ecclesiae Episcopo*) segnet dieser das Wasser und besprengt das Volk *in baptismi memoriam*. Dieser liturgische Akt, dem oft allzu wenig Gewicht im Gesamtbild der Feier gegeben wird, stellt die Feier der Kirchweihe in einen sakramental-ekklesiologischen Kontext: Die Gemeinde soll durch die rituelle Dedikation der Kirche an ihre eigene Berufung erinnert werden und sich als «lebendige Kirche» (*Ecclesiam vivam*) erneuern (*renovare*). Das neue Gebäude steht für ein neues Volk, das von Gott erwählt (*populum Dei*) und zum Tempel des Heiligen Geistes berufen ist.[30]

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prae se ferat, atque congruam omnium ordinationem permittat necnon rectam muneris exsecutionem uniuscuiusque foveat.»

29 Die Auswahl des Tages für die Kirchweihe soll die möglichst zahlreiche Anwesenheit der Gläubigen an der Feier begünstigen. Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 9, 3.

30 «Totus ritus in primis spectare debet Ecclesiam vivam, populum Dei congregatum. Praestat igitur ut celebratio incipiat a memoria baptismim quo in electorum numerum accepti

Der Höhepunkt der Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe ist das vom Bischof dargebrachte *sacrificium dominicum*[31], die konzelebrierte Eucharistie, die im Entwurf als Zeichen der Einheit (*signum unitatis*) des Volkes Gottes und als Band der Liebe (*vinculum caritatis*) charakterisiert wird.[32] Diese Aussage mit ihren eucharistie-ekklesiologischen Zügen stellt einen der wertvollsten Aspekte dieses Entwurfs dar, der leider aus der Endfassung von 1977 spurlos verschwunden ist. Denn gerade die Wiederentdeckung der zentralen Stellung der Eucharistie bei der Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe bildet die Reform *par excellence* dieses Ritus. Durch diese Hervorhebung wird nicht nur die sakramentale Bedeutung des Bischofs im Leben seiner (Lokal-) Kirche liturgisch sichtbar gemacht, sondern auch die Einheit mit ihm sowie die Einheit des ganzen Volkes im Band der Liebe zeichenhaft manifestiert und gefestigt.

Das fünfte Kapitel des *Praenotanda*-Entwurfs (*De praeparatione pastorali*)[33] liefert schliesslich eine Aussage, die die zahlreichen «Früchte» der Teilnahme der Gläubigen an der Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe erörtert, welche wiederum nur unbegreiflich verkürzt in der *Editio typica* von 1977 Erwähnung finden. Das *Schema* erinnert daran, dass neben der rechtzeitigen und gründlichen Vorbereitung der Gläubigen, damit sie die verschiedenen Elemente der Feier erfassen und sich daran tätig beteiligen können, auch einer anderen Dimension gebührend Platz gegeben werden soll. Sie sollen sich gemeinsam auf dieses wichtige Ereignis im Leben ihrer Gemeinschaft vorbereiten und darum bemüht sein, dass die Einweihung einer neuen Kirche die allgemeine Erneuerung der Gemeinde fördert und bestätigt.[34] Denn die Weihe einer neuen Kirche soll über die Indienstnahme eines neuen Gotteshauses hinaus auch die innere Erneuerung aller Gläubigen bewirken.[35]

Die Weihe einer neuen Kirche umfasst gemäss den *Praenotanda* vom Oktober 1970 schliesslich auch eine missionarische Dimension. Die Errichtung einer

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sumus. Itaque omnis fidelis, baptismum memorans, oblationem suam renovabit.» *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 11 b, 4.

31 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 15, 5.

32 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 15, 6.

33 *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

34 «Fideles non solum tempestive certiores fiant de novae ecclesiae dedicatione sed opportune praeparentur ut actuose ritui intersint, qui communes labores et animorum contentionem ad Christi fidelium communitatem renovandam confirmabit.» *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

35 «Omnes Christi fideles animos intendere debent ut, cum nova dedicatur ecclesia, ipsi renovatur». *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

neuen Kirche ist kein Selbstzweck, und das Gebäude ist nicht bloss das Eigentum einer Gemeinde: *ecclesiae dedicatione vis quoque missionalis inest*[36]. Sie ist der Ort wo sich die christliche Gemeinde (*communitas christiana*) versammelt, das Evangelium verkündet wird und dadurch das christliche Volk im Glauben und in der Liebe wächst.[37] Die Kirche ist Ort der Verkündigung und der Eingliederung neuer Mitglieder in die christliche Gemeinschaft, in den Leib Christi, dessen Abbild die Kirche ist. Deshalb kommt der Tauferinnerung und der Besprengung der Gemeinde und des neuen Kirchenbaus ein grosses Gewicht im Ritus der Kirchweihe zu: Unter ihrem Dach wird durch die Feier der Taufe und Eucharistie eine christliche Gemeinde aus «lebendigen Steinen» stets weitergebaut und mit dem Evangelium genährt.

Die Sorge für die Pfarreien der Ortskirche und die Verantwortung für die geistliche Ernährung und das Wachstum der christlichen Gemeinden liegt primär beim Ortsbischof. Der letzte Abschnitt des Kapitels *De praeparatione pastorali* im *Praenotanda*-Entwurf ruft an dieser Stelle die aus SC 41 bekannte sakramententheologische und liturgie-ekklesiologische Aussage über die Rolle des Bischofs im «Leben seiner Gläubigen» mit Nachdruck in Erinnerung.[38] Der Bischof ist das Band (*vinculum*), das die Gemeinde zusammenhält und ihre Einheit gewährleistet. Vom Bischof gehen alle apostolischen Impulse in der Diözese aus (*procedit*), eine Aussage, die wiederum an SC 42 erinnert. Er ist litr der Ursprung des sakramentalen Lebens der Ortskirche, da er aber «nicht immer und nicht überall in eigener Person» anwesend sein kann, sendet er Mitarbeiter und Mitarbeiterinnen, die bestimmte Dienste und Aufgaben in seinem Auftrag in den einzelnen Gemeinden erfüllen. Der Segen Gottes kommt auf das Volk (*super populum*) der Ortskirche durch den hohepriesterlichen und apostolischen Dienst des Bischofs herab. Er ist die Verbindung zwischen den Pfarreien (*paroecia*) und Gemeinschaften, die unter dem Vorsitz des Bischofs eine Ortskirche bilden. Diese Ortskirche, aufgegliedert

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36 *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

37 «In nova aede, enim, quae loco a templis inopi est constructa, evangelii resonabit praeconium et communitas christiana, veritatis luce collustrata, in fide et caritate proficiet.» *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

38 «Episcopi autem adventus in lucem proferet vincula quibus paroecia aut communitas Episcopo coniungitur: ut enim in dioecesi omnis apostolicus impulsus ab Episcopo procedit, ita Dei benedictio per eum super populum descendit.» *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

in Einzelgemeinden und Gotteshäusern, «stellen auf eine gewisse Weise die über den ganzen Erdkreis hin verbreitete sichtbare Kirche dar» (SC 42).

Mit diesen Aussagen erhält die Feier der Kirchweihe ihre höchste ekklesiologische Dimension. Der Bischof weiht eine neue Kirche ein, weil er selbst die primäre pastorale Verantwortung für die Gemeinden seiner Ortskirche trägt. Die Weihe einer neuen Kirche dient schliesslich dem Wachstum der ganzen Ortskirche, auch wenn eine Pfarrkirche oder Kapelle und die dort wirkenden Seelsorgerinnen und Seelsorger einem «räumlich verfassten» (SC 42) Gebiet dieser Ortskirche zugeordnet sind. Die liturgische Feier der Kirchweihe drückt diese multidimensionale und sakramentale Verbindung zwischen der Einzelgemeinde, dem Ortsbischof und der Ortskirche zeichenhaft aus. Mehr noch: Die Feier der Kirchweihe im Kontext der konzelebrierten Eucharistiefeier unter dem Vorsitz des Bischofs und der vollen und tätigen Teilnahme des Gottesvolkes ist eine *praecipua manifestatio ecclesiae*, wo der Bischof als «Hoherpriester seiner Herde» in Erscheinung tritt (SC 41). Der *Praenotanda*-Entwurf von 21. Oktober 1970 ist darum bemüht, diesen Aspekt der Kirchweihe möglichst deutlich hervorzuheben, damit diese Bedeutung der Weiheliturgie auch den «Gläubigen» (*fideles*), die sich auf das Fest vorbereiten[39], bewusst wird. Es ist zu bedauern, dass gerade diese, aus liturgie-ekklesiologischer Sicht so bedeutungsvollen Akzente in der *Editio typica* von 1977 – mit den Worten von Bugnini – «beträchtlich verkürzt»[40] wiedergegeben wurden.

Das nächste *Schema* zur Revision der Feier der Kirchweihe trägt das Datum des 25. März 1971 und beinhaltet sowohl den neuen Ritus für die Kirchweihe als auch den bereits dargestellten *Praenotanda*-Entwurf.[41] Inhaltlich können kaum Abweichungen im Vergleich zum *Schema 370* vom Oktober 1970 festgestellt werden. Eine bemerkenswerte Neuerung dieses *Schemas* befindet sich im zweiten Appendix, wird aber aus der *Editio typica* wieder verschwinden.[42] Das Schema erwägt die Einfügung einer Taufe in die Feier der Kirchweihe, falls dies aus pastoralen Gründen opportun erscheint. Natürlich würde die Feier der Eingliederung in die Kirche im Rahmen der Kirchweihliturgie liturgie-theologisch gesehen eine optimale Bereicherung der ganzen Feier bilden, die bereits zahlreiche Anknüpfungspunkte zur Tauftheologie beinhaltet. Sie würde die spirituelle und missionarische Dimension und den Zeugnis-

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39 Vgl. *Schema 370 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae. Praenotanda*, 18, 7.

40 Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 830.

41 *Schema 375 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, 25. März 1971.

42 *Appendix II, De baptismi celebratione ritui dedicationis ecclesiae coniuncta*, in: *Schema 375 Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae*, 21.

charakter des Kirchenbaus sakramental und zeichenhaft konkretisieren, allerdings auch das bereits umfangreiche Fest noch weiter verlängern. Vielleicht daran liegt es, dass dieser Punkt in den späteren *Schemata* nicht mehr anzutreffen ist.

Die letzten drei *Schemata* zur Revision der Kirch- und Altarweihe stammen aus dem Jahr 1972. Da bis dahin ausschliesslich die Liturgie der Kirchweihe erarbeitet wurde, widmete sich die Studiengruppe nun dem *Ordo dedicationis altaris*[43], sowie den Dedikationsriten[44] von Kirche, Altar, Kelch, Patene und der Segnung der Friedhöfe; diese Segnungsvollzüge waren traditionell dem Bischof vorbehalten[45]. Unter diesen Riten kommt der Weihe des Altares eine besondere Rolle zu, da sie nicht nur als «das unverzichtbare Herzstück der *Dedicatio ecclesiae*»[46] gilt und als eine «reduzierte Kirchweihe»[47] verstanden werden kann, sondern zu den Pontifikalliturgien gehört, die in den letzten Jahrzehnten in vielen Kirchen, in denen in Folge der Liturgiereform ein neuer Altar erforderlich war, gefeiert wurde. Dadurch konnte der Bischof als «Hoherpriester seiner Herde» (SC 41) von vielen Gläubigen der Ortskirche erfahren werden. Diese Tatsache erhebt die Feier der Altarweihe zusammen mit der Kirchweihe zu den wichtigsten und aus liturgie-ekklesiologischer Perspektive gesehen zu den bedeutendsten bischöflichen Liturgien.

Die zwei *Schemata,* die es ermöglichen, den Entstehungsprozess der revidierten Feier der Altarweihe zu rekonstruieren, beinhalten sowohl die neugestalteten Riten als auch zwei Fassungen der *Praenotanda*. Die erste *Praenotanda*-Version des *Schema 378* beginnt mit einem bereits aus dem *Schema 370* zur Kirchweihe bekannten Gegensatz zwischen dem kultisch-rituellen Altarbegriff des Alten Testaments und dem Tempel des Neuen Bundes, Christus und seinem Opfer, dessen

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43 *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris* vom 6. Januar 1972 und überarbeitete *Praenotanda* zum *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris. Adnexus* vom 1. März 1972.

44 *Schema 380 Ordo benedictionis ecclesiae, ordo benedictionis altaris, ordo ad benedicendum calicem et patenam, ordo ad coemeterium benedicendum* vom 15. Februar 1972. Ihre *Praenotanda* sind sehr knapp gehalten und sind meist kurze Zusammenfassungen der Vorbemerkungen zur Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe.

45 Vgl. Klöckener, *Das Pontifikale als liturgisches Buch*, 91.

46 Andreas Heinz, „*Die Weihe des Altares*", in *Manifestatio Ecclesiae – Studien zu Pontifikale und bischöflicher Liturgie*, (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 17), Hg. von Winfried Haunerland–Otto Mittermeier – Monika Selle – Wolfgang Steck, Regensburg: Pustet, 2004, 323–349, hier: 323.

47 Bruno Kleinheyer, *Kirchweihe – Altarweihe. Zur neuen Ordnung im deutschen Sprachgebiet*, in Liturgisches Jahrbuch, Münster: Aschendorff, 31, 1981, 214–235, hier 219.

Gedächtnis in der Kirche sakramental vergegenwärtigt wird.[48] Die Feier des Paschamysteriums in der eucharistischen Versammlung am «Tisch Gottes» (*mensa Domini*) ist die Teilhabe am Leib des Herrn (*participatio corporis Domini*). [49] Die Teilhabe an dem vom Priester am Altar gesegneten Kelch und dem gebrochenen «einen Brot» bewirkt die Einheit des «einen Leibes», der Kirche.[50]

Weiht der Bischof einen neuen Altar in einer Kirche, wird diese ekklesiologische und sakramentale Dimension durch die erste Eucharistiefeier deutlich. Ja, die eigentliche Weihe eines Altares besteht gemäss diesem Entwurf in der ersten Eucharistie, die am neuen Altar gefeiert wird. Die *Praenotanda* mahnen davor, den liturgie-theologischen Sinn der Altarweihe ausser Sicht zu lassen (oder «mahnen, … nicht außer Acht zu lassen): die Eucharistiefeier soll nicht bloss als rituelles Instrument der Altarweihe angesehen werden. Eine Verzwecklichung der Eucharistiefeier soll vermieden werden. Der Altar erfüllt seinen Zweck erst dann, wenn an ihm das Gedächtnis des Herrn (*Memoriale Domini*) gefeiert wird, und so die christliche Gemeinde voll am Paschamysterium teilnimmt.[51] Der Bischof, der im Normalfall der Feier vorstehen soll, ist der Hohepriester, der die versammelte Gemeinde in diese Geheimnisse einführt und ihnen zur regelmässigen und häufigen Feier[52] der Eucharistie einen Altar übergibt. Diese liturgie- und eucharistie-ekklesiologischen Aussagen machen die Bedeutung des Bischofs im sakramentalen und kirchlichen «Leben seiner Gläubigen» (SC 41) deutlich.

Die zweite Fassung des *Praenotanda*-Entwurfs zur Altarweihe vom 1. März 1972 beinhaltet zwar wenige Abweichungen im Vergleich zur ersten Version, sie vertieft

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48 «Christus Dominus verbo atque exemplo Antiqui Foederis cultus sensum aperuit et rituum Templi finem fecit: quod umbra erat ad plenam lucem protulit et, prophetias rerum veritate perficiens, Novi Foederis cultum inchoavit; immo salutifera Passione ac gloriosa Resurrectione, ipse, qui Sacerdos erat et Victima, ei fastigium imposuit atque Ecclesiae perpetuandum concredit, Memoriale suae Paschae instituens.» *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris*, 1, 1.

49 Vgl. *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris*, 2, 1.

50 «Participatio autem de eadem dominica mensa efficit ut omens qui de uno pane participant unum corpus sint.» *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris*, 2, 1.

51 «Eucharistiae celebratio res est prima ac necessaria ad altare dedicandum. Eucharistia autem non celebratur praecipue ut altare Sancta contingens sacrum fiat, sed ut communitas christiana Memoriale Domini peragens plene participet Paschale mysterium: ad hoc enim altare est erectum.» *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris*, 21, 8.

52 Vgl. *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris. Adnexus*, 7, 4.

jedoch die Bedeutung des Altares in der Liturgie und im spirituellen Leben der Gläubigen. Sie bezeichnet die Jünger (?) Christi (*Christi discipuli*) mit dem Begriff *altaria spiritalia*, die dazu berufen sind, ihr Leben Gott als geistliches Opfer darzubringen. Diese Ergänzung des ersten Entwurfs wird, zwar leicht überarbeitet, in die Endfassung einfliessen und stellt eine altkirchliche Auslegung der Rolle des Altares im Leben der Gemeinde, der Glieder (*membra*) Christi, dar.[53] Eine weitere Ergänzung bringt dieses *Schema* auch hinsichtlich der einzelnen Rituselemente der Altarweihe und ihrer theologischen Darstellung, die wesentliche Rolle der Eucharistie im Zusammenhang der ganzen Feier wird dabei wiederholt und mit Nachdruck betont.[54]

Die *Schemata* zu den oben erwähnen Riten wurden bei der zweiten Plenarversammlung der Gottesdienstkongregation im März 1972 in ihrer aktualisierten Form präsentiert und den Mitgliedern des Dikasteriums zur Überprüfung vorgelegt.[55] Aus diesen Entwürfen und nach zahlreichen Experimenten durch Bischöfen aus ganzen Welt wurde 1973 eine sogenannte «Fahnenausgabe» (*bozza di stampa*)[56] zusammengestellt und den Bischofskonferenzen, liturgischen Zentren weltweit und einzelnen Experten zur weiteren Überprüfung zugestellt. Die Absicht dieser Studienausgabe bestand darin – wie bereits in den *Schemata* gesehen –, die Riten zu vereinfachen und zu gestalten, damit sie der aus der altrömischen Ordnung der Kirchweihe bekannten theologischen Auffassung näherkommen, demnach die Weihe der Kirche (und des Altares) durch die erste im Kirchgebäude gefeierte Eucharistie erfolgt.[57]

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53 Vgl. *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris. Adnexus*, 2, 1.

54 Vgl. *Schema 378 Ordo dedicationis altaris. Adnexus*, 19–22, 7–9.

55 Vgl. Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 828.

56 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris deque aliis locis et rebus Deo sacrandis*, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973. Der Band wurde mit *Praenotanda* versehen und beinhaltete folgende Kapiteln: I. Ritus bei der Grundsteinlegung oder beim Beginn des Kirchbaus; II. Kirchweihe; III. Altarweihe; IV. Segnung einer Kirche; V. Segnung eines Tragaltares; VI. Segnung eines Ortes, der liturgischen und anderen Feiern dienen soll; VII. Weihe von Kelch und Patene; VIII. Segnung eines neuen Kreuzes, das zur öffentlichen Verehrung der Gläubigen aufgerichtet wird; IX. Glockenweihe; X. Segnung eines Friedhofes; XI. Öffentliche Sühnefeier, wenn eine Kirche geschändet worden ist; XII. Krönung eines Marienbildes. Vgl. Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 828-829; Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 162–164.

57 Kaczynski, *Ein neues Pontifikale*, 258.

Forneck bezeichnet den in der Studienausgabe veröffentlichten Ordo zur Kirchweihe als «grossen Einschnitt»[58] und lobt dabei sowohl die aus den Schemata bekannten theologischen Aussagen der *Praenotanda* als auch den Aufbau der Feier selbst. Er stellt in seiner Analyse fest, dass der grösste Unterschied zu den vorkonziliaren Kirchweiheriten darin besteht, «dass sich die Eucharistiefeier nicht mehr den Dedikationsriten anschliesst, sondern den Rahmen für diese bildet und so wieder zum Höhepunkt der Feier wird»[59]. Zwar sind die meisten Ritenelemente aus der vorkonziliaren Form der Kirch- und Altarweihe (Besprengung, Salbung, Beleuchtung) beibehalten, aber sie sind auf die Feier der Eucharistie hingeordnet. Die Feierordnung kennt allerdings keine eigene Dedikationsgebete für die Weihe der Kirche und des Altares. Dieser Schritt ist im Vergleich zum vorkonziliaren Pontifikale der sichtbarste Unterschied. Bemerkenswert ist auch die fakultative Natur der Reliquienbeisetzung.[60]

Die Rückmeldungen zu den Erneuerungen der Studienausgabe von 1973 waren gemischt. Angeblich stellte diese vereinfachte, eindeutig auf die Eucharistie zentrierte Ordnung der Kirchweihe für manche Befragten eine Herausforderung dar.[61] Diese Erfahrung machte klar, dass «der Rückgriff auf ein vorkultisches Stadium christlicher Liturgie»[62] im Zusammenhang mit der Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe nicht mehr möglich war. Die Studiengruppe nahm diese Rückmeldungen ernst und widmete sich der weiteren Bearbeitung der Riten, um den Druck der *Editio typica* baldmöglichst in die Wege zu leiten. Die 1975 erfolgte Aufhebung der Gottesdienstkongregation legte jedoch das Projekt, das sich in der letzten Arbeitsphase befand, vorläufig auf Eis.[63]

Der neue Pontifikale-Band *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* erschien schliesslich mit einem Dekret der Kongregation für die Sakramente und den Gottesdienst vom 29. Mai 1977[64]. (?) Vergleicht man inhaltlich die Studienausga-

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58 Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 162.

59 Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 163.

60 Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 163.

61 In seinem Rückblick auf die Erarbeitung der neuen Ordnung der Kirch- und Altarweihe und die Studienausgabe von 1973 als eine wichtige Etappe in diesem Prozess, Kaczynski schreibt: «Die Nüchternheit ging den Befragten jedoch zu weit.» in: Kaczynski, *Ein neues Pontifikale*, 258.

62 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 360.

63 Vgl. Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 829.

64 Das Veröffentlichungsdekret wurde von James Roland Knox als Kardinal-Präfekt und Erzbischof Antonio Innocenti als Sekretär unterzeichnet. Lateinischer Text in: Offizielle

be von 1973 mit dieser endgültigen Version, so fällt sofort auf, dass in der *Editio typica* nur ein Teil der ursprünglich geplanten Riten[65] veröffentlicht wurde: die Grundsteinlegung einer Kirche, die Weihe bzw. Segnung einer Kirche und eines Altares sowie die Segnung von Kelch und Patene. Neben dem Inhalt erlitten auch die *Praenotanda* erhebliche Verkürzungen, wie bereits in den vorhergehenden Absätzen erwähnt. Als letzte *Editio typica* in der Reihe der im Auftrag des Konzils erneuerten Faszikel des Pontifikale beinhaltet jedoch diese Ausgabe – in erster Linie die *Praenotanda* und die liturgischen Texte zur Weihe der Kirche und des Altares – zahlreiche aus liturgie-ekklesiologischer Sicht bedeutende Aussagen zum Bild des Bischofs als «Hoherpriester seiner Herde» (SC 41) im Kontext der liturgischen Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe. Diese Aussagen sollen in den folgenden Abschnitten kurz dargestellt werden.

Eine Auswertung aus liturgie-ekklesiologischer Sicht

Unter den Riten der nachkonziliaren Pontifikalebände ragen aus liturgie-ekklesiologischen Sicht die Feier der Bischofsweihe und die der Kirch- und Altarweihe deutlich hervor. Wenn der *Ordo* der Bischofsweihe von 1968 und die *Editio typica altera* von 1990 mit ihren umfänglichen pastoralen Einführungen im Sinne der «Wiederentdeckung des Episkopats» im Zuge des Konzils ein konzentriertes, liturgisch greifbares und multidimensionales Bild des Bischofs als «Hoherpriester seiner Herde» (SC 41) darstellt, dann nimmt der *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* von 1977 diese «Herde», die Kirche, in den Blick. Diese zwei Pontifikalefaszikel sind liturgie-ekklesiologisch gesehen voneinander genauso untrennbar, wie für die Liturgiekonstitution eine Darstellung eines

lateinische Ausgabe 5f; *Notitiae* 13, 1977, 364f; Deutscher Text: *Dokumente zur Erneuerung der Liturgie [DEL]. Bd. 2: Dokumente des Apostolischen Stuhls 4. 12. 1973 – 3. 12. 1983,* hg. von Heinrich Rennings – Martin Klöckener, Kevelaer – Fribourg: Botzon&Bercker, 1997, Dok. 215, Nr. 3534.

65 Die folgenden Kapiteln aus der «Fahnenausgabe» von 1973 wurden aus der *Editio typica* von 1977 weggelassen: VI. Segnung eines Ortes, der liturgischen und anderen Feiern dienen soll; VII. Weihe von Kelch und Patene; IX. Glockenweihe; X. Segnung eines Friedhofes; XI. Öffentliche Sühnefeier, wenn eine Kirche geschändet worden ist; XII. Krönung eines Marienbildes. Die Feier der Krönung eines Marienbildes wurde 1981 nachträglich als *Ordo coronandi imaginem beatae Mariae Virginis* veröffentlicht, trägt aber den Reihentitel *Pontificale* nicht.

«Hohenpriesters» ohne «Herde» ebenfalls undenkbar wäre. Da in der Ordinationsfeier «der Bischof für die ganze Ortskirche bestellt wird, betrachtet nun die Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe mit zeichenhaften Bildern diese Realität, die der Bischofsweihe auch Sinn und Ziel verleiht: die Ortskirche, deren Abbild der Kirchenbau und der Altar sind.

Dass die Weihe einer neuen Kirche und/oder einer Altares nicht nur eine Angelegenheit einer Einzelgemeinde, sondern der ganzen Ortskirche ist, und somit im Zuständigkeitsbereich des Bischofs liegt, geht aus den knappen, aber wichtigen Bestimmungen der sowohl für die Feier der Kirchweihe als auch für die Feier der Altarweihe vorgesehenen *Praenotanda* deutlich hervor: «Für die Weihe der neuen Kirche [bzw. neuer Altäre] im Bistum ist der Bischof zuständig, dem die Sorge für diese Ortskirche (*ecclesia particularis*) anvertraut ist»[66]. Und da «die Eucharistiefeier die wichtigste und allein notwendige Handlung bei der Weihe einer Kirche [eines Altares] ist»[67], ist das Bild des Bischofs in diesem Pontifikaleband genau das Bild dessen, der in SC 41 als «Hohenpriester seiner Herde» und als Vorsteher der Eucharistiefeier, an der «das ganze heilige Gottesvolk voll und tätig […] teilnimmt», dargestellt ist; er ist «umgeben von seinem Presbyterium und den Dienern des Altares». Wie sich die Kirche versteht, die sich in diesem Zusammenhang vorzüglich manifestiert (vgl. *praecipua manifestatio ecclesiae* in SC 41), wird im Folgenden anhand einiger Ritenelemente sowie Kirchen- und Altarbilder des *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* verdeutlicht.

Die Einführung des *Ordo* zur Kirchweihe beginnt mit einem Abschnitt über den Sinn (*natura*) und die Würde (*dignitas*) des Kirchengebäudes[68], ein durch die Liturgiereform hervorgebrachtes thematisches Novum[69] dieses Pontifikalefaszikels. Der Sinn des Kirchenbaus hat seinen Ursprung nach den *Praenotanda* in Tod und Auferstehung Jesu, der durch sein Paschamysterium zum «vollkommenen Tempel des Neuen Bundes» wurde und als solcher um sich eine Gemeinschaft, ein Volk, als sein Eigentum versammelt hat (*populum acquisitionis congregavit*). Dieses heilige Volk wird als «durch die Einheit des Vaters und des Sohnes und des

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66 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 6, 22 und 12, 86. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3548 und 3583.

67 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 15, 25 und 21, 87. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3557 und 3592.

68 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 1–3, 21–22. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3543–3545.

69 Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 173.

Heiligen Geistes geeinte Kirche» gekennzeichnet, die der «aus lebendigen Steinen erbaute Tempel Gottes» ist, in dem der Vater angebetet wird (*adoratur*). Der Versammlungsort der christlichen Gemeinde wird ebenfalls seit alters (*ab antiquo*) «Kirche» genannt. In ihr finden die liturgischen Grundvollzüge der Kirche als Gemeinschaft statt: das Hören des Wortes Gottes, das gemeinsame Gebet, der Empfang der Sakramente und die Feier der Eucharistie.[70] Der Kirchenbau, das «Haus der Kirche», ist Zeichen der pilgernden Kirche auf Erden und zugleich Bild des vollendeten, himmlischen Jerusalem[71] und daher auch ein «Symbol überirdischer Wirklichkeit»[72].

Mit dieser kompakten theologischen Einführung in die Feier der Kirchweihe legen die *Praenotanda* die Grundthemen dieser Dedikationsriten dar: sie sind christologisch verankert (Paschamysterium), haben stets eine trinitarische Ausrichtung, weisen auf die Kirche als Volk Gottes (Ekklesiologie) und Tempel des Heiligen Geistes (Pneumatologie) hin, die sich im Kirchenbau abbildet. Hier versammelt sich die Gemeinde, um das Wort zu hören (Verkündigung), die Mysterien der Kirche in der Liturgie zu feiern (Sakramente) und um Gott anzubeten (Doxologie). Diese Kirche befindet sich auf dem Weg zur Vollendung (Eschatologie): sie pilgert auf dieser Erde[73], schaut aber auf die Gemeinschaft der Heiligen, die «bereits im Himmel weilt»[74] (*communio sanctorum*). Die Riten und Texte der Kirch- und Altarweihe sollen diesen theologischen Akzenten im Ablauf der Feier gerecht werden, und sie tun dies mit bewunderungswertem Erfolg, wie es aus den weiteren Ausführungen deutlich hervorgehen wird.

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70 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 1, 21. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3543.

71 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 2, 21. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3544.

72 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 3, 21. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3545.

73 Der Pilgercharakter der irdischen Kirche (vgl. LG 48-51) hat gemäss SC 8 auch eine liturgische Dimension: «In der irdischen Liturgie nehmen wir vorauskostend an jener himmlischen Liturgie teil, die in der heiligen Stadt Jerusalem gefeiert wird, zu der wir pilgernd unterwegs sind, wo Christus sitzt zur Rechten Gottes, der Diener des Heiligtums und des wahren Zeltes».

74 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 2, 21. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3544.

Das Bild der pilgernden Kirche wird zu Beginn der Feier in Form der Eröffnungsprozession am deutlichsten sichtbar. Der *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* sieht dafür drei Formen vor.[75] Die erste Variante ist die *processio ad ecclesiam dedicandam* und hat ihren Ausgangspunkt in der Versammlung der Gläubigen, des Bischofs und der anderen Dienern in einer Nachbarkirche; von dort aus ziehen sie gemeinsam in die Kirche, die geweiht werden soll. Das singende und betende Voranschreiten auf dem Prozessionsweg[76] unter der Leitung des Bischofs ist ein Abbild der Kirchenwerdung, der Ekklesiogenese[77], und es ist Ausdruck einer Gemeinschaft, die dynamische Reifungs- und Wachstumsprozesse kennt. Das Bild des Bischofs in diesem Zusammenhang ist jenes des Hirten, der seine Herde zur neuen Kirche (als geistlicher Tempel und Gebäude zugleich) führt. Er betet, singt und geht mit. Er ist Teil der pilgernden *Communio* der Gläubigen, die feierlich in ihr neues, irdisches Zuhause (*domus ecclesiae*) einzieht.

Liturgietheologisch verweist die Prozession zu Beginn der Weiheliturgie der Kirche auf eine alte Tradition der Kirche, die von der Liturgiereform des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils wiederentdeckt und aufgegriffen wurde. Die Prozession ist ein konstitutives Element und Kennzeichen jener *Missa stationalis*, die nach dem Konzil als Substitut für die *Missa pontificalis* den Gemeinschaftscharakter des bischöflichen Gottesdienstes und dessen Rolle für die Einheit der Ortskirche stärker zum Ausdruck bringen soll. Die Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe als *Missa stationalis* gehört damit zu den wichtigsten liturgie-ekklesiologischen Momenten im Leben der Ortskirche. Die Prozession als klassischer Bestandteil der *Missa stationalis* hat eine zweifache Funktion: Sie fördert die Ver-Sammlung, das innere Zusammen-Wachsen und die Einheit der Ortskirche mit ihrem Bischof[78], und sie drückt zugleich den Zeugnischarakter der Feier und der Bot-

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75 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 11, 24.

76 Eine weiterführende Analyse der Prozessionspsalmodie der Kirch- und Altarweiheliturgie liefert Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 364–377.

77 Mehr zum Ausdruck der «Ekklesiogenese» bei: Gundelinde Stoltenberg, „*Ekklesiogenese. Bausteine für eine mystagogische Praxis der Kirche*", in *Mystagogische Seelsorge. Eine lebensgeschichtlich orientierte Pastoral*. Hg. von Stefan Knobloch – Herbert Haslinger, Mainz: Grünewald, 1991, 76–105.

78 Vgl. Martin Klöckener, „*Liturgie in der alten Kirche des Westens*", in *Geschichte der Liturgie in den Kirchen des Westens. Rituelle Entwicklungen, theologische Konzepte und kulturelle Kontexte*. Hg. von Jürgen Bärsch – Benedikt Kranemann – Winfried Haunerland – Martin Klöckener, Bd. 1, Münster: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, 201-269, hier: 230.

schaft der Kirche im öffentlichen Raum (Stadt, Dorf, Strassen, Plätze, etc.) aus.[79] Durch die Prozession wird die Überzeugung kundgetan, dass die christliche Botschaft nicht nur eine rein innerkirchliche, sondern auch eine «missionarische Dimension»[80] hat. Kirchliches Leben vollzieht sich nicht in Abgrenzung zu dieser Welt, sondern in dieser Welt mit Blick auf das neue Jerusalem, dessen Sinnbild das Kirchengebäude[81] ist.

Nach dem Einzug in die Kirche folgt die Segnung des Wassers und die Besprengung der Gemeinde *in signum paenitentiae et in memoriam baptismi* und auch die Besprengung des Kirchenraums sowie des Altares als Hinweis auf ihre liturgische Funktion. Im Gebet über dem Wasser kommt das Bild der Kirche als Leib vor, dessen Haupt (*caput*) Christus ist und dessen Mitglieder (*membra*) Menschen (*homines*) durch die Taufe werden. [82] Das Gebet ist stark auf das Paschamysterium Christi ausgerichtet, das die vergebende Liebe Gottes und das Geschenk des neuen Lebens durch das Sakrament der Taufe an den Menschen bewirkt. Dementsprechend ist die Kirche als Gemeinschaft der Getauften und als Tempel des Heiligen Geistes zu verstehen. Der Gebetstext ist eine komprimierte Tauf- und Firmtheologie sowie eine heilstheologisch geprägte Ekklesiologie, die am Beginn der Dedikationsliturgie den sakramenten-theologischen Rahmen der Feier bildet.[83] Das kurze Gebet nach der Besprengung bringt nochmals einen wesentlichen Aspekt der Feier unmissverständlich auf den Punkt: Die Kirche, die nun als Haus des Gebets (*orationis domus*) und Tempel des Heiligen Geistes (*Spiritus Sancti templum*) dediziert wird, ist die versammelte Gemeinde selbst (*quod nos sumus*).[84]

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79 Zur Prozession als Bestandteil der *Missa stationalis* und ihre Rolle in der Liturgie und öffentlichem Raum anhand der Beispiele der Kirchen von Jerusalem, Rom und Konstantinopel in der Spätantike: John F. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship. The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*. Rom: Oriental Institute, 1987 (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 228), 234–251, hier: 251.

80 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 20, 27.

81 Vgl. *Praenotanda*, in: *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 2, 21; Hanno Schmitt, «*Mache dieses Haus zu einem Haus der Gnade und des Heils». Der Kirchweiheritus in Geschichte und Gegenwart als Spiegel des jeweiligen Kirchen- und Liturgieverständnisses im 2. Jahrtausend*, Paderborn: Brill – Schöning, 2004 (Paderborner Theologische Studien, 40), 461.

82 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 48-49, 38–39.

83 Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 204.

84 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 50, 40.

Zu Beginn des Wortgottesdienstes wird der Ambo, der Ort der Verkündigung des Wortes Gottes, vom Bischof mit einem kurzen Gebet gesegnet. Zwei Lektoren und der Psalmist begeben sich zum Bischof mit dem Lektionar. Der Bischof nimmt das Lektionar entgegen und spricht einen Segen, etwa mit den Worten: «Das Wort Gottes soll in diesem Gebäude immer erklingen (*resonet*), damit es euch das Geheimnis Christi (*Christi mysterium*) enthüllt und euer Heil in der Kirche bewirkt»[85]. Danach übergibt der Bischof das ihm gereichte Lektionar dem ersten Lektor, der die alttestamentliche Lesung vortragen wird. Mehrere Dinge fallen dabei auf: Die drei Personen (zwei Lektoren und ein Psalmist) bringen dem Bischof in einer kleinen Prozession das Lektionar, das nicht auf dem Ambo bereitstehen soll (wie in früheren Riten), sondern erst während der Feier auf das Ambo platziert wird. Die kleine Prozession ist eine zeichenhafte Darstellung dafür, dass das lebendige Wort als Geschenk der Kirche gegeben wird, damit es immer neu gelesen, gehört und interpretiert wir – eine Aufgabe, die unter der Autorität des Bischofs geschieht. Zweitens, ähnlich wie bei der Segnung des Altares, vollzieht sich auch im Fall des Ambos die Segnung durch dessen erste zweckentsprechende Verwendung in der neuen Kirche.[86] Drittens, der Lektor übergibt zuerst das Lektionar dem Bischof, der es nach dem knappen Segensgebet zum Vortrag der ersten Lesung dem Lektor überreicht. Diese Geste unterstreicht nochmals die Autorität des Bischofs, der als oberste Verkünder des Wortes Gottes in seiner Lokalkirche den Auftrag erteilt, das Wort Gottes in der neuen Kirche regelmässig vom Ambo aus der Gemeinde zu verkünden.[87] Viertens, die drei Diener (zwei Lektoren und ein Psalmist) gehören zu jener Gruppe, die bei einer feierlichen Bischofsmesse oft in den Schatten der anderen Amtsträger geraten. Sie vollziehen jedoch «einen wahrhaft liturgischen Dienst» (SC 29), und ihre Rolle in der Liturgie darf keinesfalls unterschätzt werden.

Nach dem Wortgottesdienst werden das Weihegebet (*prex dedicationis*) und die Salbungen (*unctiones*) [88] sowie weitere Elemente vollzogen, die den *pars tertia* des *Ordo* bilden und zwischen der Verkündigung des Wortes und der Feier der Eucharistie platziert sind. Viele Aspekte der erneuerten Feier der Kirch- und Altarweihe wurden, u.a. aus liturgie-ekklesiologischer Sicht, in den

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85 Vgl. *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 50, 40 [Eigenübersetzung].

86 Zu einer Theologie und Praxis des Ambos: Mark G. Boyer, *The Liturgical Environment. What the Documents Say*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, MN, 2004², 46-55, hier 47–48.

87 Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 215-216.

88 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 57-71, 41–52.

vergangenen Abschnitten bereits gewürdigt. An dieser Stelle muss jedoch diese «Architektur des Ritus als Hinweis auf eine Grundspannung im sakramentalen Kirchenverständnis»[89] angesprochen werden. Die Spannung lässt sich an der historisch gewachsenen Zweipoligkeit der Kirchweiheliturgie feststellen, die zu einer spannungsvollen Koexistenz zweier «Kraftfelder»[90] führt: Neben dem dedikatorischen Grundduktus der Feier erscheint an dieser Stelle in der Liturgie der Kirchweihe ein Ritenkreis mit konsekratorischen Elementen, der sich in der Auffassung von Bruno Kleinheyer und Markus Eham[91] nur schwer mit dem ersten versöhnen lässt.

Die durch die Koexistenz von zwei Ritenfeldern verursachte Spannung lässt sich bereits in den *Praenotanda* zu den neuen Ordnungen der Kirch- und Altarweihe diagnostizieren, wo es in den jeweiligen Abschnitten heisst: «Die Eucharistiefeier ist die wichtigste und allein notwendige Handlung bei der Weihe einer Kirche [eines Altares]. Dennoch wird nach der gemeinsamen Überlieferung der Kirchen des Ostens und des Westens auch ein besonderes Weihegebet (*prex dedicationis*) gesprochen. Es bringt zum Ausdruck, dass das Gebäude der Kirche [der Altar] für immer dem Herrn geweiht wird, und es bittet um den Segen Gottes»[92]. Die Überzeugung der Studiengruppe, die Eucharistiefeier sei die «allein notwendige Handlung» bei der Kirch- und Altarweihe, muss ziemlich fest gewesen sein, wenn – wie im historischen Teil gesehen – in der 1973 Ausgabe gar kein Weihegebet abgedrückt wurde.

Die Wiedereinführung einer *prex dedicationis* in die *Editio typica* von 1977 nach einer kurzen Pause von vier Jahren bleibt wohl eine theologisch fragwürdige und schwierig nachvollziehbare Entscheidung, auch wenn in den Traditionen des Westens und des Ostens solche Gebete in der Dedikationsliturgie vorkommen. Denn liturgie-ekklesiologisch stellen die zwei Ritenkreise zwei unterschiedliche Auffassungen über die Kirche dar. Der erste Satz, demzufolge die «wichtigste und allein notwendige Handlung» bei der Indienstnahme der Kirche die erste, vom Bischof geleitete Eucharistiefeier ist, spiegelt nicht nur die Praxis der alten

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89 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 356.

90 Bruno Kleinheyer, *Kirchweihe – Altarweihe. Zur neuen Ordnung in unserem Sprachgebiet*, in: Liturgisches Jahrbuch 31. 1981, 214–235, hier: 228–232.

91 Die Ausführungen von Eham bringen die ganze Problematik auf den Punkt: Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 356–361.

92 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 15, 25 und 21, 87. Deutscher Text in: DEL 2. Dok. 215, Nr. 3557 und 3592.

Kirche[93], sondern auch das «Sinnziel»[94] des eucharistischen Dankhandelns der versammelten Gemeinde wider: die sakramentale *manifestatio ecclesiae* (SC 41), diejenigen Realität der Kirche, die «ja in Christus gleichsam das Sakrament, das heisst Zeichen und Werkzeug für die innigste Vereinigung mit Gott wie für die Einheit der ganzen Menschheit» (LG 1) ist.

Die angebliche Notwendigkeit eines besonderen Weihegebetes neben der «wichtigsten und allein notwendigen Handlung» der Feier der Eucharistie ist Zeugnis für eine theologische «Auffassung vom Weihe-Vollzug durch besondere konsekratorische Handlungen […] die den Kirchenraum für seine liturgische Bestimmung bereiten»[95]. Auch wenn das Weihegebet und die anschliessenden Handlungen nur die «Sinn-Bestimmung des Kirchen-Baus für Gottes Dienst verdeutlichen und seinen Segen für Altar, Kirche und die in ihr feiernde Gemeinde erbitten»[96] sollen, wirkt die den Sakramentenfeiern übliche Gestaltung dieses Liturgieteils mit der Einleitung durch die Allerheiligenlitanei liturgietheologisch störend, da sie leicht mit Zeichenhandlungen konsekratorischer Art verwechselt werden kann. Gerade eine solche Verwechselung wollte die Studiengruppe während der Vorbereitung der neuen Riten durch die Rückkehr zur altkirchlichen Tradition der Kirchweihe ohne besonderes Weihegebet und die Integration einiger Elemente dieses Gebets in die für die Kirchweihe geschaffene eigene Messpräfation[97] vermeiden.

Trotz der Spannung, die dieser Teil der Liturgie beinhaltet, haben die *prex dedicationis* und die nachfolgenden Handlungen ihren Wert, vor allem dank dem «katechetischen und ausdrucksvollen Inhalt»[98] der Texte und den Kirchenbildern, die sie zum Vorschein bringen. Das Weihegebet wird von der Litanei und einer abschliessenden Oration, die vom Bischof vorgetragen wird, eingeführt. Die Oration fasst die Bitten der Litanei zusammen und bittet Gott um seinen Segen, damit das neue Kirchgebäude zu einem Haus der Gnade und des Heiles werde, die Gemeinde wiederum, die sich in ihm versammelt, möge in ihm Gott im Geist und Wahrheit anbeten (*adorare*) und in Liebe wachsen (*aedificare in caritate*).[99]

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93 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 357.

94 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 357.

95 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 358.

96 Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 357.

97 Vgl. Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 831.

98 Vgl. Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform*, 831.

99 *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 60, 44.

Das Gebet steht für eine Kirche, die Gnade und Heil vermittelt, Wachstum kennt und doxologisch ausgerichtet ist.

Unmittelbar vor dem Weihegebet findet die Beisetzung der Reliquien unter dem Altar statt, eine Handlung, die nach der Eucharistiefeier das älteste nachweisbare Element der Dedikationsfeier der Kirchen bildet.[100] Sie sind eine zeichenhafte Ausdrucksform der Einheit des Lebensopfers der Märtyrer mit dem Opfer Christi, das auf dem Altar in der Feier der Eucharistie vergegenwärtigt wird[101], aber auch eine Erinnerung an die Verbindung der sichtbaren Kirche mit den Heiligen aller Zeiten, die weiterhin ihre Liturgie im himmlischen Jerusalem feiern, und zu dem die Kirche auf Erde «pilgernd unterwegs» (SC 8) ist. Dabei tritt das Bild der Kirche als *communio viatorum*, die zu ihrer Vollendung am Ende der Zeiten in der *communio sanctorum* unterwegs ist, in Erscheinung.

Die eigentliche *prex dedicationis* ist ein recht langes, vom Bischof am Altar mit ausgebreiteten Händen gesungenes oder gesprochenes Gebet, eine «Neukomposition» jener Liturgiereform, die sich stets auch als Kirchenreform definiert hatte (vgl. SC 1). Daher sind die Ausdrucksformen, Themen und Bilder des Gebetes für die Weihe der Kirche ein hervorragender Ausdruck dessen, wie sich die Kirche im Spiegel der Liturgiereform, im *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* verkörpert, versteht. Das Weihegebet, das vom Bischof in der *Missa stationalis* zur Weihe der neuen Kirche in der Einheit mit dem Volk vorgetragen wird, stellt ein ekklesiologisches Loblied und ein «Hochgebet der Dedikationsliturgie»[102] dar, das wiederum als ein Herzschlag der Ortskirche zur erstrangigen Quelle liturgie-ekklesiologischer Betrachtung wird.

Das Dedikationsgebet lässt sich in vier Themenbereiche einteilen. Die Einleitung fasst den Zweck der «festlichen Feier» (*festivo celebrare*) der versammelten

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[100] Weiterführende Literatur zum Thema Reliquien, Reliquienverehrung und ihre Verwendung in der Liturgie des Westens: Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints. Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981 (The Haskell Lectures in History of Religions, New Series 2); Robert Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. Zum Reliquienkult in der Alten Kirche und im Mittelalter in Verbindung mit der Heiligenverehrung: Klöckener, *Liturgie in der alten Kirche des Westens,* 247–249; Arnold Angenendt, *Offertorium. Der mittelalterliche Messopfer*, Münster: Aschendorff, 2013 (Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 101), 129–137.

[101] Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 233.

[102] Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 247.

Gemeinde zusammen: Sie möchten Gott, der die Kirche heiligt (*sanctificator*) und führt (*rector*), dieses Haus des Gebetes (*orationis domus*) für ewig (*in perpetuum*) weihen (*dicare*). Das Haus soll zugleich Gott, aber auch der Gemeinde gehören, die sich in ihm versammelt, um ihn zu verehren (*pie veneratur*), sein Wort zu hören (*verbo eruditur*) und die Sakramente des Heils zu feiern. Auf diese einführende Zielsetzung zu Beginn des Weihegebetes folgt eine Aussage, die in den nächsten, anamnetischen Teil überleitet: das neue Gotteshaus weist auf das Geheimnis der Kirche (*mysterium adumbrat Ecclesiae*) hin, die in erster Linie als strahlende Braut (*Sponsam gloriosam*) «jungfräulich unversehrt im Glauben und mütterlich fruchtbar in der Kraft des Heiligen Geistes»[103] Christus entgegengeht. Anschliessend wird dieses Geheimnis der Kirche in «drei ekklesiologisch geprägten Strophen»[104] vertieft und in einer von der Sprache des Neuen Testamentes geprägten Begrifflichkeit[105] bildhaft dargestellt.

In der ersten «Strophe» wird die heilige Kirche (*Ecclesia sancta*) als auserlesener Weinberg des Herrn (*electa vinea Domini*) dargestellt, dessen Ranken die ganze Welt umspannen und dessen Reben, vom Holz des Kreuzes getragen, in das Reich des Himmels hineinwachsen. Diese Kirche ist in der Beschreibung der zweiten «Strophe» auch glücklich (*Ecclesia felix*), da sie das Zelt Gottes unter den Menschen (*tabernaculum Dei cum hominibus*) und der heilige Tempel (*templum sanctum*) ist, der aus lebendigen Steinen (*lapidibus vivis*) auf dem Fundament des Apostels (*apostolorum fundamentis*) erbaut ist. Der Eckstein (*lapide angulari*) des ganzen geistlichen Gebäudes ist Jesus Christus. Die dritte «Strophe» verwendet Bilder, die den universalen Sendungs- und Zeichencharakter der erhabenen Kirche (*Ecclesia sublimis*) betonen, die sie als Stadt auf dem Berge (*Civitas iugo montis erecta*) beschreiben, die überall sichtbar ist und allen leuchtet. Die Quelle ihres unvergänglichen Lichtes (*lucerna perennis*) ist das aus dem Buch der Offenbarung bekannte Lamm (*Agnus*), ihre Anwohnerinnen und Anwohner sind die Heiligen, die ein Danklied singen (*canticum beatorum*). Mit diesem deutlich eschatologischen Bild

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[103] *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 62, 46. Deutsche Übersetzung des Weihegebetes: *Die Weihe der Kirche und des Altares. Die Weihe der Öle. Pontifikale Bd. 4*. Hg. von den Liturgischen Instituten Salzburg – Trier – Zürich, Freiburg: Herder, 1994 (Pastoralliturgische Reihe in Verbindung mit der Zeitschrift «Gottesdienst»), 69, 62–63, hier: 62.

[104] Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 247.

[105] Schmitt, *«Mache dieses Haus zu einem Haus der Gnade und des Heils»*, 530. Eine Zusammenstellung der biblischen Quellenangaben zu den Kirchenbildern des *prex dedicationis* liefert: Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 248.

verweist das Weihegebet nicht nur auf das himmlische Jerusalem, als Endziel der auf Erde pilgernden Kirche, sondern auch auf die Teilhabe an der himmlischen Liturgie, die in der heiligen Stadt gefeiert wird, an der durch die Teilhabe am eucharistischen Mahl, das ein Vorgeschmack des himmlischen Hochzeitsmahl des Lammes ist, die Kirche bereits vorauskostend Anteil hat (SC 8).

Auf diesen anamnetischen Teil folgt eine epikletische Formulierung, die – allerdings ohne direkten Hinweis auf den Heiligen Geist – die Funktion hat, den dauerhaften Charakter der Weiheliturgie zu betonen. Der Bischof bittet um den Segen Gottes für den Altar und die ganze Kirche, damit dieser Ort für immer heilig (*locus sanctus semper*) und der Altar, der ebenfalls in neutestamentlicher und urchristlicher Tradition «Tisch» (*mensa*)[106] genannt wird, für das Opfer Christi (*Christi sacrificio*) geweiht bleibe. Dieser Satz führt das Gebet in den Sitz im Leben der Dedikationsliturgie über. Die aufgelistete Kirchenbilder sollen durch den Segen Gottes im «Hier» der liturgischen Handlungen der Gemeinde, in erster Linie durch die Teilnahme am Paschamysterium (Tod und Auferstehung) Christi in der Taufe und Eucharistie, sakramentale Realität werden (liturgische Ekklesiologie). Alles was allgemein über die Kirche im ersten Teil der *prex dedicationis* gebetet wurde, soll hier (*hic*) für «jeden Menschen» (*cunctique homines*), der «die Würde der Kindschaft» (*filiorum tuorum dignitatem*) trägt, in der liturgischen Versammlung zur erfahrbaren Realität werden.

Die Kirche manifestiert sich (SC 41) in der konkreten Versammlung der Gläubigen, als Gemeinschaft (*communio*) im «Hier» (*hic*), die «in dieser Kirche» (*hanc ecclesiam*) und «an diesem Altar» (*hoc altare*) das österliche Gedächtnis feiert (*memoriale Paschatis celebrent*) und vom Wort und Leibe Christi lebt (*convivio*). Sie sind in ihrem freudigen Lobgesang (*laudis oblatio*) mit den himmlischen Chören vereint. Ihre Liturgie verläuft im «Hier und Jetzt», ist aber im neuen Jerusalem und im Lobgesang der Heiligen (*communio sanctorum*) verankert. Der Blick der Gemeinde richtet sich auf die Vollendung «nach dieser Zeit», in der sie «alle jubelnd einziehen in das neue himmlische Jerusalem»[107]. Bis dahin jedoch hat die Kirche und ihre Liturgie auch noch eine weitere Dimension, die neben den vorwiegend liturgisch-sakramentalen

[106] Mehr zu dieser Terminologie im Kontext des Weihegebetes: Schmitt, «*Mache dieses Haus zu einem Haus der Gnade und des Heils*», 530. Eine umfassende Studie über «Tisch» und «Tischgemeinschaft» in der alttestamentlichen, neutestamentlichen und jesuanischen Tradition, sowie in der Urkirche: János Bolyki, *Jesu Tischgemeinschaften*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998 (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 96).

[107] *Die Weihe der Kirche und des Altares*, 63.

Aspekten, die dieses Weihegebet auszeichnen, in der Oration zur Sprache gebracht wird und gemäss dem *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* zum wesentlichen Bild der Kirche gehört. Da dieser Aspekt gerade in den meisten liturgie-ekklesiologischen Studien übersehen wird, soll er an dieser Stelle kurz genannt werden.

Ein Abschnitt des vom Bischof vorgetragenen Dedikationsgebets stellt die Kirche als den Ort dar, wo «die Armen Barmherzigkeit» (*pauperes misericordiam inveniant*) und «die Bedrückten die Freiheit» (*oppressi veram libertatem*) finden. Oft werden Fragen der sozialen Gerechtigkeit und der Diakonie in einer «ausserliturgischen» Dimensionen der Kirche behandelt.[108] Die Verbannung dieser Aspekte des christlichen Lebens, dessen Quelle und Höhepunkt die Liturgie ist (SC 10)[109], aus dem liturgie-ekklesiologischen Kontext führte bereits in der Urkirche (z.B. in der Gemeinde von Korinth)[110] und auch später[111], zu erheblichen Kontroversen. Die

[108] Zur Wiedergewinnung der diakonischen Dimension in der Liturgie: Barbara Feichtinger, *Liturgie und soziales Handeln. Afrikanische Praxis als Inspiration*, Stuttgart: W Kohlhammer, 2008 (Praktische Theologie heute 93), 33–62.

[109] Der italienische Liturgiewissenschaftler und Mitglied der ökumenischen Klostergemeinschaft von Bose, Goffredo Boselli hebt diese Dimension der Liturgie in seinem Buch vor, und widmet dem Thema ein eigenes Kapitel (*Liturgy and the Love of the Poor*). Er betont in der ersten Linie die Verbindung zwischen der Eucharistie als Quelle und Höhepunkt des christlichen Lebens (SC 10) und des ethischen Handels der Kirche: «To affirm with *Sacrosanctum Concilium* that the liturgy is the source and summit of the church's life means at the same time to acknowledge that the liturgy is also the source and summit of the ethical life of every Christian community and of every individual believer. We are called by the liturgy itself not to forget our neighbors in need or those living in situation of injustice. The celebration of the Eucharist is not only the *priestly* action of the people called to offer thanksgiving to God for all his gifts in the same of all humanity. It is also the *prophetic* action of a people called to proclaim to all humanity in the name of God the call to share those gifts». Vgl. Goffredo Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 2014, 183-205, hier 185.

[110] Zur Polemik in Korinth um das Herrenmahl als sozialer und liturgie-ekklesiologischer Konflikt zwischen den armen und reichen Mitgliedern der Gemeinde: James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle,* Grand Rapids MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2006, 609–613; Michael Wolter, *Paulus: Ein Grundriss seiner Theologie*, Göttingen: Vanderhoeck&Ruprecht, 2011², 274–285; Panayotis Coutsoumpos, *Community, Conflict, and the Eucharist in Roman Corinth*, Eugene, Oregon 2015², 31–64.

[111] Vgl. dazu die Studie von Susan R. Holman mit einem Beitrag zur Liturgie und die Armen in der Welt alten Kirche (*Leitourgia and the Poor in the Early Christian World*): Susan

Verbindung zwischen der Eucharistie und der Solidarität mit den Armen gehörte gerade während der Konzilszeit[112] und in den Jahrzehnten der Liturgiereform zu einer der brennenden Fragen der innerkirchlichen Diskussion. Es kann als Frucht dieser Diskussion bewertet werden, dass diese äusserst wichtige Dimension der Kirche und zwar der innere Zusammenhang zwischen Eucharistie und sozialer Verantwortung, die zwar in den späteren Jahrzehnten in einigen Kreisen der Katholischen Kirche vermehrt unter Verdacht geriet[113] und im Pontifikat von Papst Franziskus mit neuem Elan an zentraler Stelle thematisiert wird[114], in das Weihegebet des *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris* von 1977 als Ausdruck einer liturgie-ekklesiologischen Betrachtung des Paschamysteriums[115] Eingang fand.

Nach dem Weihegebet werden die Salbungen des Altares und der Wände[116] der neuen Kirche mit Chrisam vorgenommen, der Altar und die Kirche werden voll beleuchtet[117], und so wird der «eigentliche» Höhepunkt der Dedikationsliturgie, die Feier der ersten Eucharistie unter der Leitung des Bischofs, vorbereitet. Die Verwendung des vom Bischof geweihten Chrisams in der Weiheliturgie ist zeichenhafter Ausdruck der sakramentalen Verbindung zwischen dem Bischof und

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R. Holman, *The Hungry are Dying. Beggars und Bishops in Roman Cappadocia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology), 31–63.

[112] In diesem Zusammenhang ist der «Katakombenpakt» als Selbstverpflichtung der vierzig Konzilsväter zu einem einfachen Lebensstil und Dienst an den Armen, den sie im Rahmen einer Eucharistiefeier in der Basilika über den Domitilla-Katakomben am 16. November 1965 unterzeichneten, ein Fallbeispiel: vgl. Norbert Arntz, *Der Katakombenpakt. Für eine dienende und arme Kirche*, Kevelaer: Topos Plus, 2015.

[113] Vgl. Peter Hebblethwaite, „*Liberation theology and the Roman Catholic Church*", in *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*, hg. von Christopher Rowland, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007², 209–228.

[114] Der Satz von Papst Franziskus, den er bei seiner ersten Audienz am 16. März 2013 für Medienvertreter formulierte («Ach, wie möchte ich eine arme Kirche für die Armen!») wurde mittlerweile zum Kernpunkt dieses Pontifikats. Mehr dazu: Jörg Alt, *Eine arme Kirche für die Armen*, in *Stimmen der Zeit* 139, 2014, 361–362; Juan Carlos Scannone, „*Incarnation, Kenosis, Inculturation, and Poverty*", in *For a Missionary Reform of the Church*, hg. von Antonio Spadaro – Carlos María Galli, New York: Paulist Press, 2017, 513–541; Stan Chu Ilo, *A Poor and Merciful Church. The Illuminative Ecclesiology of Pope Francis*, New York, 2018.

[115] Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 198–201.

[116] *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 63–64, 47–49.

[117] *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 69–71, 51–52.

seinen Gemeinden bzw. ihren Kirchen und Altären. Der Chrisam ruft die Aussagen der Liturgiekonstitution zur Einheit von Pfarrei und Bischof in Erinnerung: «das liturgische Leben der Pfarrei und dessen Beziehung zum Bischof [soll] im Denken und Tun der Gläubigen und des Klerus vertieft werden» (SC 42). Die Salbung mit Chrisam, der vom Bischof als «Hohempriester seiner Herde» (SC 41) in der *missa chrismatis* in Konzelebration mit dem Klerus geweiht wird, in einer liturgischen Feier, die unter möglichst zahlreicher Beteiligung der ganzen Diözese stattfinden soll, verkörpert die sakramentale und ekklesiologische Einheit der Ortskirche mit ihrem Bischof.

Die Eucharistiefeier, «die wichtigste und allein notwendige Handlung bei der Weihe einer Kirche [eines Altares]»[118], hat eine eigene Präfation[119], die von der Gottgewolltheit eigener Häuser des Gebetes, von der Dedikation der konkreten Kirche und schließlich von der lebendigen, vom Geist erfüllten Kirche, die auf Erde zum himmlischen Jerusalem unterwegs ist, spricht[120]; sie verwendet dabei mehrere Kirchenbilder, die auch i der bereits betrachteten *prex dedicationis* vorkommen. Der Bischof feiert die Eucharistie in Konzelebration mit den Priestern und Seelsorgern der Pfarrei oder der Gemeinschaft, für die die Kirche erbaut wurde.[121] Schmitt unterstreicht dabei als grossen Verdienst des neuen *Ordo dedicationis*, dass in ihm die Eucharistiefeier «nicht wie in der Vergangenheit ein Anhängsel [ist, sondern] zum Mittelpunkt [wird], denn der ganze Kirchweihritus wird in die heilige Messe eingebunden»[122].

Im Fokus dieses Kapitels lag in der ersten Linie die Dedikationsliturgie einer neugebauten Kirche, da sie liturgie-ekklesiologisch gesehen die bedeutendste Feier des zuletzt erschienenen Bandes des *Pontificale Romanum* ist. Liturgietheologisch bleibt nach wie vor die Koexistenz zweier «Kraftfelder» im Kirchweihritus (Weihegebet und erste Eucharistiefeier) problematisch. Ekklesiologisch gesehen repräsentieren die Kirchenbilder, die die ganze Feier prägen, ein trinitarisch ausgerichtetes Modell: Volk Gottes, Leib Christi und Tempel des Heiligen Geistes. Wertvoll sind vor allem die pneumatologischen Dimensionen der Kirchweihe und das Bemühen, den Blick vom Gebäude auf die Gemeinde («lebendige Steine») zu lenken. Eham erkennt ebenfalls die Schritte, die der neue *Ordo* in Richtung einer

[118] *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 15, 25 und 21, 87.

[119] *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 75, 53–54.

[120] Forneck, *Die Feier der Dedicatio ecclesiae im Römischen Ritus*, 267.

[121] *Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris*, 9, 23.

[122] Schmitt, «*Mache dieses Haus zu einem Haus der Gnade und des Heils*», 460.

«liturgischen Ekklesiologie» macht, und stellt dabei Spuren der *Communio*-Ekklesiologie des Konzils fest.[123]

Gerade aus liturgie-ekklesiologischer Perspektive sind die Verdienste der revidierten Weiheliturgie erheblich. Sie stellt das Kirchgebäude und damit die Pfarrei oder Gemeinschaft in den Kontext der Ortskirche und betont dabei das Bild des Bischofs, als «Hohenpriester seiner Herde, von dem das Leben seiner Gläubigen in Christus gewissermassen ausgeht und abhängt» (SC 41). Die Aussage der *Praenotanda*, dass die wichtigste Handlung der Kirchweihe die erste Eucharistiefeier ist, die im Normalfall unter dem Vorsitz des Ortsbischof stattfindet, verdeutlicht diese «Abhängigkeit»: Der Bischof ist der erstberufene Verkünder des Wortes Gottes (Segnung des Ambo) und Hoherpriester (Eucharistiefeier), der dafür Sorge tragen soll, dass die Glieder des Leibes (Kirche) mit ihrem Haupt (Christus) und untereinander (*Communio*) durch die Teilhabe am Paschamysterium stets in sakramentalen Verbindung bleiben. Die Feier der Kirchweihe bezeugt schliesslich die Würde der Gotteskindschaft, die Barmherzigkeit gegenüber die Armen und die Freiheit für die Bedrückten (*prex dedicationis*) als konkrete Kennzeichen einer Kirche, die sich als «Freundesgemeinschaft» und «Ort des Glaubens-Solidarität»[124] versteht sowie dementsprechend handelt[125] und lebt, denn Glaubens- und Lebens-Gemeinschaft bleiben voneinander untrennbar[126].

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[123] Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 363.

[124] Eham, «*Sie schreiten dahin mit wachsender Kraft*», 363.

[125] Vgl. den Beitrag von Erzbischof Hélder Câmara, einem der bekanntesten Vertretern der Befreiungstheologie über Eucharistie und Solidariät zitiert in englischer Übersetzung bei von Boselli: «In the early days of the church, the pagans were stuck by how those who received the bread of life loved one another – not in a theoretical way or only with words, but in practical ways, with actions. The world needs our witness again, so that it may know that the Eucharist compels us to live justice and love as the only ways to true peace». Vgl. Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 208. Originalbeitrag: Hélder Câmara, *L'eucharistie, exigence de justice sociale*, in *Parole & Pain* 42, 1971, 75–76, hier 76.

[126] Vgl. Ansprache von Papst Benedikt XVI. anlässlich der Generalaudienz am 1. Oktober 2008: «Liebe zu den Armen und göttliche Liturgie gehören zusammen, die Liebe zu den Armen ist Liturgie. Die beiden Horizonte sind in jeder Liturgie gegenwärtig, die in der Kirche – die sich ihrem Wesen nach der Trennung zwischen Kult und Leben, zwischen dem Glauben und den Werken, zwischen dem Gebet und der Liebe zu den Brüdern widersetzt – gefeiert und gelebt wird.» Online-Quelle: http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/de/audiences/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20081001.html (Abgerufen am 30. September 2023).

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"KOINONIA" IN REFORMED THEOLOGY

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Abstract. This presentation is an edited and revised version of the presentation given at the Ecumenical International Conference "Active Participation in Community", Pannonhalma Archabbey, 21 October 2022. The theme of the conference was synodality – accordingly, this paper aims to present the basic features of Reformed ecclesiology. It highlights the fact that adapting different forms of communion from a secular context is not a viable solution for the church, even though it remains a challenge for the church today in almost all countries. Instead, the ecclesiological and practical implications of koinonia must be considered. According to Reformed theology and Confessions of faith, the ministries, services and governance of the church derive from the koinonia with Christ and with one another. Participation in this communion requires a concrete form of ecclesial and social service; it is concretized by participation in the threefold office of Christ (royal, priestly and prophetic). Last but not least, sharing in the threefold office of Christ has an as yet unexploited ecumenical potential for the common witness of Christians.
Keywords. Reformed Theology, Communion, Church organization, threefold office of Christ

„If you want to make God laugh, tell him about your plans", says an old rabbinic saying. The relevance of this saying is not that it is meaningless to talk about the plans of our church or our churches, especially the effort to seek more Gospel-oriented aspects of community life and church government. Besides, Christians are often assumed to be humorless. Reformed Christians in particular have a reputation for gloomy composure and sanguine sobriety. And the world is amused from time to time by the contradiction between the churches' loss of socio-political public space and their assertion of their own importance…

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The question is not even whether the open or implicit indifference, cynicism or mockery against the churches is justified or excessive. The point, I think, is rather whether we have the theological humor – the humor of faith – to look at our own efforts with real sobriety and at God's possibilities with greater hope. *Karl Barth* says that „to have humor" we must indeed „become children of God", and it is only in the light of Christ as the „light of the world" that we realize how much we do not have control over the future here in the present.[2]

And to show that Calvin was not so lacking in humor as posterity would have us believe, here is a quote from him on his view of the synods:

> "Even in their ancient and purer councils there is something to be desiderated, either because the otherwise learned and prudent men who attended, being distracted by the business in hand, did not attend to many things beside; or because, occupied with grave and more serious measures, they winked at some of lesser moment; or simply because, as men, they were deceived through ignorance, or were sometimes carried headlong by some feeling in excess. […] any one who reads their acts will observe many infirmities, not to use a stronger term.[3]

At the same time, Calvin knows no greater authority on matters of faith and doctrinal development than the universal Church, represented by the Synod.

Therefore, what is needed for the Christian churches, with their specific traditions and the diversity of their different structures, to learn and continue to learn the unexplored dimensions of community life, and at the same time to provide a model for the world and civil society - with humor (i.e. with an awareness of the relative nature of human effort) and hope (i.e. with openness to God's possibilities even where they are not yet evident). The *internal basis for* holding this duality together, according to Reformed theology, is „koinonia", and *its external form is the* shaping of community life – the latter being the demand and work of the believer in obedience to the Word.

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2 Karl Barth, *Ethik II. (1928/1929)*, GA II/10 (hrsg. Dietrich Braun), Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1978, 438.

3 John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (trans. by Henry Beveridge, 1845), Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2011, (4,9,10), 973.

The theological sense of communion – and the problem of non-theological notions of community

Community as a concept has a good reputation these days. Politicians are calling for the organization of community, and many professional and stakeholder organizations, associations, NGOs and, not least, churches are working to build communities. Community organizing courses are starting up at university level, but there is also a demand for religious organizations based on the principle of utility: a religious organization is only relevant to social life if it builds communities…

The problem starts when this demand is accepted without reflection by religious organizations, specifically by our churches, when they adapt this demand (as evidence) without theological reflection. In political and social contexts, a variety of values can form the theoretical basis for community organization: a common language and culture, a shared past, economic interests, political goals. Such self-organization can have positive effects – as the history of European culture and civilization shows, and in which the churches have played (and can play) a positive role – but it can also be ideological or lead to conflict. Historical examples show the disastrous consequences when totalitarian regimes have tried to establish their power based on a sense of community of race, ethnicity or class identities. In this regard, *Max Weber's* critique is still relevant and merits attention today: the claim to a community based only on a "subjective consciousness of emotional belonging" is ultimately an object of the imagination ("geglaubte Gemeinschaft").[4] This therefore calls for further carefulness and critical reflection in the social sphere. And the expectations of society towards the church – o be actively involved in the cultivation of different (non-biblical and non-theological) forms of community or to provide a framework for the experience of certain forms of community identity – are both a burden and irritating for the church.

But often, even within the church, we use the concept of community without reflection. Although our use of the term community reflects the meaning of the Greek words *koinonia* and the Latin *communio*, the everyday use of the term in the Church does not necessarily include the theological implications of the term. Almost all congregations, parishes or territorial churches are engaged in

[4] Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, *Kapitel IV: Ethnische Gemeinschaftsbeziehungen* (Digitale Bibliothek 58), Berlin: Directmedia, 2011, §2, 237.

intensive community-organizing work, maintaining a network of relationships, from partner church meetings to jointly undertaken or supported projects (e.g. social, cultural, ecological, etc.). In the ecumenical movement and at the level of inter-denominational relations, common occasions, commemorations, worship services, demonstrative cooperation on political and public issues, solidarity with one another, all create a sense of community. It is based on a shared past or a pressing present. All such intra- or inter-denominational activities are built around the notion of community, which has become a paradigm – although the different underlying theological traditions and hermeneutical approaches make it a problematic issue. Not all initiatives, encounters or joint actions are theological communities.[5] On the other hand, from a theological point of view, any attempt to give a Christian rhetorical color to various community ideas and to accept them without theological reflection within the church is dubious. This phenomenon leads over time to the deconstruction of the substance of the church – especially when the (supposed) ideas and values on which the community organization is based are also represented by other associations or formations within a society. In Reformed Theology, the meaning of the concept of *community* in the church (or *ecclesial communion*), whether at the level of a local, legally identifiable local parish or in an interdenominational context, is *a common sharing in Christ*, through the sacraments and the Word, by the creative power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, communion in God, communion with God and communion with one another! In this sense, this communion of sharing is provided by the Holy Spirit (see Phil 2,1; 2 Cor 13,13), the Spirit of the risen Cyrios-Christ, and those who share in this reality receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.[6] According to Calvin

> "All the elect of God are so joined together in Christ, that as they depend on one head, so they are as it were compacted into one body, being knit together like its different members; made truly one by living together under the same Spirit of God in one faith, hope, and charity…"[7]

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5 At the same time, the terms used in different languages (e.g. „Kirchengemeinschaft", „communion", „fellowship") lead to translation difficulties, interpretative possibilities, and practical differences.

6 See Rudolf Bultmann, *Der zweite Brief an die Korinther*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976, 253–254.

7 Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (4,1,2), 846.

Or, as Luther says, in the Eucharist the church becomes an integral unity with Christ and with each other – „one dough"[8] .

So to be *in the* koinonia is to be in Christ. Or, in Barth's definition, to be in the congregation gathered for worship is to be „in the earthly-historical form of the existence of Jesus Christ"[9]. The cause and source of this communion is therefore a spiritual event: the common participation of baptized believers in the presence of Christ, according to the gospel promise: „For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt 18,20). In this sense, the existence of the church is indeed a matter of faith,[10] *credo ecclesiam* – as the Apostles' Creed testifies. But as such, the Church is not an „invisible formation", but a „particular gathering of men"[11] by which the universal Church of Christ is realized in a concrete historical place and time. In other words, the work of the Holy Spirit is embodied in the visible unity and, in this sense, in the community. This local and visible community is part of the *communio sanctorum*, made concrete *by the presence of* Christ, by the *interaction of* its members with him and with one another, and by their common *sharing*.[12] This spiritual process is moved by a force over which man

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8 „Eyn kuchen mit Christo […] ein kuchen mit einender als mit dem nehisten" – says Luther in a High Thursday sermon in 1523. This transformation into „one dough" also indicates that for Luther, experiencing unity with Christ is not an individualistic possibility, but an act of communion from the very beginning. See Martin Luther, „Sermon am grünen Donnerstag (2. April 1523)", in *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 12., Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1891, 485.

9 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (CD), *Volume IV/1: Doctrine of Reconciliation* (§. 57–63), edited by Geoffrey William Bromiley and Thomas Forsyth Torrance, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956, 716.

10 See Karl Barth, *Credo. Die Hauptprobleme der Dogmatik, dargestellt im Anschluß an das Apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis. 16 Vorlesungen, gehalten an der Universität Utrecht im Februar und März 1935*, Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1948, 136; See also Jan Milič Lochman, *Az Apostoli Hitvallás. Dogmatikai vázlatok a Hiszekegy nyomán* [The Apostles' Creed. Dogmatic Sketches on the Basis of the Apostles' Creed], Budapest: Kálvin Kiadó, 1995, 157–161.

11 Barth, *Credo*, 136.

12 See Barth, *Credo*, 151; Eberhard Hauschild – Uta Pohl-Patalong, „Gemeinde, kirchlich", in Werner Heun (eds.): *Evangelisches Staatslexikon (EStL)*, Neuausgabe, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 2006, 696. At the same time, this experienced reality (participation in the relationship with God) also affects the sphere of everyday life (e.g. community of property, solidarity), and begins already here, in this earthly life, and

(and the Church) does not have control - but which can be described empirically in terms of experience, perception, insight, cognition and understanding.[13] In the language of faith, this is understood by theology and the Church as the work of the Holy Spirit. The individuals participating in this spiritual event become a community: they are caught up in a sense of "we", experiencing themselves as part of a collective[14] that is different from any other group or community formation in the world. And it is the gathering together in the name of the Triune God, the praise and supplication, the listening to the interpretation of the Scriptures, the living of the sacraments, the confession of faith and the blessing that gives it its permanence and intensity. All the institutional, organizational and structural forms of the Church make sense in terms of this spiritual event, this communion, and vice versa: their raison d'être is to provide a framework for this spiritual event. This communion cannot therefore be humanly created or (like an event) managed – it „happens" when and if the believers are touched by the Gospel and the Spirit.

The consequences of koinonia for the organizational life of the Church

The Reformed understanding of *koinonia*, is that the creating work of God's Word is its source and foundation. In other words, koinonia is „*creatura verbi*"[15], which also marks the beginning of the historical existence of faith and the Church.

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affects the afterlife. See Friedrich Hauck, κοινός, κοινωνία in: Gerhard Kittel et al. (eds.): *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (ThWNT)*, Vol. 3, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1938, 804–810.

13 Hauschild-Pohl-Patalong: Gemeinde, 696.

14 More on the theological implications of the collective acting actors, see Sándor Fazakas, „From collective sin to collective reconciliation: Some aspects of the church's involvement and role in the development of historical and social sin and the process of reconciliation", in Julia Enxing – Dominik Gautier – Dorothea Wojtczak (eds.), *Satisfactio: Über (Un-) Möglichkeiten von Wiedergutmachung*, Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2019, 134–153.

15 „Ecclesia enim nascitur verbo promissionis per fidem…" See Martin Luther, „De captivitate Babylonica (1520)", in *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 6, Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1888, 560. See also Calvin: „Wherever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we cannot have any doubt that the Church of God has some existence, since his promise cannot fail." Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (4,1,9), 853.

However, we should make further distinctions concerning the socio-historical existence of the Church: (a) we have to distinguish between the *hidden reality* of the origin of this communion, i.e. *of the Church*, and (b) *the external order* that is *experienced by all* (and the different aspects and manifestations of this external order as a social formation).[16] Hidden is the reality that creates faith and the Church, because man cannot have or create it, he can only receive it as a gift. But what man has to deal with is the concrete, visible form of this communion. The order, the structure, the external form of the community is already a human enterprise: the community of believers shapes itself if and when it obeys the will of God. However, any committed effort, which we call conciliarity or synodality, is, according to Reformed theology, nothing other than the work of the believer committed to God and listening to God's will; it is the search for correspondence and correspondence between the divine action, which creates the Church and the human actions, which shape the empirical reality of the Church.

Well, the above theological clarifications and insights were crucial for the organizational forms of the Reformed Church and its governance - at least in terms of theological precision. The conception of the church as a "koinonia" was the *theological deep layer*, which should (should have) shaped and formed the church's experienceable form of being and its external order embedded in historical-social determinations… (I say "should have" because this "shaping" was often done in the light of realities, by re-functionalizing existing structural elements, and later, guided by tradition). In terms of content, however, this church-forming claim of the Reformed creeds was built around three elements. These are:

(1) the offices and government of the church,
(2) the relationship of the congregations to one another, i.e. the synodical structure of the church,
(3) and the order of life of the congregation, including church discipline.

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16 Eilert Herms, "Das evangelische Verständnis von Kirchengemeinschaft", in Eilert Herms, *Von der Glaubenseinheit zur Kirchengemeinschaft*, Vol. 2, Marburg: N.G. Elwert Verlag, 2003, 303–304; See also Michael Beintker, "Das Wort vom Kreuz und die Gestalt der Kirche", *Kerygma und Dogma* 39 (1993), 150–151.161. This distinction is in line with the teaching of the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europa on the church, which gives this context and the realization of the church's existence in the world in terms of „Grund", „Gestalt" and „Gestaltung". See Leuenberger Kirchengemeinschaft – Gemeinschaft reformatorischer Kirchen in Europa, *Die Kirche Jesu Christi* (Leuenberger Texte 1), ed. by Wilhelm Hüffmeier, Frankfurt am Main: Otto Lembeck Verlag, ^{3}2001, 21–63.

Regarding (1) offices, it is useful to note briefly that the Reformed confessions define all offices as ministries, but that the basis of all offices is the office of Christ – that is, all ministries are subordinate to the unique and threefold office (as Prophet, Priest and King) of Christ. At the same time, the plurality of offices in the Church is recognized: all offices (pastoral, elder, diaconal) are legitimated by participation in the body of Christ, they are functions of the head (Christ), and they are called to lead the church only together, complementing each other. From the very outset, there is no subordination or superiority between them, no dependence on authority.

Concerning (2) the synodical structure of the church, it is important to underline that the common position of Reformed theology and the Reformed Confessions of Faith in this regard is that the church, consisting of congregations, is built "from below", from the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to the body of Christ. The so-called Presbyterian-Synodal System of reformed Churches does not derive from a democratic principle of popular representation, nor even from a principle of synodalism, but *from the need for spiritual communion of* believing congregations with one another. It cannot be denied that in the Reformed churches, too, a practice has developed over time which, while claiming democratic principles, has resulted in a deformed practice based on false principles: for example, where the church operates a quasi-church parliament, or where church offices at various levels rule over congregations as authorities. *Paul Jacobs* points out that this deformed practice is essentially *the result of a reversal of cause and effect*[17]: that is, Christ as the basis and source of all offices is replaced by the church organization, which is designed and conceived in one way or another, becomes self-serving and dominant, and as such no longer serves the edification of the congregations. Thus, the reference to Christ remains merely a form of self-justification.

Regarding (3) lifestyles of believers and discipline, it is worth mentioning that in the reading of the Reformed Confessions, the main emphasis on the issue of church discipline – contrary to later interpretations and negative assumptions that still persist today – was not on rigorous punishment, exclusion, or even education. The need for discipline and disciplining appeared only when, like the former, the link between cause and effect was broken: that is to say, the invocation of the Word was not followed by a life order, based on faith and voluntarily

[17] Paul Jacobs, *Theologie reformierter Bekenntnisschriften in Grundzügen*, Neukirchen: Verlag der Buchhandlungen des Erziehungsvereins, 1959, 123.

assumed, in accordance with the Gospel. In other words, the hearing of the Word, participation in communion/eucharistic communion, blessing, was not followed by a consecrated life.

These three aspects must be in *a dynamic* – even not free from tension – relationship. The organizational order of the Church must be dynamic in the sense of the „theological deep layer" mentioned above. This means that organizational issues need to be reviewed from time to time according to the criterion of the extent to which human orders contribute to the true worship of God, the practice of faith, the edification of the Church and the good order of life together in general. The external order of the church is therefore not fixed finally - especially if the existing order and form have been developed based on previous faith experiences or in the light of past socio-historical realities. For the community of believers, the revision of the external form must be a matter of negotiation, theological reflections and consensus seeking, and at the same time open to renewal, revision and improvement. At the same time, the Church's particular form of organization can be the result of *interaction*: it is shaped by the tension, interaction and interrelation of biblical and theological truths, as well as socio-cultural, legal and political conditions.

How does this „koinonia-based consequence", i.e. the order of life of the communion of believers, become concrete?

Reformed theology answers this question by sharing in threefold office of Christ. This is not an exclusively Reformed approach, by the way. This „formula" is also relevant ecumenically, as *Edmund Schlink* notes: although it was not created before the great schism, but after it, it is nevertheless found in the teaching of almost all Christian denominations.[18] At its core, participation in the threefold office of Christ (*triplex munus Christi*) enables us to understand the public work of Jesus Christ through his church in the world and to participate in his work as called ministers of *that* Church. In Reformed theology we find it in several orders.[19] I will now follow the recommendation that emerged from the theological dialogue between

[18] Edmund Schlink, *Ökumenische Dogmatik. Grundzüge*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983, 414.

[19] See Calvin: „Therefore, that faith may find in Christ a solid ground of salvation, and so rest in him, we must set out with this principle, that the office which he received from the Father consists of three parts. For he was appointed both Prophet, King, and Priest…" Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (2,15,1), 416.

Daniel Migliore from Princeton and *Michael Welker* from Heidelberg, which starts from the pre-paschal life and public ministry of Jesus Christ.[20]

The *kingdom of Jesus Christ* revealed before Easter is a clear witness to the power of freedom and servant love. Though he was King, above all and above all, he took the form of a servant, reaching out to the lowly. „For this king is not only a king, but both a brother and a friend, yes, a poor and an outcast."[21] Therefore, this kingship, in the light of the filling of the Spirit, revolutionizes the hierarchical and monarchical order of the Church, as well as the power structures of political systems. This coming of Christ to the little man is made possible only by „free and creative self-limitation…"[22]

What might be the implications of this for the believer in Christ, the church, and the world? Well, through free self-restraint in gratitude, for the good of neighbor and environment, and by protesting against oppressive mechanisms, it is possible to create a situation for fellow human beings who are suffering and in need, in which they can taste the flavor of active love. It is a kind of diaconal ethos, a way of living the Christian soul that is perhaps unique and incomparable in our world, but which makes possible a different and qualitative life. An ethical orientation that is not only reactive but *pro-active*, preferably at a local level, making its impact felt in the world, with sensitivity to local problems.

The dimension of *Christ's office as High Priest* is revealed, among other things, in the words of Hebrews: „He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:17). The church shares not only in the life of Jesus, but also, through the Holy Spirit, in his office as High Priest. In this place we are confronted with the reality of the universal priesthood of the faithful, whose ministry goes beyond the framework of liturgical worship and the dimensions of the cultivation of traditional religious culture. What could be the consequence of this? *Worship rightly* understood and celebrated, and *an ethos of atonement* and *reconciliation*. Rightly interpreted Worship serves to open, consolidate and deepen the knowledge of God – the knowledge of God that is lacking in the secular world. This lack of knowledge leads to religious-secular uncertainty; at the age of shaken life, man desperately

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20 See Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999, 155; Welker, Michael: *Gottes Offenbarung. Christologie*, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2012, 201.

21 Welker: Ibid, 223.

22 Ibid.

seeks possibilities of interpretation, including religious interpretation: e.g. why is suffering in the world, or what is the meaning of life? These questions need answers – in the light of a rightly understood knowledge of God. And our world, our environment, is dependent on peace and reconciliation. Not only because the issue of historical-social guilt, the heavy legacy of the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century, the history of wars past and present, weigh heavily and in many ways on the present - both East and West. But every day, the people and social actors of our time, their religious communities and civil organizations, are becoming part of new and new histories of conflicts, driven by economic, political or ideological interests. The new situations of conflict caused by new injustices and political struggles need to be addressed through reconciliation. Our churches can play a key role in this.

It cannot be overlooked and has been proven on numerous occasions and in many situations since then, that it is precisely those societies, countries or regions that suffer most today from the emergence of new injustices, human rights violations and extremist political tendencies, where there is simply no opportunity to come to terms with past and present conflicts, to learn from the mistakes of the past.

The participation in *Christ's prophetic ministry* and its implications may seem offensive. This is because in his preaching Jesus not only promised salvation but also judgment. He proclaimed his own suffering, but he also confronted the political, religious and opinion-forming forces of his time with the validity of the divine will. Christians and churches who share in Christ's prophetic ministry will always be exposed to the moral, cultural, political, and economic laws of their time and may be confronted by the „opinion-makers" of their own age. For the believer is and will inevitably be exposed to these conflicts if theology and the Church do not seek to affirm unreservedly the events of the world around actions and the us and rhetoric of those in power but seek to analyze the context in a factual way. False prophets have always been quick to join the chorus of the enthusiastic majority. But true prophecy demands justice in concrete times and situations and is open to criticism… but also open to self-criticism.

In summary, we know that the tensions and conflicts generated by critical reflection and self-critical analysis can make the church's external and internal relationships and capacity for action extremely difficult, but ultimately can be of great service to community life. It can be a warning against the tendency of the powers and authorities of the world to absolutize, and a warning against the forces

(economic, political, media, etc.) which seek to deprive man of his internal and external freedom. However, this prophetic voice can also be directed inwards: with critical self-reflection towards the inner circles of a Church which is on the path of self-justification and self-preservation, but in the hope of ever-timely renewal and self-correction - in the sense of *semper reformanda semper actualis!*

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SINODALIDAD EN LA IGLESIA PALABRAS DEL PREPÓSITO GENERAL DE LA COMPAÑÍA DE JESÚS, P. ARTURO SOSA ABASCAL, S.J., EN EL ACTO ACADÉMICO DE CONFERIMIENTO DEL TÍTULO DE DOCTOR HONORIS CAUSA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD BABES-BOLYAI CLUJ-NAPOCA, 17 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2023[1]

Fr. Arturo Sosa Abascal, SJ

Introducción

Una profunda emoción me lleva a iniciar estas palabras con una acción de Gracias al Señor por tanto bien recibido a través de la *Universidad Babes-Bolyai*, la más antigua y fecunda Universidad en Romania. Recibo este reconocimiento en nombre de la Compañía de Jesús, ligada a los orígenes de esta Universidad cuando en el lejano 1581 fundó la *Academia Claudipolitana Societatis Iesu*, entonces Colegio Mayor de los Jesuitas en Cluj. Agradezco de corazón esta generosa iniciativa de la Facultad de Teología Romano-Católica y la Facultad de Teología Greco-Católica.

Nos encontramos en este significativo acto académico cuando acaba de finalizar la primera reunión de la XVI Asamblea del Sínodo de los Obispos, bajo el título *Por una Iglesia sinodal: comunión, participación y misión.* El Santo Padre Francisco ha querido tratar el tema de la sinodalidad de la Iglesia dentro de un proceso propiamente sinodal. Por eso, se ha organizado en tres fases sucesivas que permiten la participación activa de todo el Pueblo de Dios. El itinerario sinodal se inició en octubre del 2021 con la consulta a nivel diocesano, seguida por una consulta continental y esta primera asamblea a nivel universal. Tanto las organizaciones laicales como la vida consagrada han participado activamente en todos los niveles y fases del proceso.

Desde ahora hasta la segunda reunión de la XVI Asamblea del Sínodo de los Obispos se está ante el desafío de compartir la experiencia vivida y preparar el final de esta fase de un proceso que continuará de diversas maneras en toda la Iglesia para que el modo sinodal de ser Pueblo de Dios que camina junto eche raíces, madure y produzca fruto en abundancia.

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[1] Palabras del Prepósito General de la Compañía de Jesús, P. Arturo Sosa Abascal, S.J., en el Acto Académico de conferimiento del título de *Doctor Honoris Causa* de la Universidad Babes-Bolyai Cluj-Napoca, 17 de noviembre de 2023.

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En este contexto del proceso sinodal que vive la Iglesia Católica, inspirada en la eclesiología del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II, impulsado por el Santo Padre Francisco y delante del claustro y estudiantes de las Facultades de Teología Greco-Católica y Católica-Romana me propongo relatar en breves trazos la experiencia sinodal en la iglesia latinoamericana contemporánea, a partir de mi propia vivencia como cristiano latinoamericano y religioso jesuita.

Sentido básico de sinodalidad

Comenzamos aclarando el significado de la sinodalidad. Para nosotros todo lo que digamos sobre ella tiene que ser una especificación de su significado literal: el hecho de caminar juntos. No sólo los cristianos, todos los seres humanos tenemos que caminar incesantemente y no sólo ni principalmente para conseguir metas específicas que nos tracemos sino más elementalmente para ser, porque como seres humanos no estamos hechos: "el modo humano de ser es ser siendo"[2]. Dios es "actualidad pura"[3]; nosotros, como no somos dioses, pero sí a imagen y semejanza suya, también somos actualidad, pero no pura sino sucesiva, reiterada constantemente mientras vivamos, porque ningún acto nuestro nos define e incluso porque otro acto posterior puede desmentirlo. Así pues, no sólo tenemos que caminar, sino que tenemos que hacerlo por el buen camino, porque hay acciones que en vez de humanizarnos nos deshumanizan.

El problema fundamental es que el orden establecido promueve por todos los medios las acciones que desarrollan cualidades funcionales al sistema y ladea completamente la propuesta de la calidad humana. Las cualidades pertenecen a lo útil, no a lo valioso: ellas potencian lo que hagamos, tanto lo bueno como lo malo. El más sabio, el más fuerte, el más influyente, no es por eso el más humano; si todas sus acciones van encaminadas a desarrollar esa cualidad y pone en ello el sentido de la vida, se deshumaniza. En cambio, el que apuesta por la calidad humana, que se da en la entrega de sí horizontal, gratuita y abierta y en recibir la entrega de otros, sí se tiene que cualificar, porque si yo digo que quiero servir eficazmente y no sirvo

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2 Ignacio Ellacuría, *Filosofía de la realidad histórica*. UCA, San Salvador: Trotta, 1999, 345.

3 "*Actus purus*" es la expresión de santo Tomás: ST I,q9,1;q12,1;q14,2 ad3;q50,2 ad3;q54,1;q75,5 ad4;q87,1;q90,1;q115,1 ad 2. Edición en español: Tomás de Aquino, Suma Teología, Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2001. Fuente: https://www.dominicos.org/media/uploads/recursos/libros/suma/1.pdf

para nada y no me cualifico para servir, es mentira que quiera servir. Está claro que caminar humanamente es caminar con otros por el buen camino y sin excluir a nadie.

También como cristianos tenemos que caminar incesantemente, porque ser cristianos no es otra cosa que ser humanos al modo de Jesús, más aún, siguiéndolo. Él es el Camino por el que tenemos que caminar. Él, el Hijo único y eterno de Dios, se hizo nuestro Hermano para que, aceptando su fraternidad, llegáramos a ser en él hermanas y hermanos unos de otros e hijas e hijos de Dios y desde esas relaciones nos esforcemos por ir construyendo el mundo fraterno de las hijas e hijos de Dios, que sólo se consumará en la otra vida. Ese es el modo humano de ser de Jesús y su propuesta.

Ahora bien, mientras vivamos estamos abiertos: podemos aceptar la fraternidad de Jesús y la de los demás y corresponder o no aceptarla, o aceptarla unas veces y rechazarla otras. Las distintas vocaciones en la Iglesia están para cualificar esas relaciones y enraizarlas en Jesús de Nazaret, sin absolutizarlas.

Así pues, para ser humanos y cristianos tenemos que caminar incesantemente y caminar con otros y por el buen camino, por el Camino que es Jesús, un camino filial y fraterno que sólo se concluye en la muerte, que según hayamos vivido, puede ser muerte definitiva o vida eterna.

Éste es el sentido básico de sinodalidad. De este caminar fraterno para llegar a ser humanos y cristianos se desprende el escuchar, el hablar, el dialogar, el decidir conjunto deliberando, es decir, mediante razones que se hagan cargo de la realidad, el evaluar entre todos, el procesar superadoramente los problemas, el celebrar los logros y la vida compartida y, como fruto de todo, la comunión. Pero insistiendo que todo esto no lo llevamos a cabo seres humanos plenamente constituidos sino como nuestro proceso de constituirnos en seres humanos y en cristianos y de constituir a la humanidad como la familia de las hijas e hijos de Dios

Trascendencia de este tema

La relevancia de este tema para la vida y misión de la Iglesia en la actualidad es incuestionable. Para el Papa Francisco la sinodalidad es "el camino que Dios espera de la Iglesia del tercer milenio"[4]. Desde la experiencia latinoamericana inspirada en

[4] Santo Padre Francisco, "Conmemoración del 50 aniversario de la institución del sínodo de los obispos". Aula Pablo VI, 17 oct 2015. Fuente: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/speeches/2015/october/documents/papa-francesco_20151017_50-anniversario-sinodo.html

la eclesiología del Concilio Vaticano II, es una apreciación con la cual es imposible no estar de acuerdo. Dios quiere que la Iglesia sea sinodal: que todos los cristianos caminemos juntos como hijos y hermanos. Si no es así, no es la Iglesia de Jesús de Nazaret, aunque sea una institución muy eficiente y con gran relevancia social.

Ahora bien, la dificultad de que la Iglesia sea sinodal corre pareja a la necesidad de que lo sea. No hay sinodalidad en el orden establecido. Para él sólo existen individuos que se relacionan con los que quieran y para lo que quieran y cuerpos sociales que buscan su provecho, como las corporaciones globalizadas. Las relaciones son secundarias y buscando el propio provecho.

Desde la perspectiva eclesial latinoamericana, en cambio, lo que subsiste no son los individuos sino las relaciones, cuando son de entrega de sí gratuita, horizontal y abierta. Esto es así porque, en contra del imaginario vigente en la mayoría de los cristianos, nuestro Dios no es el Monarca absoluto: "la relación en Dios no es como un accidente adherido a un sujeto, sino que es la misma esencia divina, por lo cual es subsistente"[5]. No existe el Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu y se relacionan; si así fuera, habría tres dioses. Lo que existe es la relación que a la vez diferencia (Padre, Hijo y Espíritu) y mantiene unido (un solo Dios verdadero). También en la Iglesia tienen que llevar la primacía las relaciones filiales y fraternas y no las doctrinas, preceptos y ritos ni la institución y sus personeros. Eso es lo que Dios espera de la Iglesia para este tercer milenio, y lo espera porque actualmente no es lo que en ella predomina. No es que falten esas relaciones, pero ellas todavía no son las que dan el tono.

La sinodalidad en la Iglesia latinoamericana: novedad y antecedentes

Establecido lo que es la sinodalidad y la relevancia de que acontezca para las personas y la humanidad, más aún para la Iglesia, pasemos a considerar su presencia en la Iglesia latinoamericana. Ante todo, tenemos que aclarar que esta palabra con este significado aplicado a la Iglesia es una novedad muy pertinente del papa Francisco. O sea, que nos vamos a referir al concepto, tal como lo hemos explicado, sin usar la palabra.

Habría que decir lo mismo que dijimos respecto de la Iglesia universal, que siempre hubo sinodalidad en la Iglesia latinoamericana, pero que no ha sido lo que ha dado el tono hasta el Concilio Vaticano II. Aunque habría que recalcar que los

[5] Santo Tomás, Suma Teológica, p I,q 29,a 4

que en la III Conferencia Episcopal Latinoamericana reunida en Puebla en 1979, se llaman "fundadores de la Iglesia latinoamericana", desde Antón de Montesinos a Toribio de Mogrovejo, pasando por Vasco de Quiroga, Bartolomé de Las Casas y tantos otros, sí la vivieron eximiamente hermanándose con los indígenas y exigiendo que no se los oprimiera sino que se los tratara digna y fraternamente, por lo que entraron en contradicción con el orden social que se estaba levantando, que era rigurosamente asimétrico y por eso discriminador.

Pero cuando se estabilizó lo que podemos caracterizar como orden colonial la institución eclesiástica aceptó ese establecimiento que negaba absolutamente la sinodalidad[6]. Esta aceptación, que negaba la sinodalidad, ocurrió en los lugares céntricos en las dos últimas décadas del XVI y en los periféricos en la tercera década del XVII.

En vísperas del Concilio Vaticano II lo que domina en la institución eclesiástica latinoamericana es la consideración de que el mundo moderno se había levantado al margen de la Iglesia y en ese sentido se había emancipado de Dios y por tanto no era ámbito de salvación. Consiguientemente la propuesta era salvarse del mundo, que equivalía en este caso al mundo moderno y más específicamente a las nacientes repúblicas, sobre todo cuando en ellas dominaban los liberales. De allí la propuesta de una institucionalización paralela: educación católica, sindicatos católicos, empresarios católicos, fiestas católicas y manifestaciones católicas públicas como las procesiones y peregrinaciones, además del culto público. Y más en el fondo un modo de vivir completamente pautado: profesar doctrinas, cumplir preceptos y practicar ritos. Lo que se pedía era fuerza de voluntad para cumplir de corazón; aunque también se fomentaban las devociones que en el mejor de los casos lograban que el voluntarismo para cumplir lo pautado se aceitara con el fervor.

Ahora bien, una buena parte del Pueblo de Dios vivía el cristianismo a su aire y por eso con una independencia fundamental respecto de la institución eclesiástica, aunque le tuviera respeto y participara fervorosamente de muchas festividades que ella presidía, aunque siempre a su aire. La institución eclesiástica interpretaba esa relativa independencia como minusvalía; pero en realidad era

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6 El tema está desarrollado en III Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano, Puebla, Conclusiones n°3-13. Documento de Puebla III Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano, *Carta del Santo Padre a los Obispos Diocesanos de América Latina*, fuente: https://www.celam.org/documentos/Documento_Conclusivo_Puebla.pdf

una consecuencia de tomar el cristianismo en sus manos, como auténticos sujetos. Los más consecuentes son los que podemos llamar "pobres con espíritu"[7] que se caracterizan por vivir con Dios, en una interlocución continua con él, no cara a cara sino codo a codo, es decir comentando con él todo que pasa y lo que les pasa y esperando también su opinión. Estos logran un grado de personalización eximio, que se muestra también en las relaciones personalizadas con los demás: una auténtica sinodalidad.

De seguir pautas establecidas a seguir a Jesús en una vida-misión discerniente

El cambio provino de no pocos que estaban insatisfechos con ese modo de vivir el cristianismo y que sentían que Dios les pedía una relación más personalizada con Él y asumir una responsabilidad positiva con aquellos con los que convivían y con su sociedad. Estos fermentos se iban conversando y provocando una crítica al establecimiento eclesiástico y un impulso a vivir el cristianismo de otro modo. Por eso estas personas cuando se iban enterando de los debates conciliares y sobre todo cuando se publicaron los primeros documentos se sintieron no sólo autorizados sino impulsados a manifestar y vivir lo que sentían, a la vez que lo clarificaban y confirmaban.

Frente a conformar su vida a pautas establecidas por la institución y la figura de adherente a ella, estos cristianos sintieron que tanto su constitución humana, como la situación de cambio histórico en la que vivían pedían unas relaciones vivas, que se expresaban en discernir el tiempo que nos toca vivir y juzgar lo que es justo hacer. Así era como experimentaban eal Dios que les había revelado Jesús y su condición de seguidores suyos. Eso era lo que el seguimiento de Jesús les demandaba en ese momento. Eso fue lo que Jesús pidió a sus contemporáneos, contraviniendo las pautas minuciosísimas que prescribían los maestros de la ley e imponían los fariseos[8]. La fidelidad tenía que ser creativa, tanto porque el tiempo cambia como porque nosotros tenemos edad. Así pues, la relación personalizada con Dios, con Jesús y también con los compañeros cristianos de camino y más en general con todos, fue abriéndose paso dejando de lado tantos protocolos.

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[7] La expresión es de Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J., martirizado en la Universidad Centroamericana de San Salvador en 1989: "El pueblo con Espíritu". En *Conversión de la Iglesia al Reino de Dios*. Santander: Sal Terrae, 1984, 70–79.

[8] Lc 12, 54-56

Dejaron de lado lo que ha sido llamado con toda propiedad "fariseísmo cristiano"[9] para seguir a Jesús en la vida, que es un flujo constante y constituyente ya que esas relaciones fraternas y filiales nos van constituyendo como personas y van construyendo, en lo que cabe, el mundo fraterno de las hijas e hijos de Dios, que es el reino que proclamó e inició Jesús y que se consumará en la transhistoria. Así pues, uno se hace ser humano y cristiano en la vida, que es histórica, una vida en relaciones filiales y fraternas, en seguimiento a Jesús, una vida vivida en la Iglesia que es la comunidad de sus seguidores.

La Iglesia, comunidad de comunidades

Esa comunidad universal de los seguidores de Jesús para que no se redujera a una idea reguladora dio lugar a multitud de comunidades en las que se discernía en conjunto y se vivía con responsabilidad personal y fraternamente lo discernido.

Sobre todo florecieron las *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base*, que fueron una alianza entre gente popular y no popular en el seno del pueblo y no una manifestación de la comunitariedad ancestral del pueblo ya que los que vinieron del campo a la ciudad lo hicieron no sólo para gozar de sus bienes civilizatorios sino más todavía para buscarse a sí mismos ya que las comunidades tradicionales eran fuertemente asimétricas y en ellas estaba todo reglamentado y no cabían ellos como esos seres humanos que buscaban una realización mucho más personalizada.

Como su actitud era positiva, fomentaron una convivialidad muy humanizadora, sin llegar a constituir propiamente comunidades. Estas personas nacieron a la comunidad al fomentar en concreto esa fraternidad de las hijas e hijos de Dios, para lo que tuvo mucha relevancia la lectura orante comunitaria de la Biblia y cada vez más del Evangelio.

Esas comunidades fueron tan dinámicas en su medio que dieron lugar a multitud de asociaciones para mejorar aspectos concretos de la vida y para influir en su medio y en la sociedad. Fueron verdaderas comunidades cuando los agentes pastorales actuaron contundentemente la sinodalidad, es decir cuando sus aportes, imprescindibles, se hacían desde la fraternidad con todos, una relación realmente mutua y no sólo el aporte unidireccional de los expertos. Estas comunidades hicieron renacer a la Iglesia latinoamericana y también al Pueblo de Dios que la constituye.

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9 Paul Ricoeur, "El escrúpulo". En *Finitud y culpabilidad,* Madrid: Trotta, 2004, 273–294.

Encarnación solidaria en la sociedad desde los empobrecidos

El discernimiento capital de esta Iglesia latinoamericana que se levantó con el Concilio Vaticano II fue que seguir a Jesús entrañaba situarse en su sociedad como lo hizo él: encarnándose solidariamente desde abajo. De salvarse del mundo perdido y construir una institucionalización paralela se pasó, entonces, a salvarse contribuyendo a salvar al mundo.

El mundo no estaba perdido porque hubiera puesto de lado a la Iglesia, sino porque su constitución piramidal no expresaba las relaciones horizontales, gratuitas y abiertas que caracterizan y construyen a las personas ni la fraternidad que vino a instaurar Jesús. Por eso había que colaborar a que el pueblo oprimido se liberase, tanto de la resignación como del afán de revancha, y también los opresores de su inhumanidad y camináramos todos hacia una auténtica democracia en la que todos fuéramos sujetos corresponsables.

Hay que decir también que en los primeros tiempos el contagio ambiental marxista llevó a algunos a posturas excluyentes, pero a la larga prevaleció la perspectiva bíblica de la liberación que excluye el odio y que incluye a los opresores y en concreto al capital, pero componiéndose con los demás actores económicos y sociales y no dominando sobre ellos.

Ahora bien, la encarnación solidaria va más allá de la economía y la política y se ejerce sobre todo en la cotidianidad y en las relaciones que nos constituyen en personas y en concreto en seguidores de Jesús. Estos cristianos latinoamericanos se tomaron muy en serio esta tarea que llegó a caracterizarlos y plenificarlos y que fue muy fecunda para su sociedad. Como el punto de partida era salvarse del mundo, encarnarse fue situarse dentro, y desde allí conocer la realidad con la mayor profundidad posible y, sobre todo, entablar lazos.

Como esa encarnación era, como la de Jesús, desde abajo, estos cristianos se solidarizaron con todos desde la solidaridad con el pueblo. Hubo muchos profesionales que fueron capaces de ver y juzgar todo desde cómo afectaba a los de abajo porque entablaron relaciones profusas con ellos tratando no sólo de ayudarlos sino de estimarlos y valorarlos y así contribuir horizontalmente a que se promuevan y recibiendo también sus dones, sobre todo su resiliencia: su capacidad de vivir en los diversos aspectos de la vida y no sólo de sobrevivir y de convivir cuando no hay condiciones de vida y hasta de dar de su pobreza. Nacieron muchas asociaciones solidarias que cualificaron mucho al pueblo y a toda la sociedad.

Merecen especial mención las comunidades religiosas, sobre todo femeninas, que se insertaron en los barrios y desde esa participación de su vida construyeron comunidades eclesiales de base y multitud de organizaciones, entre ellas muchos centros educativos.

Desde la Biblia y sobre todo los evangelios

Queremos señalar que este proceso de la Iglesia latinoamericana vino propiciado desde el comienzo por la relevancia que llegó a tener la Biblia y a la larga, sobre todo los evangelios. Realmente que ahí estuvo la mano de Dios porque esta lectura de la Biblia ayudó mucho a procesar la situación de opresión.

El Éxodo y desde él los profetas fue un referente más básico que las doctrinas políticas, señaladamente el marxismo, y por eso se pudo asimilar lo válido de ellas sin quedarse anclado en sus rigideces. Lo bueno es que la relación con la Biblia no consistió sólo en su estudio asiduo, sino, más todavía, en la lectura orante.

Y paulatinamente todo se fue concentrando en los evangelios y a través de ellos en el seguimiento fervoroso y situado de Jesús. Esta entraña jesuánica, este anclarse en Jesús de Nazaret, no en un Cristo dogmatizado, fue la gran riqueza de esta Iglesia.

Los Padres de la Iglesia latinoamericana y los teólogos de la liberación

En este proceso que hemos descrito sucintamente queremos destacar el papel pionero y tremendamente inspirador de una pléyade de obispos de diversos países que con toda justicia han sido denominados "padres de la Iglesia latinoamericana"[10]. Larraín, McGrath, Proaño, Pironio, Angelelli, Helder Camara, Samuel Ruiz, Loscheider, Arns, Alvear, Romero y tantos otros fueron capaces de convocar al pueblo, de darle voz y también de servir de voceros suyos y desde una postura

[10] José Comblin dedica varios trabajos a estudiarlos y rendirles homenaje. El primero, más conceptual, en "Los obispos de Medellín". En José Comblin, *10 palabras sobre la Iglesia en América Latina*, Estella: Verbo Divino, 2003, 41–77. El segundo, más vivencial, es su contribución al homenaje que se le tributó con motivo de sus ochenta años de edad, titulado significativamente *Saudades da América Latina*. El libro homenaje lleva por título José Comblin, *A esperanca dos pobres vive*, Sao Paulo: Paulus 2003, 721–732. Ver además José Comblin, *Los Santos Padres de América Latina,* Revista Latinoamericana de Teología, 65 (mayo-agosto 2005), 163–172

inequívocamente evangélica provocaron la solidaridad de muchas personas, avivaron la fe, la encarnaron, revitalizaron a sus Iglesias y nos dejaron un legado tremendamente inspirador.

Lo mismo que decimos de los obispos tenemos que decir de la teología. Podemos afirmar que la teología latinoamericana, en el sentido preciso de la que brota de la praxis evangélica de los cristianos latinoamericanos, nace en esta Iglesia que se encarna en el continente desde el pueblo y desde esa postura vital discierne los signos de los tiempos. Gustavo Gutiérrez, el teólogo más representativo, participó en la II Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano en Medellín (1968) y su emblemática *Teología de la liberación* se publicó en 1971[11]. Ronaldo Muñoz, Juan Carlos Scannone, Segundo Galilea, Enrique Dussel, José Comblin, Juan Luis Segundo, Leonardo Boff, Carlos Mesters, Ignacio Ellacuría, Jon Sobrino, Víctor Codina, Pedro Trigo y tantos otros y las nuevas generaciones, que están bien representadas en Francisco de Aquino Junior, componen un verdadero cuerpo pensante realmente fraterno que desde los años 70 se ha venido reuniendo sistemáticamente y se puede decir que ha compuesto un pensamiento orgánico y a la vez en constante proceso ya que su sustancia es la comprensión del cristianismo que brota desde una vivencia cristiana compartida y que sigue el pulso a la realidad que se va viviendo solidariamente.

Obstáculos eclesiales y epocales a este modo de ser Iglesia

Ahora bien, esta vivencia tan fecunda de la Iglesia latinoamericana, a contrapelo del orden establecido, fue más difícil de vivir por el cambio en la institución eclesiástica que tuvo lugar en el pontificado de Juan Pablo II. Durante este tiempo la Iglesia vivió la paradoja de una presencia universal en los medios de comunicación y un pensamiento social avanzado, al lado de una creciente institucionalización de su estructura y un anticomunismo incapaz de reconocer el fermento social trasformador de la Comunidades Eclesiales de Base. En la escogencia de nuevos obispos, líderes eclesiales y lineamientos pastorales prevalecieron las tendencias institucionalistas y de movilización masiva.

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[11] Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, Lima. Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano y Caribeño, II Conferencia General Del Episcopado Latinoamericano Documentos Finales De Medellín, fuente: https://www.celam.org/documentos/Documento_Conclusivo_Puebla.pdf

Además, desde mediados de los años 80, penetró fuertemente en el horizonte societal el imaginario neoliberal, que eclipsó al que había regido hasta entonces que podemos llamar cristianismo secularizado ya que los valores de laboriosidad, promoción, justicia y solidaridad eran valores respetados por todos, aunque no todos los practicaran. Todo lo que promovía la Iglesia latinoamericana desde su esfuerzo por encarnar el Vaticano II pasó a estar "fuera de onda". Y por si fuera poco también desde entonces se fueron muriendo muchos religiosos, religiosas y curas diocesanos que llegaron al continente latinoamericano en la postguerra española y europea sin que hubiera suficientes reemplazos.

Por eso, aunque el Papa Juan Pablo II se dio cuenta del cambio negativo de la institución eclesiástica y por eso escribió al episcopado brasilero que "la teología de la liberación es no sólo oportuna sino útil y necesaria" (9/4/1986), la institución eclesiástica latinoamericana restablecida no rectificó y cada vez hubo más voces hostiles. Aunque esta corriente, cuyos representantes carecen de carisma, opuso más bien una resistencia pasiva y la voz pública la seguía llevando la Iglesia comprometida con la base, lo cierto es que el Pueblo de Dios se fue quedando cada día más solo y las comunidades, sin estos animadores, fueron languideciendo.

Sin embargo, hay que decir que los documentos conclusivos de las cuatro Conferencias Generales del Episcopado Latinoamericano posteriores al Vaticano II, Medellín (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992) y Aparecida (2007), evidencian, en medio de tanta oposición, una continuidad fundamental respecto de la sinodalidad. Esto es más que sorprendente y muy digno de admirar. Indica que la mayoría de los que han sido nombrados sigue en esa onda, gracias a Dios. En ello hay que reconocer la acción constante del Espíritu Santo

El Papa Francisco es representante eximio de ese modo de vivir el cristianismo y llegó a él por una evolución muy personalizada y por eso con su palabra, con su ejemplo y, además, con la designación de obispos en esta línea está rehabilitando esta manera de vivir el cristianismo, además de darle legitimidad. El Papa Francisco representa lo mejor de esta tradición latinoamericana, ahora enriquecida con la experiencia de la Iglesia universal y el impulso de la sinodalidad como dimensión constitutiva del Pueblo de Dios en misión evangelizadora.

La Compañía de Jesús recibe este prestigioso Doctorado Honoris Causa de la *Universidad Babes-Bolyai* con agradecimiento por la historia común y como confirmación de su deseo de contribuir al futuro sinodal de la Iglesia en el cual tiene un papel muy importante el trabajo universitario en su conjunto y la reflexión teológica en particular.

STUDIA UBB THEOL. CATH. LAT., LXVIII, 2, 2023, P. 107–110

LAUDATIO ON THE DOCTOR HONORIS CAUSA ACADEMIC TITLE AWARDING TO VERY REV. FR. ARTURO SOSA ABASCAL, SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS[1]

Dávid Diósi[2]

Reverendissime Domine, Domine Generalis!
Domine Rector Magnifice! Domine Praesidens Magnifice!
Excellentissimi Domini Archiepiscopi et Episcopi!
Illustrissimi Domini Prorectores et Domini Decani!
Reverendissimi Professores! Venerabiles Hospites!

In hoc Regno nostro eruditionis instituendaeque in liberalibus disciplinis iuventutis, Collegium societatis Jesu, in Civitate Coloswar erigendum atque construendum statuerimus, […], cuius maxime decori atque utilitati consultum semper esse cupimus, […] ut et ornamento et commodo illi sit.

"In an effort to advance the sciences and to propagate the liberal arts among our youth, we have decided to establish and to construct a Jesuit College in the city of Cluj, in the sincere hope that this college may prove to be an advantage and an ornament to the city," writes Kristóf Báthory in his letter to the Magistrate of the city of Cluj, dated 5 May 1580. One year later, on 12 May 1581, István Báthory, King of Poland and Prince of Transylvania, signed the founding document of the Jesuit College and *Academia Claudiopolitana*, which states that students of the institution may study both towards a bachelor's and a master's degree and a doctorate, as it is legal and customary in the academies of Italia, Gallia, Hispania, and Germania. Two years later, Pope Gegory XIII founded the *Seminarium Pontificium ac Regium (Papal and royal seminary)*, thereby granting the already extant Jesuit Academy of Cluj the rank of university. "By the apostolic authority vested in us," the Pope writes in the founding document, "we hereby establish

[1] Laudatio delivered on the occasion of the Doctor Honoris Causa academic title awarding to Fr. Arturo Sosa Abascal SJ on 17th December 2023.

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a college, or seminary, in the city of Cluj-Napoca which excels all other cities of Transylvania… This college, and seminary, is to be like the colleges and seminaries we have previously caused to be founded in the regions of Bohemia, Polonia, and Germania." The Academy of Cluj immediately rose to prominence among the universities of Europe and, with the founding act of the Holy See, was also recognized as one in a line of eminent pontifical universities. From the very beginning, the founders of the first true university in Transylvania dared to dream big, despite living in unfavorable historical times that offered few bright prospects. The collaboration of the Jesuit Order proved to be the key to success. The freshness, dynamism, intellectual and spiritual vigor of the order that had been founded a mere four decades earlier set the scene for our university. István Báthory had first encountered Jesuits during his captivity in Vienna between 1565 and 1567, and the duke was deeply impressed by the consolation and encouragement these fathers extended to him. The Jesuit penchant for organization characterized their university curricula from the beginning. Their central curriculum was well thought out and meticulously developed, enabling the Society of Jesus to build a unified educational system international in scope. Their universities, our own university included, stood open to international relations. This receptivity to foreign scholars greatly improved the quality of the faculty who hailed from cities as diverse as Rome, Vilnius, Vienna and Cracow, among others. The first rector of the university, Polish-born Jakab (James) Wujek, was a scholar of international renown whose translation of the Bible into Polish remained the authoritative edition for the next three centuries.

In the early seventeenth century, the erudite Jesuits were forced to leave Transylvania, but they were allowed to continue their academic work in Cluj-Napoca from 1698 until the suppression of the Order in 1773.

Today, 250 years later, we are gathered in the imposing Aula Magna of what once was the ancient Jesuit college to celebrate a joyful occasion. It is our honor and privilege to award Very Rev. Fr. Arturo Sosa Abascal, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, an honorary doctorate and the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa*.

Arturo Sosa Abascal was born in 1948 in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. Father Abascal joined the Society of Jesus in 1966, was ordained to the priesthood in 1977, and pronounced his final vows in 1982. He studied philosophy and theology at the Andrés Bello Catholic University of Caracas and at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. In 1990, Father Abascal received his doctorate

in political sciences from the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas. Of his numerous important positions of leadership, I wish to highlight only three. Between the years 1996 and 2004, he served as the Provincial of Venzuela. From 2004 to 2014, he was the rector of the Catholic University of Táchira, and he has functioned as the Superior General of the Society of Jesus since 2016. Father Abascal has taught at several institutions of higher learning, including Andrés Bello Catholic University in Caracas, the Central University of Venezuela, and he served as guest faculty at Georgetown University in Washington DC. Jesuit spirituality, intellectual apostleship, collaboration with others, solidarity with the most vulnerable (with a special concern for migrants and refugees), and the advancement of reconciliation and dialogue are at the heart of Father Abascal's ministry.

The formational and educational work of the Society of Jesus is recognized and highly valued the world over. Jesuits operate over 3,400 educational institutions and more than 100 boarding schools and dormitories across the globe. Over 200 of these are intitutes of higher learning. Several members of our own university received their education at renowned Jesuit institutes of learning, undergoing a distinctively Jesuit spiritual formation. This simple fact is ample proof that the educational and formational ministry of the Society of Jesus, far from being a mere figment of a glorious past, is a powerful force for good in the world today. Jesuit spirituality places great emphasis on the responsible use of freedom, the importance of a personal relationship between students and teachers, the joy of learning, which opens the gateway to a lifelong love of study and an unceasing readiness to improve oneself on an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual level. A Jesuit education is value-based and encourages students to know, to love, and to accept themselves, as well as to come to know the world around them so that they may live an active life of service to others. Although Jesuit institutions welcome individuals from a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds, the person of Jesus Christ serves as the universal example of true humanity whose life and teachings are a source of encouragement and devotion to all. Our own university is committed to cultivating Jesuit spirituality, and we - as Romania's biggest, oldest, and highest-ranking university - are proud to represent the Jesuit educational tradition in academic circles today. We do so not only out of historical obligation but out of a deep and heartfelt conviction.

The Most Reverend Arturo Sosa Abascal, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, is a genuine embodiment of the Jesuit spirit. For this reason, we deem him worthy of the title of *Doctor Honoris causa*. We, heirs to a venerable Jesuit institution, are proud to welcome the Superior General of Society of Jesus, stationed in Rome, as a member of our academic community in Cluj.

Reverendissime Domine Generalis! Ad multos annos!

Omnia ad maiorem Dei gloriam!

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UN SMS DI SAN ANSELMO A MAURIZIO SUL MALE O IL MALE NELLA LETTERA 97 DI ANSELMO D'AOSTA

István András[1]

Summary: The following article through Anselm of Aosta's Letter 97 brings to the reader, the idea that Anselm's epistolary today can be understood as virtual letters: SMS or messages on social networking sites. The theme of the Letter 97 ~~is~~ presents evil not as something or not-something, but as almost something. With his itinerary, Anselm not only re-elaborated Augustine's thought, but also opened the door for a new interpretation that after centuries, that is, today, becomes interesting because of its freedom and perspectives. By the means of language Anselm opens the horizon to the eyes of today's reader that stretches to ontological perspective. In this sense, the evil that is almost-something opens an infinite possibility.
Keywords: Anselm of Aosta, evil, nothing, epistolary, SMS, something, not-something, almost-something.

Negli ultimi anni ricercatori e studiosi hanno fatto un grande lavoro con molte scoperte e novità sull'epistolario di Anselmo d'Aosta. Oltre all'edizione critica, sono stati pubblicati diversi volumi e studi sull'epistolario di Anselmo, attraverso i quali siamo ora più vicini all'itinerario razionale e spirituale del nostro autore. Le ricerche ne hanno rivelato non solo le qualità intellettuali e spirituali,[2] ma anche il lato umano[3]. Ecco perché Ovidio Lari, vescovo di Aosta, nella sua piccola introduzione per l'edizione delle lettere di Anselmo d'Aosta, scrive che il

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2 "Nella guida spirituale e nell'esercizio del consiglio vediamo in Anselmo riunite una chiara lucidità e una decisa fermezza." Inos Biffi, Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol I.*, cura Inos Biffi–Costante Marabelli, Milano: 1988, 43–88, 70.

3 "L'attenzione e la disponibilità di Anselmo per gli altri appare all'origine di gran parte del suo epistolario". I. Biffi, Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol I.*, cura I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano, 1988, 43–88, 60.

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nostro autore è "certamente una persona ricca di affetti"[4]. Tramite l'epistolario anselmiano scopriamo che Anselmo non era soltanto un cervello, un uomo guidato esclusivamente dalla ratio, ma un monaco aperto verso Dio e verso la gente.[5] Inos Biffi afferma che chi vuole conoscere veramente sant'Anselmo[6] deve studiare le sue lettere[7].

La nostra ricerca parte dall'idea che l'epistolario è una forma di conversazione utilizzata quando le parti sono fisicamente lontane. Nel tempo, l'epistolario è cambiato si è evoluto, diventando persino un genere letterario. Lo sviluppo dell'epistolario non è ancora finito, ma per la gente di oggi, spesso rimane una forma letteraria del passato, attraverso la quale si manifestava l'uomo vecchio del passato. Oggi l'epistolario significa le possibilità offerte dai moderni dispositivi e dal mondo virtuale[8], con cui possiamo comunicare istantaneamente sui siti di social network o anche attraverso gli sms, colmando la distanza fisica che ci separa. Da qui nascono due domande: le nuove forme di comunicazione (es. SMS) possono essere chiamate lettere o epistolario e le lettere di Anselmo possono essere interpretate come messaggi (SMS)?

Nell'epoca di Anselmo l'epistolario era una forma letteraria, ma soprattutto una forma di comunicazione per quelli che erano lontano fisicamente. L'epistolario di Anselmo è vasto e i destinatari erano persone vere, reali con le quali il nostro

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4 Ovidio Lari, *La chiesa di Aosta e Sant'Anselmo*, in *Anselmo d'Aosta, Lettere, Vol I.* ed. I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano 1988, 13.

5 "Anselmo non si interessava solo dei monaci ma anche dei laici". Biffi, I., Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol I.*, cura I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano, 1988, 43–88, 76.

6 Chi vuole conoscere la "fisionomia interiore, gli interessi fondamentali, lo spirito e lo stile" deve studiare le lettere di Anselmo. Queste lettere sono importanti anche "per la storia della Chiesa del tempo". Cfr. I. Biffi, Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol I.*, cura I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano, 1988, 43–88, 45.

7 Cfr. Biffi, I., Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol. I.*, cura I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano, 1988, 43–88.

8 Cfr. István András, «A virtualizálódó szubjektum (helyzetjelentés; morfondírozás)» in. *Studia Theologica Transsylvaniensia, 17/2,* Alba Iulia: Institutul Teologic Romano-Catolic 325-341.

autore era in contatto. Oggi giorno potremmo dire, con allusione ai social work, che Anselmo aveva molti amici e *parlava, scriveva*: era in *connessione* con loro.[9]

Studiando le lettere di Anselmo scopriamo che molte volte esse non sono soltanto semplici lettere o risposte a qualche domanda pratica, o guide spirituali, ma sono come riassunti o come schizzi dei suoi pensieri e dei suoi libri. Così la *Lettra 97* può essere considerata come una scheda per il libro *De casu diaboli,* perché affronta la stessa tematica, la tematica del male.

Cosa è l'epistolario?

La lettera come stile letterario è presente nella storia della letteratura a partire da epoche remote fino a oggi.

Nel corso dello sviluppo umano, l'uomo si è reso conto presto che le distanze geografiche sono difficili da coprire e che per questa non poteva essere presente ovunque in persona. Ma capiva che anche l'opinione di una sola persona era fondamentale in certe questioni. Per questo motivo, la pratica di rendere nota l'opinione di una persona assente attraverso inviati o oggetti inviati da lui, si è affermata fin dall'antichità. Più tardi, con l'avvento della scrittura, appaiono anche le lettere. Nelle antiche monarchie orientali la corrispondenza epistolare aveva un carattere soprattutto ufficiale, ma accanto all'elemento ufficiale spesso rivelava l'aspetto privato della letteratura epistolare.[10] Durante il II secolo a C. comincia una larga fioritura dell'epistolario. Troviamo lettere in prosa ma anche in forma di poesia, spesso permeate dalla filosofia. Dopo Cristo l'epistolario rimane una forma letteraria usata anche dagli apostoli e dai padri della chiesa.

Nel Medio Evo l'importanza dell'epistolario non cade, al contrario, con Giles Constable possiamo dire che il periodo aureo dell'epistolografia è il periodo del XI-XII secolo[11].

Quando l'analfabetismo fu debellato perché la gente ha imparato a scrivere, la lettera rimase presente nella vita quotidiana dell'uomo non soltanto nella

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9 Il tempo di ricevere un messaggio era lungo, ma il tempo era vissuto in rapporto all'eternità e oggi in rapporto con il prossimo appuntamento.

10 Cfr. Gino Funaioli, Giuseppe Cardinali, *Epistulari, Scritture,* in. https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/scritture-epistolari_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/ (13.11.2023.).

11 Cfr. Giles Constable, *Letters and letter-collections*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1976, 31-38.

letteratura. Ci furono epoche in cui l'uso delle lettere era di moda. Una lettera d'amore, per esempio, poteva essere la manifestazione più grande e più sincera del cuore e della mente umana. Anche oggi scriviamo lettere. Forse non sulla carta e con la penna, ma scriviamo lettere.

Almada arriva alla conclusione che la definizione più accettata dagli studiosi sulla definizione della lettera suppone tre elementi:

1. la lettera è una forma scritta di comunicazione
2. la lettera permette di rompere la distanza tra chi scrive e colui a cui si scrive
3. la lettera si presenta come un sostituto del discorso orale e perciò deve assumere i criteri della spontaneità[12]

Le lettere di Anselmo corrispondono a questi punti, e nello stesso tempo formano un vero epistolario.

La domanda su che cosa sia l'epistolario diventa importantissima, soprattutto quando l'uomo comincia a trascurare le cose e le strutture reali vivendo in un mondo virtuale. "Oggi giorno, viviamo una svolta molto grande a livello comunicativo, cioè la compresa di internet. Assistiamo di fatto ad una svolta storica in ciò che riguarda i mezzi di comunicazione"[13]. Scrivere lettere per l'uomo di oggi spesso significa scrivere e-mail o addirittura SMS, ma dobbiamo chiarire che un'e-mail è una lettera, perché ne ha lo stile e le caratteristiche sebbene in breve.

Nel mondo postmoderno la lettera, come forma letteraria e come forma di espressione, comincia a perdere i suoi caratteri in favore dell'informazione. Possiamo vedere come il posto dell'epistolario viene preso dall'SMS o da un breve messaggio sul messenger o sulle reti sociali. Tutto è entrato sulla via dello scioglimento, come osserva Derrida o Esterházy.[14] Ma, secondo la definizione detta sopra possiamo dire che anche un SMS o un messaggio sulle reti sociali può essere interpretato come una lettera.

1. la lettera è una forma scritta di comunicazione: se accettiamo che scrivere non si fa soltanto con carta e strumenti idoneia, ma anche con mezzi più moderni

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[12] Cfr. Christian Alejandro Almada, *Anselmo D'Aosta ed il genere epistolare*, L'Ulivo, 37 (2007), Abbazia Monte Oliveto Maggiore: Monte Oliveto Maggiore, 390.

[13] Ch. Almada, *Anselmo D'Aosta ed il genere epistolare*, L'Ulivo, 37 (2007), Abbazia Monte Oliveto Maggiore: Monte Oliveto Maggiore, 388.

[14] Cfr. Péter Esterházy, „1 Norfolk" in. *A szabadság nehéz mámora*, Budapest: Magvető, 2003, 39–43, 40.

per trasmettere informazioni[15], vediamo che anche un SMS, o un massaggio può essere una lettera.

2. la lettera permette di rompere la distanza tra chi scrive e colui a cui si scrive: Gli SMS e i messaggi stessi fanno in modo che la distanza sia annullata più velocemente[16].

3. la lettera si presenta come un sostituto del discorso orale e perciò deve assumere i criteri della spontaneità: oggi giorno la spontaneità è molto presente. Questa è la nostra forza.

Invertendo il ragionamento possiamo dire che l'epistolario di Anselmo, secondo queste regole può essere considerato come un insieme di messaggi o di SMS.

L'epistolario di Sant'Anselmo

Nella vita di Anselmo d'Aosta l'epistolario comincia al tempo in cui Lanfranco, suo maestro, viene nominato arcivescovo di Canterbury e Anselmo rimane lontano da lui[17]. Diventa il suo successore, ma in alcuni casi ha bisogno del suo aiuto.

Le lettere di Anselmo sono ripartite in tre parti, corrispondenti ai tre importanti periodi della sua vita.

Primo periodo[18]: priorato di Bec. In questo periodo Anselmo scrive 83 lettere. Queste lettere hanno destinatari diversi e tematiche diverse. I destinatari sono: l'abate, 10 lettere (11, 18, 52, 71, 83 ecc.), il priore, 8 lettere (48, 58, 63 ecc.), un monaco, 32 lettere (3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 33, 34, 84 ecc.), una monaca, 1 lettera (45), l'arcivescovo, 12 lettere (1, 14, 23, 66, 72 ecc.), il vescovo, 3 lettere (53 ecc.). Le tematiche più ricorrenti sono: l'amicizia, la vita monastica, i consigli per la vita monastica, la guida spirituale.

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15 Cfr. Edd. Ruzsiczky Éva, Szávai J., R., *Magyar Larousse Enciklopédiai szótár*, Vol. II, Paris–Budapest: Librairie Larousse–Akadémiai Kiadó, 1992, 225.

16 Tramite gli sms anche il tempo constante comincia a ridursi. Il tempo, il grande nemico dell'uomo, rimane come un sogno da uccidere Chrònos. Cfr. Guido Tonelli, *Il sogno di uccidere Chrònos,* Milano: Feltrinelli, 2021.

17 Cfr. Alfredo Simón, *Caritatis pace et amore veritatis. L'esperienza di Dio nell'epistolario di Anselmo D'Aosta*, Benedictina, 56 (2009), Cesena: Centro Storico Benedittino Italiano, 21–23.

18 Qui non pretendo di presentare tutti i destinatari, soltanto alcuni per vederne la diversità, e ciò vale anche per i prossimi due periodi.

Secondo periodo (1078 – 1093) quando Anselmo era abate a Bec. In queste lettere la componente monastica, sempre presente, appare ben bilanciata dalle relazioni epistolari con gli esponenti della gerarchia ecclesiastica diocesana. Di questo periodo abbiamo soltanto 54 lettere. I destinatari sono: l'abate, 11 lettere (92, 105, 110, ecc.), il priore, 2 lettere (93, 143), un monaco, 5 lettere (97 ecc.), l'arcivescovo, 6 lettere (89, 90 ecc.) il vescovo, 6 lettere (91, 107, 122, 136 ecc.) un laico, 1 lettera (94).

Terzo periodo (1093 – 1109) quando era arcivescovo di Canterbury. Questo è il periodo più fecondo. Abbiamo 234 lettere con le seguenti tematiche: questioni pastorali, consigli ecc.. I destinatari sono: l'abate, 5 lettere (158, 186 ecc.), il priore, 2 lettere (179, ecc.), il priore e i monaci, 12 lettere, un monaco, 8 lettere (174, 188, ecc.), una monaca, 3 lettere, il papa, 10 lettere (206, 210)[19].

Dal punto di vista della nostra tematica possiamo dire che nell'epistolario di Anselmo d'Aosta la parola *male* appare 129 volte[20]. In alcune parti tratta del male nell'ambito spirituale, per esempio nelle lettere 6, 17, 37, 65 ecc. In altre il male appare come un problema della vita quotidiana, quando l'uomo fa qualcosa di male per gli altri, come per esempio nella lettera 126. Nella lettera 217 Anselmo dice che il male è presente nella vita, ma noi dobbiamo scoprirlo e lottare contro di esso. Il male appare anche con concetti biblici. Alla fine del mondo ci sarà il giudizio finale fra buoni e cattivi, fra bene e male. Su questa tematica parlano le lettere 252, 258, 346, ecc. In qualche lettera, il male appare quando Anselmo è accusato da qualcuno. Le riflessioni metafisiche sul male sono presenti nella Lettera 97.

La lettera 97

La Lettera 97 fu scritta quando Anselmo era abate a Bec e ha come destinatario Maurizio. Maurizio era monaco in Inghilterra, capo dei monaci beccensi in Inghilterra. Nell'epistolario di sant'Anselmo appaiono due monaci con il nome di Maurizio, almeno secondo Schmitt. Uno è *Mauritius monachus Beccensis*

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[19] Cfr. Alfredo Granata, *L'epistolario anselmiano: un monumento di vita e di letteratura*, in *Anselmo d'Aosta Lettere 3,* ed. I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, 1988, 120–123.

[20] Cfr. https://www.brepolsonline.net/doi/abs/10.1484/M.NUTRIX-EB.5.112923 D'Aosta, Epistole, Lettere

Cantuariae degens[21]. Per questo Maurizio Anselmo ha scritto le lettere: 42, 43, 47, 51, 60, 64, 69, 74, 79. L'altro Maurizio, sempre secondo Schmitt, è il *superior novae cellae Beccensis apud Confluetium*[22]. Ma per altri studiosi esiste soltanto un monaco che aveva una relazione spirituale stretta con Anselmo. Tersilla Gatto Chanu nel suo libro afferma che Maurizio era un monaco del Bec con una grande capacità intellettuale. Quasi non esiste tema sul quale egli non avesse un pensiero[23]. Biffi sottolinea che "la corrispondenza con Maurizio è più affettuosa. Soltanto a lui riserva il titolo di figlio."[24]

Questa lettera crea un dibattito tra gli studiosi. Alcuni ritengono che sia stata scritta intorno all'anno 1085, o addirittura ancora più tardi, forse verso il 1092[25]. Non possiamo dimenticare che il libro *De casu diaboli* fu scritto tra gli anni 1080-1085[26] e la Lettera 97 contiene la stessa tematica. Se è così, la *Lettera 97* può essere considerata come un riassunto o uno schizzo, o una preparazione per il libro. Se la lettera è stata scritta verso il 1092, dopo il libro *De casu diaboli* possiamo dire che Anselmo mandò un piccolo estratto, un riassunto per il suo amico Maurizio.

La tematica e la struttura della Lettera 97

Sappiamo che ogni lettera come stile letterario deve avere una struttura, talvolta ben precisata. La struttura della Lettera 97 è interessante e si presenta così:

– saluto
– prima parte: versetti 3-18 trattano un problema pratico riguardante la vita di un fratello
– seconda parte: versetti 18-97 è la parte più deduttiva, con riflessioni di tipo metafisico sul male

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21 Cfr. S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia,* Vol III, Edinburgh: Thomam Nelson et Filios, 224–225.

22 Cfr. S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia,* Vol III, 224–225.

23 Cfr. Ghatto Chanu, T.G., *Anselmo D'Aosta*, Milano: San Paolo, 2009, 101–105.

24 Biffi, I., Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol I.*, cura I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano, 1988, 43–88, 61.

25 Cfr. Anselmo D'Aosta, *Lettere Vol I*, ed. I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, Milano 1988, 310–311.

26 Cfr. F.S. Schmitt, *Zur Chronologie der Werke des hl Anselm von Canterbury,* Revu Bènèdictine 44 (1932), Turnhout: Brepols, 322–355.

– manca il saluto finale

Naturalmente la lettera comincia con un saluto affettuoso "al diletto[27] suo fratello e figlio Maurizio"[28]. In questo saluto Anselmo si presenta come "fratello Anselmo, detto abate di Bec"[29]. Anche da questo saluto si nota la relazione stretta tra Anselmo e Maurizio. Anselmo si considera un fratello di Maurizio e vorrebbe rimanere fratello, non importa il servizio che presta nella Chiesa, importante è il suo atteggiamento di fraternità. Così possiamo dire che la Lettera 97 è la lettera di un fratello ad un altro fratello.

La lettera si divide in due grandi parti. Nella prima parte Anselmo cerca di trovare una risposta ad un problema dei monaci dell'Inghilterra, per un fratello al quale risultava difficile la vita claustrale. Secondo Anselmo il problema si doveva risolvere con la carità fraterna e se la carità fraterna non fosse stata sufficiente, in seguito si sarebbe dovuto applicare contro di lui la "severità imposta dalla regola"[30].

Nella seconda parte della lettera Anselmo tratta la tematica del male, cercando di spiegare e di capire.

La struttura di questa parte della lettera si presenta così in cinque punti:

1. male = niente
2. dimostrazione di cosa è il niente:
   a) niente come qualcosa
   b) niente come non qualcosa
3. il male = niente
   anche il male può essere:
   a) qualcosa
   b) non qualcosa
4. il male come quasi qualcosa

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27 Interessante come anni dopo, nell'epistolario di San Bernardo queste parole diventano importanti.

28 S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia,* Vol. III, Lettera 97, 224,1–2. "dilecto fratri et filio suo Mauritio", trad. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere Vol 1,* ed. I. Biffi, C. Marabelli, 311.

29 S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia, Vol. III,* Lettera 97, 224, 1. "Frater Anselmus, dictus abbas Becci", trad. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 311.

30 S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia, Vol. III,* Lettera 97, 225, 14. "regularem in eum me exercere severitatem necesse erit", trad. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 313.

5. la cecità come male reale → il male non è altro che non-bene, o assenza di bene, dove deve o conviene esservi il bene.

La lettera non finisce tradizionalmente, perché manca il saluto finale.

Il campo semantico della lettera 97

Quando noi uomini parliamo, cerchiamo di essere chiari per essere capiti. (in un sms usiamo parole brevi e chiare). Ma il nostro linguaggio dipende anche dalla persona con cui parliamo. Così usiamo linguaggi diversi con i genitori, con gli amici, in chiesa, nel posto di lavoro ecc.. Tutti noi siamo contenti quando una persona parla chiaramente e possiamo capire senza difficoltà.

Anche Anselmo, quando scrive una lettera cerca di essere chiaro per essere ben capito. Per questo possiamo affermare che ogni parola che viene usata ha il suo ruolo, ben definito dall'autore. Con le parole usate possiamo avere un *assaggio* del linguaggio anselmiano ed entrare nella dialettica di Anselmo.

Biffi osserva che il linguaggio di Anselmo è molto affettuoso. Gran parte delle sue lettere sono lettere di amicizia ma dobbiamo sapere che "siamo in un'epoca in cui l'amore era essenzialmente un concetto intellettuale"[31]

Nella prima parte della Lettera 97 le parole chiave sono: *fratrem*, *voluntatis*, *inoboedientia*, *severitatem*. Tutte queste parole appartengono al linguaggio monastico. *Fratrem* si riferisce ai monaci che vivono insieme secondo una regola per la quale tutti sono fratelli.

La parola *voluntas* per Anselmo, per tutta la sua attività, è molto importante. É interessante notare che nella seconda parte della lettera, dove viene sviluppato un tema filosofico, questa parola manca. Ma considerando la diversità fra le due parti della lettera, non possiamo dire che questa parola dovrebbe trovarsi anche nella seconda parte. Nella prima parte la parola *voluntas* sta in opposizione con la parola *inoboedientia*, (*voluntas* ↔ *inoboedientia*), per dimostrare che la volontà e la disobbedienza non coincidono sempre. Anselmo discioglie questa tensione con la parola *regola*, (*voluntas* ↔ *inoboedientia* →*regola*), la regola come strumento intermedio tra la volontà e la disobbedienza. Il problema della volontà viene sviluppato in opere complete come *De libertate arbitrii*, *De veritate*, *De casu diaboli* ecc. Nel libro *De casu diaboli* Anselmo afferma che la volontà è qualcosa di reale,

[31] Inos Biffi, Anselmo *al Bec. Amabilità e rettitudine di un monaco riuscito*, in Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere, Vol I.*, cura I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, 43–88, 54.

per questo deve derivare da Dio e come tale non può essere non buona[32]; nemmeno i suoi effetti possono essere non buoni. Il male consiste nell'ingiustizia, che per parte sua è privazione della giustizia[33], come troveremo nella seconda parte della lettera.

Nella seconda parte della lettera il campo semantico è molto più grande. Le parole chiave sono: *malum* 13 (volte), *nihil* 43, *nulla* 4, *nullatenus* 3, *nomen* 17, *bonum* 4, *non bonum* 1, *aliquid* 54, *non aliquid* 7, *quasi aliquid* 1, *non est aliquid* 2, *ratio* 1, *caecitas* 5, *non visus* 3, *visus* 8.

Il male nella Lettera 97

Anselmo affronta il tema del male non soltanto nella Lettera 97, ma anche in altre opere e in contesti differenti. Il *male* come nulla, per esempio, appare anche nel *Monologion,* nel *De veritate*, nel *De potestate et impotentia, possibilitate et impossibilitate, necessitate et libertate, o De casu diaboli.*

La tematica del male presentato nella *Lettera 97* è uguale a quello che troviamo nel libro *De casu diaboli*.[34] La lettera presenta lo stesso ordine logico del libro *De casu diaboli*. L'autore prima fa l'affermazione che il *male* è *niente* così partendo dal concetto *niente* spiega come il male e il niente possono essere *qualcosa* o *non-qualcosa* e alla fine *quasi-qualcosa*.

Il male come *qualcosa*

L'autore prima spiega come il *niente* può essere *qualcosa,* affermando che i termini "male e niente significano qualcosa non nella realtà, ma secondo la forma dell'espressione"[35].

Il male e il niente sono qualcosa secondo il significato. Qui ritroviamo Agostino. Per Agostino e anche per Anselmo il significato deve essere qualcosa. Il male è un nome, così che non possiamo negare che il nome male abbia un significato, non significa nulla, ma qualcosa.

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32 Cfr. Anselmo d'Aosta, *La caduta del diavolo*, 48–50.

33 Cfr. Anselmo d'Aosta, *La caduta del diavolo*, Milano: Bompiani, 2006, 83–84.

34 Cfr. István András, *A rossz Cantrbury Anzelm felfogásában a De casu diavoli dialógus alapján,* Studia Theologica Transsylvaniensia, Alba Iulia: Institutul Teologic Romano-Catolic, 16/2, 203-217.

35 S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia, Vol. III,* Lettera 97, 227, 82–84. "Hoc igitur modo malum et nihil significant aliquid non secundum rem, sed secundum formam loquendi.", trad:. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 317.

D.P. Henry spiega che per Anselmo il male e il niente non trovano, fuori del linguaggio e fuori del pensiero, alcun termine corrispondente. Perché ci sia vero male, per Anselmo, la mancanza deve riferirsi a un bene dovuto[36]. Quando sentiamo il nome *male,* noi pensiamo ad una mancanza dovuta che dopo la forma linguistica è *qualcosa*[37], "… all'udire il termine male si pensa a qualcosa che paventiamo e cerchiamo di evitare"[38]

Lo studioso Campbel, per spiegare l'itinerario di Anselmo, ritorna al libro *De grammatico,* dove scopre che per il nostro autore le parole significano realtà[39]. In quest'opera, riferendosi alle *Categorie* di Aristotele, afferma che l'intento principale di tale scritto aristotelico è quello di dimostrare che ogni nome o parola significa qualcosa tra le realtà comprese nelle categorie, che a loro volta comprendono tutti i tipi di essere, poiché tutto ciò che è, o è sostanza, o è qualità, o è quantità, o è un'altra delle categorie. E proprio perché le *voces* significano *res,* Aristotele, pur non proponendosi di discutere in quel libro che cosa siano le *singole res*, né di quali realtà siano appellative le singole *voces,* ma di quali realtà siano significative, dovette parlare necessariamente di cosa fossero le *res*, nel momento in cui volle dire che cosa fosse ciò che le *voces* significano. Così anche il male significa qualcosa.

Palmeri dichiara che per Anselmo è chiaro che Aristotele, quando scrisse che i termini considerati in se stessi, senza connessione con altri con cui formano un enunciato, significano o la sostanza, o la qualità o un'altra delle categorie, intendeva riferirsi al significato con cui le parole significano *per sé,* cioè in modo diretto, ciò che è loro essenziale, con il quale significano sempre qualcosa che è compreso tra ciò che è. Lo stesso Palmeri mette in evidenza che il significato proprio, dire *per sé* di un nome è quello da esso connotato e, pur differendo dal significato *per aliud*, che è indiretto e si riferisce alla cosa denotandola, è comunque il significato di qualcosa che è, secondo uno dei modi di essere espressi

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36 Cfr. Desmond Paul HENRY, *Saint Anselmo and Nothingness,* Philosophical Quarterly, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 15 (1965), 243–246.

37 Cfr. ANSELMO D'AOSTA, *La caduta del diavolo,* 162–163.

38 "Rursus, si audito nomine mali intelligimus aliquid quod horremus et vitandum censemus". Anselmo D'Aosta, *Lettere Vol I*, ed. I. Biffi–C. Marabelli, 310–311, 312.

39 Cfr. Richard CAMPBEL, *Anselm's Background Metaphysics*, The Scottish Journal of Theology 33 (1980), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 317-145, 333.

dalle categorie, e non può significare ciò che non è compreso in esse, perché non significa ciò che non è[40].

Sciuto osserva che in un altro libro di Anselmo, nel *Monologion* il nostro autore esprime lo stesso pensiero quando afferma che "ogni parola è parola di qualche cosa"[41] e che, se non fosse mai esistita nessuna creatura, non ci sarebbe mai stata una parola che la esprimesse e la significasse[378], rimarcando la necessaria relazione che lega il dire all'essere e la capacità e la funzione dell'essere parola alla sua capacità di significare realtà. Così come un *nome* deve avere un significato e deve significare in qualche modo la realtà, reciprocamente non può esserci *verbum* di ciò che né fu, né è, né sarà[42], e ciò che né fu, né è, né sarà non può essere significato, perché non è *aliquid* rispetto a cui il *nome* possa esercitare la sua funzione. Questo pensiero lo troviamo anche in Agostino. Del resto per Anselmo le parole, intese come segni sensibili sono del tutto subordinate e dipendenti dalle parole intese come contenuto di pensiero e queste ultime, a loro volta, dipendono dall'essenza delle cose, che è in Dio. In ogni caso, quindi, le parole possiedono senso soltanto in quanto sono parole di cose, cioè soltanto in quanto si riferiscono a qualcosa di reale.

A proposito del male Anselmo, nel capitolo decimo del libro *De casu diaboli*, afferma che "certamente se la parola *male* è un nome ha un significato. E se ha un significato, significa"[43]. Questo è il primo passo nella spiegazione di Anselmo che il male è *qualcosa*. Subito dopo, nel capitolo seguente, il nostro autore afferma chiaramente che il nome *nulla*, e con questo anche il nome *male*, "è un nome"[44].

Dopo queste spiegazioni e analisi, se mettiamo al posto di *nome* il nome *male,* possiamo vedere che questo deve significare qualcosa. Anselmo, partendo da Agostino e attraverso Aristotele, mostra con la grammatica e con i concetti della filosofia del linguaggio, che il male, cioè la parola *male* significa qualcosa e per questo deve esistere. Il nome *male* significa qualcosa ma soltanto secondo la forma del linguaggio, come abbiamo visto.

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40 Cfr. Pietro PALMERI, *Voluntas e rectitudo nella riflessione etico-filosofica di Anslemo d'Aosta*, Palermo: Officina di studi medievali, 2009, 127-128.

41 ANSELMO D'AOSTA, *Monologio e Proslogio*, trad. Italo Sciuto, Milano: Bompiani,2009, 137.

42 Cfr. ANSELMO D'AOSTA, *Monologio e Proslogio*, 139.

43 ANSELMO D'AOSTA, *La caduta del diavolo,* 87.

44 S. ANSELMI CANTUARIENSIS ARCHIEPISCOPI, *Opera Omnia Vol.I.,* 248, 16–17. "… nomen est.", trad. ANSELMO D'AOSTA, *La caduta del diavolo,* 89.

Con questa spiegazione Anselmo ammette che il male è *qualcosa* ma solo secondo la forma del linguaggio.

Il male come *non-qualcosa*

Detto questo, il nostro autore presenta il *male* come non-*qualcosa*. Questo indica che si deve interamente escludere il concetto di ogni cosa che sia qualcosa e che non si deve comunque ammettere alcuna cosa, né in assoluto né ciò che sia qualcosa. Ma, siccome l'esclusione di qualche cosa non può indicarsi in altro modo se non designando la cosa stessa la cui esclusione si vuole indicare, inevitabilmente l'espressione *non-qualcosa*, proprio eliminando ciò che è qualcosa, finisce con l'indicare qualcosa. Siccome, poi, togliendo di mezzo tutto ciò che è qualcosa, essa non indica un'essenza, la cui esistenza debba essere in certo modo riconosciuta dalla capacità intellettiva di chi ascolta, l'espressione non-qualcosa non indica cosa alcuna né ciò che sia qualcosa[45].

Naturalmente non possono mancare gli esempi come *cecità*, *temere*. Con tutti questi Anselmo mostra come il male è *qualcosa* solo secondo la forma del linguaggio, ma secondo la realtà è *niente,* cioè assenza del bene. "Il male non è altro che *non-bene*, o assenza di bene, dove deve o conviene esservi il bene"[46].

Italo Sciuto sottolinea che *non-qualcosa* stabilisce, attraverso il suo significato, che si deve rimuovere completamente dall'intelletto ogni cosa e tutto ciò che è qualcosa e non si deve trattenere assolutamente nell'intelletto alcuna cosa o ciò che è davvero qualcosa. "Nulla, peraltro, più evidente del fatto che, al solo proferirla, tal espressione, cioè non-qualcosa, indica che si deve intieramente escludere il concetto di ogni cosa e di ogni cosa che sia qualcosa, e che non si deve comunque ammettere alcuna cosa, né in assoluto, ciò che sia qualcosa. Ma, siccome l'esclusione di qualche cosa non può indicarsi in altro modo se non designando la cosa stessa la cui esclusione si vuole indicare, inevitabilmente l'espressione non-qualcosa, proprio eliminando ciò che è qualcosa, finisce con l'indicare qualcosa. … Dunque, per tali opposte ragioni, tale espressione non-qualcosa indica, sino a un certo segno, una cosa e qualcosa, mentre non indica affatto una cosa o qualcosa."[47]

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45 Cfr. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 314-317.

46 "Et malum non est aliud quam non-bonum, aut absentia boni ubi debet aut expedit esse bonum.". Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 317.

47 "Nihil quoque hoc aperitus quam quod haec vox, scilicet non-aliquid, omnem rem penitus et omne quod est aliud intellectu removendum, nec omnio ullm rem aut penitus quod

Analizzando il concetto *non-qualcosa* possiamo presentarlo insieme con Anselmo in due modi: il primo modo è che presentiamo il *non-qualcosa* come un nome e il secondo modo è di presentare il nome *non-qualcosa* che nega una cosa o una realtà.

Nel primo modo dopo le regole sopra viste, cioè la filosofia del linguaggio di Aristotele e di Agostino, possiamo dire che il *non-qualcosa* è un nome[48] ed in qualche modo significa una realtà e qualcosa[49]. Lo stesso Sciuto sottolinea che possiamo dire che significa qualcosa nel senso che si deve rimuovere completamente dall'intelletto ogni cosa, ma poiché la rimozione di un qualche cosa non può essere mostrata in alcun modo se non mostrando ciò di cui si mostra la rimozione, così significa qualcosa[50]. Così possiamo dire che se il male è un *non-qualcosa*, il *nome* significa qualcosa.

Invece, nel secondo modo di presentare, la parola *non-qualcosa* non significa niente, ossia non significa una realtà. Spiegando in questo modo la parola *cecità,* vediamo che qui la parola *non-qualcosa* significa niente, perché la *cecità* è una mancanza, un niente[390]. Il male così diventa un niente, cioè una mancanza dovuta.

Lo studioso Giacobbe Elia sottolinea in che modo Anselmo mostri che *nihil* e *malum* hanno lo stesso significato di *non-aliquid* e che *non-aliquid* è una *vox* che, con il suo significato, ha l'effetto di escludere dall'intelletto assolutamente qualsiasi realtà e tutto ciò che può essere pensato come *qualcosa*. Dire *non-qualcosa* significa dover rimuovere dall'intelletto ogni *res* e qualsiasi *aliquid*. Per fare questo, però, bisogna per forza significare ciò che s'intende escludere, perché per negare qualcosa, si deve intendere ciò che viene negato e, quindi, tale qualcosa deve essere significato in modo comprensibile. Nel caso della negazione più universale, che è data dall'espressione *non-qualcosa*, per poter escludere tutto ciò che è *qualcosa,* si deve capire che cosa si intende con il termine *qualcosa,* e quindi questo termine deve essere significato. Ma cercare il significato di ogni

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aliquid sit ponendum, sua prolatione significat. Sed quoniam remotio alicuius rei significari nullatenus potest nisi cum significatione eius ipsius cuius significatur remotio: necesse est ut haec vos que est non-aliquid, destruendo id quod est aliquid significet aliquid. … Igitur haec vox non-aliquid his diversis rationibus aliquatenus significant rem et aliquid, et nullatenus significant rem aut aliqiud". Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 314.

48 Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 314.

49 ANSELMO D'AOSTA, *La caduta del diavolo,* 93.

50 Cfr. Italo SCIUTO, «Il libero arbitrio nel pensiero medievale», in *La libertà del bene*, ed. C. Vigna, Milano 1998, 132–135.

qualcosa, vuol dire fare in modo che, nell'intelletto di chi intende tale esclusione non sia presente nessuna *essentia:* in questo modo l'espressione *non-qualcosa* riesce a significare nessuna realtà, o cosa, o ente, ovvero niente di ciò che sia qualcosa[51].

Riassumendo, possiamo vedere che la parola *non-qualcosa* in un modo significa una realtà e qualcosa e, in un altro modo non significa una realtà o qualcosa[52].

Lo studioso Sciuto per evidenziare questo duplice senso del *non-qualcosa* usa due concetti presi dal *Monologion*. Questi concetti sono il *sensus* e *l'intellectus*. Il *sensus* dovrebbe indicare il modo ingenuamente realistico d'intendere il linguaggio, un modo irriflessivo d'intendere la sua portata ontologica. L'*intellectus* anselmiano, invece, presenta l'obiezione a livello semantico. (L'*intellectus,* perciò, si pone ad un livello superiore nei confronti del *sensus*).

In sintesi possiamo dire che, secondo il *sensus*, il male, che è *non-qualcosa*, significa che è niente, cioè inesistente. Ma, secondo l'*intellectus*, il male, come *non-qualcosa*, è *qualcosa*. Secondo il *sensus*, il male può essere una mancanza, una cosa non esistente, così non significa una realtà, ma secondo l'*intellectus* anche il male e anche il concetto *nonqualcosa* significano *qualcosa,* cioè parliamo di una cosa che è *non-qualcosa* un'altra cosa rispetto al qualcosa reale di prima. Così il male è *non-qualcosa* perché non significa niente, ma, d'altra parte è *nonqualcosa,* cioè qualcosa. Con questa spiegazione Anselmo non chiarisce il concetto di male, ma piuttosto crea una confusione concettuale – linguistica e perciò per, rischiarare il sistema delle idee, introduce il concetto *quasi-qualcosa*.

Con Italo Sciuto possiamo affermare che si potrebbe infatti sottoporre al trattamento del *sensus* e dell'*intellectus* la stessa espressione *non-aliquid*, assunta da Anselmo come significato intellettuale della parola *nihil*. Si avrebbe quindi un ribaltamento della posizione, perché, secondo il suo *sensus,* il *non-aliquid* è esclusivo di *aliquid*, ma secondo il suo *intellectus* il concetto di *non-aliquid*, in quanto concetto pensabile o *ens rationis*, è un *aliquid*. Bisognerebbe perciò affermare, secondo quest'ultimo significato, che prima di Dio non vi sarebbe

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51 Cfr. Giacobbe ELIA, *Introduzione*, in Anselmo D'Aosta, *La caduta del diavolo*, 11–17.

52 Questa differenza tra i significati di *non-qualcosa* diventa interessante sul piano della creazione, cioè come intendere l'*ex nihilo*. Lo studioso Italo Sciuto partendo da Agostino attraverso le opere di Anselmo, come il *Monologion, De casu diaboli*, spiega che l'*ex nihilo* significa veramente nulla. Cfr. Italo, SCIUTO, *La semantica del nulla in Anselmo d'Aosta,* Medioevo, XV (1989), Padova: Università di Padova, 42–45.

neppure il *non-aliquid*. In realtà è possibile, in base alla stessa definizione anselmiana, parlare di *nihil* senza implicare *aliquid*, ed è perciò lo statuto ontologico di quest'ultimo che andrebbe chiarito. Il contesto in cui si muove Anselmo non esige, però, questa elevazione metafisica, essendogli sufficiente pensare il nulla come negazione[53].

Il male come *quasi-qualcosa*

Il concetto *quasi-qualcosa* appare soltanto una volta e collega i concetti *qualcosa* e *non-qualcosa*. Questo termine viene tradotto nella lettera in italiano con la parola *all'incirca qualcosa*, ma in latino scrive *quasi aliquid*.[54]

Anselmo ragiona così: "Ora, se in base a questo ragionamento le voci *male* e *niente* sono davvero espressione di qualcosa, né è tuttavia il male o il niente ciò che così vien significato, v'è però un altro ragionamento in base al quale essi significano qualcosa ed è qualcosa ciò che vien significato; non però davvero qualcosa, ma all'incirca qualcosa"[55].

Luigi Gentile evidenza che per il nostro autore il male e il bene non sono due nature appartenenti ad uno stesso genere. Il male si oppone al bene, che è ente, perciò, non può essere un ente, ma solo *qualcosa* che si oppone all'ente, di qui la definizione di male come privazione del bene. Privazione non assoluta, perché in questo caso si dovrebbe concludere che il male sia niente, bensì relativa, nel senso che è privazione di una parte di bene in un ente: così, ad esempio la cecità è privazione del bene della vista in un uomo e come tale si trova realmente in lui. Il male, dunque, più che un qualcosa è da considerare un *quasi-qualcosa*. Così, viene ulteriormente ribadito che il male non è già una negazione, ma una privazione, cioè mancanza di una perfezione connaturale e dovuta[56].

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53 Cfr. I. SCIUTO, *La semantica del nulla in Anselmo d'Aosta,* 48–49.

54 Cfr. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 314–315.

55 S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, *Opera omnia, Vol. III,* Lettera 97, 227, 66–68. "Sed cum hac ratione malum et nihil vere significent aliquid, et tamen quod sic significantur non est malum vel nihil, est tamen et alia ratio qua significant aliquid et quod significatur est aliquid; sed non vere aliquid, sed quasi-aliquid.", trad. Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 315.

56 Cfr. L. GENTILE, , *Il problema del male in Anselmo d'Aosta*, in ed. Giuseppe Fidelibus, *Agostino non è (il) male,* Chieti: Edicola, 1998, 54.

Italo Sciuto spiega che per capire il concetto *quasi-qualcosa* dobbiamo ritornare al termine *qualcosa.* Egli mostra che possiamo intendere il termine *qualcosa* in quattro modi:

Il primo modo è proprio quello del nome *qualcosa* si dice di ciò che si esprime con un nome, si concepisce con la mente ed esiste nella realtà. Alla semplificata semiologia agostiniana che si polarizza nel rapporto *signum-res,* Anselmo sembra voler sostituire una tripartizione di tipo stoico tra nome, concetto e realtà che si può dire anche in termini di significante, significato e cosa.

Il secondo modo si ha quando manca la cosa, come il termine *chimera* che ha solo il nome e il concetto.

Il terzo significato è quando rimane il solo nome o significante.

Il quarto significato è quando manca anche il nome.

Possiamo dire che la realtà che viene espressa nel secondo, terzo e quarto modo va appunto attribuita alla definizione di *quasi-qualcosa.*

Il male è implicato nel terzo e quarto significato. Nel terzo significato gli esempi sono ingiustizia e nulla. Per chiarire come si possa dare questo mero significante, Anselmo introduce l'interessante distinzione tra *intellectus* e *in intellectu,* che potremmo tradurre con *senso* e *significato.* Con questa distinzione tra *intellectus* e *in intellectu* il nostro autore vuole chiarire il significato *removendo.*

Il quarto modo mostra come si possa intendere il nome *qualcosa* nel suo significato massimamente deontologizzato, senza con questo ridurlo ad uno zero semantico impensabile e indicibile. Oltre a mancare la realtà e il concetto, qui viene meno lo stesso nome. Ciò accade quando si parla del *non essere* nella proposizione. Quando si dice, per esempio che il *non essere* del sole sulla terra fa il non essere del giorno, si tratta grammaticalmente il non essere come fosse un *qualcosa,* perché i due stati, di fatto, sono posti logicamente in relazione causale, e causa ed effetto sono certamente *qualcosa.* Non diversamente accade quando si viene a dire che *è* il *non essere,* ad esempio affermando, a proposito di qualcuno che nega che qualcosa sia, che la cosa *è* come egli dice, mentre per parlare propriamente si dovrebbe dire che *non è* così come egli dice che *non è*. Si potrebbe dire che, tolto anche il nome, al termine *qualcosa* rimane il suo significato operativo, il suo *uso.* Ciò vuol dire che non si può porre, a proposito del nulla, una questione del *quod sit,* indipendentemente dalla determinazione del *come funziona.* Limitatamente a questo problema forse si può dire che per Anselmo non è estranea l'idea che, almeno per certi aspetti, il significato si trova nell'uso. Benché solo il primo sia il modo proprio di usare il nome *qualcosa*, vi è

piena legittimità nell'usare un'espressione apparentemente ambigua come *quasi qualcosa*, per indicare quei nomi ai quali non può essere attribuita un'esistenza *in re* ma che hanno ugualmente, a diverso livello, un significato[57].

Anselmo sviluppa la sua teoria partendo dal punto che *nihil* significa qualcosa e nulla allo stesso tempo. "Dunque, per tali opposte regioni, tale espressione non-qualcosa indica sino a un certo segno una cosa e qualcosa, mentre non indica affatto una cosa o qualcosa."[58]

Lo studioso Sciuto afferma che in questo caso dobbiamo osservare che cosa è la parola *significat*. La *significationis consideratio* che Anselmo sviluppa si riferisce evidentemente, senza citarla, alla teoria semantica esposta nel *De grammatico,* e nel *De veritate,* che si occupano del problema della *significatio* in riferimento, rispettivamente, ai termini ed alla proposizione. In entrambi i casi c'è un duplice concetto di significato, uno *per sé* ed uno *per aliud*. Per i termini si tratta della *significatio* e della *appellatio*, per le proposizioni di due tipi di *rectitudo*, una generica ed una vera. La distinzione tra le due coppie non sono sempre molto chiare, ma si può dire che la differenza vada intesa come un approfondimento del rapporto tra *sensus* e *intellectus* di cui si parla nel capitolo XIX del *Monologion*. Va intesa cioè come differenza tra due livelli di significazione: uno che si ha quando l'enunciato afferma ciò per cui è fatto, ciò che deve, ed uno di fatto, in cui il significato si determina secondo le possibilità grammaticali dell'enunciato. Anselmo sfrutta questa distinzione di fondo per risolvere l'aporia del nulla[59].

Nella Lettera 97 Anselmo ragiona così: "Ora. se in base a questo ragionamento le voci *male* e *niente* sono davvero espressione di qualcosa, né è tuttavia il male o il niente ciò che così vien significato, v'è però un altro ragionamento in base al quale essi significano qualcosa ed è qualcosa ciò che vien significato; non però davvero qualcosa, ma all'incirca qualcosa"[60] SI osserva subito che nella traduzione italiana viene collocata la parola *all'incirca qualcosa* ma nel testo latino è *quasi aliquid*.

Anselmo pensa i concetti di nulla e male secondo la categoria di qualità piuttosto che secondo la modalità, e sembra sottolineare quasi una certa, per così dire,

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57 Cfr. I. SCIUTO, «La semantica del nulla in Anselmo d'Aosta», 62–64.

58 "Igitur haec vox non-aliquid his diversis rationibus aliquatenus significant rem et aliquid, et nullatenus significant rem aut aliqiud" Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 314.

59 Cfr. SCIUTO, «La semantica del nulla in Anselmo d'Aosta», 42–44.

60 "Sed cum hac ratione malum et nihil vere significent aliquid, et tamen quod sic significatur non est malum vel nihli, est tamen et alia ratio qua significant aliquid et quod significatur est aliquid; sed nonvere aliquid, sed quasi aliquid" Anselmo d'Aosta, *Lettere 1,* 314.

fecondità ontologica. Il pensiero, infatti, seguendone le variazioni semantiche, sembra sollecitato a formulare ulteriori determinazioni di realtà, in modo più ricco e articolato rispetto alla rigida opposizione tra ciò che *è* e ciò che *non è*, tra l'essere e il nulla in senso parmenideo.

Con lo studioso Elia possiamo dire che l'analisi logica del nulla condotta da Anselmo segue l'idea che l'opposizione tra grammatica e logica, tra uso proprio e improprio del linguaggio non va necessariamente intesa nel senso dalla sostituzione[61]. L'attitudine di Anselmo si caratterizza piuttosto per il tentativo di elevare, più che abbandonare, l'uso improprio verso quello proprio, rendendolo così valido. In senso più generale si può osservare che, storicamente, la riflessione anselmiana realizza in modo significativo il progetto precedentemente solo abbozzato, di fare del nulla un oggetto di pensiero e di linguaggio. Essa lo realizza senza modificare, nella sostanza, il principio realistico della corrispondenza tra pensiero, linguaggio e realtà, senza tuttavia rinunciare alla desostanzializzazione del nulla, necessariamente implicata dal principio di creazione. La definizione del nulla come *quasi qualcosa* che *significat removendo* vorrebbe quindi conferire al concetto del nulla una legittimazione oggettiva sul piano logico, linguistico, pur senza accordagli una verità ontologica.

Il concetto *quasi-qualcosa* con il quale Anselmo cerca di spiegare il male rimane soltanto nella forma linguistica. è il concetto con il quale Anselmo elimina la tensione creata dal concetto di male come *qualcosa* e come *non qualcosa*. Il maestro spiega che abbiamo orrore quando sentiamo il nome *male* perché pensiamo alla sofferenza, al dolore (che non possiamo negare che siano qualcosa), ma sappiamo che queste sono mancanze, mancanze di cose dovute, come per esempio la cecità è la mancanza della vista là dove dovrebbe esserci la vista.

Riassumendo, il significato del concetto di *quasi-qualcosa* comunica che il male è qualcosa solo sul piano logico-linguistico, ma senza avere una verità ontologica ed è dipendente dalla volontà e dal libero arbitrio.

Conclusione

L'epistolario di Anselmo dimostra la ricchezza intellettuale e spirituale del nostro autore, che anche oggi offre al lettore una visione vasta sulla vita e la capacità e la libertà di porsi e di ragionare sulle domante profonde della vita. Le

[61] Cfr. G., ELIA, Introduzione, 19.

lettere del nostro autore nel postmoderno e nell'epoca della tecnica possono essere considerate come un insieme di messaggi o di SMS.

Il male, come una domanda fondamentale nella vita umana, viene presentata nella Lettera 97 in un modo originale. L'originalità sta nell'idea di definire il male come *quasi aliquid*. Se intendiamo questo concetto sul piano ontologico possiamo pensare che il male esiste e forse è coeterno con il bene che noi chiamiamo Dio. Per Anselmo tutto rimane sul livello logico-linguistico, ma a noi oggi dà a pensare.

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STUDIA UBB THEOL. CATH. LAT., LXVIII, 2, 2023, P. 132–133

NAGY KORNÉL, *LEMBERGBEN KEZDŐDÖTT. AZ ÖRMÉNYKATOLIKUS EGYHÁZ SZÜLETÉSE [IT BEGUN IN LEMBERG. THE BEGINNING OF THE ARMENIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH]* NYÍREGYHÁZA: SZENT ATANÁZ GÖRÖGKATOLIKUS HITTUDOMÁNYI FŐISKOLA, 2020. 195 PP., ISBN 978-615-6201-03-4.

Szabolcs András[1]

Kornél Nagy is a Senior Research Fellow of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a renowned researcher of European Armenians and the Armenian Catholic Church in Transylvania. In this work, he examines when the establishment of the European Armenian Catholic Church can be dated on the basis of ecclesiastical and archival sources. The research focuses on the Armenian community of Lemberg and its gradual rapprochement with the Catholic Church.

In order to present the research findings, Nagy first presents the available sources, placing them in their historical context. Of particular importance are the Vatican archival sources, which provide a realistic picture of the demographic-religious relations in 17th-century Central-Eastern Europe, the internal divisions of the European Armenian community of the time, and its relations with the motherland under Turkish occupation.

To help the reader understand the settlement and Catholicization of the Armenians in Eastern Europe, the author briefly outlines the history of the first Christian nation, highlighting that even before the Turkish conquest, there was tension between Constantinople and the Armenians, not only for religious but also for ethno-social reasons. The rapprochement between the Armenians and the Catholic Church began in the first millennium, and then fluctuated in the following centuries. The author also points out that it was not only external invasions (Byzantines, Persians, Turks) that caused the westward migration of Armenians, but also internal divisions that accelerated the process.

The author then describes in detail the Armenian community of Lemberg before the Union. The city, now part of Ukraine, then part of the Polish principality, was a meeting point for different nationalities and religions, while at the same time

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Armenians engaged in trade were attracted by the city's vibrant economic life, where north-south and east-west trade routes met. Although the local population was not overwhelmingly welcoming to the Armenians, the princes provided them with the right legal conditions and trade benefits, and the Armenians contributed to the further development of Lviv. Religiously, they were able to preserve their Miaphysite Christianity, and ecclesiastically they remained under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Echmiadzin.

The author goes into detail about the ecclesiastical union of Archbishop Nikol Torosowitz in 1630-1635, showing the intertwining of personal and political interests, accompanied by simony and corruption, so that this attempt at unification failed in 1652, and therefore, according to Kornél Nagy, we cannot yet speak of the actual establishment of the Armenian Catholic Church. The next chapter reveals that Propaganda Fide took the cause of Armenian union into its own hands, which the author links to the founding of the Armenian College of Lemberg in 1663, which was intended to train a new Armenian Catholic clergy. After Torosowitz's death, the Holy See appointed Vardan Hunanean as Armenian Catholic bishop, but he moved to Armenia, and Deodatus Nersesowitz became the new candidate, appointed bishop in 1684. However, Hunanean became the Armenian Catholic Archbishop of Lemberg when he returned to the city.

In the following chapters, Kornél Nagy describes the Armenians from Moldavia and Transylvania, who were closely connected to the Lemberg centre. While the Moldovans adhered to the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Transylvanian adhered to the Union. An important role in this process was played by Oxendio Virziresco, who had studied in Italy and was commissioned by Propaganda Fide. The Transylvanian mission was a success, and the Armenians who settled there united with Rome under the authority of the Archbishop of Lemberg.

To sum up, Kornél Nagy concludes that the Armenian-Catholic union was not a specific event, but a process that took place in Lemberg. This city, with its diversity, was a meeting point for Eastern and Western Christianity, but also had a religious and commercial link with the Armenian homeland and Rome, thus providing the right conditions for the union to spread from there to other Armenian communities in Europe. Kornél Nagy's book is a great read both from a scholarly point of view and for the reader interested in the past, as it presents historical events in a thoroughly documented yet readable style. The author manages to place the subject of the Armenian Union in an appropriate historical-cultural context, thus enabling the reader to understand the process of the church events.