



THE REASONS (LOGOI) OF CREATION, PREMISES OF THE FULFILMENT OF GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

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ABSTRACT

The reasons (logoi) of creation, premises for the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. In order for the world to move towards the purpose for which it was created and to share in God's grace, it must have been created with this capacity and predisposition. It must be capable of receiving the grace that sanctifies it and of containing certain potencies that are actualized in the sense intended by the Creator. These potencies have been much spoken of in Orthodox theology, and are known as the rations (logoi) of creatures.

Keywords: *reason; creation; deification; priesthood; man;*

INTRODUCTION

We know through revelation that the world is created by God through His will, wisdom and power. It does not emanate from God and is not part of Him, but is brought into existence out of nothing. This clear distinction between creation and Creator is of crucial importance, showing us that without a relationship to God that transcends creation, the latter is meaningless, locked in a cyclicity that leads nowhere. Moreover, without its Creator the world returns to the non-being from which it was raised, since it is not eternal but dependent on God.

Another very important point is that since it has an intelligent Creator who brought it into existence, there must be a precise reason and purpose to it, which also gives the creation a meaning and purpose that it must reach.¹

The movement towards this goal, which is the perfect development of the world in the direction envisaged by the Creator from the beginning, would not be possible, however, if creation had not been provided with the necessary means. More precisely, it must have in its constitution the powers that must be actualized in order to achieve perfection. At the same time, since we are talking about a personal Creator, there is also a need for an alter-ego of His, who represents the impersonal world and puts it in the fullest connection with Himself, for what can be this finality to which creation must attain, if not the sharing of the supreme good which is found only in communion with God.

1. REASON FOR CREATION

We see that the world, with its every element, has a certain order and nothing exists without directly or indirectly influencing something else. It is a rational composition in which any deviation of its components has visible consequences. This fact leads us to believe that it

¹ Jean-Claude LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului la Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul (The deification of man in Saint Maxim the Confessor)*, trad. Marinela BOJIN, Ed. Basilica, București, 2019, pp. 103–105.



does not originate in an accidental act.² It cannot be a matter of chance, but clearly there is an intelligent Creator, a supreme Reason, which is the origin of the reason of each thing and the interdependence of all.³

At the same time, this perfect, all-knowing and all-powerful Creator, who is none other than God, cannot be compelled by anything or anyone outside to create the world, as this would be contrary to His omnipotence. At the same time, God could not be provoked by any internal necessity to create the world (Acts 17:25), nor could there be any kind of necessity in God, since necessity contradicts His aseity and perfection, since He is the only Being in Himself (Jas. 3:14; Acts 5:26). God is the full Existence of happiness, power, glory. No one can add anything and no one can push Him to do anything. Therefore, creation is a voluntary, free and unnecessary act of God.⁴

Therefore, if the world did not come into being by accident, but was rationally created by God⁵ and at the same time it was not created out of any necessity of His, it means that the reason for creation can only be to give Him something, to show His goodness and love outwardly.

"Therefore, this God-World, wisdom, power, He also built the human nature, not that He was compelled to do so by anything, but He brought man into the world, only and only from an outpouring of His love. And this, because His light was not to remain hidden, His greatness undivulged and His goodness unrequited, nor any other attributes which we see in the divine nature, could not remain inactive, so that no one could partake of them or feast on them."⁶

Out of kindness, He willed that there should be creatures to share His love. We can thus say that love and goodness are the deepest motivation of creation.⁷

"For the Good and Precious God was not content with the contemplation of Himself, but, in His bountiful goodness, willed that beings might appear who could enjoy His benefits and partake of His goodness. Therefore He brought into being from non-being all things seen and unseen, and man, who is made up of things seen and unseen, as he thinks, creates; and thought becomes work, being made real by the Word and perfected by the Spirit."⁸

Therefore, if God's reason for creating the world is goodness and love, then there must be a well-defined purpose that is also linked to these qualities of the Creator.

² Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. I, E.I.B.M.O., București, 2010, pp. 10–11.

³ Adrian LEMENI, *Sensul eshatologic al creației (The eschatological sense of creation)*, Ed. ASAB, București, 2007, p. 124.

⁴ Pr. Prof. Dr. D. STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. I, p. 352.

⁵ Pr. Prof. Vasile RĂDUCĂ, „Grija Bisericii față de mediul ambiant”(„The Church's concern for the environment”), în *Studii Teologice*, nr. 3/1990, p. 112.

⁶ SFÂNTUL GRIGORE DE NYSSA, *Oratio catehetica magna*, P.G. 45, 21 BC [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL GRIGORIE DE NYSSA, *Marele cuvânt catehetic sau despre învățământul religios (The great catechetical word or on religious education)*, în: *Scrieri (II)*, PSB 30, trad. Pr. Prof. Dr. Teodor Bodogae, E.I.B.M.B.O.R., Bucuresti, 1998, p. 294.].

⁷ SFÂNTUL IUSTIN POPOVICI, *Dogmatica Bisericii Ortodoxe (Dogmatics of the Orthodox Church)*, vol. I, trad. Diac. Zarko MARKOVSKI, Ed. Doxologia, Iași, 2016, p. 315; Pr. Prof. Dr. D. STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. I, p. 352.

⁸ SFÂNTUL IOAN DAMASCHIN, *Expositio fidei orthodoxae*, II, 2, PG 94, 864C [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL IOAN DAMASCHIN, *Dogmatica (Dogmatics)*, II, 2, trad. pr. Dumitru Fecioru, Apologeticum, București, 2001, p. 37.



2. THE PURPOSE FOR CREATION

As I said, bringing the world into existence neither adds to nor subtracts from God. Nor, however, can it be said that the world is something superfluous. God does not create anything that does not have a precise purpose and destination. Everything that is created has a well-founded reason:⁹ "The Lord hath made all things every man for his own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. 16:4).

The world has not only a transient value for the knowledge of God, but its reasons persist in the eschaton.¹⁰ In the perspective of eternity, "the rays of creatures, far from becoming superfluous, after the revealed contemplation of God will show us the fruitfulness of divine Reason and will be an exemplification of it, just as the rays of the sun are a manifestation and an exemplification of His light. In other words, when we contemplate God revealed, we will contemplate the reason of things in Himself, and not in things as now."¹¹

Holy Scripture makes it clear what the purpose of all creation is: "In Him all things were made" (Col. 1:16; Eph. 3:9; Heb. 1:2), "for whom are all things" (Heb. 2:10), "He is the Omega" (Rev. 1:8), the goal of all things is that "God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).¹² Everything was made for God (Rom. 11:36; Heb. 2:10) and can find its ultimate meaning only in Him. So the purpose of creation is in God. If everything is created out of His goodness and love, it tends to share more and more in this goodness and love, it tends towards sharing in Him:

"And as goodness turns all to itself and is the proper gatherer of the shared as the beginning and unifying deity, and all desire after it as the beginner, the sustainer, the goal, so goodness is (as Scripture says) that from which all have taken existence and are, as products of the perfect cause and in which all are maintained, guarded and held as in an all-embracing bosom and to which all turn as to the proper end of each. According to him all are desired, the knowing and rational in a knowing way, the sensing in a sensing way, the senseless by innate movement of vital desire, and the lifeless and simply existing, only by the capacity of the fraternal sharing."¹³

⁹ SILVESTRU-EPISCOP DE CANEV, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. IV, trad. ARHIM. GHERASIM MIRON, Ed. Credința Strămoșească, București, 2001, pp. 100–102.

¹⁰ Polycarp SHERWOOD, *St. Maximus the confessor: The ascetic life. The four centuries on charity*, Longmans, Green and Co, Londra, 1955, pp. 54–55.

¹¹ Pr. Prof. Dr. D. STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Ascetică și Mistică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Ascetic and Mystical Theology)*, Ed. Basilica, București, 2019, pp. 25–26.

¹² SFÂNTUL IUSTIN POPOVICI, *Dogmatica Bisericii Ortodoxe (Dogmatics of the Orthodox Church)*, vol. I, pp. 316–317.

¹³ SFANTUL DIONISIE AREOPAGITUL, *De Divinis Nominibus*, IV, 4, PG 3, 700 [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL DIONISIE AREOPAGITUL, *Despre Numinile Dumnezeiești (About Divine Names)*, în: *Opere complete*, trad. PR. PROF. DR. DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, Ed. Paideia, București, 1996, p. 147]. „Să înaintăm deci cu cuvântul la bunătatea însăși pe care teologii (autorii Scripturii) o atribuie prin excelență dumnezeirii mai presus de dumnezeire și o deosebesc de toate, cum socotesc, numind bunătate însăși existența dumnezeiască (obârșia dumnezeiască) care prin însuși faptul că e binele, ca bine ființial (prin ființă), întinde bunătatea la toate cele ce sunt. De fapt, precum soarele nostru, nu prin cugetare sau voință, ci prin însuși faptul că este, luminează toate care participă la lumina lui după rațiunea puterii lor, așa și binele mai presus de soare, prin însăși existența lui, ca arhetipul ridicat mai presus de chipul lui obscur, transmite tuturor, pe măsura lor, razele întregii bunătăți.” (“Let us therefore turn with the word to goodness itself, which the theologians (the authors of Scripture) attribute by excellence to deity above deity, and distinguish it from all, as they reckon, calling goodness itself divine existence (divine origin), which by the very fact that it is good, as the ultimate good (by being), extends goodness to all that is. In fact, just as our sun, not by thought or will, but by the very fact that it is, illuminates all who partake of its light according to the reason of their power, so the good above the sun, by its very existence, as the archetype raised above its obscure image, transmits to all, in their measure, the rays of all goodness”). SFANTUL DIONISIE



Specifically, God, being absolute Goodness and Love, wanted to manifest outwardly these attributes of His.¹⁴ Thus, He brought creation into existence as a reflection of His perfection (not as an emanation) to share His love and happiness.¹⁵ So God's eternal plan was this sharing of Himself¹⁶ of creation, or in other words of its deification.¹⁷

"All the creatures of God, contemplated by us by nature, with the help of proper knowledge and knowledge, reveal to us in a mysterious way the reasons according to which they were made, and reveal to us by them the purpose placed by God in each creature. In this sense it is also said: 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the work of his hands proclaims his strength' (Ps. 18:2). And eternal power and godliness is Providence, which holds things together and the work of deifying those held by it."¹⁸

"God, having created the prime reasons and the universal essences of things, still works to this day, not only sustaining them in existence, but also bringing into actuality, unfolding and constituting the given parts virtually into essences (...). Through this the grace that ennobles all will be revealed in full work. It is the work of which God Himself and the Word, Who became man for it says: "My Father is working until now, and I am working" (John. 5:17)."¹⁹

All creatures are created to share in the glory and love of God. All gravitate towards Him in this sense, manifesting their adherence in their own way. Inanimate things, though without self-consciousness, express in their own way, even by mere existence and beauty, the glory of God: Ps. 18:1-5; 49:6; 96:6. Facets possessing a rational soul express themselves by free will both in words and especially in deeds: Sirach 38:6; Mt. 6:10; 22:37; Gal. 4, 6; In. 17, 3; Acts 17, 28; Colos. 1, 10.²⁰ The latter, more than the others, have the special purpose

AREOPAGITUL, *De Divinis Nominibus*, IV, 1, coll. PG 3, 694BC [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL DIONISIE AREOPAGITUL, *Despre Numinile Dumnezeiești (About Divine Names)*, pp. 145–146].

¹⁴ „Căci Dumnezeu este bun, mai bine zis, izvorul a toată bunătatea. Iar Cel Bun nu pizmuiește pe nimeni. De aceea, nepizmuind existența nimănui, a făcut toate din cele ce nu sunt, prin Cuvântul Său, Domnul nostru Iisus Hristos. ("For God is good, or rather, the source of all goodness. And the Good One does not pity anyone. Therefore, not pitying the existence of any, he made all things that are not, through his Word, our Lord Jesus Christ.)" SFANTUL ATANASIE CEL MARE, *Oratio de Incarnatione Verbi*, I, 3, PG 25, 101AB [trad. rom. SFANTUL ATANASIE CEL MARE, *Despre întruparea Cuvântului (On the Incarnation of the Logos)*, I, 3, PSB 15, E.I.B.M.B.O.R., Bucuresti, 1987, p. 92.].

¹⁵ Numeroase pasaje scripturistice fac referință la crearea lumii din bunătatea și iubirea absolută a lui Dumnezeu și la menirea creației de a se împărtăși de acestea: (Numerous scriptural passages refer to the creation of the world out of God's absolute goodness and love and the creation's purpose to share in it:) Ps. 8,10; 35, 10; 39, 6, 9; 103, 24; 144, 9; Is. 40, 26; 49, 15; Dan. 3, 56; I Paralip. 16, 13; In. 2, 6; Tit 3, 4; I Tim. 2, 4; Apoc. 4, 11. SILVESTRU-EPISCOPI DE CANEV, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. IV, p. 102.

¹⁶ Nu poate fi vorba despre o contopire sau o identificare a creației cu Creatorul, ci ne referim la o împărtășire de harul lui Dumnezeu, nu de ființa Sa. (There can be no question of a merging or identification of creation with the Creator, but we refer to a sharing of God's grace, not His being.)

¹⁷ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Epistolae*, 24, coll. PG 91, 609C [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Epistole (Epistles)*, 24, PSB 81, E.I.B.M.B.O.R., Bucuresti, 1990, p. 163; Pr. Prof. Dr. D. STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. II, E.I.B.M.O., București, 2010, p. 337.

¹⁸ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 13, 293D-296C [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, *Filocalia* 3, trad. Pr. Prof. Dr. D. STĂNILOAE, Ed. Apologeticum, Bucuresti, 2005. 13, pp. 69–70.].

¹⁹ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 2, PG 90, 272AB [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, 2, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, pp. 44–45].

²⁰ SILVESTRU-EPISCOPI DE CANEV, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. IV, p. 104.



of moral and spiritual development.²¹ (Mt. 5, 48; II Cor. 3, 18; Efes. 1, 4; 2, 10.) by their perfection influencing the others.

"The world is, without doubt, intended for the glory of God the Father, whose act of creation it is in a special way, He being the beginningless Origin. It is the Holy Spirit who fulfils the counsel of creation, bringing the work of revelation begun through the Son, and so the world is a fundamental gift of love between the Father and the Son. This gift of the Holy Spirit, uniting the world with the Father and the Son, is the ultimate possibility of uniting creation with the Trinity."²²

"Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, as he purposed in himself before, to the fullness of time, that in Christ all things in heaven and on earth should be made one, all things in him" (Eph. 1:9-10).

So the reason for creation is the goodness of God who wants all creatures to share in the love of the innermost being according to their ability to receive it. Thus, the goal becomes clear, that of ever deeper communion with God, i.e. of deification.²³

3. LOGOS AND LOGOI

In order for the world to move towards the purpose for which it was created and to share God, it must have been created with this capacity and predisposition. It must be capable of receiving the grace that sanctifies it and of containing certain potencies that are actualized in the sense intended by the Creator. These potencies have been much spoken of in Orthodox theology, and are known as the rations (*logoi*) of creatures.

In the theology of St Maximus Confessor, the logos of a creature represents its reason for being, in a double sense: both the principle according to which it exists and the end it must reach. It is the intention according to which God created everything and, at the same time, the purpose for which it was created. In short, *logoi* are the embodiment of God's will in all created things.²⁴

The *logoi* (*logoi*) make each created being unique, giving it its own purpose and value in relation to God. Thus, there are *logoi* that place creatures in a certain species, in a certain genus, that give creatures certain qualities, etc.²⁵ These reasons are at the same time the principles by which God governs the relations between creatures and which ensure the cohesion and order of the whole cosmos.

The Logos of a creature is not only the creative intention according to which God will at a given moment put from potency into act a certain thing, that is, the model or archetype of the created, but it is also the finality to which creation is to attain. Nor is it merely the

²¹ SILVESTRU-EPISCOPI DE CANEV, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*, vol. IV, p. 105.

²² Hans Urs von BALTHASAR, *Création et Trinité* apud. ADRIAN LEMENI, *Sensul eschatologic al creației (The eschatological sense of creation)*, p. 119.

²³ Omul, în calitate de făptură rațională, poate răspunde iubirii Dumnezeuști, unindu-se tot mai intim cu Creatorul. Totodată, (omul) fiind în legătură cu restul creației, va trage după sine întreg cosmosul care se va împărtăși de îndumnezeirea persoanei umane. (Man, as a rational creature, can respond to God's love by uniting himself ever more intimately with the Creator. At the same time, (man) being in connection with the rest of creation, will draw the whole cosmos after him, which will share in the deification of the human person).

²⁴ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 64, PG 90, 709 [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, pp. 431–432].

²⁵ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua*, Io., 7, PG 91, 1077C [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua*, Io., 7, p. 80]; J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, p. 112.



indication of this finality and the principle which directs creation towards it, but it is the virtual fulfilment in God, the as yet unfulfilled perfection of creation.²⁶ By moving towards this fulfilment of the purpose for which it was created and achieving this purpose, creation is restored to the logos according to which it was created. The movement of the creature will coincide with God's plan, and the creature will be deified, in the sense that it will find its place in the logos existing in God, specifically designed for it.²⁷

"He who does not corrupt the reason (logos) of his being, pre-existent in God, becomes in God through mindfulness; he moves in God according to the reason (logos) of his good being, pre-existent in God, working through virtues, and lives in God according to the reason (logos) of his eternal being, pre-existent in God."²⁸

Therefore, we can say that the reasons of things converge in the Logos of God. He is both the principle of their existence and their finality. In Him these Logoi have their origin, existing there from all time.²⁹ However, it must be said that their existence in the Logos does not mean that the world existed before its creation. The presence of the world's reasons in God is only a virtuality of the world, a potential existence that comes into being only at the moment of creation. To do otherwise would be to accept the dualistic view that the matter from which the world was created is also eternal in the likeness of God.

At the same time, the fact that the reasons of the world are pre-existent in the Logos of God does not mean that they are identified with God. The Logos is totally transcendent in relation to them. St Maximus Confessor says that the reasons of creation were prepared (*prokatartithentes*)³⁰ or fulfilled (*simblirosas*),³¹ actions that show their creation, even if a creation prior to the actual creation.³²

Nor are the reasons of things emanations of the divine being. They are manifestations, not of being, but of the will of God; therefore St. Dionysius Pseudo-Areopagite also calls these logoi and voiri (*thelimata*)³³ divine.³⁴ We can therefore say that the reasons of things are seals of God's will in creation or divine intentions in relation to the world, because through them the Creator's plan is expressed in creation.³⁵

To better understand the *raison d'être* of creation, we can refer to its iconic character. In the Christian view, the world is not confused with God, as it is in Greek philosophies and pantheistic religions. There can be no ontological continuity between created and uncreated nature. Yet creation speaks of its Creator "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the work of his hands proclaims his strength" (Ps. 18:1-2). Thus, creation acts as an icon

²⁶ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 2, PG 90, 272AB [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, 2, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, pp. 44–45.].

²⁷ P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua...*, p. 169.

²⁸ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua*, Io., 7f, PG 91, 1084B [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua*, Io., 7, p. 86].

²⁹ LARS THUMBERG, *Microcosm and Mediator. The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, Open Court Publishing Company, Illinois, 1995, pp. 75–76.

³⁰ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 13, PG 90, 293D [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, 13, pp. 69].

³¹ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 2, PG 90, 272A [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, 2, pp. 44].

³² J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, p. 118.

³³ SFANTUL DIONISIE AREOPAGITUL, *De Divinis Nominibus*, V, 5-10, PG 3, 820A-825B [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL DIONISIE AREOPAGITUL, *Despre Numirile Dumnezeiești (About Divine Names)*, pp. 159–161].

³⁴ P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua...*, p. 176.

³⁵ J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, p. 114.



referring to the Archetype. The reasons of things are not consubstantial with the Logos, but icons of Him. They refer to Him, but are not identical with Him.

So the iconic character of creation shows us that it is not of one being with God, but is related to Him. The world must therefore be understood in relation to God. Any autonomous understanding of the world only turns it into an idol. Anything reduced to itself and treated as having its ultimate meaning in itself is transformed from an icon into an idol, is obscured and placed as a wall between God and man.³⁶

Turning now to the purpose for which the world was created, and knowing what has been said about its reasons in the Supreme Reason, we can show clearly why creation has all the prerequisites for becoming divine. The world's readiness for transfiguration is given by its connection with the Logos.³⁷ The whole cosmos is created by the Word of God, having its *raison d'être* in connection with the Supreme Reason.³⁸ We reaffirm, however, that the reasons of things are created, unlike the Logos which is uncreated, being one of the persons of the Holy Trinity, and therefore there can be no pantheistic confusion with God, deification presupposing another kind of connection.

This connection is closely related to the Incarnation of the Son of God.³⁹ By the Logos becoming man, a bridge is created between the created and the uncreated, without the uncreated becoming created or vice versa. The creature thus acquires the possibility of uniting with the Creator; man together with the world, which he represents and sums up, unites with Christ, thus achieving his deification and the transfiguration of the world (which is a passion of the deification of man, and therefore an deification in relation to him). The link is similar to the hypostatic union between the uncreated divine nature and the created human nature of the Saviour. They are united, as we learn from the wording of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, "unchanged, unmixed, undivided, undivided."⁴⁰ Thus the created nature does not change into the uncreated, does not mix, does not divide and is not separated from it. Similarly, nature too can unite with God in solidarity with man, but it does not identify with and become God.⁴¹

Even before the Incarnation, the world's reasoning tended towards the Logos, but could never arrive at a real union, or rather, a real communion with Him (the term union can also lead us to pantheistic fusion). The communion with God's grace was from without; man could see the uncreated light, but as something external with which he could not have a perfect union.⁴² After the incarnation, man who has become a member of the Church, and therefore part of the body of Christ, perceives grace as something within himself and can share God through grace in an organic, full way.⁴³

So once again we see the close connection between the reasons of things and the Logos of God by which creation can reach the most intimate union with God and achieve the purpose for which it was created:

³⁶ ADRIAN LEMENI, *Sensul eschatologic al creației (The eschatological sense of creation)*, p. 114.

³⁷ P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua...*, pp. 177–178.

³⁸ A. LEMENI, *Sensul eschatologic al creației (The eschatological sense of creation)*, p. 118.

³⁹ N. RUSSELL, *The doctrine of deification...*, p. 7.

⁴⁰ SFÂNTUL IOAN DAMASCHIN, *Expositio fidei orthodoxae*, III, 3, coll. PG 94, 988B [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL IOAN DAMASCHIN, *Dogmatica (Dogmatics)*, III, 3, p. 84.].

⁴¹ J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, pp. 115–116.

⁴² Panayotis NELLAS, *Omul, animal îndumnezeit (Man, a deified animal)*, trad. diac. Ioan I. Ică jr, Ed. Deisis, Sibiu, 2009, pp. 158–159.

⁴³ Ierotheos VLACHOS, *Dogmatica empirică a Bisericii Ortodoxe Sobornicești (The Empirical Dogmatics of the Catholic Orthodox Church)*, vol. I, trad. TATIANA PETRACHE, Ed. Doxologia, Iași, 2014, pp. 342–346.



"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and God was the Word. It was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him nothing was made that was made" (John. 1:1-3). "Having made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, as he purposed in himself before, that all things should be made one in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth, all things in him" (Eph. 1:9-10). "This is the image of the unseen God, who was born before all flesh. For in him were all things made, things in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, whether thrones or rulers or beginners or masters. All things were made through Him and for Him. He is before all, and all things are established through Him; and He is the Head of the Body which is the Church. (Col. 1:15-18) "After that God spoke to our fathers by the prophets on many occasions and in many ways, in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also made the ages; who, being the brightness of his glory and the image of his being, and holding all things by the word of his power, after he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of glory in the highest (. ...) (Heb. 1:2-3).

Therefore, the reasons of all creatures have both their origin and their unity in the divine Logos, and through them God is present in creation, and creation is in relation to Him and has its ultimate purpose in Him:

"Having the reasons of what was made existing in Him from before the ages, by His goodness He created out of nothing the visible and invisible building, as One who made all things with reason and wisdom in due time, both the general and the individual. For we believe that there prevails a reason for the creation of angels, a reason for each of the beings and powers that make up the world above, a reason for men, a reason for all those who have received existence from God, not to name them all individually. It is properly one and the same Reason, which by its infinity and transcendence is in itself and for itself unbounded and unbounded, being beyond all creation and the distinction and variety which exist and are conceived in it, showing itself and multiplying itself out of goodness in all that are in it, according to the measure of each, and recapitulating (bringing back) all in itself. Through Her exist and persist, and in Her are those made, since through Her they were made and to Her they were made; and persisting and moving, they partake of God. For since they were made by God, all things partake of God according to their measure, whether by understanding (mind), or by reason, or by feeling, or by vital movement, or by their natural or acquired skill, as the great reckons. God-discoverer Dionysius Areopagite" ⁴⁴

So we see that the reasons of the world are not just God's creative intentions. Their role does not only stop at bringing creatures into existence and preserving them, but they also represent the premises for the fulfilment of their purpose. They point to the goal that creation is meant to reach, namely union in grace with God, and they direct the world towards that goal.⁴⁵ The creation of the world according to these divine wills is the first step towards deification, and the free movement given by God to creation is the means by which it can advance towards the actualization of its potency, potency given by these logoi. When man, for example, reaches his final goal by working with divine grace and takes the world with him, then we can say that he is restored according to the logos according to which he was created; by placing his freedom in the work of God's will, he makes his existence coincide

⁴⁴ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua, Io.*, 7, PG 91, 1080AB [SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua, Io.*, 7, pp. 80–81].

⁴⁵ P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua...*, p. 169.



with the normative principle according to which he was created,⁴⁶ as Saint Maxim the Confessor says:

"He who does not corrupt the reason (logos) of his being, pre-existent in God, becomes in God through mindfulness; he moves in God according to the reason (logos) of his good being, pre-existent in God, working through virtues, and lives in God according to the reason (logos) of his eternal being, pre-existent in God".

CONCLUSIONS

Another thing we notice is that the divine plan for the deification of man and, through him, of all creation, leaves rational creatures (angels and humans) the option of not carrying it out, because this plan involves dialogue and love, and these require not only the divine initiative but also the response of the creature.⁴⁷ Therefore, the reasons of facts do not predetermine them, but only offer them the possibility of deification, and they can also move contrary to these logoi according to which they were created.⁴⁸

It must also be said that the fulfilment of the potential given by the reasons for creation will not be fully realized until the end of time. Even if the actualization of the potentialities inscribed in each creature begins now, the completion of this process belongs to the eighth day.⁴⁹ This consummation at the end of time represents, for all creation, the attainment of the final goal towards which all creation is oriented and directed by its reasons:

"The deification is the concentration (*periohi*) and the end (*peras*) of all time and ages and of those in time and ages. And the concentration and end of times and ages and of those in them is the inseparable union of the true beginning and end in the saved."⁵⁰

In conclusion, we can say that all created things can and should be seen from the perspective of the divine plan according to which they were created⁵¹ and that the creation, becoming and salvation of creatures must be related to their final goal, which is deification.⁵²

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⁴⁶ J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, pp. 120–121.

⁴⁷ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua, Io., 7, PG 91, 1073CD* [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Ambigua, Io., 7, p. 74*].

⁴⁸ J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, p. 123.

⁴⁹ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Capita theologiae et aeconomiae*, II, 25, PG 90, 1136B [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Capete teologice sau gnostice (Theological or gnostic heads)*, II, 25, *Filocalia 2*, Ed. Apologeticum, București, 2005, p. 222.].

⁵⁰ SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 59, PG 90, 609A [trad. rom. SFÂNTUL MAXIM MĂRTURISITORUL, *Răspunsuri către Talasie (Replies to Thalassie)*, 59, p. 347].

⁵¹ P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua...*, p. 177.

⁵² J.-C. LARCHET, *Îndumnezeirea omului... (The deification of man...)*, p. 124.



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